

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Every year, 300.000 children go missing in Europe. AMBER Alert Europe aims for #zeromissingkids by preventing children from going missing or bringing them home safely.

#ZEROMISSINGKIDS



European Centre for Missing Children



AMBER ALERT EUROPE

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Welcome letter

Dear friends and supporters,

In 2024, we made steady progress toward our vision of a Europe where no child goes missing without a trace. AMBER Alert Europe worked across borders and disciplines to raise awareness, improve investigative tools, and build stronger networks that support the protection of missing children. These efforts reflect the shared commitment of all those who stand behind this cause.

At the heart of our work is a growing and dedicated network. Today, AMBER Alert Europe connects 75 participating organisations across 29 countries, including Ministries of Interior, police academies, NGOs, and universities. These partnerships make it possible to respond more quickly, share vital knowledge, and ensure that no disappearance is limited by geography or procedure.

One of the key highlights of the year was the launch of Check. Think. Report., a prevention campaign that reached families in 16 countries and 14 languages. Designed with input from law enforcement experts, it provides clear steps for parents and caregivers to follow when a child goes missing—offering guidance in moments when every second matters.

We also saw important developments at the policy level. Through our advocacy efforts, the Prüm II Regulation and the AI Act were updated to include missing persons. These changes support the use of biometric identification and real-time data sharing—tools that can play a crucial role in accelerating investigations and providing answers to families in need.

The International Cold Case Analysis Project (ICCAP) continued to thrive, connecting over 1,000 students, professionals, and law enforcement experts from 53 police academies and universities from 12 countries. Together, they examined long-unsolved cases with fresh insight, reinforcing the value of combining academic research with practical expertise.

As we look ahead to 2025, we are undertaking critical, first-of-its-kind research to gather real-world data that will provide a comprehensive picture of the many factors surrounding why and how children go missing, what happens in the critical moments afterward, and how we can strengthen prevention and response systems. This foundational work is essential to identifying root causes and closing the gaps that put children at risk. Every new collaboration, every data point, and every shared insight brings us closer to a future where children are not only found, but truly protected.

Thank you for being part of this important work.



FRANK HOEN

Founder and Chairman
AMBER Alert Europe



01

Our impact

What we achieved in 2024



Working Together for Zero Missing Children: AMBER Alert Europe's Impact in 2024

In 2024, AMBER Alert Europe continued its efforts to improve the protection of missing children across Europe. Working together with partners at national, cross-border, and EU levels, the Foundation contributed to meaningful progress through advocacy, awareness campaigns, research collaborations, and operational initiatives. Each of these efforts brought us a step closer to our goal of zero missing children—ensuring that more children are found, more families are supported, and fewer disappearances go unanswered.

Our 2024 Highlights

SUPPORTING FAMILIES THROUGH AWARENESS AND PREPAREDNESS

In recognition of International Missing Children's Day, we launched the Check. Think. Report. campaign in 16 countries, made available in 14 languages to reach families across diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Developed in close collaboration with law enforcement experts, the campaign focused on providing parents and caregivers with clear, accessible guidance on what to do in the critical first moments when a child goes missing. Rather than overwhelm with information, the materials were designed to be simple, actionable, and reassuring—offering structure in a moment often defined by panic and uncertainty.

While the circumstances of each disappearance are different, helping families feel more informed and prepared is an important step in strengthening society's overall ability to respond to missing children cases.





ADVANCING POLICY TO INCLUDE AND PROTECT THE MISSING

In 2024, important steps were taken at the EU level to better address the issue of missing persons in key legislation. We worked closely with Members of the European Parliament, EU agencies, and other partners to ensure that missing persons were included in both the Prüm II Regulation and the Artificial Intelligence Act.

These changes help improve how countries share information, use biometric data, and apply AI tools in missing person investigations. While further work is needed to put these changes fully into practice, their inclusion in EU law is an important move toward stronger and more coordinated responses across Europe.

ADDRESSING LEGAL GAPS AND PROMOTING A UNIFIED EU RESPONSE

We continued our work with European policymakers to improve how missing children are protected across the EU. As part of this effort, we participated in discussions with the European Parliament's LIBE (Civil

Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs) and JURI (Legal Affairs) Committees, calling for a more consistent, child-focused approach at the European level.

Currently, the way missing children cases are handled can vary greatly between countries, especially in cross-border situations. To help close these gaps, we highlighted the need for mutual recognition of risk assessments—so that when a child is considered at high risk in one country, that status is recognised across borders. We also stressed the importance of equal protection for all missing children, regardless of whether their case is linked to a crime.

A key part of our message was the proposal to create a European Centre for Missing Persons. This centre would support better cooperation and coordination between national authorities and help ensure that every missing child in Europe is treated with urgency and care. The proposal reflects our ongoing goal: to build a Europe where missing children do not fall through the cracks and where protection is not limited by borders.

INNOVATING COLD CASE INVESTIGATIONS THROUGH ICCAP

In 2024, our International Cold Case Analysis Project (ICCAP) continued to grow as a unique initiative combining academic knowledge with practical investigation. More than 1,000 students and professionals from 53 organisations in 12 countries took part, working together to explore new ways of looking at long-unsolved missing persons cases. With participants from diverse fields—such as law, criminology, forensic science, and psychology—ICCAP encourages fresh perspectives and critical thinking.

One highlight of the year was the Dutch Police Hackathon, where an ICCAP team helped identify two possible missing persons in an active case. While outcomes like these remain exploratory, they show the potential of combining education and investigation.

More than just a project, ICCAP is a growing collaboration between universities, police, and other partners across Europe. It shows how working together in new ways can bring renewed attention—and new hope—to cold cases that might otherwise remain in the dark.



STRENGTHENING CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Last year, we continued to grow our network of partners committed to protecting missing children. Strengthening collaboration across different fields—such as academia, law enforcement, and civil society—remained an important focus. A formal agreement with the University of Cologne laid the foundation for joint training activities and academic research on child protection, highlighting the value of combining knowledge with practical application.

We also welcomed the French organisation AVANE to our network. With its experience in unresolved disappearances, AVANE is supporting efforts to review and analyse cold cases. These new partnerships reflect our ongoing commitment to working together across borders and sectors, helping us move closer to our shared goal of better protecting children and preventing disappearances.

SUPPORTING LAW ENFORCEMENT THROUGH TRAINING

We strengthened our cooperation with CEPOL, the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training, by entering into a new multi-year framework agreement. This formal agreement builds on years of trusted collaboration, aimed at supporting law enforcement professionals in their essential work on missing person cases. Over the past four years, we have hosted nine expert-led training sessions on various aspects of missing person investigations. Through this continued partnership, we remain committed to working alongside law enforcement—supporting their efforts with resources, networks, and opportunities for knowledge sharing.



LOOKING AHEAD

2024 was a year of impact, innovation, and influence. From empowering parents to shaping EU laws, from digital tools to academic alliances, every initiative brought us closer to our mission: zero missing children. Together with our partners, we remain committed to building a Europe where no child disappears unnoticed, and every child is protected, searched for, and found.



AMBER Alert Europe in 2024

Together Towards Zero Missing Children: Highlights



SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Launched the “Check. Think. Report.” campaign

- ✓ Reached families in 16 countries
- ✓ Available in 14 languages
- ✓ Practical, expert-backed steps for the first critical moments after a child goes missing. Helping families act quickly and confidently when it matters most.



SHAPING EU POLICY

Ensured inclusion of missing persons in Prüm II Regulation and Artificial Intelligence Act

- ✓ Improving use of biometric tools and real-time data sharing in investigations.
- ✓ Creating a stronger legal foundation for faster, more effective responses.



ADVOCATING FOR STRONGER CROSS-BORDER PROTECTION

Engaged with the European Parliament (LIBE & JURI Committees)

- ✓ Called for mutual recognition of risk across borders
- ✓ Advocated for a European Centre for Missing Persons
- ✓ Promoted equal protection for all missing children and pushing for EU-wide coordination so no child falls through the cracks.



INNOVATING COLD CASE INVESTIGATIONS

ICCAP – The International Cold Case Analysis Project

- ✓ Over 1,000 participants from 12 countries
- ✓ 53 partner organisations
- ✓ New insights into long-unsolved cases and bridging theory and practice to give forgotten cases renewed attention.



EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS

New collaborations:

- ✓ University of Cologne (Germany) – joint training and research on child protection
- ✓ AVANE (France) – contributing expertise on unresolved disappearances
- ✓ Strengthening cross-sector cooperation for real-world impact.
- ✓ Building a network united by a shared mission to protect missing children.



SUPPORTING LAW ENFORCEMENT

Formalised multi-year partnership with CEPOL

- ✓ 9 expert-led training sessions hosted since 2020
- ✓ Focus on practical skills and knowledge sharing
- ✓ Supporting those on the front line of missing person investigations.



OUR GOAL: ZERO MISSING CHILDREN

At AMBER Alert Europe, we believe every child deserves to grow up safe and protected. Through awareness, advocacy, innovation, and cooperation, we are building a Europe where no child goes missing without a trace—and no child is ever forgotten.

02

Our organisation

AMBER Alert Europe Foundation

About us

AMBER Alert Europe, the European Centre for Missing Children, is a foundation that strives to improve the protection of missing children and to prevent children from going missing by empowering them and raising awareness on the issue of missing children and its root causes. We connect experts from 75 participating organisations, particularly Ministries of Interior, civil society, universities, and police academies from 29 countries, in our mission towards zero missing children in Europe

Our activities


Our activities cover training, research, child alerting, and prevention and awareness-raising, as well as launching initiatives aimed at impacting policies and legislation in the area of children's rights. Our joint efforts with police experts in the field of missing children even paved the way for a European police expert network in this area.

All of our activities are implemented in line with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and with respect for the privacy of children and data protection laws.

Our beginnings

As a response to missing children cases exceeding geographical borders, the AMBER Alert Europe Foundation was founded in 2013 to contribute to better cross-border coordination and cooperation in the search for missing children.

Since then, our network has expanded and now encompasses different experts from a variety of backgrounds who make their know-how and expertise available to improve existing practices and procedures for a fast and safe recovery of missing children and safeguarding of children against going missing or an abduction.



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– AMBER Alert Europe
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(ICCAP)



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Staff Officer to the National
Police Chiefs' Council
(NPCC) Missing People Lead



**PATRÍCIA
CIPRIANO**

Portugal

Associação Portuguesa de
Crianças Desaparecidas



LARS BRUHNS

Germany

Initiative Vermisste
Kinder

Organisations that support us

Participating organisations

action against
abduction



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de la Justice



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de la Sécurité intérieure

ACTIVE
FENCE



Centar za nestalu
i zlostavljanu djecu



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ITAKA
Centrum Poszukiwań
Ludzi Zaginionych

LQCATE
MISSING PEOPLE



groupcall



MINISTRY FOR HOME AFFAIRS
AND NATIONAL SECURITY



POLIISI
POLIISIHALLITUS
Polisstyrelsen
National Police Board



NSW Police Force

ÖSTERREICH
FINDET
EUCH

POLICE
LËTZEBUERG





INITIATIVE
VERMISSTE
K NDER



Kadunud.ee
Teadmata kadunud inimeste otsingud



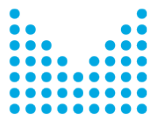
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informeren en alarmeren



Victim Support
Europe

VOST EUSKADI

WePROTECT
GLOBAL ALLIANCE



MINISTERSTVO VNITRA
ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY

ASSOCIATION
AVANE
Association d'Aide
aux Victimes
des Affaires Non Élucluidées



UNIVERSITY
OF COLOGNE

Maastricht University
Faculty of Law



Sponsors

In 2024, AMBER Alert Europe had the support of multiple organisations that contributed to the cause by providing us with valuable in-kind services.

2MANYDOTS

Website builder and hosting partner 2MANYDOTS sponsored the redesign of the AMBER Alert Europe website and subsequently also hosts our website. The services are provided entirely free of charge and can be quantified at an amount of approximately €7,000 annually.

Axon Advocaten

Axon is a law firm based in Amsterdam that specialises in internationally oriented services. They apply an hourly rate of €325 (excl. VAT). The service, as requested by AMBER Alert Europe, is provided free of charge. An exact amount to be quantified cannot be provided in advance. No min-max has been agreed upon between parties.

MN Adviseurs & Accountants

MN Adviseurs & Accountants provides AMBER Alert Europe with financial advice, as well as financial statements. This service, costing around €10,000 annually, is provided free of charge.



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