

HAS SOMEONE YOU KNOW GONE MISSING?

What to do when someone goes missing abroad?

THIS FACTSHEET INCLUDES INFORMATION ON:

Reporting the person missing:

- If you are in the UK Page 2
- If you are abroad Page 2
- Information you should provide Page 3
- What UK police can do to help Page 3
- What the FCDO can do to help Page 3
- What the FCDO cannot do Page 3
- What you can do Page 3
- Other Organisations Page 4
 - LBT Global
 - International Child Abduction and Contact Unit (ICACU)
 - Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB)
 - FCDO and Home Office Forced Marriage Unit
 - UK Missing Persons Unit (UKMPU)



It can be a traumatic experience when someone goes missing and it may be especially hard to know what to do when a relative or friend goes missing abroad. Information on how to report the person missing and how to access help is outlined below.

This Factsheet is for when someone is missing abroad. If you have lost contact with someone, at home or abroad, over a long period of time, please see the 'Lost Contact' Factsheet.

Reporting the person missing

If you are in the UK

- Contact the police and enquire as to whether it is appropriate to report the person missing. If you are not sure which police force to contact, contact your local force and they will be able to advise further. As long as it is not an emergency and you do not require an immediate police response, dial 101.
- After the police have agreed to log a missing person report, they can liaise with the relevant foreign police force and ask for relevant enquiries to be made in the country in which the person was last seen. The jurisdiction and the investigation would lie with the foreign police force.
- You can also contact the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) on 0207 008 5000 and ask for the Consular Directorate. You will need to provide them with details of the country the person is believed to have gone missing in, where they were last seen and when you last had contact with them.

If you are abroad

- You should report the person as missing to the local police in the country you are in. Provide as much information as possible so the local police can co-ordinate with the UK authorities. Make a note of any reference numbers they give you.
- If the person you are reporting as missing is in the same foreign country as you then the local police force has jurisdiction and should make enquiries to help find the missing person; however, the process may be different to that of the UK.

- If the person who has gone missing is in another country to where you are, the local police force who took the missing person report will liaise with the authorities in the country where the person is missing as it is this country that will have jurisdiction.
- It can be of benefit if you also telephone the UK police to report the person missing. You should report the person missing to the police force for the area where the person normally lives. If you do not know where this is, report the person to the police force where you live. The telephone numbers for UK police forces can be obtained from the website of the relevant police force, links can be found here: www.police.uk/forces.
- Do not use 101 as it cannot be used outside of the UK. When you report the person missing, provide as much information as possible, including any reference numbers given to you by the police in the country you are currently in. In this instance, the jurisdiction will still be with the country where the person has gone missing.
- The FCDO may also be able to assist you. You can use the FCDO website: www.gov.uk/world/organisations to find a British Embassy near your location.
- If you are in Europe and your child has gone missing, you can also call 116 000. You still need to report your child missing to the local police but the 116 000 free phone number provides a way for parents to immediately get in contact with a charity which deals with missing children in the country you are calling from. The charity should be able to provide information and assistance and put you in contact with local authorities. The 116 000 number can also be used to take sighting reports and other information from members of the public, which can then be passed on to the relevant police force. The 116 000 number is currently operating in 31 countries in Europe, see list here: www.missingchildreneurope.eu

Information you should provide

When reporting a person missing abroad, you should try to provide as much information as possible about the missing person, such as:

- Name, date and place of birth
- The time and place that last contact was made
- Their travel itinerary and where you think they may be
- Mobile phone number, email address and/or social media account
- Their passport details
- The name of the company they have travel insurance with and any other details of their travel insurance policy that you may have
- A recent photograph
- Whether they have any medical conditions

If your friend or relative uses an internet site which they regularly update with details of where they are and perhaps who they are with, it is important that this information is also provided to the police and the FCDO. For example, this might be an online travel blog, a personal website, a social networking site or a photograph site. Some of these sites may include geocoded or geotagged photographs uploaded by the missing person, which might include location information that may be of use to the investigation.

What UK police can do to help

Please be aware that responsibility for conducting searches and missing person investigations overseas rests with the local police force in the country where the person has gone missing.

The UK police may assist with enquiries, but it is rare for them to become actively involved in the case. This is because they do not have the legal authority to carry out an investigation outside the UK and they can only do so with the permission of the country involved.

What the FCDO can do to help

The FCDO can help in cases where the person missing is a British national or has dual nationality whereby regular contact has been unexpectedly lost. The FCDO may be able to:

- Check their records to see if the missing person has come to their attention.
- Provide you with information on the local police force/authority in the country they went missing so you can make a missing person report.
- Liaise with the local authorities and keep you informed of their progress.
- Provide you with details of organisations specialising in missing person cases.
- If you decide to travel abroad to search for your relative or friend, staff at the British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate can offer information on local conditions and help you arrange meetings with the local authorities and investigation agencies.

What the FCDO cannot do

The FCDO cannot help if the person does not have British nationality, nor if you are trying to trace someone who you lost contact with a long time ago. The FCDO cannot:

- Search for the missing person.
- Provide financial assistance for missing person investigations.
- Offer legal advice.
- Pay for a body to be returned to the UK – the FCDO's Deaths Overseas Guidance can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/coping-with-death-abroad

What you can do

Consider the following when trying to trace a person believed to be missing abroad:

- When and why were you expecting contact from them?
- Was there anything in their last communication with you that might suggest where they are now or why they might not have been in touch?

- Was there anything posted on their online social networking, blogging or information sharing websites that might suggest where they are now and/or who they may recently have been with?
- You may wish to contact the family of any travelling companions or other people with whom the missing person might have been in contact with whilst abroad. They may have helpful information which could assist.
- Consider what you would be able to achieve by travelling to the country yourself. Local authorities may be reluctant to pass on information.

Other organisations

There are other organisations which may be able to provide you with assistance:

LBT Global (formerly Lucie Blackman Trust)

This charity provides support and advice to British nationals who are missing overseas and their friends and family.

Telephone: 0198 371 8802
Email: enquiries@lbtglobal
Website: www.lbt.global

International Child Abduction and Contact Unit (ICACU)

This is the Central Authority on the civil aspects of International Child Abduction. They may be able to help if your child has been taken abroad without your consent and kept overseas against your wishes.

Telephone: 0203 681 2756
Website:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-child-abduction-and-contact-unit-application-form

Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB)

CFAB assists people who have been separated by international borders from family members as a result of divorce, migration, seeking asylum, trafficking and abduction. It also supports people for whom there are protection concerns, including children and vulnerable adults who may have been abducted or trafficked.

Telephone: 0207 735 8941
Email: info@cfab.org.uk
Website: www.cfab.org.uk

FCDO and Home Office Forced Marriage Unit

If you are worried someone may have stopped contact or be missing due to having been forced into marriage, the FCDO and Home Office Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) can provide confidential advice and assistance to:

- Those who have been forced into marriage
- Those at risk of being forced into marriage
- People worried about friends or relatives who may have been forced into marriage.

More information can be accessed via the FMU website.

UK Missing Persons Unit (UKMPU)

The UKMPU works alongside the UK police and related organisations to help find missing people.

Telephone: 0800 234 6034
Email: ukmpu@nca.gov.uk
Website:
www.missingpersons.police.uk



If you require more information, other factsheets can be downloaded from the UK Missing Persons Unit website: <http://missingpersons.police.uk>.

The information in this guide is not definitive and should be utilised in conjunction with police guidance and independent legal advice.

ABOUT THE UKMPU

The Missing Persons Unit is the UK national and international point of contact for all missing person and unidentified body cases. We're the only UK agency focused exclusively on missing people. We serve all UK police forces as well as overseas police agencies.

We are a hub for the exchange of information and provision of expertise on the subject of missing persons. We provide a comprehensive service for all missing person investigations, supporting law enforcement and other agencies.



www.missingpersons.police.uk



[@UKMissingPersonsUnit](https://www.facebook.com/UKMissingPersonsUnit)



[@UKMissingPerson](https://twitter.com/UKMissingPerson)



[@ukmissingpersons](https://www.instagram.com/ukmissingpersons)