

Improving access to justice for child victims

Common European evidence-based guidance for child interviews in the criminal justice context
[Policy brief 1/2024. Child Forensic Interviews: Recommendations by the European Association of Psychology and Law \(EAPL\) | Heuni](#)

The Policy brief *Child Forensic Interviews: Recommendations by the European Association of Psychology and Law (EAPL)* provides guidelines for child forensic interviewing, emphasizing the need for evidence-based, structured practices that safeguards the accuracy and reliability of children's testimonies and ensuring they are treated with care and respect. The brief is based on a recently published scientific open access article ([White paper on forensic child interviewing: research-based recommendations by the European Association of Psychology and Law](#)), which is authored by 34 experts throughout Europe and beyond and the drafting of which was led by HEUNIs senior programme officer Julia Korkman. The paper sets out key recommendations for safe and reliable hearing of children in the criminal justice context, aiming to standardize practices across Europe. The brief is currently being translated into numerous languages.

Interviewing child victims of trafficking: A handbook for professionals
<https://heuni.fi/-/handbook-for-forensic-child-interviews#a872c1fa>

The Handbook for Forensic Child Interviews in Presumed Cases of Trafficking provides guidance for professionals conducting investigative interviews with children who are presumed victims of trafficking. It advocates for evidence-based practices that prioritize the accurate and reliable collection of testimony while safeguarding the child's well-being. The handbook addresses the challenges of memory, suggestibility, and cultural influences illustrated with practical examples, and highlights the particularly relevant features when investigating suspect cases of trafficking in children. The emphasis is on protecting vulnerable children while ensuring that the information gathered contributes to a just outcome for all parties involved. The handbook, developed in collaboration with the Council of Baltic Sea States, is currently available in English, Finnish, Georgian, Greek, Slovenian and Swedish.

Encountering and interviewing child victims of online sexual violence
[PROMISE ELPIS. Adapting multidisciplinary response and interagency collaboration to meet the specific needs and requirements arising in the context of child sexual violence online | Heuni](#)

The project *PROMISE ELPIS* focuses on the criminal justice process and aims to provide criminal justice actors and in particular law enforcement with skills and adapted interviewing tools to ensure the criminal justice process is sensitive and safe to the needs of the children involved. Within this project, an adapted interview protocol for investigating online child sexual abuse cases has been developed with the aim of focusing on information that is both child-sensitive and relevant for the criminal justice process. PROMISE ELPIS will promote this interview protocol and provide training possibilities to professionals involved. The interview protocol and related trainings build on scientific research, experiences by professionals and the views of the implicated children.

Improving the access to justice for victims of forced marriages

[EASY. Increasing dialogue, awareness, and victim-centred support for victims of forced marriages | Heuni](#)

The *EASY* project is focused on increasing dialogue, awareness, and victim-centered support for victims of forced marriages across four EU Member States: Spain, Ireland, Germany, and Finland. The project works to ensure that victims of forced marriages receive the support they need through community dialogue, awareness-raising, and the development of victim-sensitive services. It also provides practical tools and best practices for professionals to identify and effectively support victims to access their rights.

[Report series №106: "Never easy" — Enhancing response and support to victims of forced marriage | Heuni](#)

[Report series № 104: Legal approaches to forced marriage | Heuni](#)

Improving access to justice for victims of trafficking

[Policy brief 2/2023. Trafficking in human beings: Psychological coercion and investigative interviewing | Heuni](#)

The Policy brief *Psychological Coercion and Investigative Interviewing* focuses on the challenges of identifying psychological coercion in human trafficking cases and is directed particularly to professionals working in the police and the criminal justice system. It provides a brief insight into the phenomenon of psychological coercion and highlights how traffickers exploit psychological manipulation to control victims, often without physical violence, making it challenging for the justice system to detect, prove and address these crimes effectively. The brief advocates the importance of the planning and preparation of the interview and for interviewing techniques that consider the victims' psychological and emotional states, ensuring that their voices are heard, and their experiences accurately represented. By improving investigative practices and understanding of psychological coercion, the brief aims to enhance the accuracy of investigations and ensure justice for both victims and the accused. A webinar related to this theme is organized together with the Australian Institute of Criminology in September 2024:

Psychological control and the vulnerability of trafficking victims

[AIC - HEUNI Webinar "Coercive control & investigative interviewing within the context of trafficking in human beings " 10.09.2024 | Heuni](#)