Advice for professionals working with children from Romania in the UK
Welcome

In this booklet, you can find information and advice about working with children from Romania.

It covers key things to bear in mind when working with children from Romania and agencies to work with. It also takes a look at how to safeguard children being moved across borders.

If you’d like to know more, the NSPCC’s Child Trafficking Advice Centre can help – just call 0808 800 5000 or visit www.nspcc.org.uk/ctac

Free booklet for children

The NSPCC has a booklet for trafficked foreign national children that’s available in both English and Romanian. Please contact us on 0808 800 5000 for more information.
The NSPCC’s Child Trafficking Advice Centre is a specialist service that provides free advice and support to professionals concerned that a child or young person may be a victim of trafficking.

The service is staffed by experienced social workers and a police liaison officer. It provides free training and awareness-raising presentations, produces child trafficking reports for courts and attends network and child protection meetings.

The Child Trafficking Advice Centre is a first responder for child referrals into the National Referral Mechanism. This is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive appropriate care.
Children on the move
Many children across the world are on the move. They may cross borders due to numerous reasons – poverty, war, political conflict, natural disaster, gender based violence, escape from discrimination and others.

Children rarely move alone. They are often accompanied by adults who may or may not be safe. In the absence of safe networks, children are highly vulnerable to different forms of abuse, especially child trafficking.

Child trafficking
Trafficked children are a specific group of children on the move. Child trafficking is the recruitment and movement of children for the purpose of exploitation.

Children can be trafficked from abroad into the UK as well as within the UK itself. They can be trafficked by parents, extended family members, known adults from a child’s community or by strangers.

Any victim, including child victims of trafficking, cannot give informed consent to their own exploitation. Every trafficked child is entitled to a response in accordance with child protection legislation. This is irrespective of their immigration status or whether they have engaged in criminal activity.

What are children trafficked for?
- sexual exploitation
- criminal activity, including cannabis cultivation, street crime and crime against persons
- labour exploitation
- informal care arrangements with related or unrelated adults for domestic servitude, benefit fraud or carrying out petty crimes
- forced marriage
- illegal adoption.

(This is not an exhaustive list and children are often exploited for more than one reason.)

For more information about child trafficking and for government guidance, visit nspcc.org.uk/childtrafficking
Working with children from Romania

Some children being moved from Romania to the UK may need a safeguarding response to ensure they are kept safe.

If a child or young person has been brought into the UK or moved around the UK for the purpose of exploitation, they are a victim of child trafficking. Please make a referral to the National Referral Mechanism and consult indicators of trafficking in the Safeguarding Children who may have been trafficked guidance.

Here are some important things to consider when working with a child from Romania. Especially in cases, where they have been moved and there are safeguard concerns.

1. Every Romanian child in the UK is entitled to protection. It is not advisable to repatriate the child without carrying out the full assessments and working with Romanian authorities to investigate and develop plan of action.

2. Do not assume the accompanying adult is ‘family’ and has parental responsibility. Establish their identity and assess them.

3. Follow the guidance for working with foreign authorities. Any international enquiry has to be done via the Romanian Embassy in UK.

4. Romania has a centralised child protection system and every enquiry has to be sent to the out central child protection office in Bucharest. The Romanian Embassy will make this contact.

5. Consider the child’s ethnicity. Belonging to the Roma community will have specific vulnerabilities and risks.

6. All people of Roma ethnicity are not Romanian nationals. Roma people live in different parts of Europe, including the UK. Please make sure you log information correctly.

7. Under Romanian law, children need to be accompanied by an adult (18 or older) when exiting the country. They also need to have official identification documents, which for children under 14 means a passport and for children aged 14 to 18 can mean a passport or ID card.

8. Under Romanian law, when the child is accompanied by one of the parents, the child can exit the country only if the accompanying parent produces an affidavit executed by the other parent. This will show that he/she consents to the child travelling to the state(s) of destination, and to the duration of the child’s trip.

9. The Romanian law imposes additional restrictions when the child is accompanied by a third party, defined as someone other than the parents. As well as the affidavit, the third party must bear with them at the border crossing point a copy of his or her criminal record.

10. The affidavit should have the child’s details, accompanying adults’ details, purpose of visit, date of visit and address. There is no standard template for this declaration and it is in Romanian.

11. This declaration should have the issuing notary’s name and registration number. This name can be verified on the Notaries Electronic database and the issuing notary can contact them via the phone. Please contact the Child Trafficking Advice Centre for this information.

12. Every Romanian national is issued with an identity card that will have their address on it. This is important while carrying out checks in Romania.
Child trafficking is child abuse. It requires a child protection response and multiagency working, in line with child protection legislation.

Consider using police powers of protection to remove a child from a dangerous place, or to prevent the child from being removed from a safe place.

Your perceived attitude towards a victim at the point of initial contact is crucial. It can determine whether the victim will engage with any conversation, investigation or interview.

If appropriate, explain to the child or young person who you are and what your role is.

It is likely that interpreters will not be trusted. Try to avoid the interpreter being from the same region as the victim. This reduces any link they may make between the interpreter and people at home.

Interpreters should be briefed about what you hope to achieve and told relevant background information. It should be made clear that the interview must be in accordance with guidance for interviewing a vulnerable and intimidated person.

If the child or young person is placed in local authority care, they may be under pressure from the trafficker to return. You should plan for this and ensure you have details available should they go missing.

Do not make promises that cannot be kept, such as guaranteeing protection of family and friends.

Once the child or young person is protected, as a first responder police should complete and submit the National Referral Mechanism form through the UK Human Trafficking Centre. You can contact them by calling 08447 782 406 or emailing UKHTC@soca.x.gsi.gov.uk

For advice, information or support, remember you can contact the NSPCC’s Child Trafficking Advice Centre by calling 0808 800 5000, emailing help@nspcc.org.uk or visiting nspcc.org.uk/ctac
What the NSPCC does

Abuse ruins childhood, but it can be prevented. That’s why we’re here. That’s what drives all our work, and that’s why – as long as there’s abuse – we will fight for every childhood.

www.nspcc.org.uk