








Procedure file

Basic information		
RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	2020/2621(RSP)	Procedure completed
Resolution on the international and domestic parental abduction of EU children in Japan		
Subject		
4.10.02 Family policy, family law, parental leave		
4.10.03 Child protection, children's rights		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Petitions	 MONTSERRAT Dolors	19/02/2020
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 VINCZE Loránt	
		 AGIUS SALIBA Alex	
		 TOOM Yana	
		 GANCIA Gianna	
		 ŽDANOKA Tatjana	
	 ZŁOTOWSKI Kosma		

Key events			
08/07/2020	Results of vote in Parliament		
08/07/2020	Decision by Parliament	T9-0182/2020	Summary
10/07/2020	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2020/2621(RSP)
Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Resolution on statement
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 132-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PETI/9/02783

Documentation gateway					
Motion for a resolution		B9-0205/2020	08/07/2020	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0182/2020	08/07/2020	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2020)452	08/12/2020	EC	

Resolution on the international and domestic parental abduction of EU children in Japan

The European Parliament adopted by 686 votes to 1, with 8 abstentions, a resolution on the international and domestic parental abduction of EU children in Japan.

During its meeting of 19 February 2020, the Committee on Petitions discussed several petitions concerning parental child abduction and visiting rights involving couples of mixed nationality, where one partner is an EU national and the other Japanese. The significant number of unsolved parental child abduction cases where one of the parents is an EU national and the other is a Japanese national is alarming.

Those petitions raised concerns over Japans poor record in the enforcement of court decisions to return children under the 1980 Hague Convention proceedings and over the lack of means to enforce the access and visiting rights, thus preventing EU parents from maintaining a meaningful relationship with their children residing in Japan. One of the main objectives of the 1980 Hague Convention is to protect children from the harmful effects of parental child abduction by establishing procedures to ensure the childs prompt return to the state of habitual residence immediately before their abduction.

Child abduction cases require swift handling as the passage of time can have long-term adverse consequences for the child and for the future relationship between the child and the left-behind parent.

Parliament regretted that Japan, as a strategic partner of the EU, does not appear to be complying with international rules in cases of child abduction. It stressed that the countrys legal framework should be improved so that, for instance, decisions handed down by the Japanese and other courts of relevant countries in procedures under the 1980 Hague Convention on the return of the child are enforced in Japan effectively.

The resolution stressed that all child-protection systems should have transnational and cross-border mechanisms in place, which take into account the specificities of cross-border conflicts. Furthermore, Parliament suggested that a European citizen-friendly informational support platform should be established so as to provide assistance to parents in cross-border family disputes, in conjunction with the Hague Conference (e.g. completion of the e-Justice portal with information on parental child abduction in third countries and on other childrens rights).

The Japanese authorities are urged to:

- enforce effectively court decisions on access and visiting rights granted to left-behind parents and on the latter maintaining meaningful contact with their children who reside in Japan;
- follow international recommendations to introduce the necessary changes to the countrys legal system and put in place the possibility for shared or joint custody after the dissolution of the parents relationship in order to bring their domestic laws into line with their international commitments;
- better cooperate with the EU and to enable the effective enforcement of the access and visiting rights granted by court decisions to left-behind parents.

The Council is called on to enhance cooperation between the child abduction alert systems with cross-border implications established in the Member States, to work with the Commission on setting up child alert mechanisms where they are missing, and to report on the conclusion of the relevant cooperation agreements dealing with cross-border abduction cases.

For their part, Member States should:

- communicate, via their foreign ministries and embassies websites in Japan, the risk of child abduction in the country and about the behaviour of the Japanese authorities on this matter;
- put pressure on the Japanese authorities to implement fully their obligations under international legislation on child protection.