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[Press release](#) | 09.03.2016

Legal rights

Children to get guaranteed rights across the EU under new law

New EU rules setting out safeguards for children suspected or accused in criminal proceedings were adopted by the European Parliament today. Commenting after the vote, Green civil liberties spokesperson **Jean Lambert** said:

"This new EU legislation is a welcome step forward in ensuring children are afforded a guaranteed level of protection in criminal proceedings across the EU. The new law sets out basic procedural rights for children, which should be guaranteed across Europe, and aims to ensure the best interests of the child are at the forefront.

"It was high time to set out common rights for children across Europe and address the problematic patchwork of national rules that has existed until now. The new law sets out basic minimum standards. The detention of children who are suspected or accused should be used as a last resort and it should be ensured that children are detained separately from adults. They should have access to a doctor and the right to an individual assessment. Importantly, they will also have the right to be communicated with in a language adapted to their needs, as well as to be accompanied by the holder of parental responsibility during the proceedings.

"While the new law represents a major improvement overall, it is disappointing that it limits the right for children to be assisted by a lawyer in certain cases. This is essentially left up to member states to decide and a lawyer can be refused if the crime is not serious or the investigation could be affected."

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Jean Lambert

Member

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