



**Valvira**  
National Supervisory Authority  
for Welfare and Health

# **Finnish Adoption Board Annual Report 2016**

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## Foreword

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The Adoption Act was amended in July 2012 and the Government appointed the new Adoption Board for a term of office lasting five years. As chairperson of the Board, I have had the privilege of working with excellent specialists to do important and instructive work for the benefit of children and families.

This annual report deals mainly with 2016. Since no annual report has been published for other years in the Adoption Board's 5-year term of office, we also raise the main events in previous years.

With the permission of the Adoption Board, a total of over 500 children from abroad have been adopted in Finland during the term of office. The number of children adopted in Finland from abroad collapsed during 2015-2016. In 2016, just 58 children arrived in Finland via intercountry adoption service providers compared with 308 in 2005. Intercountry adoptions have declined everywhere in the world during the 2000s. One reason for this is the growing interest in domestic adoption in the countries of origin. In Finland this trend was impacted particularly by the ending of Russian, Kenyan and Ethiopian adoptions in 2015-2016. No children had yet arrived from the new adoption co-operation countries of Bulgaria, Kyrgyzstan and Taiwan in 2016. The fact that the City of Helsinki also stopped accepting new intercountry adoption applicants has also impacted adoption numbers.

The number of intercountry adoption applicants has gradually declined year after year. One reason for this might be a decline in the availability for adoption of small healthy children from abroad. In 2016, around 67% of the children arriving in Finland were aged two years or younger. However, it is often children aged older than this or who otherwise have special needs or siblings who are most in need of intercountry adoption. More applications are required from families who have a desire and who are suited to adopting children with special needs. This should be considered already at the adoption counselling stage. The number of domestic adoption applicants has also remained smaller than forecast. We on the Adoption Board assess the suitability of applicants to become adoptive parents bearing in mind the best interests of the child. A strong family is in the best child's interest.

The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Hague Adoption Convention) requires the Adoption Board, as the central authority, to work in close cooperation with other Contracting States. During this five-year term of office, the Adoption Board intensified its role as the central authority by visiting countries with which Finland cooperates in adoption matters. Also cooperation between the central adoption authorities in the Nordic countries works well.

Cooperation between the Finnish Adoption Board and intercountry adoption service providers has become established and in 2016 we drew up proposals together to develop funding for the service providers' post-adoption services. Cases raised in public suggest that there seems to be reason to develop post-adoption support and services in particular. The plenary has convened regularly each year and, among other things, proposed an increase in the adoption grant for inter-country adoptions. In 2016, the Adoption Board's secretariat received additional resources, which have

enabled development of the secretariat's operating processes and administrative practices in adoption matters.

As the Adoption Board's term of office draws to a close, it has been a delight to note that members of the Adoption Board, Finland's intercountry adoption service providers and adoption counselling providers are professionals and reliable. Organisations for children and families superbly complement the official adoption system. We all work together in the best interests of children and families. I would like to thank all concerned for fine cooperation.

Helsinki, 14 March 2017

Merja Vuori  
Counsellor of Social Welfare  
Chairman of the Finnish Adoption Board

# 1 Composition and duties of the Adoption Board

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The Finnish Adoption Board operates under Valvira, the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, as a special expert, permission and supervisory authority in adoption matters. The Board grants permissions for domestic and intercountry adoption, as well as operating licences to intercountry adoption service providers<sup>1</sup> and monitors their operation.

Adoption is regulated by the Adoption Act (22/2012) and the Government Decree on Adoption (202/2012). In all decisions and other measures concerning the adoption of a minor child, the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration. [Finnish Adoption Act, Act No 22/2012 can be found here in English.](#)

The Adoption Board is the central authority as referred to in The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Treaty SopS 29/1997) and the competent national authority as referred to in the European Convention on the Adoption of Children (Treaty SopS 39/2012).

The Finnish Adoption Board consists of a plenary session, a section for international matters and a section for adoption permission matters. The chairman or deputy chairman of the Adoption Board chairs the plenary and the sections. The Finnish Government appoints the Adoption Board for a maximum term of five years at a time. The current term of office is from 1 July 2012 until 30 June 2017. The Government appoints the chairman, deputy chairman, members and deputy members to the Board. The Adoption Board's chairman, deputy chairman and secretaries are officials of Valvira.

Merja Vuori, Counsellor of Social Welfare, serves as chairman of the Adoption Board and Riitta Husso, Senior Officer, Legal Affairs, as deputy chairman. Jonna Salmela, Senior Officer, Legal Affairs, and Minna Malviniemi, Senior Officer, serve as secretaries to the Board.

**The section for international matters** has at least four other members in addition to the chairman or deputy chairman. One of the members must represent the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The section must also include members with expertise in legal matters relating to international adoptions, the practical intercountry adoption operation and child welfare.

Composition of the section for international matters as at 31 December 2016 (ordinary member, deputy member below in parentheses):

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland  
Hanna Rantala, Legal Officer  
(Henna Harju, Legal Officer)

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<sup>1</sup> The term *service provider* is derived from the current Finnish legislation. Finnish Adoption Act, Act No 22/2012 Section 32: "An intercountry adoption service may be provided by municipal social welfare organs and other organisations (service providers) which have been licensed thereto by the Adoption Board."

## Expertise:

Legal matters relating to international adoptions

Outi Kempainen, Senior Adviser for Legislative Affairs, Ministry of Justice

(Laura Määttä, Senior Adviser for Legislative Affairs, Ministry of Justice)

Practical intercountry adoption operation

Tuula Kumpumäki, Executive Director, All Our Children

(Anja Wikstedt, Adoption Curator, All Our Children)

Child welfare

Aila Puustinen-Korhonen, Senior Expert, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities

(Sami Uotinen, Head of Legal Affairs, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities)

Finnish Immigration Service

Arja Kallakivi, Head of Section

(Eeva-Maria Nieminen, Senior Adviser)

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

Johanna Huovinen, Senior Adviser for Legislative Affairs

(Annika Juurikko, Senior Adviser for Legislative Affairs)

***The section for adoption permission matters*** has at least four other members in addition to the chairman or deputy chairman. The section must include members with expertise in child welfare, adoption counselling, a child's growth and development as well as a member with medical expertise.

Composition of the section for adoption permission matters as at 31 December 2016 (ordinary member, deputy member below in parentheses):

Expertise in adoption counselling

Sanna Schultz-Karlsson, Social Worker, City of Helsinki Department of Social Services and Health Care

(Kaisa Tervonen-Arnkil, Development Manager, Save the Children Finland)

Medical expertise

Riitta Aejmelaeus, Senior Medical Officer, Valvira

(Maarit Sandelin, Senior Medical Officer, Valvira)

Expertise in a child's growth and development

Jarmo Salo, Paediatrics Specialist, Oulu University Hospital

(Johanna Lammi-Taskula, Head of Unit, National Institute for Health and Welfare)

Expertise in child welfare

Nina Sormo, Leading Social Worker, City of Espoo

(Mervi Aarnio, Social Worker, City of Järvenpää)

Valvira's member  
Marita Raassina, Senior Officer, Valvira  
(Eine Heikkinen, Head of Unit, Valvira)

At a **plenary** session, all members of the sections are present. In addition, a necessary number of members representing the authorities and organisations operating within the field of operation of the Adoption Board are appointed to attend the plenary session. If necessary, also other members may be appointed to attend the plenary session.

Composition of the plenary as at 31 December 2016 (ordinary member, deputy member below in parentheses) included the members and deputy members of the section for international matters and the section for adoption permission matters referred to above and:

Aulikki Haimi-Kaikkonen, Senior Social Worker, City of Helsinki  
(Saara Leinonen, Adoption Coordinator, City of Helsinki)

Anja Ojuva, Executive Director, Interpedia  
(Eija Kiiskinen, Senior Adoption Coordinator, Interpedia)

Irene Pärssinen-Hentula, International Adoption Director, Save the Children Finland  
(Tiina Tammi, Lawyer, Save the Children Finland)

Anu Uhtio, Executive Director, The Adoptive Families in Finland  
(Lilly Korpiola, Chairman of the Board, The Adoptive Families in Finland)

Juha Jämsä, Executive Director, Rainbow Families  
(Anna Moring, Project Manager, Rainbow Families)

Minna Vihavainen, Executive Director, Adopterade Finland rf  
(Annika Oldenburg, Deputy Chairman, Adopterade Finland rf)

Reetta Kurjonen, Board Member, Aikuiset adoptoidut ry  
(Karoliina Norhomaa, Deputy Chairman, Aikuiset adoptoidut ry)

## 2 Operations of the Adoption Board in 2016

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### 2.1 Administration of the Adoption Board

The Finnish Adoption Board was transferred to Valvira, the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health at the start of the Board's 5-year term of office in 2012. Under a reorganisation at Valvira in 2015, the Adoption Board's secretariat was placed in Valvira's private sector licencing and social welfare supervision department and the Board's referendary resources were increased.

The Adoption Board's website was refreshed in 2016 and provides information about the adoption process and the Adoption Board's operations. During 2016, the email address [adoption@valvira.fi](mailto:adoption@valvira.fi) was introduced alongside the personal email addresses of persons working in the secretariat. During the year of operations, the work processes of the Board's secretariat were described and documented and the key practical ways of working were overhauled.

### 2.2 Training and national cooperation

Each year, the Adoption Board arranges adoption training, which is primarily intended for adoption counsellors and intercountry adoption service providers. In 2016, training was held at the House of the Estates in Helsinki on 26 January. Training themes were puberty and adopted children, adoption counselling in rainbow families and persons with disabilities as adoption applicants. In addition, the Board also reviewed the consent of biological parents living abroad and other topical matters. A total of 66 persons working with adoption matters took part in training.

In 2016, The Adoption Board and Helsinki District Court held a joint meeting on the topic of the Board's and Court's duties and role in matters of confirmation of foreign adoption. Problems relating to independent adoptions were also discussed.

During the year, the chairman of the Board and secretaries took part also in other events as experts and lecturers.

### 2.3 Plenary

The plenary of the Adoption Board is tasked with monitoring development in adoption matters and, where necessary, making initiatives in matters concerning adoption. During the present term of office, the plenary has generally convened twice a year. To monitor the development of adoption matters, the plenary has broadly discussed matters of topical relevance. Experts, such as training professionals Seija Poikonen and Sanna Mäkipää, the Ombudsman for Minorities Eva Biaudet and Merike Helander, lawyer at the office of the Ombudsman for Children, have also been invited to these discussions.

During 2016, the plenary of the Adoption Board held two meetings. The plenary supplemented its adoption support initiative submitted to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health about the Government Decree on Amending Section 3 of the Decree on Maternity Allowance and Adoption Support to increase the adoption support paid to adoptive parents by Kela. The plenary submitted a statement to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health's legislative proposal for proposed amendments to the Health Insurance Act (1224/2004). The statement proposed extending parental benefits also to authorised adoptions that take place without a service provider. To monitor development in adoption matters, in 2016, the plenary considered the arrangement of support to be given in Finland particularly with regard to post adoption service.

## **2.4 Section for international matters and international cooperation**

International cooperation of the Adoption Board is based on the international conventions and the Adoption Act referred to earlier. These conventions require the central authority of each Contracting State to work in close cooperation with each other in adoption matters.

Under the Government Decree on Adoption, the section for international matters shall

- to the appropriate extent gather and maintain information about the legislation and practices concerning adoption and intercountry adoption service in foreign states and, on request, provide information about these to authorities and service providers;
- monitor compliance with the Hague Convention in Finland and, when necessary, take measures to ensure compliance with the Convention;
- cooperate with the central authorities or the bodies responsible for the duties of a central authority in foreign states that are contracting states in the Hague Convention in order to achieve the objects of the Convention and to exchange the information referred to in the Convention;
- cooperate with the national authorities designated by the state parties in the European Convention on the Adoption of Children, concluded in Strasbourg on 27 November 2008, to exchange the information referred to in the Convention;
- grant licences for the provision of intercountry adoption service and cancel licences that have been granted;
- grant a Finnish service provider licence to cooperate with a foreign service provider and cancel licences that have been granted;
- monitor the operation of the service providers and their cooperation with foreign service providers;
- provide the reports referred to in section 78 of the Adoption Act and give the statements referred to in section 79 of the Adoption Act;
- grant the approvals referred to in Article 17 (c) of the Hague Convention and issue the certificate referred to in section 8 of this Decree in cases where a service provider has not been used;
- perform the central authority functions under the Hague Convention, unless a certain function has been delegated to another body by law or government decree.

During its term of office, the section for international matters has issued statements to among others Helsinki Court of Appeal, district courts and to the Ministry of Justice. The section has also provided expert consultation, for example on matters relating to the legality of documents, in respect of some applications being considered by the section for adoption permission matters. The Adoption Board has also, where required, been in contact with the central authorities of different countries, the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law and the International Social Service organisation (ISS).

During 2016, the section of international matters convened 10 times and gave two statements to the Ministry of Justice. One of these statements concerned the accession of Kyrgyzstan and Ghana to the Hague Convention and the other concerned the accession of Namibia to the Convention. Two statements were given to Helsinki District Court in matters concerning the recognition of two adoptions that had taken place outside Finland. The section also gave two statements to other district courts in adoption confirmation matters.

### **Implementation of the Hague Convention**

The Adoption Board is represented at the Hague Adoption Conference, which is held every five years and is tasked with monitoring and improving implementation of the Hague Convention. Last held in 2015, the Adoption Conference lasts a number of days and goes through the status of contractual obligations and implementation of the Convention. The Conference is attended by the central adoption authorities of the states of origin and receiving states and other organisations and authorities in the field. In 2015, the chairman and two members of the Adoption Board attended the conference. One of the attendees represented the Ministry of Justice.

In between conferences, the central authorities of Contracting States to the Hague Convention, in Finland the Adoption Board, take part in monitoring and development of the implementation of the Hague Convention each year by completing various surveys by the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference. In turn, the Permanent Bureau provides the Board with information in matters concerning individual Contracting States. In 2016, one enquiry was done to the Permanent Bureau relating to consideration of the licence application in the Adoption Board's section for international matters.

### **Central authority cooperation**

The Adoption Board's secretariat regularly responds to contacts and enquiries from the central adoption authorities in different countries and similarly sends the enquiries from the Board to adoption service providers and central adoption authorities in different countries and, in individual cases, also to other authorities. Reports may involve, for example, complaints and adoptions taking place without a service provider, but also more general matters relating to legislation and practice. In far-reaching or key matters the section for international matters gives a view on the content of replies or questions before they are sent.

#### *Meetings of the Nordic central adoption authorities*

Each Nordic country takes it in turn to arrange a meeting of the Nordic central adoption authorities. Such meetings are by nature working meetings at which

information about trending phenomena in intercountry adoption and matters relating to the oversight of service providers are discussed and exchanged. During the term of office of the present Adoption Board, central adoption authority meetings have been held in Norway (2013) and Denmark (2014). The Finnish Adoption Board hosted a central adoption authority meeting in 2015.

In 2016, the meeting was held in Iceland in May. Themes in the meeting in Iceland included international inter-family adoptions, service providers' matching processes, matters concerning the upper age limits applying to adoption applicants, questions relating to the discontinuation of service providers, post adoption services and their funding. The last two themes were discussed at Finland's initiative. The meetings were attended by the chairman, secretary and two members of the Adoption Board.

### **ISS (International Social Services)**

In its work, the Adoption Board has used the country information and reports available from ISS and completed ISS surveys on three occasions during 2016. ISS services are available to the Adoption Board and other authorities subject to payment. Country information and reports are required particularly when considering granting a licence to a Finnish service provider to cooperate with a foreign service provider.

### **Intercountry adoption service**

Nine licence matters in respect of intercountry adoption service providers were considered. The Adoption Board invited adoption service providers to two adoption service provider meetings in 2016. In the meetings discussed current matters relating to service providers' operations in practice and the international adoption operating environment. Save the Children Finland and Interpedia submitted an initiative to the section for international matters to change the funding model for post adoption services. Together with adoption service providers, the Adoption Board has studied the possibilities to improve the post adoption service funding model.

#### *Meeting of the Bulgarian ANIDO Association*

Each year, the Adoption Board has met the authorities of different countries of origin of children. These authorities have been invited to Finland as guests of intercountry adoption service providers. On 9 February 2016, Valvira organised a meeting at which the representatives of the ANIDO Association, which is based in Sofia, Bulgaria, and Save the Children Finland together with the chairman, secretaries and one member of the section for international matters of the Adoption Board, took part. The meeting discussed the countries' adoption processes and particularly intercountry adoptions and their development in Bulgaria.

### **Visit to China**

Since 2014, the Adoption Board has made a cooperation and supervisory visit to a partner country of origin sending children for adoption to Finland. During the visits, the Finnish delegation meets the country's central authorities, adoption service providers and representatives of missions, and visits children's homes. In 2014, the secretary and one member of the Adoption Board participated on a visit to Bulgaria.

In 2015, the chairman, secretary and one member of the Adoption Board visited Thailand.

The Adoption Board's section for international matters made a supervisory visit to China from 27 November to 2 December 2016. The visit was made by the Adoption Board's secretary and two members. The purpose of the visit was particularly to learn about China's special needs programme, as well as to exchange information between the central authorities, discuss current matters and thus strengthen international adoption cooperation between Finland and China.

During the visit, the Finnish delegation met the Chinese central authority, the China Centre for Children's Welfare and Adoption (CCCWA), visited the Finnish Embassy in Beijing, visited children's homes in Jinan in the province of Shandong and the Shandong civil affairs office. Among other things, the office for civil affairs registers found children, sends them to children's homes and confirms adoptions. The visit also included visits with Interpedia and save the Children Finland's adoption service partners, who, among other things, are responsible for assisting Finnish families on journeys.

### **International adoption cooperation**

#### *Nordic Adoption Council (NAC)*

The Adoption Board attends NAC meetings, which are held every other year. The previous meeting was held in 2015. NAC members are adoption organisations from the different Nordic countries. The NAC's objective is to develop a Nordic adoption system and adoption requirements. NAC member organisations consider it important for central adoption authorities to be involved in this cooperation.

#### *EurAdopt conference in the Netherlands*

EurAdopt is an association of accredited European adoption organisations (In Finland intercountry adoption service providers). Every other year, EurAdopt holds a conference to which it widely invites actors in the field of adoption. The secretaries of the Adoption Board participated in the EurAdopt 2016 Conference, which took place in Utrecht in the Netherlands on 1-2 June 2016. The theme of the conference was "the Relevance of Adoption - Improving the life for children who cannot live with their family". The conference discussed intercountry adoption in a broader framework. Alternative forms of care for children who cannot live with their biological parents in countries of origin were described and discussed on the first day of the conference. On the second day, the experiences of adoptees in the receiving countries were discussed. A total of 250 guests from 25 countries participated in the conference include representatives from 10 European central authorities.

## **2.5 Section for adoption permission matters**

The section for adoption permission matters considers matters relating to granting of permission for adoption and changing the conditions, extending the validity and cancellation of a granted permission. The section also considers the notifications concerning changes in the prospective adopter's circumstances.

As a rule, adoption permission must be applied for whenever a person resident in Finland wishes to adopt a child under the age of 18 years (adoption from outside the family). The permission requirement applies to both domestic and intercountry adoptions. The permission for adoption is valid for a maximum of two years. Before the deadline expires, application must be made to extend the validity of a granted permission if necessary. In the event that any material changes take place in a prospective adopter's circumstances during the permission's period of validity, he or she shall notify the Adoption Board thereof without delay. No adoption permission is required for domestic adoptions, where the applicant is adopting his or her spouse's child (inter-family adoption) or the domestic adoption of a child that he or she has permanently cared for or raised.

The Adoption Board's section for adoption permission matters met a total of 21 times in 2016. Of these meetings, 11 were in a full composition and 10 were in a restricted composition with members consisting of the chairman or deputy chairman of the Adoption Board, together with a member or deputy member of the section who represents expertise in child welfare or adoption counselling. A matter may be considered in a restricted composition provided that it, with regard to the circumstances of the case and previous decisions of the Board, is evident how the matter should be decided.

In 2016, the section for adoption permission matters resolved 98 matters concerning new permission in respect of intercountry adoption. Permission was not granted in six of the cases. The validity of the permission was extended in 65 cases and not extended in four. A total of 28 notices of changes in circumstances were dealt with.

During 2016, the section for adoption permission matters granted 22 new permissions for Finnish domestic adoptions and extended the validity of permission in 13 cases. One change in circumstances case was dealt with.

Fewer intercountry and domestic adoption permission cases were dealt with in 2016 than in 2015.

In exceptional circumstances, an intercountry adoption service provider cannot be used. In such cases, permission for adoption may be granted mainly if the child to be adopted is a close relative of the applicant and a Finnish service provider does not operate in the country of origin of the child. In 2016, the Adoption Board considered seven applications concerning adoption without a service provider. Three of these cases were granted permission.

Consideration of the adoption application in the Adoption Board is the fastest phase in the prospective adopter's adoption process. In 2016, the average permission processing time was 1-2 months. Most of the applications arriving are processed in any following meeting of the Board. Delays in processing are because the application documents have not been fully completed or some other further information is required.

More information about the statistics can be found on [the Adoption Board's website](#).

## 3 Intercountry adoptions

As a rule, an intercountry adoption service provider must always be used in intercountry adoptions. In 2016, there were three intercountry adoption service providers operating in Finland: Interpedia, Save the Children Finland's international adoption service and the City of Helsinki Department of Social Services and Health Care. The City of Helsinki's intercountry adoption service is no longer taking on new customers, but will complete pending applications and post adoption service work with earlier customers.

Service providers are responsible for assisting prospective adopters in measures relating to the intercountry adoption of a child under the age of 18 years and monitoring that the adoption takes place in the best interests of the child, with respect for the fundamental rights of the child as recognised in international law and without anyone deriving improper financial or other gain therefore. After adoption has been confirmed, service providers assist the adoptee and his or her parents in gaining access to information about the child and his or her origin. Service providers provide the information recipient with the necessary support and guidance.

### 3.1 Service providers' international partners

The Adoption Board grants licence for the provision of intercountry adoption service and a Finnish service provider licence to cooperate with a foreign service provider. Licences are granted for a maximum of five years. The tables below show the valid contact licences by country held by service providers at 31 December 2016.

<b>City of Helsinki, Department of Social Services and Health Care</b>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Central authority</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Bulgaria	Ministry of Justice	Happy Child Association
Estonia	Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs	Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs
South Africa	Department of Social Development	Johannes Child Welfare Society (JCWS)
Thailand	Department of Children and Youth (DCY)	Thai Red Cross Children's Home Department of Children and Youth (DCY)
<b>Interpedia</b>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Central authority</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Bulgaria	Ministry of Justice	Family National Association (FNA)
China (PRC)	China Centre for Children's Welfare and Adoption (CCCWA)	China Centre for Children's Welfare and Adoption (CCCWA)

Columbia	Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (ICBF)	Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (ICBF) Fundación Centro para el Reintegro y Atención del Niño Fundación Casa de la Madre y el Niño Fundación Ayuda A La Infancia Hogar Bambi – Chiquitines
India	Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA)	Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA)
South Africa	Department of Social Development	Abba Adoptions
Taiwan	-	Christian Salvation Services (CSS)
Thailand	Department of Children and Youth (DCY)	Department of Children and Youth (DCY)
<b>Save the Children Finland</b>		
<b>Country</b>	<b>Central authority</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Bulgaria	Ministry of Justice	ANIDO Association
China (PRC)	China Centre for Children's Welfare and Adoption (CCCWA)	China Centre for Children's Welfare and Adoption (CCCWA)
Kyrgyzstan	Ministry of Labour and Social Development	Ministry of Labour and Social Development
The Philippines	Inter Country Adoption Board (ICAB)	Inter Country Adoption Board (ICAB)
Thailand	Department of Children and Youth (DCY)	Department of Children and Youth (DCY)

### 3.2 Trend in the number of children coming to Finland

Since 1985, a total of 4,575 children have come to Finland via intercountry adoption by service providers. Recent years have seen a decline in adoption numbers. Whereas in 2014, 142 children came to Finland via intercountry adoption, the figure declined to 93 in 2015 and just 58 in 2016. Of the children arriving, around 67% were aged two years or younger.

There has been a big change in the numbers of children coming to Finland compared to 2005, when 308 children arrived in Finland. The decline in numbers of internationally adopted children is an international phenomenon. The decline in the number of children coming to Finland is generally affected by the fact that the countries of origin of the children are giving fewer children for intercountry adoption. In Finland, the trend has particularly been affected by the suspension of adoption cooperation with Russia, Kenya and Ethiopia in 2015–2016. Adoptions from new cooperation partners have not yet been launched full scale. Another factor impacting the decline in the number of children coming to Finland is the City of

Helsinki's decision whereby the City of Helsinki's intercountry adoption service no longer takes new customers.

There are no statistics on the number of domestic adoptions from outside the family because the Adoption Board does not receive information about such adoptions. The permission obligation only applies to domestic adoption applicants who began adoption counselling after 1 July 2012.

Detailed information about the children coming to Finland can be found on the statistics on the Adoption Board's website.

### Number of internationally adopted children coming to Finland through service providers 1986-2016

	1985	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Bulgaria															1	
China	265	61	133	140	49	46	18	33	23	41	62	47	33	27	10	
Columbia	385	37	22	20	18	14	17	11	11	7	8	2	16	5	9	
Dominican Republic	6															
Estonia	60	2	4	3	2	3	1	2						1		
Ethiopia	191	6	7	5	15	13	14	16	10	10	3	3	3	1		
Guatemala	13															
India	97	6	8	15	4	9	2	7	3	7	8	8	7	5	5	
Karelia, Republic	3															
Kenya										9	6	10	4	6	4	
Philippines	7	12	12	19	21	19	11	10	12	8	21	10	14	6	9	
Poland	24	1	2	2												
Romania	34															
Russia	550	26	41	35	50	20	34	36	38	31	17	15	10			
South Africa	22	23	24	27	22	25	36	41	32	45	32	37	37	35	14	
Sri Lanka	43															
Taiwan	1															
Thailand	334	64	36	42	37	27	24	31	22	8	14	15	15	9	11	
Vietnam	35															
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2070</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>58</b>	



## Valvira

National Supervisory Authority  
for Welfare and Health

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