

TO ENOC Working group on the rights of children in intercountry adoption

Response to questionnaire from the Ombudsman for Children in Finland

About the questionnaire

The European network for the Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) has a Working group on the rights of children in intercountry adoption placements with unknown prospective parents.

Statistics

Children adopted (from abroad)

2016 70

2015 118

2014 199

2013 160

2012 196

(Statistics Finland)

People applying for international adoption

2017 68 men, 80 women

2016 146 men, 163 women

2015 140 men, 163 women

2014 221 men, 246 women

2013 228 men, 246 women

(National Adoption board)

Other matters

The Ombudsman for Children in Finland does not handle complaints or individual matters concerning children and families and cannot alter the decisions taken by other authorities. The Ombudsman for Children can not give an opinion about matters concerning individual children and families.

In 2017 the Ombudsman for Children and the national adoption board made an initiative to the responsible ministries. They called for a review of the implementation of the adoption law (in force since 2012) that would include child impact assessment. They suggested that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health would take into account the needs for adopted children and families in all services and training of the service personnel. Adoption counselling is mandatory by law for municipalities to provide. Often there is not enough understanding for special challenges in adoption families in the family services. This includes early childhood education and care, schools and social services.



Finland is a receiving country in adoption. There are three accredited adoption providers: Save the Children Finland, Interpedia and Helsinki city committee of Social affairs. All adoptions require the permit from the national Adoption board. There needs to be an accredited adoption provider with few exceptions, such as that the child adopted is related to the adoption parent(s). Adoptions from non-Hague countries are not prohibited but the current providers don't have contacts there.

There is data collected about the age, gender and the country of origin of the adoption children. The cost of the adoption varies from about 10000 to 23000 euros. The family does not have a legal obligation to tell the child that he/she is adopted but in the adoption counselling it is recommended. Adopted children established an organization in 2010 that seems to be more like a get-together organization than an advocacy organization.

Jyväskylä 16.3.2018

Tuomas Kurttila
Ombudsman for Children

Anssi Pirttijärvi
Senior Officer