



European Network of National Observatories on Childhood

DENMARK

Form for the compilation of good practises in the post adoption phase for the Seminar on post adoption

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Post adoption services

1. Do the social services promote the establishment of a trust relation with the prospective adoptive parents before the adoption is pronounced in particular in the meetings that are aimed at their training and preparation? (so that in case of problems in the post adoption phase the adoptive parents are more likely to contact the social services)

The question whether applicants can be approved as adoptive parents are dealt with by the local county. The applicants will go through a procedure with interviews and discussion of personal issues as well as general adoption issues a relationship will be created between the applicant and the caseworker so that it will be natural for the applicant to contact the country if problems occur when the child has arrived in the family.

Furthermore, the country most on its own initiative offers the adoptive parents counselling and home visits after the child has arrived in the family.

2. Please indicate the possible types of services (counselling, groups of mutual aid, psychotherapy, scholastic support, family mediation, etc.).

The Department of Family Affairs is not familiar with investigation showing the most common types of help to adoptive parents after the child has arrived in the family.



The type of help that the adoptive parents chose to seek will of course differ very much depending on the type of problems that the family might turn out to have.

As indicated in the answer to question 1 many families will – at least as a start – chose to seek help with the county where they already know caseworkers who – based on their general experiences with problems related to adoption – might be able to help the families or to give guidelines about other possibilities.

In general the adoptive parents and the child will be able to seek help from the general social and health system in Denmark supporting families with problems. This involves also the local municipalities.

Furthermore private organisations offers help to adoptive parents and adoptive children on a voluntary basis. This includes for instance “hot-line”-telephones and groups of mutual aid.

Finally, some families choose to seek help from private professions as for instance psychologists.

3. Who is the subject that has the responsibility of the service?
4. Staff employed in the Service (number, professional characteristics, etc.).
5. Duration of the Service (until when?, until the minor is 18 years old?)
6. Is there collaboration and integration among the different public subjects involved (services, school, etc.) and between these and the private bodies in the carrying out of the service?
7. Is there an evaluation system of the service? Are data on the use of the service by families available?

The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption entered into force in Denmark on November 1, 1997. The Department of Family Affairs is the Central Authority according to the convention.

According to article 9 the Hague Convention central authorities shall take, directly or through public authorities duly accredited in their State, all appropriate measures, in particular to promote the development of adoption counselling and post-adoption services in their States.

As it appears, our department has the overall responsibilities for the counselling of adoptive families. However, as we have mentioned in the answer to question 2 adoptive parents and adoptive children will be able to receive help from the general social and health system in Denmark, which involves municipalities as well as counties. It differs from one municipality to another and from one county to another if special offers have been made for adoptive families.

In other words, when the adoption decision has been made the adoptive families will in general not be considered as a family with special needs in regard to help from the public authorities, but the families will take part in the general social service system in Denmark. These services will be provided for the family in general and it will not depend on the time that has passed since the adoption or on the age of the adopted child.

On this basis it is not possible for us to supply you with data on specific services for adoptive parents.

8. Who elaborates the reports on the post-adoption phase required by the authorities of States of origin?



It differs very much from one country of origin to another which kind of follow-up reports should be made when the child has arrived in the family.

The county that has approved the adoptive parents as adoptive parents most take part in elaborating the reports if the child's country of origin demands so. In other cases the follow-up report will be elaborated by the accredited adoption agency or by the adoptive parents themselves.

9. Are there good practices in the country relating with the beginning of the relation with the adoptive family on the immediately subsequent period after the pronouncement of adoption?

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Access to the origins

10. In the framework of the support services in the post-adoption phase, is there a service to support those who want to collect information about their origins? (Right to the access to the origins recognized also in the art. 7 (1) of the Convention on Rights of the Child).

Adoptive children who wish to have access to the files concerning their Danish adoption case have a right to get a copy of the files from the authorities that have been involved in the case.

In cases concerning adoptive children from Denmark the Department of Family Affairs will also give guidance and help the child to get information about the names of the child's biological parents.

In cases concerning adoptive children from abroad the accredited adoption agencies that took part in the adoption will help the child. These agencies have quite a lot of experience in regard to these matters.

11. Are there limits and conditions for the access to the information about the origins (age, consent of the adoptive parents and/or biological parents)?

All adults (that is persons of 18 years of age or older) have a right of access to the files concerning themselves. If the adoptive child is not 18 years old, the adoptive parents might apply for access to the files on behalf of the children – or on behalf of themselves.

12. Who is the competent subject to address the request (public services, the central authority, an administrative office, etc.)?

See the answer to question 10.

13. Are there centres and/or services specialized in the assistance in this sector?

See the answer to question 10 in regard to the accredited adoption agencies.



14. Does a central organ exist which has to collect and preserve the information on the origins?
15. What are the modalities of functioning and access to the service? What are the professional roles engaged in the support phase in the research on information on the origins?
16. How long has the information on the origins to be preserved?

There is no central authority to collect or preserve the information but all authorities and the adoption agency involved in the case most preserve the files.

17. Is it possible to check if and how the valorisation and the preservation of the links with the origins are promoted (cultural and social events with other adoptive parents group, travel opportunities to the country of origin with other adoptive family, etc..)? Do public or private bodies carry out this kind of activity?

There are private organisations of for instance adoptive families and adoptive children from specific countries, which arrange social and cultural events related to the country of origin and their common background.

Furthermore the accredited adoption agencies host events where they gather families with children from specific countries.

18. Are there good practices in the country relating to the support to adopted adults who wish to collect information on their origins?

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Adoptive Failures

19. Who is responsible of the child in case of an adoption failure?

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20. Which kinds of support and accompaniment for the child and the adoptive family are realised in this hypothesis?
21. Are the authorities of the State of origin informed in the case of intercountry adoption?
22. What are the interventions for the minor protection carried out in case of revocation of the adoption? Is an immediate placing in a new family provided or is a first insertion in a welcome structure for children considered?

Article 21 of The Hague Convention contains the following provision concerning adoptive failures:

“Article 21

(1) Where the adoption is to take place after the transfer of the child to the receiving State and it appears to the Central Authority of that State that the continued placement of the child with the prospective adoptive parents is not in the child's best interests, such Central Authority shall take the measures necessary to protect the child, in particular –

a) to cause the child to be withdrawn from the prospective adoptive parents and to arrange temporary care;



b) in consultation with the Central Authority of the State of origin, to arrange without delay a new placement of the child with a view to adoption or, if this is not appropriate, to arrange alternative long-term care; an adoption shall not take place until the Central Authority of the State of origin has been duly informed concerning the new prospective adoptive parents;
c) as a last resort, to arrange the return of the child, if his or her interests so require.

(2) Having regard in particular to the age and degree of maturity of the child, he or she shall be consulted and, where appropriate, his or her consent obtained in relation to measures to be taken under this Article.”

In the few cases where an adoption failure take place Denmark will follow the procedure described in Article 21 – also in cases concerning children from countries where the Hague Convention has not entered into force.

In practise the local municipality will be responsible for taking care of the child, and the child will normally be placed in an institution until the situation has been clarified.

The authorities in the country of origin will be informed about the situation, cf. article 21, section 1.

23. Are there good practices in the country relating to the interventions of support to the adoptive families in difficulty and/or support in cases of removal of the child from the adoptive family?

The situation will only be dealt with according to Article 21 of the Hague Convention if the foreign adoption decision is not recognised in Denmark and there has not yet been issued a Danish adoption decision.

If there is already a Danish adoption decision or if the foreign adoption decision is recognised in Denmark the child is considered to be the child of the adoptive parents and the situation must be dealt with as any other situation where parents cannot take care of their own children.

In these cases the child will often be placed in an institution as well, and as a last resort the parents could chose to give the child up for adoption to (another) Danish family.