



interpedia



**Interpedia's
adoption service:
annual review 2022**



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interpedia

CHILDREN OF THE WORLD

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Openness and trust carry us into the future

I just received wonderful photos from new grandparents from their grandchild's christening. In these photos I could see their adopted child's life going forward. I have had the honor of being part of sharing the feeling of family continuity, of seeing adopted children grow up. In my work in adoption counseling as well as in adoption service, I have often experienced how the process experienced together has created a deep trust that has carried over the years.

The time of adoption counseling can be demanding but also a rewarding time of going through one's own history and growing into parenthood, if only you have the courage to give it a chance.

Preparing well for adoptive parenting can mean participating in information seminars or going through all possible written information on the subject. However, the most important thing is the journey into yourself, your own childhood and relationship, and your own future parenthood. This requires openness and honesty with yourself. You must have the courage to deal with your life path in a way that ensures you of your strength in a situation where a child becomes a close part of your life with their history and ballast. Strength and openness also support a child dealing with their past experiences.

Similarly, in Interpedia's adoption service, a trusting relationship during the process opens an opportunity for a longer continuum. Open cooperation between the employee and the customer is part of the preparation. After the child has arrived, communication can continue in our post-adoption service, where you can discuss issues related to the child's background, biological family, or root trips, even with small children. We have connections to the children's countries of birth, and we can offer a bridge to the past and support children in forming their identities.

Trust is also a prerequisite for high-quality adoption cooperation with our partners in the sending countries. With deep, direct and long-term cooperation, we develop together and can work for the child's best interest in the future as well. This is our common goal because children are such a precious gift to us.

A warm thank you for the past year to all our customers, members, foreign partners and our network in Finland, as well as to Interpedia's board and staff.

Anja Ojuva
Executive Director



Cooperation for the benefit of the child

During 2022, adoption work started to return to normal after the years of covid, and we were able to meet our customers and partners face to face. We noticed again how these meetings deepen cooperation and mutual trust.

However, frequent remote connections are here to stay and are a valuable addition to our work. We can talk more regularly with our partners and hold information events remotely. In this way, we are better able to serve our customers in different parts of Finland.

Today, adoption work is highly customized, and a lot of work, investigation and consultation is done for each child. Although the number of adoptions has decreased since the peak years, there are still children in our cooperation countries for whom intercountry

adoption is an option that is in the child's best interest. In addition to this, what makes our work meaningful is that every child who arrives is an eagerly awaited and much longed-for addition to the family.

The topics of discussion at EurAdopt's conference in Copenhagen in September 2022 confirmed that the focus of adoption work is increasingly shifting to post-adoption service. We also want to respond to this need. All those adopted through us and their families are welcome to our post-adoption service with a low threshold.

Salla Hari
Director for Adoption Program

Interpedia's strategy 2021–2025

During 2022, we implemented Interpedia's adoption service strategy 2021–2025

As an adoption service provider:

- we work for every adoptive child to have a well-prepared family that suits their individual needs.
- we work for every customer to have high-quality, expert service during different stages of the adoption process.

- we are a reliable and professional partner to both Finnish and international authorities, adoption organizations and adoption agents.
- we do high-quality post-adoption work and develop our services in accordance with the ever-growing demand.
- we work uncompromisingly for the best interest of the child in a changing operational environment.



Interpedia's adoption service 2022



During 2022:

- 37 children were adopted to Finland through Interpedia (2021: 41)
- Interpedia accounted for 65 % of all children adopted internationally through Finland through Service Providers (2021: 61 %).
- Adopted children were 0 to 7 years old on arrival.
- The largest age groups of adopted children were one-year-olds (11).

At the end of the year:

- a total of 135 customers (2021: 151)
- there were 85 applications in the cooperation countries (2021: 81)

A total of 2 333 adopted children have come to Finland through Interpedia in 1985–2022.

Adoptive children arriving in Finland through Interpedia in 2012–2022

	Bulgaria	South Africa	Ethiopia	India	Kenya	China	Colombia	Taiwan (China)	Thailand	Total
2022	–	13	–	12	–	–	4	–	8	37
2021	–	24	–	2	–	–	3	–	12	41
2020	–	5	–	1	–	–	8	2	3	19
2019	–	23	–	3	–	1	9	2	14	52
2018	–	10	–	6	–	2	6	1	3	28
2017	–	20	–	5	–	4	8	2	1	40
2016	–	13	–	5	–	4	9	–	9	40
2015	–	29	1	5	3	11	5	–	4	58
2014	–	20	3	7	2	15	16	–	8	71
2013	–	20	3	8	4	19	2	–	8	64
2012	–	12	3	8	6	16	7	–	4	56

Network cooperation for the child's best interest

The processes of international adoption today are very individual and require network cooperation. The goal is to find a well-prepared adoptive family that meets the needs of a child without a family in the best possible way. Adoption applicants are currently required to be prepared to provide a home for a child with special needs.

The employees of Interpedia's adoption service meet the applicants regularly during the waiting period to get to know their situation as well as possible. Our adoption service also works closely with consulting doctors because sufficiently comprehensive health information about the child helps the adoption applicants to prepare for the parenting of the child and for the years to come.

In addition, we work together with the adoption counseling social workers, so that they have up-to-

date information about the situation of the adoption service and the sending countries. During the waiting period, the applicants' situations and support needs may also change.

Our other networks in Finland:

- Finnish Adoption Board's Plenary Session
- Network of Finnish Adoption Service Providers:
- Adoption Organisation Network:
- Central Union for Child Welfare in Finland (LSKL), Consultative Committee for Preventive Child Welfare
- Steering Group for Adoption Counsellor Activities of All Our Children

Interpedia's foreign adoption partners

approved by the Finnish Adoption Board



Bulgaria:

- Family National Association (FNA), Sofia



South Africa

- Abba Specialist Adoption & Social Services (Abba), Pretoria



India:

- Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA), New Delhi



Colombia:

- Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (ICBF), Bogotá
- La Casa de la Madre y el Niño (La Casa), Bogotá
- La Fundación Ayuda a la Infancia Hogar Bambi Chiquitines, Cali



Thailand:

- Department of Children and Youth (DCY) Child Adoption Center, Bangkok



Events, support and communication 2022

During the year, we continued with regular support and feedback calls or remote meetings with families after the adoptive child's arrival in Finland. There has been a clear need for these. Feedback also allows us to develop our operations.

In addition, we continued frequent customer communication in both Finnish and Swedish.

All information seminars related to adoption and cooperation countries were organized via remote connection in 2022. Good experiences had been gained from them and customers from different parts of Finland had an equal opportunity to participate in the events.

In 2022 we organized:

- 26 adoption information sessions in Finnish, 2 in Swedish and 1 in English (a total of about 1 200 participants)
- 2 seminars for adoptive children's grandparents and other close ones, in cooperation with other adoption organisations
- 1 webinar on the language development of adopted children together with the Nordic Adoption Councilin (NAC)
- 2 information sessions in Swedish with the support of Stiftelsen Brita Maria Renlunds Minne



With the financial support of Stiftelsen Brita Maria Renlunds Minne, we organized two information sessions in Swedish:

- "First time as a family" in Pietarsaari in November
- "Post-Adoption service at Interpedia" was moved to spring 2023.

We warmly thank the Foundation for its valuable support for the bilingualism of our organization.

During 2022, the following were sent to adoption applicants:

- 23 applicant newsletters
- two brochures of our adoption cooperation countries
- adoption coordinators' country-specific information letters and event invitations
- two letters from the Executive Director (Midsummer and Christmas)

Customer satisfaction

In the adoption service's customer satisfaction survey, the proportion of those who were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with Interpedia's adoption service was again high (81%). The proportion had increased from the previous year (2021: 78%).





Our international networks

Nordic Adoption Council (NAC)

Active Nordic and European cooperation has become a necessity for exchanging information and experiences, and in the practical level work as well.

” Greetings from the Nordic Adoption Council’s meeting from the DIA (Danish International Adoption) office in Copenhagen”



” Marika Elmeranta, our senior adoption coordinator, participating in the meeting: After a long period of remote meetings during the pandemic, we finally got to meet face to face.”

On Facebook on May 6, 2022



In the photo, the board of the NAC 2022, where Marika Elmeranta acted as Finland’s representative.

The EurAdopt conference in Copenhagen brought together colleagues from different parts of the world

Interpedia’s Director for Aadoption Program Salla Hari represented Finland in EurAdopt Council

After the pandemic break, the first EurAdopt conference was organized in Copenhagen in the beginning of September. The theme was ”Sustainability of intercountry adoptions from different perspectives”.

Our contact persons Gireeja Seth Rajesh from India and Ana Maria Fernandez from Colombia attended the conference. At the conference, Fernandez gave a presentation on post-adoption service in Colombia. We also met a lot of our European colleagues and partners from sending countries.

” The day’s presentations reflected on the past and future of intercountry adoptions: what we can learn from the past and what needs to be developed with the future in mind.

Everyone agreed that ethical and legal intercountry adoptions are still needed in the future, and there is also a need for effective and timely support for adoptees and adoptive families. In addition, we discussed the adoptees’ right to their own identity and how it can be supported.

On Facebook 19.2022



” Topics of the second day of the EurAdopt conference were the decrease in intercountry adoptions, the importance of cooperation and communication, learning from each other and mutual respect, and the development of post-adoption service. With the number of adoptions decreasing, the focus is shifting to post-adoption service, and it is necessary to listen especially to the experiences and needs of the adoptees.

On Facebook 29.2022



“ We also met our partners from Abba in South Africa. In the photo, Abba’s director Katinka Pieterse, senior adoption coordinator Marika Elmeranta and Abba’s operations director Rene Ferreira. Pieterse’s conference presentation discussed the situation of children in South Africa, adoptions, the influence of culture on adoption work, challenges and recommendations for the future.”

On Facebook 19.2022 and 29.2022



“ From the left, our contact person in India Gireeja Seth Rajesh, adoption coordinator Tiina Hemming, our contact person in Colombia Ana Maria Fernandez and senior adoption coordinator Marika Elmeranta.”

On Facebook 19.2022



“ We also talked with Susan Otuoma, the director of our former partner in Kenya, Little Angels Network, and we heard from her e.g. on Kenya’s developing post-adoption service work.

Otuoma sent greetings to all the adoptees from Kenya and their families.

On Facebook 19.2022

“ #EurAdopt Day 2: Capucine Page from Haag Permanent Bureau talked about the importance of cooperation in intercountry adoptions. Good cooperation and trust between countries, authorities, professionals, and all parties involved in adoption is the basis for successful adoption work.

On Twitter 29.2022



Foreign cooperation organizations

for adoption service and development cooperation

Ethiopia

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Bethlehem Family Development Programme (BFDP)

Out of ultimate poverty through family support

Addis Abeba School Centre, German Church School (GCS)

Support for school and destitute families

Berhan Lehetsanat (BL)

Education and rehabilitation for disabled children

Maedot

Day care centres and early education for the poorest children

Bulgaria

ADOPTION

Family National Association (FNA)

FNA is a private non-profit social sector organisation in Sofia

Colombia

ADOPTION

Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (ICBF)

ICBF operates under the Colombian Ministry of Social Affairs and Health as the highest national child protection authority

Fundación Ayuda a la Infancia Hogar Bambi Chiquitines

Chiquitines is a private child protection organisation that has its own children's home in Cali

La Casa de la Madre y el Niño (La Casa)

La Casa is a non-profit organisation. It has three children's homes of its own and a shelter for pregnant women and their children in Bogotá

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Jardin de la Nina Maria (JNM)

Education and a safe growth environment for girls

South Africa

ADOPTION

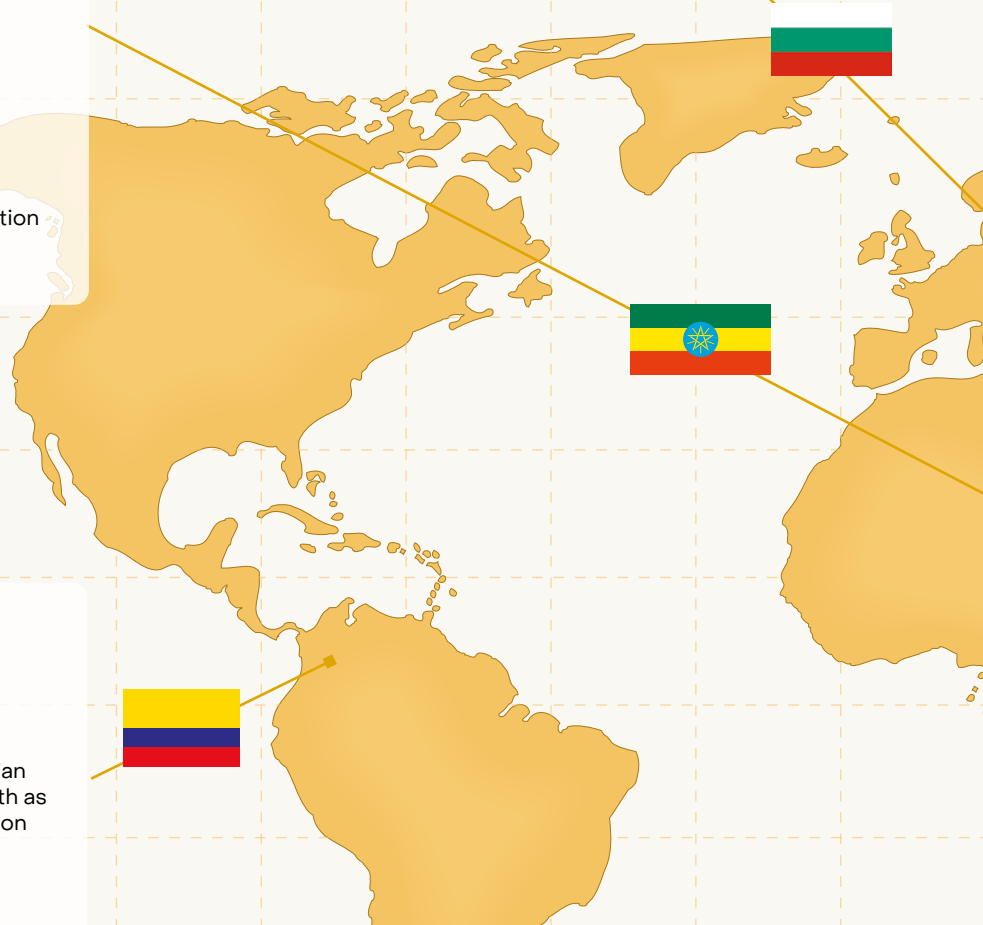
Abba Specialist Adoption & Social Services (Abba)

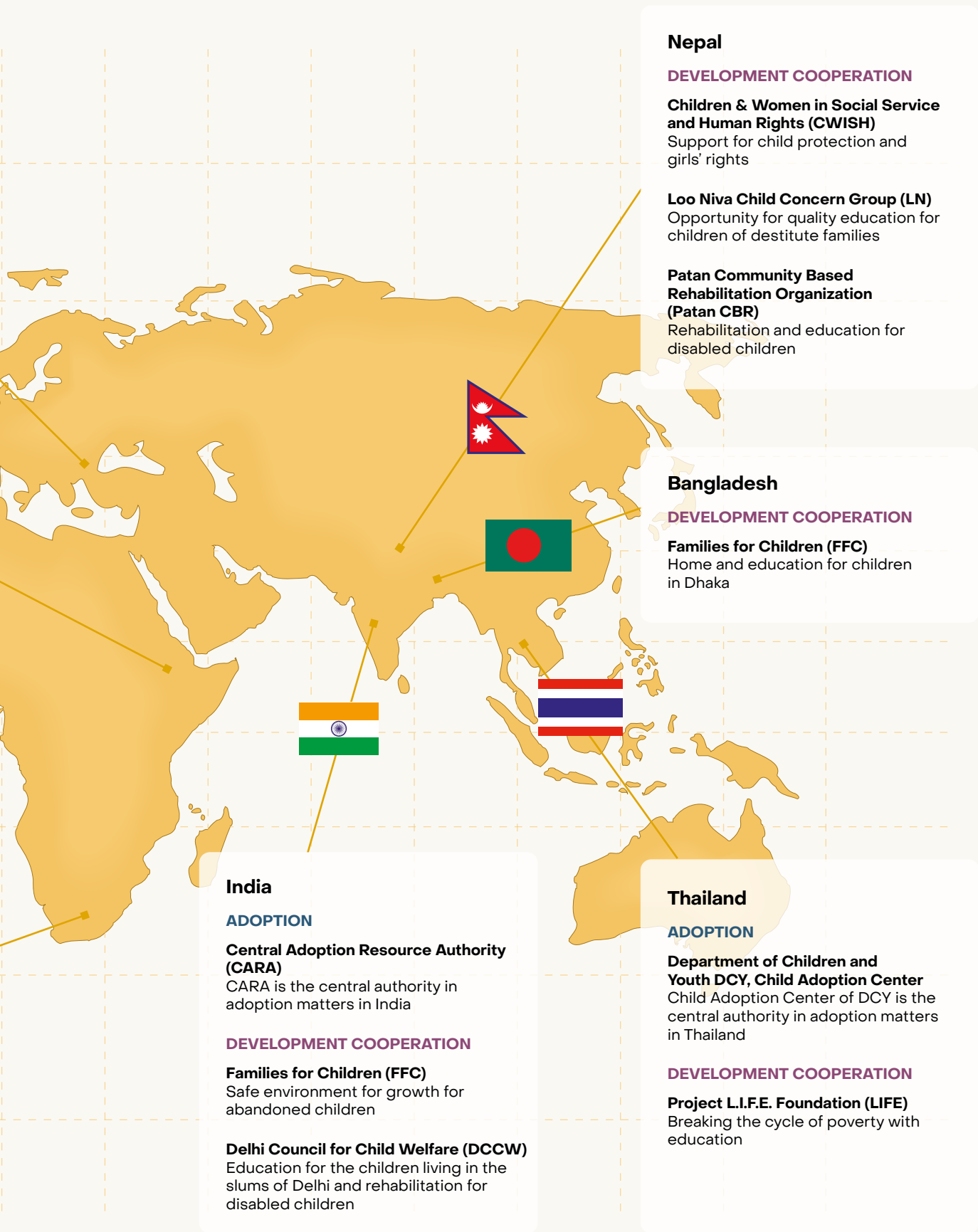
Abba is South Africa's largest adoption organisation with offices in Pretoria and Cape Town as well as smaller offices in other parts of the country

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

SA Cares for Life

Support for the children of Plastic City slum





Nepal

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Children & Women in Social Service and Human Rights (CWISH)
Support for child protection and girls' rights

Loo Niva Child Concern Group (LN)
Opportunity for quality education for children of destitute families

Patan Community Based Rehabilitation Organization (Patan CBR)
Rehabilitation and education for disabled children

Bangladesh

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Families for Children (FFC)
Home and education for children in Dhaka

India

ADOPTION

Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)
CARA is the central authority in adoption matters in India

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Families for Children (FFC)
Safe environment for growth for abandoned children

Delhi Council for Child Welfare (DCCW)
Education for the children living in the slums of Delhi and rehabilitation for disabled children

Thailand

ADOPTION

Department of Children and Youth DCY, Child Adoption Center
Child Adoption Center of DCY is the central authority in adoption matters in Thailand

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Project L.I.F.E. Foundation (LIFE)
Breaking the cycle of poverty with education



In the Interpedia post-adoption service:

- adoptees of all ages can reflect on their background and identity with post-adoption workers
- we take care of the legal archiving of the documents so that the adoptees can access them with our guidance if they so wish
- adoptees can request and process new information about their background (if necessary, we ask for more information from the adoptee's country of birth)
- adoptees / adoptive families can get help with root-seeking trip arrangements
- we respond to contacts from the children's countries of birth, after which we contact the adoptee and support him/her in receiving the information
- we inform adoptive families if there are changes in the policies of the country of origin that affect adoptive families
- we organize information sessions



Post-adoption service at Interpedia

The importance of the post-adoption service is especially significant when the different parties of the adoption go through their background and the reasons that led to the adoption.

During 2022:

- we participated in the gathering for families with children adopted from India, where families and adoptees had the opportunity to meet an Interpedia employee
- we organized a post-adoption information session in August in connection with the meeting of families who adopted from Ethiopia
- in cooperation with other adoption actors, we organized a post-adoption information webinar for adoptees and adoptive families on the topic "When there is no background information".

Approximately 170 people participated in these events. Root trips started again after the pandemic subsided, and 15 trips took place during the year.

Together with other Finnish adoption service providers, Interpedia received funding from the appropriation granted to Valvira (National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health) for this purpose. With the support, we have continued to develop post-adoption service to meet growing needs.



” Anni Rusi, who was adopted from Thailand, talks about her roots trip and her participation in the Thai Nativeland Visit root trip event in our blog. Thailand is one of the few adoption countries that organize a big event for adoptees and their families, where they can get to know their country of birth and meet each other. There are many kinds of root journeys. Adoptees visit their countries of birth as tourists or visit, for example, their children’s homes or hometowns. Nativeland Visit is one way to get back to your roots.”

On Instagram 10.3.2022



The adoptee’s right to identity is a priority

” According to Colombian law, children and young people have the right to their identity. In Colombia, pioneering work has been done over the years, among other things, in how information related to a child’s background is collected and recorded. Nowadays, the information in the child proposal is considerably more detailed than, for example, in the late 1990s.

Adoptive parents also have an obligation to support the child’s identity. Colombia’s adoption guidelines include advice on gathering information about the child’s life story, supporting adoptive identity, tracing origins, and preserving language and culture.”

Marika Elmeranta’s blog post on April 13, 2022
 ”Roots in Colombia - ICBF offers adoptees support for background research”

” The theme of the post-adoption webinar organized by the adoption service providers yesterday was ‘when there is no information about the adoptee’s background’.

The social workers of the post-adoption services discussed the ways to examine and reflect on the fact that there is no information about your birth parents or early stages of life. From the support and information available through the post-adoption service, you can also find new perspectives to look at your own history.

Three important things emerged from the discussion:

1. adoptees should be able to access therapeutic support more easily if they wish
2. the power of peer support can be significant when dealing with one’s own identity
3. the need for peer support continues well into adulthood: even adult adoptees need to be able to mirror their thoughts and feelings with their peers.

Many thanks to everyone who participated in the webinar”

On Facebook 14.10.2022





Business trips after the pandemic

During the year, the employees of the adoption service went on a business trip to India in spring and to Colombia at the end of the year. The trips showed again that face-to-face meetings deepen cooperation and mutual understanding.

Domestic business trips were also carried out. During the year, our adoption service visited Tampere, Turku, Pietarsaari and Oulu to meet families and adoption counseling social workers.



Business trip to India

During their trip, our adoption coordinators visited the Nest Case Home in Kerala, the Sisters of Nazareth children's home in Paduapuram, Kochi, the Sishu Vihar children's home in Hyderabad, CARA, the Central Adoption Authority of India, the Finnish Embassy in Delhi and the Delhi Council for Child Welfare (DCCW) i.e. Palna.

“ Today, the Nordic adoption delegation met representatives of CARA, the central authority for adoption affairs in India.

They had important discussions about, among other things, the processes of releasing children for adoption, the reforms of India's adoption system, the post-adoption service and the adoption processes of individual children.”

On Facebook 26.4.2022





Business trip to Colombia



” Greetings from the adoption service’s business trip to Colombia

The director for the adoption program Salla Hari and the senior adoption coordinator Marika Elmeranta have planned the work with our contact person Ana Maria Fernandez, participated in ICBF training and talked with ICBF’s adoption team and psychosocial team. They also monitored the progress of the judicial phase of the adoptive family’s process.”

On Facebook 24.11.2022

Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar ICBF is Colombia’s highest child welfare authority. In the picture, ICBF’s psychosocial team.

Adoptees’ Day was celebrated again on 13.3.

On Instagram 13.3.2022



” Today, our adoption service attended a cooperation meeting at the Colombian embassy.

In the photo, Ambassador Andriana del Rosario Mendoza Agudelo and Embassy Counselor Jose Camilo Sandoval Rojas, as well as Interpedia’s Salla Hari and Marika Elmeranta.

On Facebook 3.6.2022



” Thank you Helen and the Ethiopia families for the lovely meeting!

Helen Awoke, Interpedia’s former Ethiopia office’s manager, gave a presentation on the situation in Ethiopia and Interpedia’s adoption team on our post-adoption services.

Finally, families talked with Helen, children and young people folded paper airplanes, drew and ran around in the long corridors of our office. It was great to have signs of life and children’s voices here after the long silent years of covid!”

On Facebook 9.8.2022

” Hello from tropical Kerala, India! Our adoption trip during these four days together has been a real rollercoaster of emotions. When the three-year-old little one learns to play hide and seek, when he happily shouts “Peekaboo” and giggles, our hearts are about to burst with joy.

India family’s blog post 8.12.2022
”Adoption trip to India”



” Closeness, warmth and play. That’s what days are made of. We received such a message from two adoptive families on an adoption trip in South Africa.

On Instagram 31.1.2023



The report on intercountry adoption was completed

” The published report opens up the history of adoptions and the changes in their regulation and is good background information for the discussion in Finland. The discussions and investigations in the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and Denmark will continue, and we will certainly get more new and useful information from them, especially for the development of the post-adoption service.”

Anja Ojuva’s blog post on 29.11.2022
”The report on international adoption was completed”

Finance

In 2022, Interpedia's adoption service activities were financed through adoption service fees and targeted funding for adoption service provision granted by the Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA) (EUR 232,104). Post-adoption service received funding from the appropriation granted by the government to Valvira (National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health) for this purpose.

Development cooperation activities are financed through private sponsors and monthly donors, other donations and project funding provided by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for financial support for development cooperation projects by civil society organizations.


In 2022, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs supported Interpedia's projects by EUR 355,240. The fundraising from sponsorship activities amounted to EUR 225,093, and other donations received totalled EUR 17,542.

The funding for adoption activities provided by STEA and the funding for development projects by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs are significant for the organisation's operations.

Interpedia received funding from Brita Maria Renlunds Minne Foundation for organising information seminars in Swedish.

Interpedia on social media

 facebook.com/Interpedia

 twitter.com/interpedia_ry

 instagram.com/interpedia

 [youtube.com → Interpedia](https://youtube.com/Interpedia)

 interpedia.fi/blogi

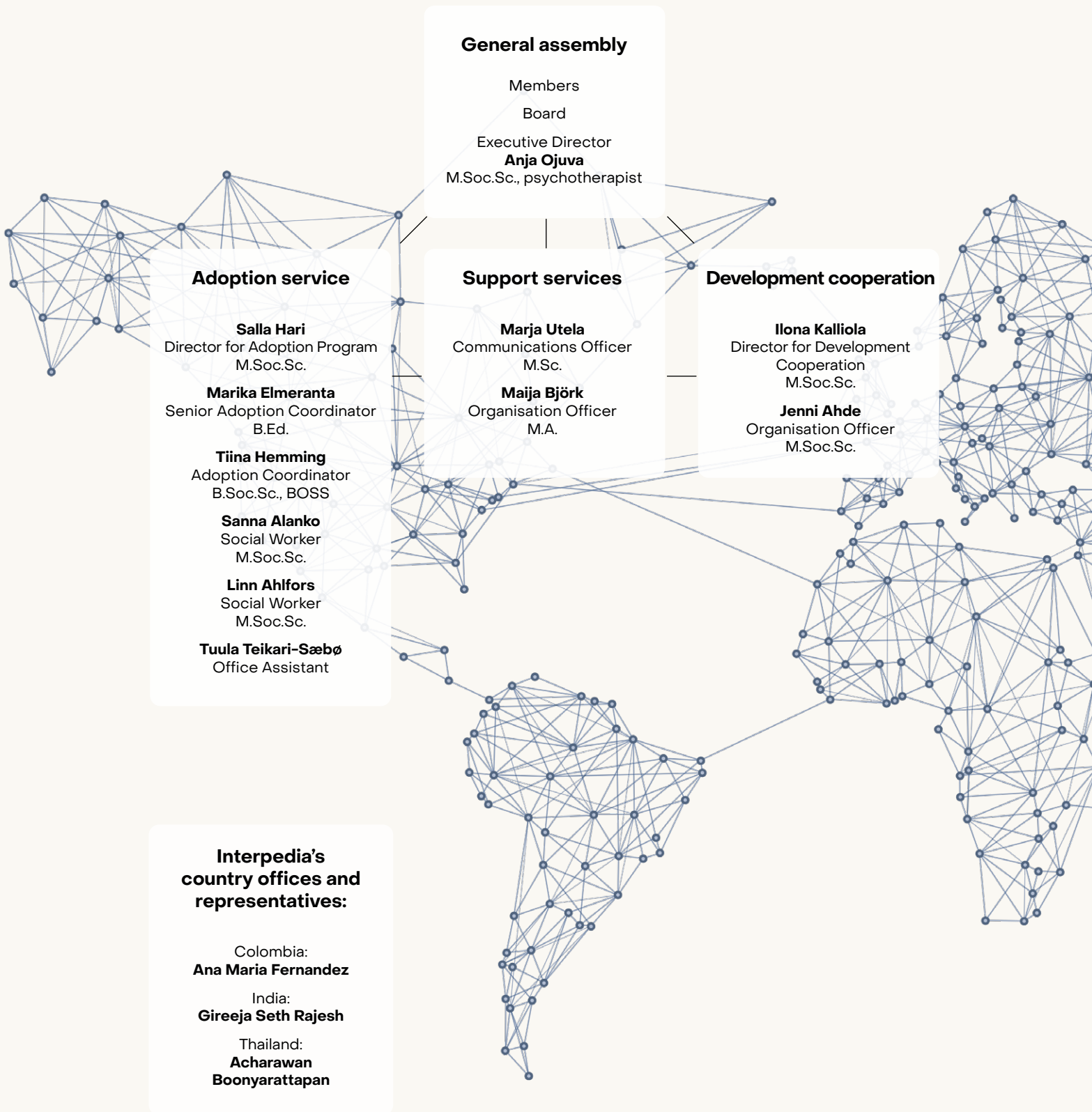
New web pages and a new visual identity

In June 2022, we published Interpedia's new website and a new graphic look. In autumn we published our wall calendar 2023 with the theme *Children and reading*.



Organisation

31.12.2022





Interpedia's Board 2022

Chairman:

Jonathan Andersin

Master of Laws, Counsel

Deputy chairman:

Thomas Nukarinen

M.Ed., Teacher: educational science and psychology

Members of the board:

Anu Kallio

M.Soc.Sc., Teacher Qualification Degree, Vocational Teacher, Director of Elderly and Disability Services

Linda Mäkynen-Lönnberg

M.Econ.Sc., Specialist, HR Technology

Lasse Rantala

D.Med.Sc. (General Practice), physician

Anna Savolainen

Master of Laws, Senior Legal Counsel

Ari Turunen

Lic.Soc.Sc, Editor-in-Chief

Deputy members:

Eija Littunen

M.Soc.Sc., Social Worker

Members 2022

At the end of the year 2022, Interpedia had 629 members (2021: 686).

The share of the Swedish-speaking members was 25 % (2021: 21 %).



An expert non-governmental organisation working for child rights and protection in an international setting

Interpedia is a politically and religiously unbound Finnish NGO founded in 1974. Its activities are based on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Hague Convention. Interpedia has more than 600 members.

The aim of Interpedia is to promote the child's rights to balanced development and a safe growth environment through **intercountry adoption and development cooperation**.

As an adoption service provider, we work uncompromisingly for the best interest of the child and make sure that each adoptive child will have a well-prepared family that suits their individual needs.

As a development co-operation organization, we promote children's rights to education, protection, and adequate standard of living in our co-operation countries on a long-term basis.

Interpedia has long experience in intercountry adoptions and extensive connections abroad. Interpedia is working on adoptions with Bulgaria, Colombia, India, South Africa and Thailand.

Interpedia implements development cooperation projects in Ethiopia and Nepal supported by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with its partner organizations. In addition, the association's 850 monthly donors and sponsors support approximately 4,000 children annually in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, South Africa, India, Colombia, Nepal and Thailand.

Through its **global education work**, Interpedia encourages Finnish children and young people to become active global citizens and increases their understanding of the reality of children and young people in developing countries. The global educational material produced by the association can be used, for example, in schools.

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