

Questionnaire on the impact of COVID-19 on intercountry adoptions under the 1993 Adoption Convention

<i>Identification for follow-up purposes:</i>	
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I. OVERARCHING QUESTIONS	
	<u>Both States of origin and receiving States</u>
1.	<p>In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, has your State modified intercountry adoption procedures under the 1993 Adoption Convention? If so, what has your State done to ensure that the safeguards and procedures of the Convention have been, and continue to be, respected?</p> <p>The emergency provisions adopted by the Italian Government established:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - from March,9, 2020: the automatic rescheduling of all judicial hearings (except for urgent matters, such as - in the civil sector- cases regarding eligibility of prospective adoptive parents (PAPs) in the intercountry adoption proceedings); - from May, 11, 2020: Court (including Juvenile Court) Presidents, after consulting the Health Authorities and the representatives of the legal professions, could adopt measures and guidelines with regard to the scheduling and the carrying out of the judicial proceedings. For the judicial proceeding hearings that have been maintained in the JC, special measure of protection has been implemented, i.e.: - Temperature control at the entrance; - Mandatory mask-wearing requirements for everyone: judges, prosecutors, administrative staff (equipment have been furnished by the Ministry of Justice) and users; - respect for distances even in JC rooms; - in the small JC rooms, identification of the maximum number of people present and installation of Plexiglas screens. <p>For health reasons, Article 83 of Legislative Decree 18 of 2020 provided the possibility of carrying out judicial proceedings hearings by video-conference (Microsoft Teams platform virtual room).</p> <p>Despite objective, instrumental and above all adequate orientation difficulties, the Juvenile Courts continues to celebrate in civil matters the proceedings dealing with the most serious and urgent situations concerning the protection of children, i.e. child adoptability.</p> <p>In front of these situations, as in many other areas, we also found ourselves managing and confronting a rapid and not always functional digital literacy path.</p> <p>See also the next answer.</p>

II. OUTBREAK OF COVID-19 (cases in transition only)	
	<u>Both States of origin and receiving States</u>
2.	<p>What measures, if any, did your State take to deal with cases where the child had already been matched with prospective adoptive parents, but no adoption decision had been issued at the time of the COVID-19 outbreak in your State? How many children were in such a situation?</p> <p>CAI, in close collaboration and agreement with the CA of the Countries of origin and with the Italian Embassies, organised where it was possible the travel of PAPs from Italy to the Country of origin, taking into account the restrictive measures of air flights or, in very few cases, organised directly the travel of adopted children from the Country of origin to Italy.</p> <p>During 2020, a hundred of children benefited from these initiatives.</p>
3.	<p>What measures, if any, did your State take to deal with cases where the adoption decision had already been issued, but the child was still in the State of origin at the time of the COVID-19 outbreak in your State? How many children were in such a situation?</p> <p>See the previous answer.</p>
III. DURING COVID-19 (cases in transition and new cases)	
	<u>States of origin only</u>
4.	<p>Has your State adapted, and if so how, the following stages of the adoption procedure:</p> <p>a) Declaration of adoptability of the child: Please insert text here</p> <p>b) Matching: Please insert text here</p> <p>c) Socialisation period: Please insert text here</p> <p>d) Support and counselling to adoptable children: Please insert text here</p> <p>e) Adoption decision: Please insert text here</p> <p>f) Other stages: Please insert text here</p>
	<u>Receiving States only</u>
5.	<p>Has your State adapted, and if so how, the following stages of the adoption procedure:</p>

	<p>a) Eligibility and suitability of prospective adoptive parents:</p> <p>Yes, by organising in some cases the hearing in the Court by video-conferences (Microsoft Teams platform virtual room).</p> <p>b) Support and counselling to prospective adoptive parents:</p> <p>Yes, by organising meeting with social services experts by video-conferences, mentioned above.</p> <p>c) Other stages:</p> <p></p>
<p>IV. USE OF TECHNOLOGY</p>	
	<p><u>Both States of origin and receiving States</u></p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Has the use of technologies (e.g, videoconferencing) evolved in the adoption procedures in place in your State since the outbreak of COVID-19 in your State? Please specify:</p> <p>a) any benefits and challenges:</p> <p>Meetings and hearings by video-conferences.</p> <p>BENEFITS consists in not further delaying the duration of the ICA proceeding, in particular in not leaving the children of cases in transition in a situation of "limbo" for a long time.</p> <p>CHALLENGES consists in using these tools not only in a pandemic situation but also to adapt them to ICA procedures in normal situation.</p> <p>b) if your response to question 72 ("Use of new technologies") of the <u>2020 Questionnaire on the practical operation of the 1993 Adoption Convention (Prel. Doc. No 3)</u> has changed:</p> <p>See the previous answer.</p>
<p>V. POST COVID-19: LOOKING AHEAD</p>	
	<p><u>Both States of origin and receiving States</u></p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Has your State developed any practices during this pandemic period that would be useful to mainstream into regular work practices? If so, please elaborate on what those practices are and how you plan to go about mainstreaming them into regular work practices:</p> <p>The use of technology (Internet, meetings by video-conferences, etc.) has made it possible to continue the work of drafting and delivering post-adoption reports.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Please share any good practices and lessons learned by your State which may be applied in the event of another pandemic or similar state of emergency:</p> <p>Protocols and agreements adopted at local level by Juvenile Courts and representatives of lawyers (Lawyer's Orders and lawyer's associations specialized in family and children proceedings) for the management of hearings in judicial</p>

	<p>proceedings (terms, modalities, contents, respecting fair trial rules);</p> <p>Video-conference to be maintained for some hearing in judicial proceedings (i.e. children adoptability);</p> <p>Digitalization of the civil proceeding files.</p>
VI. ANY OTHER COMMENTS	
	<p><u>Both States of origin and receiving States</u></p>
9.	<p>Please insert here any other comments you may have:</p> <p><input type="text"/></p>