

Adoptions DSS 2020-21

Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type: Data Set Specification

METEOR identifier: 749045

Registration status:

- [Children and Families](#), Standard 03/11/2021

DSS type: Data Set Specification (DSS)

Scope: The Adoptions data set specification (DSS) describes data collected from state/territory departments responsible for adoptions for the Adoptions Australia Collection.

[Adoption](#) is the legal process by which a person legally becomes a child of the [adoptive parent](#)(s) and legally ceases to be a child of his/her existing parent(s). Adopted children are normally aged 18 years and under; however, some [known child adoptions](#), such as adoptions by [step-parents](#), can involve adoptees over 18.

The Adoptions Australia Collection contains data relating to two populations of children, those subject to:

- Finalisations- children who were the subject of a [finalised adoption](#) order during the reporting period. This includes orders that were made in Australia and in the case of some [intercountry adoptions](#), where the full adoption order was made in the [country of origin](#).
- [Placements](#)- children, regardless of the status of their adoption order, who were placed with their adoptive family during the reporting period. 'Placed with their adoptive families' refers to when the child enters Australia for intercountry adoptions, or when the child is taken into the care of the prospective adoptive parent(s) for local adoptions.

The DSS excludes [expatriate adoptions](#) by Australian citizens or permanent residents who have lived overseas for 12 months or more and have adopted a child through an overseas agency or government authority. Australian adoption authorities are not responsible for expatriate adoptions and do not assess or approve applicants for such adoptions.

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use: **Adoption categories**

[Intercountry adoption](#)—Intercountry adoptions are adoptions of children from countries other than Australia, who are legally able to be placed for adoption, but who generally have had no previous contact or relationship with the adoptive parents. There are four categories of intercountry adoptions, divided into two groups.

Program adoptions — an intercountry adoptions through an official Australian intercountry adoption program that was active at the time the file of the applicant(s) was sent.

Theses adoptions can be a:

- [Hague adoption](#) — an intercountry adoption where Australia had an official adoption program open with the adoptive child's country of origin and the adoptive child's country of origin has ratified or acceded to the Hague Convention, and the file of the applicant(s) was sent after the Hague Convention entered into force in that country
- [Bilateral adoption](#) — an intercountry adoption where Australia had an official adoption program open with the adoptive child's country of origin at the time the file of the applicant(s) was sent.

Non-program adoptions — an intercountry adoption that was not through an Australian intercountry adoption program that was active at the time the file of the applicant(s) was sent.

These adoptions can be a:

- **[Known child intercountry adoption](#)** — an adoption where the child and the applicant had a pre-existing relationship prior to the adoption that allowed the adoption to occur. Without this relationship, the child would not generally be able to be adopted by the applicant through an intercountry adoption process.
- **[Ad-hoc adoption](#)** — an adoption from a country with which Australia did not have an existing intercountry adoption program at the time the file of the applicant(s) was sent.

[Local adoption](#)—an adoption of a child or children who were born or permanently lived in Australia before the adoption, who are legally able to be placed for adoption, but who generally have had no previous contact or relationship with the adoptive parents.

[Known adoption](#)—an adoption of a child/children who were born or permanently lived in Australia before the adoption, who have a pre-existing relationship with the adoptive parent(s) and who are generally not able to be adopted by anyone other than the adoptive parent(s). Known child adoptions include adoptions by step-parents, relatives, carers and others. Intercountry known adoptions are not included in this category of adoption.

Hague/bilateral adoptions

An adopted child's country of origin is categorised as either a 'Hague' or a 'bilateral' country. A Hague country is where the adoptive child's country of origin has ratified or acceded to the **[Hague Convention](#)** on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, and the **[applicant\(s\)](#)** file was sent to that country after the Convention entered into force in that country. By ratifying or acceding to the Hague Convention a country is legally bound to apply the Convention.

In some cases, the categorisation of a country as either 'Hague' or 'bilateral' may vary at different stages of the overseas adoption process (for example, a country may have signed but not yet ratified or acceded to the Hague Convention when an applicant's file is sent to that country, but by the time the adopted child enters Australia and is placed with their adoptive parent(s), the country may have ratified or acceded to the Convention and the Convention has come into force). By signing the Hague Convention a country expresses, in principle, its intention to become a party to the Convention. However, signature does not, in any way, oblige a country to take further action (towards ratification or not). A country is party to the Hague Convention if it has ratified or acceded to the Convention - this involves the legal obligation for the country to apply the Convention.

The list of 'Hague' countries, (i.e. countries that ratified or acceded to the Hague Convention) can be found on the HCCH website [here](#). The date listed for when the Convention came into effect can be used to determine which countries had ratified the Convention before the end of the reporting period for the Adoptions DSS.

Implementation start date: 01/07/2020

Implementation end date: 30/06/2021

Comments:

For local and intercountry adoptions, children are generally placed with their adoptive families before their adoption order is finalised; however, for some intercountry adoptions where a finalised adoption order recognised by Australian authorities was issued by the country of origin, placement may occur after the adoption order is finalised. Some children placed for adoption during the reporting period may not have their adoption finalised until a following year. In addition, some adoption orders finalised in the reporting period may relate to children who were placed in previous years.

Glossary items

Glossary terms that are relevant to this data set are included here.

[Ad-hoc adoption](#)

[Adoption](#)

[Adoptive parent](#)

[Applicant](#)

[Bilateral adoption](#)

[Country of origin](#)

[Expatriate adoption](#)

[Family](#)

[Finalised adoption](#)

[Hague adoption](#)

[Hague Convention](#)

[Intercountry adoption](#)

[Known child adoption](#)

[Known child intercountry adoption](#)

[Local adoption](#)

[Non-Hague adoption](#)

[Placement](#)

[Step-parent](#)

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Steward: [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)

Relational attributes

Related metadata Supersedes [Adoptions DSS 2019-20](#)

references:

- [Children and Families](#), Superseded 03/11/2021

Metadata items in this Data Set Specification [Show more detail](#)

Seq No.	Metadata item	Obligation	Max occurs
-	Adoption—access arrangement type, agreement type code N	Conditional	1
-	Adoption—adoption consent, code N	Conditional	1
-	Adoption—adoption organisation sector, code N	Conditional	1
-	Adoption—adoption placement not finalised, total N[NN]	Conditional	1
-	Adoption—adoption placement, total N[NN]	Conditional	1
-	Adoption—application for information lodged, total number N[NN]	Optional	1
-	Adoption—application for information type, code N	Optional	1
-	Adoption—application type, information/veto code N[N]	Optional	2
-	Adoption—children adopted as part of a sibling group, total number N[N]	Conditional	1
-	Adoption—finalised adoption, total number N[NN]	Optional	1
-	Adoption—Indigenous status, code N	Optional	1
-	Adoption—Intercountry adoption placement type, code N	Conditional	1
-	Adoption—person who lodged a veto, party to an adoption, code N[N]	Optional	1
-	Adoption—person who lodged an application for information, party to an adoption code N[N]	Optional	1
-	Adoption—sibling group, total groups N[N]	Conditional	1
-	Adoption—veto in place, total number N[NN]	Optional	1
-	Adoption—veto lodgement, total number N[NN]	Optional	1
-	Adoption—veto type, code N	Optional	1
-	Adoptive family—adoptive parent marital status, code N	Conditional	1
-	Adoptive family—sibling composition, text X[X(199)]	Conditional	1
-	Adoptive family—sibling composition, type code N[N]	Conditional	1
-	Adoptive family—special care need, code N	Conditional	1
-	Birth mother—marital status, at child's birth code N	Conditional	1
-	Person—adoption type, code N	Optional	1
-	Person—age, total years N[NN]	Optional	5
-	Person—country of origin, code (SACC 2016) NNNN	Conditional	1
-	Person—intercountry adoption living arrangement post arrival, code N	Conditional	1
-	Person—intercountry adoption order type, code N	Conditional	1
-	Person—pre-adoption relationship to adoptive parent(s), code N	Conditional	1
-	Person—sex, code N	Optional	3
-	Service provider organisation—approved intercountry adoption client, total number N[NN]	Optional	1
-	Service provider organisation—intercountry adoption client file sent overseas, total number N[NN]	Optional	1
-	Service provider organisation—intercountry adoption client, total number N[NN]	Optional	1