



EurAdopt Conference 2026 – Reflecting on Intercountry Adoption: Integrating lived experience, research and knowledge

The [EurAdopt Conference](#) 2026, *Reflecting on Intercountry Adoption: Integrating lived experience, research and knowledge*, was held at University of Malta in Valletta from 16-17 April 2026. Hosted by EurAdopt member, Foundation for Welfare Services, Malta, the conference, which attracted over 100 delegates, served as a platform for exchanging insights, fostering collaboration, and promoting the well-being of adoptees and adoptive families across Europe and it brought together adoptees, adopters, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to advance knowledge and share best practices in adoption.

At the same time, EurAdopt, a collective membership organization from 12 countries, entered a new phase of modernization, strengthening its collaboration with members and with new organizations engaged in post-adoption services. This development reflected a deepening commitment to inclusive dialogue—one that ensures adoptees’ perspectives remain central, whilst also recognizing the voices and experiences of all those involved in intercountry adoption, including first families.

A key message that became clear throughout the conference was that whilst research still evidences that adoption provides longer term outcomes for children that are stronger than other forms of permanent care, this is not possible without openness, honesty and crucially, support, that is robust, specialist and lifelong.

An additional message was the importance of moving forward with an open mindset towards future cooperation across the global adoption sector. This openness is essential to ensure that issues related to intercountry adoption remain firmly on the agenda in all European countries where intercountry adoptees live.

It was also evident that we all have a role to play, both for the adoption communities we already serve and the children who are still living in institutions without the opportunity to grow up in a family in their country of origin. Whilst estimates show that 80% of children in institutions have living family who could care for them with support, this still leaves 20% of children needing alternative permanent care.

Chair of EurAdopt and moderator of the conference, Satwinder Sandhu said:

“This conference was a very important moment for the debates around intercountry adoption. Across Europe we are seeing governments close intercountry adoption services but often without considering all the research and evidence available. There is no doubt that adoption needs to continue to evolve and modernize, as well as be subject to ongoing rigorous assessment and legal processes, but the fact is that adoption does still work.”

What we heard at this conference was not a glossy fairytale narrative of adoption but how adoption can and should offer permanence to a small number of children across the world who might still need it. Most of our speakers this year were adoptees themselves, and they posed intelligent and probing questions of us and of the adoption system. As Chair of EurAdopt I am committed to supporting our members to continue to reflect on these questions and to think about how we can continue to ensure that adoption is fully centred around the needs of adoptees themselves.”

Further updates on changes at EurAdopt and its future direction will be shared in the coming period, and stakeholders are encouraged to stay tuned for more information.

The next EurAdopt Conference is scheduled to take place in spring 2028.

EurAdopt Council

20 April 2026