



*Hague Adoption Convention Country? YES*

### Child Profile

- Healthy children of an older age 8 years plus
- Groups of siblings (2 or 3 children)
- Children with physical or mental disabilities

### PAP Profile

- Couples (both heterosexual and same sex couples) married for at least four years, may adopt jointly if both spouses are over 25 years of age.
- Single persons may adopt if they are over 30 years of age

### Process

1. Attend an adoptions preparatory course organised by an accredited adoptions agency.
2. Compile the Home Study Report together with the social worker. Attend a psychological assessment carried out by a competent psychologist.
3. Apply with the Maltese Central Authority and Adoptions Board to be found eligible to adopt. The following original documentation shall be prepared and transmitted to the Adoptions Board:
  - Birth certificate of the wife
  - Birth certificate of the husband
  - Marriage certificate of the couple
  - Police detailed and basic certificate of the wife
  - Police detailed and basic certificate of the husband (and other relatives living with the family)
  - Medical certificates of the wife, husband and any relatives living in the household including tests for HIV, Hepatitis and Syphilis
  - FS3 wife
  - FS3 husband
  - Photos/welcome book
  - Home study report
  - Psychological reports

4. Once the couple is approved by the Adoptions Board the secretary will inform the Agency with the decision of the board. The Adoptions Board shall also prepare the necessary CA documents. The secretary will then contact the Agency to pick up the CA documents, the board's approval and the original documents listed above who will then forward to the PAPs.
5. Prospective adoptive parents who would be interested in adopting a child from Portugal need to notify Agenzija Tama with their interest at registration phase. PAPs need to have concluded the adoptions course and home study report and have the eligibility from the Malta Adoptions board.
6. At registration the PAPs will need to have all their adoption documents translated into Portuguese by an official translator. All documents will need to be notarised and apostilled and a soft copy sent to Agenzija Tama. The original copies to be retained by the PAPs.
7. Agenzija Tama will forward referral cases of Portugal children to the interested prospective adoptive parents as soon as these referrals are received from the Malta Central Authority.
8. When the PAP shows interest in a specific case of children from Portugal, Agenzija Tama will provide the Malta Central Authority with the PAPs home study report, psychological report, and some photographs which will then be forwarded to the competent Portuguese authorities. The above-mentioned documentation will need to be translated in Portuguese by an authorised translator, notarised and apostilled.
9. In the event of a match, Agenzija Tama will be notified by the Maltese Central Authority and be requested to submit the full dossier which incorporates the following documentation: Acceptance of Match; Home Study Report; Psychological Report; Birth Certificates; Marriage Certificate; Passports; Identity Cards; Health Certificates (expressly referring adoption); Criminal Records; Income Information; and Presentation Albums (Welcome Books). Again all mentioned documentation will need to be translated in Portuguese by an authorised translator, notarised and apostilled.
10. Should the Portuguese Adoption Committee confirm the matching, the Portuguese Central Authority will issue the formal Child Referral, Declaration of Adoptability and Agreement for the Procedure of the Adoption (as per articles 4, 12, 16 and 17 of the Hague Convention).
11. The Maltese Central Authority will issue the formal Acceptance of the Referral and the two Central Authorities will agree a date to start the transition period (based on the Portuguese local adoption team's agenda, as well as the prospective adoptive parents' availability to travel). The transition period is expected to last between three (3) to six (6) weeks (usually four weeks), until the local adoption team concludes that the adoption is likely to be successful. During the transition period, which takes place in Portugal, the prospective adoptive parents will need to interact with the Portuguese local adoption team and other professionals, so a translator will be

necessary. When it comes to the communication between the prospective adoptive parents and the child, the advised procedure will vary according to the age of the child. However, the Portuguese Central Authority strongly suggests that the prospective adoptive parents learn a few key sentences in Portuguese. There are several strategies in order to facilitate the communication with the child, and it would be important for the prospective adoptive parents to consider this before arriving in Portugal. If the transition period suggests a successful adoption, the Portuguese local adoption team will request the Portuguese Court of Law to issue a Temporary Transfer of Guardianship of the child, to the prospective adoptive parents. This document will be given to the prospective adoptive parents in order to be translated and apostilled. The local adoption team will provide the prospective adoptive parents with an original of the Birth Certificate and other personal identification documents of the child (such as the Identity Card and Health Book), a copy of the Court Sentence that determined the adoptability of the child, and all reports concerning the child. The Portuguese Central Authority will also provide a European Health Card for the child.

12. After arriving in Malta, the Maltese Central Authority will forward the Post-Adoption Reports to the Portuguese Central Authority. These are to be submitted as follows: one month after arrival, and two more every two (2) months during the first six (6) months (legal pre-adoption period in Portugal). After these first six (6) months, the Portuguese Central Authority expects to receive a pre-adoption report every three (3) months, until the adoption is determined by a Maltese Court of Law (or, if the prospective adoptive parents wish to, by a Portuguese Court of Law). After the adoption is determined by a Court of Law, the Portuguese Central Authority will await to receive the original of the Court Decree that determined the adoption and a certified translation, as well as the Certificate of the Conformity with The Hague Convention as per Article 23 of The Hague Convention.

**Notes:**

- A. The blood tests result requested by the competent Maltese health authorities are forwarded to the Maltese Central Authority. Further information concerning the health of the child or children may also be requested. Prospective adoptive parents are provided with photographs. Videos may also be requested.
- B. The prospective adoptive parents will need to rent an apartment in Portugal in which to stay during the transition period (3 to 6 weeks). The Portuguese Central Authority does not recommend renting a hotel, since it will provide an artificial environment (no possibility to cook, not able to create a home like environment).
- C. The prospective adoptive parents are expected to travel to Portugal once, for the transition period. This period lasts between three (3) to six (6) weeks (depending on the age of the child/children, the evolution of the bond between the prospective adoptive parents and child/ren, and the Portuguese Court of Law which issues the Transfer of Guardianship).