

# What do we know about adoption?



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**United Nations Population Division**

# What is an adoption?

Legal act:

- Creates a tie equivalent to natural filiation
- Mutual rights and responsibilities (intestate succession, acquisition of name, acquisition of citizenship)
- Permanent

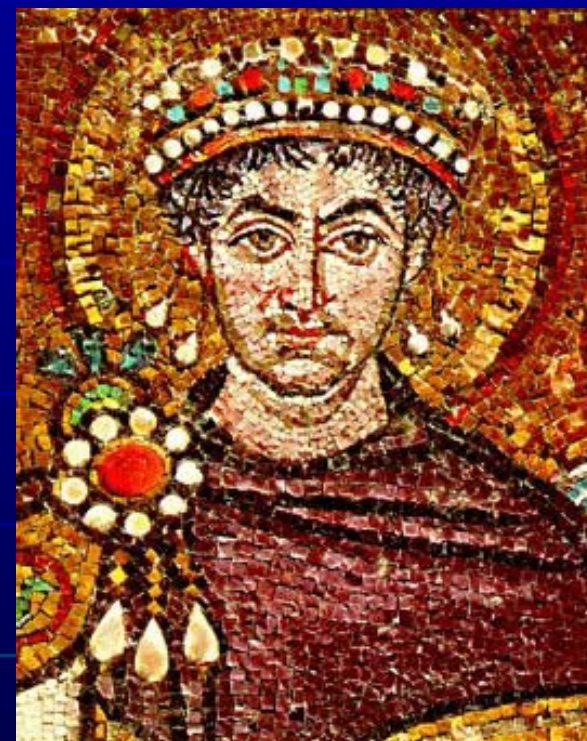
# Historical roots...



**Code of Hammurabi**  
(Babylon, 18<sup>th</sup> century BC)

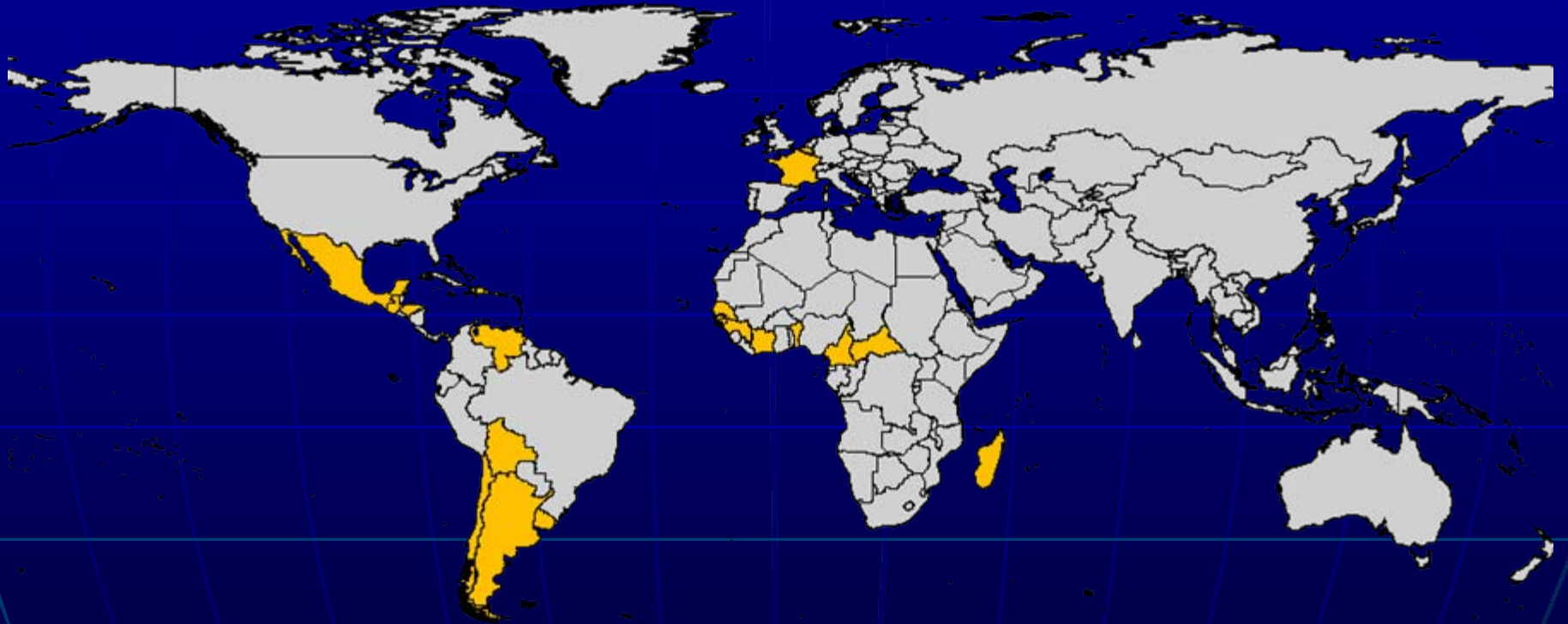


**Laws of Solon**  
(Athens, 6<sup>th</sup> century BC)

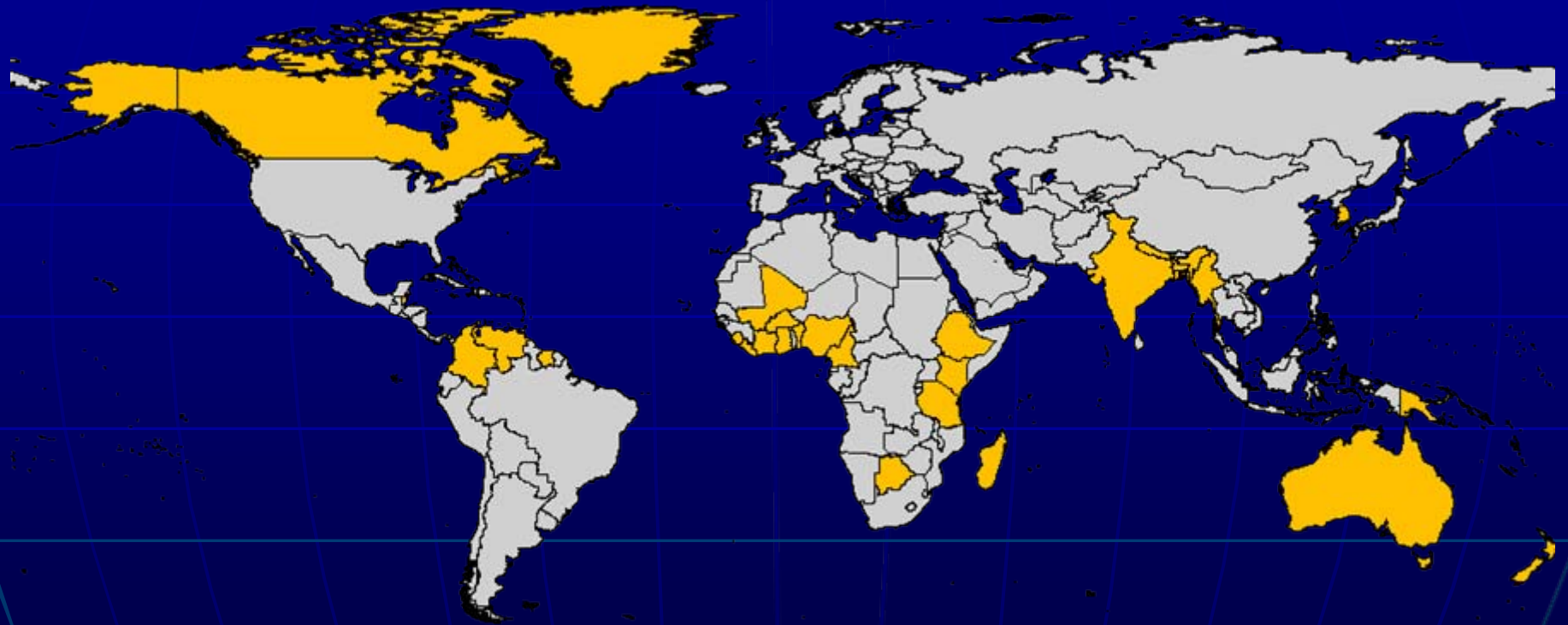


***Institutes of Justinian***  
(Rome, 6<sup>th</sup> century AD)

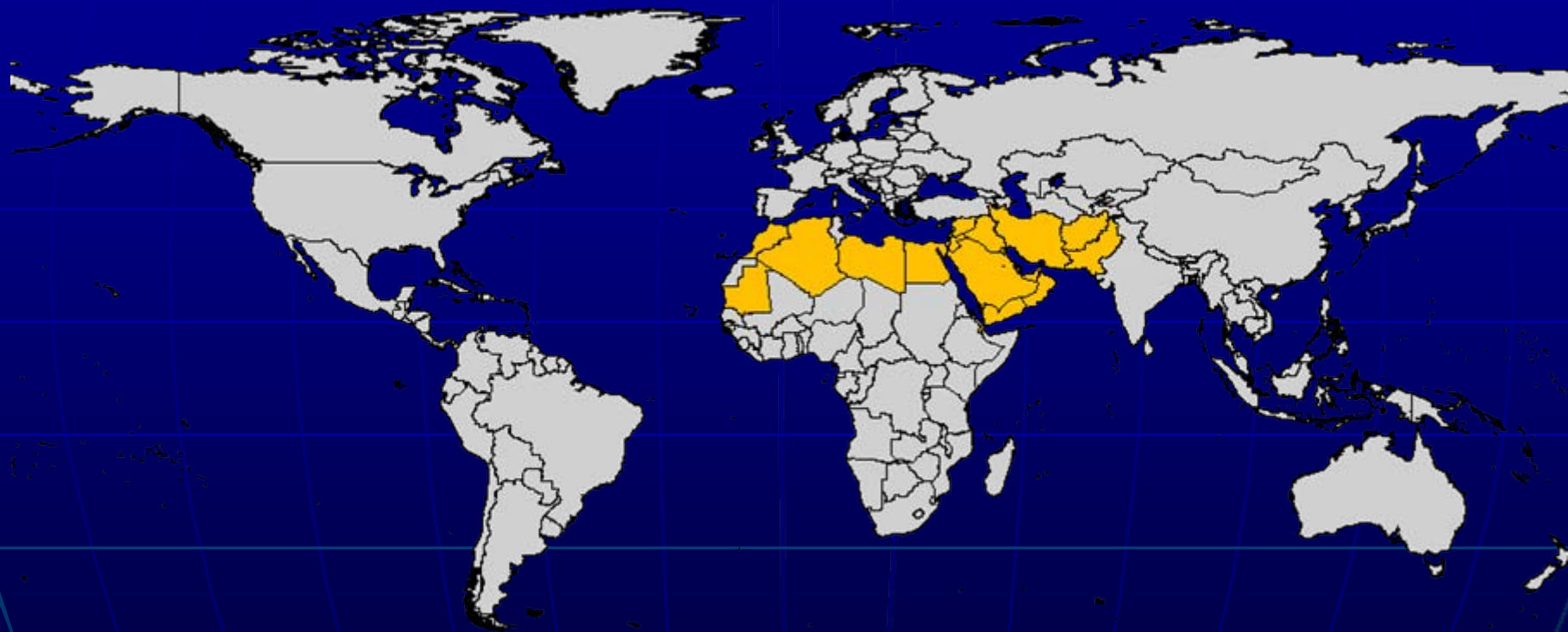
# Simple adoption



# De facto adoption



# Kafalah



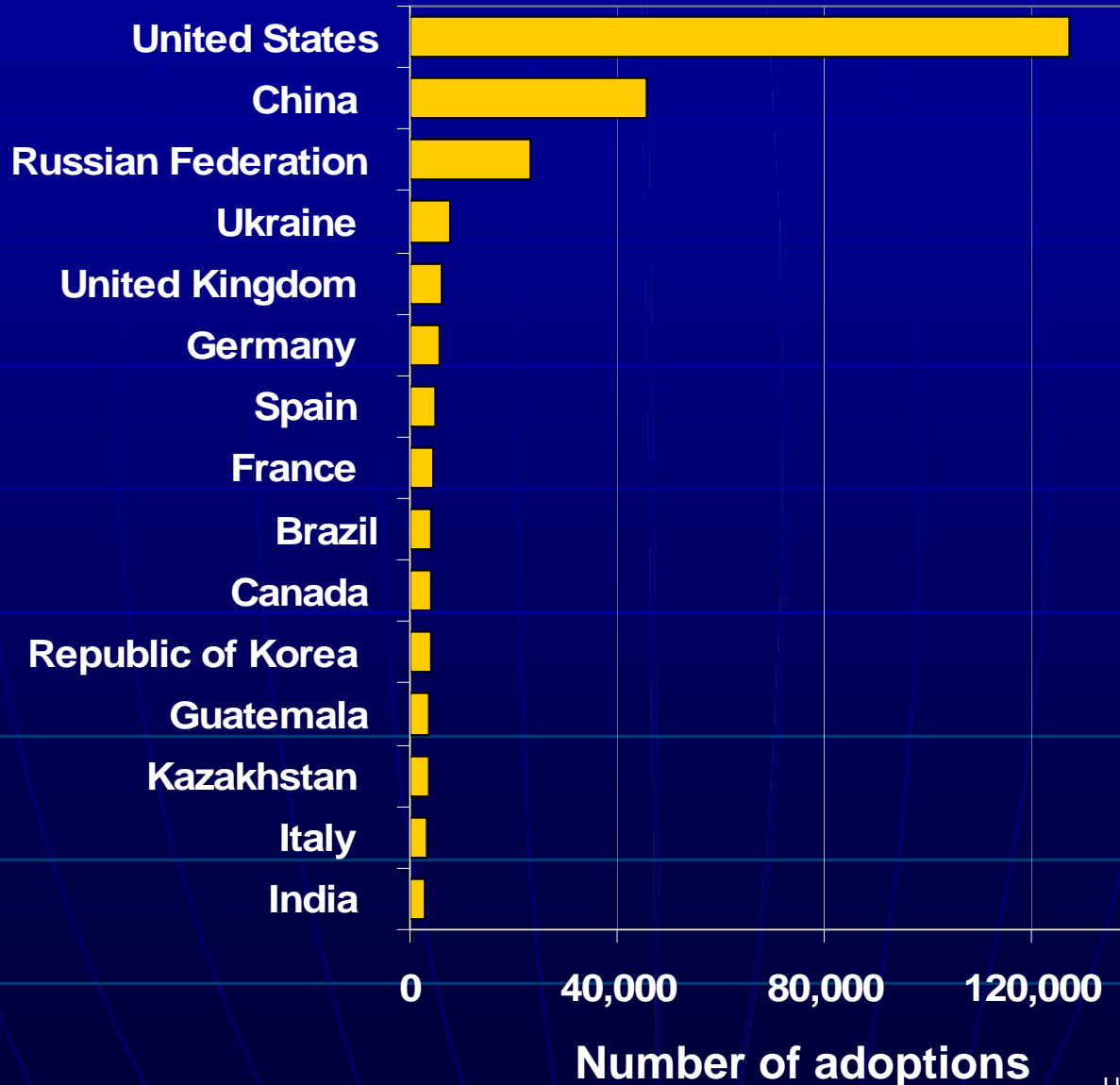
# How many adoptions take place each year?

**260,000 adoptions per year**  
(based on data for 118 countries)

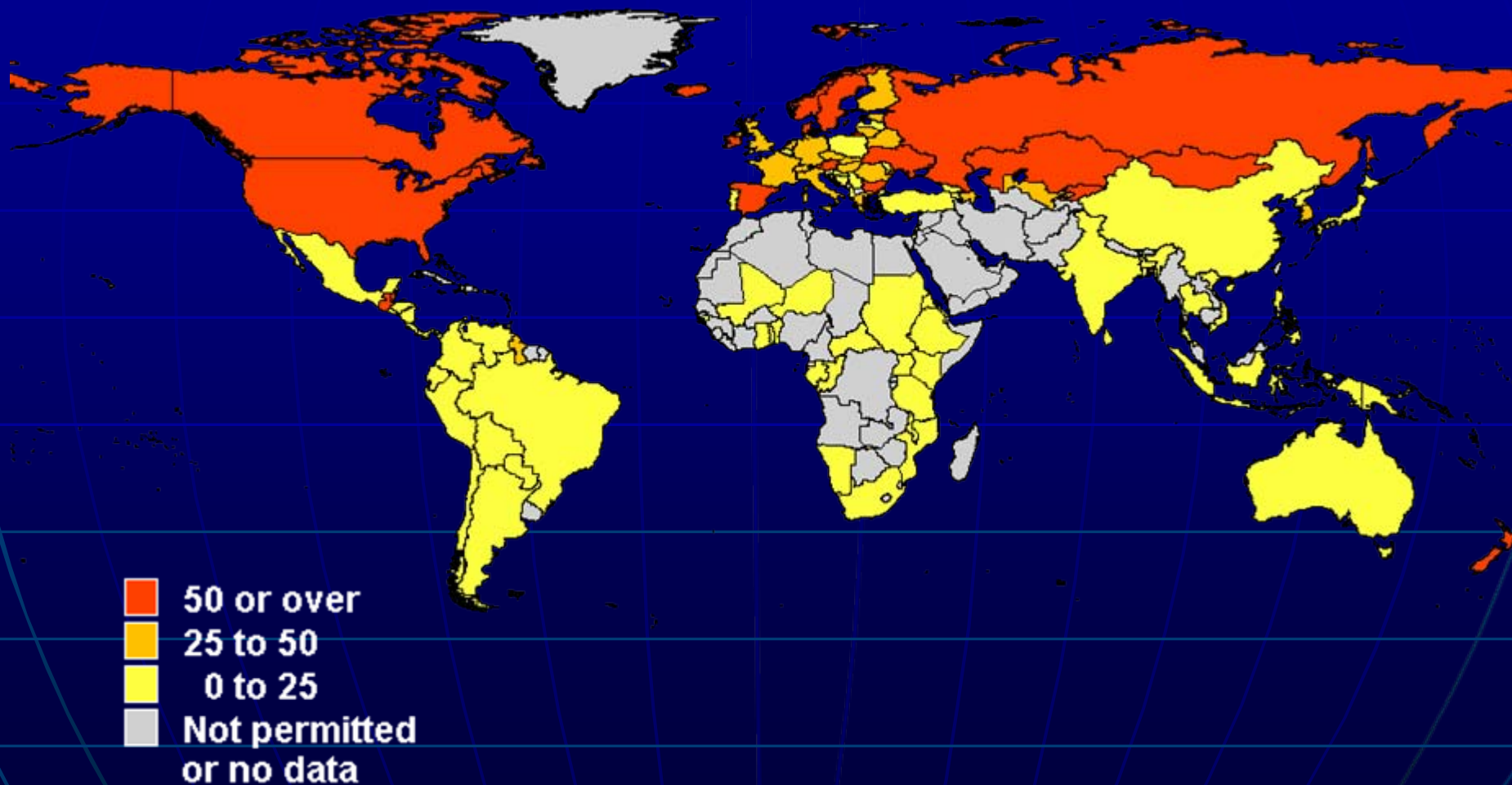
## Relatively rare event

- 2 per 1,000 births
- 12 per 100,000 persons under age 18

# A few countries account for most adoptions



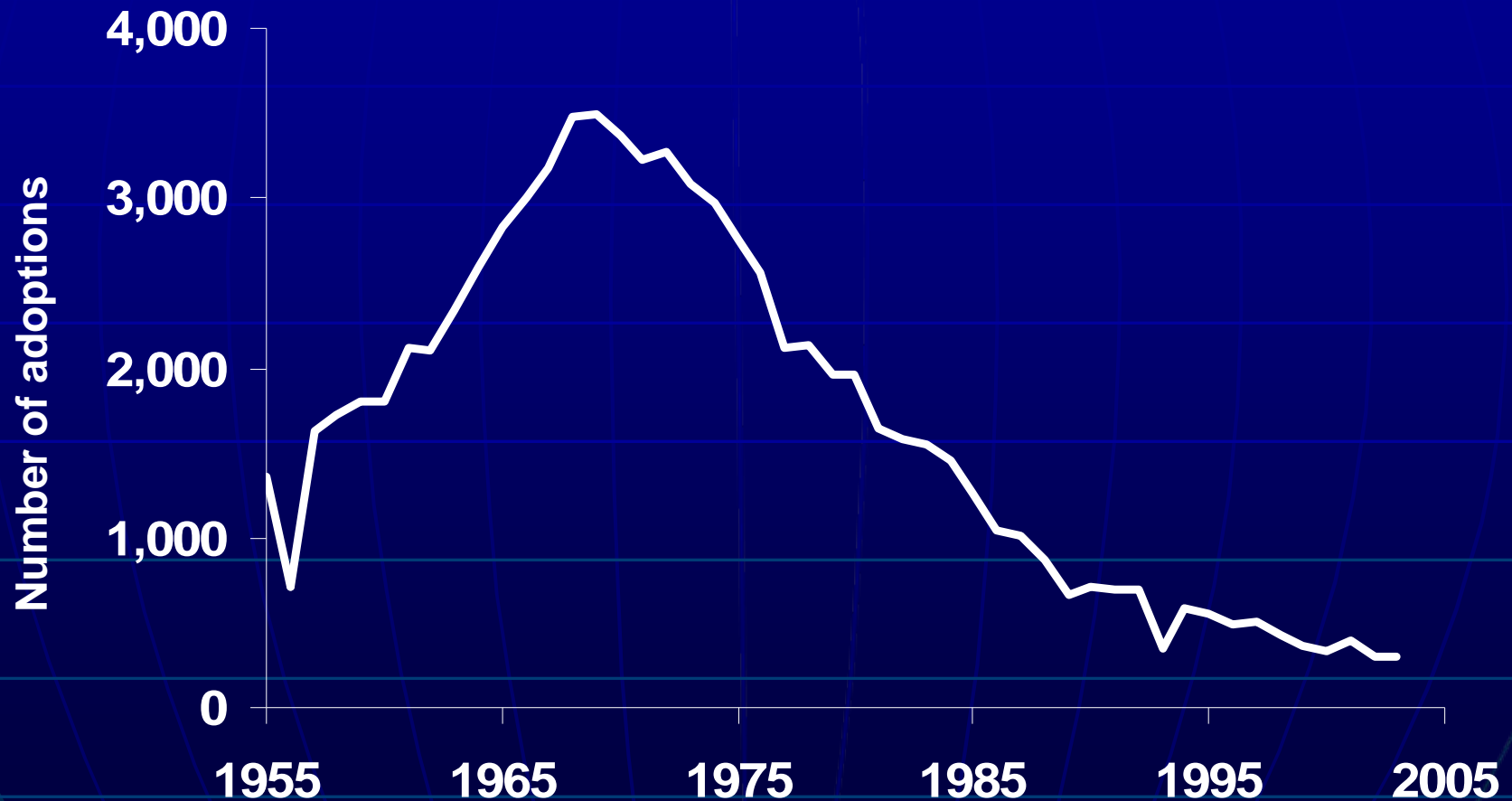
# Adoptions of children under age 18 per 100,000 children under 18



# Domestic adoptions

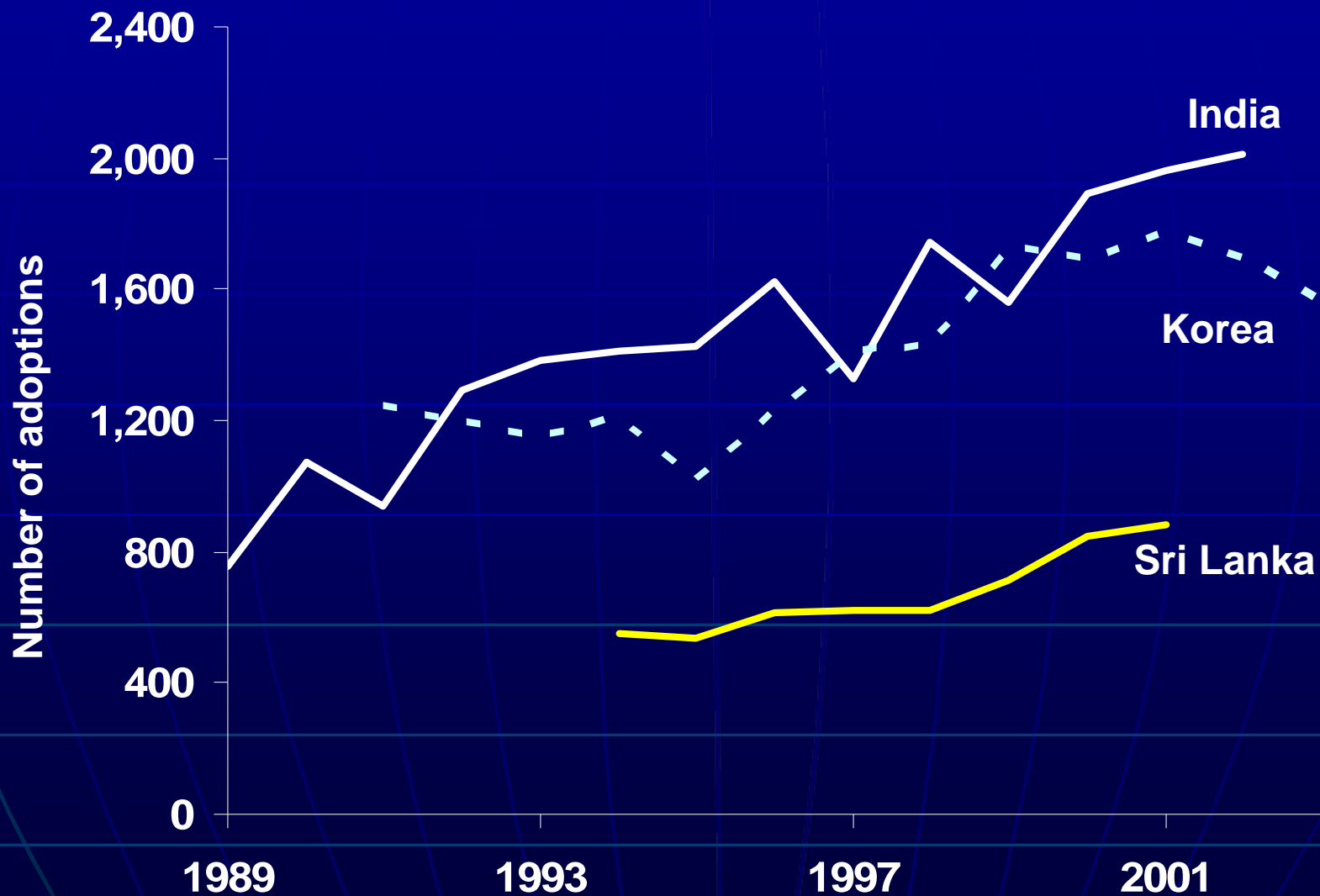
- 220,000 per year
- 85 per cent of all adoptions
- Are 50 per cent or more of all adoptions in:
  - **China**
  - **Russian Federation**
  - **United Kingdom**
  - **United States**
  - ...

# Domestic adoptions New Zealand



# Domestic adoptions

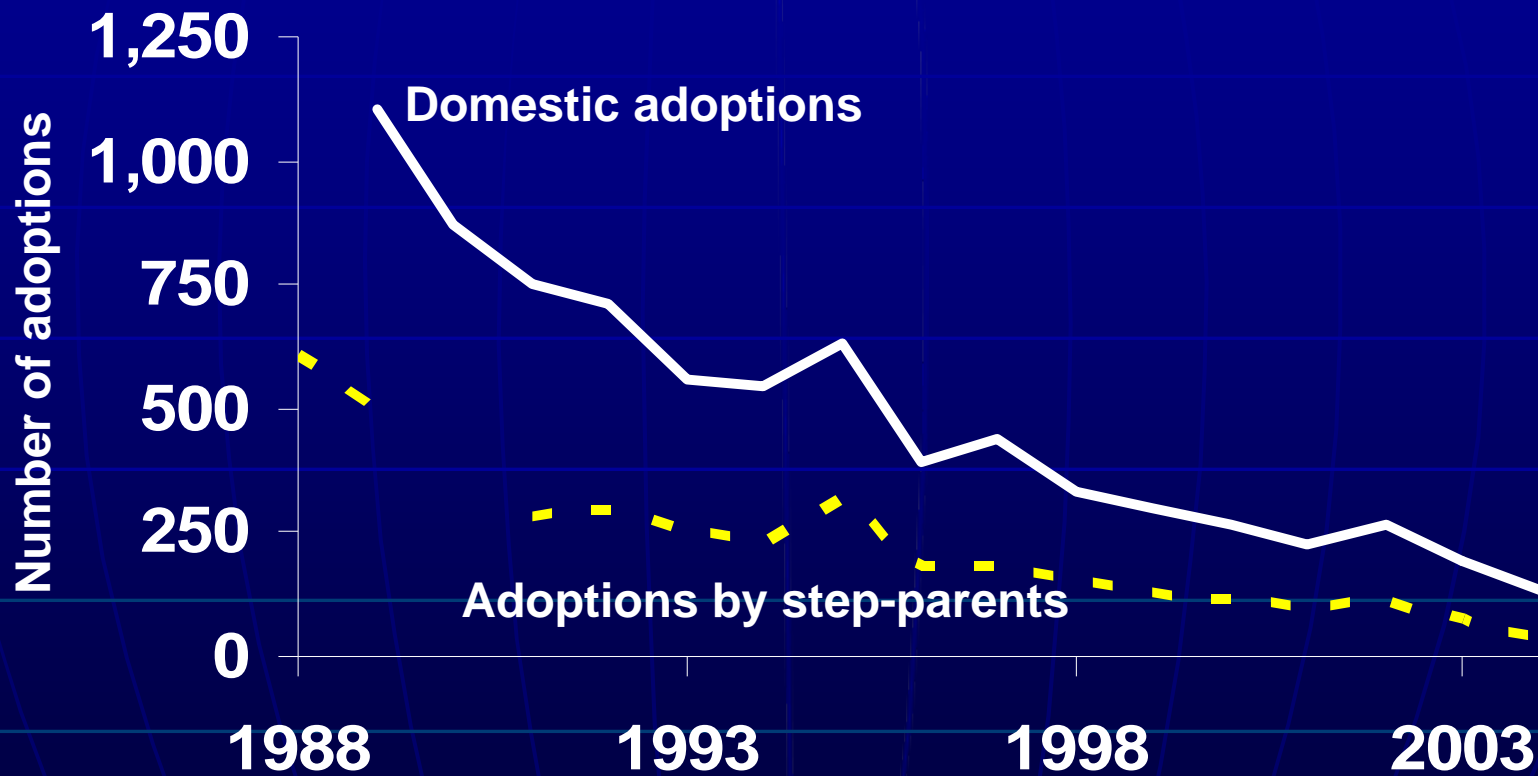
## India, Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka



# Adoptions by step-parents and relatives

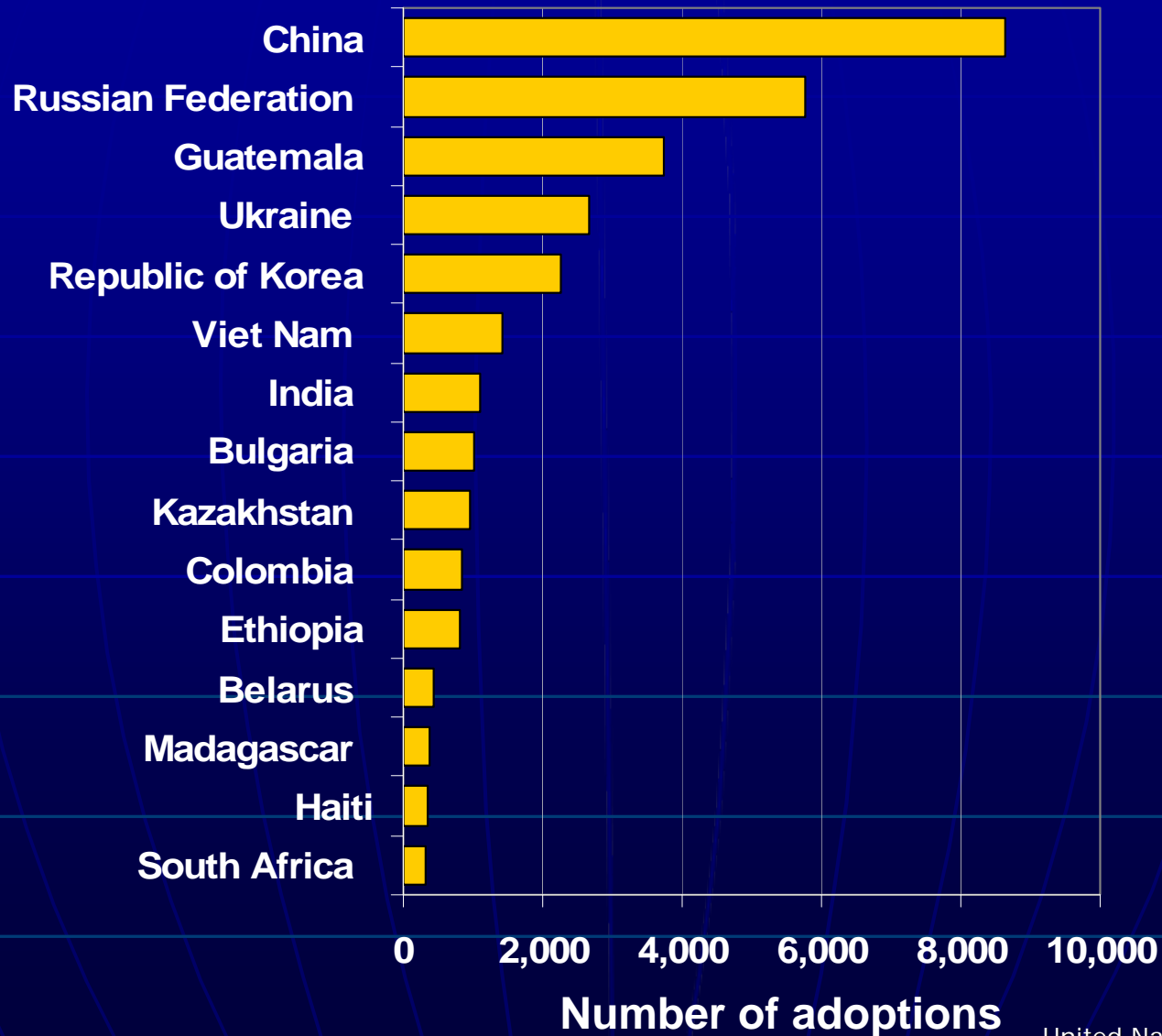
- More than half of domestic adoptions are by a step-parent or a relative
  - Gambia
  - Germany
  - Haiti
  - New Zealand
  - ...
- Adoptions by a step-parent have been declining due to policy changes

# Adoptions by step-parents Australia



# Intercountry adoptions

## Countries of origin



# Major countries of origin of intercountry adoption

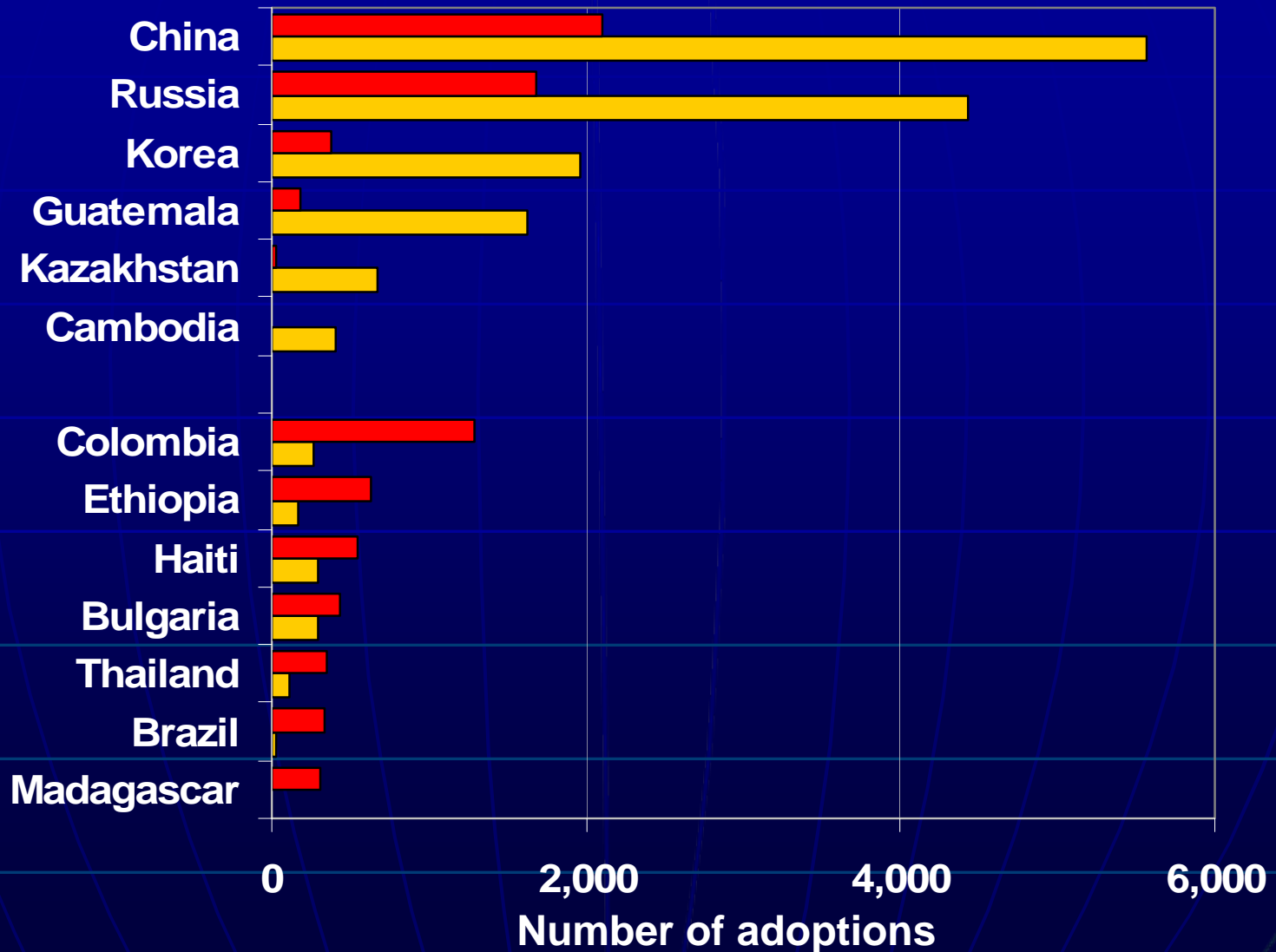
1980-1989	1998-2006
Republic of Korea	China
India	Russian Federation
Colombia	Guatemala
Brazil	Ukraine
Sri Lanka	Republic of Korea
Chile	Viet Nam
Philippines	India
Guatemala	Bulgaria
Peru	Kazakhstan
El Salvador	Colombia

# Intercountry adoptions from Romania



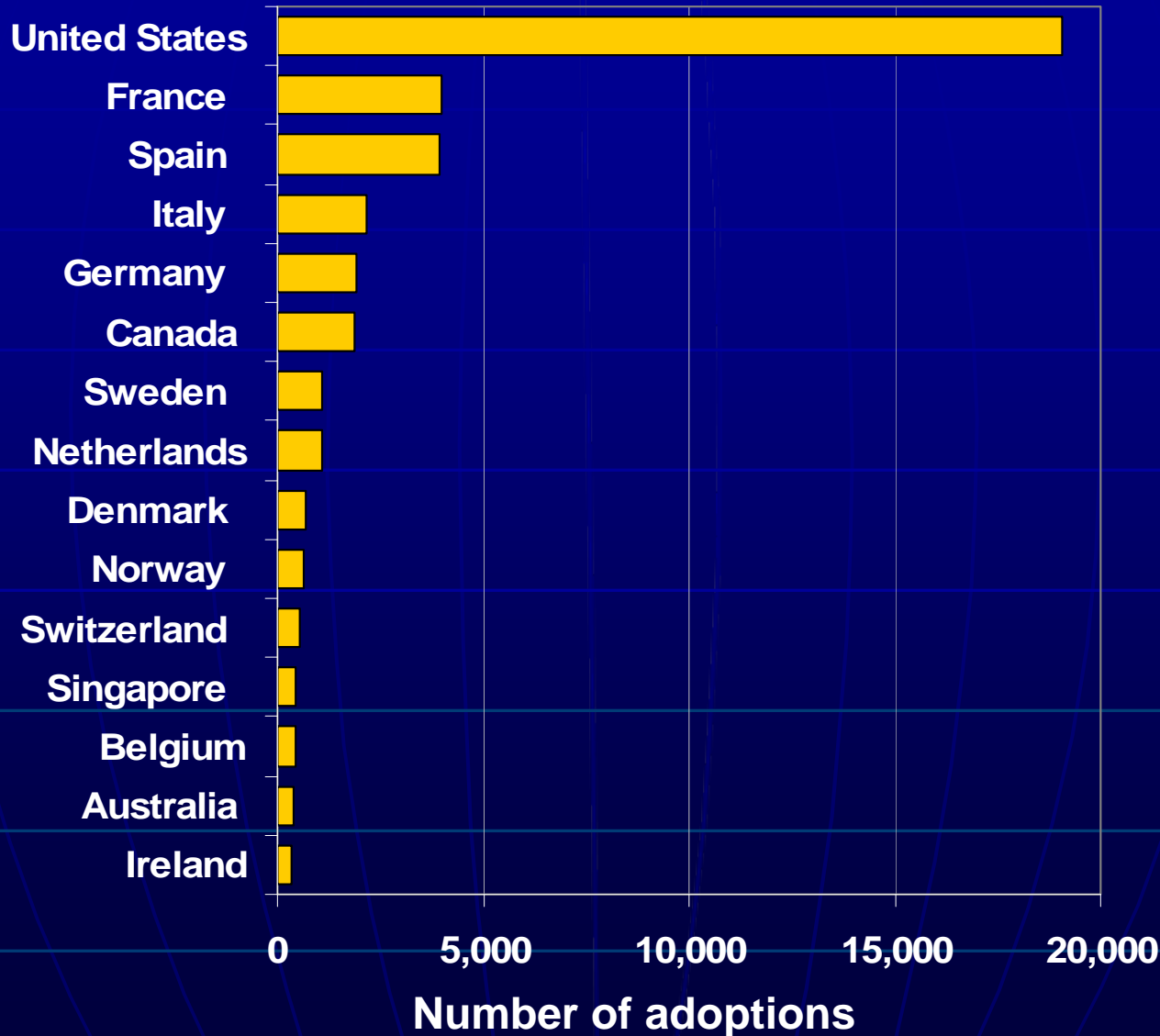
# Major countries of origin

■ Northern America ■ West European countries

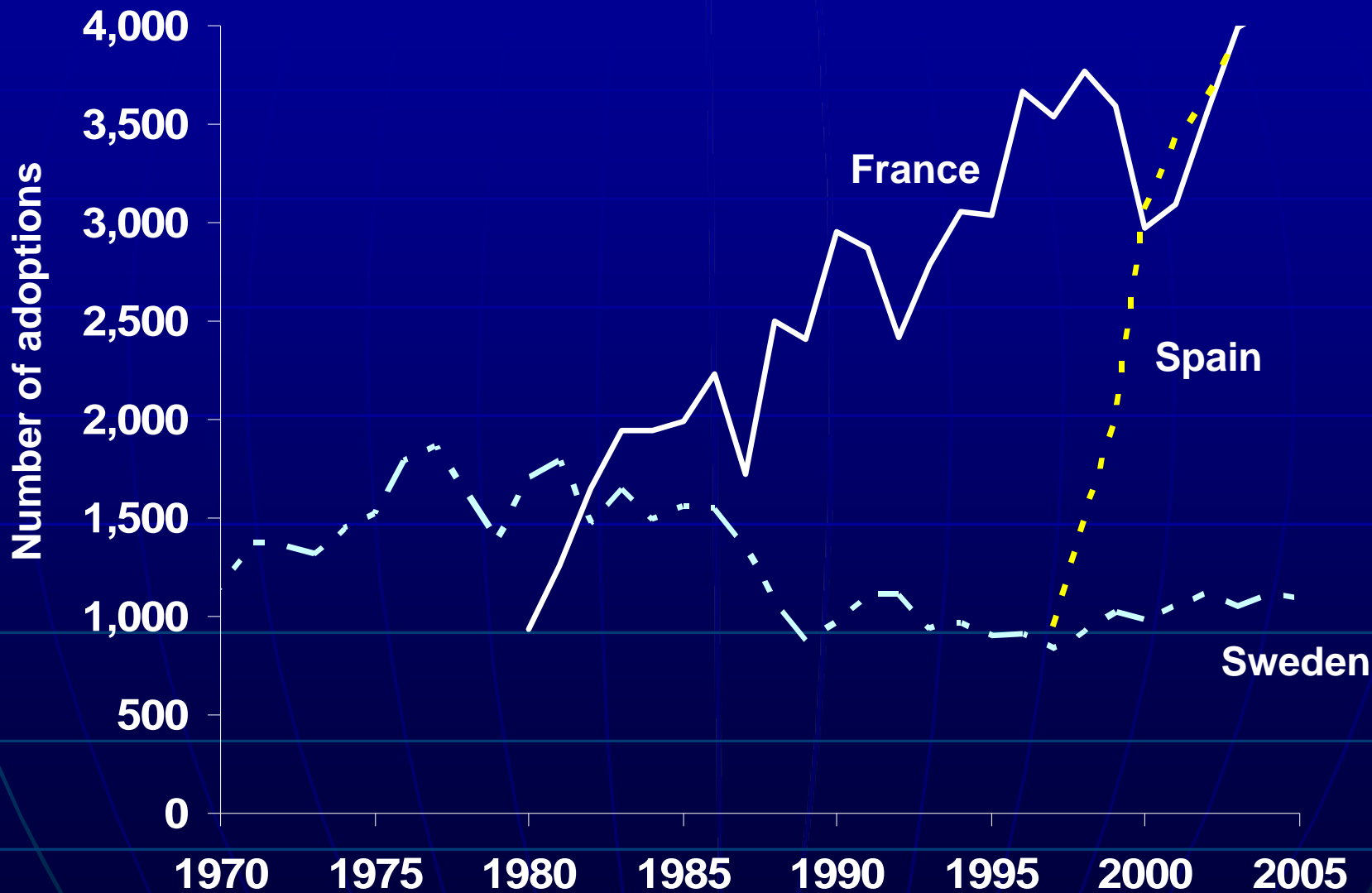


# Intercountry adoptions

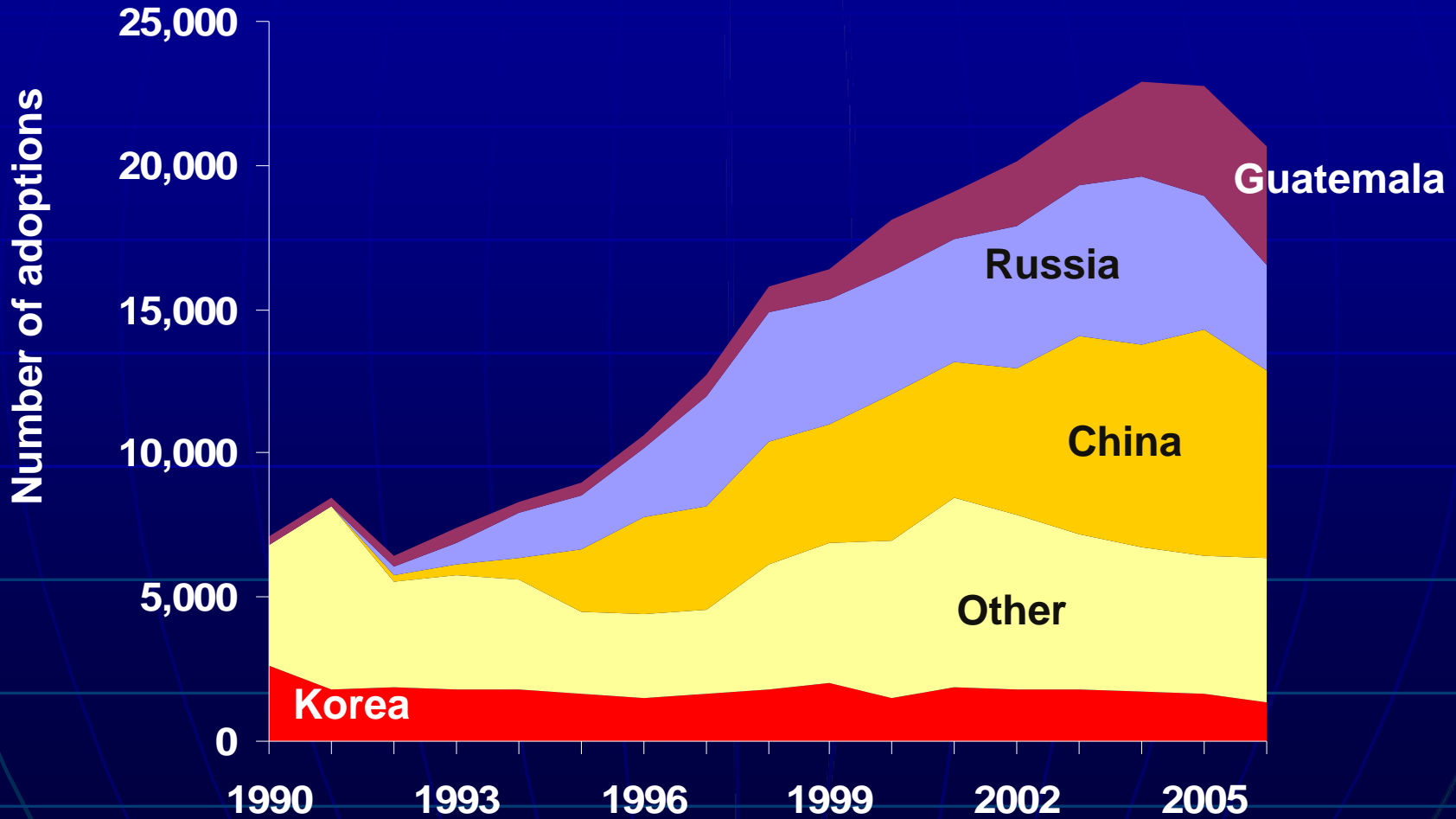
## Countries of destination



# Intercountry adoptions France, Spain and Sweden



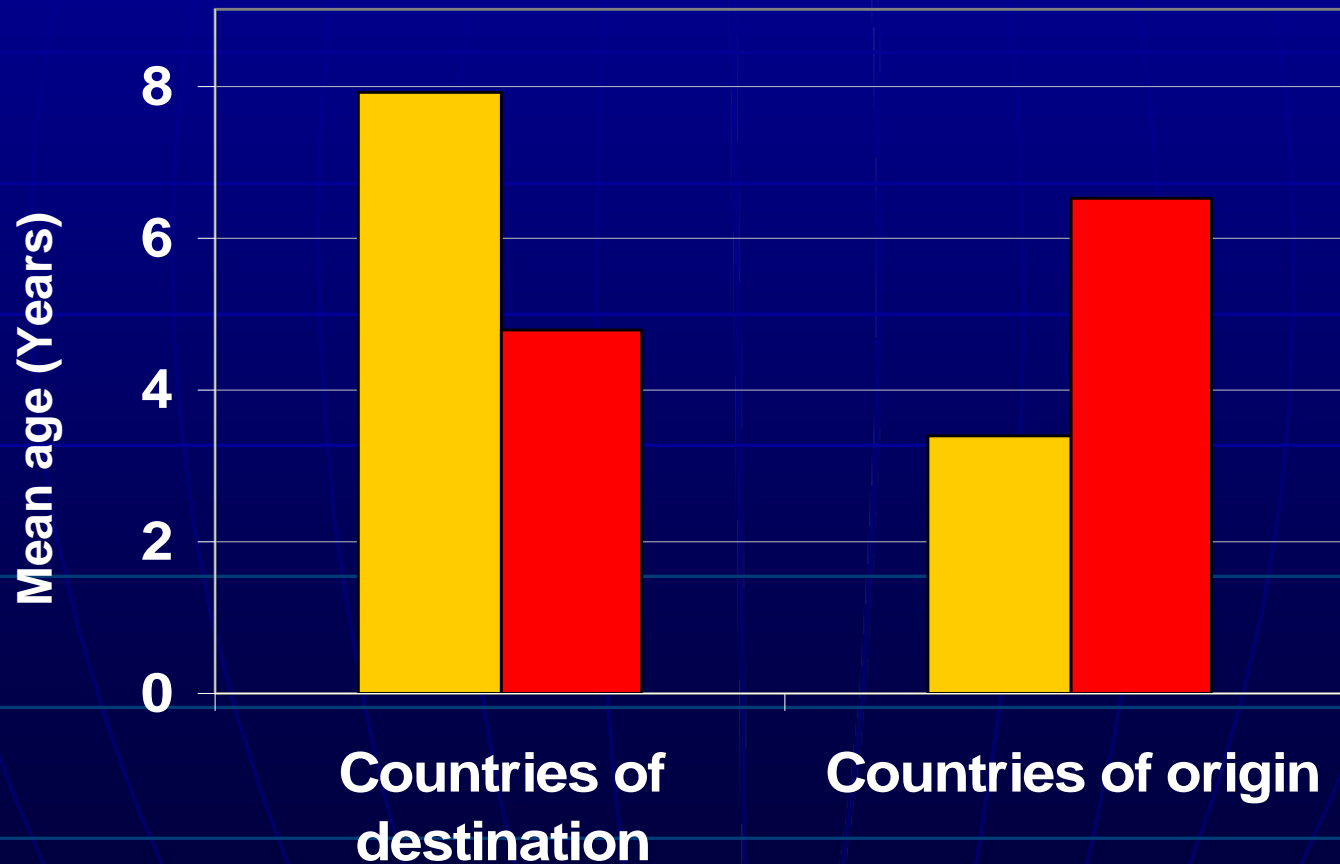
# Intercountry adoptions United States



# Mean age of adopted children

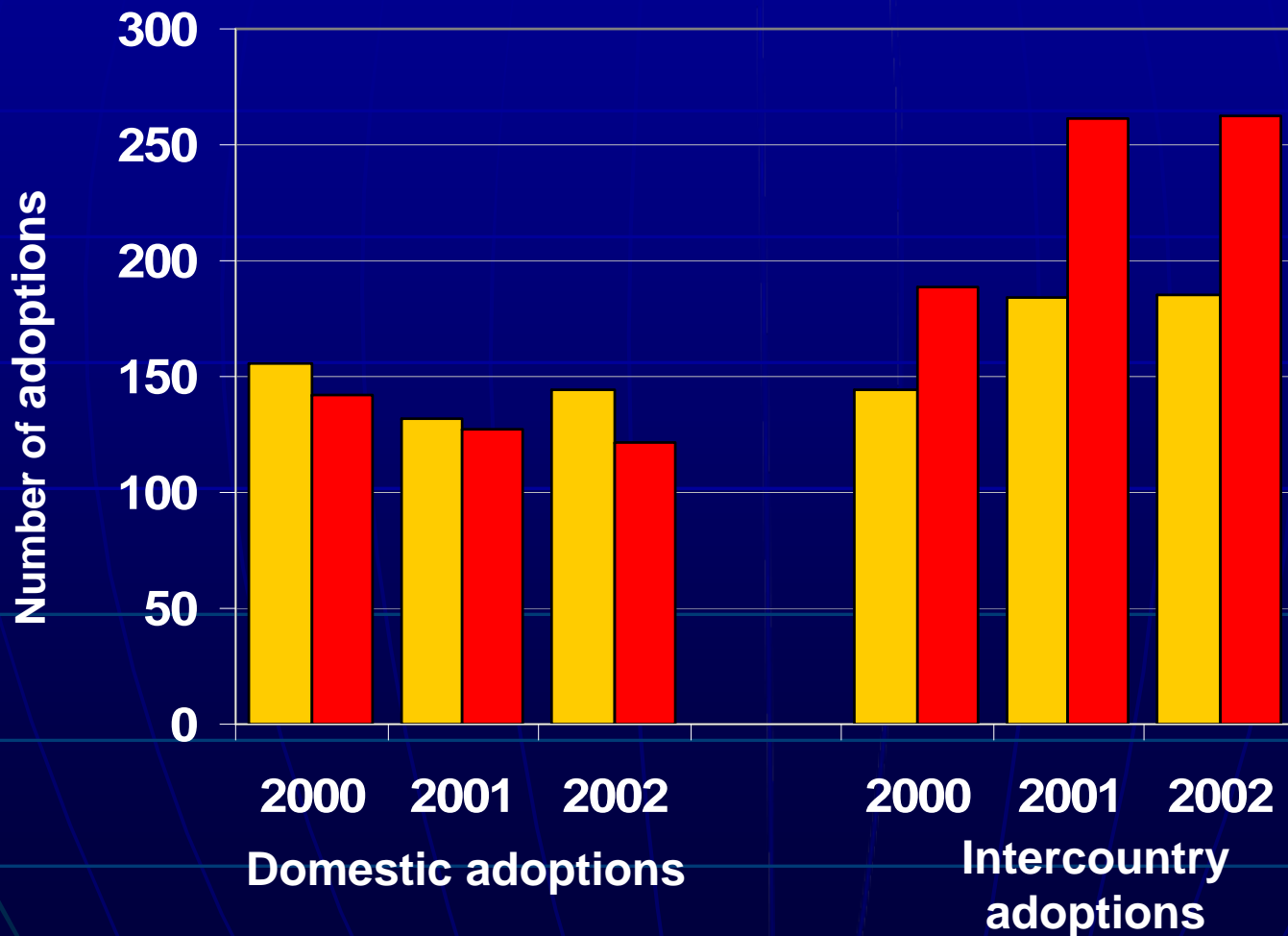
(Median value for 16 countries)

■ Domestic adoption ■ Intercountry adoption



# Boys or girls? Singapore

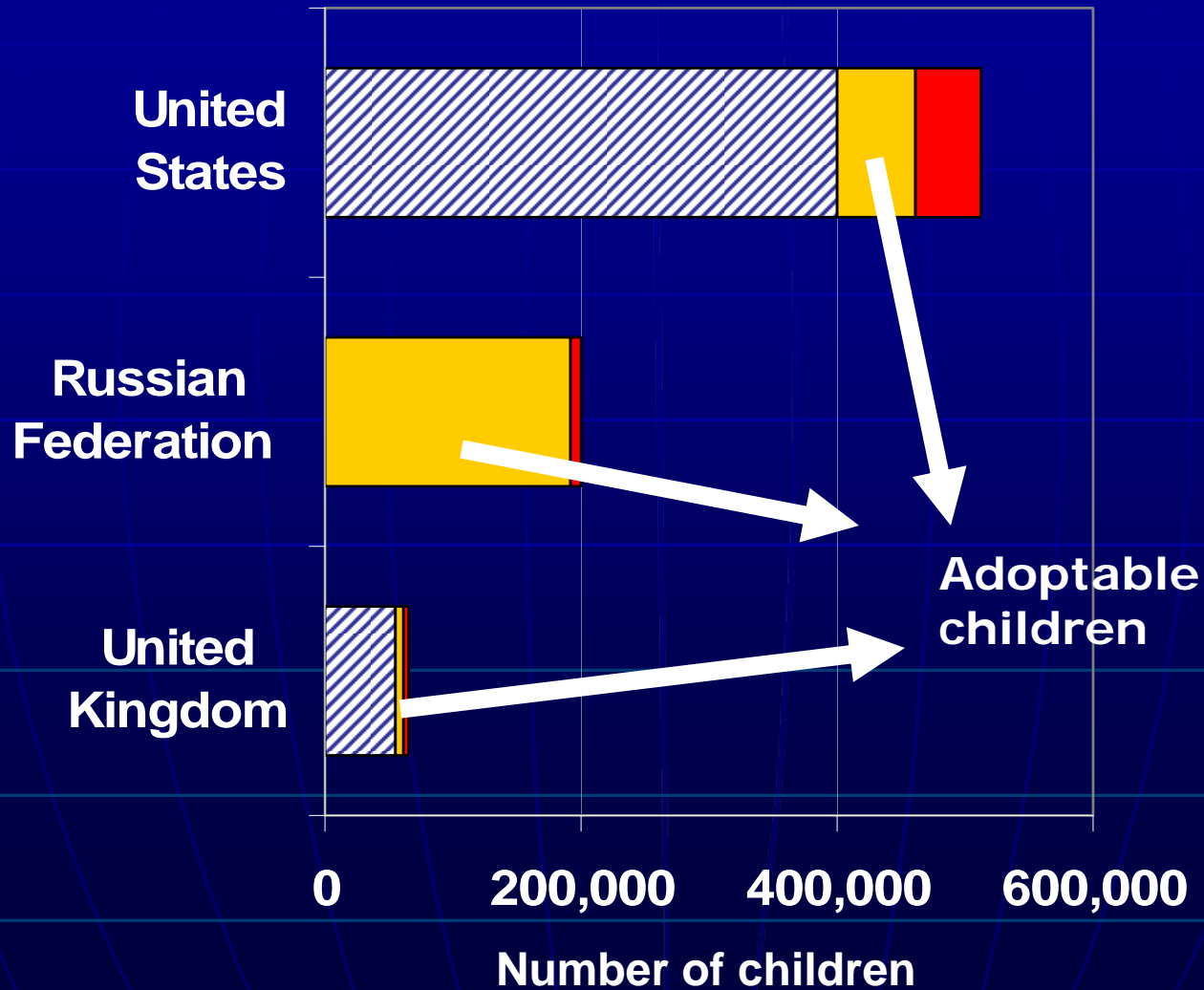
■ Boys ■ Girls



# Children adopted from abroad by sex Denmark, Ireland and Norway (2003)

Country of origin	Number of adoptions	Percentage of girls
China	502	97
Colombia	174	41
Ethiopia	76	54
India	113	72
Korea	123	30
Russia	174	43
Viet Nam	73	74

# Children in care



# Who is adopting?

- **Childless persons**
- **Persons with children (biological or adopted)**
- **Step-parents and relatives**

# Improving data on adoption

Countries providing data on	Number
All adoptions	118
<b>Of which</b>	
Both domestic and intercountry adoptions	88
Sex of the adopted person	39
Age of the adopted person	26
Relationship to the adopted person	22
Sex of the adoptive parent	5
Age of the adoptive parent	4

<http://www.unpopulation.org>

United Nations Population Division

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