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## Changing the lives of thousands of children: Rinat Akhmetov to Children. Say No to Orphanhood! turns 17



On 1 June 2008, the [Rinat Akhmetov Foundation](#) launched Rinat Akhmetov to Children. Say No to Orphanhood! – an initiative that has since become the largest non-governmental adoption support programme in Ukraine. In 2025, the initiative marks its 17th anniversary.

From the very beginning, the project has been built on a simple yet powerful principle: every child has the right to grow up in a loving family and enjoy a happy childhood.

A major breakthrough came with the launch of the National Adoption Portal Rinat Akhmetov to Children. Say No to Orphanhood! At the time, it was a groundbreaking and unprecedented step. The portal allowed anyone to browse photo and video profiles of children from nearby residential institutions and learn more about their stories. This transparency helped spark a public conversation and shift attitudes around adoption, a topic that had long remained taboo in Ukraine.

*“We created Say No to Orphanhood! portal, which now exists as a dedicated section of our website where we published photos of children living in institutions. To create those profiles, Foundation staff visited orphanages to collect new photo and video content. That information became a bridge between the children and prospective parents. We also aired public service announcements on television and shared information on social media,”*

*said Oksana Ishchuk, project manager at the Rinat Akhmetov Foundation.*

The project helped thousands of people open their hearts to orphans. Thanks to the Foundation’s efforts, Ukrainians began to see foster and adoptive families in a new light, and the number of children adopted or placed with families began to rise rapidly. To date, nearly 11,000 children have found loving homes thanks to the Foundation’s initiative.

In 2023, Rinat Akhmetov to Children. Say No to Orphanhood! released a new information guide for prospective parents, Steps Toward a Child. This practical, step-by-step handbook explains all the different forms of child placement: adoption, guardianship, foster care, family-type orphanages, and temporary care. It was created in response to numerous requests from users of the platform, particularly given the additional complexities introduced by martial law. You can download the guide here: <https://bit.ly/4kp6GVv>.

Today, the programme continues to expand. It offers webinars, training, and educational events for future parents, social workers, and educators. A special focus is placed on raising awareness and preventing orphanhood – to give as many children as possible the chance to grow up in families, not institutions.

Say No to Orphanhood! is part of the broader Rinat Akhmetov to Children programme, which has already reached nearly 6 million children. Follow the latest updates on the Rinat Akhmetov Foundation’s work at: <https://bit.ly/3XN1gu2> .