



RESEARCH ON THE
LIVED EXPERIENCES
OF INTERCOUNTRY
ADOPTION
PARTICIPANT
INFORMATION
LEAFLET



ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN
THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study on internationally adopted people. The study is exploring the experiences of individuals who have been adopted into Ireland from abroad. We'd like to hear your thoughts and feelings about intercountry adoption in general. Before you make a decision about taking part in this study, please take the time to read the following information sheet carefully. You are free to contact the research team should you have any questions (contact details provided at the end of this leaflet).

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences and views of Irish people who were adopted from another country. We hope to understand more about individuals who were internationally adopted and are now adults. We also want to give people who were adopted a way to voice their views about adoption in Ireland and reflect on childhood experiences growing up in Ireland. We also want to find out about what, if any, support services you feel would be useful to people who have been internationally adopted.

Who is conducting this study?

The study is designed and delivered by the research unit in the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI). The research team is made up of a research officer (Dr Judy Lovett) and a research assistant (John Regan).

Why am I being invited to take part?

You are being invited to take part because you were adopted into Ireland from another country, and you are between the ages of 18 and 40.

Do I have to take part?

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. It is your decision whether you want to take part or not. Nobody will be made aware that you are participating in this research, and all communication between you and the research team will be private and confidential. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time you wish, and withdrawal will have no consequences on you. If you decide to withdraw, you will need to notify Judy at +353 (0) 1 2309317, or email to aai_research@aai.gov.ie.

What are the study procedures?

If you agree to be included in this study, here are the steps that will take place:

- ▶ You will first be asked to complete a basic demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire will ask you information such as your age, your county of residence, and your gender.
- ▶ After this, you will be invited to take part in either a focus group with other intercountry adoptees, or an individual interview, depending on your preference. These sessions will be audio recorded with your consent, and will be carried out remotely by the research team via Zoom. The main topic of discussion will be your experience of adoption, your thoughts on intercountry adoption and your use of adoption related services. The sessions will take place at a time convenient to you, and will last around 90 minutes.
- ▶ The data that we will be collecting will be the recorded discussions of the session. This data will be transcribed by the research assistant in the AAI. The transcribed data will be de-identified, which means that you will not be identifiable in the transcription. The transcribed data will only be accessible to the research team. Shortly after the session has taken place, you will be asked to complete a final survey that will ask you how you found taking part in the study, and give you an opportunity to provide any additional information you wish to add.



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How long will this study take?

Your contribution to this study will consist of a focus group or individual interview that will run for approximately 1 hour – 1 hour and 30 minutes, in addition to a short demographic questionnaire and a post-focus group/ interview survey.

Is my data protected and confidential?

All information that you give during the course of the focus group or individual interview will be treated with the highest level of confidence. The researchers will take notes during the session about any important topics that might come up, but any information that you give will not be linked to you in any way and will be fully de-identified. If you are taking part in a focus group, you will have the option to use a pseudonym if you do not wish to be named. Please note that your name will not be mentioned in the transcribed data, and instead will be replaced with a unique identifier code. This will be linked to your personal data by the research team in the event that you wish to withdraw your participation from the study. However, if you choose to disclose information that would indicate a serious cause for concern (e.g. criminal offence, a risk to children, or a risk to life), it is the duty of the research team to inform a senior member of the social work team in the AAI and report any issue concerning a child/children to Tusla. This is called the duty of care. We would never do this without informing you first.



What are the risks of participating?

As researchers, we are obliged to consider any risks to you from participating. We are aware that participating in a focus group or interview can be inconvenient for some participants. For this reason, we have decided to do the sessions entirely on Zoom, rather than in person. This will eliminate commuting time. We will provide a guide for accessing Zoom, and further assistance will be provided should it be required on the day. One potential emotional risk is that the topics discussed might upset you. If you are upset by any of the topics discussed in the session, you are free to take a break from the discussion at any time, stop taking part in the session completely, or withdraw from the study entirely, meaning you won't have any further communication with us, and any of your data will be removed.

We will also have a support plan in place, should you need emotional support as a result of any of the topics discussed. If you get upset by any of the content, a social worker will be on standby to talk to you on your mobile phone, and will advise you on what next steps you can take for your mental health and safety. You are under no obligation to complete the full study, and you have the right to withdraw your participation at any time. There is minimal risk of physical harm through participation in the study.





How will I benefit from this study?

We hope that having the ability and opportunity to provide your unique insight into intercountry adoption and your intercountry adoption experience would be of interest to you. We hope to gather views and opinions on intercountry adoption from those who have experienced it, to highlight policies or interventions that may need improvement or alteration in the future, and to assess the needs of internationally adopted people as they grow and develop from adolescence to adulthood. You will be contributing to a field of research that does not currently have much Irish-specific information available. Your input will provide much-needed context for intercountry adopted people in Ireland.

Will I be compensated for participating in this study?

You will be compensated for your time spent participating in the study. You will be given a €20 OneforAll voucher upon completion of all elements of the study, which includes the session itself and the post-focus group/interview survey. If you do not finish the study to completion, we will not be able to compensate you for your time.

What will happen to my data?

All results of your assessments (e.g. all of the responses to the demographic questionnaire, transcripts of the session, and your responses to the post-focus group/interview survey) will be identified only by a unique participant code that contains no information about your identity. Only the members of the research team will have the information that matches the anonymous code to identifying information about yourself such as your name, your age, and your email. We will keep all your identifying information in a password protected file on our secure folders in the Adoption Authority, and this will be stored on a password protected laptop that is kept in a locked filing cabinet overnight. The reason we keep your identifying information is in the event that you wish to withdraw from the study, making it easier to find and erase your contributions. After the data are collected and analysed, all personal identifiers will be removed and your data will be completely anonymised. At this point, you will not be able to withdraw your participation from the study. The research team will then produce a report that will be reviewed by other researchers in the field of adoption. After the review,



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the report will be published and will be made available to the general public. You will not be identifiable in this published report. We hope that this study will be used to inform policy makers on the experiences of intercountry adoption in Ireland.

Who can I contact if I have questions?

This form explains the research study. You can ask questions about anything that you do not understand. You can ask questions at any time during the research process, and a member of our research team would be happy to help.

You may contact **Dr Judy Lovett (email: judy.lovett@aai.gov.ie; phone: +353 (0)1 2309317)** if you have any further questions about the study. Alternatively, you can contact the research team at aai_research@aai.gov.ie and a member of our team will get back to you. A description of this study will be available on www.aai.gov.ie/en/. You can view this web page at any time.

How to take part:

If you want to take part, please visit <https://aai.gov.ie/en/intercountry-adoption-focus-group-recruitment>. Here, there will be a button that you can click. This will bring you to our application process, where you can give your consent to take part. We will also ask for your name and email so we can get back to you. You will receive an email from aai_research@aai.gov.ie, which will provide you with further instructions.



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