



**INTERCOUNTRY  
ADOPTION  
FOCUS GROUPS  
PARTICIPANT  
INFORMATION  
LEAFLET  
(OVER 18)**



**ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN**  
THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND

# INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION FOCUS GROUPS

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET

### (OVER 18)

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 in their adolescence or in their adulthood. 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 13 and 34.

#### 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](mailto: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 a focus group with other adoptees around your age who were adopted from abroad. This focus group will be audio recorded with your consent. This will be carried out remotely via Zoom. These meetings will be run by the research team. The main topic of discussion will be your experience of adoption, and your thoughts on intercountry adoption and your use of adoption related services. The focus group will take place at a time convenient to you, and will last around 90 minutes to 2 hours.
- ▶ The data that we will be collecting will be the recorded discussions of the focus groups. This data will be de-identified, which means that you will not be identified from the data you provide. This data will be transcribed through the use of an Irish transcription service will do this for us (name available on request).. This transcription service is subject to GDPR and has signed the AAI's non-disclosure agreement. If you do not consent for this service to transcribe the focus group, the research assistant in the AAI will transcribe the data. The transcribed data will only be accessible to the research team. Two weeks after the focus groups have taken place, you will be asked to complete a final survey that will ask you how you found taking part in the study and giving you an opportunity to provide any additional information that you did not get to say in the focus group.



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## How long will this study take?

Your contribution to this study will consist of a 5 minute demographic questionnaire, a focus group that will last a maximum of 2 hours, and a post-focus group survey that will last 5 minutes. Overall, we expect your time contribution to the study to be no more than 2 hours and 10 minutes.

## Is my data protected and confidential?

All information that you give during the course of the focus group will be treated with the highest level of confidence. The researchers will take notes during the focus groups 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. You will have the opportunity to use a pseudonym if you do not wish to be named during the focus group. Please note that even if you do not use a pseudonym in the focus group, your name will not be mentioned in the transcribed data, and instead will be replaced with unique identifier codes. 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 can be inconvenient for some participants. For this reason, we have decided to do the focus groups 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 focus group, you are free to take a break from the discussion at any time, stop taking part in the group 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, especially for teenagers and adults. Your input will provide much-needed context for this sample of adopted people.

## 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 focus groups and the post-focus group 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, your contribution to the focus group, and your responses to the post-focus group 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 lock 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



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researchers in the field of adoption. After the review, 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](mailto: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](mailto: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/](http://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 our website at <https://aai.gov.ie/en/> where you can find a section on intercountry adoption focus groups. 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](mailto:aai_research@aai.gov.ie), which will provide you with further instructions.



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