



INTERCOUNTRY
ADOPTION
FOCUS GROUPS
**WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW
(UNDER 18)**



ÚDARÁS UCHTÁLA na hÉIREANN
THE ADOPTION AUTHORITY of IRELAND

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION FOCUS GROUPS

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET

(UNDER 18)

Hello, and thank you for taking the time to read this information leaflet. We would like to invite you to take part in a focus group for a research study on internationally adopted people. We want to hear about your experiences as a young adoptee who was adopted into Ireland from another country. We want to understand your experiences, both good and bad, and hear your thoughts and feelings about intercountry adoption. Before you make a decision about joining us for this study, please take the time to read this information leaflet carefully. If you are under the age of 18, you may wish to speak to a trusted adult (e.g. parent/guardian) about taking part in this study. We will need the consent of your parent or guardian, as well as your own assent, just to ensure that we're doing everything we can to keep you safe. You may also contact the research team if you have any questions (you can find our contact details at the end of this leaflet).

Why are we doing this study?

The research team is doing this study to understand the experiences and feelings of people who were adopted from abroad. We want to understand more about adoptees when they are teenagers and as they grow up into adults, and to give you a way to voice your views and opinions about adoption in Ireland.

Who is doing this study?

The study has been made and will be run by the research team in the Adoption Authority of Ireland (AAI). The research team is made up of a research officer called Judy and a research assistant called John. Our job is to study and explore the information you give us during the study to better understand the life of an adopted person in Ireland.

Why am I being asked to take part?

You are being asked to take part in this study because you were adopted into Ireland from another country, and you are 13 years old or older.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part in this study is completely up to you. You do not have to take part in our study if you don't want to. It is your decision if you want to take part or not. Other than your parent/guardian and the research team, nobody will be told that you are taking part in this research, and all emails or conversations we have with you will be private. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time you want, it is entirely up to you.

What does it mean if I agree to take part?

- ▶ If you agree to take part in this study, we will first ask you to do a quick questionnaire about yourself. The questionnaire will ask you some questions about your age, the county you live in, and your gender. This will take about 5 minutes.
- ▶ After this, you will be invited to take part in one focus group with other adoptees around your age who were also adopted from abroad. A focus group is where we meet as a small group (5-7 people) with people around your age. In this focus group, we will talk and share stories about adoption. This will be done online through Zoom. We will record this discussion using audio only (your voice is the only thing we will record) and take notes of what is said during our meeting. These meetings will be run by the research team, who will ask questions or put out topics for the whole group to talk about. The main topic we will talk about will be the experience of adoption. The focus group will take place at a suitable time that will work around your school and hobbies, and will last around 90 minutes to 2 hours.
- ▶ We will record the discussions we have at our focus group, and once they have been typed up we will delete the recording. The talk we had in our focus group will be made into a transcript. A transcript is a written down version of what we had talked about in the focus groups. An Irish transcription service will do this for us (name available on request). They are a company that know how to keep your information



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private, and writing down the conversations we have will make it easier to look at what was said and write a report on it. We will only allow the company to type up the transcript for us if we get your consent. The typed-up transcript of the recording will be analysed and only used by the research team.

- ▶ Two weeks after the focus group, we will ask you to do one final survey for us. This will ask you about how you found the focus group, and give you another chance to tell us your thoughts and feelings about adoption. This will only take about 5 minutes.

How much time does the study take and will I get anything in return?

This study should take at most 2 hours and 10 minutes of your time. We aim to hold these focus groups on the weekends or in the late afternoon, so you will not have to miss any school to do the study. You will be given a €20 OneforAll voucher when you finish all parts of the study, which includes the focus groups **and** the post-focus group survey. If you do not finish the study fully, we will not be able to compensate you for your time.

What is private and confidential?

All information that you give during the course of the focus group will be treated with the highest level of privacy and confidentiality. Confidentiality means that we are not going to tell anyone anything you tell us during the study. The only time we would have to tell someone is if you tell us something that makes us concerned about your safety, or the safety of another person. If this happens, it would be our responsibility to tell a senior member of staff what you told us and talk with Tusla. We will never do this without telling you first. Both of the researchers have a Children First certificate, and will be able to help you if you have any trouble during the focus group. We may take notes during the focus groups, but any information that you give will not be linked to you in any way. You will be de-identified. This means that nobody will be able to know you are the person that gave us the information at any part of the discussion, publication, or presenting stages of the study.

Would I be harmed by taking part?

You will be in no physical harm if you take part in this study. We are aware that taking part in a focus group might make some participants feel a bit nervous, especially if you have never done a focus group before. There is no need to be worried. The research team will try their best to make sure you are comfortable during the focus group. If you are upset at any stage in the focus group, you will be invited to take a break, mute your microphone and camera. A member of the AAI's social work team will ring you on your mobile phone for a chat so that you can talk about what is upsetting you. You do not have to complete the full focus group, or the questionnaire, and you have the right to stop taking part or change your mind at any time. You can also ask us to withdraw your data (i.e. delete what you said) for up to 2 months after the focus group has taken place.





What will taking part in this study do for me?

We hope that having the chance to tell us your opinions and experiences of adoption in a group of people who have also been adopted could be of interest to you. We want to collect your opinions on intercountry adoptions to look at areas that might need improvement or change in the future, and to understand your needs as an internationally adopted teenager. Your input and involvement is important, because it will give us much needed information and understanding for what young adopted people need in Ireland.

Will other people find out about me?

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 protected as best as we can. We will give everyone who participates a unique code. Only a small number of people on the research team will be able to link your information to this code. This means that information about yourself such as your name, your age, and your email, will only be known by the research team. We will keep all your 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 when we are not in the office. The reason we keep your identifying information is because if you do not want to take part in the study anymore, it will make it easier for us to find your data and to delete it. After we are able to look at and study the information, your data will be completely anonymised. This means that nobody will be able to identify or name you. At this point, you will not be able to take back what you have said as part of the study. The research team will then make a report that will be looked at by other researchers who study adoption. This is to make sure that what we report is correct and that we did our job correctly. After this, the report will be published and will be made available for everyone to read. In this final report, nobody will be able to identify you or find out who you are.



We want to hear from you

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, and a member of our research team would be happy to help.

You or your parent/guardian 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. You can contact the research department 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 <https://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 assent to take part. We will ask for your name and email so we can get back to you. We will also ask for a name and contact details of a parent/guardian to give consent for you to take part. Your parent/guardian will get an email from aai_research@aai.gov.ie, which will ask them to give consent for you to take part. After this, you will be allowed to take part in the study, and we will be in touch with you with further details.

