

Website Notice in respect of applications from prospective adopters to adopt from a country other than one with which the Authority has an agreed adoption programme

The Adoption Act 2010 (Section 40) limits the choice of Irish resident prospective adoptive parents in respect of intercountry adoption to countries which have acceded to or ratified The Hague Convention of 29 May 1993 on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption or to countries with which Ireland has bi-lateral adoption agreements.

Currently, Ireland has no bi-lateral agreements in place, prospective adopters resident in Ireland wishing to adopt abroad must choose from a country that is a party to the Hague Convention and with whom the Authority has an active adoption programme.

Currently, there are 99 countries who have formally agreed to partake in this Convention, and Ireland has working adoption programmes with 9 countries (Bulgaria, China, Haiti, India, The Philippines*, Poland, Thailand*, USA and Vietnam).

The AAI has accredited Helping Hands Adoption Mediation Agency to facilitate adoptions between these countries and Ireland.

The Authority has set out the following criteria in respect of requests for the opening of a new adoption programme:

- Is there need for intercountry adoption in the country of interest?
- What are the views of International Social Services and UNICEF on the country and its adoption programme?
- What are the experiences of our partners in The Hague Convention and those of our international partners with whom the Authority liaises on a regular basis?
- Can adoptions be effected safely, transparently and legally in that country?
- Will that country deal with an accredited Irish agency?
- Will that country enter into an agreement with the Authority?
- Has the AAI the capacity to properly monitor such programmes?

The above is not an exhaustive list and other criteria deemed to be necessary in the case of a particular country may be added where appropriate.

**Philippines and Thailand programmes currently being transferred to Helping Hands. Further details to follow.*