



## International Forum on Intercountry Adoption & Global Surrogacy V\* Intercountry Adoption Agencies and the HCIA

This report is based on the sessions of Thematic Area 3 (Intercountry Adoption Agencies and the HCIA) of the International Forum on Intercountry Adoption and Global Surrogacy held at the International Institute of Social Studies in Den Haag, the Netherlands, 11–13 August 2014. The remit for this area was 'evaluation of agency regulation - strengths and weaknesses including financial transparency; use of communication technologies in the adoption

process, both pre- and post-adoption; selection and preparation of prospective adoptive parents, including management of expectations.'

### Overall Goals of Thematic Area

Running throughout is the dilemma and debate about whether agencies are the solution to problems of trafficking and malpractice in ICA or a major part of the problem. A good starting point is the *Report*

\* We continue this month with the series initiated in issue 75 with summaries of the final reports from each of the thematic areas of the [International Forum on Intercountry Adoption & Global Surrogacy](#). The event, which brought together experts from different countries, aimed to analyze the regulations, practices and issues related to these two phenomena in order to inform the decisions of the central authorities that have signed the Hague Convention on International Adoption and the Special Commission of the Hague Conference. The images that accompany the text correspond to the working sessions of the forum.

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on *Intercountry Adoption*, drawn up by Hans van Loon for the of the Hague Conference Permanent Bureau which looks at the distinction between 'independent' and 'agency' adoptions from the perspective of receiving countries and countries of origin.

A major issue in respect of agencies has been the issue of financial integrity and concerns over excess profit making. This has led to questions about the meaning of 'improper financial gain' in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) - does this mean that *proper* financial gain is permissible - and how could this be defined? There is concern over agencies which also provide aid to states of origin - or to the orphanage from which children are received.

### Demographic Background

The Forum was held at a critical time in the history of intercountry adoption, twenty years after the entry into force of the 1993 *Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption* (HCIA). The annual number of adoptions recorded by receiving countries peaked at over 45,000 in 2004 but has fallen steadily in the sub-

sequent decade, with less than 17,000 in 2013. This has coincided with a growth in the number of adoptions of children with special needs. The result is a financial crisis in many adoption agencies, a growing number of people approved for adoption who are waiting many years for a child and a rise in the recourse of childless persons to ARTs including global surrogacy. In the same period the number of adoptions from Africa has increased and now accounts for more than a quarter of all ICA.

### Best interests and subsidiarity

This joint session with Thematic Areas 1 and 2 provided an ideal starting point for our discussions. Overall, it was felt that the key question was, 'How can we ensure that accredited adoption bodies work ethically and in the best interest of children?' This was to provide a focus for our conclusions as a result of a final joint session where Nigel Cantwell raised issues arising from his UNICEF report on the Best Interests of the Child published shortly after the Forum.

Kay Johnson spoke movingly of her work in China and pointed out that subsidiarity can be violated by discriminatory



practice in countries of origin, in this case the one-child family policy. She also noted that there have always been enough potential domestic adopters in China but intercountry adopters were preferred - another breach of subsidiarity. The decline in adoptions from Chinese orphanages is due to a reduction in the number of healthy 'adoptable' children in their care. Most are now disabled children, abandoned because parents cannot care for them due to the poor rural health care infrastructure and inadequate healthcare insurance.



### *Roundtable Discussions*

Participants noted that many countries, especially in Africa, did not have the notion of full adoption, a theme developed in the subsequent session on countries of origin. Many argued that the concept is western and ignores the fact that informal adoption and fosterage is the preferred solution in many countries.

Does “subsidiarity” mean that children *should* be made available for intercountry adoption if in-country solutions fail? Participants felt that this was for the country of origin to decide. There was concern about calls from some Western

commentators for many more children to be adopted internationally. What happens when a child without parents has a chance of either being placed with an aunt outside the country or in an unrelated family living in his own country? Should heritage adoptions be seen as ‘domestic’?

There was also discussion of whether intercountry adoption should be preferred over high quality institutional care and/or [n-country foster care. Participants raised the issue of what was meant by “high quality” institutional care and what happens if a first mother indicates a preference for intercountry over domestic adoption. In some outgoing adoptions from the USA, it was thought that birth mothers might prefer intercountry over domestic adoption, a choice which may also be influenced by financial considerations. Some adoptions from the USA to the Netherlands were said to be adoptions by same-sex couples of mixed race children, who were hard to place for domestic adoption, so that the principle of subsidiarity was not broken. The rights of the child were seldom discussed in these debates

There was concern over intercountry adoptions after emergencies such as the

Asian Tsunami and Haiti Earthquake, The Hague Conference issued an information note which stated that ‘...in a disaster situation, like that after the earthquake, efforts to reunite a displaced child with his or her parents or family members must take priority. Premature and unregulated attempts to organise the adoption of such a child abroad should be avoided’. Many felt that there should be *no* adoptions after such emergencies and disasters - a view reflected in the legislation of several receiving countries including Spain and Italy. The reaction of some countries – notably, Canada, France, the USA and the Netherlands – to the earthquake in Haiti was inappropriate, despite the supposed focus on expediting adoptions already in progress, as it was impossible for such adoptions to be carried out with due regard to the principle of subsidiarity.

Most participants felt that private and independent adoptions should not be allowed – one wrote as a comment “NO NO NO” – there was a lack of clarity about the situation with respect to relative adoptions or cases where adoptions took place in the child’s country of origin where the adoptive parents were living at the time, with

the child being subsequently brought into the adopters' home country, which might be many thousands of miles away.

Another major issue identified was where the agency becomes the problem—with concerns over financial arrangements as a market in intercountry adoption developed. There are many agencies in the USA which seek to promote and increase intercountry adoption, spelling out a philosophy of "orphan rescue", often underpinned by strong evangelical Christian beliefs and citing biblical injunctions to adopt, the scriptural/theological justification for which has been challenged by David Smolin. In such cases subsidiarity can be marginalised if any child adopted is seen as gaining by the opportunity to be raised in a good Christian home.

### **Connections to birth culture and birth kin, and the potential for open international adoption**

The second session with Thematic Areas 1 and 2 involved small group discussions with members of all three thematic areas. Barbara Yngvesson spoke about the dangers of the 'clean break' philosophy which seems to characterize most intercountry

adoptions and asked how 'best interest' could be reconceptualised so as to relate to the changing needs and experiences of the adopted person over time?

The presentation by Hollee McGinnis gave us the perspective of an adoptee and referred to her research for the Donaldson Institute, in which she argued that we need to go beyond culture camps and fostering pride in one's heritage to talk about racism and helping adoptive parents and adoptees prepare for racial bias. McGinnis also spoke about *Also-Known-As*, the organization she founded in New York City for adult intercountry adoptees. She went on to challenge the need for 'clean-break' adoptions and asked us to think whether we could create an adoption system that does not re-traumatize children by denying that their birth parents and birth kin matter.

Her final words are worth quoting in full: *Adopting across race, nationality and culture is complex and requires courage, honesty, commitment, and of course love. So we must be willing to talk about the hard stuff - the discrimination, inequalities, and prejudices that exist in the world.*



### **Roundtable Discussions**

Key questions were the role of agencies in states of origin and what agencies in receiving countries should do to respect the rights of birth families. The issue of whether consent was freely given emerged as a major area of concern and built on the discussions of adoptability in the previous session. Questions remained about how the idea of consent could be applied to abandoned children as in the early days of adoption from China. The HCIA requires consent to be given *after* the birth of the child, but many noted that often it is sought earlier.

Participants also explored what role agencies should play in supporting search and reunion by – or on behalf of – adoptees. How might sending countries better provide clear information for adoptees if/when they search for their birth families? This led to consideration of the impact of new communications technologies on the role of agencies in this area.

It was noted that there are now many publications on open domestic adoption in the UK and USA which demonstrate clear advantages for all members of the adoption triad, but there is little written and



virtually no research on open intercountry adoption. Discussion focussed on the feasibility and desirability of more contact. Participants from the United Kingdom noted that domestic adoption with contact was primarily 'letter-box,' which in principle could also be practiced in intercountry adoption, but a recent study suggested that direct contact, especially with grandparents, was often more successful. Other discussion went back to Yngvesson's points about the dominance of a clean break assumption in receiving states and the frequent citing of first parents' belief that their children would keep in touch and eventually return. This was felt to be true of many first families in Africa. The issues surrounding the possibility of 'open' intercountry adoption are discussed in more detail in the report by Riitta Högbacka from Thematic Area 2.

There was also discussion of the role of agencies in arranging homeland tours, especially if these include a search for first families. This can lead to problems for adopters if the first family wants to maintain regular contact – e.g. by Skype – or there is expectation of financial support and for the birth mother if other

members of the family did not know of her experience. Many felt that adoptees should make decisions about searching when they felt ready for it and that some adoptive parents were doing it for their own concerns.

There was agreement between the three streams that first parents continue to be the 'hidden dimension' in intercountry adoption and that the HCIA failed to address their rights, although some argued that often their rights were seen in terms of a right to privacy which could clash with rights of adoptees to more knowledge about their origins..

A final point raised was the importance of acknowledging the role of the extended family, especially in Africa where grandparents often play a crucial role in relation to the so-called AIDS 'orphans'. Any move towards more contact should acknowledge the importance of the wider family and also of siblings who may prove to be the most important potential contact for international adoptees.

### **The role of intermediaries in intercountry adoption and cross-border surrogacy**

Our third session was held jointly with Thematic Area 5 (Global Surrogacy Practices – see report by Marcy Darnovsky). Lisa Ikemoto, reflected on the high-profile surrogacy scandals in California, and the state's legislative responses to them, and Carmel Shalev described the marketing practices of cross-border surrogacy brokers in Israel. The discussions took place against the background publicity about 'Baby Gammy', the child born of commercial surrogacy in Thailand, who was then ostensibly abandoned by the contracting parents

This was an opportunity for both groups to learn from each other and recognize where there were useful lessons to be learned from the longer history of ICA, but also where cross-border surrogacy created new issues where there were no simple parallels. Commentators have looked at the possibility of applying adoption research to the experience of ART (assisted reproductive technologies), arguing that adoption's lessons are particularly relevant when the technology

involves the use of 'donor' sperm, eggs and embryos, thereby creating families in which the child is not genetically related to one or both parents. Lessons include the danger of secrecy and the withholding of information; the need for a focus on the best interests of children; the creation of 'non-traditional' families, particularly as more single, gay and lesbian adults use ART; the impact of market forces; and legal and regulatory frameworks to inform standards and procedures.

The acceptability of commercial surrogacy is hotly debated but many of the issues also apply to 'altruistic' surrogacy. Undertaking a commercial surrogacy arrangement is a legally daunting process that can cost upward of \$70,000 in the USA, compared to India, where it can be arranged with little legal 'red tape' for about \$12,000, including medical and surrogate fees. In the UK the number of parental orders relating to children born to overseas surrogates now matches the number of intercountry adoptions and in Australia there are said to be more 'off-shore surrogacy' arrangements than intercountry adoptions.

### *Roundtable Discussions*

Consideration of the role of the surrogate raised interesting questions about terminology: who is the 'birth' mother in cross-border surrogacy? In Ireland the term 'birth mother' is rejected by many biological mothers of children placed for adoption. They want to be known rather as the 'first' or 'natural' mother of their child.

Who are the intermediaries in cross-border surrogacy and can they be subject to a process of accreditation as required in the HCIA ? Several were cited: -: attorneys; recruiters; brokers; clinics; medical tourism agencies. The problems of sur-



rogacy *agencies* were highlighted by the case of Planet Hospital.

Most of the debates on surrogacy – and especially global surrogacy – have focused on the exploitation of the surrogate in poor countries, who will often leave her own children to live in a clinic while she is pregnant. Some argue that surrogacy offers an opportunity for poor women to earn money that can transform the lives of her own children and that what is needed is regulation of the industry, not banning. Others believe that making surrogacy more legitimate would increase opportunities for illegal adoption, because of the possibility that one can serve as a cover for the other.

For Thematic Area 3, the issue that emerged most strongly was the perceived marginality of the child in most surrogacy arrangements. Little attention seemed to have been paid to when and how (and indeed whether) the child should be told of the circumstances of her birth. Most internationally adopted persons want to learn more about their country of origin and biological/first families and many children born through the provision of third-party sperm or eggs want more information

about the gamete providers. Will children born through surrogacy be told of this, and if so, will they too want more information about the surrogate who gave birth to them? Will some parents want to establish and maintain a relationship with the surrogate? What role should intermediaries play in these situations? These issues become more acute in cross-border surrogacy where the surrogate lives in another country and may be of different racial origin.

Arguments that global surrogacy will replace intercountry adoption because it is cheaper and ensures that the child is young and usually genetically related are rather simplistic – as are suggestions that ICA agencies will move into cross-border surrogacy. Global surrogacy is particularly attractive to same-sex couples, who have very limited opportunities to adopt internationally.

### *Do we need a Hague Convention on Global Surrogacy?*

Most participants in Thematic Area 3 felt that work should continue on a possible convention and that there was certainly a need for international agreements to ensure that commissioning parents were

vetted – although lengthy home studies were seen as inappropriate – and that children born through global surrogacy had the same rights as other children in terms of citizenship and parentage. Any convention should also tackle the financial issues and aim for accreditation of intermediaries and ensure the right of the child to know about the manner of their birth and to information about the surrogate and any donated gametes.

It was recognised that there are many differences between intercountry adoption and global surrogacy and that rules relating to adoption, which is, above all, a measure of child protection for children deprived of their family environment cannot simply be applied to surrogacy. The 2010 HCIA Special Commission ‘viewed as inappropriate the use of the Convention in cases of international surrogacy’ but recommended that the Hague conference should carry out further study of the legal issues surrounding international surrogacy’. This led to a series of preliminary documents culminating in the publication in March 2014 of *A Study of Legal Parentage and the Issues Arising from International Surrogacy Arrangements* which

supports the decision to continue work on a possible convention.

Those in favour pointed to the success of the HCIA in regulating intercountry adoption, ensuring citizenship for those adopted transnationally and seeking to ensure that it was always in the best interests of the child. The HCIA has also sought to establish agreement about the keeping of records of the child's birth. All of these are needed in global surrogacy, as the number of such arrangements continues to grow.

Opponents argued that an international convention would legitimise the procedure and could be manipulated by intermediaries to maximise their profits. Some feared that if there were a treaty from The Hague on issues of the civil status of children born as a result of surrogacy it would be a clear signal to intermediaries and contracting agencies that global surrogacy has a legal stamp of approval and represents a set of contracts that are or should be enforceable. But others noted that the HCIA has been used by birth mothers for international human rights claims and that a surrogacy convention could create similar opportunities for women engaged in reproductive labour for hire.

### 'Special needs' adoption

Our fourth meeting was a joint session with Thematic Area 1 on the topic of intercountry adoption involving children with 'special needs' (SN). The session opened with presentations by two European agencies. Irene van Ark of Wereldkinderen, the Netherlands, focused on the increase in special needs adoption from China, which raised the question of whether there are more SN children available for adoption or just more information that defines them as Special Needs? Data from the CCAA show that children placed are older and often boys as well as being defined as special need.

Paolo Palmerini from CIAI, Italy, stressed that a key point when speaking about children with special needs was the definition. It is difficult to extract relevant data useful for comparison when there is not a uniform definition. The Italian Central Authority distinguishes *bisogni particolari* (particular needs – minor and non-permanent health related problems) and children with *bisogni speciali* (special needs – major and permanent) In 2013, 28 per cent of ICAs were said to involve

children with special needs, but CIAI estimated that 70 per cent of their adoptions could be so classified.

In subsequent discussion, the importance of agencies preparing prospective adoptive parents for children with additional needs was acknowledged especially if they have experienced fertility issues and want to parent a young child. It was felt that there was not a full understanding of what specific skills we should look for in prospective adoptive parents for special needs children.

There was a danger that some may seek such children to avoid the longer wait for a healthy infant. The separation



of home studies and mediation in some countries may make assessment less problematic, especially if linked to preparation courses, but the importance of good accredited bodies has never been higher. The assessment of the prospective adopters, their resources and their motivation, may prove decisive in the success of a late adoption. One participant talked of the need for 'special accredited bodies for special needs children'.

Preparation was seen as vital for any child placed for international adoption, especially those with 'special needs' and old-



er children for whom cross-border placements are more likely to be traumatic and often involve loss of their language and the need to acquire a new one. In the Netherlands, preparatory courses are required for all prospective adopters and these take place before the home studies and are organised by a government body, although agencies may do additional preparation after approval. In most other countries it is up to each agency to design their own preparation course and to determine best practice. Tailoring courses to the needs of a specific child is difficult as the child is often unidentified so that preparation needs to be generalised. Should there be extra training available at the point of referral, which brings a new realm of work trying to identify the needs of a specific child, often with limited information?

A need was also seen for preparation in states of origin for the children moving for adoption, especially where they are older or have special needs. Such children will be aware of being taken away from familiar surroundings and having to acquire a new language and get used to new types of food, The HCIA says very little about 'matching', but participants felt

this was vital for special needs children and required close co-operation between central authorities and accredited bodies in both sending and receiving countries.

It is widely acknowledged that post-adoption support for all adoptive families is currently inadequate. The need for better services is even more important in the case of special needs children placed for intercountry adoption. Those adopting a child with special needs may need life-long support and the accredited body should make such support available at reasonable cost. The value of the involvement of accredited bodies is that they know the adoptive parents and prepare adoption reports to the child's country of origin, but is there a danger that this will distract from the need to make mainstream agencies tackle the issues? It was also felt that support must be provided for the adoptee as an independent person and for birth mothers - hence need to address issues of search and reunion.

Finally, it was felt that more research was needed. Concern over the re-homing' of children in the United States has highlighted the need for receiving countries to ensure the safety of children placed. Ruth

McRoy has noted that a major distinguishing factor in the success of special needs adoptions is the extent to which the adoptive parents have been given realistic assessment of the child's problems. This may be difficult in relation to children placed through intercountry adoption where the inadequacy of medical information has been found to be considerable and where doctors may be ill-informed about conditions in the country from which the child comes. Sending countries should keep accurate records of children placed and make these available to accredited bodies in the destination country.

### **Conclusion and suggestions for change** *Orphan Care, Foreign Aid and Assistance to Birth Families*

Our final session, shared with Thematic Areas 1 and 2, featured a presentation on best interests by Nigel Cantwell with responses by David Smolin and Mark Riley, who spoke of his experience working with community groups in Uganda where donations from the USA are used to build orphanages from which a growing number of children are being adopted. Most of the children entering these institutions are

not orphans, but the orphanage directors need children to justify continued investment.

In the final part of this session all participants in Thematic Area 3 met together and each was invited to reflect on the previous discussions. We returned again to issues surrounding the future of accredited bodies and especially non-governmental agencies. The decline in intercountry adoptions has meant that the income to such agencies from fees has fallen while the growth of special needs placements has increased the cost of home studies, preparation and support. This could reinforce the aggressive strategies of agencies threatened by the reduction of income and tempted to fight against other agencies for those children available for adoption. A further consequence of falling numbers has been that in many states the number of approved prospective adoptive parents far exceeds the number of children available for intercountry adoption, despite which applications are still being accepted, approved and dossiers sent to states of origin.

Given all the publicity about wrongful adoption, agencies could be forgiven

for despairing. But as long as intercountry adoption continues, agencies and other accredited bodies will have a vital role, alongside Central Authorities, in making the Hague Convention effective and in building on its minimal requirements.

It was felt that in some receiving states there were too many agencies (more than 60 in Italy in 2013, eight of which had handled fewer than five adoptions in the year). In the United States there were many more. States of origin often fail to restrict the number of overseas agencies allowed to operate in their country. In Ethiopia there were at one time more than 50 agencies - 17 from the USA alone. Since ratifying the HCIA, the USA has required all agencies working with other HCIA countries to be accredited by the State Department, but other private agencies are allowed to continue to operate in non-Hague countries.

### *Suggestions for Change*

Throughout our discussions there was an awareness of the limited legal powers of the Hague Conference. The convention provides a secure framework but its effective implementation needs 'a wide

range of actors - from child care workers to health care practitioners to judges - who understand its philosophy and objectives and who are given the resources and training necessary to enable them to carry out their duties properly.

### *Central Authorities*

At present, most controls in the system are left to the Central Authorities, who are responsible for accrediting mediating agencies and other bodies involved in the preparation and selection of prospective adopters. A central power is the role of accreditation, which was the subject of

the second Guide to Good Practice from the HCIA. Central Authorities also have powers to decide from which countries their citizens may adopt. Participants felt that all CAs should follow the HCIA expectation that the same standards should be applied if children are adopted from countries that have not ratified the HCIA. Many states of origin now restrict the number of countries and agencies with which they have agreements, an essential step, but one that is contested by many agencies in what is seen as a global market place.

### *Intercountry Adoption Agencies*

It was felt that rigorous accreditation of agencies was essential but that agencies themselves had direct responsibility for promoting good practice. There were concerns about the selection and preparation of prospective adoptive parents, including the management of their expectations and the long waiting periods before the adoption takes place. The resources needed to offer adequate assessment, preparation and post-adoption support are considerable and it is anticipated that many smaller agencies will not be able to continue, as most are dependent on an income from

prospective adopters. Agencies within a country need to work together to tackle these issues and it is essential to avoid competition between agencies - and between receiving states - for those children still in need of placement.

### *Financial Considerations*

Under Article 8 of the Convention, Central Authorities are required to take '...directly or through public authorities, all appropriate measures to prevent improper financial or other gain in connection with an adoption and to deter all practices contrary to the objects of the Convention'. A central concern here was the use of contributions and donations. Such contributions may be required by the state of origin and there continues to be concern that some see intercountry adoption as a source of revenue, as well as reducing the cost of in-country care. Many participants felt that cash donations for child protection must be kept separate from intercountry adoption to avoid pressure on states of origin - or individual orphanages - to release children for adoption



### **The Role of Agencies Post-adoption**

The importance of support for families adopting children with special needs had been discussed but participants stressed that support should be available for all families adopting from overseas. Agencies should pay more attention to the post-adoption needs of children they had placed, but this will need funding from government to support adoptive families. Agencies should also ensure that records are preserved and can be accessed by adoptees.

The role of agencies post adoption is not just about adoptees and their families, it is also about their responsibility to the child's country of origin. Central Authorities are required to send reports on intercountry adoptions to the child's state of origin. At the 2005 Special Commission this was a major concern of those attending, some of whom pointed out that without such reports, rumours of children taken for body parts or being trafficked for sexual abuse would increase.

### **Conclusion**

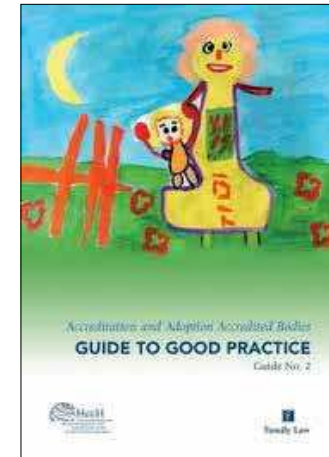
Overall the feeling was that accredited bodies have played a key role in ensuring that intercountry adoption is in the best

interests of the child, but that there was need for careful monitoring by Central Authorities and greater discipline on the part of agencies in determining how many prospective adopters could be approved in the light of falling numbers of adoptions and in restricting the number of files sent to states of origin struggling to find good matches for the smaller number of children available for adoption.

There was also acknowledgement that there were too many agencies that did not act in the responsible manner required by the HCIA and that independent adoptions continued. The assertion that agencies have too often acted primarily in the interest of adoptive parents, while the rights of children and their first families remained secondary, seemed apparent. It was vital that Central Authorities monitor agencies rigorously and withdraw accreditation if standards are not met, but it was felt that only agencies themselves could put this right. The HCCH needed to ensure that both messages were heard by contracting states.

NOTE: For more detailed recommendations of this thematic area, with full references and bibliography and data tables see the main report located at: <http://hdl.handle.net>

## FURTHER READING

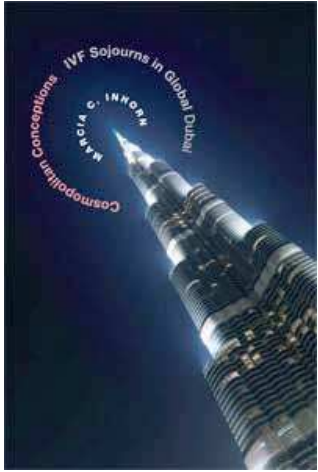


Hague Conference on Private International Law (2013)

**[Accreditation and Adoption Accredited Bodies: General Principles and Guide to Good Practice](#)**

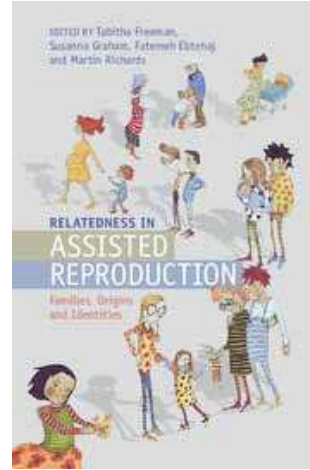
The Hague: Family Law/  
Hague Conference on Private International Law

This Guide will assist the accrediting and supervising authorities in the Contracting States of the *Hague Convention of 29 May 1993 on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption* to perform their obligations more comprehensively at the national level, and thereby achieve more consistency at the international level. It is also hoped that the Guide will assist accredited bodies (or those seeking accreditation) to obtain the best possible understanding of their legal and ethical responsibilities under the Convention. Suggestions for good practice are given to help in the performance of those responsibilities. Prospective adoptive parents might also be assisted to know what could be expected of a professional, competent and experienced accredited body.



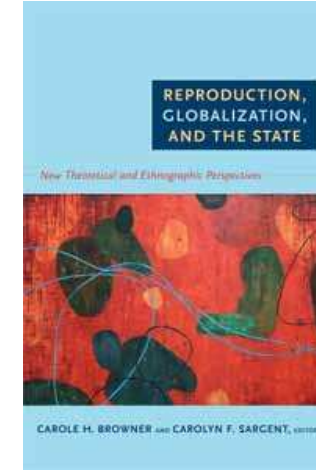
Inhorn, M. C. (2015)  
[Cosmopolitan Conceptions: IVF Sojourns in Global Dubai](#)  
 Durham; London:  
 Duke University Press

In their desperate quest for conception, thousands of infertile couples from around the world travel to the global in vitro fertilization hub of Dubai. In this book Marcia C. Inhorn highlights the stories of 220 “reprotravelers” from fifty countries who sought treatment at a “cosmopolitan” IVF clinic in Dubai. These couples cannot find safe, affordable, legal, and effective IVF services in their home countries. The magnitude of reprotravel to Dubai, Inhorn contends, reflects the failure of countries to meet their citizens’ reproductive needs, which suggests the necessity of creating new forms of activism that advocate for developing alternate pathways to parenthood, reducing preventable forms of infertility, supporting the infertile, and making safe and low-cost IVF available worldwide.



Freeman, T. et al. (2014)  
[Relatedness in Assisted Reproduction: Families, Origins and Identities](#)  
 Cambridge:  
 Cambridge University Press

Assisted reproduction challenges and reinforces traditional understandings of family, kinship and identity. Sperm, egg and embryo donation and surrogacy raise questions about relatedness for parents, children and others involved in creating and raising a child. How socially, morally or psychologically significant is a genetic link between a donor-conceived child and their donor? What should children born through assisted reproduction be told about their origins? Does it matter if a parent is genetically unrelated to their child? What impact does the wider cultural, socio-legal and regulatory context have? In this multi-disciplinary book, an international team of academics and clinicians bring together new empirical research and social science, legal and bioethical perspectives to explore the key issue of relatedness in assisted reproduction.



Browner, C. & Sargent, C. (2011)  
[Reproduction, Globalization, and the State: New Theoretical and Ethnographic Perspectives](#)  
 Durham; London:  
 Duke University Press

This book conceptualizes and puts into practice a global anthropology of reproduction and reproductive health. Leading anthropologists offer new perspectives on how transnational migration and global flows of communications, commodities, and biotechnologies affect the reproductive lives of women and men in diverse societies throughout the world. Based on research in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Western Europe, their fascinating ethnographies provide insight into reproduction and reproductive health broadly conceived to encompass population control, HIV/AIDS, assisted reproductive technologies, paternity tests, sex work, and humanitarian assistance.

## FURTHER VIEWING



Planell, D. (2009)  
***La vergüenza (The shame)***  
 Spain, 107 min.

Pepe and Lucia can not deal with Manu. They have tried everything, but it is useless: the child they adopted barely a year ago is too much for them, and they decided to break the adoption. But soon they realize the price they must pay if they want to go ahead with his plan is high. The film is the debut of David Planell, Goya-nominated screenwriter for "Seven French billiard tables" (co-written with Gracia Querejeta). He has worked in some of the most successful Spanish television series and some well-known films.



Macías, Juana (2016)  
***Embarazados (Pregnant)***  
 Spain, 100 min.

A couple tries to conceive a baby despite some drawbacks: he has poor, lazy and abnormal sperm, and she is in premenopausal stage, despite being only 37 years old.



López Luna, Anna (2014)  
***Bury Them and Keep Quiet***  
 Spain, 102 min.

*Bury and silence*, title of an engraving of Francisco Goya, is a film that explores the haunting landscape of the "two Spains". What is revealed comes not only from a past that can be kept at a distance, but continues to serve the present: the theft of babies in maternity wards. Abuse of medical power, religious control, institutionalized corruption, contempt for the other: words and feelings that resonate from one story to another and reveal procedures during the Franco dictatorship that have continued in democracy. A number of testimonies collected from various regions of Spain: parents and children unveil their stories, which had been silenced for long.



Tober, D. (2015)  
[The perfect donor](#)  
 Moonchaser Productions

*The Perfect Donor* is a fair and balanced exploration into the world of commercial egg donation. Through the personal stories of young women who sell their eggs, so that others can create the families of their dreams, *The Perfect Donor* reveals why women decide to become egg donors, how they feel about the process, and how they think about the children born from their eggs. This film weaves together the tangled intersections of money and altruism, family and women's health, joy and heartbreak, and the business of making babies. While some donors are overjoyed at their role in helping others complete their families and donate again, others discover that the thousands of dollars they receive for their eggs comes at a greater cost.



O'Brien, K. (2014)  
[Given or taken](#)  
 Four Corners – ABC, 44:55 min.

Over five decades thousands of women gave up their newborn children for adoption. While they were supposed to make their decision freely, many claim they were coerced, bullied and their children were effectively stolen.



[PM Gillard apology: full speech](#)

March 2013: Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard has delivered a national apology to victims of forced adoption practices that were in place in Australia from the late 1950s to the 1970s.