



# Glossary of terms

The terms within this Glossary have been defined only for the purposes of the *Protocol for Responding to Allegations of Illicit or Illegal Practices in Intercountry Adoption*. Some terms below are drawn from the [Toolkit for Preventing and Addressing Illicit Practice in Intercountry Adoption](#).

**Abduct/abduction of children:** 'the act of taking a child away illegally, especially using force' (Oxford Dictionary), including through coercion or threats, for the purpose of intercountry adoption. For example, kidnapping, or obtaining a child by falsely informing parents that their baby was stillborn or died shortly after birth.

**Adult adoptee:** a person who came into Australia as a child through intercountry adoption, or another type of overseas adoption, who is now over 18 years old.

**Adoptee:** a person who has been adopted from an overseas country to Australia.

**Adoptive family:** a family with at least one adoptive parent and one adoptee.

**Adoption:** the process by which a person legally becomes a child of the adoptive parent/s and ceases to be a child of his/her existing parent/s.

**Allegations:** a statement, made without giving proof, that someone has done something wrong or illegal.

**Australian Central Authority (ACA):** the Australian Government Department of Social Services is the ACA, responsible for Australia's obligations under the [Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption](#) (Hague Convention), relationships with overseas countries and leadership on national intercountry adoption policy.

**Central Authority:** Central Authorities for intercountry adoption are appointed by Contracting States and are responsible for upholding the standards and safeguards of the Hague Convention.

**Country of origin (State of origin):** the usual country of residence of the child being adopted. This is generally also the child's country of birth.

**Documentation (File / Adoption file):** all documents and information relating to an intercountry adoption.

**Expatriate adoption:** an adoption of a child by an Australian citizen or permanent resident, living overseas for over 12 months or more, through an overseas agency or government authority, without the involvement of Australian authorities.

**Family:** where reference is made to family or birth family instead of parents or birth parents, it is meant to include not only the birth parents but also the close relatives (e.g., siblings, grandparents) living in the same household. When reference is made to adoptive family instead of adoptive parents, it is meant to refer to the family unit composed of the adoptee, their adoptive parent(s) and possible siblings.

**Falsification (of documents):** the act of changing a document such that it contains false information. Falsification is a form of fraud.

**Fraudulent:** dishonest and illegal, or intended to deceive someone for the purpose of obtaining money.

**Hague Convention:** entered into force in Australia in 1998. It is an international convention that provides safeguards and rules for the adoption of children between Contracting States.

**Illegal adoption:** an adoption resulting from abuses, such as abduction, the sale of, traffic in, and other illegal or illicit activities against children.

**Illicit adoption:** an adoption that is conducted without respect for the rights of the child or for the safeguards of the Hague Convention.

**Intercountry adoption:** an adoption of a child from an overseas country with which Australia has an official adoption program. The child must be determined as legally able to be placed for adoption and has generally had no previous contact with the adoptive parent(s).

**Intercountry adoption programs:** adoption programs through which Australia has an official partnership with an overseas country for the facilitation of intercountry adoption.

**Irregularity:** something that is not correct or acceptable, or that does not follow a rule or a normal procedure.

**Jurisdictional Support Guides (JSGs):** provide jurisdictional information to individuals who suspect and may wish to report illicit/illegal practices in intercountry adoption. The JSGs complement the Protocol.

**Law enforcement authorities (LEA):** any government agency responsible for law enforcement within a specific jurisdiction through the employment and deployment of law enforcement officers and their resources.

**Birth Parent:** parent(s) of the child at birth.

**Pattern (of illicit practices):** illicit practices should be understood as constituting a pattern where there have been repeated abuses of a similar type over a given period, usually involving the same actors.

**Prospective adoptive parent(s) (PAPs):** person or persons wishing to adopt, regardless of whether they have been determined to be eligible and suitable for adoption.

**Protocol:** refers to the *Protocol for Responding to Allegations of Illicit or Illegal Practices in Intercountry Adoption*.

**Receiving State:** the new country of residence of the adopted child after being moved from their country of origin (State of origin).

**Sale of children:** 'any act or transaction whereby a child is transferred by any person or group of persons to another for remuneration or any other consideration'. This includes, among other things, 'improperly inducing consent, as an intermediary, for the adoption of a child in violation of applicable international legal instruments on adoption.'

**State and Territory Central Authority (STCA):** individual Central Authorities established in each state and territory government to manage the process of intercountry adoption in Australia.

***Toolkit for Preventing and Addressing Illicit Practices in Intercountry Adoption (the PAIP Toolkit):*** a toolkit of documents developed by the Hague Conference on Private International Law, in consultation with Contracting States, to support Contracting States in the prevention and management of illicit and illegal practices in intercountry adoption.

**Trafficking:** the movement of children for the purposes of illegal adoption or other forms of exploitation, which may involve the payment of money or other compensation.

