

# Online survey:

<http://oaks.korean.net/event/survey.jsp>

*The following questions concern use of online services. The results will be used to improve Korean.net, an internet-based service developed by OKF to promote the rights of overseas Koreans and facilitate communication.*

**1. Are you a member of any organization(s) of overseas adopted Koreans (OAK)?**

**If yes, please state the name of your organization.**

Yes ( 46 )                      No ( 72 )                      no answer( 2 )

**2. Do you subscribe to OAK e-mails or newsletters via Internet? If yes, please indicate**

Yes ( 13 )                      No ( 103 )                      no answer( 4 )

**3. On which areas do you think *Korean.net* should focus for OAKs?**

searching for birth families (39), travel (18), job opportunities (19), studying Korean language (31), programs for experiencing Korean culture (18), everything (23) etc.

"This is just my opinion... I think it would be great if you could focus on searching for birth families. Just in my experience as a Korean adoptee, I think that I have dealt with a lot of pain from not knowing anything about who I am and where I came from. Basic questions like why do I look like I do and what happened in my adoption, things like that. How come adoptees always have to re-learn everything? I am not interested in culture, language or THEIR history. We were sent away for a reason, we were not wanted, we were sent away as some product of Korea. What has Korea ever done for us? Except of taking everything from us? I believe that you should talk about the NEGATIVE SIDES about Korean adoption too, or does the Korean Government sponsor this place? Last time I was in Korea, the Korean adoption organizations told us to "Love Korea," because "Korea loves you," I don't think so...

**4. What functions do you think are the most important in building networks for OAKs?**

network for adoptee and adoptee organization (16), provide adoptees' meeting (17), fund for adoptee organization (3), keeping in touch with adoptees and organizations (7), post adoption service (24), don't know (4) etc.

*The following questions are about OAK programs held in Korea, such as Korean culture camps, visiting or studying in Korea.*

**5. Are you aware of programs for OAKs provided by organizations such as OKF, universities**

**in Korea, and adoption services?**

Yes ( 37 )                      No ( 73 )                      no answer ( 10 )

**6. Have you ever participated in any of the programs? If yes, when and which program was it?**

Yes ( 18 )                      No ( 92 )                      no answer ( 10 )

2004 OKF Summer cultural camp, NIIED, YWCA, World Korea Festival, Holt Summer School, adoptees camp in their citizenship countries, etc.

**7. Do you have any suggestion or opinion on how it can be improved to offer you better services? Please write in detail.**

More free time, not only for English translator but also another language. Discussion with professor or counselor about adoption issue, Discussion with Korean volunteers about adoption issue, More information about birth family searching, More information about Korean language study scholarships, etc.

**8. What did you like most about the program?**

Meet other Korean overseas adoptees from other countries (22), meet Korean (counselor) (20), opportunity for visiting Korea (5), etc.

*The following questions are about birth family search.*

**9. Are you interested in searching for your birth families? If yes, why?**

Yes ( 87 )                      No ( 27 )                      no answer ( 6 )

**10. Have you ever tried to search for your birth family? If yes, what activity did you do at that time?**

Yes ( 51 )                      No ( 20 )

I would like to know where I came from and why I was given up for adoption. I visited Korea in 1994 and searched for my birth parents by visiting both of the orphanages I stayed at before being transferred to the US. I'm sure I'll go to the adoption services; ask around for how others did it. I only want information however; I don't really desire (yet, maybe) a meeting or "reunion."

**11. If you are interested in searching for your birth family in future, what will you do?**

Ask other OAKs or InKAS, other organization for adoptees, request to adoption services, search Internet, etc.

**12. If you previously searched for your birth family, what do you think was the biggest obstacle?**

Lack of information (42), need translator (8), etc.

**13. Did you meet your birth family?**

Yes ( 2 )                      No ( 73 )                      no answer ( 25 )

**14. If yes, do you think the reunion brought about any changes or difficulties in your life? In what way?**

Cultural difference (23), change of positive way, happy about meeting birth family, no problem (8), etc.

My reunion brought me the truth. The truth of my history, it locked up all the last questions I had been thinking of. But also it made me realize that I would never be a Korean, I accepted after 23 years that I was Swedish, and that I will die one day as one. The search is still going on, and if there will be a reunion it will bring a lot of changes. Can't explain yet. Since it depends on the search result. A lot of new questions have of course been brought up, but mostly I am happy about finding family.

**15. Are you keeping contact with your birth family regularly after the first reunion?**

Yes ( 16 )                      No ( 18 )

**16. If you are not, would you like to contact them again?**

Yes ( 2 )                      No ( 7 )

**17. Do you find it helpful sharing other OAKs' experiences on searching for their birth families?**

Yes ( 53 )                      No ( 7 )

*The following questions are on studying on Korea, long-term stay in Korea, and working in Korea.*

**18. Are you interested in studying Korean language?**

Yes ( 99 )                      No ( 13 )                      no answer ( 7 )

**19. If you have studied Korean before, how did you do it?**

via Internet ( 4 ), attend Korean schools in Korea ( 8 ), attend Korean schools in their

citizenship countries ( 25 ), tutor ( 7 ), adoptee camp ( 1 ), etc.

**20. Would you like to get a permanent job and live in Korea?**

Yes ( 49 )      No ( 53 )      don't know ( 8 )      no answer ( 10 )

**21. Have you ever visited Korea before? If yes, when and for how long?**

Yes (63, more twice 18)      No ( 48 )      no answer ( 8 )

**22. If yes, what was the biggest difficulty you had while you were in Korea? Did you experience any personal change since then?**

Language and culture were the biggest issues. I wasn't made to feel that I was Korean, Koreans rejected me, wouldn't accept me as being Korean, I couldn't communicate with anyone, I didn't understand the culture and the finer nuances of the culture. I felt lost. It was a horrible experience and yet one of the best in my life. Since returning I have felt "more Korean." I have a better understanding of Korean Americans, Korean culture, etc. In the beginning I had problems with communicating with Koreans and adapting to Korean culture. I feel proud about my Korean heritage. Communication was very difficult since I only speak English and Korean people did not speak English very well. Now I know a little more about my country of birth and the people who live there. I like the country and the people, and feel great about and proud of my origin. Korea is not any longer a big misterium or a taboo for me.

***The last section deals with the future directions of policies and projects for OAKs***

**23. What is your opinion on Korea and Korean people?**

(I love them. I feel a strong connection to my heritage. Completely open right now. I haven't known too many Koreans, a few Korean Americans, and over the years Korean adoptees and I suppose I don't have an opinion on any group of people, but so far, I have enjoyed everyone. Don't really have an opinion, as Koreans as a whole people. I do know that my birth mother had to give me up at over 4 years old, because I was half white, fathered by an American. That was 1957. How can I answer this question? Korea is my motherland and Korean people are my people. My American culture is so vastly different than Korean culture, but I am learning about Korean culture and learning to accept it and embrace it. I love Korea, and I think Korean people are generally warm, affectionate, and helpful, but I finally accepted a hard reality and truth that most adoptees experience and have hard times coping with: that I won't be accepted and that I don't belong to my own country of birth. I challenge this to the Korean community, because even though I did not grow up here, I still consider myself Korean~ it is hard for Koreans to accept this kind of discrepancy because it means admitting to some kind of shame. I don't want to bring shame on Koreans, but I just hope that I can be treated with some

dignity~ that is all I want, and think adoptees have a right to.

**24.If you want to get information on Korea, which do you think is the most useful method?**

searching Internet (49), participating in visit Korea programs (26), visiting Korea and meeting Koreans (16), books (7), meeting other adoptees and sharing of experience (13) etc.

**25.In what area of Korea are you most interested? Choose one.**

- |                 |                 |                                |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| ( 69 ) Culture  | ( 5 ) History   | ( 5 ) Searching birth families |
| ( 19 ) Politics | ( 4 ) Education | ( 5 ) Other adoption issues    |
| ( 7 ) Others    | ( 7 ) no answer |                                |

**26. Do you regard yourself as a Korean or a member of Hanminjok (Korean people)?**  
**yes ( 46 )**

A member of Hanminjok. American, but racially Korean, because of my face.

Difficult question. I would say 50%/50%. I was asked some years ago I would have said no.

double-ethnic. ethnically yes, but culturally international.. I feel both Swiss and Korea at the same time.

I am born here, Korea. I am ethnically both Korean and American.

I am Korean because I was born there and of Korean. I am Korean to them in the US, but am American to Korean.

I am proud of my Korean heritage and want to know. I cannot be a fully member, but I try to find a niche where I belong. I consider myself Korean first. I feel both Danish and Korea. I feel half Danish, half Korean. I feel Korean but I do not feel that I am a part of the Korean people due to cultural differences. I feel part of the Korean diaspora.

I see myself as both Korean and Swedish before my first travel to Korea. I was more Swedish. I was born in Korea. My face is Korea. I'm of Korean heritage. It is part of who I am, Korean /Danish, ethnically Korean, culturally Danish

The older, become, the more, realize that an important part of me is Korean.

**No (20)**

Culturally the difference is too great. I am Korean on the outside, American on the inside. I do not know enough about the culture, not knowing the language is also an issue. I feel more Swedish the longer I am here in Korea

I feel Norwegian. I feel real French. Only my face is Korean. Korean outside but French inside. My culture is French - I get French education. Some ways I feel, but not totally.

**I don't know (50)**

Half Korean. Adopted Korean

both! I feel French and Korean. generally, I am Korean with genetic family here but I am an American.

French & Korean cultures. I am Korean, by nationality. I feel like a Dane with roots in the east. I feel like a Duke, but I am aware of my roots. I have many Korean friends, but cannot speak Korean. I would like to gain more of my culture heritage. It's hard, but I have to be proud of being Korean. Korean and Danish. Korean/American. Part of me is Korean, part of me Swedish. Physically I'm Korean, but that's all. Some things for and against. sometimes yes and sometimes no ! I feel Korean for specific label.

**No answer (4)**

Adopted Koreans are also a part of Korea. I am both now. I feel like a Norwegian, but I am also very happy being in Korea. I identify myself as Korean. Korean-American adoptee, neither nor, I look Koreans and do understand that.

**27. Do you have any suggestion or opinion on what the Korean government should do for OAKs?**

Support birthparent search (Give you the legal right to fetch the full file at the adoptions agencies)  
(22)

Support OAK organizations (20)

Stop adoption overseas (encourage domestic adoption, Support counseling) (16)

Job opportunities (6)

Dual citizenship (5)

Summer programs and Language courses (12)