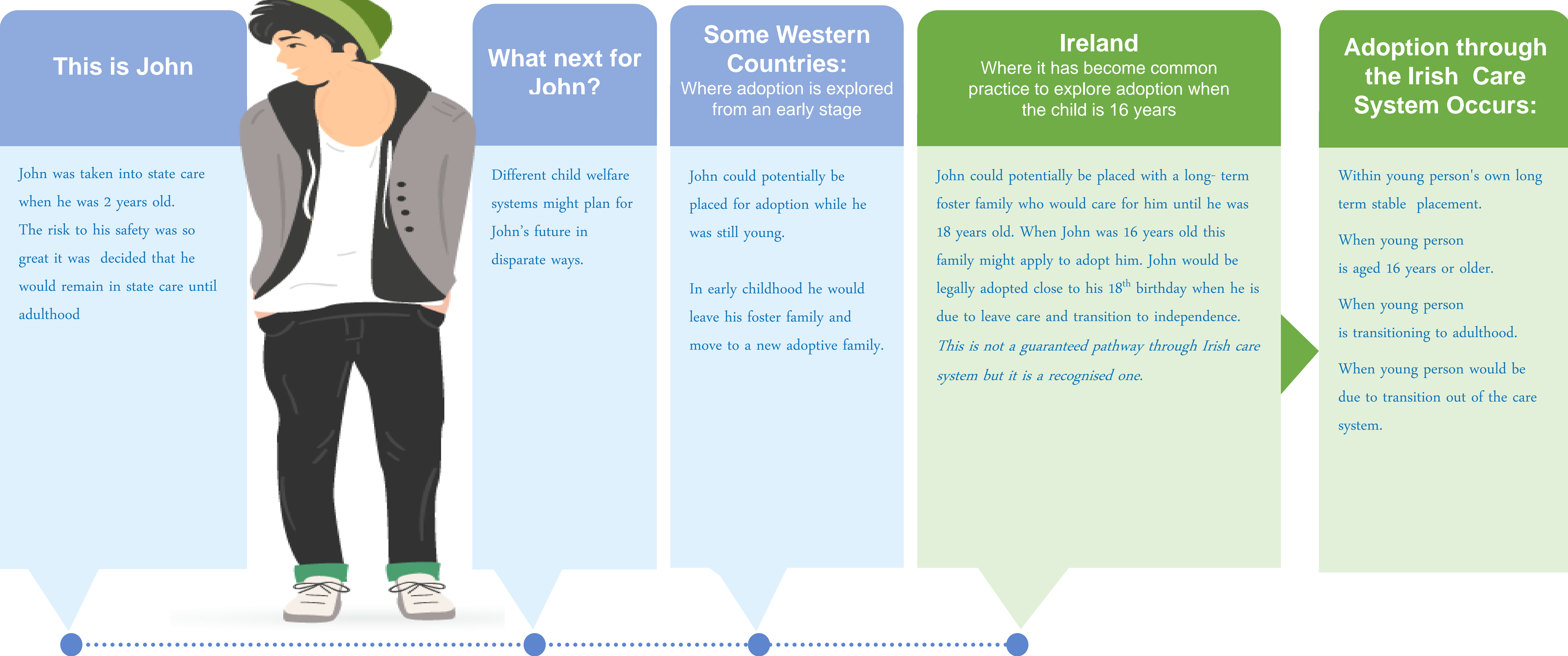




# The Lived Experience of Young Adults Adopted Late by their own Long-Term Foster Carers

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## The issues at the centre of this study:

- Late adoption from within a stable foster placement changes legal status but not practical circumstances.
- The change in status from 'being in care' to 'being adopted', occurs as the young person is due to exit care and potentially holds symbolic meaning that continues to be significant in early adulthood.
- Being adopted, as the young person exits care, potentially causes an emotional shift and impacts their experiences of transition in multiple areas of their life.

*The Irish System of late adoption creates an ideal 'laboratory' from which to study these issues.*

## Research Questions

1. What is the lived experience of young adults adopted late from long term stable care?
2. How does late adoption, from within a stable foster placement, impact the young adults' experiences of youth transitions?

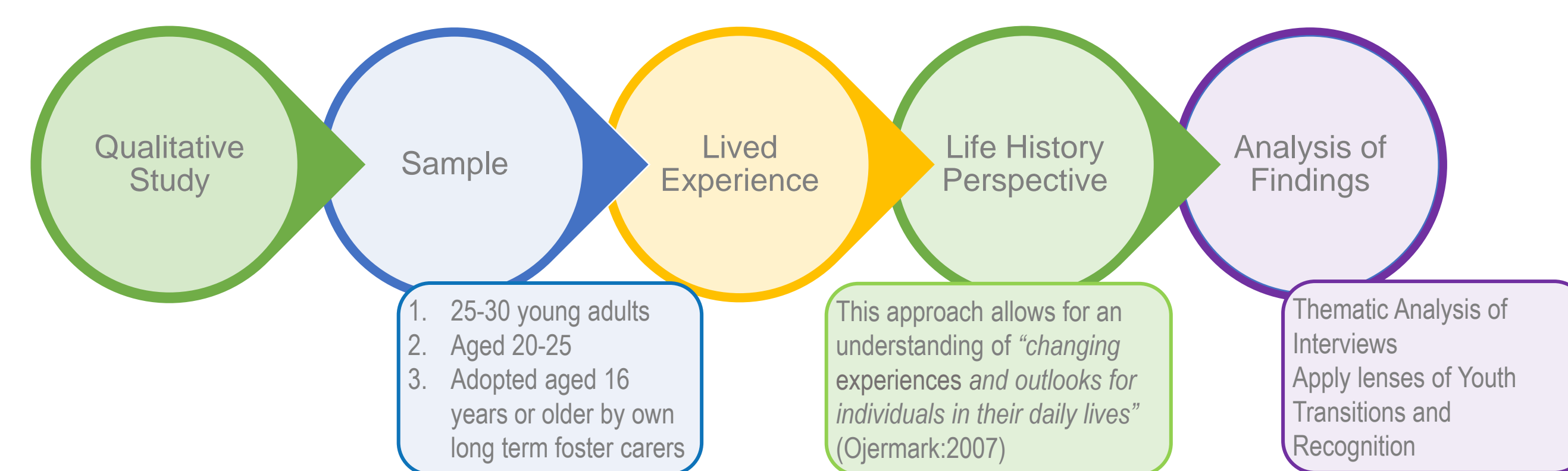
## Literature

1. Current literature focuses on adoption-from-care as a means of providing secure attachments through placement stability for young children in state care. (Tresiliotis, 2002; Haight et al, 2003; Barth et al, 2005; Dance and Rushton, 2005; Hanna et al, 2011; Biehal, 2012).
2. The lens of transitions is increasingly used to understand experiences of care leavers moving from care to independence. (Gilligan, 2018; Storo, 2018; Stein, 2012; Mendes, 2005).
3. Attachment remains of significant importance for looked after children but the lens of recognition has begun to be applied to understand childcare issues (Thomas, 2012; Warming, 2015; Ridley et al, 2016; Paulsen, 2017; Houston and Montgomery, 2017)

## Potential Contribution of the Study

1. Provide lived experience accounts of late adoption from stable long-term care gaining insight into the meaning young adults attach to being adopted late and how this impacts their lives beyond childhood into adulthood.
2. Contribute to our understanding of how young adults process the shift from care status to adopted status in their late teenage years and how this interacts with other experiences of transition.
3. Apply new theoretical perspective of 'Recognition' and 'Youth Transitions' to this issue revealing the potential symbolic meaning young adults attach to being adopted late.

## Study Design



## Key Considerations & Challenges

1. Engaging Stakeholders
2. Recruitment

## Next Steps

1. Seek ethical approval from my university and from Tusla; the Child and Family Agency responsible for child welfare in Ireland.
2. Continue with literature review
3. Convene an Advisory Committee.
4. Commence Recruitment and Data Collection.

## Contact Details



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