

# Participant Information Sheet – DOCTORAL STUDY

**Research topic:**

Floundering or flourishing? Exploring Ukrainian elementary school teacher understandings of their professional experience

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**Invitation**

You are being invited to take part in a doctoral research study. This invitation has important information about the reason for the study, what you will be asked to do if you decide to be involved in this research, and the way information about you will be used if you choose to participate. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take some time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. When you are ready, kindly respond by November 29, 2021, to the email address for the principal investigator, listed above.

Thank you for reading this information and for your consideration to participate.

**Purpose of study**

This doctoral investigation seeks to investigate Ukrainian elementary school teacher perceptions of professional flourishing within their current educational environment. The research question for this study is: *What does it mean to flourish professionally for Ukrainian elementary school teachers?* In connection with this, I also hope to gain insights into the relationship between professional and personal flourishing: how has this relationship evolved? What evidence, if any, is there of the merger or separation of these constituents of teacher experience? I will also solicit teacher opinions about the relationship between professional flourishing and continuous professional development, as well as teachers' views about a preferred educational future for the evolving democracy of Ukraine.

**Participants**

This study will involve twelve (12) elementary school teachers from different regions of Ukraine (six (6) each from eastern and western Ukraine, or, four (4) - western Ukraine, four (4) - eastern Ukraine, along with four economic migrants currently abroad).

**Nature of participation**

Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to join one (1) focus group facilitated by me, the principal investigator, lasting approximately one and a half (1.5) hours, followed approximately three (3) weeks later by one (1) semi-structured individual interview (lasting approximately one (1) hour). Each of these sessions will be scheduled in coordination with participants and will be conducted using the University of Glasgow official and secure Zoom online meeting platform (designated links to each session will be sent out), and the sessions will be recorded for the purposes of data analysis related to this doctoral study.

To address the research question given above, this study will involve two (2) visually based data collection techniques, namely the ‘River of Experience’ and autophotography (photo elicitation). You will be asked to produce one 'River of Experience' and AT LEAST one (1) personally relevant photograph related to the research question, which may be presented separately or as a component of your 'river'. During the online focus group, I will provide a brief introduction to my research, followed by a presentation of portions of several sample ‘rivers’ and photos, to acquaint you with what I will be asking you to produce as part of your participation. (The sample ‘rivers’ and photos will reflect my own professional teacher flourishing journey). **No special knowledge, skills, or training are required to produce these data artifacts.** You will be instructed to produce your own professional teacher flourishing ‘river’ and representative photo(s) in the period of time between the focus group and interview.

Please be advised that your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may choose to pause or withdraw your participation at any time in the process, with no prejudice and no reason required. Should you choose to end your participation at any time, there will be no personal or professional repercussions whatsoever. You may contact me at any time during the research process should you wish to pause or withdraw.

**Privacy, confidentiality, and data management**

Confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines. To protect your privacy and confidentiality, all data will be de-identified, meaning that any *personal* details will be replaced by codes to which only I, the Principal Investigator, retain the legend, and kept in a secure location. In addition, all electronic data collected will be encrypted and stored on the University of Glasgow secure servers/digital storage space (available by password-only access to myself, the Principal Investigator), and paper data will be kept in a secure locked location. All personal data will be securely destroyed by 15/12/2023.

According to the university’s data management policy, the *research* data will be transferred to the secure Enlighten research data storage platform, where they will be retained and then disposed of after 10 years. Please be advised that the retained research data may be used for journal articles or conference papers following the conclusion of the study. Data sets suitable for future research will be openly available via the Enlighten data repository. However, all data will retain their confidentiality through de-identification and pseudonymization.

Please be advised, as well, that total anonymity/confidentiality may be impossible to guarantee; for example, in the unlikely event of disclosure of harm or danger to any of the participants. In such an instance, participants will be contacted and consulted.

**Possible risks or discomforts**

To the best of my knowledge, your participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk to you beyond that of everyday life. In this regard, your participation in this study may involve the following risks: you may feel emotional or upset during the focus group or the interview, insofar as your feelings and experiences related to your professional life during your teaching career will be investigated. If you should become uncomfortable at any time, you will be free not to answer or to skip to the next question.

**Possible benefits for me or others**

There is potential for participants to benefit professionally from this study by gaining insights into their own and one another’s conditions for professional flourishing. Additionally, the opportunity to create visual data artifacts may prove valuable both for personal professional development and pedagogically for application in the classroom (be it physical or online). What’s more, by sharing your knowledge, experience, and views about what contributes to and detracts from professional flourishing, you will be contributing valuable new insights that can be used for future scholarly journal articles, academic conference presentations, and future research. Your participation will also provide important evidence of the success and challenges of using visual research methods in educational research. Finally, the opportunity to conduct research with you, as fellow practitioners, on issues related to professional teacher flourishing, can only serve to better inform my own practice and that of my colleagues.

For your information, this study has been approved by the Ethics Committee of the College of Social Sciences, University of Glasgow.

To pursue any complaint about the conduct of the research: contact the College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer, Dr. Muir Houston, email: [Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk).

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