

## ADOPTION FROM BULGARIA

The Bulgarian program gives excellent opportunities to adopt a Caucasian child with medical and social histories.

Bulgaria ratified the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption in 2002. Adoption of a Bulgarian child by foreigners is governed by the Bulgarian legislation.

The Loving Heart International Adoption Agency was registered in Bulgaria with the Central Adoption Authority: the Ministry of Justice and established excellent working relationship with the Department of Intercountry Adoptions of the Ministry of Justice of Bulgaria.

The prospective adoptive parent(s) must be a "person of full capacity who is not deprived of parental rights". Married couples have priority over single adoptive applicants. The adopters must be at least 18 years old and minimum 15 years older than the child. There is no age restriction on the adoptive applicants.

All children who are adopted in Bulgaria come from state orphanages named "Homes for Medical and Social Care for Children". The children are being cared for by specially trained childcare providers and supervised by medical and other professionals: psychologists, rehabilitation therapists, teachers, social workers, etc.. The level of the physical, emotional and living conditions for these children was significantly improved. Children are legally available for international adoption at the age of one and over with comprehensive medical records, family history and photographs/video.

When you, the adoptive applicants, have received a favourable assessment from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services in Ontario or from the authority in your state/province of residence, the adoption dossier is sent to the agency's facilitator in Bulgaria, who will submit the dossier to the Central Adoption Authority for registration and approval.

The Ministry of Justice keeps the Central Registry for all children, available for international adoption and all foreign adoptive applicants. The proposal of a child will be made by the Central Adoption Authority. If you accept the proposal in a face-to-face meeting with your adoption practitioner (or in a method approved by your state/province of residence), you travel to Bulgaria to meet the child in person. Both adoptive parents, if you are married, are to attend this meeting. If you are not able to travel you must present written explanations.

The formal acceptance of the child is to be done when you return to Canada. You would have an opportunity to consult with various adoption specialists in Bulgaria and Canada in order to make your approve the proposed child.

The agency will forward the signed Consent to Adopt with the Ministry's Approval to the Bulgarian Adoption Authority. The legal process will continue in Bulgaria.

According to the Bulgarian Adoption Law, the legal time for finalization of the adoption will be approximately 3 months. To complete the adoption process two trips are required. The duration of each trip is approximately 5 to 6 days. You are NOT required to be present at the Court hearing.

When the lawyer/facilitator has obtained the adoption order, the new birth certificate, the child's passport, and the child's visa, you will be advised to fly to Bulgaria and reunite with the child. Only one of the parents could travel to bring the child home.

Bulgarian legislation requires four post adoption reports for two years: 6, 12, 18 and 24 months after the child is home.

Loving Heart International Adoption Agency will provide full assistance in every step of the adoption process in Canada and in Bulgaria.

For more details on adoption from Bulgaria, please contact the agency at:

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