

# Adopting From Bulgaria

As with all of our adoption programs, you must first participate in a general information meeting prior to contracting with the agency. This can be done via telephone for families who reside outside of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Once this meeting has taken place, and you have signed the contracts and paid the initial agency fees, we immediately begin working on your home study, foreign dossier, and USCIS approval. Our agency strives to offer the fullest level of support and services possible - even sending for apostilles and document authentications on your behalf in order to complete your adoption dossier in the quickest manner possible. While there are many aspects outside of our control with adoption and foreign adoptions in particular, we have found during our years of experience that our hard work on things we can control - paperwork, preparing and authenticating dossiers, etc. – usually quickens your overall adoption process.

The first step in any adoption is to obtain an approved home study. If you live in Texas, Hope International will complete the home study for you. If you live out of state, we will assist you in finding a home study agency. After your home study has been completed we submit it to USCIS for you and we will begin work on your dossier. Once you receive USCIS approval, and send your dossier to Bulgaria for translation, legalization and submission to the Ministry of Justice, you are ready to be matched with a referral. The submission of your dossier is assisted by our partners in Bulgaria, AMOR.

The issuance of a referral depends on your child preferences and can take as little as a few months if you are open to an older child, sibling group, or a child with special needs, or up to five years for a younger child with no known special needs. The children available to adopt are of Roma, Turkish, and Bulgarian heritage. The youngest children are 18 months old.

If you are approved by Bulgaria and accept a referral, you will travel to Bulgaria as soon as possible for the first trip. Hope International will assist you with travel arrangements and with preparing for your trip. On the first trip, 5 days will be spent visiting your child in his or her region. At the end of this visit, if you choose to proceed with the adoption, we will help you file an official form stating you wish to adopt the child you are visiting.

Once the documentation is complete, you will return to the United States to wait for the paperwork to be approved by the Ministry of Justice in Bulgaria and for the adoption to become final. The time this will take is very difficult to predict. It will likely be between 3-5 months, but could take even longer.

While we recognize how frustrating this wait can be, it is important to understand and respect that foreign governments take the question of international adoption very seriously, and there are many steps involved before you can bring your child home. As your agency, we know this time can be one of the most challenging, and we are here to support you as you wait.

**You will be notified as soon as the adoption is final in Bulgaria so you can make travel preparations for the second trip. This trip will be a minimum of 12 days, and only one parent is required to travel. During this time, the foreign representative from AMOR will assist you in obtaining the following for the child: adoption certificate, a new birth certificate, a medical examination, a passport, and a visa.**

**When you return to the United States, Hope will continue to support you as your family adjusts to the adoption. Bulgaria requires post-adoption supervision for 2 years after the adoption has been finalized.**



## Requirements to be Eligible to Adopt from Bulgaria

1. You must be a U.S. citizen or in legal status and married to a U.S. citizen.
2. If unmarried, you must be at least 25 years old.
3. Perspective adoptive parents must be at least 15 years older than the child they are adopting, but there is no maximum age.
4. Bulgarian Marriage Requirement: Perspective adoptive parents can be a heterosexual married couple or a single person.