

Nightlight® Christian Adoptions
International Adoption Program Description
Bulgaria



GENERAL INFORMATION

The country of Bulgaria is situated between Romania and Turkey in Southeastern Europe, bordering the Black Sea. This small country has one of the richest folk heritages worldwide. Bulgaria is home to Plovdiv, the 6th oldest city in the world, dating back thousands of years. Sofia, the capitol of Bulgaria, is the second oldest city in Europe. Due to its rich history, scenic landscapes, and numerous museums and restaurants, Bulgaria is a popular destination for many tourists. Bulgaria is party to The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Hague Adoption Convention). Therefore, all intercountry adoptions between Bulgaria and the United States must meet the requirements of the Convention and U.S. law implementing the Convention.

Bulgaria adoptions are conducted through a collaborative effort of a Hague accredited adoption agency in the US and by the Bulgarian Central Adoption Authority (Ministry of Justice).

Information on international adoptions from Bulgaria can be found at:

- <http://travel.state.gov/content/adoptionsabroad/en/country-information/learn-about-a-country/bulgaria.html>: Information on international adoptions from Bulgaria on the U.S. Department of State Web site
- <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3236.htm>: Information on the country of Bulgaria on the U.S. Department of State Web site
- <http://www.bulgariatravel.org/en>: Bulgaria tourism information

CHILDREN AVAILABLE

- Both boys and girls are available for adoption
- Children as young as 1 year and as old as fifteen are available for adoption. (wait time for a referral of a child under 8 years old can be up to 5 years)
- Most of the children are of Roma descent and have olive skin and dark hair
- Children over age 7, Sibling groups of older children, and children with special needs are readily available.

ELIGIBILITY TO ADOPT

Adoptive parents should be at least 15 years older than the child they are adopting and no older than 50 years, although Nightlight in general considers it best that there be no more than 45 years between you, the parents, and your child. This requirement can be more flexible with families adopting school-age children and children with special needs. Bulgaria also has no restrictions on family size, making it a great option for larger families. Married heterosexual couples and single women and men are accepted into the program.

PROCESS

1. Make application to Nightlight Christian Adoptions.
2. Complete the home study and File I-800A with US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
3. Prepare dossier while completing home study if pursuing a waiting child
4. Accept a referral of a waiting child once home study is nearly complete and awaiting Immigration approval (I-800A Adoption Approval)
5. Complete commitment documents to “hold” a child for a pre-approval before Immigration Approval and dossier are complete
6. If waiting for a referral of a child instead of selecting a waiting child, complete dossier and include I-800A Adoption Approval from Immigration
7. Dossier sent to Bulgaria, where it is translated and legalized and then submitted the Ministry of Justice.
8. Complete official referral review with Nightlight’s Social Services Department
9. Once matched, must commit to the child within 2 months from official referral
10. Once committed to a child, both parents (if married) travel within a month to visit child
11. Visit child for 4-5 business days
12. At the end of the visit, while in Bulgaria, both parents (if married) sign a commitment letter to adopt the child and Power of Attorney to file adoption case with the court
13. Travel home

14. File the I-800 form that includes the child's information with Immigration here in the United States. Immigration will forward the approval to the Consular section of the U.S. Embassy in Sophia, Bulgaria.
15. The Bulgarian representative will pick up Article 5 from the U.S. Embassy and take it to the Ministry of Justice in Sofia.
16. The representative will receive a court hearing date, which the representative will attend on behalf of the family.
17. The court will issue an adoption decree.
18. The family travels to Bulgaria for 7-10 days to pick up their child, get the official medical exam, and obtain the child's U.S. visa at the Consular section of the U.S. Embassy. (Only one parent needs to go to Bulgaria for the second trip.)

TRAVEL & ADOPTION

You receive a referral of a child from Nightlight Christian Adoptions through the Bulgarian Ministry of Justice. The referral will include a brief social history of the child, and the current health and development of the child. We highly recommend that you have this information reviewed by a doctor who specializes in international adoption before you make a decision. Once you decide to accept a referral, you will be considered "matched" with the child. You coordinate travel dates with Nightlight and will travel to Bulgaria a month of accepting your referral. Both parents are required to travel in this initial trip. During your trip, you will visit your child for 4 to 5 business days getting to know your child and begin bonding with him or her. During these daily bonding visits, a social worker will observe your interactions with the child and prepare a recommendation for the court. At the end of your bonding trip, you will meet with our Bulgarian representative sign the official referral acceptance and the power of attorney to be represented at the court hearing. The court hearing is usually scheduled 6-8 weeks after your 1st trip, depending on how quickly the necessary document on the child are obtained and how quickly you complete and file your I-800 form with USCIS. After the court hearing, the adoption becomes final and the adoption decree is issued 7-10 days later. Once you receive the court decree, our Bulgarian representative will obtain a new birth certificate and schedule appointment for your child's passport, medical exam, and visa. Once the appointments are set, you will be provided travel dates to come and pick up your child. One parent or both may travel on the second trip, which will take 7-10 days. While in Bulgaria, you will take your child to apply for a passport, take your child to get evaluated at the medical clinic approved by the Embassy, and visit the US Embassy in Sofia to obtain your child's visa.

POST ADOPTION

Within 30 days of your arrival home, you must have a home visit by your home study provider. Your home study provider will prepare post-adoption reports and submit them to Nightlight at 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, 24 months, 30 months and 36 months after the adoption is finalized. These reports include your child's developmental progress and pictures. This is a very serious commitment; Nightlight is committed to showing the Bulgarian Adoption Committee and birth families that children adopted by US citizens are healthy and well cared for.

Compliance with post adoption reports is also required by The Hague Convention. Therefore, Nightlight charges a fee to monitor and process these post placement reports and also requires families to pay for the cost of the post placement report in advance.

COSTS

The program fee for Bulgaria is \$27,000. Your additional costs will include home study, USCIS approval, notary & apostille fees, airfare, hotel, in country guide, and embassy fees as shown on the fee schedule. Your out-of-pocket expenses may further be reduced if you receive scholarships, grants or employer-provided adoption benefits. For additional fee information please see Exhibit A.

Please contact Ashley Settle, ashley.settle@nightlight.org (502) 423-5780 ext. 275, with any questions.





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Getting Started CHECKLIST

1. Fill out Application Documents

- Fill out the Online Application
- Read and Sign the Agreement for International Adoption Services
- Read and Sign the Social Media Policy
- Read and Sign the Complaint Procedure
- Read and Sign the “No Healthy Child Letter”
- Read and Sign the Consent to Release Confidential Information
- Read and sign the Privacy Practices
- Upload your family photo
- Pay the application fee

**Please Note: Keep the Complaint form for your records; you may want to make a copy of the Policy & Procedure to also keep for your records*

2. Complete your Orientation

Once we review and accept your Application materials, we will send you an acceptance letter via e-mail. Shortly after that you will receive an invoice for the orientation phase and then begin your orientation with your adoption advisor.

3. Obtain a Home Study

- **If you live in Nightlight's licensed area**, we will perform your home study. Once your application is approved, your adoption advisor will notify you how to get started on your home study with one of our Nightlight offices.
- **If you are out of Nightlight's licensed area**, we will help you find a local agency.

Please read our [FAQs](#) before submitting your application. If you have any questions please call our office: at 502-423-5780 or send us an e-mail at info@nightlight.org.

NIGHTLIGHT® CHRISTIAN ADOPTIONS
ATTACHMENT A – INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS – FEES AND ESTIMATED COSTS

Bulgaria

PROGRAM FEE	COSTS	TOTALS	NOTES
Application Fee		\$600	<i>Due with application</i>
Nightlight Program Fee #1		\$2,500	<i>Due upon application acceptance</i>
Nightlight Program Fee #2		\$2,500	<i>Due upon completion of the Orientation call</i>
Nightlight Program Fee #3		\$7,900	<i>Due prior to dossier submission to the country</i>
Agency Fee	\$4,700		
Foreign Fee	\$3,200		
Nightlight Program Fee #4		\$6,500	<i>Due upon receipt of referral</i> <i>\$1,000 sibling fee (for 1 or more)</i> <i>Includes translation of original home study and USCIS approval</i> <i>\$5,000 for additional siblings</i>
Agency Fee	\$4,400		
Foreign Fee	\$2,100		
Nightlight Program Fee #5		\$7,000	<i>Due upon return from trip 1</i>
Agency Fee	\$1,800		
Foreign fee	\$5,200		
Total Program Fee		\$27,000	\$6,000 for additional sibling (one time charge)
OTHER COSTS (ESTIMATED)	COSTS	TOTALS	NOTES
U.S.-Based Fees		\$9,045 – 15,240	
<i>Monitoring and Oversight fee charged by accrediting entity. Per child</i>	\$850		<i>Due upon signing the Agreement for International Services</i> <i>\$850 for each additional child</i>
<i>Home Study</i>	\$1,500-\$2,500		<i>Costs vary by state/agency</i>
<i>Translation/Shipping of annual Home Study Update/USCIS Update</i>	\$300-\$1,500		<i>Per-page fee, depends on number of annual updates needed</i>
<i>Post adoption reports</i>	\$2,100-\$2,500		<i>Costs vary by state/agency</i>
<i>Shipping and/or translating of post adoption reports</i>	\$940-\$1,150		<i>Costs may vary depending on number of children you are adopting, due upon receipt of referral</i>
<i>Home study supporting documents</i>	\$225		<i>Costs for criminal clearances, obtaining physicals, and other misc. expenses.</i>
<i>Parent education and training</i>	\$100-\$300		<i>Estimate cost of online education courses.</i>
<i>Home study review fee</i>	\$300		<i>Review of home study prepared by an agency other than Nightlight</i>
<i>Psychological Evaluation/ 2 parents</i>	\$0-\$500		<i>Some countries will require this and some will not. In addition your home study agency or Nightlight may require in certain circumstances.</i>
<i>USCIS Filing Fees</i>	\$920		<i>Includes I-800A application and biometrics for all family members</i>
<i>Shipping/translation and apostille of dossier documents</i>	\$810-\$1,325		<i>Paid to Nightlight at the dossier phase</i>
<i>Medical Review of Referral</i>	\$0-\$200		<i>Some physicians do not charge for this service. International adoption clinics will usually charge a fee for this.</i>
<i>Certificate of Citizenship Certificate (COC)</i>	\$0-\$1170		<i>Applies to families in guardianship countries, families living abroad, families coming home on an IR4 visa. No applicable in some countries.</i>
<i>Escort Fee</i>	\$1000		<i>Case by Case basis</i>
<i>Dossier prep/state certification for families</i>	\$0-\$800		<i>NCA offers dossier prep where our staff will send off documents to secretary of state for you. \$800 for entire dossier or \$50 per document. These fees do not include shipping or the apostille costs.</i>
Other In-Country Adoption Costs		\$7,350 – 11,150	<i>Estimates are for 2 people and 2 trips</i>
<i>Airfare (2 adults)</i>	\$4,800-\$8,000		<i>Paid to airline/travel agency.</i>
<i>Airfare for child (one way)</i>	\$400-\$1,000		<i>Depends on the child's age.</i>
<i>Food & Lodging (est. 12 days at \$75 /day)</i>	\$1800		<i>Paid to hotel/apartment owner</i>
<i>Child's visa & medical exam</i>	\$350		<i>Paid to US Embassy and Clinic</i>
Total Other Costs (Est.)		\$16,395 - \$26,390	
TOTAL FEES & ESTIMATED EXPENSES			
GRAND TOTAL		\$43,395 - \$53,390	<i>Range depends on adoption type and your expenses, which may vary from state to state. Beijing Tour not included.</i>

The cost of operating an international adoption program is substantial and increasing with the additional compliance requirements under The Hague Convention on Inter-Country Adoption. The nature of international adoption makes it impossible to predict the exact costs you will incur, but we believe the estimates above are realistic. Although we strive to maintain a predictable fee schedule, unexpected increase in our costs may necessitate an increase in fees. Therefore, fees may be increased upon 90-day notice. Program fees are paid in phases and are non-refundable. Nightlight establishes a budget for costs each year based on the number of adoptions it estimates completing during the year from each country. Based on these estimates, we establish program fees, taking into consideration the amount of staff time and expenses which will be involved in maintaining the program. Of course it would be prohibitive to allocate all of the costs (payroll, rent, insurance, supplies, travel, etc.) to one adoption in one program.

A late fee of 12% annual (1% monthly) will be assessed for fees more than 30 days past due.

Please initial on both this page and the following page that you have received a copy of this List of Fees and Estimated Costs.

Date: _____

Adopting Parents: _____

Attachment B
 Nightlight Christian Adoptions
 INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS – FEES AND ESTIMATED COSTS
Bulgaria

SERVICES CATEGORIZED PER HAGUE REQUIREMENTS	Bulgaria
Home Study (including estimated out of pocket costs)	\$1,725–\$2,725
Adoption expenses in the US (includes personnel costs, administrative overhead, operational costs, training and education, communications and publications costs and other costs associated with providing adoption services in the US)	\$17,350
Foreign country program expenses (includes personnel costs, administrative overhead, operational costs, training and education, communications and publications costs and other costs associated with providing adoption services in the child's convention country)	\$11,000
Care of the child (the expected total fees and estimated expenses charged to PAP's for the care of the child in the country of origin prior to adoption, including, but not limited to costs for food, clothing, shelter, medical care, foster care, orphanage care and other services provided DIRECTLY to the child.)	\$0
Translation and Document Expenses: the expected total fees and estimated expenses for obtaining any necessary documents, translation of documents related to the adoption and information on whether the PAP's will pay costs directly or to a 3rd party either in the US or Convention country or through the agency. Category includes but is not limited to, costs for obtaining, translating, copying records or documents required to complete the adoption, costs for Convention court documents, passport, adoption certificate and other documents related to the adoption, costs for notarization and certifications.	\$1,110–\$2,825
Contributions: any fixed contribution amount or percentage that the PAP expected or required to make to child protection or child welfare service programs in the Child's convention country or in the US along with an explanation of the intended use of the contribution and the manner in which the transaction will be recorded and accounted for.	\$0
Post placement (PP) and post adoption (PA) reports: the expected total fees and estimated expenses for any PP or PA reports that the agency or parents must prepare to comply with requirements of the expected country of origin (and NCA requirements)	\$2,940–\$3,350
Travel/Accommodation Expenses: Estimated 2 Adults, 1 child: includes hotel, food, fuel, and airfare estimates.	\$7,000–\$10,800
Third Party Expenses: includes USCIS fees, courier services, in-country guide, and child medical or visa costs if paid directly by the family rather than through Nightlight.	\$2,120–\$3,990

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