



**PARENTS – CHILD - BRIDGE**

**Eltern-Kind-Brücke e.V.**

Staatl. anerk.

Adoptionsvermittlungsstelle

State-approved Adoption Service



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## **Intercountry Adoption Service “Eltern-Kind-Brücke e. V.”**

### **Parents-Child-Bridge**

#### **About the organisation**

“Eltern-Kind-Brücke e. V” (Parents-Child-Bridge) is an association which was founded by adoptive families. It has been registered as an association in Heidelberg since 1998 and has since been recognised as a charitable child and youth welfare association (gemeinnütziger Verein der Kinder- und Jugendpflege = non-governmental non-profit youth welfare organization)). It was then recognised as a community youth organisation (Träger der freien Jugendhilfe) in July 2000 and as a government recognised Intercountry Adoption Centre in November 2001.

Since 21.08.2002, the organisation has been relicensed in accordance with the Hague Convention.

It originated from the Association of Adoptive and Foster Care Families in the Rhine-Neckar-Area, which had also been founded by Board Members of Parents-Child-Bridge many years ago. In addition to counselling unwillingly childless couples and adoption applicants, providing follow-up care for adoptees and adoptive families and helping adult adoptees to search for their roots, the organisation had also organised and held regular meetings of adoptive families for mutual support and workshops for birth parents and adult adoptees.

#### **The main roles of the organisation are as follows:**

Promotion of families and social projects in Germany and overseas  
Arrangements of sponsorship and school sponsorship programmes  
Support and guidance for adoption applicants, adoptive families and birth families  
Parenting advice for adoptive families  
Selection, preparation and counselling of adoption applicants.  
Placement and support of children made available for adoption.  
Post-adoption services. Educational advice. Networking for adoptive families throughout Germany.

The adoption service operates on the basis of the stipulations of the Hague Convention of 29.05.1993 on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption.

Eltern-Kind-Brücke e.V. employs suitable professional staff and is responsible for supervising the service.



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## **About the objectives**

Eltern-Kind-Brücke e.V. was founded in order to find prospective adoptive parents for orphans and abandoned children made available for adoption overseas and to prepare them for their role as parents. Ongoing post-adoption guidance and support are guaranteed.

## **About the work we do**

### **The main roles of the service are as follows:**

Informing, counselling and supporting adoption applicants:

- in relation to the situation in the child's country of origin
- in relation to the legal aspects of adopting a child from overseas
- in relation to family, ethical, social and psychological issues associated with adopting a child from overseas

Verifying the suitability of adoption applicants on the basis of their personal requirements, their financial situation and their family and social background

- Completion of files to be forwarded to the adoption panel and authorities in the other country
- Involvement in bringing the adopted child and adoptive parents together
- Completion of the adoption process
- Post-adoption counselling and support for families
- Co-operation with the authorities in the children's countries of origin, including the preparation and forwarding on of progress reports and home studies
- Co-operation with the adoption services of state adoption centres and other adoption services within Germany
- Presentation of work in journals, at conferences and in public

## **About the way we work**

Adoption is a life-long decision. This is why we feel it is important for us to provide support for the parents-to-be from the start and confront them with the experiences not only of experienced adoptive parents but also of adult adoptees and birth parents. The decision to adopt a child, particularly from overseas, involves many processes, and we wish to provide a suitable range and level of services to reflect this, particularly in the form of:

- Information events and preparation seminars



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- Bringing adoptive families together
- Opportunities to have contact with adult adoptees
- Offers of meetings with birth families
- Counselling meetings
- Waiters' seminars
- Home visits
- Psychological consultations
- Various follow-up services
- Adoptive family meetings

### **About the applicants**

It is vital to ensure that adoption applicants are mentally, physically and financially capable of caring for a child. There must be a willingness to come to terms with their own unwilling childlessness and the decision to adopt. We require adoption applicants to work intensively and constructively with the adopted child to help him/her come to terms with his/her roots, to the extent of working with the birth family, although this is only possible in very rare cases.

Adoption applicants should generally be married and aged between 25 and 45. There should be an appropriate age gap between the parents and the child.

We require the applicants to have a stable job and income. They must also be prepared to change their work arrangements when a child is placed with them.

### **About the countries of origin of the adopted children**

We first focussed on placing children from Eastern Europe and Asia, but are able and willing to cooperate with one or more additional cultural zones in the future. Intensive meetings and visits to the countries have shown us the drastic conditions under which some of these children live. Orphanages, children's homes and other institutions are sometimes no more than warehouses which cover only the most basic survival needs. This is why we support foster families in the children's birth countries (by arranging sponsorships) in order to help children to grow up in their country of birth. Only when no adequate solution is available in the child's country is intercountry adoption considered.

We are currently working with Bulgaria, Latvia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Russian Federation, Nepal, Taiwan and Thailand.



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## **About the costs**

The work of our adoption service cannot be carried out using the financial resources or sponsorships of our members. Unfortunately, we do not receive any government subsidies for our work.

The professional staff requirement doubled when the Hague Convention came into force, and profession standards were raised again. This is why we have to ask adoption applicants to contribute to the costs incurred both here and as a result of maintaining contact with the foreign countries. The applicants are informed in detail about the costs involved at the start of the process. The fees are transparent and are collected in instalments.

The costs incurred overseas are presented in detail in the country-specific information sheets. All payments are made by transfer to our adoption service or (in the case of local costs) against a receipt for a contractually agreed sum, in a way which is transparent for both parties to the contract.

As government-controlled and non-profit organization all money left over from our work is being used for sponsorship programs in the countries of origin and for humanitarian aid.

## **Contacts in the Adoption Service:**

### **Information/administration/overseas contacts/counselling/matching/post-placement service:**

#### **Eltern-Kind-Brücke e.V.**

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**Daily hours of consultation: 8.30 a.m.-12.30 p.m. and Wednesday: 2 p.m.-5 p.m.**

Website: [www.eltern-kind-bruecke.de](http://www.eltern-kind-bruecke.de) or [www.parents-child-bridge.de](http://www.parents-child-bridge.de)