



PARENTS – CHILD - BRIDGE

Eltern-Kind-Brücke e.V.
Staatl. anerk.
Adoptionsvermittlungsstelle
State-approved Adoption Service



Modus operandi of the Intercountry Adoption Service

Eltern-Kind-Brücke (Parents-Child-Bridge)

Every child has a right to parents (last updated: Jan. 2010)

Because it is usually possible to find new parents for healthy newborns, even in their countries of origin, we are seeking parents for children who have lived through experiences which have in some cases been very painful and who need lots of love, patience and understanding.

These parents will therefore need special qualities:

- they must be prepared to liaise closely and continuously with our organisation as they prepare for the adoption, to remain in contact with us even after the end of the process and to ask for professional help whenever this might be needed
- they must be very caring, patient and resilient
- they must be prepared to learn to love unconditionally
- they must devote a lot of time to their child, help him/her to become integrated in a caring and responsible manner, deal sensitively and respectfully with the child's country of origin and his/her personal history and to understand and keep his/her past as part of his/her identity

We see adoption as a practical way of helping individual children and would like to enable others to have the same positive experiences that we ourselves have had (the founding members of EKB are experienced adoptive parents).

In order to pool their resources, experience and expertise, the government-recognised Intercountry Adoption Centre "Eltern-Kind-Brücke e.V." cooperates in some work fields with the adoption centre "Diakonisches Werk" in Heidelberg, an experienced social service agency.

**Hours of consultation (Tel.: 06221/33942-0):
Monday-Friday 8.30 a.m.-12.30 p.m. and Wednesday 2.00 p.m.-5.00 p.m.**

Many years of experience have shown that no institution, no matter how good, can take the place of a stable, loving family.

In intercountry adoption, close co-operation with the authorities of the countries of origin is of vital importance. Because this is the only way of ensuring that the children made available for adoption have really been abandoned and that no adoptive parents can be found in the children's country of origin.



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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. Post-adoption support is also necessary. We are committed to making ourselves available for consultation until your adoptive children come of age and hope that the adoptive families we work with will feel happy to make use of this service.

We feel committed to the guidelines of the Hague Convention and attach importance to good co-operation with other German Adoption Centres.

The following guidelines for selecting applicants have been drawn up on the basis of many years of experience and against the background of German adoption legislation:

1. Both applicants should be between 25 and 45 years of age.
Exceptions may be made in the case of older or harder-to-place children.
There should be an appropriate age gap between the parents and the child.
2. We can only place children with married couples.
3. The applicants' jobs, income and home environment must be stable, as must their relationship.

Legal requirements

In Germany, the adoption of children both domestically and from overseas is regulated by the German adoption law (Adoptionsvermittlungsgesetz/AdVermG). In addition, the stipulations of the Hague Convention, which guarantee standards of quality, have been applicable since the beginning of 2002.

We come under the authority of the Baden Youth Welfare Office (Landesjugendamt).

Adoption Centres have to be approved by the government and must provide professional staff with sufficient professional experience in the field of adoption. During the adoption process, checks must be made to ensure that the applicant family is mentally, physically and financially capable of caring for a child.

For this purpose, our adoption service conducts in-depth meetings with applicants and liaises with the applicants' local Youth Welfare Office on an ongoing basis. Even after the adoption is completed, we will continue to provide a counselling service. We organise appropriate educational events in collaboration with the Heidelberg and Rhine-Neckar Association of Adoptive and Foster Families (Verein der Adoptiv- und Pflegefamilien Ortsverband Heidelberg und Rhein-Neckar- Kreis e.V.), the relevant State Associations and the National Association of Adoptive and



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Foster Families (Bundesverband der Adoptiv- und Pflegefamilien) and the National Association of Children Adopted from Overseas (Bundesverband ausländischer Adoptivkinder).

Our profession staff participate regularly in educational events and work towards additional qualifications.

1. What we do

In line with the German Adoption Law, our adoption service co-operates nationally with relevant local Adoption Centres and verifies the intentions, motivation, suitability and financial status of applicants in one-to-one meetings. We compile all the documents required for the overseas adoption and forward these on to the relevant overseas authority either directly or via our local representatives.

After consultation with the relevant authorities (Youth Welfare Office, State Youth Welfare Office, etc.), our professional staff discuss detailed referrals of children with the applicants in depth to ensure that this referral is accepted with professional support and counselling.

Although the referral of a child is accepted provisionally on the basis of the written information from the sending country, this only becomes binding once the prospective adoptive parents have travelled to the country and had the opportunity to make a final decision after meeting the child in person.

After completing the adoption process, the adoptive parents usually travel to collect the child in his/her birth country. This is very important for parents and child and enables the parents to develop a personal relationship with their child's birth country.

The purposes of our organisation are purely and directly non-profit and charitable, and we are religiously and politically neutral.

2. **Publicity and financial support**

We publicise our adoption services in an appropriate and sensible manner and carry out appropriate publicity on the basis of professional exchange with other supporting organisations.

Applicants are usually referred to us by Youth Welfare Offices or other recognised Adoption Centres.

A domestic lump sum fee is levied for counselling and information relating to the adoption process in this country. For all services provided by us in the foreign country (doctors, representation, local support, etc.), a country-specific overseas processing fee is charged.