

# Adopt a child from abroad

You want to adopt a child from abroad? This process is accompanied by the Youth Welfare Office and the Foreign Placement Office.

## Competent Department

- [Adoptionsstelle Bremen](#)

## Basic information

One speaks of an intercountry adoption if the child lives in another state before the adoption and moves or is supposed to move to Germany due to the adoption. The nationality of the child and your own nationality do not play a role.

The adoption can take place abroad, but also in Germany. Mostly, however, it is pronounced in the country of origin.

Adoptions that take place in Germany are also considered foreign adoptions if the child has only come to Germany in the last 2 years before the application and the adopters live in Germany.

During the whole time you will be accompanied by a placement office, which will advise and support you. If you wish, the placement office will also be there for you after the adoption procedure has been completed. After the adoption, the countries of origin usually want to be informed about the life of the children in the form of development reports. The placement office will also discuss this with you.

## Requirements

If you wish to adopt a child, then under German law you must have unlimited legal capacity and be at least 25 years old. If you are married, at least one of the two spouses must be 25 years old, with the younger spouse being at least 21 years old.

There is no maximum age for adoptive parents set by law. The age difference to the adopted child should correspond to a natural distance, according to the Federal Working Group of the State Youth Welfare Offices.

Normally, the following applies: a married couple - regardless of gender - can only jointly adopt a child. Whether an international adoption by same-sex couples is possible depends

largely on the legal situation in the country of origin of the adopted child. However, single persons can also adopt a child.

You must be suitable as adoptive parents. In addition, you must be specifically suitable for an intercountry adoption.

Further requirements result from the law of the country from which the child originates.

## Procedure

In most cases, the process of an international adoption takes place in 3 steps:

1. Mediation procedure in Germany
2. Adoption procedure abroad
3. Recognition of the adoption in Germany

In detail:

- You register with a placement office for intercountry adoptions. This can either be the central adoption office of the state youth welfare office or a non-governmental placement office that is licensed for foreign adoptions. You will receive an initial consultation from the specialists.
- This will be followed by an examination to determine whether you are suitable for adoption. This suitability test consists of two parts:
- In the general suitability test, it is checked whether you are basically suitable for adoption. This is usually done by your youth welfare office.
- In the country-specific suitability test, it is checked whether you are specifically suitable for the adoption of a child from abroad. This is done by your international placement agency to which you have applied.
- After a positive review, your international placement agency will forward your adoption application to the adoption specialty agency in the state you have chosen.
- It usually takes some time before a child who needs you as parents is proposed to you. During this waiting period, your international placement agency will continue to counsel you and prepare you for the adoption.
- When a child is suggested to you, you will usually already find out some things about the child, such as his or her age, health condition or past history. Your placement agency will discuss the proposal with you and help you decide whether you want to continue the adoption process with the proposed child. You will travel to the child's country of origin to meet the child and, depending on the regulations in the country of origin, spend the adoption foster care period with the child.
- In most cases, the adoption procedure is carried out in the child's country of origin. For this purpose, your placement agency will advise you, prepare you for the procedure and support you during the procedure.
- After the adoption procedure abroad, the adoption must be recognized in Germany. If the child's country of origin has joined the "Hague Adoption Convention", it will issue you a certificate (according to Article 23 HAÜ), with which the adoption is automatically recognized in Germany
- otherwise, you must apply for recognition at the family court in Germany. Only with the recognition is the foreign adoption also effective in Germany. You can find more information under [How is a foreign adoption recognized in Germany?](#)

- You can already apply for recognition from the child's country of origin. This is usually necessary so that you can enter Germany with the child: After you have submitted the application, your placement agency will issue you a certificate that it has carried out your adoption procedure. With this certificate, you can apply for a visa or other entry documents for the child, at the German embassy or another foreign mission in the child's country of origin.
- As soon as you have received the entry papers, you can enter Germany with the child.

## Legal bases

- [§ 9 Abs. 1, Abs. 2 Gesetz über die Vermittlung und Begleitung der Adoption und über das Verbot der Vermittlung von Ersatzmüttern \(AdVermiG\)](#)
- [§2a Adoptionsvermittlungsgesetz \(AdVermiG\)](#)

## More information

You have no legal right to the placement of a child.