

BULGARIA

Bulgaria is a steady and established intercountry adoption program. The Bulgaria adoption program is a great fit for families open to Down syndrome, special needs and older children. Lifeline has been blessed with a wonderful partner in Bulgaria!

Adoption Requirements

- Adoptive parents must be at least 15 years older but no more than 55 years older than the child
- Married couples or single women can adopt
- There are no family size requirements
- Bulgaria is open to expat families as well

Children Coming Home

- Children 2-3 years old with Down syndrome
- 5 and older with minor to moderate medical special needs
- Typical special needs can include:
 - Down syndrome, older children, developmental & cognitive delays, complex medical and behavioral needs

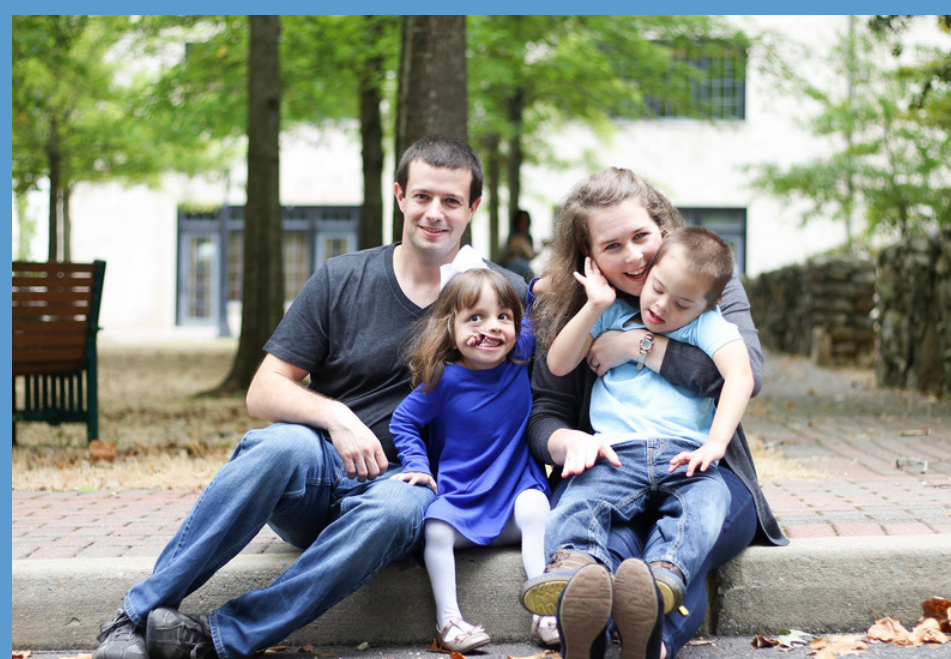
Travel

- 2 trips are required
- 3 weeks total in country
- Lifeline's in-country team will assist with appointments in Bulgaria

During your 1st trip you will have a bonding period. The 2nd trip will include sight-seeing and the child's visa paperwork appointments.

Matching Overview

- Families are eligible for matching once their dossier is submitted
- The Ministry of Justice issues referrals to Lifeline to present to families for review
- Estimated timeline for matching is a few months to 6 years depending on the families' openness to age and needs.



Meet the Team



Brianna Thomas, MSW

Program Manager- Eurasia

Brianna graduated from the University of Montevallo in 2016 with a Bachelor's in Social Work and received her Master's in Social Work from The University of Alabama in 2018. She has always had a connection to Lifeline and was excited to join the team in January of 2017. Brianna is thankful to be a part of the Eurasia team to serve families throughout their adoption journey!



Caroline Crawford

Administrative Assistant

Caroline graduated from UAB in 2022 with a degree in psychology. She loves to travel to different countries and learn about other cultures! She has always had a heart for the nations and for the Lord's children. Caroline joined the Eurasia team in June 2023 and is so excited to see how the Lord works in and through Lifeline!!



Brooke Ezekiel, BSW

Eurasia Social Worker

Brooke graduated from Auburn University with a Bachelor's in Social Work and joined the Lifeline team in January of 2022. Brooke has lived in the greater Birmingham area most of her life. She loves playing board games and her Goldendoodle puppy named Fisher. Brooke's favorite bible verse is Habakkuk 3:18-19 because it reminds her where joy is found as well as the faithfulness of the Father in all circumstances.



Timmi-Ann Kaurudar

Program Caseworker

Timmi-Ann joined Lifeline in February 2021. She is from Fairhope, Alabama and is a program caseworker on the Eurasia team. Timmi-Ann graduated from Samford University where she studied Human Development and Family Science. "My favorite thing about working at Lifeline is the mission they have for serving the Lord by loving and supporting children and families all over the world!"

Our representative in Bulgaria, [FNA](#), facilitates Lifeline's adoption program in Bulgaria.. Lifeline has relationships with the central authority of adoption in Hungary and over 10 years of Bulgaria adoptions!



Jana Lombardo

Director of
International
Programs



Karla Thrasher

Senior Director of
International
Adoption



Process Timeline

Application

The full application gathers in-depth information from families who wish to adopt from Colombia. Your application is reviewed by our Latin America team to affirm you are eligible for this program.

Immigration

Throughout this 2 step approval process families will complete required paperwork and be fingerprinted for approval to adopt within certain parameters. Families then apply to immigrate a specific child to the US through adoption .

2 to 3 months

Matching

There are 2 routes for matching in Bulgaria. A family can be preliminarily matched with a waiting child any time after application. Families in the traditional route will not match until after their dossier is registered. Bulgaria then issues a referral to Lifeline, Lifeline presents the file. If the family accepts, they will travel to meet the child in two weeks. At the end of trip one the family will sign consent paperwork.

Current estimate for traditional route matching timeframes is 6 months to 2 years

Post Adoption

Lifeline continues to provide post-adoption support to families long-term. In addition to a family's social worker, Lifeline's Counseling Team and educational services are helpful resources for families. Post adoption reports are due to Bulgaria at 6, 12, 18 and 24 months. A Lifeline worker will also call to check-in periodically to provide resources and support.

Home Study

During this part of the process, social workers and families will talk extensively about various aspects of a family's life such as finances, health, home life, capacity for care, and overall well-being. In addition, families will be part of specific training for how to parent children from trauma backgrounds.

3 to 4 months

Dossier

When all of the information from the home study and immigration has been completed for the dossier, it will be apostilled and sent to the central authority in Bulgaria to be translated and registered. The Bulgarian dossier is compiled of about 15 items and is put together during the wait time for your Immigration Approval.

4 weeks

Travel

There are two adoption trips to Bulgaria. The first is a bonding trip consisting of 5 days visiting the child in their region and culminates in signing consent paperwork. The second trip occurs 4-6 months after trip one and last approximately 2 weeks. The child comes into your care on day one and the remainder of the trip is spent in Sofia. Families will then attend the child's visa paperwork appointments. There are opportunities for sight-seeing and cultural experiences during the stay and families are able to bring their entire immediate family to experience Bulgaria. Lifeline's in-country team will support the family and provide transportation to important adoption appointments during their stay.

2 weeks, then 6 months after matching

Chronological Fee Tool

Application Fee \$300
due at the time of application

Agency Fee A \$4,425.00
due upon program acceptance, 2 weeks
after application

Agency Fee B \$4,425.00
due at completion of home study,
roughly 3 to 4 months after application

Agency Fee C \$4,425.00
due at dossier submission, 6 to
9 months after application

Agency Fee D \$4,425.00
due prior to Adoption Trip, as early as 12
months after application

Third Party Fees \$1,930.00
third party fees are estimated and
include home study fees, dossier fees,
and US governing body required fees

Foreign Program Fees \$9,500
representative, in-country facilitation,
and translation fees - these are paid to
Lifeline but used for foreign program
services

Travel Fees \$10,020.00
Estimated for two adults traveling to
adopt one child. Expenses may vary
based on time of year, preferences, and
needs.



Travel Details

First Trip

Families will travel to Bulgaria twice. The first trip is for approximately 7 days and consists of a bonding time visiting the child in their region.



Second Trip

The second trip will occur about 4-6 months after the first trip and will be roughly 10-14 days in country. The child will reside with the adopting family in Sofia while the family attends appointments to complete the child's visa paperwork before returning to the United States.

While in-country

Lifeline's has an amazing in-country team who walks alongside families each step of the way and provides support during their stay in Bulgaria. There are many opportunities for sightseeing and cultural experiences while in Sofia. Bulgaria is open to families traveling with children in the home and our team helps to prepare your family if you choose to bring your children on the adoption trip.



"International adoption has many unknowns and all the moving pieces can seem overwhelming. Lifeline made what can be a very complicated process much less overwhelming. We still came across some unexpected issues, but Lifeline walked right along beside us the entire way. They're love and support for us, transparency in the process, and heart for the fatherless is what ultimately led us back to them for our second adoption." -The Grants



When Kalee and I married, we knew we wanted a big family. Throughout our first five years of marriage, we were blessed to have three amazing biological kids. As we grew in God's love and our adoption as His children, He began compelling us to stand in the gap for children from hard places. We didn't know where to start but God ultimately led us to Leo's profile and we began to pursue our son. It has been one year from our initial inquiry, and we are so thankful that God used Lifeline to help us get our son home. God is faithful and is able to do abundantly more than we can even ask or think. We are so thankful to have our son home!" - The Wade Family

"We really enjoyed working with Lifeline the past three and seeing lives changed. For us adoption wasn't about building a family, but bringing kids home- kids who needed a home. We are so thankful that God has used Lifeline to help put kids in families. At the end of that day that is what is most important. We know adoption changes lives and it changes everything. For us, for them and we wouldn't change a thing about it!" - The Parrish Family

