

## Costs

Costs vary between countries and can range from A\$20 000 to A\$45 000. The costs are charged throughout the process and do not occur as a lump sum payment.

## What are the expectations of intercountry parenting?

Applicants must be able to provide a loving, consistent and stable family environment for an overseas born child. Intercountry adoptive parenting also requires a commitment to, and respect for, the child's biological heritage and cultural origins.

Applicants must be willing to establish and maintain links for a child with their culture of origin to ensure the child has an integrated sense of cultural identity. This involves the capacity to embrace life as an identified inter-racial family.



### More information?

Contact the Adoptions and Permanent Care Unit

phone: 6207 1335

fax: 6207 8888

email: [adoptions@act.gov.au](mailto:adoptions@act.gov.au)

[www.dhcs.act.gov.au](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au)

# intercountry adoption

information for applicants



children, youth  
& family support | ACT

community partners

Intercountry adoption is a relatively recent development in Australia, which has increased over a period when the number of locally born children who require adoptive families has fallen significantly.

Adoption is the process by which a child ceases to be a member of one family and becomes, legally and permanently, a member of a new family. The ACT Adoptions Unit is responsible for all adoptions within the ACT, including children who are adopted from overseas. The Unit is part of the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support within the ACT Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services. Its functions are determined by the *ACT Adoption Act 1993*.

Intercountry adoption is governed by *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* and *The Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption*, which place obligations on both the country of origin and receiving countries. The Australian Government has ratified both these conventions.

State and Territory welfare authorities do not support privately arranged adoptions including children who are relatives. They will also not help sponsors to meet the requirements of the migration regulations for granting a visa to an adopted child.

### **Overseas programs**

Australian States and Territories facilitate adoptions from donor Hague Convention countries and specific countries with which Australia has established government to government bilateral agreements.

Children have recently arrived to the ACT community from China, Ethiopia, Korea, India, the Philippines and Taiwan. Please contact the Adoptions Unit staff for information on other existing programs. It is important to note that all overseas programs are subject to change.

### **ACT requirements to adopt**

People considering an application to adopt a child from overseas are encouraged to seek as much information as possible about the unique challenges, demands and rewards of adoptive parenthood. In line with adoption legislation and national guidelines, there are a number of eligibility criteria that apply to prospective adoptive parents.

Applications for assessment and approval as adoptive parents are only accepted after people have attended an information and seminar program.

### **Process of overseas adoption**

All overseas adoption programs vary in their requirements with regard to age, marital status, health and in some cases religion. In summary, all programs require that applicants are able to demonstrate their ability to provide for the emotional, social and economic well being of an overseas born child until maturity. Please contact the Adoptions Unit staff for detailed information on overseas programs.

Overseas adoption is neither simple nor quick. The entire process can take up to four years to complete.

Applicants wishing to be approved as adoptive parents have a number of suitability checks made and have a home study completed by a social worker or psychologist. If approved in the ACT, the applicant's file is sent to the overseas country of choice for further approval and matching of a child.

Upon the child's arrival in Australia, an overseas country requires a minimum of three post placement reports to be provided over a period of months. For some countries, finalisation of an adoption is then required to be effected in the ACT Supreme Court.

