

INFORMATION ABOUT APOSTILLES

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The Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement for Legalisation for Foreign Public Documents, the Apostille Convention, or the Apostille Treaty is an international treaty drafted by the Hague Conference on Private International Law.

The Convention specifies the modalities through which a document issued in one of the signatory countries can be certified for legal purposes in all the other signatory states. Such a certification is called an Apostille (French: certification). It is an international certification comparable to a notarisation in domestic law, and normally supplements a local notarisation of the document. The Convention abolishes the requirement of diplomatic and consular legalisation for public documents originating in one Convention country and intended for use in another.

For the purposes of the Convention, public documents include:

- (a) Documents emanating from a court;
- (b) Documents issued by an administrative authority (such as civil records); and
- (c) Documents executed before a notary.

Such documents issued in a Convention country which have been certified by a Convention certificate, called an "Apostille", are entitled to recognition in any other Convention country without any further authentication.

How to get a UK document legalised

You can get a UK public document 'legalised' by asking the UK government to confirm that a UK public official's signature, seal or stamp on the document is genuine.

You might need to do this if a local authority abroad has asked you to provide a document and they've said it must be legalised. For details, visit www.gov.uk/get-document-legalised

Publications

The Permanent Bureau - www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=text.display&tid=37 - has produced a series of three publications on the practical operation of the Apostille Convention.

- *The ABCs of Apostilles* is a brochure that is primarily addressed to users of Apostilles with short answers to frequently asked questions, including when, where and how Apostilles are issued and what their effects are. Download [here](#).
- *How to Join and Implement the Hague Apostille Convention* is a brief guide that is designed to assist authorities in new and potential Contracting States in implementing the Convention. Download [here](#).
- *The Apostille Handbook* is a comprehensive reference tool that is designed to assist Competent Authorities in performing their functions under the Apostille Convention, as well as address issues that arise in the contemporary operation of the Convention. Download [here](#).



Countries which accept the Apostille Certificate

The following countries are all members of the Hague conference and have entered into force Convention 12 of 5 October 1961: Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Public Documents. These countries will therefore accept the Apostille Certificate in place of any further legalisation:

Asia

North East Asia

China (Hong Kong)
China (Macao)
Hong Kong
Japan
South Korea
Mongolia

South East Asia

Brunei Darussalam
Macao (China)

South Asia

India

Central Asia

Kazakhstan

Middle East

Israel
Turkey

Australasia

Australia
Cook Islands
Fiji
Marshall Islands
Niue
New Zealand
Samoa
Tonga
Vanuatu

Europe

Northern Europe

Denmark
Finland
Iceland
Norway
Sweden

Western Europe

Armenia
Belgium
France
Ireland
Luxembourg
Monaco
Netherlands
UK and Northern Ireland

Southern Europe

Andorra
Italy
Malta
Portugal
San Marino
Spain

Eastern Europe

Albania
Armenia
Azerbaijan
Belarus
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Estonia
FYR of Macedonia
Greece
Latvia
Macedonia
Montenegro
Poland
Romania
Russian Federation
Serbia
Slovenia
Turkey
Ukraine

Central Europe

Austria
Czech Republic
Georgia
Germany
Hungary
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Republic of Moldova
Slovakia
Switzerland

Africa

Botswana
Cape Verde
Dominican Republic
Lesotho
Liberia
Malawi
Mauritius
Namibia
Sao Tome and Principe
Seychelles
South Africa
Swaziland

Americas

Central America

Belize
Costa Rica
El Salvador
Honduras
Mexico
Panama

South America

Argentina
Colombia
Ecuador
Suriname
Venezuela

North America

United States of America (USA)

Caribbean

Antigua and Barbuda
Bahamas
Barbados
Dominica
Grenada
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Lucia
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Trinidad and Tobago