

LEGALIZATION OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS FOR THEIR USE ABROAD

When a **public document** issued or certified by a competent Czech authority shall be used abroad it is usually necessary to have this document (super)legalized for this purpose – it means that it has to be legalized by the embassy of the foreign state where the public document will be used that is competent for the Czech Republic (this “superlegalization”/vyšší ověření is preceded by other legalizations made by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and possibly other competent Czech authorities).

There are exceptions to this principle with regard to states bound by:

- *Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents* (“Apostille Convention”) (see below point IV) – introduces simplified procedure (“apostillization”)
- certain *bilateral* international agreements on legal aid (see below point V) – exempts certain types or all public documents from legalization obligation.

Exceptions from the requirement to legalization of public documents also results from certain directly applicable *EU legislation*.

The purpose of legalization or “apostillization” is to certify that a public document was established by the competent judicial or administrative Czech authority. The legalization or “Apostille” certificate refers to the authenticity of the seal and signature on the public document, not to the content of the public document. Only public documents may be legalized or “apostillized” (e.g. notary documents, notary certifications, certificate of incorporation of a company, etc.). Private documents (e.g. simple copy of a public document, power of attorney without notary certification, etc.) are not legalized or “apostillized” for their use abroad.

Since October 2021, there are three Czech Competent Authorities for legalization/apostillization of Czech Public Documents:

- a) The Notarial Chamber of the Czech Republic in Prague and the Regional Notarial Chamber in Brno, České Budějovice, Hradec Králové, Ostrava, Plzeň, Ústí nad Labem – **apostille only for Czech Notary Documents**; for more information, please, see [Apostila \(nkcr.cz\)](https://apostila.nkcr.cz)
- b) Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic – International Private Department for Civil Matters (Ministerstvo spravedlnosti České republiky – mezinárodní odbor civilní)

- **apostille and legalization** (superlegalizace/vyšší ověření,) **for Czech Judicial Documents,**
- **legalization** (superlegalizace/vyšší ověření) **for Czech Notary Documents;**

For more information, please, see website: [Ověřování listin do ciziny - Portál justice;](#)

- c) Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic – Consular Department, Legalization Office (konzulární odbor, oddělení legalizace veřejných listin) - **apostille and legalization for all other Czech Public Documents;** for more information, please, see website (only in Czech language):

[Ověřování listin | Ministerstvo zahraničních věcí České republiky \(mzv.cz\)](#)

Summary of Administrative Fees in the area of Apostille/Legalization:

- in The Notarial Chambers: 363 CZK for Apostille of Czech Notary Document;
- in Ministry of Justice: 300 CZK for Apostille of any Czech Judicial Document, 100 CZK for legalization (vyšší ověření/superlegalizace) of Czech Judicial Document or Czech Notary document;
- in Ministry of Foreign Affairs: 300 CZK for Apostille/legalization (vyšší ověření/superlegalizace) of all other Czech Public Documents.

In Czech Ministries it is possible to pay Administrative Fees in fee stamp – in Czech language “*kolek*” (one fee stamp for legalization of one signature and seal), or by credit card.

Fee stamps are not sold at both Ministries.

[Legalization / “apostillization” upon personal \(oral\) request](#)

Office hours:

Monday and Wednesday: 8:00 – 12:00, 13:30 – 17:00

The last documents are accepted fifteen minutes before the end of office hours (at 11:45 and 16:45).

Requests for legalization are executed during office hours (max. 5 verification). If you have more than 5 documents, please send documents by post (address: Ministerstvo spravedlnosti ČR, Vyšehradská 16, PSČ 128 10, Praha 2).

It is necessary to bring own fee stamps which can be bought at any post office. New, we are accepted the payment by the credit card. Please be advised that no fee stamps are sold at the Ministry of Justice.

Address of the legalization office: **Na Děkance 3, 128 10 Praha 2** ([map](#))

phone : **00 420 221 997 473**

00 420 221 997 925

00 420 221 997 319

00 420 221 997 211

Email: moc@msp.justice.cz

In the event that due to our workload we could not pick up the telephones, please send your request to the e-mail address: moc@msp.justice.cz.

[Legalization / “apostillization” upon written request](#)

Post address:

Ministerstvo spravedlnosti České republiky

mezinárodní odbor civilní

Vyšehradská 16

128 10 Praha 2

Czech Republic

Written request shall contain the following entries:

- a) state where the public document will be used
- b) postal address of the applicant (where the legalized documents are to be sent)
- c) phone contact + if relevant, e-mail address of the applicant
- d) required number of fee stamps
- e) attached will be the document for legalization / “apostillization”

In accordance with the Act no. 500/2004 Coll., (Administrative Code), the time limit for the processing the legalization is 30 days, from the day the document(s) is/are received at the Ministry.

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I. Important notice

A. General

It is recommended that applicants ascertain in advance which documents and certifications / authentications are required abroad. Unfortunately, international agreements are not always entirely observed in practice and sometimes legalization or Apostille is required even if there is exemption in an international agreement, or where such an exception is apparent from a directly applicable legal act of the European Union.

It also shall be ascertained in advance whether original or certified copy is required. When a certified copy is legalized / “apostillized”, the legalization certificate / Apostille refers only to the notary certification, not to the seal and signature on the original document.

B. Legalization / “apostillization” of notary documents

Notary Documents may be legalized / “apostillized” only if they are signed by:

- 1) notary (in Czech language “notář”) or
- 2) notarial candidate appointed as the notary’s deputy (in Czech language “notářský kandidát, který byl ustanoven zástupcem notáře”) or
- 3) notarial candidate authorized to produce certified copies and authentications of signature for the use abroad (in Czech language “notářský kandidát, který byl notářem pověřen k provádění legalizace a vidimace ve vztahu k cizině”).

Notarial documents signed by notarial secretaries or trainees (in Czech language “notářský tajemník”, “notářský koncipient”) may not be legalized / “apostillized”!

C. Legalization of sworn experts

For more information contact **The Notarial Chamber of the Czech Republic:**

<https://www.nkcr.cz/en/apostille>, Apolinářská 442/12, 128 00 Praha 2, phone 273 037 033.

D. Legalization / “apostillization” of identity cards

According to the Czech law providing of certified copies of certain public documents (ID cards, passports, driving licenses) is not allowed.

However, certified copies of passports may be obtained at certain embassies of foreign states competent for the Czech Republic – information available at the embassies.

E. Legalization / “apostillization” of diplomas and certificates of education

Procedure of legalization / “apostillization” of diplomas and certificates of education is the following:

- 1) legalization by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Czech Republic, then
- 2) legalization / “apostillization” by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, then, if relevant,
- 3) superlegalization by the competent embassy.

Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic is not competent for legalization / “apostillization” of these documents!

F. Legalization / “apostillization” of copies of an entry in the Commercial Register

Firstly, Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic can apostillize/legalize a copy of an entry in the Commercial Register issued by Czech *courts*.

Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic is allowed to legalize a copy of an entry in the Commercial Register issued by Czech *notaries*.

II. Legalization (vyšší ověření/superlegalizace) pursuant to article 109 of the Act No. 91/2012 Coll., on International Private Law

The following mechanism applies in relation to states which are not Contracting Parties either to the Apostille Convention or to bilateral international agreements introducing exemption from legalization.

Procedure of legalization (vyšší ověření/superlegalizace) of judicial and notarial documents consists of 3 steps:

- 1) legalization by the Ministry of Justice of the Czech Republic, then
- 2) legalization by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, then
- 3) superlegalization by the embassy of the foreign state where the public document will be used that is competent for the Czech Republic.

Administrative Fee:

100 CZK (paid in fee stamp – in Czech language “kolek” or by the credit card; one fee stamp for legalization of one signature and seal). It is necessary to bring own fee stamps. No fee stamps are sold at the Ministry of Justice!

Foreign public documents are superlegalized by the competent Czech embassy abroad. Previous legalization by a ministry of foreign affairs of the state where the public document was established and possibly (according to the law of that state) by other authorities is needed. For more information contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (website – only in Czech language – http://www.mzv.cz/jnp/cz/cestujeme/overovani_listin/index.html).

III. Apostille

The Apostille Convention simplifies the procedure of legalization of public documents to be used in Contracting States of the Convention (list of Contracting Parties can be found below). Simplified authentication consists of a single formal action, ie. legalization of the document by a verification clause, the so-called Apostille, issued by authorities of the state of the origin of the public document. No further legalization (eg. by the embassy of the state in which the document is to be used) is needed.

List of Contracting Parties:

- Albania
- Andorra
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan

- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Bolivia
- Bosnia and Hercegovina
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Burundi – from 13. 2. 2015; Czech Republic has raised an objection to the accession of Burundi to the Hague Apostille Convention. Consequently, the Apostille Convention will not enter into force between the Czech Republic and Burundi, and the legalization of public documents will continue to take the form of so-called superlegalization.
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Chile
- China + Hong Kong and Macau
- Colombia
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark (+ the Faro Islands, nevertheless the Convention *does not* apply for Greenland)
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Estonia
- Fiji
- Finland

- France
(+ French Polynesia, Afars and Issas, Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Comoros, Martinique, New Caledonia, Reunion, St. Pierre and Miquelon, Wallis and Futuna)
- Georgia
- Germany
- Greece
- Grenada
- Guatemala
- Guyana
- Honduras
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Kazakhstan
- Korea, Republic of
- Kosovo
- Kyrgyzstan
- Latvia
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malawi
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Monaco
- Mongolia

- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Namibia
- Netherlands (+ Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, Saba)
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niue
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan – from 9. 3. 2023; Czech Republic has raised an objection to the accession of Pakistan to the Hague Apostille Convention. Consequently, the Apostille Convention will not enter into force between the Czech Republic and Pakistan, and the legalization of public documents will continue to take the form of so-called superlegalization.
- Palau
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Republic of Moldova
- Republic of North Macedonia
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- Rwanda - **from 5. 6. 2024**
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Samoa
- San Marino
- Saudi Arabia
- Sao Tome and Principe
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Singapore

- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- South Africa
- Spain
- Suriname
- Swaziland
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Tajikistan
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Türkiye
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom (+ Jersey, The Bailiwick of Guernsey, Isle of Man, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Virgins Islands, British Solomon Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, Gibraltar, Montserrat, Saint Helena, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands, Turks a Caicos Islands)
- Uruguay
- USA (+ Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Porto Rico, Virgin Islands of the United States)
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Venezuela

Apostillization of translation established by a sworn translator (attached to a Czech public document):

Better to have it made in the state where the public document will be used, if possible. Otherwise, it is recommended to do the translation after apostillization of the underlying public document.

Administrative Fees:

300 CZK (paid in fee stamp – in Czech language “kolek” or by the credit card; one fee stamp for legalization of one signature and seal). It is necessary to bring own fee stamps. No fee stamps are sold at the Ministry of Justice!

The list of foreign competent authorities pursuant to the Apostille Convention can be found on the website of Hague Conference on Private International Law: http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=conventions.authorities&cid=41.

IV. Regulation (EU) 2016/1191 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2016 on promoting the free movement of citizens by simplifying the requirements for presenting certain public documents in the European Union and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012

Pursuant to an EU *Regulation (EU) 2016/1191 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2016 on promoting the free movement of citizens by simplifying the requirements for presenting certain public documents in the European Union and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012* which promotes the free movement of citizens, certain public documents and their certified copies are exempt from legalisation and the apostille formality within the EU from 16 February 2019. More information can be found here: https://beta.e-justice.europa.eu/551/EN/public_documents?init=true.

V. Exemption from legalization or apostillization pursuant to bilateral agreements on legal aid

List of states bound by a bilateral international agreement with Czech Republic which exempts certain types or all public documents from legalization / “apostillization”:

Afghanistan

Albania

Algeria

Austria

Belarus - only documents used by courts, it does not apply to public documents produced by citizens

Belgium - only documents used by courts, it does not apply to public documents produced by citizens

Bosnia and Hercegovina

Bulgaria

Croatia

Cuba

Cyprus

France

Georgia - only documents used by courts, it does not apply to public documents produced by citizens

Greece - only documents used by courts, it does not apply to public documents produced by citizens

Hungary

Italy - only documents used by courts, it does not apply to public documents produced by citizens

Korea Democratic People's Republic of (North Korea)

Kosovo

Kyrgyzstan

Mongolia

Montenegro

Poland

Portugal

Republic of Moldova

Republic of North Macedonia

Romania

Russian Federation

Serbia

Slovakia

Slovenia

Spain

Syria

Switzerland

Ukraine

Uzbekistan

Yemen - suspension of the operation of the Treaty from the 11th April 2019

Vietnam

To download the list of the contracts and the text of the relevant provisions relating to exemption from further legalization of documents, go back to the main web page on legalization of documents.

Notice: Latvia unilaterally cancelled obligation of legalization / “apostillization” of public documents established by authorities in the Member States of EU, European Economic Area and Switzerland.

Up to date: 09. 04. 2024