

**THE HAGUE CONVENTION**  
**ABOLISHING THE REQUIREMENT OF LEGALIZATION**  
**FOR FOREIGN PUBLIC DOCUMENTS**

The Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents was signed in The Hague on 5 October 1961. It has effect for Bulgaria from 30 April 2001.

- **Legalization of documents with an apostille**

The Signatory States to the Convention have put to use the legalization by [apostille](#) of documents issued by foreign states.

The apostille certificate exempts the document to which it is issued from any further legalization formalities by other superior authorities in the country of issue.

Apostilled documents emanating from States which are parties to the Hague Convention **are not legalized by the Bulgarian diplomatic or consular mission** accredited to the respective State. Such documents are recognized by the Bulgarian authorities when they bear an apostille certificate or such a certificate is attached thereto.

- **Validity of apostilled documents**

Apostilled documents are recognized and can give effect in each State which is a party to the Convention.

- **The following cannot be apostilled:**

The Hague Convention does not apply, therefore an apostille certificate cannot be issued, to:

1. administrative documents dealing directly with commercial or customs operations;
2. documents executed by diplomatic or consular agents.

Such documents emanating from Bulgaria can be certified for use abroad (legalized) by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in accordance with the existing requirements.

- **Bulgarian authorities which are competent to issue apostilles**

The Bulgarian authorities, which are competent to issue apostilles to Bulgarian public documents, are the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**The Ministry of Justice** certifies with an apostille acts emanating from courts and notaries.

**The Ministry of Foreign Affairs** certifies with an apostille any other public acts:

1. Civil status and address registration documents issued by Municipalities
2. Different attestations, certificates, licenses, etc. issued by different ministries, state agencies and institutions
3. Education certificates, certificates of acquired qualification and competence
4. Documents emanating from the National Social Security Institute, the National Statistical Institute, etc.

- **Requirements to the certification with an apostille by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

In order to be apostilled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the documents issued by the competent Bulgarian institutions must bear:

1. A legalization with an original/**rectangular ink stamp for abroad**, affixed by the institution issuing the document
2. **A round stamp and a signature** of the official authorized to make this legalization affixed next to the rectangular stamp.