

Questionnaire for Contracting Parties to the 1961 Apostille Convention



Israel

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Questionnaire for Contracting Parties to the 1961 Apostille Convention

Please note that not all questions require a response from all Contracting Parties; some are directed only at Contracting Parties that have not implemented one or both components of the e-APP. Likewise, other questions are addressed solely to those who have implemented and operate the e-APP.

I. Implementation of the e-APP

The questions below are intended to identify all Contracting Parties that have implemented one or both components of the e-APP (*i.e.*, those that issue e-Apostilles and/or operate an e-Register). Likewise, for Contracting Parties that have implemented neither component, the questions seek to clarify the stage they have reached in considering the e-APP, as well as the challenges that may be preventing its implementation.

A. First component: e-Apostille

1 Does your State issue e-Apostilles?

- Yes, e-Apostilles have been issued since 2021
- No, e-Apostilles have not been implemented yet.
- If not, please specify:
- We are studying the use of e-Apostilles and plan to implement the e-Apostille component.
Please specify, if relevant: [insert answer]
- We are not currently planning to implement the e-Apostille component.

For Parties that answered “No, e-Apostilles have not been implemented yet”, please answer question 1.1

1.1 What challenges is your State facing that may prevent it from implementing e-Apostilles?

More than one answer is possible.

- Internal law limitations.
- Judicial or administrative structure.
- Implementation challenges (e.g., lack of resources, lack of infrastructure).
- Cost.
- System interoperability / compatibility.
- Security concerns.
- Other – please specify: [insert answer]

If relevant, please explain any of the options above: [insert answer]

2 Regardless of whether your State currently issues e-Apostilles, are your receiving agencies equipped or able to accept and process incoming e-Apostilles (*i.e.*, e-Apostilles issued by other Contracting Parties)?

- Yes, all e-Apostilles can be processed.
- Yes, but on certain conditions – please specify: [insert answer]
- No – please explain why not: [insert answer]
- Unknown.

Please explain further any of the items above, if relevant: In 2021, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Deputy Attorney General (International law) at the time issued a circular to clarify that Israeli government authorities must recognize electronic apostilles issued by foreign states. The letter set out Israel’s obligations under the Apostille Convention, and outlined that when

electronic apostilles meet the conditions for recognition of paper apostilles they must be recognized as legal and valid (see unofficial translation of the circular enclosed). In cases where the Office of the Deputy Attorney General (International law) is aware of difficulties in acceptance of an electronic apostille by an Israeli government authority, the Office refers the authority to the circular and the matter is resolved.

B. Second component: e-Register

3 Does your State maintain an e-Register?

Yes, an e-Register has been implemented on [insert answer]

If yes, please indicate any specific features of your e-Register (e.g., whether your State maintains multiple e-Registers, different types of e-Registers for various Competent Authorities, or separate registers for paper and e-Apostilles, etc.): The e-register only refers to electronic apostilles (separate internal registers record the issuance of paper apostilles)

No, an e-Register has not been implemented yet.

If not, please specify:

We are studying the use of an e-Register and plan to implement the e-Register component.
Please specify, if relevant: [insert answer]

We are not currently planning to implement the e-Register component.

For Parties that answered “No, an e-Register has not been implemented yet”, please answer question 3.1:

3.1 What challenges is your State facing that may prevent it from implementing an e-Register?

More than one answer is possible.

Internal law limitations.

Judicial or administrative structure.

Implementation challenges (e.g., lack of resources, lack of infrastructure).

Cost.

System interoperability / compatibility.

Security concerns.

Other – please specify: [insert answer]

If relevant, please explain any of the options above: [insert answer]

II. Technology and the e-APP (including the use of digital signatures)

The questions below are intended to further understand how Contracting Parties recognise and use electronic or digital signatures, and how electronic public documents interact with the Apostille process, particularly in cases where the e-Apostille component has not yet been implemented.

For the purposes of this questionnaire, an **electronic signature** is a name, initial, mark or symbol that is affixed to, or logically associated with, a document or other record in electronic form, to evidence the signing of that document or record. A **digital signature** is a special type of electronic signature which works with encryption technology and can be authenticated using a digital certificate.

4 Under your internal law, for your own domestic public documents, do you recognise electronic / digital signatures as functionally equivalent to handwritten (wet) signatures (i.e., allowing your public documents to be signed electronically)?

Yes, please specify (including whether there are any requirements or technical standards for using electronic / digital signatures): The Electronic Signature Law, 2001 regulates the legal status

of electronic signatures in Israel. The Privacy Protection Authority, acting as the Registrar of Certifying Authorities under Section 9 of the Law, serves as the regulatory authority responsible for registration, supervision, and enforcement. The Law distinguishes between three types of electronic signatures according to their level of reliability: an electronic signature, defined as electronic information or a mark attached to an electronic message; a secure electronic signature, which uniquely identifies its owner, is created under the owner's exclusive control, and enables detection of any alteration to the message after signing; and a certified electronic signature, which is a secure electronic signature supported by a certified electronic certificate issued by a body authorized by the Privacy Protection Authority. Regulation 8(1) of the Electronic Signature Regulations (Secure Electronic Signature, Hardware and Software Systems and Examination of Applications), 2001, establishes three conditions for establishing the presumption that an electronic signature constitutes a secure electronic signature. The first condition sets out requirements regarding the algorithms and key lengths used for electronic signatures for the purpose of signing by the certificate holder (end user). The second condition establishes requirements concerning the protection of the signature creation device, including information security requirements applicable to the device. The third condition addresses the protection of access to, and the use of and individual key for that purpose.

No.

Other – for example, electronic signatures are only permissible for certain categories of documents. Please specify: [insert answer]

Unknown.

For Parties that answered Q.4 affirmatively, please answer question 4.1:

4.1 For incoming electronic public documents (i.e., those issued by other Contracting Parties), does your State impose specific requirements or technical standards for accepting electronic / digital signatures?

Yes – please specify the applicable requirements or technical standards: [insert answer]

No.

Other – please specify: generally, when an electronic apostille is attached to an incoming public document from contracting state the document would be considered as valid in Israel without further requirements. [insert answer]

Unknown.

5 Under your internal law, do foreign electronic public documents have the same probative value as paper public documents?

Yes – Please specify (including whether your receiving agencies are able to accept and process incoming electronic public documents): [insert answer]

No.

It depends – please specify: In principle, the law does not distinguish between domestic documents and documents issued abroad. Foreign documents must meet the same signature requirements outlined above as for domestic documents.

Other – please specify: [insert answer]

Unknown.

If relevant, please explain further any of the options above: [insert answer]

6 Under your internal law, are public documents executed, or able to be executed, in electronic form (whether or not they are to be used abroad under the 1961 Apostille Convention)?

Yes, all public documents are executed or able to be executed in electronic form.

Yes, certain categories of public documents are executed or able to be executed in electronic form.

No, public documents are never executed in electronic form.

If relevant, please explain any of the options above: All of the most frequently used public documents are available in electronic form.

For Parties that answered affirmatively and execute, or are able to execute, public documents in electronic form, please answer question 6.1:

6.1 Can electronic public documents issued in your State be verified by foreign receiving agencies?

Yes – please specify how they can be verified: [insert answer]

No.

Other – please specify: foreign agencies can verify the signatures on electronic public documents from Israel if the documents have been authenticated by an electronic apostille, but not the document itself

Unknown.

6.2 If your State executes, or is able to execute, electronic public documents but has not implemented the e-Apostille component, how is an Apostille issued for such electronic documents?

The public document must first be *executed* in paper format.

A hard *copy* of the electronic public document is printed and a paper Apostille is issued and attached.

Other – please specify: [insert answer]

III. Issuance of e-Apostilles

The questions below are intended to identify any requirements or conditions that Contracting Parties may impose for issuing e-Apostilles, as well as to understand the procedures followed by the Competent Authorities and how the underlying public document is treated.

7 Does your State have any requirements, conditions, or limitations for issuing e-Apostilles? If so, please describe them (e.g., requirements concerning the identity of the applicant; the use of specific platforms or digital solutions for applications; the nature or the form of the underlying public document; etc.).

Yes – please specify: [the underlying public document must be issued electronically. Only applicants with access to the personal area on the Israel Government System (Israeli nationals and residents) can request an electronic apostille. insert answer]

No.

Please explain further any of the items above, if relevant: [insert answer]

8 Under your internal law, which of the following formats of public documents are eligible for the issuance of e-Apostilles?

More than one answer is possible.

Electronic public documents.

Paper public documents that have been scanned by a public official.

Paper public documents that have been scanned by applicants.

If relevant, please explain any of the options above: [insert answer]

9 Does your State issue paper Apostilles alongside e-Apostilles?

Yes.

No, we only issue e-Apostilles.

- 9.1 If yes, please indicate the proportion of e-Apostilles issued in comparison to paper Apostilles. If known, provide any specific reasons that may explain the difference in proportions.**

In 2025, 409,742 public documents were issued. Of these, 41,433 were issued with an electronic apostille (approximately 10%). Throughout 2025, 2,058 digital apostilles were issued for notarial certificates. These requests constitute 4.6% of all requests for the issuance of electronic apostilles submitted in 2025. The main reason for the disparity (aside from technological issues related to the issuance of electronic apostilles for notarial documents), is the concern by applicants that the electronic apostille would be rejected in contracting states. These concerns are based on the experiences of applicants and lawyers who assist them in processing of Israeli public documents abroad, which face significant difficulties in various contracting states. Other reasons include lack of awareness and preference to have physical paper documents.

- 9.2 If yes, what are the criteria for issuing paper Apostilles versus e-Apostilles (e.g., is the nature or the form of the underlying public document decisive, or can applicants choose between the two formats)?**

In cases where the underlying public document can be issued electronically (relevant to almost all public documents), the applicant can choose whether to apply for an electronic or paper apostille. In all other cases, only a paper apostille can be issued.

- 9.3 If not, how does your State issue e-Apostilles for paper-based documents?**

[insert answer]

- 10 When issuing e-Apostilles for electronic public documents, does your State preserve the electronic / digital signature of the underlying document?**

Yes, the electronic / digital signature is preserved. Please explain how this is done: [insert answer]

No, only the electronic / digital signature of the e-Apostille is preserved.

If relevant, please explain any of the options above: Under Section 1(4) of the The Electronic Signature Law, 2001, an "Approved Electronic Signature" is a secure electronic signature for which a Certifying Authority has issued an approved electronic certificate concerning the signature verification means that identify it. An electronic notarial certificate is a certificate signed with an Approved Electronic Signature of a notary, issued by a Certifying Authority. The electronic signatures are issued by one of two entities, Comsign and Personal ID, which have been selected as Certifying Authorities in accordance with the Electronic Signature Law, 2001. With respect to digital apostille certificates, the Apostille Verification Website (e-register) is designed to allow foreign authorities to verify that apostille certificates received from Israel are authentic and that the notary who signed the notarial certificate is authorized to act as a notary in Israel. Through the verification website, <https://eregister.justice.gov.il>, apostilles can be checked in the Israel Apostille Register. Apostille certificates are stored in the Ministry's Apostille Certificates system (SOAportal).

- 11 When issuing e-Apostilles, how does your Competent Authority complete the standard informational items on the Certificate? Please indicate whether there are any differences compared with issuing paper Apostilles or authenticating paper public documents.**

The Competent Authority completes all standard informational items in the same manner as when issuing paper Apostilles or authenticating paper public documents.

The Competent Authority completes the items differently as follows:

- Items 2-4: [insert answer]
- Items 7 and/or 10: [insert answer]

12 In addition to the digital signature, does your e-Apostille include any other security or technical features, such as QR codes, encryption, digital watermarks, or similar measures?

The digital Apostille incorporates several security and verification features to ensure its authenticity and proper use.

It includes:

1. Dedicated online verification platform (<https://eregister.justice.gov.il>) which enables authorities to confirm the validity of the document through the official government registry.
2. Each certificate is assigned a unique serial number for tracking and verification purposes.

IV. Operation of an e-Register

13 What particulars are contained in your e-Register?

More than one answer is possible.

- Number and date of the Apostille (required).
- Name and capacity of the person signing the document and / or the name of authority whose seal or stamp is affixed (required).
- Name and / or type of underlying document.
- Description of the contents of underlying document.
- Name of the applicant.
- State of destination.
- Copy of the Apostille.
- Copy of the underlying public document.
- Other – please specify: Name of the officer who signed the public document.

If relevant, please explain any of the options above: [insert answer]

V. Issues with e-Apostilles

The questions below are intended to assess the practical acceptance of e-Apostilles among Contracting Parties to the 1961 Apostille Convention. They aim to identify whether e-Apostilles issued or received by a Contracting Party have ever been refused, the reasons for any such refusals, and the actions taken in response.

14 Has an e-Apostille issued by your Competent Authority ever been refused by the authorities of another Contracting Party?

- Unknown.
- No.

Yes, please provide any further information, in particular the reasons why the e-Apostille was refused, if known: Some contracting parties refuse to accept electronic apostilles for the following reasons:

1. The state/relevant agency does not recognize electronic apostilles as legally valid stating that only paper apostilles are legally valid.
2. The state/relevant agency claims that because the Israel e-Register does not show the underlying public document (for privacy reasons) the electronic apostille is invalid, even though there is no such legal requirement under the Convention.
3. The domestic laws of the state/relevant agency do not allow for recognition of any form of electronic public document, including electronic apostilles.

4. The competent authority in the contracting party is aware of the legal validity of an electronic apostille but it does not have the authority to impose the obligation to recognize an electronic apostille on other government agencies.

5. Domestic laws allow for acceptance of foreign public documents but each government agency is independent to choose whether to accept foreign electronic public documents or not;

6. Difficulties preventing the embassy of the contracting party in Israel from accepting electronic documents or electronic apostilles, as the embassy it is accustomed to working with paper-based processes.

15 If an e-Apostille has been rejected, what actions were taken in response?

More than one answer is possible.

A paper Apostille was issued instead.

Contacted the receiving authority.

Contacted the Competent Authority of the place of destination.

Contacted nearest diplomatic mission of the place of destination.

Contacted own diplomatic mission accredited to the place of destination.

Contacted the Permanent Bureau.

No action taken.

Other, please specify: When a complaint is received regarding a state that refuses to recognize an electronic apostille, Israel engages bilaterally with the state and its competent authorities to clarify the reasons for the rejection. We also provide the competent authority with a brochure explaining the signature verification procedure for the electronic apostille. In addition, for states that do not recognize electronic public documents, we offer a hybrid model in which the original underlying public document is issued in a physical format alongside an electronic document bearing with an electronic apostille. In some cases, these steps resolve the issue but in others, problems remain, making the availability of the use of electronic apostilles in some contracting parties non-existent. In such cases, it is very difficult to solve the issue bilaterally without any supportive multilateral framework in the form of post-Convention assistance. Detailed guidance from the HCCH on best practices on how to resolve these difficulties could be very useful as reference in bilateral outreach on these issues.

Unknown.

If relevant, please explain any of the options above: [insert answer]

16 Has an e-Apostille received by your authorities ever been refused?

Unknown.

No.

Yes, please provide any further information, in particular the reasons why the e-Apostille was refused, if known: in cases where we become aware of a rejection of an electronic apostille by an Israeli government agency or municipality, we reach out to the agency/municipality to inform its legal advisor that Israel is obligated to recognize electronic apostilles in the same manner as a paper apostille. We also send the circular issued in 2021 to the relevant agency/municipality. In all cases this resolves the issue.

If relevant, please explain any of the options above: [insert answer]

VI. Education and training

17 Has your State implemented training activities or issued any guidelines on the operation of the e-APP for officers in the Competent Authority(ies)?

No.

Yes, please specify: Israel initiated a proactive outreach to the Registrar of Companies, the Registrar of Inheritances, and the Land Registry to facilitate their participation in the program and provided a detailed explanation of the Digital Apostille Initiative.

18 Has your State implemented training activities or issued any guidelines on the acceptance of e-Apostilles and the operation of e-Registers for receiving authorities?

No.

Yes, please specify:

If your State has issued guidelines or supporting documentation for receiving authorities, please indicate the format used, the type of information included, how the documents have been distributed, and how frequently they are issued, if known: As noted above, in 2021, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Deputy Attorney General (International law) at the time issued a circular to clarify that Israeli government authorities must recognize electronic apostilles issued by foreign states. The letter set out Israel's obligations under the Apostille Convention, and outlined that when electronic apostilles meet the conditions for recognition of paper apostilles they must be recognized as legal and valid (see unofficial translation of the circular enclosed). In addition, the Israel Population and Immigration Authority issued a procedure establishing that electronic apostilles must be recognized as follows:

"2.1.3 Authentication of a public document by means of an apostille shall be carried out in one of the following ways: a sticker affixed to the reverse side of the document; an attached page accompanying the document; by electronic means.

2.1.4 In the case of electronic authentication, the document shall be accepted only in digital form (via electronic mail), where both the seal of the authority issuing the document and the apostille appear on the document."

19 Is / Are your Competent Authority(ies) willing and able to meet with other Competent Authorities to discuss the implementation and operation of the e-APP and to exchange experiences?

Yes, please specify: Israel maintains an ongoing and constructive dialogue with competent authorities of foreign states and embassies in Israel to promote the acceptance and use of electronic apostilles. Prior to launching Israel's electronic apostilles program we consulted various competent authorities on their experiences. Since the launching of the Israeli electronic apostilles, we met with embassies in Israel and component authorities abroad to explain how Israel issues electronic apostilles and to stress the importance of ensuring that such apostilles would be accepted by the respective foreign authorities. As part of these efforts, we organized a workshop for a contracting party to explain the procedure for issuing electronic apostilles. In addition, we convened a conference for foreign consuls stationed in Israel, during which we presented the electronic apostille and discussed the existing barriers to its implementation. The Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a circular to all embassies in Israel to explain the operation of the Israeli apostille program. We intend to hold a another conference in the near future. We are willing and able to engage with any interested competent authority in ant contracting state to support and enhance the circulation of electronic apostilles in contracting states .

No, please specify: [insert answer].

Unknown.

VII. Miscellaneous

20 Do you have any suggestions that could assist in the promotion, implementation, and / or operation of the e-APP?

No.

Yes – please specify: 1.Information from contracting parties on the acceptance, or lack thereof, of electronic apostilles should be published on the HCCH website (based on voluntary information provided by states in response to requests for information by the HCCH). Even if only some states provide some information this could be very helpful for states issuing electronic apostilles to provide accurate guidance to users regarding the likely acceptance of such apostilles in destination states. 2.The HCCH should consider encouraging that states which cannot accept foreign electronic public documents to recognize the authenticity of the documents if the applicant provides the paper public document alongside the electronic public document with an electronic apostille. 3.The HCCH should clarify that rejection of an electronic apostille solely for the reason that the apostille is in an electronic form is a violation of the Convention. 4. The HCCH should clarify that it is a violation of the Convention to reject an electronic apostille solely due to the fact that the e-register does not show the underlying public document. 5. The HCCH should encourage states to issue guidelines to receiving authorities on the acceptance of electronic apostilles, while providing modalities for the content of such guidelines. 6. The HCCH should consider addressing practical dilemmas facing competent authorities which issue electronic apostilles. These can include, inter alia, the printing on not of the electronic apostille, issuing cautionary warnings about potential rejections by contracting parties of electronic apostilles and means to resolve complaints from applicants about lack of acceptance of electronic apostilles.

21 Are there any specific topics or practical issues related to the e-APP that your State would like have discussed at the 14th International Forum on the e-APP?

No.

Yes – please specify: The forum should dedicate a session for discussion between contracting parties on developing tools to remove barriers to optimizing the circulation of electronic apostilles based on the responses to the questionnaire. Alongside a substantive based discussion it could also be useful to discuss institutional steps which can facilitate the development of such tools, to be suggested for consideration by CGAP in its March 2027 meeting. If it will be helpful we would be glad to share Israel's experience on developing the electronic apostille with the forum as Israel has done in past sessions.

22 Please confirm whether your responses to this questionnaire can be published on the HCCH website.

No.

Yes – please specify whether certain questions should not be published: [insert answer]

VIII. Additional information & supporting documents

23 Please indicate any additional information or documentation to support your response. This may include resources for the general public or guidelines for Competent Authority staff, as well as any recent judicial decisions, legislative developments, books, articles, or published works relevant to the operation of the 1961 Apostille Convention.

[See enclosed the 2021 letter issued by the then Deputy Attorney-General (International Law) to all legal advisors of the Israeli government agencies on the importance of accepting electronic apostilles, the Israel Ministry of Justice brochure the Ministry of Foreign Affairs circular on the electronic apostille issued to all embassies in Israel.]

Questionnaire relating to the implementation and operation of the e-APP

insert answer]

Please attach any relevant documents when submitting the questionnaire to secretariat@hcch.net.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.