

Love to share!

Our experience on e-APP

The National Center for Information and Documentation (NACID) secures access to a variety of information resources, maintains databases, creates information products and provides services to support the development of education, training, and science.

The Centre is the authorized body for issuing the Apostille certificate for educational and certification documents issued by the institutions in the system of pre-school, school and vocational education and training, by the university institutions and scientific organizations and by the Ministry of Education and Science and its divisions, through amendments in the Declaration under art. 6, par. 1, of the Law on ratification of the Convention for abolishing the requirement of legalization for foreign public documents of October 19, 2018.

The beginning

What did the analysis of the procedure for issuing Apostilles show?

Negatives:

A cumbersome procedure

Difficulties for stakeholders

The impact of paper use on the environment

Opportunity: Digital environment

Can it be changed and how?

What do we have?

- ✓ Legislative framework Hague Convention, recommendations of the Permanent Bureau, Apostille Handbook, European and National legislation
- ✓ Required availabilities:
 - Databases available e-Registers of all students in educational institutions, including universities, e-Registers of the issued documents for completed educational degree, including for higher education and an up-to-date database of the specimens of the competent persons signing the educational documents.
 - Built internal information system for movement of paper documents and Apostilles
 - e-Register-Category 2 (Additional)
- ✓ Financial resource The Bulgarian Operational Program "Good Governance" for the implementation of the European Social Fund (ESF) in the period 2014-2020
- ✓ Competent staff

What we need?

- ✓ Project
- ✓ IT professionals
- ✓ Technology

- We completed the project successfully
- We implemented the components of e-APP:
- 1. e-Apostilles on the paper educational documents which are subsequently scanned and digitally certified by authorized officer.
- 2. e-Register-Category 3 (Advanced) verification of the Apostille and document, digital certificate of the Apostille and the integrity of the underlying public document.

The e-process

The e-administrative services are available ONLY for educational documents which are available in e-Registers of issued educational documents where the documents may be verified officially.

The holders of a diploma and other documents issued **after 2007** by Bulgarian educational institutions/schools (Bulgarian and foreign citizens) and the holders of a diploma/diploma supplement issued **after 2012** by Bulgarian universities/HEls (Bulgarian and foreign citizens) can **apply online** and receive e-Apostilles and/or paper Apostilles.

Why: e-Registers of issued documents for primary, secondary and higher education and vocational education and/or training maintained by the Ministry of Education and Science and NACID.

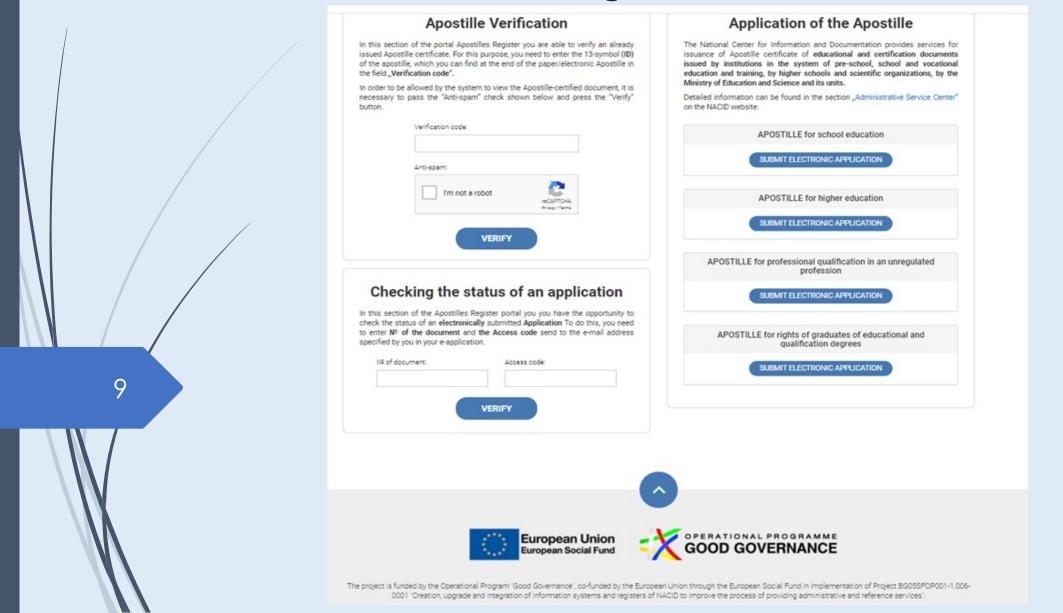
The paper process

For educational documents which ARE NOT AVAILABLE in e-Registers request for issuing both paper and/or e-Apostille can be made in the Administrative Service Centre of NACID orally or by written application.

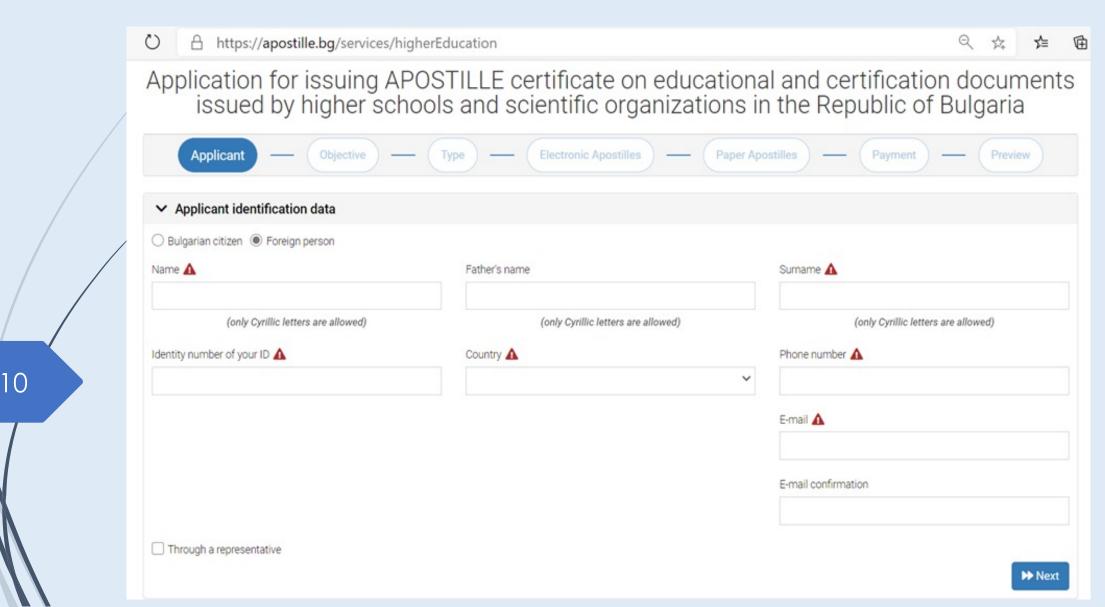
The verification of both e-Apostilles and paper Apostilles are carried out through the NACID "Apostilles e-Register". **Portal available at internet address:**

https://apostille.bg/.

Start, Checking status and Verification



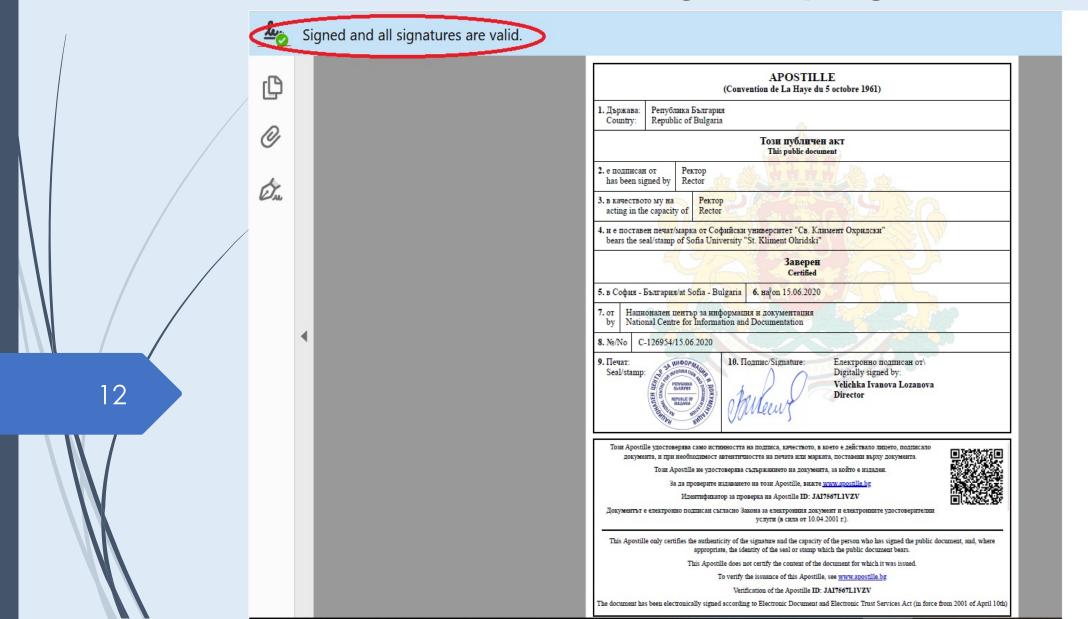
Application steps



Advantages

- 1. All interested foreign institutions and persons from any country can easily verify both the e-Apostille and the paper Apostille together with the document they are attached to by entering the ID number located at the bottom of the respective Apostille in the "Apostille Verification" section of the Portal "Apostilles e-Register": https://apostille.bg/.
- 2. The e-Apostille and the document, both merged into a unified PDF file, are previewed, and the file can be downloaded, stored and provided via any electronic device. Each e-Apostille is also equipped with a QR-code for easy verification through these digital devices from anywhere across the globe.
 - 3. Processing time and Price Fast and Cheap!

Electronic APOSTILLE signed by digital Certificate



The result

Each individual person whose educational documents have been certified with both paper and e-Apostille receives an electronic message presenting detailed information about the issued Apostilles with a direct link to the relevant Apostille at the Portal (https://apostille.bg/) for verification by any interested institution or person.

Преписката по Вашето заявление за издаване на Apostille е приключена.

За да прегледате преписката и да изтеглите удостоверените с електронен Apostille документи, посетете портала "Perистър Apostilles" на адрес: https://apostille.bg/, като въведете:

Номер на преписка:

Код за достъп

Издадени са 1бр. електронни Apostilles:

Диплома Apostille No:

сод за достъп (ID):

Електронният Apostille е електронна версия на хартиения Apostille. Електронните Apostilles **имат същата правна сила** като хартиените. Всички държави, които са страни по *Хагската конеенция от 5 октомери 1961 г. за премахване на изискването за легализация на чуждестранни публични актове, са длъжни да приемат електронния Apostille. Електронният и хартиеният Apostille са еднакво валидни.*

Можете да изпратите това съобщение на заинтересованите институции или лица.

За проверка на Apostille и свързания с него документ моля, посетете електронния Регистър на Националния център за информация и документация на адрес: https://apostille.bg/

Необходимо е да въведете идентификационния код (ID) на съответния Apostille.

An e-Apostille is an electronic version of a paper Apostille. E-Apostilles have the same legal standing an effect as paper Apostilles. All countries who are party to the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legislation for Foreign Public Documents are obliged to accept the e-Apostille. E-Apostille and paper Apostille are equally valid.

You can send this message to institutions or persons who are interested in your documents.

To check the Apostille and related document, please visit the e-Register of the National Center for Information and Documentation at: https://apostille.bg/

Please enter the identification code (ID) of the Apostille.



Verification of e-Document

The verification of digitally signed document is important as for its holder as well as for the institution/person to which it will be submitted. The process indicates:

- Verification of the **validity of digital certificate** by which the document has been signed.
- Verification if the document **has not been already modified after** it has been signed.

The verification can be made at the website of the Electronic Governance State Agency in the <u>"Validation of e-Documents"</u> section.

Validation of the timestamps

The certificate of the **timestamp** placed on an electronic document, which has been signed with a digital certificate with a timestamp generated for it, can be verified. **The validity of the timestamp**:

- certifies the time of signing the electronic document and
- **guarantees** that the document has been created before the timestamp is placed.

The validation can be made at the website of the Electronic Governance State Agency in the "Validation of timestamps" section.

STATISTICS OF ISSUED APOSTILLES BY NACID

| Period | Total Number | Paper Apostilles | e- Apostilles |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 15.06. 2020 – 14.06.2021 | 16 607 | 14 860 | 1 747 |
| 15.06.2019 – 14.06.2020 | 17634 | 17634 | X |
| 15.06.2018 – 14.06.2019 | 21656 | 21656 | X |
| 15.06.2017 – 14.06.2018 | 23045 | 23045 | X |

Challenges

- 1. How to bind an e-apostilled document with its translation made by a sworn translator?
- The competent institutions to which the apostilled document is presented still insist on paper.
- 3. Consumers' distrust of the digitally certified e-documents.



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

National Centre for Information and Documentation



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

Velichka Lozanova

Director of Directorate "Information Activities and

Authentication of Educational Documents"

52 A, Dr. G. M. Dimitrov Blvd.

1125 Sofia, Bulgaria

e-mail: lozanova@nacid.bg

tel.: (+359 2) 817 38 55

NACID e-mail: nacid@nacid.bg

https://nacid.bg/en/