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**QUESTIONNAIRE OF APRIL 2016 RELATING TO THE**

***HAGUE CONVENTION OF 5 OCTOBER 1961 ABOLISHING THE REQUIREMENT OF LEGALISATION FOR FOREIGN PUBLIC DOCUMENTS***

**(APOSTILLE CONVENTION)**

*drawn up by the Permanent Bureau*

**\* \* \***

**QUESTIONNAIRE D’AVRIL 2016 PORTANT SUR LA
*CONVENTION DE LA HAYE DU 5 OCTOBRE 1961 SUPPRIMANT L'EXIGENCE
DE LA LÉGALISATION DES ACTES PUBLICS ÉTRANGERS***

**(CONVENTION APOSTILLE)**

*établi par le Bureau Permanent*

*Preliminary Document No 1 of April 2016*

*for the attention of the Special Commission of November 2016 on the
practical operation of the Apostille Convention*

*Document préliminaire No 1 d’avril 2016*

*à l'attention de la Commission spéciale de novembre 2016 sur le
fonctionnement pratique de la Convention Apostille*

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# About this Questionnaire

As announced in circular letter L.c. ON No 16(16) of 1 April 2016, the Secretary General of the Hague Conference on Private International Law has formally convoked a meeting of the Special Commission on the practical operation of the *Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Public Documents* (“Apostille Convention”), to be held from Wednesday 2 November to Friday 4 November 2016. The Special Commission meeting will also be preceded by the 10th International Forum on the e-APP (electronic Apostille Program) on Tuesday 1 November 2016.

Both meetings are convoked pursuant to paragraph 35 of the Conclusions & Recommendations of the 2016 meeting of the Council on General Affairs and Policy of the Hague Conference (available [here](https://assets.hcch.net/docs/3c2a5c5c-9252-4562-9b4d-b88523d18285.pdf)).

With a view to preparing for both the Special Commission meeting and the e-APP Forum, the Permanent Bureau has drawn up the following questionnaire. Responses to this questionnaire will assist the Permanent Bureau in its ongoing monitoring of the Apostille Convention and in ensuring the currency and accuracy of data contained on the “[Apostille Section](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille)” of the Hague Conference website (< [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net/) >). The information and views provided by States will also assist the Permanent Bureau in defining the key issues to be addressed at the Special Commission. With a view to facilitating discussions at the Special Commission, the Permanent Bureau will prepare a synopsis document to collate the responses that are received on time.

States are kindly asked to submit their completed questionnaire by **Friday 15 July 2016**. Completed questionnaires should be sent to the Permanent Bureau by e-mail to < secretariat@hcch.net > with subject line “Questionnaire – Apostille Convention – *[State name]*”.

# Instructions for completion

***Non‑Contracting States*** to the Apostille Convention are invited to respond to [***Part A***](#_Questions_for_non-Contracting) of the questionnaire only. ***Contracting States*** are invited to respond to [***Part B***](#_Questions_for_Contracting) only.

States should respond to each question *electronically* by:

* checking the appropriate box provided (if applicable, more that one box may be checked); and/or
* entering text, *in either English or French,* in the field provided (the field will expand automatically as the response is entered).

Certain questions may have multiple responses for States that have more than one Competent Authority or more than one territorial unit in which different systems of law apply. If this is the case, the authority responsible for completing and submitting the questionnaire may wish to consult the Competent Authorities or authorities in the territorial units to produce a consolidated response to the relevant questions.

States are kindly requested to submit ***a single response per Contracting State*** that accounts for all Competent Authorities and territorial units in which the Apostille Convention applies. If necessary, the space provided in each question for comments may be used to specify different practices among Competent Authorities or among territorial units.

This questionnaire is largely based on the 2012 questionnaire. If still applicable, a State may wish to copy its response to the 2012 questionnaire into its response to this questionnaire (cross-references to the corresponding questions of the 2012 questionnaire have been included to assist in this regard). Throughout the questionnaire, references to the relevant paragraphs (paras) of the [Apostille Handbook](https://www.hcch.net/en/publications-and-studies/details4/?pid=5888) (“**Apostille HB**”) and to the Conclusions and Recommendations (“**C&R”**) of the Special Commission (**SC**, referred to as “2012 SC”) have also been included. The documents referred to in this paragraph are accessible via the [Apostille Section](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille).

**States are kindly requested not to change the format of the questionnaire.** Any questions regarding the completion of this questionnaire may be submitted to the Permanent Bureau by e-mail to < secretariat@hcch.net > for the attention of Mayela Celis (Principal Legal Officer) and Brody Warren (Legal Officer).

The Permanent Bureau will place all replies to this Questionnaire on the Hague Conference website < [www.hcch.net](http://www.hcch.net) > unless expressly asked not to do so.

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# Identification (please complete all fields)

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| Name of State: | **Insert name of State** (hereinafter “YOUR STATE”) |
| *For follow-up purposes:* |
| Name and title of contact person: |       |
| Name of authority/office: |       |
| Telephone number: |       |
| E-mail address: |       |

#### Questions for non-Contracting States

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| Reasons for not being a Contracting State |
| * + 1. Why is YOUR STATE not party to the Apostille Convention?

⮊ *c.f. Q a) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  The internal law of YOUR STATE does not require foreign public documents to be legalised or subjected to a similar formality before having effect in YOUR STATE (see also **Question f)**)[ ]  There are legal obstacles in the internal legal system of YOUR STATE that prevent it from becoming a Party to the Convention – *please specify*:     [ ]  YOUR STATE is concerned about the loss of revenue currently generated by legalising documents.[ ]  There are other specific issues arising out of the Apostille Convention which dissuade YOUR STATE from joining the Apostille Convention – *please specify*:     [ ]  YOUR STATE does not have the means or resources to properly implement the Apostille Convention[ ]  The question of becoming a Party to the Convention has never been examined in detail[ ]  Other – *please specify*:      *Comments*:      |
| Foreign direct investment |
| * + 1. Is YOUR STATE aware that international organisations, such as the World Bank and the International Chamber of Commerce, have recognised the importance and efficacy of the Apostille Convention in the promotion and development of international trade and investment and have urged States that have not done so to join the Convention?

⮊ *c.f. Q b) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *See C&R No 4 of the 2012 SC.* 🖉 *The International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank Group released the Investing Across Border Report, which is an initiative that compares the regulation of foreign direct investment (“FDI”) around the world. One of the indicators used in the report to measure the ease with which a foreign company can start a business in a given economy was whether or not the Apostille Convention was in force for that economy. Accordingly,* ***by being party to the Apostille Convention, a State can improve its FDI competitiveness****. For more information,* [*click here*](http://iab.worldbank.org/~/media/FPDKM/IAB/Documents/IAB-report.pdf)*.*🖉 *The Chamber of Commerce released a news item urging States to join the Apostille Convention,* [*click here*](http://www.iccwbo.org/News/Articles/2012/ICC-urges-States-to-ratify-Apostille-Convention-for-simplified-authentication-of-public-documents/)*.*⮊ *see also para. 23 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes[ ]  No *Comments*:      |
| Studying the Apostille Convention |
| * + 1. Is YOUR STATE currently studying the Apostille Convention, or does YOUR STATE envisage studying it, with a view to becoming a State Party in the near future?

⮊ *c.f. Q c) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes – *please specify (including status and timetable for accession)*:      [ ]  No – *please explain why not (then* ***go to******Question e)****)*:      |
| ***Only for States that are studying or envisage studying the Apostille Convention**** + 1. Is YOUR STATE taking the e-APP (electronic Apostille Program) into consideration, or does YOUR STATE envisage taking it into consideration, as part of this study?

⮊ *c.f. Q e) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *Information on the e-APP is available on the* [*Apostille Section*](http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=text.display&tid=37) *of the Hague Conference website. For detailed information, see in particular paras 321-363 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – please specify which component(s)?[ ]  *both* components[ ]  only the e-Apostille component[ ]  only the e-Register component[ ]  No *Comments*:      |
| Statistics |
| * + 1. How many legalisations were performed in 2015 by the authorities of YOUR STATE?

*If no statistics are kept, please provide a rough estimate*⮊ *c.f. Q f) of the 2012 questionnaire* | *Outgoing documents* *Legalisations performed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on documents executed in YOUR STATE* | *Incoming documents**Legalisations performed by consulates/embassies of YOUR STATE located in another State on documents executed in that State* |
|       |       |
| Other instruments |
| * + 1. Is the production of foreign public documents in YOUR STATE exempted from / not subject to legalisation or similar formality, or otherwise facilitated, by virtue of:
* any internal law or practice that YOUR STATE has introduced or intends to introduce? Or
* any bilateral, regional or global instrument to which YOUR STATE is party or to which it intends to become party.

⮊ *c.f. Q g) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No *Comments*:      |

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| The “Apostille Section” and publications |
| * + 1. How useful is the information provided on the [Apostille Section](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille) of the Hague Conference website?

⮊ *c.f. Q i) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *In addition to English and French, the Apostille Section is available in* [*German*](https://www.hcch.net/de/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille/)*,* [*Portuguese*](https://www.hcch.net/pt/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille/) *and* [*Spanish*](https://www.hcch.net/es/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille/) *(click on the link “other languages” – not all documents have been translated).*🖉 *The Special Commission has noted that the Apostille Section continues to be a most useful resource of information (see C&R No 8 of the 2012 SC).*⮊ *see also para. 33 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Very useful[ ]  Useful[ ]  Not useful[ ]  The Apostille Section has not yet been consulted*Comments or suggestions for improvement*:      |
| * + 1. Is YOUR STATE aware of the publications of the Permanent Bureau the [*ABCs of Apostilles*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/abc12e.pdf)*,* the [*Brief Implementation Guide*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/guide12e.pdf),and the [*Apostille Handbook*](https://assets.hcch.net/docs/ff5ad106-3573-495b-be94-7d66b7da7721.pdf), available on the [Apostille Section](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille) of the Hague Conference website?

⮊ *c.f. Q j) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes [ ]  Some of them – *please specify*:     [ ]  No |
| * + 1. Does YOUR STATE have any suggestions for future publications that could assist the promotion, implementation, or operation of the Apostille Convention?

⮊ *c.f. Q k) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No |
| Other |
| * + 1. Are there any specific topics or practical issues that YOUR STATE would like to have discussed at the 2016 Special Commission?

⮊ *c.f. Q l) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 38-39 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No |

#### Questions for Contracting States

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| Apostille sample |
| Please submit a **sample** (preferably in .PDF, .JPEG or .TIFF format) of the Apostille Certificate used by your Competent Authority(ies). If YOUR STATE issues both paper and e-Apostilles please provide us with a sample of both.⮊ *c.f. Q 8.2 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *This Apostille Certificate will be used for internal purposes only.*  |
| Joining the Apostille Convention |
| Changes to internal law |
| * + 1. Was implementing legislation necessary to give the Apostille Convention force of law in YOUR STATE (including regulations relating to the establishment and functioning of Competent Authorities)?

⮊ *c.f. Q 1.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes*Please specify the provision(s) or implementing legislation, and the date of entry into force*:      *Please specify how the legislation may be accessed (*e.g.*, include a copy or provide a link to an online version)*:      [ ]  No *Comments*:      |
| Foreign direct investment |
| * + 1. Is YOUR STATE aware that international organisations, such as the World Bank and the International Chamber of Commerce, have recognised the importance and efficacy of the Apostille Convention in the promotion and development of international trade and investment and have urged States that have not done so to join the Convention?

⮊ *c.f. Q 1.2 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *See C&R No 4 of the 2012 SC.* 🖉 *The International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank Group released the Investing Across Border Report, which is an initiative that compares the regulation of foreign direct investment (“FDI”) around the world. One of the indicators used in the report to measure the ease with which a foreign company can start a business in a given economy was whether or not the Apostille Convention was in force for that economy. Accordingly,* ***by being party to the Apostille Convention, a State can improve its FDI competitiveness****. For more information,* [*click here*](http://iab.worldbank.org/~/media/FPDKM/IAB/Documents/IAB-report.pdf)*.*🖉 *The Chamber of Commerce released a news item urging States to join the Apostille Convention,* [*click here*](http://www.iccwbo.org/News/Articles/2012/ICC-urges-States-to-ratify-Apostille-Convention-for-simplified-authentication-of-public-documents/)*.* ⮊ *see also para. 23 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes[ ]  No *Comments*:      |

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| Other relevant instruments, laws and practices |
| * + 1. Is the production of any types of foreign public documents in YOUR STATE exempted from / not subject to legalisation or similar formality, or otherwise facilitated, by virtue of:
* any internal law or practice that YOUR STATE has introduced or intends to introduce?

or* any bilateral, regional or global instrument to which YOUR STATE is party or to which it intends to become party?

⮊ *c.f. Q 1.3 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 18-20 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No *Comments*:      |

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| Objections to accessions |
| Revisiting objections  |
| ***Only for States that have objected to one or more accessions**** + 1. If YOUR STATE has objected to the accession of one (or more) Contracting State(s) under Article 12 of the Convention, has your State revisited its position on this issue in the last five years, or does YOUR STATE intend to do so in the near future?

⮊ *c.f. Q 2.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has invited States that have objected to continue assessing whether conditions for withdrawing their objections are met (see C&R No 7 of the 2012 SC).*⮊ *see also paras 91-95 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No *Comments*:      |

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| The Apostille Section and publications |
| Content of the Apostille Section |
| * + 1. How useful is the information provided on the [Apostille Section](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille) of the Hague Conference website?

⮊ *c.f. Q 3.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *In addition to English and French, the Apostille Section is available in* [*German*](https://www.hcch.net/de/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille/)*,* [*Portuguese*](https://www.hcch.net/pt/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille/) *and* [*Spanish*](https://www.hcch.net/es/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille/) *(click on the link “other languages” – not all documents have been translated).*🖉 *The Special Commission has noted that the Apostille Section continues to be a most useful resource of information (see C&R No 8 of the 2012 SC).*⮊ *see also para. 33 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Very useful[ ]  Useful[ ]  Not useful*Comments or suggestions for improvement*:      |

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| * + 1. How often do staff of the Competent Authority(ies) of YOUR STATE consult the [Apostille Handbook](https://assets.hcch.net/docs/ff5ad106-3573-495b-be94-7d66b7da7721.pdf)?

🖉 *The Apostille Handbook was published in 2013 and is available in English and French on the* [*Apostille Section*](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille/)*. A revised Spanish version will be available soon on the* [*Apostille Section*](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille/) *(for a provisional version, click* [*here*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbs.pdf)*).*  | [ ]  Daily[ ]  Frequently[ ]  Seldom[ ]  Never*Comments or suggestions*:      |
| * + 1. Does YOUR STATE have any suggestions or comments concerning the publications of the Permanent Bureau, the [*ABCs of Apostilles*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/abc12e.pdf)*,* the [*Brief Implementation Guide*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/guide12e.pdf),or the [*Apostille Handbook*](https://assets.hcch.net/docs/ff5ad106-3573-495b-be94-7d66b7da7721.pdf), available on the [Apostille Section](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille) of the Hague Conference website?

⮊ *c.f. Q 3.1 b) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No |
| * + 1. Does YOUR STATE have any suggestions for future publications that could assist the promotion, implementation, or operation of the Apostille Convention?

⮊ *c.f. Q 3.1 c) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No |

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| Operation and statistics  |
| General evaluation |
| * + 1. How does YOUR STATE rate the overall operation of the Apostille Convention?

⮊ *c.f. Q 4.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Excellent[ ]  Good[ ]  Satisfactory[ ]  Unsatisfactory*Comments or suggestions for improvement*:      |
| * + 1. Has YOUR STATE encountered any persistent difficulties, issues or challenges in the operation of the Apostille Convention?

⮊ *c.f. Q 4.1 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also para. 36 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No[ ]  Unknown*Comments:*      |
| Statistics on issued Apostilles  |
| * + 1. How many Apostilles were issued in YOUR STATE for each of the following years?

*Under Art. 7(1) of the Apostille Convention, each Competent Authority must keep a register in which to record each Apostille issued.* ⮊ *c.f. Q 4.2 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also para. 46 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | *Year* | *Number**If you wish to provide detailed information per Competent Authority, please identify the number of Apostilles separately in the space below, or attach a detailed breakdown of the statistics as a separate document.* |
| 2015 |       |
| 2014 |       |
| 2013 |       |
| 2012 |       |
| [ ]  Unknown – *please explain*:     *Comments:*      |
| * + 1. Can any trend(s) be discerned from these statistics?

⮊ *c.f. Q 4.2 b) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes – *please specify, including possible reasons for the trend(s)*:     [ ]  No[ ]  Unknown |
| * + 1. What are the principal States of destination for Apostilles issued in YOUR STATE?

⮊ *c.f. Q 4.2 c) of the 2012 questionnaire* | *If possible, please indicate an estimation of the proportion/percentage of total Apostilles issued by YOUR STATE that are for use in these States of destination.*      |
| ***Only for States that issue e‑Apostilles**** + 1. How many e-Apostilles were issued in YOUR STATE for each of the following years?

⮊ *c.f. Q 4.2 d) of the 2012 questionnaire* | *Year* | *Number**If you wish to provide detailed information per Competent Authority, please identify the number of Apostilles separately in the space below* |
| 2015 |       |
| 2014 |       |
| 2013 |       |
| 2012 |       |
| [ ]  Unknown – *please explain*:     *Comments:*      |
| ***Only for States that issue e‑Apostilles*** * + 1. What are the principal States of destination for e-Apostilles issued in YOUR STATE?

⮊ *c.f. Q 4.2 e) of the 2012 questionnaire* |       |
| * + 1. Please identify the **three** categories of public document that are most frequently requested to be apostillised in YOUR STATE.

*Please indicate these from “1” to “3” in descending order of frequency, with “1” being the most frequent.**If a category of document is not listed, please specify it at the bottom of the list in the space provided.* ⮊ *c.f. Q 4.2 f) of the 2012 questionnaire* |       | Civil status documents (*e.g.*, birth, death and marriage certificates) and certificates of non-impediment |
|       | Other administrative documents (including decisions from administrative tribunals or decision making bodies) |
|       | Extracts from commercial registers and other registers |
|       | Notarial authentications of signatures |
|       | Other notarial acts |
|       | Diplomas and other education documents |
|       | Court documents, including judgments |
|       | Patents or other documents pertaining to intellectual property rights |
|       | Documents relating to adoptions |
|       | Translations  |
|       | Medical or health certificates  |
|       | Criminal records  |
|       | Import or export licences |
|       | Certificates of origin |
|       | Certificates of conformity |
| Other documents – *please specify* |
|       |       |
|       |       |
| * + 1. Please mark with an “X” the categories of documents that are issued in YOUR STATE in *electronic* format (even if this is the case for only a few documents within that category) and for which an Apostille is issued (whether as an e-Apostille or in paper form)?

*If a category of document is not listed, please specify it at the bottom of the list in the space provided.* *🖉 see also* ***Section 6.8*** *Electronic documents and electronic signatures*⮊ *see also paras 170-171 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) |       | Civil status documents (*e.g.*, birth, death and marriage certificates) and certificates of non-impediment |
|       | Other administrative documents (including decisions from administrative tribunals or decision making bodies) |
|       | Extracts from commercial registers and other registers |
|       | Notarial authentications of signatures |
|       | Other notarial acts |
|       | Diplomas and other education documents |
|       | Court documents, including judgments |
|       | Patents or other documents pertaining to intellectual property rights |
|       | Documents relating to adoptions |
|       | Translations  |
|       | Medical or health certificates  |
|       | Criminal records  |
|       | Import or export licences |
|       | Certificates of origin |
|       | Certificates of conformity |
| Other documents / more information – *please specify* |
|       |       |
|       |       |
| Legalisations |
| * + 1. How many legalisations were performed in 2015 by the authorities of YOUR STATE?

*If no statistics are kept, please provide a rough estimate*⮊ *c.f. Q 4.3 a) of the 2012 questionnaire* | *Outgoing documents* *Legalisations performed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on documents executed in YOUR STATE and bound for a non-Contracting State to the Apostille Convention*      | *Incoming documents**Legalisations performed by consulates/embassies of YOUR STATE located in another State on documents executed in that State and bound for a non-Contracting State to the Apostille Convention*      |
| Public information |
| * + 1. Is practical information (such as informational brochures or information provided on government websites) on the operation of the Apostille Convention made available to Apostille users?

⮊ *c.f. Q 4.4 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 55-57 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes*Please specify how this information is made available (if available online, include URL)*:     *If not accessible online, please submit a copy of this information*[ ]  No |

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| Published works on the Apostille Convention |
| * + 1. Has the Apostille Convention been the subject of any articles, books or other works published in YOUR STATE?

⮊ *c.f. Q 4.5 a) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes – *please provide full citation (if possible please provide a summary in English or French)*:     [ ]  No[ ]  Unknown |

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| Competent Authorities |
| Contact details |
| * + 1. Please indicate how many Competent Authorities YOUR STATE has designated under the Apostille Convention (see also **Questions 7.2** and **7.3**).

*If your State is unable to specify the exact number, please provide a rough estimate.* |       |
| * + 1. Are the [contact details and practical information](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/authorities1/?cid=41) provided on the [Apostille Section](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille) for the Competent Authorities of YOUR STATE accurate and complete?

⮊ *c.f. Q 5.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has strongly encouraged States Parties to provide the Permanent Bureau with* ***annual updates*** *of information relating to their State which is made available on the Apostille Section (see C&R No 70 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 8 of the 2012 SC).*⮊ *see also para. 67 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes  |
| [ ]  No – *please supply the correct information to be uploaded to the Apostille Section in Annex A or in a separate Word or PDF file*: |
|  |
| Training and support |
| * + 1. Have guidelines, desk instructions, or similar documentation been prepared to assist staff at Competent Authorities in the performance of their functions under the Apostille Convention?

⮊ *c.f. Q 5.2 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also para. 47 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes *- please submit a copy of this documentation, if possible, with a summary in English or French (for internal use only)*[ ]  No |
| * + 1. How often does YOUR STATE provide training to staff at Competent Authorities?

⮊ *c.f. Q 5.2 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also para. 48 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Regularly[ ]  As required[ ]  Seldom[ ]  Never*Comments*:      |

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| Substantive scope of the Apostille Convention |
| Definition of “public document” |
| * + 1. Is the concept of a “public document” defined in the internal law of YOUR STATE?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Apostille Convention applies to “public documents”. Art. 1(2) lists certain categories of documents that are deemed to be public documents. The Special Commission has noted that it is for the law of the State of origin to determine the public nature of a document. It also recalled that the list of public documents in Art. 1(2) is not exhaustive (see C&R No 72 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 12 of the 2012 SC).*⮊ *see also para. 110* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify (including reference to the relevant law(s))*:     [ ]  No – *please explain*:*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. Has YOUR STATE experienced any difficulties with characterising a document as a “public document” for the purposes of the Apostille Convention (see also **Questions 6.2** and **6.3**)?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.1 d) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *Keeping in mind the purpose of the Apostille Convention, the Special Commission has suggested that States Parties should give a broad interpretation to the category of public documents (see C&R No 72 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 12 of the 2012 SC).*  | [ ]  Yes – *please specify which documents have led to difficulties and how such difficulties have been addressed*:     [ ]  No*Comments*:      |
| Exclusion of documents executed by diplomatic or consular agents |
| * + 1. Has the exclusion of “documents executed by diplomatic or consular agents” from the scope of the Apostille Convention given rise to any difficulties in YOUR STATE, either as a State of origin or a State of destination?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.2 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has confirmed that the exception for “documents executed by diplomatic or consular agents” is to be interpreted* ***narrowly*** *(see C&R No 77 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 15 of the 2012 SC).* ⮊ *see also paras 135-139* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No*Comments*:      |

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| Exclusion of administrative documents dealing directly with commercial or customs operations |
| * + 1. Has the exclusion of “administrative documents dealing directly with commercial or customs operations” from the scope of the Apostille Convention given rise to any difficulties in YOUR STATE, either as a State of origin or a State of destination?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.3 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has noted that some States issue Apostilles for import/export licences, health certificates or certificates of origin/conformity (see C&R No 77 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 15 of the 2012 SC).* ⮊ *see also paras 135-138, 146* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify (including the category of document concerned and the steps taken to address the difficulty/ies)*:     [ ]  No*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. Does YOUR STATE issue Apostilles for any of the following documents?

*This question concerns* ***outgoing*** *documents* ⮊ *c.f. Q 6.3 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has reconfirmed that the exception for “administrative documents dealing directly with commercial or customs operations” is to be interpreted* ***narrowly*** *(see C&R No 77 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 15 of the 2012 SC).* ⮊ *see also paras 148* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Certificates of origin[ ]  Export licences[ ]  Import licences[ ]  Health and safety certificates issued by the relevant government authorities or agencies[ ]  Certificates of products registration[ ]  Certificates of conformity[ ]  End user certificates (*i.e.*, documents certifying that the buyer is the end user of acquired goods)[ ]  Commercial invoices*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. Does YOUR STATE accept Apostilles issued for any of the following documents?

*This question concerns* ***incoming*** *documents* ⮊ *c.f. Q 6.3 c) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has encouraged States to accept, to the extent possible, Apostilles issued for documents such as import / export licenses, health certificates and certificates of origin even if that State would not itself issue Apostilles for such documents (C&R No 15 of the 2012 SC).*⮊ *see also paras 148* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Certificates of origin[ ]  Export licences[ ]  Import licences[ ]  Health and safety certificates issued by the relevant government authorities or agencies[ ]  Certificates of products registration[ ]  Certificates of conformity[ ]  End user certificates (*i.e.*, documents certifying that the buyer is the end user of acquired goods)[ ]  Commercial invoices*Comments*:      |
| Copies |
| * + 1. Under the internal law of YOUR STATE, is the Convention considered to apply to a *simple* copy of a public document (*i.e.*, may a simple copy of a public document be also regarded as a public document)?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.4 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also para. 157 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No – *please specify/explain*:      |
| * + 1. Under the internal law of YOUR STATE, is the Convention considered to apply to a *certified* copy of a public document?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.4 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also para. 154* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – but an Apostille may be issued for the certification *only*, not the copied public document.[ ]  Yes – an Apostille may be issued either for the certification or for the copied public document – *please specify/explain*:     [ ]  No – an Apostille may not be issued for the certification nor for the copied public document – *please specify/explain*:     *Comments*:      |
| Translations |
| * + 1. Under the internal law of YOUR STATE, is the Convention considered to apply to a *simple* translation of a public document?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.5 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 195-197 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify/explain*:     [ ]  No – *please specify/explain*:     *Comments*:      |
| * + 1. Under the internal law of YOUR STATE, is the Convention considered to apply to a *certified* translation (*i.e.*, a translation executed by a sworn/affirmed/accredited translator)?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.5 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 195-197 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify/explain*:     [ ]  Only if the document to which the certified translation relates is a public document[ ]  No – *please explain*:     *Comments*:      |
| Extradition documents |
| * + 1. Under the internal law of YOUR STATE, is the Convention considered to apply to extradition documents?

🖉 *The Special Commission has recognised that the Apostille Convention may apply to extradition requests (C&R No 16 of the 2012 SC)*⮊ *see also paras 160-162 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify/explain:*     [ ]  No – *please specify/explain:*     *Comments*:      |
| Medical certificates |
| * + 1. Under the internal law of YOUR STATE, is the Convention considered to apply to medical certificates?

⮊ *see also para. 182 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify/explain:*     [ ]  No – *please specify/explain*     *Comments*:      |

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| Electronic documents and signatures |
| * + 1. Can public documents executed in electronic form be considered “public documents” in YOUR STATE for the purposes of the issuance of an Apostille?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.6 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 170-173 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf)*.* | [ ]  Yes – *please specify (then* ***go to******Question 6.8b)****)*:     [ ]  No – *please explain (then* ***go to******Question 6.8c)****)*:     [ ]  Public documents are never executed in electronic form – ***go to Question 6.8c)****Comments*:      |
| * + 1. If a public document is executed in electronic form, how does YOUR STATE issue an Apostille for that document?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.6 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 235-237 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  An e-Apostille is issued[ ]  A paper Apostille is attached to the printout of the electronic public document (if so, please explain the rationale of this practice and whether YOUR STATE envisages the issuance of e-Apostilles for public documents executed in electronic form):     [ ]  Other – *please specify*:     *Comments*:      |
| * + 1. Can scanned copies of public documents that were executed in paper form be considered “public documents” in YOUR STATE for the purposes of the issuance of an Apostille?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.6 c) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 158-159, 173 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify the manner in which the scanned public document circulates (*e.g. *electronically or as a printout)*:     [ ]  No – *please specify/explain*:     *Comments*:      |
| * + 1. Are electronic signatures recognised in YOUR STATE as functionally equivalent to handwritten signatures (*i.e.*, can a public document be signed electronically)?

⮊ *c.f. Q 6.6 d) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also para. 261 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify* *the legal basis (*e.g.*, legislation)*:     [ ]  No – *please specify/explain*:     *Comments*:      |

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| Access to Apostille services |
| One-step vs multi-step process |
| * + 1. Does a public document executed in YOUR STATE need to be somehow certified before the issuance of an Apostille?

⮊ *c.f. Q 7.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *Recalling the purpose of the Convention to simplify the process of authentication, the Special Commission has invited States Parties to consider removing any unnecessary obstacles to the issuance of Apostilles while maintaining the integrity of authentications (see C&R No 79 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 19 of the 2012 SC).* ⮊ *see also paras 14-16 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Certification is not required for any public document – ***go to Question 7.2***[ ]  Certification is required for some categories of public documents – ***go to Question 7.1b)***[ ]  Certification is required for all categories of public documents – ***go to Question 7.1b)*** |
|  ***Only for States that require certification*** * + 1. What certification process is involved (in particular, how many certifications are required before the issuance of an Apostille)?

⮊ *c.f. Q 7.1 b) of the 2012 questionnaire**If necessary, use the space provided in* ***Question 12.1b)*** *to respond to this question*  | *Category of public document* | *Number of certifications* | *Certifying authority* |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
| ***Only for States that require certification*** * + 1. Why is certification required?

⮊ *c.f. Q 7.1 c) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  YOUR STATE has designated a single Competent Authority but the signatures, seals and stamps of local officials and authorities are subject to a certification by a regional authority, whose certificate is in turn subject to an Apostille issued by the Competent Authority (in other words, the Apostille is not issued for the underlying document but for the (final) certification).In the above circumstances, how (if at all) can an Apostille be issued for the underlying document?     [ ]  YOUR STATE has designated several Competent Authorities but the signatures, seals and stamps of local officials and authorities are nonetheless subject to a certification by a regional authority, whose certificate is in turn subject to an Apostille issued by the relevant Competent Authority (in other words, the Apostille is not issued for the underlying document but for the (final) certification).In the above circumstances, how (if at all) can an Apostille be issued for the underlying document?     [ ]  YOUR STATE has a special, multi-step procedure for the authentication of diplomas and other education documents that are issued in your State and need to be produced abroad – please explain the nature and content of that process:     [ ]  Other – *please specify*:      |
| ***Only for States that require certification*** * + 1. Does YOUR STATE plan to make changes to the certification process (*e.g.*, adopting a one-step process for all or certain categories of public documents)?

⮊ *c.f. Q 7.1 d) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes – *please specify/explain*:     [ ]  No – *please explain why not*:      |
| Decentralisation of Apostille services |
| ***Only for States that have designated ONE Competent Authority**** + 1. Has YOUR STATE considered decentralising the Apostille services by establishing regional offices or by designating additional Competent Authorities?

🖉 *The Special Commission has welcomed and encouraged efforts designed to decentralise the provision of Apostille services. Such efforts have been shown to increase efficiency in the provision of services while reducing the burden on the public (C&R No 18 of the 2012 SC)*⮊ *see also para. 218 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify/explain*:     [ ]  No – *please explain why not*:      |
| Diplomatic missions as Competent Authorities |
| * + 1. A few Contracting States have recently designated their diplomatic missions as Competent Authorities (*e.g.,* Australia and Austria). Does YOUR STATE consider there to be any advantages or disadvantages with regard to this practice, in particular in light of Art. 1(3)(a) of the Convention?

🖉 *The Special Commission has confirmed that the exception for “documents executed by diplomatic or consular agents” is to be interpreted* ***narrowly*** *(see C&R No 77 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 15 of the 2012 SC).*⮊ *see paras 139-140 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf)*,*  |       |
| ***Only for States that have designated diplomatic missions as Competent Authorities**** + 1. For which of the following documents do your diplomatic missions issue Apostilles?

⮊ *see also paras 144-145 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Documents executed in YOUR STATE (*i.e.* the State that the consular or diplomatic agent represents), which are subsequently presented for apostillisation to the diplomatic mission[ ]  Documents handled by consular or diplomatic agents but executed by another authority in YOUR STATE, which are reprinted or reissued by the diplomatic mission (*i.e.*, the consular or diplomatic agent merely acts as an intermediary for a document that has been effectively issued in the State (s)he represents)[ ]  Documents executed by consular or diplomatic agents that are not of a diplomatic or consular nature (*e.g.*, civil status documents or notarial acts)[ ]  Others. Please specify      *Comments*:      |
| ***Only for States that have designated diplomatic missions as Competent Authorities**** + 1. Has YOUR STATE experienced any practical difficulties with the designation of diplomatic missions as Competent Authorities?
 | [ ]  Yes – *please specify/explain*:     [ ]  No – *please explain*:     *Comments*:      |
| ***Only for States that have designated diplomatic missions as Competent Authorities**** + 1. Please explain how, in practice, Apostille services are provided by the diplomatic missions of YOUR STATE (*e.g.* via retrieval from a database of public documents in YOUR STATE or using physical documents presented at the diplomatic mission, and how the origin of a public document is verified).
 |       |
| Apostille requests |
| * + 1. In YOUR STATE, how can an Apostille be requested?

⮊ *c.f. Q 7.2 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also the Model Apostille Request Form at Annex III of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  In person[ ]  By post[ ]  By email (to request the issuance of an e-Apostille)[ ]  Through a website[ ]  Other – *please specify*:     *Comments*:      |
| * + 1. In YOUR STATE, do Competent Authorities enquire about the State of destination of the public document to be apostillised?

⮊ *c.f. Q 7.2 c) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also para. 203 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Always[ ]  Applicants specify the State of destination in an application form[ ]  The State of destination is mentioned on the Apostille Certificate[ ]  The enquiry is made orally and no record is kept[ ]  Occasionally – *please specify any circumstances for such an inquiry*:     [ ]  Never*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. How long does it take for an Apostille to be issued?

⮊ *c.f. Q 7.2 e) of the 2012 questionnaire* |  | In-person request | Other requests (from the time of receipt of request to the time of dispatch / collection) |
| Less than one hour | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Less than two hours | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| On the same day | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| By the following working day | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Within two to three working days | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Within one working week | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Other – *please specify*:      |       |       |
| Fees |
| * + 1. Do Competent Authorities in YOUR STATE impose a fee for issuing an Apostille?

⮊ *c.f. Q 7.3 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The 2009 Special Commission encouraged States to ensure that any fee imposed for issuing Apostilles be reasonable (see C&R No 94).*⮊ *see also paras 274-277 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes. Please specify the fee in Annex A.[ ]  No*Comments*:      |

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| Issuance of Apostilles |
| Verification of public documents |
| * + 1. Do all Competent Authorities of YOUR STATE have access to a register or database containing sample signatures / stamps / seals of the officials / authorities that execute public documents, which the Competent Authority may consult before issuing an Apostille?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 219* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes[ ]  No*Please explain how your Competent Authority(ies) then ascertain(s) whether a signature / stamp / seal on a public document is genuine and comes from an authority / official of your State*:     *Comments*:      |
| * + 1. What is the form of the register or database containing sample signatures / stamps / seals of the officials / authorities that execute public documents?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.1 b) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Electronic form[ ]  Paper form[ ]  Electronic and paper form*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. How is the register or database containing sample signatures / stamps / seals of the officials / authorities that execute public documents maintained and updated?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.1 c) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 223-225 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Each Competent Authority maintains and updates its own register or database[ ]  Competent Authorities maintain and update a common register or database*Comments (including whether a standard form is used to obtain sample signatures /  seals stamps from the officials / authorities)*:      |

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| * + 1. How does a Competent Authority of YOUR STATE address situations where the public document for which an Apostille is requested bears a signature, stamp or seal that does not match the sample in the register or database containing sample signatures / stamps / seals of the officials / authorities that execute public documents?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.1 d) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also para. 227 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) |       |
| The Apostille |
| * + 1. What stationery is used for the Apostille?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.2 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 245, 248-249 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Standard paper[ ]  Paper with security features – *please specify (*e.g.*,* *watermarks, holograms, barcodes)*:     [ ]  Rubber stamp[ ]  Self-adhesive stickers[ ]  Other – *please specify*:     *Comments*:      |
| * + 1. Does YOUR STATE use a bilingual or trilingual Apostille Certificate or is it planning to introduce one?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.2 c) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission welcomed the development of multilingual Model Apostilles by the Permanent Bureau and encouraged their use by Competent Authorities (see C&R No 20 of the 2012 SC).* *The* [*bilingual*](http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=publications.details&pid=5207&dtid=28) *and* [*trilingual*](http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=publications.details&pid=5190&dtid=28) *Certificates are available on the* [*Apostille Section*](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille)⮊ *see also paras 241-243 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes *- please specify in which languages*:     [ ]  No – *please specify why not*:*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. Does YOUR STATE use the Apostille Certificate to authenticate the origin of public documents even when the Apostille Convention does not apply (*e.g.* using the Apostille Certificate for legalisations or other certifications)?

⮊ *see also paras 87 et seq. of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes *– if applicable, please specify the disclaimer included in the Apostille*:     [ ]  No *Comments*:      |
| Completing the Apostille |
| * + 1. How are Apostilles filled in?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.3 a) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  By hand[ ]  Using a typewriter[ ]  Using computer software – *please specify*:     *Comments*:      |

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| * + 1. In what language are the ***blanks*** of Apostilles usually ***filled in***?

Please note that this question does not refer to the 10 standard informational items of the Apostille Certificate, which was the subject of Question 8.2b). In other words, how does YOUR STATE complete its Apostille certificates?⮊ *c.f. Q 8.3 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has encouraged States to consider that,* ***in addition*** *to a language used by the State of origin, if not English or French, the information in Apostilles be completed in one of these languages (see C&R No 90 of the 2009 SC).*⮊ *see also para. 259 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  In one language – *please specify:*      [ ]  In two languages – *please specify:*           [ ]  In three languages – *please specify:*           [ ]  Other – *please specify:*     *Comments*:      |
| * + 1. How are Apostilles numbered?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.3 c) of the 2012 questionnaire* ⮊ *see also paras 262-264 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Consecutively[ ]  Randomly – *please specify how the number is generated*:     [ ]  Other – *please specify*:     *Comments*:      |
| * + 1. Where an item of the Apostille is not applicable (*e.g.* the underlying public document is not signed or does not bear a seal), does YOUR STATE write in the relevant item “not applicable” or “n/a”?

🖉 *The Special Commission has emphasised the importance of completing the 10 numbered standard informational items in every Apostille. No item should be left blank. Where an item is not applicable this should be indicated by writing “not applicable” or “n/a” (C&R No 21 of the 2012 SC)*⮊ *see also para. 258 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes[ ]  No - *Please specify your current practice*:      [ ]  Such situations do not arise in practice *Comments*:      |
| ***Question 8.3e)*** *– for Apostilles issued in paper form* |
| * + 1. How is a paper Apostille signed?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.3 e) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has affirmed the principle that the validity of the signature is determined by the law applicable to the Competent Authority issuing the Apostille (C&R No 22 of the 2012 SC)*⮊ *see also para. 261 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  By hand (“wet” signature)[ ]  By rubber stamp[ ]  By printer (*e.g.*, a facsimile signature or PDF/JPEG image of the signature)[ ]  By electronic signature - *please specify*:     [ ]  Other – *please specify*:     *Comments*:      |

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| ***Question 8.3f)******and g)****– for Apostilles issued in electronic form (e-Apostilles)* |
| * + 1. How is an e-Apostille signed?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.3 f) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 348* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | *Please describe the technology used for applying the electronic signature*:      |
| * + 1. Does the law of YOUR STATE allow for a printout of an electronic document or an e-Apostille (both of which have been digitally signed) to be circulated?
 | [ ]  Yes *- please specify*:     [ ]  No – *please specify*:      *Comments*:      |
| Additional text |
| * + 1. Do Competent Authorities include other information on the Apostille (in addition to the entries of the 10 numbered standard informational items)?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.4 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has recognised the usefulness of additional text outside the area of the 10 numbered standard informational items of the Apostille and that States are free to employ text as necessary to provide clarifications regarding the Apostilles they issue. The Permanent Bureau has developed model additional text, which is included on the* [*bilingual*](http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=publications.details&pid=5207&dtid=28) *and* [*trilingual*](http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=publications.details&pid=5190&dtid=28) *Certificates, available on the* [*Apostille Section*](https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/specialised-sections/apostille) *of the Hague Conference website under “Model Apostille Certificate”* ⮊ *see also paras 253* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes[ ]  Information relating to the limited effect of an Apostille (see Art. 3 of the Convention)[ ]  Information relating to the nature or content of the underlying public document[ ]  Information relating to the effect of Apostilles on certified copies[ ]  Information relating to the person who requested the Apostille[ ]  Information relating to the State of destination[ ]  Information relating to fees[ ]  Information relating to the e-Register of the Competent Authority (*e.g.*, the URL of the relevant website)[ ]  Information relating to a digital signature [ ]  Identification of a code to access the e‑Register of the Competent Authority[ ]  Other – *please specify*:     [ ]  No*Comments*:      |

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| Affixing the Apostille |
| ***Questions 8.5a) to d)*** *– for Apostilles issued in paper form* |
| * + 1. Is the Apostille placed on the document itself or on a separate slip of paper (an *allonge*)?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.5 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 265* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  The Apostille is placed on the document itself by: [ ]  self-adhesive sticker[ ]  glue[ ]  rubber stamp[ ]  printing it on the underlying document[ ]  seals[ ]  staples[ ]  other – *please specify*:     [ ]  The Apostille is placed on a separate slip of paper by (see also **Question 8.5b)**)[ ]  self-adhesive sticker[ ]  glue[ ]  rubber stamp[ ]  printing it on the separate slip of paper[ ]  seals[ ]  other – *please specify*:     *Comments (in particular, please specify what criteria are applicable to determine whether the Apostille is placed on the document itself or on an* allonge*)*:      |
| * + 1. If a separate slip of paper is used (an *allonge*), how is it attached to the document?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.5 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉*The Special Commission has encouraged the use of methods that would evidence any tampering with the method of affixation (see C&R No 91 of the 2009 SC and C&R No 24 of the 2012 SC)*⮊ *see also paras 268-269 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf)*.*  | [ ]  Staples[ ]  Grommet[ ]  Ribbons[ ]  Glue[ ]  Tape[ ]  Other – *please specify*:     *Comments*:      |
| * + 1. In the case of a one-page public document, where is the Apostille placed / *allonge* attached?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.5 c) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  The front of the document[ ]  The back of the document*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. In the case of a multi-page document, where is the Apostille placed / *allonge* attached?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.5 d) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has recommended that the Apostille be placed on the signature page and, if an* allonge *is used, that the* allonge *be attached to the front or back of the document (see C&R No 17 of the 2003 SC)*⮊ *see also paras 271-272 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  The first page of the document[ ]  The last page of the document[ ]  The page with the signature / seal / stamp[ ]  Other – *please specify*:     *Comments*:      |
| ***Question 8.5e) and f)*** *– for Apostilles issued in electronic form (e-Apostilles)* |
| * + 1. What technology does YOUR STATE use to affix or logically associate the Apostille to the underlying public document?

⮊ *c.f. Q 8.5 e) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also para. 270 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) |       |
| * + 1. How does that technology ensure that the Apostille is not tampered with?

⮊ *see also para. 267 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) |       |

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| Register of Apostilles |
| Maintaining the register |
| * + 1. Does each Competent Authority of YOUR STATE record particulars of each Apostille issued in a register?

⮊ *c.f. Q 9.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *The Special Commission has recalled that Article 7 of the Convention requires each Competent Authority to establish and maintain a Register of Apostilles containing the information required by that Article (C&R No 25 of the 2012 SC)*⮊ *see also para. 278 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *what information is recorded?*[ ]  the number and date of the Apostille (requirement of Art. 7(1))[ ]  the name and capacity of the person signing the document and/or the name of authority whose seal or stamp is affixed thereto (requirement of Art. 7(1))[ ]  the name and/or type of the underlying document[ ]  a description of the contents of the underlying document[ ]  the name of the applicant[ ]  the State of destination[ ]  a copy of the Apostille[ ]  a copy of the underlying document[ ]  the fees of the Apostille[ ]  other – *please specify*:     [ ]  No – *please explain (including how Competent Authorities in YOUR STATE respond to requests for verification of Apostille – then* ***go to Question 10.1****)*:     *Comments*:      |
| * + 1. In what form is the register kept?

⮊ *c.f. Q 9.1 b) of the 2012 questionnaire* 🖉 *The Special Commission has recognised the utility of maintaining an e-Register that is accessible online in order to facilitate recipients’ ability to verify the issuance of Apostilles (C&R No 25 of the 2012 SC)*⮊ *see also paras 279-280 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Electronic form, *not* publicly accessible online[ ]  Electronic form, publicly accessible online (an “e‑Register”) – *with the following features*:[ ]  the URL for the relevant website is indicated on the Apostille (see **Question 8.4a)**)[ ]  the register incorporates features to avoid ‘fishing expeditions’ (*i.e.*, attempts by users to collect information about an Apostille that he/she has not received) – *please specify*:     [ ]  the register allows users to view details about the Apostille (*e.g.*, the entries against any of the 10 numbered standard informational items) – *please specify*:     [ ]  the register allows users to access the Apostille, or an image thereof[ ]  the register allows users to access the underlying document, or an image thereof[ ]  the register allows users to verify the signature on the Apostille[ ]  Paper form*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. How is the register maintained?

⮊ *c.f. Q 9.1 c) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Each Competent Authority maintains its own register [ ]  Competent Authorities maintain a common register  |
| * + 1. For how long do Competent Authorities retain records of particulars in their register?

⮊ *c.f. Q 9.1 d) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *Although the Special Commission has not suggested a minimum period during which records in a register should be kept, it has concluded that it was a matter for each State party to develop objective criteria in this respect, and that holding of information in electronic form would facilitate the storage and retrieval of records. (C&R No 21 of the 2003 SC)*⮊ *see also paras 289-290 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Less than one year[ ]  Between one and five years[ ]  Between five and ten years[ ]  Ten years or more[ ]  Indefinitely*Comments (including specific detailed regarding records retention)*:      |
| Checking the register |
| ***Only for States in which Competent Authorities keep a Register in paper or in electronic form BUT it is not publicly accessible online (*i.e. *not an e-Register*)** * + 1. How frequently is a request made to the Competent Authorities in YOUR STATE to check the register of Apostilles?

⮊ *c.f. Q 9.2 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*🖉 *Under Art. 7(2) of the Apostille Convention, the Competent Authority that issued the Apostille must, at the request of any interested person, verify whether the particulars of the Apostille correspond with those in the register.* ⮊ *see also paras 286-288 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Never[ ]  Once per year[ ]  Between 2 and 10 times per year[ ]  Between 10 and 20 times per year[ ]  More than 20 times per year – *please specify approximately how many*:      [ ]  Unknown*Comments*:      |
| ***Only for States in which Competent Authorities keep an e-Register*** * + 1. If Competent Authorities in YOUR STATE keep an e-Register, does YOUR STATE have statistics on how frequently the e‑Register is consulted?

⮊ *c.f. Q 9.2 b) of the 2012 questionnaire* | [ ]  Yes – *please specify the number of consultations and the relevant period*:      Has the implementation of an e‑Register led to more Apostilles being checked against the register? *This question does not apply to Contracting States that implemented an e-Register upon accession to the Apostille Convention*[ ]  Yes – *by how much?*     [ ]  No[ ]  No *Comments*:      |

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| The effect of Apostilles |
| Apostilles issued in YOUR STATE |
| * + 1. Has the effect of a paper Apostille or e‑Apostille issued by a Competent Authority of YOUR STATE ever been refused to be given in other Contracting States (*i.e.*, has the Apostille been rejected)?

⮊ *c.f. Q 10.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire* ⮊ *see also paras 293-320 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/docs/ff5ad106-3573-495b-be94-7d66b7da7721.pdf) | [ ]  Yes - *please specify on what grounds*:[ ]  the Apostille was not square-shaped[ ]  the Apostille did not have sides at least nine centimetres long[ ]  the Apostille did not have a border[ ]  the colour of the ink used to print the Apostille[ ]  the Apostille was signed other than by hand (“wet” signature)[ ]  the Apostille was not signed at all[ ]  the Apostille was issued in electronic form (an e-Apostille)[ ]  the Apostille had expired[ ]  the manner in which the Apostille was numbered – *please specify*:     [ ]  the manner in which the Apostille was affixed to the underlying document – *please specify*:     [ ]  the Apostille was physically detached from the underlying document[ ]  the underlying document was not a public document under the law of the State of destination[ ]  the person that signed the underlying document no longer acts in the capacity certified in the Apostille[ ]  the Apostille did not certify the authenticity of the signature or the capacity in which the person signing the underlying document had acted, whether or not the document was signed (*i.e.*, standard informational item no 2 and 3 are not filled in)[ ]  other – *please specify*:     [ ]  No[ ]  Unknown*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. If an Apostille was rejected, what action did YOUR STATE take?

⮊ *c.f. Q 10.1 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*  | [ ]  The Apostille was reissued[ ]  The receiving authority was contacted[ ]  The Competent Authority of the State of destination was contacted[ ]  Diplomatic mission of the State of destination in YOUR STATE was contacted[ ]  Diplomatic mission of YOUR STATE in the State of destination was contacted[ ]  The Permanent Bureau was contacted[ ]  No action taken[ ]  Other – *please specify*:       |

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| * + 1. Has a Competent Authority in YOUR STATE ever been requested by the authorities in another Contracting State to certify or confirm its procedures for issuing Apostilles?

⮊ *c.f. Q 10.1 c) of the 2012 questionnaire* 🖉 *The Special Commission has strongly recommended that Competent Authorities refuse to comply with requests from other Contracting States to confirm issuance procedures or provide specimen signatures, and to notify the Permanent Bureau if they receive them (C&R No 27 of the 2012 SC)*  | [ ]  Yes – *please elaborate*:     [ ]  No*Comments (including views on this practice)*:      |
| Foreign Apostilles produced in YOUR STATE |
| * + 1. On which of the following grounds has the effect of a foreign Apostille in fact been refused to be given in YOUR STATE?

⮊ *c.f. Q 10.2 a) of the 2012 questionnaire* ⮊ *see also paras 293-320 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  The Apostille was not square-shaped[ ]  The Apostille did not have sides at least nine centimetres long[ ]  The Apostille did not have a border[ ]  The colour of the ink used to print the Apostille[ ]  The Apostille was signed other than by hand (“wet” signature)[ ]  The Apostille was not signed at all[ ]  the Apostille was issued in electronic form (an e-Apostille)[ ]  The Apostille had expired[ ]  The manner in which the Apostille was numbered – *please specify*:     [ ]  The manner in which the Apostille was affixed to the underlying document – *please specify*:     [ ]  The Apostille was physically detached from the underlying document[ ]  The underlying document was not a public document under the law of YOUR STATE[ ]  The person that signed the underlying document no longer acts in the capacity certified in the Apostille[ ]  The Apostille does not certify the authenticity of the signature or the capacity in which the person signing the underlying document had acted, whether or not the document was signed (*i.e.*, standard informational items no 2 and 3 are not filled in)[ ]  Other – *please specify*:     [ ]  None of the above[ ]  Unknown*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. On which of the following grounds *might* the effect of a foreign Apostille possibly be refused to be given, in YOUR STATE?

⮊ *c.f. Q 10.2 a) of the 2012 questionnaire* ⮊ *see also paras 293-320 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  The Apostille was not square-shaped[ ]  The Apostille did not have sides at least nine centimetres long[ ]  The Apostille did not have a border[ ]  The colour of the ink used to print the Apostille[ ]  The Apostille was signed other than by hand (“wet” signature)[ ]  The Apostille was not signed at all[ ]  The Apostille was issued in electronic form (an e-Apostille)[ ]  The Apostille had expired[ ]  The manner in which the Apostille was numbered – *please specify*:     [ ]  The manner in which the Apostille was affixed to the underlying document – *please specify*:     [ ]  The Apostille was physically detached from the underlying document[ ]  The underlying document was not a public document under the law of YOUR STATE[ ]  The person that signed the underlying document no longer acts in the capacity certified in the Apostille[ ]  The Apostille does not certify the authenticity of the signature or the capacity in which the person signing the underlying document had acted, whether or not the document was signed (*i.e.*, standard informational items no 2 and 3 are not filled in)[ ]  Other – *please specify*:     [ ]  None of the above[ ]  Unknown*Comments*:      |
| * + 1. Does YOUR STATE apply any time limit on the effect of foreign Apostilles and/or foreign public documents that are produced in YOUR STATE?

⮊ *c.f. Q 10.2 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 28, 174, 186-187 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No*Comments*:      |

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| The electronic Apostille Program (e-APP)  |
| Implementation  |
| * + 1. Has either component of the e-APP been implemented by the Competent Authorities of YOUR STATE?

⮊ *c.f. Q 11.1 a) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 333* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes[ ]  the e-Apostille component[ ]  the e-Register component – *please specify the URL(s) for the e-Register(s)*:                    [ ]  No  |
| ***Only for States that have not implemented either component of the e‑APP**** + 1. If neither component of the e-APP has been implemented, has the e-APP been studied by Competent Authorities in YOUR STATE?

🖉 *For information on the e-APP, see paras 321-363 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf)⮊ *c.f. Q 11.1 b) of the 2012 questionnaire*  | [ ]  Yes[ ]  and *both components* are being considered for implementation – *please specify*:     [ ]  and only the *e-Apostille component* is being considered for implementation – *please specify*:     [ ]  and only the *e-Register component* is being considered for implementation – *please specify*:     [ ]  but neither component is being considered for implementation – *please explain why not*:     [ ]  No – *please explain why not*:     *Comments*:      |
| ***Only for States that have implemented either component of the e‑APP or are actively considering implementing it**** + 1. Has YOUR STATE contacted other Competent Authorities that already operate an e-APP component and asked for any relevant information or exchange of experience?

⮊ *see also para 339 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No*Comments*:      |
| ***Only for States that have implemented the e-Apostille component**** + 1. For which of the following documents does YOUR STATE issue e-Apostilles?

⮊ *see also paras 171, 346* et seq. *of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf)  | [ ]  Electronic public documents. *Please specify:*      [ ]  Paper public documents that have been subsequently scanned[ ]  Both*Comments*:      |

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| * + 1. Are there any issues (legal or otherwise) that may affect the implementation of the e-APP in YOUR STATE?

⮊ *c.f. Q 11.1 c) of the 2012 questionnaire* ⮊ *see also paras 345, 358 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No[ ]  Unknown*Comments*:      |

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| Other |
| Additional comments and information |
| * + 1. If you need more space for your response to one or more of the questions above, please specify the question number(s) and add your comments below:

      |
| * + 1. If you would like to make any additional comment or provide information relating to the practical operation of the Apostille Convention (including the implementation of the e-APP) that has not been reflected in your responses above, please do so below:

      |
| * + 1. Are there any specific topics or practical issues that YOUR STATE would like to have discussed at the 2016 Special Commission?

⮊ *c.f. Q 12.1 c) of the 2012 questionnaire*⮊ *see also paras 38-39 of the* [*Apostille HB*](https://assets.hcch.net/upload/apostille_hbe.pdf) | [ ]  Yes – *please specify*:     [ ]  No |

**Annex A**

**Competent Authorities**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of authority: |       |
| Street and postal address: |       |
| Telephone and fax numbers: |       |
| E-mail address: |       |
| Language(s) of communication: |       |
| Contact person: |       |
| Website URL: |       |
| Categories of public document for which an Apostille may be issued: |       |
| Fees for Apostilles |       |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of authority: |       |
| Street and postal address: |       |
| Telephone and fax numbers: |       |
| E-mail address: |       |
| Language(s) of communication: |       |
| Contact person: |       |
| Website URL: |       |
| Categories of public document for which an Apostille may be issued: |       |
| Fees for Apostilles |       |

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| --- | --- |
| Name of authority: |       |
| Street and postal address: |       |
| Telephone and fax numbers: |       |
| E-mail address: |       |
| Language(s) of communication: |       |
| Contact person: |       |
| Website URL: |       |
| Categories of public document for which an Apostille may be issued: |       |
| Fees for Apostilles |       |

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| --- | --- |
| Name of authority: |       |
| Street and postal address: |       |
| Telephone and fax numbers: |       |
| E-mail address: |       |
| Language(s) of communication: |       |
| Contact person: |       |
| Website URL: |       |
| Categories of public document for which an Apostille may be issued: |       |
| Fees for Apostilles |       |

|  |  |
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| Name of authority: |       |
| Street and postal address: |       |
| Telephone and fax numbers: |       |
| E-mail address: |       |
| Language(s) of communication: |       |
| Contact person: |       |
| Website URL: |       |
| Categories of public document for which an Apostille may be issued: |       |
| Fees for Apostilles |       |

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| --- | --- |
| Name of authority: |       |
| Street and postal address: |       |
| Telephone and fax numbers: |       |
| E-mail address: |       |
| Language(s) of communication: |       |
| Contact person: |       |
| Website URL: |       |
| Categories of public document for which an Apostille may be issued: |       |
| Fees for Apostilles |       |