



## PRESS RELEASE

### ***Significant Milestones for e-APP for Europe Project: Spain issues its first e-Apostilles and starts operating a central e-Register using state-of-the-art e-APP technology***

This week Spain issued and registered its first e-Apostilles using state-of-the-art technology developed under the *e-APP (electronic Apostille Pilot Program) for Europe* project, thus becoming the second State worldwide (after New Zealand) to have completed a comprehensive implementation of both of the e-APP's components.

Full adoption of the e-APP means that Spain has implemented a technologically advanced system to facilitate (1) the issuance of and use of electronic Apostilles (e-Apostilles), and (2) the electronic registration of Apostilles in an e-Register that is accessible online. Spain is also unique in that it has become the first State worldwide to develop a *central* e-Register to operate and record data across multiple domestic jurisdictions.

In practice, this means that the applicant can download e-Apostilles online from the website of the Spanish Ministry of Justice ("[Sede electrónica](#)"). The applicant will then obtain an electronic file consisting of a digitally signed e-Apostille and the underlying public document. These e-Apostilles are available for public documents issued in either paper or electronic form. The e-Apostille can be easily verified in other States via the central [e-Register](#) which will contain information regarding Apostilles issued by all Competent Authorities in Spain.

Following the initial launch of the new system in Murcia and Albacete, on 13 May 2011, the system has been rolled out in all judicial and administrative Competent Authorities in Spain under the purview of the Ministry of Justice. With a view to promoting the e-APP in Spain, the Spanish Ministry of Justice has also made available online a [video](#) explaining the benefits of the system and how it works. As a result of the implementation of the e-APP, Apostille services in Spain will be faster, easier and will offer effective means to combat fraud.

The issuance of Spain's first e-Apostilles and the operation of a central e-Register are significant milestones for the *e-APP for Europe* project. The project is a collaboration between the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law and the Spanish Ministry of Justice (partner) as well as the Ministries of Justice of Finland, the Czech Republic and France (associate partners). The project was made possible by a generous grant from the European Commission's 'Civil Justice' programme.

The 18-month project is comprised of three main interrelated elements: 1) commencement of the 6<sup>th</sup> International Forum on the e-APP (which took place on 29 and 30 June 2010); 2) development and implementation of an e-APP system in Spain; and 3) the holding of three regional meetings across Europe (in Helsinki, Prague, and Paris) to encourage all participating States to implement the e-APP, in particular e-Registers.

There are currently ten States (in all or in part of their territory) which have implemented one or both components of the e-APP. Out of the ten, four have implemented the e-Apostille component and all have implemented the e-Register component of the e-APP.

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*The Hague Conference on Private International Law is the world organisation for cross-border co-operation in civil and commercial matters. It has 72 Members located on every continent. Furthermore, more than 130 States are Parties to one or more Hague Conventions. In essence, the purpose of the Organisation is to build bridges between various legal systems, while respecting their diversity. In doing so it reinforces the legal security of private persons – an essential role in an age of globalisation in which rules and guidelines are needed.*

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