The electronic Apostille Program (e-APP)

Submitted by: Hong Kong, China
The electronic Apostille Program (e-APP)

APEC Workshop on Simplified Authentication Process for Production of Public Documents Abroad through the use of the Hague Apostille Convention
Medan, Indonesia
28-29 June 2013

Christophe Bernasconi
Deputy Secretary General
The Hague Conference on Private International Law

Why the e-APP

- In many States, most of the Apostille-related work is still done manually (without any assistance from modern office technology)
- The origin of a public document is not always verified adequately before the Apostille is issued
- In some States, Apostilles are stapled to the underlying document
- “Register, what register??!” – almost no requests for verification of Apostilles issued
Why the e-APP

- Convention must keep pace with e-Government initiatives to remain relevant:
  - More and more public documents are executed in electronic format (incl. e-notarial acts)
  - 2003 Special Commission on the practical operation of Apostille Convention acknowledged that the Convention operates in an environment which is subject to important technical developments
  - 2003 Special Commission also noted that the spirit and letter of the Apostille Convention are not obstacles to the use of modern technology and that its operation can be further improved by relying on such technologies

Launch of the e-APP

- In 2006, the Hague Conference, in co-operation with the National Notary Association of the United States of America, launched:
  - 2012 electronic Apostille Program

- In view of the subsequent success of the e-APP, the name was changed in January 2012 to simply the “electronic Apostille Program”
The two components of the e-APP

**e-Apostilles**
Issuance of Apostilles in electronic format, with a digital certificate

**e-Registers**
Operation of Apostille registers in electronic format than can be accessed online to verify the origin of paper and e-Apostilles

Advantages of the e-APP

- More secure
- More efficient
- Flexible
- Straightforward
- Green

*Subject to domestic law
The e-Apostille component

Executed in electronic format

Executed in paper then scanned*

*Subject to domestic law
The e-Apostille Component

Paper Apostille

New Zealand

e-Apostille

The e-Apostille Component

e-Apostille

Spain
Recognition of e-Apostilles

- An Apostille may **not be rejected** on grounds **alone** that it is has been issued **electronically**
  - Convention text is neutral as to the form of Apostilles – it allows for *functional equivalence* and thus for the Convention to keep up with technological developments
  - It is a fundamental principle of the Convention that an Apostille validly issued in one State Party **must be accepted** in other States Party – not extending this basic principle to e-Apostilles would provide States of destination with more power in the electronic environment than they have in the paper environment
  - In 2012, the Special Commission reaffirmed that the law of the State of execution determines how the Apostille may be signed (incl. electronically signed)

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**The e-Register component**
The e-Register component

Before... ... after!
The e-Register component

- Enables recipient to verify the origin of an Apostille easily and securely online (typically via the website of the Competent Authority)
- To avoid misuse, an e-Register should only be of use to persons who have actually received an Apostille and want to verify its issuance (no “fishing expeditions”)
- e-Register is used to record the particulars of all Apostilles issued by the Competent Authority (i.e., paper and electronic Apostilles)

Categories of e-Registers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functionality</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Information displayed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Yes&quot; / &quot;No&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Yes&quot; / &quot;No&quot; +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>information on Apostille and/or underlying document (possibly visual check)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&quot;Yes&quot; / &quot;No&quot; +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>information on Apostille and/or underlying document (possibly visual check) + digital verification of Apostille and/or underlying document</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Category 1 (Basic)
[Permanent Bureau recommends Categories 2 and 3]
Welcome to the register of apostilles issued in Andorra

The apostille with register number 00933474501 (08/07/2009) exists in register.

Back to the main page

Andorra

LEGALNET
Search engine
Search

Look up apostille entry to check its validity

Number of apostille: [blank]
Date of apostille (dd/mm/yyyy): [blank]

Search | Reset
Category ② (Additional)

Georgia
**Georgia**

**Bulgaria**
Y
Bulgaria

Y
Bulgaria
VERIFICATION OF APOSTILLES, ISSUED IN RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND APPLIED ON DOCUMENTS APPROVING EDUCATION (QUALIFICATION) OF A PERSON

This page allows to find and verify information on apostilles, issued in Russian Federation after January 1, 2011 and apply on documents of the following types: certificates of education (only state approved document type), documents conferring academic degree (only state approved document type), documents conferring academic title (only state approved document type). Information provided on this page is based on the records registered in the Federal Database of Apostilles, which is subject to order to fulfill requirements of Russian Federation Government Regulation No. 356, dated 11.09.2011.

Disclaimer: Any result posted or generated by the this verification tool is made available for informational purposes only. The Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science (Rosobrnadzor) makes no warranty, expressed or implied, regarding the accuracy, adequacy, completeness, legality, reliability or usefulness of any information so provided by this verification tool.

* Required
** Required, Holder's first name specified in document.

User manual

Data are accurate as of 08.06.2022 09:37

Russian Federation

SEARCH RESULTS

Date, confirming existence of legally issued apostille with specified characteristics, is FOUND.

Issue date: 06.07.2011

Russian Federation

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Back

BACK
Other Category 2 e-Registers

- Costa Rica
- Dominican Republic
- Ireland
- Moldova
- New Zealand
- United States (various states)

Category 3 (Advanced)
For e-Apostilles AND paper Apostilles
Validar Firma de Apostilla Electrónica

Solicitud procesada con éxito:

La firma de la apostilla es válida. Ni la apostilla ni el Documento Público anexo a ella han sido alterados tras la firma.

Resultado de la validación

Datos del certificado con el que se firmó la Apostilla Electrónica

Número de Serie: 1019703069

Emisor: OUA/FIMT Clase 2 CA, O=FIMT,C=ES

Asunto: CN=NOMBRE DOLERA ALBARRACIN JOSE ANTONIO - NIF 22432475T,OU=500220165,OU=Fimt clase 2 CA, O=FIMT,C=ES

Vigencia desde: 20/01/2011 hasta:

España
Mexico

Slovenia
On this site, you may verify whether the competent court in the Republic of Slovenia has issued, after 1 September 2012, a certificate attesting to the authenticity of a signature and of a seal or stamp on a public document. In order to verify the existence of a certificate, enter certificate ID and issue date in the fields below, copy the secure password and click on the search button.

**Search Parameters**
- Certificate ID: dagmv7
- Issue Date: 18.02.2013

**Search results - Certificate Details**
- Certificate No.: 9v-H 789/2013-dagmv7
- Issue Date: 18.02.2013
- Issued by: Okrožno sodišče na Ptuju
- Signed by: Baneja Pojc
- Acting in the capacity of: viša sodnica
- Authenticated Public Document: potrdilo o nezamravljanju IV.Kr. 319/2013

**Slovenia**
## Status of the e-APP

### Table 1 of 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Competent Authority(ies)</th>
<th>e-Apostilles (implementation date)</th>
<th>e-Register (implementation date)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andorra</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td>July 2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td>October 2007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
<td></td>
<td>November 2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>October 2007</td>
<td>October 2007</td>
<td>Colombia provides print-outs of e-Apostilles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td>December 2011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Operational (implementation date to be confirmed)</td>
<td>The implementation of the e-Register is not yet fully e-APP compatible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice (including 7 Regional Offices)</td>
<td></td>
<td>July 2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td>March 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior</td>
<td></td>
<td>February 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Department of Internal Affairs</td>
<td>May 2009</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs (including 7 Regional Offices)</td>
<td></td>
<td>October 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Moldova</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
<td></td>
<td>January 2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Status of the e-APP

#### Table 2 of 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Competent Authority(ies)</th>
<th>e-Apostilles Implementation Date</th>
<th>e-Register Implementation Date</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>83 executive bodies of constituent entities (“federal subjects”)</td>
<td>April 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>The e-Register records all Apostilles issued for education documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>11 District Courts</td>
<td>September 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>42 judicial and administrative Competent Authorities</td>
<td>May 2011</td>
<td>May 2011</td>
<td>Murcia had already implemented the e-Apostille component in November 2008. A nationwide implementation of the e-Apostille component was completed in May 2011. Central e-Register used by all Competent Authorities under the purview of the Ministry of Justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>October 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>December 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>February 2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>June 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>The implementation of the e-Register is not yet fully e-APP compatible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>February 2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>November 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td>The e-Register only records Apostilles issued by the Corporations Section of the Secretary of State.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>September 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td>The implementation of the e-Register is not yet fully e-APP compatible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>February 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### e-APP Fora

- The international fora on the e-APP provide an opportunity for States to exchange information and experience on the e-APP and the practical operation of its components.
- The e-APP fora also provide an opportunity for States to discuss related matters such as electronic notarisation, digital evidence and digital authentication.
e-APP Fora

- **6th Forum in Madrid**
  - 29-30 June 2010
  - Attended by 70 experts from 20 States

- **7th Forum in Izmir**
  - 14-15 June 2012
  - Attended by 120 experts from 31 States

- **8th Forum in Montevideo**
  - Scheduled for 17-18 October 2013

Additional information

- Dedicated ‘Apostille Section’ of the Hague Conference website
- Soon, a dedicated e-APP page of the ‘Apostille Section’
Quick wrap

- Both components of the e-APP (e-Apostilles and e-Registers) are aimed at:
  - **Competent Authorities** in State of origin:
    - Issue e-Apostilles
    - Operate e-Registers
  - **Recipients** in State of destination
- Each component can be implemented **separately**
- No need for a new convention/protocol – so all Contracting States are kept on board!

Support from the 2012 Special Commission

“The SC **recognises** the value of the e-APP as a tool to further enhance the secure and effective operation of the Apostille Convention and **notes with satisfaction** the continued implementation of the e-APP and the expanding use of e-Apostilles and e-Registers. The SC **applauds** the efforts of a number of States actively engaged in implementing one or both components of the e-APP and **strongly encourages** other Contracting States that have not yet done so to actively consider implementation. The SC **encourages** further exchanges of information among States about the implementation of the e-APP, in particular at the 8th International Forum on the e-APP scheduled for 2013 in Montevideo. The SC **thanks** the Government of Uruguay for its generous offer to host the next in this series of important events.”
Thank you

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