

Copies Authenticated by a Notary, Apostilles and Chain Legalization

In our last article titled “*What is required to make a translation official?*” (you can find it in the archives of articles), we explained verification of a translation by a court-appointed interpreter. This article will cover authenticated copies made by notaries and legalization of foreign documents by an apostille or by the chain method.

As we stated in the last article, a translation verified by a court-appointed interpreter is permanently attached to the document in the original language. That document is either the original or an **authenticated copy of the original**. In the Czech Republic, certified copies of documents in foreign languages are made by notaries, but the notary is not responsible for the contents of the document. An authenticated copy is equally valid as the original document.

The price per printed page of an authenticated copy of a document varies within the range of CZK 30 to CZK 40. Authenticated copies of originals are made immediately upon request.

Authenticated copies are not made in the following cases:

- a document that cannot be substituted for by an authenticated copy or that may not be legally copied, such as an identity card, passport, driver’s license, green card (permanent resident card), bank check, bill of exchange etc.;
- if the original document contains alterations, insertions or deletions that could cast doubt on its authenticity.

A document must be **legalized** if it is to be used for official purposes in another country.

There are two different kinds of legalization:

APOSTILLE
 (Hague Convention of 5 October 1961/Convention de La Haye du 5 octobre 1961)
BAILIWICK OF JERSEY

1. Country: Jersey, Channel Islands
 Pays: Jersey, Iles de la Manche.

This public document/ Le présent acte public

2. Has been signed by **B K PICKERSGILL**
 A été signé par

3. Acting in the capacity of **NOTARY PUBLIC**
 Agissant en qualité de

4. Bears the seal/stamp of **THE SAID NOTARY PUBLIC**
 Est revêtu du sceau/timbre de

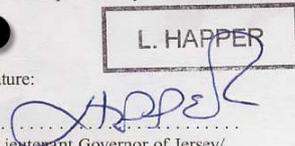
Certified/Attesté

5. At St. Helier/à St. Helier 6 the/le

7. By Her Britannic Majesty's Lieutenant Governor of Jersey/
 Par le Lieutenant Gouverneur de Sa Majesté Britannique à Jersey

8. Number/sous No. [REDACTED]

9. Stamp:  Timbre:

10 Signature: 
 For the Lieutenant Governor of Jersey/
 Pour le Lieutenant Gouverneur de Jersey

If this document is to be used in a country which is not party to the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961, it should be sent to the consular section of the mission representing that country.

1) **Apostille**

An apostille is authentication of a public document for the purpose of its use abroad. By an apostille, an authority of the state where the document was issued verifies the document’s authenticity. An apostille only applies to contact between countries that are parties to the Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization of Foreign Public Documents dated 5 October 1961.

The Hague Convention does not, however, apply to the authentication of translations of documents into a foreign language. We therefore

recommend having a document and its apostille translated in the country where the document will be presented.

If you need to use a document issued by an authority of the Czech Republic (such as a marriage license or a university diploma) in another country, it would be a good idea to have the document affixed with an apostille. Czech apostilles are issued either by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or by the Ministry of Justice in Prague.

2) Chain Authentication Method

The chain authentication method for official documents consists of authentication of signatures and official seals on such documents. Chain authentication serves the same purpose as an apostille, but it involves more bureaucratic complications and is more expensive. This method of legalization applies to documents that are to be used in countries with which the Czech Republic has not entered into any multilateral international treaty abolishing the requirement of legalization of foreign public documents (i.e. countries that are not parties to the aforementioned Hague Convention).

Chain authentication involves three levels of authentication. First the document is authenticated by the state authority that supervises the issuing authority of the document. The next step is authentication by the consular department of the ministry of foreign affairs (Department of State in the USA). The final step is legalization by the embassy or consulate of the country where the authenticated document is to be used.

If you have any questions regarding this topic, please contact us. We will be happy to answer your questions.

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