

Authentication of documents

The originals or authenticated copies of all documents must be submitted in the Studien- und Prüfungsabteilung, personal or sent on postal way.

Foreign documents give the same evidential value as domestic public documents only if they are either exempt from legalization or have passed the necessary legalization procedure (art. 293 para. 2 of the Code of Civil Procedure – ZPO, RGBl. no. 113/1895, in the present version).

Documents from countries with which Austria has concluded a bilateral agreement concerning exemption from legalization are exempt from all kinds of legalization procedures. A list you can get on http://wissenschaft.bmwf.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/wissenschaft/naric/english/2.1.4.07_E.pdf

Documents from countries which are Contracting States to the “Hague Legalization Convention” (Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents, BGBl. no. 27/1968) do not need full diplomatic legalization (art. 2.3) if they are supplied with the Apostille, which means that for documents from these countries the legalization in the form of the Apostille is sufficient: A list you can get on http://wissenschaft.bmwf.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/wissenschaft/naric/english/2.1.4.07_E.pdf

Only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, in some cases, specially empowered authorities in the respective foreign country are authorized to do the legalization in the form of the Apostille. The diplomatic representation of a foreign country in Austria, however, is under no circumstances authorized to do it (therefore it does not make sense to refer persons to the embassy of the respective country in Austria in order to obtain a missing Apostille). – Authorities in countries empowered to do legalization in the form of the Apostille are stated in the instruments of ratification of the Hague Legalization Convention that have been deposited in The Hague (see: http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=conventions.authorities&cid=41#l).

Full diplomatic legalization is required for documents from all countries which are neither bound to Austria by a bilateral agreement on legalization, nor member countries of the Hague Legalization Convention.

The mode of full diplomatic legalization is required for documents from all those countries which are neither Contracting Parties to a bilateral agreement with Austria concerning exemption from legalization nor Contracting Parties to the Hague Legalization Convention. This mode means that documents first have to pass the internal legalization procedure within the country in which they have been issued (this procedure is different in each country but the last authority definitely has to be the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the respective country). Afterwards the documents must additionally be legalized ('overlegalized') diplomatically by the Austrian diplomatic representation (embassy, consulate, honorary consulate) in the respective country. That means that the legalization of a foreign document solely by the diplomatic representation of the respective country in Austria – without prior legalization by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the respective country – cannot be sufficient basis for 'over-legalization'. Furthermore, please note that only original documents are subject to 'over-legalization'.

Legalization cannot be done by the diplomatic representation of the respective country in Austria or by the Legalization Office of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs.

- First step: Legalization by the competent sectorial Ministry (e.g. Ministry of Education) of the country of origin;
- second step: 'Overlegalization' by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country of origin;
- third step: Austrian diplomatic representation in the country of origin.

In principle, the original document should show all required stamps of legalization before being subject to translation, so that the various stamps can also be translated. The translation must be attached to the original document or to a legalized copy of it.

Translations

In principle, the original document should show all required stamps of legalization before being subject to translation, so that the various stamps can also be translated. The translation must be attached to the original document or to a legalized copy of it.

If the translation has been done by a sworn and officially accredited translator in Austria, additional legalization is not required. Translations in foreign countries should also be done by a sworn and officially accredited translator in the respective country. Regarding legalization, such translations have to be treated as foreign original documents, which means that the mode of legalization depends on the country in which the translation was done.

(as of March 2015)