On 6 July 2016, the European Union adopted a regulation simplifying the circulation of certain public documents between the EU countries.

General Information

The Regulation 2016/1191 aims at cutting red tape and costs for citizens when they need to present a public document issued by an EU country in another EU country. Under the Regulation, public documents (for example, a marriage certificate) issued by the authorities of an EU country must be accepted as authentic by the authorities of another EU country without the need for the document to be authenticated (the so-called apostille). The Regulation also simplifies formalities related to certified copies and translations of public documents when certified copies or translations are required by the authorities of the receiving EU country.

The public documents covered by the Regulation refer particularly to civil statuses such as birth, name, marriage, registered partnership, parenthood, adoption, death and the absence of a criminal record.

The Regulation does not govern whether the documents are recognised by the country they are being presented in as this is currently governed by national law. However, in applying their national law, the EU countries must respect the European Union law, including the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union, on free movement of citizens within the European Union.

The Regulation also introduces optional multilingual standard forms that can be attached to the public documents to avoid translation requirements. This means that, when a citizen requests a public document from an authority (for example, a birth certificate), he/she can also request a multilingual standard form which will be attached to the public document.

The multilingual standard form will mirror the contents of the public document and will include the headings of the public document in the official languages of the issuing EU country and of the receiving EU country. With this translation aid, the receiving EU country should only require a translation of the public document in exceptional circumstances. As these forms are translation aids of public documents, if a particular form is not used by an EU country then, in this case the multilingual standard form will not exist.

The Regulation will apply as from 16 February 2019.

Below you will find the multilingual standard forms for each EU country, in the official language(s) of the country, in some or all of the following areas:

- birth
- life
- death
- name
- marriage
- capacity to marry
- registered partnership
- capacity to enter into a registered partnership
- registered partnership status
- domicile and/or residence
- absence of a criminal record in the Member State of nationality of the person concerned

Public documents forms

- Belgium
• German
• French
• Dutch

• Bulgaria
• Czech Republic
• Denmark
• Germany
• Estonia
• Ireland
  • English
• Greece
• Spain
• France
• Croatia
• Italy
• Cyprus
  • Greek
  • English
• Latvia
• Lithuania
• Luxembourg
• Hungary
• Malta
  • Maltese
  • English
• The Netherlands
• Austria
• Poland
• Portugal
• Romania
• Slovenia
• Slovakia
• Finland
  • Finnish
  • Swedish
• Sweden
• The United Kingdom
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