Text consolidated by Valsts valodas centrs (State Language Centre) with amending laws of:

28 October 2010 [shall come into force from 24 November 2010];

1 November 2018 [shall come into force from 28 November 2018];

21 March 2019 [shall come into force from 28 March 2019].

If a whole or part of a section has been amended, the date of the amending law appears in square brackets at the end of the section. If a whole section, paragraph or clause has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets beside the deleted section, paragraph or clause.

The *Saeima* 1 has adopted and

the President has proclaimed the following Law:

**Document Legalisation Law**

**Chapter I**

**General Provisions**

**Section 1.** The purpose of this Law is to ensure effective international circulation of public documents and simultaneously – verification of their authenticity.

**Section 2.** The following terms are used in this Law:

1) **certificate** (apostille)– corresponds to the interpretation of the relevant term used in the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Public Documents;

2) **public document** – corresponds to the interpretation of the relevant term used in the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Public Documents;

3) **legalisation** – the process of ensuring the authenticity of public documents.

**Section 3.** (1) The legalisation of public documents shall be performed in accordance with this Law, if international agreements ratified by the *Saeima* or legal acts of the European Union do not specify otherwise.

(2) This Law shall not be applied if a public document has been issued in a European Union Member State, a European Economic Area State, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (except for its overseas territories) or the Swiss Confederation. If the institution, which accepts such public document, is having doubts regarding its authenticity, the institution shall communicate in writing with the foreign institution, which issued the public document or is responsible for authenticity of the public document, if international agreements ratified by the *Saeima* or legal acts of the European Union do not specify otherwise.

(3) The Cabinet shall determine the central authorities of Latvia, allocation of their functions and procedures by which these authorities shall perform the activities referred to in Regulation (EU) 2016/1191 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 2016 on promoting the free movement of citizens by simplifying the requirements for presenting certain public documents in the European Union and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012 in accordance with this Regulation and shall cooperate with Latvian and foreign State and local government institutions.

*[28 October 2010; 1 November 2018; 21 March 2019 / See Paragraph 4 of Transitional Provisions]*

**Section 4.** (1) A public document issued in Latvia which is intended to be used in a foreign state that is a participating state of the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Documents shall be electronically legalised by sworn notaries. The abovementioned document shall be accepted in electronic or paper form.

(2) A public document issued in a foreign state which is intended to be used in Latvia and a public document issued in Latvia which is intended to be used in a foreign state that is not a participating state of the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Documents shall be legalised by authorised officials of the diplomatic and consular service. The abovementioned document shall be accepted only in paper form.

*[1 November 2018 / The new wording of the Section shall come into force on 1 July 2019.* *See Paragraph 3 of Transitional Provisions]*

**Section 5.** (1) A State duty for performance of notarial activities shall be paid for the legalisation of a public document issued in Latvia to which the procedures for legalisation determined in the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Documents are applicable.

(2) A State duty for the legalisation of a public document shall be paid for the legalisation of such a public document to which the procedures for legalisation determined in the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Documents are not applicable. The amount of the State duty, the payment procedures, and also exemptions from the State duty shall be determined by the Cabinet.

*[1 November 2018 / The new wording of the Section shall come into force on 1 July 2019.* *See Paragraph 3 of Transitional Provisions]*

**Chapter II**

**Legalisation of a Public Document Issued in Latvia**

*[1 November 2018 / The new wording of the title of the Chapter shall come into force on 1 July 2019.* *See Paragraph 3 of Transitional Provisions]*

**Section 6.** For the legalisation of a public document issued in Latvia a person shall complete a submission form and submit the document to be legalised. The Cabinet shall approve the sample submission form and prescribe the procedures by which legalisation shall be performed or the decision to refuse legalisation shall be taken.

**Section 7.** It is prohibited to legalise the following public documents issued in Latvia:

1) documents that do not conform to the requirements for drawing up of documents laid down in laws and regulations;

2) documents the certification of which is technically impossible due to the actions of the submitter (for example, the document submitter has laminated the document himself or herself);

3) electronic documents that do not conform to the requirements for drawing up and circulation of electronic documents laid down in laws and regulations;

4) the derivatives and translations of personal identification documents.

*[1 November 2018 / Clause 4 shall come into force on 1 July 2019.* *See Paragraph 3 of Transitional Provisions]*

**Section 8.** If a public document issued in Latvia is intended to be used in a foreign state that is a participating state of the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Documents, it shall be legalised with a certificate (apostille)according to this convention.

**Section 9.** If a public document issued in Latvia is intended to be used in a foreign state that is not a participating state of the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Documents, it shall be legalised by certifying the authenticity of the signature, the status of the person that has signed the document and – if necessary – the authenticity of the seal or stamp imprinted on the document.

**Chapter III**

**Legalisation of a Public Document Issued in a Foreign State**

*[1 November 2018 / The new wording of the title of the Chapter shall come into force on 1 July 2019.* *See Paragraph 3 of Transitional Provisions]*

**Section 10.** (1) For a public document issued in a foreign state to have legal force in Latvia, it shall be legalised.

(2) In implementing State public administration, State administration, judicial and legislative institutions, other institutions and persons may accept only a legalised public document issued in a foreign state.

(3) In order to legalise a derivative or translation made in Latvia of a public document issued in a foreign state, such a public document issued in a foreign state must be legalised in its issuing country.

*[1 November 2018 / Amendments to Section shall come into force on 1 July 2019.* *See Paragraph 3 of Transitional Provisions]*

**Section 11.** If a public document has been issued in a foreign state that is a participating state of the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Documents, the document shall require a certificate (apostille)according to this convention.

**Section 12.** If a public document has been issued in a foreign state that is not a participating state of the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Documents, it shall be legalised by the procedures determined by the Cabinet.

**Transitional Provisions**

*[1 November 2018]*

1. The Cabinet shall, within four months following the coming into force of this Law, issue the regulations referred to in Sections 5, 6, and 12 of this Law.

*[1 November 2018]*

2. Amendments to this Law regarding the supplementation of Section 3 with Paragraph three shall come into force on 16 February 2019.

*[1 November 2018]*

3. Amendments regarding the expression of the titles of Sections 4 and 5, Chapters II and III of this Law in new wording, supplementation of Section 7 with Clause 4, and also amendments to Section 10, Paragraph one of this Law regarding the replacement of the words “the force of a public document” with the words “legal force” and regarding the supplementation of the Section with Paragraph three shall come into force on 1 July 2019.

*[1 November 2018]*

4. Amendment to Section 3, Paragraph two of this Law shall be applicable from the day when the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has withdrawn from the European Union pursuant to Article 50 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

*[21 March 2019]*

This Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 22 March 2007.

President V. Vīķe-Freiberga

Rīga, 4 April 2007