

Title: Why Choose a Translation Agency Registered with the Bulgarian MFA?

Language: English

Purpose: Marketing / Sales

Target Audience: Bulgarian companies and entrepreneurs working with foreign partners; law firms; individuals who need official translations for institutions in Bulgaria and abroad; companies involved in international tenders and deals.

Meta description (EN): Discover why choosing a translation agency registered with the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is crucial for quality, legal validity and data security. Learn how this decision protects your business and saves time and risk.

Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
1.1. The importance of official translation in international business and personal legal procedures	2
1.2. The risks of using unregistered translators or agencies	3
1.3. Purpose of this article	3
2. What “Agency Registered with the MFA” Means.....	4
2.1. Definition and legal framework	4
2.2. Requirements for registration	4
2.3. Difference between a “sworn translator” and an ordinary translator	4
3. Advantages for Businesses and Individuals.....	5
3.1. Legal validity of translations.....	5
3.2. Guarantee of quality and professionalism	5
3.3. Confidentiality and data protection	5
3.4. Faster and safer legalisation of documents	6
4. Real Risks When Choosing an Unregistered Agency	6
4.1. Non-recognition of documents by institutions in Bulgaria and abroad	6
4.2. Additional costs for re-translation and certifications	6
4.3. Delays in deals, visas and legal procedures.....	6
4.4. Lack of guarantees for confidentiality	6
5. How to Check if an Agency Is Registered with the MFA	7
5.1. Official MFA list – step by step	7
5.2. Check the sworn translators	7

5.3. Questions to ask before signing a contract	7
6. Practical Tips for Companies and Clients	7
6.1. Keep key documents regularly updated for fast international procedures	7
6.2. Choose an agency that also provides urgent services	7
6.3. Negotiate an SLA for deadlines and confidentiality	8
6.4. Request electronic copies for future use	8
7. Conclusion	8
Need an official translation with guaranteed legal force?	8

1. Introduction

1.1. The importance of official translation in international business and personal legal procedures

An official (sworn) translation is a translation performed and certified by a sworn translator or a translation agency whose signatures and stamps carry legal force before institutions. It is required wherever a document must have legal effect outside the language in which it was issued or outside the jurisdiction of the issuing authority.

Typical cases where a sworn translation is mandatory:

- **Corporate documents:** certificates of current status, articles of association, powers of attorney, board protocols, financial statements, tax certificates, commercial contracts, documents for foreign public procurement.
- **Judicial and administrative proceedings:** court rulings and orders, summonses, writs of execution, expert reports, notarial deeds, birth/marriage/death certificates, criminal records/certificates of good conduct.
- **International contracts and transactions:** letters of credit, Incoterms annexes, declarations of conformity, certificates of origin, patent applications, licence agreements, franchise/distribution agreements.
- **Migration and visa procedures:** educational diplomas and transcripts, recommendation letters, employment contracts, bank statements, medical certificates, sponsorship letters/invitations, certificates of marital status.
- **Financial–banking sector:** KYC/AML documentation, beneficiary structure, certified statements, bank references, auditor’s letters.

Why it is critical:

- **Legal force:** the translation must be recognised without additional interpretation.
- **Accuracy and terminology:** terminological mistakes can lead to refusal, sanctions or extended deadlines.
- **Traceability and responsibility:** the sworn translator and the registered agency are legally responsible for the accuracy of the translation.

1.2. The risks of using unregistered translators or agencies

Choosing a “random” translator or a company not registered with the MFA may look cheaper or faster, but it carries significant risk.

Most common consequences:

- **Non-recognition by institutions:** state bodies (in Bulgaria and abroad), courts, universities or banks may reject a document if the translation was not done by a sworn translator/agency recognised under their rules.
- **Legal risks:** invalid contracts, terminated public procurement procedures, returned visa/immigration applications, delayed court cases.
- **Financial losses:** paying twice for “correction”, missing tender deadlines, losing deposits/fees, forfeiting revenue from deals.
- **Reputational damage:** creating the impression of unprofessionalism before partners and institutions.
- **Confidentiality and GDPR:** with unregistered providers there is a real risk of leakage of sensitive data (personal or corporate) due to the absence of standardised processes and contractual guarantees.

1.3. Purpose of this article

- To give you clear criteria for selecting a translation partner.
- To explain why registration with the MFA is an objective indicator of quality, traceability and legal validity.
- To show the concrete benefits for businesses and individuals: lower risk, faster route to legalisation, higher acceptance of documents.

2. What “Agency Registered with the MFA” Means

2.1. Definition and legal framework

An “agency registered with the MFA” is a translation provider listed in the official register maintained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria. This status proves that the agency meets the requirements for:

- working with sworn translators;
- proper format and procedure for certification of translations;
- internal quality control and process traceability;
- compliance with confidentiality and data-protection standards.

For you, this is a shortcut to legalisation: when institutions require an official translation, the stamp or certificate of a registered agency is the key to acceptance in Bulgaria and, when local formalities are met (apostille, notarial certification, etc.), abroad as well.

2.2. Requirements for registration

Registration is far from a mere formality. It usually includes:

- Proven capacity of sworn translators for the relevant languages and fields.
- Quality-control processes: two-step review, terminology glossaries, file version control, approval before certification.
- Administrative compliance: proper formatting of stamps, certifying notes, required attachments.
- Maintaining up-to-date lists of translators and their language combinations/competence.
- GDPR compliance: internal policies and technical measures to protect sensitive data.
- Traceability and archiving: order register, responsible persons, date/time of certification, translation version.

2.3. Difference between a “sworn translator” and an ordinary translator

- **Sworn translator:** a person who meets the required language qualifications and experience, is entered in the official register, and whose translations can be officially certified (signature/stamp/certification text) for submission to institutions. He or she bears legal responsibility for the accuracy.
- **Ordinary translator:** may be an excellent linguist but without the status to certify translations officially. Their work has no legal force on its own and is often not accepted by institutions unless re-certified by a sworn translator or a registered agency.

3. Advantages for Businesses and Individuals

3.1. Legal validity of translations

Translations certified by an MFA-registered agency:

- Are recognised by Bulgarian state authorities (ministries, courts, municipalities, universities, banks).
- Are widely accepted abroad when the destination country's formalities (apostille, local certifications) are met.
- Reduce the risk of rejection or of being asked for a "re-translation".

Practical benefit: you shorten the path to legalisation – less running between institutions, fewer last-minute surprises.

3.2. Guarantee of quality and professionalism

Registered agencies work with sworn translators specialised in fields such as law, finance, technical documentation, medicine and academia, and apply multi-level quality control:

- **Expert terminology:** use of glossaries and translation memory (CAT tools) to unify terminology throughout the document.
- **Two-step review:** translation → editing/revision → certification.
- **Formal compliance:** correct spelling of names, addresses, numbers and dates; formatting identical to the original.
- **Clear responsibility:** it is always known who translated, who checked and when the document was certified.

The result: fewer errors, fewer rejections, fewer delays.

3.3. Confidentiality and data protection

Registered agencies implement policies and technical measures for:

- **GDPR compliance:** data minimisation, purpose-bound processing, access control, audit logs.
- **Contractual confidentiality guarantees:** NDAs, incident-response procedures, staff training.
- **Secure IT environment:** encrypted channels, controlled sharing, protected archives.

This is essential for sensitive documents such as court files, medical records, financial statements or trade secrets.

3.4. Faster and safer legalisation of documents

A registered agency acts as an **integrator of the entire process**:

- **Coordination with MFA and institutions:** planning timelines and the correct sequence (notarial certification → apostille → official translation, or vice versa, depending on the case).
- **Express pathways:** reserved time slots, on-call translators, fast courier routes, ready-to-submit electronic copies.
- **Lower risk of procedural errors:** a wrong order of steps often means repeating the entire process and losing days.

Example:

Issuance of the original → Notarial certification (if required) → Apostille → Official translation by a sworn translator → Agency stamp/certification → Delivery in electronic and/or paper form → Acceptance by the institution.

4. Real Risks When Choosing an Unregistered Agency

4.1. Non-recognition of documents by institutions in Bulgaria and abroad

The most serious consequence of using an agency without MFA registration is that the translated documents may not be accepted by official bodies. In Bulgaria this means ministries, courts, universities, banks, notaries or municipalities may reject them. Abroad the risk is even higher: embassies, immigration authorities, courts or business partners may demand a new translation by a recognised sworn translator, making the initial service worthless.

4.2. Additional costs for re-translation and certifications

If a translation is not recognised, the whole process must be repeated: you pay again for a sworn translation, certifications and apostille. This often leads to double or triple the original cost. Besides the direct expenses, there are indirect ones – travel, notary fees, courier services and lost work time.

4.3. Delays in deals, visas and legal procedures

The need for re-translation and re-certification can postpone critical deadlines. In business deals this may result in losing a strategic partner or a tender. For visa or immigration procedures it may mean missing interview dates, rejection or even the expiry of application deadlines. In court cases a delayed translation can lead to postponement or an unfavourable judgment.

4.4. Lack of guarantees for confidentiality

Unregistered translators and agencies are not subject to MFA oversight and often lack standardised procedures for protecting personal and corporate data. This raises the risk of unauthorised access,

information leaks or misuse—particularly critical for financial documents, contracts, court materials or personal medical records.

5. How to Check if an Agency Is Registered with the MFA

5.1. Official MFA list – step by step

The official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides a public list of translation agencies that have a valid contract with the MFA. Checking is simple:

1. Go to the MFA website (section “Official Translations”).
2. Select “Translation companies with active contract”.
3. Search by the agency’s name or city.
4. Make sure the company is listed and its contract is current.

5.2. Check the sworn translators

You can also verify the sworn translators working with the agency. They are listed on the MFA website with their language combinations. This ensures that the specific translation will be performed by a professional authorised for official certification.

5.3. Questions to ask before signing a contract

- Do you have a current contract with the MFA and can it be seen in the public register?
- Which of your translators are sworn for the required language?
- What are the timeframes for apostille and notarial certifications?
- How do you guarantee confidentiality of personal and corporate data?
- Do you offer a written Service Level Agreement (SLA) with specific deadlines and responsibilities?

6. Practical Tips for Companies and Clients

6.1. Keep key documents regularly updated for fast international procedures

Businesses with international activity should periodically update documents such as certificates of current status, tax certificates and financial statements. This way, when a deal or tender is urgent, you will not waste time obtaining expired documents.

6.2. Choose an agency that also provides urgent services

Even when there is no immediate time pressure, it is wise to work with a partner who can respond quickly if needed. Agencies that offer express services (apostille, notarial certifications, official translations within a day) provide peace of mind in critical situations.

6.3. Negotiate an SLA for deadlines and confidentiality

A Service Level Agreement ensures that the agency commits in writing to specific deadlines, quality levels and data-protection standards. This reduces the risk of misunderstandings and disputes.

6.4. Request electronic copies for future use

After receiving the legalised documents, ask for electronic copies as well. They are valuable for subsequent transactions or repeated applications, saving time and costs in future procedures.

7. Conclusion

A registered agency is not just a provider of translation services, but a **guarantor of legal force, quality and security**. It delivers recognised translations, complies with state requirements and protects the client's interests.

Working with an established agency eliminates the risk of document rejection, avoids extra expenses for repeated translations and allows you to respond quickly in international deals or legal procedures.

Before your next deal, court case or visa application, **check your translation partner**. Make sure you work with an agency registered with the MFA – it is an investment in the security and reputation of your business or personal affairs.

Need an official translation with guaranteed legal force?

Our team offers:

Translations by sworn translators recognised by the MFA

Official certifications and apostille in short timeframes

Full process coordination and express services

Transparent pricing and agreed deadlines

Guaranteed confidentiality and GDPR-compliant work

Contact us today to ensure recognised and legally valid translations for your key documents!