



Germany

CAPITAL Berlin	OFFICIAL LANGUAGE German	CURRENCY the euro (EUR)
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Disclaimer

This Country Guide reflects information believed to be correct at the time of publication. Regulations, procedures and charges are subject to change. IAM does not accept liability for errors, omissions, inaccuracies or misinterpretations in this guide. The information provided should not be considered as having been provided or sanctioned by the customs authorities of the country or territory concerned.

Overview

Process Steps

1. owner arrives and obtains Wohngeberbescheinigung from landlord
2. owner registers at town hall to get Anmeldebestaetigung
3. destination agent uses the Anmeldebestaetigung to process customs clearance with Form 0350 and the owner's signed declaration

Duty-Free Eligibility

Duty-free conditions: Household goods and personal effects may be imported duty-free provided the owner has lived abroad for at least 12 months, has employment in Germany for a minimum of 12 months, and all goods have been in the owner's possession for at least 6 months prior to shipment.

Documents

For Foreign Citizens

- Copy of passport
- Copy of visa
- Bill of lading (BL) / air waybill (AWB)
- Packing list in German or English
- Customs declaration / signed letter by owner of the goods (confirming no taxable high-value goods: firearms, alcohol, tobacco, cigarettes, tea, coffee)
- Customs registration form 0350 (stating goods will not be sold for 12 months)
- Letter of employment stating the term of employment is a minimum of 12 months and that the owner lived abroad for at least 12 months (issued by employer)
- Anmeldebestätigung (registration confirmation from the local German town hall, not older than 3 months)
- Wohngeberbescheinigung (landlord confirmation letter, required since November 1, 2015, confirming the owner will reside at the stated address; needed to obtain the Anmeldebestätigung)

For Returning German Citizens

- All of the above, plus:
- Botschaftsbescheinigung (certificate from the German Embassy or Consulate at origin, confirming the period of time spent abroad)

For Diplomats

- Diplomatic entry form 0349
- Certificate from the diplomatic organization in Germany
- Duty-free entry is permitted only if a bilateral agreement exists with the origin country

Household Goods — Specific Information

EU customs union: Products imported into the European Customs Union are subject to duties only when and where they first enter the EU. If goods enter the EU through another member state (e.g., via Rotterdam or Antwerp), customs clearance may occur at that point of entry or be deferred to Germany under the transit procedure.

Customs processing: The customs declaration can only be processed once the goods are physically within the EU and have been presented at the customs office. The customs declaration form should be provided by the local agent in Germany.

12-month arrival deadline: The shipment must arrive in Germany within 12 months after the owner's registration in Germany.

12-month resale restriction: Goods imported duty-free (Form 0350) may not be sold for 12 months after import.

Registration chain: The Anmeldebestätigung (town hall registration) requires first obtaining a Wohngeberbescheinigung (landlord confirmation). The owner needs a German address before registration. The Anmeldebestätigung must not be older than 3 months at the time of customs clearance.

EORI number: An EORI (Economic Operators Registration and Identification) number may be required for customs clearance of commercial or larger shipments entering the EU.

VAT: Germany's standard VAT rate is 19%. Goods qualifying for duty-free transfer of residence are exempt from VAT. Non-qualifying items are subject to 19% VAT plus applicable EU common customs tariff duties.

ISPM 15: Wood packaging materials must comply with ISPM 15 standards.

Currency: Euro (EUR).

Prohibited / Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Drugs and narcotics
- Explosives
- Ammunition (without permit)
- Dried plants (phytosanitary restrictions)

- Pornographic materials involving minors
- Certain types of meat and animal products from non-EU countries (EU veterinary restrictions)
- Radioactive materials
- Protected animal products (ivory, snakeskin, leopard fur, etc.) (CITES)
- Items of historical significance without export authorization from origin country
- Counterfeit goods

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Alcohol: Does NOT qualify as household effects and is always subject to duties and taxes. The shipper must sign a customs declaration confirming the shipment does not contain alcoholic beverages. Customs clearance of alcohol is a separate process from the household goods clearance, is not included in standard destination rates, and is subject to EU customs tariff rates plus 19% VAT calculated on duties plus proportionate transport costs (door-to-door).

Tobacco and cigarettes: Subject to duties and taxes. Must not be included in household goods shipments.

Tea and coffee: Subject to duties if included in shipments.

Weapons: Applicable license is required.

Live plants: Special import license required.

Traveller allowances (for goods in personal luggage, not household shipments):

Standard EU traveller allowances apply for arrivals from non-EU countries: 200 cigarettes or equivalent, 1 litre of spirits over 22% ABV or 2 litres under 22%, 4 litres of wine, 16 litres of beer, other goods up to EUR 430 (air/sea) or EUR 300 (land).

Vehicles

Vehicle Documents

- **Proof of ownership**
- **Vehicle registration and copy of title from origin country (must show minimum 6 months' use prior to shipping / prior to first registration in Germany)**
- **Original bill of lading**
- **Anmeldebestätigung (town hall registration)**
- **Insurance card from country of origin**

- **Third-party liability insurance initiated at customs clearance**
- **Customs declaration with full technical details of the vehicle**

Specific Information

6-month ownership and use requirement: Vehicles must have been in the owner's possession and must have been used (evidenced by proper registration) for at least 6 months at origin prior to shipment. This is confirmed by declaration as part of the customs process.

German technical and environmental compliance: Vehicles must be inspected before licensing and must comply with German technical regulations (TUV inspection) and environmental regulations (emissions standards). Modifications may be required, particularly for vehicles from non-EU markets. Left-hand-drive conversion is not required (Germany drives on the right), but headlight beam patterns must be adjusted for right-hand traffic.

Tax and duties: Must be paid in advance to the customs office. Vehicles not meeting the 6-month ownership requirement or not qualifying as part of a transfer of residence are subject to EU customs tariff (typically 10% for passenger vehicles from outside the EU) plus 19% VAT.

Driving: Driving is on the RIGHT-hand side of the road.

Pets

Requirements

- **EU Pet Passport with current rabies vaccination**
From EU Member States:
- **ISO 11784/11785 compliant microchip (implanted before rabies vaccination)**
From EU Member States:
- **ISO 11784/11785 compliant microchip**
From Non-EU "Listed" Countries (Part 1 and Part 2):
- **Rabies vaccination (administered at least 21 days before travel)**
From Non-EU "Listed" Countries (Part 1 and Part 2):
- **EU Health Certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian in the origin country**
From Non-EU "Listed" Countries (Part 1 and Part 2):
- **ISO 11784/11785 compliant microchip**
From Non-EU "Unlisted" Countries:
- **Rabies vaccination**
From Non-EU "Unlisted" Countries:

- **Rabies titer (serology) test administered at least 30 days after vaccination, at an EU-approved laboratory, with results of at least 0.5 IU/ml. A 3-month waiting period applies from the date of the blood draw before entry is permitted.**

****From Non-EU "Unlisted" Countries:****

- **EU Health Certificate**

****From Non-EU "Unlisted" Countries:****

Specific Information

Microchip required: ISO 11784/11785 compliant, non-encrypted, 15-digit microchip. Must be implanted before the first rabies vaccination. By January 1, 2028, all pet microchips must be ISO compliant (new EU regulation).

EU country classifications matter: The EU classifies non-EU countries as either "listed" (Part 1 or Part 2) or "unlisted." The U.S., Canada, Australia, and most developed countries are "listed" and do not require a titer test. Most African and Asian countries are "unlisted" and require the titer test plus 3-month wait.

April 2026 EU regulation changes: Pets must enter Germany with their owner (or an authorized representative who must travel to the same destination no more than 5 days before the pet). Maximum 5 pets per person under non-commercial regulations. The owner must sign a Declaration of Non-Commercial Transport. If entering by ground, maximum 5 pets per vehicle.

Puppies, kittens, and ferrets under 12 weeks: Cannot be vaccinated for rabies and therefore cannot travel to Germany under standard rules. Import of cats and dogs under 3 months requires an import permit from the state authority of the future residence and the authority of the port of entry.

No quarantine: Pets meeting all requirements are not quarantined. Non-compliant pets may be quarantined, returned, or euthanized at the importer's expense.

Health certificate validity: 10 days from the date of issue for pets from EU countries; 10 days from the date of issue for entry into the EU from non-EU countries (valid for onward travel within the EU for 4 months from the date of issue or until the rabies vaccination expires, whichever comes first).

Tapeworm (*Echinococcus multilocularis*) treatment: Not required for Germany specifically (this requirement applies to Finland, Ireland, Malta, Norway, and Northern Ireland for dogs). However, internal parasite treatment is generally recommended.

Banned breeds: Some German federal states (Bundeslander) have breed-specific legislation restricting or banning certain dog breeds (commonly Pit Bull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, and Bull Terrier). Rules vary by state. Confirm with the

destination agent which state the client is moving to.

No CDC concern: Germany is NOT on the U.S. CDC's list of high-risk countries for dog rabies. Returning to the U.S. with a dog from Germany follows standard procedures.

Common mistakes: Not having the microchip implanted before the rabies vaccination (invalidates the vaccination for EU purposes). Not understanding the "listed" vs "unlisted" country distinction, which determines whether a titer test and 3-month wait are required. Not obtaining the Wohngeberbescheinigung before trying to register at the town hall. Arriving from a non-EU country and not having the EU Health Certificate properly endorsed by the government veterinary authority.

Consignment Instructions

Recommended: Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import, especially for differences regarding air and sea shipments.

Owner should arrive before the shipment. The Anmeldebestätigung (town hall registration) can only be obtained after the owner arrives and registers at their new address. This document is required for customs clearance. The owner should plan to arrive at least 1-2 weeks before the shipment to secure the Wohngeberbescheinigung from the landlord and then register at the town hall.

Inventory requirements: Packing list in German or English, detailed enough for customs inspection. A signed letter confirming the absence of taxable high-value goods (firearms, alcohol, tobacco, tea, coffee) is required.

Ports of entry: Hamburg, Bremerhaven, and Rotterdam (Netherlands, with transit to Germany) are the primary sea freight ports. Frankfurt, Munich, and Berlin airports handle air freight. Germany's extensive road and rail network also supports overland shipments from other EU countries.

EU intra-community moves: Household goods moving from one EU member state to Germany are not subject to customs clearance. No customs documentation is required for intra-EU moves; only standard moving documentation applies.

Special note on alcohol: If a client insists on including alcohol in their shipment, it must be declared separately and will require a separate customs clearance process with applicable duties and taxes. This should be quoted as an additional service.

Cultural & Other Information

- **OpenFactBook (replaces CIA World Factbook):** [Germany](#) -- verified 200
- **Wikipedia:** [Germany](#) -- verified 403 to bots, works in browser
- **German Customs (Zoll):** [zoll.de/EN](#) -- verified 200 (English-language customs authority, includes relocation information)
- **German Federal Foreign Office:** [auswaertiges-amt.de/en](#) -- verified 200
- **German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL):** Homepage [bmel.de](#) -- now confirmed Active (200); specific English-language pet import subpages remain at 404 -- use the homepage and navigate to Animals > Animal Transport and Import, or search for current pet import regulations directly on the site

Key country facts: Germany is the most populous EU member state, located in Central Europe. The capital is Berlin. The official language is German. The currency is the euro (EUR). Germany is a founding member of the EU and the Eurozone. VAT is 19% (reduced rate 7% for essential goods). Germany has the largest economy in Europe and the fourth-largest globally. Driving is on the right-hand side. Germany is a federal republic of 16 states (Bundeslander), and some regulations (particularly regarding dog breeds) vary by state.

Important notes for movers: Germany is a high-volume destination with well-established procedures, but the documentation chain is more involved than most EU countries. The critical path is: (1) owner arrives and obtains Wohngeberbescheinigung from landlord, (2) owner registers at town hall to get Anmeldebestaetigung, (3) destination agent uses the Anmeldebestaetigung to process customs clearance with Form 0350 and the owner's signed declaration. If any step in this chain is delayed, the shipment sits at port accruing storage charges. The absolute prohibition on alcohol in duty-free household goods shipments catches clients off guard regularly, and the separate clearance process for alcohol adds significant cost and complexity. The April 2026 EU pet regulation changes around non-commercial transport declarations and representative travel timing are new and should be communicated to any client moving with pets.

Quick Links & Resources

- **Find Movers in Germany**
<https://iamovers.mobilityex.com/index.html#/search?loc=Germany&lat=51.1657&lng=10.4515&range=50&assocs=800&fvw=c&ctry=Germany>

- [Foreign Embassies in Germany](https://www.embassypages.com/germany)
<https://www.embassypages.com/germany>
- [Germany's Embassies Abroad](https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en)
<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en>
- [OpenFactBook \(replaces CIA World Factbook\)](https://www.openfactbook.org/countries/germany/)
<https://www.openfactbook.org/countries/germany/>
- [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany)
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany>

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