Country Guide (IAM)

Bosnia and Herzegovina

This guide is compiled from the IAM Country Guide for reference only. Customs regulations change frequently; please consult your Seapoe relocation consultant for the latest requirements before shipping.

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Documents

Documents required for importing used household goods, personal effects, and related shipments.

For Foreign Citizens (Non-Diplomatic)

- Copy of passport
- Detailed inventory, valued, dated, and signed by the owner
- Packing list
- Copy of lease (minimum 2 years) or purchase contract (notarised)
- Original bill of lading (OBL) / express release / air waybill (AWB)
- Power of attorney (notarised)
- Protocol from Ministry of Foreign Affairs (if applicable)
- Statement from BiH embassy/consulate at origin confirming the owner has lived abroad for more than 12 months (for returning citizens)

For Diplomats

- Copy of passport
- Diplomatic identification
- Protocol number from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Detailed, valued inventory
- Packing list
- OBL / express release / AWB
- Power of attorney

Specific Information

Temporary admission — Foreign workers: Foreigners with work/residence permits may import goods on a temporary basis for the duration of their permit. Customs may require a bank guarantee for the total amount of temporarily imported goods. Goods must be re-exported when the permit expires.

Non-qualifying imports: If the owner does not qualify for duty-free import, duties and taxes of approximately 30-40% of total value apply.

Lease requirement: A notarised copy of lease (minimum 2-year term) or purchase contract for housing in BiH is required.

Inventory requirements: Detailed, valued inventory listing all used items. For electrical appliances, product information including serial number, type, make, and model must be included.

Document language: Customs declarations must be in one of the three official languages: Bosnian, Serbian, or Croatian.

Duties & Taxes

Duty-free conditions — Returning BiH citizens: Used household goods may be imported duty- and tax-free if the owner has lived abroad for more than 12 months (confirmed by a statement from the BiH embassy/consulate at origin). Used items must have been owned for a minimum of 6 months prior to import.

Duty-free conditions — Diplomats: Duty- and tax-free import with proper documentation.

VAT: 17% VAT applies to all goods imported into BiH and placed in free circulation.

Customs duty rates: Ad valorem at 0%, 5%, 10%, or 15%. EU-origin goods are largely duty-free under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (since 2015). CEFTA, EFTA, and Turkey FTA also provide preferential rates.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Narcotics and illegal drugs — Strictly prohibited
- Firearms, explosives, and ammunition without permit — Prohibited
- Knives and deadly weapons — Prohibited
- Hazardous waste — Prohibited
- Endangered species and wildlife products CITES — Ivory, protected species products prohibited
- Counterfeit goods and currency — Prohibited
- Pornographic material — Prohibited
- Unapproved pesticides — Prohibited

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Duty-Free Traveller Allowances

Per the Indirect Taxation Authority (uino.gov.ba):

- 200 cigarettes, or 100 cigarillos, or 50 cigars (20 per VisaHQ), or 250g tobacco
- 1 litre of spirits over 22% ABV, or 2 litres of wine/champagne/strong wine under 22%
- 2 litres of table wine
- 60ml perfume, 250ml eau de toilette
- Gifts up to approximately EUR 76.70 (BAM 150)
- Items exceeding BAM 600 in value cannot be divided between individuals to avoid duties

Restricted Items

- Weapons and ammunition PERMIT REQUIRED — Hunting weapons need a police permit; must be reported to police upon entry
- Plant and meat products PERMIT REQUIRED — Permission from the Ministry of Agriculture
- Antiques and valuable works of art — Restricted for both import and export
- Medications — Personal use amounts permitted; larger quantities require permits
- Lithium batteries — Safety certifications required (2025 update)
- Products of animal origin exceeding specified weights — Subject to veterinary border inspection with international health certificate

Currency

- Cash or securities exceeding EUR 10,000 must be declared at every border crossing
- Currency declaration form available from customs officers or at http://www.uino.gov.ba
- Local currency (BAM) and foreign currencies: no import restrictions; export limited to amounts imported and declared

Consignment Instructions

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

Bank guarantee: Customs may require a bank guarantee for the total value of temporarily imported goods and vehicles. This is a significant financial requirement for non-permanent imports.

Document language: Customs declarations must be in Bosnian, Serbian, or Croatian.

Clearance system: BiH uses the Ucarina electronic customs system. Processing typically takes 24-48 hours with correct documentation.

Routing / port of entry: BiH has limited direct sea access (approximately 20 km of coastline at Neum). Most sea freight arrives via the Croatian port of Ploce (the primary sea freight entry point for BiH) or via Split/Rijeka (Croatia) and is transported overland. Air freight arrives via Sarajevo International Airport. Land border crossings with Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro are also used.

Entity structure: BiH comprises two entities (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska) and the Brcko District. Customs and indirect taxation are managed centrally by the Indirect Taxation Authority, which applies uniformly throughout BiH.

Currency: Bosnia and Herzegovina convertible mark (BAM/KM), pegged to the euro at BAM 1.95583 = EUR 1.

Regulatory Updates

- 2025: BiH customs aligned with WCO HS 2022 nomenclature and EU Combined Nomenclature updates. Tightened rules on lithium batteries and electronics classification.
- 2023: Council of Ministers adopted temporary suspension/reduction of customs rates on 68 tariff codes in textile, footwear, chemical, metal, food, and electrical sectors (valid through December 2024).
- 2015: Stabilisation and Association Agreement with EU entered into force, eliminating tariffs on most EU imports.
- 2009: Import tariffs eliminated on 11,000 EU-origin products.