

Estonia

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.

From non-EU countries (transfer of normal residence)

- Full valued inventory list in English
- Photocopy of passport
- Document proving residence in a non-EU country for the past 12 months (lease agreement, employer letter, local council registration, utility bills, bank statements, etc.)
- Letter providing that the shipper is employed in Estonia (if applicable)
- Residence/work permit issued by Estonian authorities
- Letter entitling the removal agent to represent the importer with customs authorities (power of attorney)
- Copy of working contract in Estonia
- Copy of Estonian lease agreement
- Copy of plane ticket (for confirmation of arrival date)
- Express bill of lading (OBL) / air waybill (AWB)

For returning Estonian citizens

- Full valued inventory list in English
- Photocopy of passport
- Letter entitling the removal agent to represent the importer with customs authorities
- Letter providing that the importer has been employed abroad more than 1 year
- Evidence documents for living in a non-EU country (residence permit, work permit, lease, non-EU country registration card, travel tickets, employer's certificate, etc.)

For diplomats

- Photocopy of passport
- Letter entitling the removal agent to represent the importer with customs authorities (completed by the embassy)
- Customs declaration of diplomatic merchandise
- Inventory list in English

Intra-EU moves

No customs formalities are required for household goods moving between EU member states.

Specific Information

Returning Estonian nationals: Duty-free if the importer has been abroad more than 1 year. Per Atlas International, returning nationals must have lived abroad for 2 years for duty-free status. The Estonian Tax and Customs Board (EMTA) website confirms the standard 12-month rule applies. The 2-year figure may reflect an older or different rule. Confirm with the destination

agent.

Import timeline: Duty-free import is allowed within 12 months after the shipper's arrival in Estonia.

Alienation restriction: Within 12 months of duty-free release, items must not be provided for use (free or for a fee), used as security, or transferred without prior notification to customs. If disposed of within this period, the shipper must notify customs and pay the corresponding import duties.

Security deposit: Estonian customs may require a security deposit equal to the import duties and VAT that would apply if duty relief is not granted. The deposit is refunded when the person has settled permanently in Estonia within 6 months and submitted all required documentation.

Estonian ID card timeline: It takes approximately 20-40 days to obtain a resident ID card / Estonian ID card. Documents should be received by the agent before the shipment arrives to minimize port charges.

Alcohol within household goods: Forbidden inside the household goods shipment. Alcohol and tobacco are excluded from the duty-free relief for personal belongings. Diplomats may import alcohol with the shipment in justified and reasonable quantities; check with the embassy before shipping.

Marriage/wedding trousseaux: If moving to Estonia due to marriage to an EU citizen, duty relief can be applied for gifts and dowry in addition to personal belongings. Each gift imported duty-free cannot exceed EUR 1,000 in value. The number of gifts is not limited.

Students: Persons coming to Estonia to study can apply for duty relief on educational materials and certain personal belongings intended for personal use during studies.

EORI number: An EORI (Economic Operators Registration and Identification) number is required for customs clearance.

Intra-EU moves: No customs duties, procedures, or inspections. Goods retain their Union status.

Currency: Euro (EUR). Estonia adopted the euro on January 1, 2011.

Duties & Taxes

Duty-free conditions (non-EU origin): Personal belongings may be imported free of customs duty provided the shipper's permanent residence has been continuously outside the EU for at least 12 consecutive months. The goods must have been in the shipper's possession and use for a minimum of 6 months before the date they ceased to have their normal residence in the non-EU country. Goods must not indicate by their nature or quantity that they are being imported for commercial purposes. Customs may make an exception to the 12-month rule if the person had a firm intention to stay abroad for 12+ months but the employer terminated employment prematurely.

New items: Items less than 6 months in the shipper's possession are subject to import duties and VAT (currently 22%).

VAT rate: 22% (increased from 20% in January 2024).

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Unlawful drugs and narcotics — strictly prohibited
- Explosive materials — prohibited
- Counterfeit and pirated goods — prohibited
- Indecent or pornographic materials featuring minors — prohibited
- Alien species endangering fundamental ecological balances in Estonia — prohibited
- Vehicles with Russian registration plates — prohibited from entry since September 2023
- Vehicles with Belarusian registration plates — prohibited from entry since July 2024
- Motor fuel from Russia — prohibited

- Meat and dairy products from non-EU countries (with limited exceptions)

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Traveler Allowances (from non-EU countries, over 17 years)

Alcohol:

- 1 litre of spirits exceeding 22%, or 2 litres of alcohol not exceeding 22%
- 4 litres of still wine
- 16 litres of beer

Tobacco:

- 200 cigarettes, or 100 cigarillos, or 50 cigars, or 250g smoking tobacco

Other goods:

- Goods of non-commercial nature up to EUR 430 (air/sea) or EUR 300 (land)

Restricted Items

- Alcohol within household goods shipments — forbidden; subject to 100% tax if shipped separately; diplomats may import in reasonable quantities
- Firearms and ammunition — authorization from territorial administration required PERMIT REQUIRED
- Hunting weapons — authorization from the Ministry of Interior required PERMIT REQUIRED
- Endangered species and CITES products — authorization from CITES required CITES
- Plants and vegetable products — phytosanitary certificate from the National Plant Protection Service of the country of origin required
- Pyrotechnics — Class I and II from EEA countries up to 2 kg; import license required for third-country pyrotechnics
- Food products of animal origin — meat and milk products may NOT be brought from non-EU countries (with limited exceptions for Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland up to 10 kg, and infant formula/baby food)
- Russian and Belarusian goods — from July 20, 2025, an additional customs duty of 50% applies to certain Russian and Belarusian goods including live animals, meat, dairy, cereals, pet food, and more

Intra-EU Moves

No customs duties apply. However, excise goods (alcohol, tobacco) are subject to limits if quantities suggest commercial intent.

Consignment Instructions

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

Do not include alcohol in household goods shipments. Alcohol is explicitly forbidden within household goods and will be subject to 100% tax if found. Only diplomats may include alcohol, and even then quantities must be reasonable and justified.

Security deposit may be required. Estonian customs may require a deposit equal to the duties and VAT that would apply without the relief. This is refunded once the shipper has settled permanently within 6 months and all documentation is provided.

5-day vehicle registration deadline. This is one of the shortest vehicle registration deadlines in Europe. The shipper must have the pre-registration inspection completed and registration processed within 5 days of customs clearance.

20-40 day ID card processing. The Estonian ID card takes 20-40 days to obtain. Plan accordingly, as it is needed for customs clearance. Submit documents to the agent before the shipment arrives.

Russian/Belarusian vehicle ban. Vehicles with Russian or Belarusian plates cannot enter Estonia

under any circumstances. Shippers relocating from Russia or Belarus must ensure their vehicles are re-registered with non-Russian/Belarusian plates before attempting to cross the Estonian border.

Port of entry: Muuga Harbor (near Tallinn) is the primary container port. Tallinn Airport handles air freight. Estonia is accessible by road from Latvia and by ferry from Finland and Sweden.

Digital customs: Estonia is one of the most digitally advanced EU member states. Many customs procedures can be handled electronically through the EMTA system.