

Guinea-Bissau

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.

Updated 2026-09-05

Documents

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

Required Documents

- Passport (copy)
- Original bill of lading (OBL), telex release, or air waybill (AWB)
- Packing list valued in Euros
- Purchase receipts or sales invoices
- Certificate of change of residence
- Transfer of employment letter from employer
- Detailed valued inventory in Euros with no-sale attestation
- Cargo tracking note
- For diplomats: diplomatic exemption certificate from the diplomatic organization
- For private clients only: taxpayer number (of the private institution or individual)

For new effects within shipments

- Detailed inventory showing exact invoice amounts of new effects, with contact address at destination
- Original invoice not older than 6 months, with address at destination (not handwritten)
- Completed, dated, and signed new effects form
- Tax refund application form
- Residence certificate or work permit from employer confirming new contract
- Transfer letter
- Copy of valid passport

Specific Information

Document lead time: Documents must be received by the destination agent at least 8 days prior to shipment arrival.

Language requirements: The inventory must be valued in Euros (or CFA francs). Portuguese is the official language, but inventories in French or English may also be accepted.

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

Duties & Taxes

Customs duties and taxes (non-diplomats): Household effects and office equipment are subject to customs duties and taxes of approximately 41% of the declared value on the packing list. For returning citizens, fees may be reduced depending on the duration of stay abroad.

New effects duties: New items within a shipment are subject to taxes of approximately 35-55% of CIF value. Customs will not accept till slips, delivery notes, order forms, or sales slips intended

for airport customs (only marine customs) as valid invoices. The invoice must state the supplier's name, address at destination, total excluding VAT, SIRET/SIREN numbers, and the exact origin of goods (within or outside the EU).

Diplomatic clearance: Diplomats are exempt from duty but must pay a tax of approximately 1.5% of the declared value on the packing list in Euros. The diplomatic card must be obtained from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prior to shipment arrival, which may take up to 30 days.

Prohibited & Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Illegal drugs and narcotic substances (PROHIBITED)
- Firearms, explosives, and ammunition (PROHIBITED)
- Knives and deadly weapons (PROHIBITED)
- Medicines and controlled drugs without authorization (RESTRICTED)
- Live plants and plant products (RESTRICTED)
- Indecent, obscene, or pornographic materials (PROHIBITED)
- Counterfeit or pirated items and currencies (PROHIBITED)
- Animals without proper veterinary documentation (RESTRICTED)

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Duty-Free Allowances (personal baggage)

Tobacco products:

- Reasonable quantity (no specific limit published)

Alcoholic beverages:

- 2.5 liters (applicable for non-Muslims only)

Perfume:

- Reasonable quantity of previously opened bottles for personal use

Currency Restrictions

Local currency (CFA franc / XOF) up to XOF 2,000,000 or equivalent in foreign currency may be imported and exported. All foreign currency must be declared upon arrival. Sums exceeding XOF 2,000,000 (approximately USD 3,200) require a bank transfer.

Special Categories

Discrepancies and Clarifications

Unverified Items

- Whether the 41% duty rate for used household goods is still current (IAM 2016 figure)
- Specific tobacco duty-free quantity limits
- Whether the alcohol restriction for Muslims is formally enforced at customs
- Current processing time for diplomatic cards from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Exact list of required new effects documentation currently accepted by customs

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.

Document lead time: Provide all documents to the agent at least 8 days before shipment arrival. For diplomatic shipments, the diplomatic card process may take up to 30 days, so plan accordingly.

Valuation in Euros: All inventories and packing lists must be valued in Euros (or CFA francs).

Port of entry: The primary port is Bissau. Air shipments clear through Osvaldo Vieira International Airport.

Clearance time: Expect 10-30 days for customs clearance. Delays are common due to limited infrastructure.

Unpredictable expenses: Storage, demurrage, and processing fees can accumulate during the lengthy clearance period. Budget accordingly.