

Italy

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

Required Documents

Italy's document requirements vary by nationality and status. The process is notably bureaucratic, with multiple Italian-language forms.

Italian Citizens Returning from Abroad

Note on consular declarations: Some Italian consulates/embassies, particularly in the USA, are no longer willing to provide consular declarations. In that case, the returning citizen must provide evidence of their period of stay abroad through: the AIRE registry (Anagrafe Italiani Residenti all'Estero) with a historical residence certificate from an Italian city hall, or a declaration from the employer, or copies of utilities/lease contracts.

Foreign Citizens

EU Citizens (non-Italian)

Same as foreign citizens, plus:

Diplomats

Specific Information

Timing for non-EU citizens: 6 months from the date of establishing residency in Italy to import duty-free.

Timing for Italian/EU citizens: 1 year from the date of departure from the origin country.

Residence registration timing: The residence application (Avvio di procedimento) must be obtained before the shipment arrives at customs. If the shipment is imported more than 45 days after the Avvio di procedimento was issued, customs will require an official certificate of residence (certificato di residenza) or family status document (stato di famiglia).

New furniture: Requires authorization from customs to import. Subject to duties (variable depending on material) and 22% VAT.

False declarations: Items declared as used but found to be new will incur a fine in addition to full duties and taxes.

Anti-mould/moisture absorbing products (USMAF requirement): Since April 2009, all inbound shipments must include a USMAF declaration. If the shipment contains any products inhibiting mould or humidity (including moisture-absorbing bags/sachets/poles commonly used in containers during transit), they must be declared and accompanied by analysis certificates from an accredited UNI CEI EN ISO/IEC 17025 laboratory certifying the products do not contain dimethyl fumarate. A legalized Italian translation may be required. This is a critical and unique-to-Italy requirement.

Audio-visual items: All TVs, radios, stereos, video recorders, DVD players, and computers must be listed with serial numbers and trademarks. Only items bearing the "CE" (European conformity) mark may enter Italy. Items purchased before January 1, 1996 without CE marking

may be admitted with proof of purchase. Customs may inspect these items. They should be packed near the container door for easy access.

Works of art and antiques: Require a detailed list (title/author/date/value) with two photos per piece. Legalization of the list by the Italian consulate at origin is advisable for returning Italian citizens. Proof of ownership for more than 6 months may be required. Fine art inspection will cause additional costs and delays. Inclusion of valuable artworks increases the likelihood of a physical inspection.

Customs inspections: Italian customs has increased the frequency of both document verifications (nearly every shipment) and physical inspections. These generate additional costs plus demurrage/detention/storage charges.

ISPM 15: All wooden packaging material (pallets, crates, bulkhead) must comply with FAO ISPM 15 requirements. Certificates attesting compliance and photos of wooden materials are recommended. Enhanced phytosanitary controls apply to shipments from China and Belarus.

Inheritance: Duty-free importation is possible if connected with a transfer of residence (standard TOR rules apply), or if the importer is the sole heir with legal documentation. Must occur within 2 years of becoming the official possessor. Some customs offices may not accept duty-free inheritance imports; consult the destination agent.

Strong recommendation: Always obtain the green light from the destination agent before forwarding any shipment to Italy.

Duties & Taxes

Duty-free conditions: Household goods used by the importer for more than 6 months may be imported duty-free. The importer must prove residence in the country of origin for at least 12 months (366 days). Duty-free importation must occur within 12 months of the date of residence registration in Italy.

VAT: 22% on the CIF value for any goods not qualifying for duty-free entry.

Wedding trousseaux: May be imported duty-free for women (Italian or foreign) marrying an Italian citizen and establishing residence in Italy. Each wedding gift cannot exceed EUR 1,000. Vehicles are not considered part of the trousseau.

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

Critical: obtain the green light from the destination agent before forwarding any shipment to Italy. This cannot be overstated. Shipments arriving without complete documentation face significant delays, demurrage/detention/storage charges, and potential duty assessments.

Residence registration: Must be completed before the shipment arrives at customs. The owner must re-apply for residence upon returning to Italy.

Consular documents: Should be obtained as early as possible for Italian citizens. Some consulates no longer issue the Dichiarazione Consolare di Rimpatrio; alternative proof of residence abroad must be arranged in advance.

USMAF declaration: Must be provided with the bill of lading by the origin agent. This is not optional.

ISPM 15: Strict compliance required. Certificates and photos of wooden packaging recommended.

Customs forms: Some customs offices require additional forms, and forms may vary by arrival port. Confirm requirements with the destination agent.

Diplomatic shipments: The diplomatic franchise must be obtained through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome before the shipment arrives. The diplomat must first obtain a special ID and be accredited. The process takes several weeks. Transportation should be held until the destination agent confirms readiness.

Italian returning diplomats and consular staff: Returning Italian diplomatic/consular corps

members and civil servants are NOT typically covered by diplomatic status for customs purposes. They should follow the "Italian returning citizen" procedures.