



Republic of the Congo

CAPITAL

Brazzaville

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

French

CURRENCY

the CFA Franc BEAC (XAF)

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Important Note

Also Known As: Congo-Brazzaville

Note: The Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville) should not be confused with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa). They are separate countries on opposite sides of the Congo River. The Republic of the Congo is a CEMAC member state.

Overview

Customs Clearance

- Sea shipments: approximately 4 weeks - Air shipments: approximately 1 week

Duty-Free Eligibility

Two taxes apply to ALL personal effects shipments, including diplomatic shipments:

- La redevance informatique (computer tax): 2% of CIF value
- La taxe ARC (assurance): 0.8% of cost and freight value

Duty-free entry: Personal effects may qualify for duty-free entry (beyond the two mandatory taxes) if all documents are submitted to the destination agent at least 15 days before the shipment's arrival and the certificate of free entry is obtained from the Customs head office in advance.

VAT: The standard VAT rate is 18.9% (the Republic of Congo applies 18% VAT plus a 5% centimes additionnels surcharge bringing the effective rate to approximately 18.9%).

Documents

Required Documents

- **Copy of passport**
- **Packing list**
- **Original bill of lading (OBL) / air waybill (AWB)**
- **Detailed inventory in French, valued, and signed by the owner of the goods**
- **Original detailed inventory of new items purchased less than 6 months prior to import, with original invoices attached**
- **Work permit or employment contract**
- **Residence permit or visa**

Household Goods — Specific Information

Pre-shipment inspection: NOT required for personal effects shipments or secondhand vehicles. However, pre-shipment inspection IS required for brand-new vehicle shipments (including diplomatic vehicles). COTECNA is the designated inspection company. Contact COTECNA in the origin country to schedule the inspection.

CEMAC framework: The Republic of the Congo is a CEMAC member state (with Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon). Import duties range from 5% to 30% on CIF value. Additional CEMAC-related taxes include: CEMAC integration tax (1% CIF), African integration contribution (0.2% CIF), statistic tax (0.2% CIF), OHADA contribution (0.05% CIF), CEEAC contribution (0.04% CIF).

Computer royalty: An additional tax at rates from 0.5% to 2% applies to all importation and exportation of goods to cover customs IT processing costs. Exemptions apply for donations, embassy imports, and NGOs covered by a headquarters agreement.

Currency: CFA Franc BEAC (XAF), pegged to the Euro at 1 EUR = 655.957 XAF.

Language: French is the official language. All customs documentation must be in French.

These taxes are unavoidable regardless of exemption status.

Prohibited / Restricted Items

Prohibited Items

- Narcotics and illegal drugs
- Counterfeit goods
- Items of historical significance (export prohibited)
- Products from endangered species without CITES documentation **CITES**
- Firearms and ammunition without authorization **PERMIT REQUIRED**

Restricted / Dutiable Items

Duty-free traveler's baggage allowances: Contact the destination agent for current personal allowance limits.

Items subject to the two mandatory taxes (even when otherwise exempt):

- All personal effects shipments pay 2% computer tax (CIF) and 0.8% ARC tax (C&F)
- No exceptions, including for diplomats

Weapons, ammunition, and explosives: Require permits from competent authorities. **PERMIT REQUIRED**

Hazardous products and chemical products: Require import permits.

Farm products (including meat and poultry): Require import permits and sanitary certificates.

Endangered species: Prohibited or restricted under CITES. **CITES**

Historical artifacts: It is prohibited to export items of historical significance (wood pieces, sculptures, paintings). Violators risk imprisonment and heavy fines.

Vehicles

Vehicle Documents

- **Vehicle registration card**
- **Purchase invoice or declaration of value**
- **Bill of lading with full vehicle details (chassis number, engine number, cubic capacity, year, brand, model)**

Specific Information

Secondhand vehicles: Pre-shipment inspection is NOT required for secondhand cars being imported as personal effects.

New vehicles: Pre-shipment inspection IS required, even for diplomatic shipments. The inspection must be performed by COTECNA at the origin before shipment.

Duty rates: Vehicle import duties apply based on CEMAC CET rates plus national surcharges. Rates vary by vehicle type, age, and engine size. Contact the destination agent for current calculations.

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

Pets

Requirements

- **Veterinary health certificate issued in the country of origin, dated no more than 5 days before transportation**
- **Rabies vaccination certificate (vaccination must have been administered more than 1 month but less than 12 months before departure)**

Specific Information

Health certificate: Must be issued within 5 days of transportation. This is a notably tight window compared to many countries.

Rabies vaccination: Must be current, administered more than 1 month but less than 12 months before departure.

CDC classification: The Republic of the Congo is classified as a high-risk country for dog rabies by the CDC. Dogs returning to the United States must meet CDC requirements for high-risk countries. Obtain the Certification of U.S.-Issued Rabies Vaccination form before departing the U.S.

CITES: The import of certain endangered species of plants, live animals, and their products is prohibited or restricted under CITES.

Veterinary services: Limited, particularly outside Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire. Complete all vaccinations and treatments before travel.

Consignment Instructions

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

15-day document lead time: All original documents must be received by the destination agent at least 15 days prior to the shipment's arrival to obtain the certificate of free entry from the Customs head office. Late documents will delay or prevent the free-entry process.

French-language inventory required: Detailed, valued, and signed by the owner.

New items inventory: New items purchased less than 6 months before import must be listed separately with original invoices attached.

Ports of entry: The primary sea port is Pointe-Noire (on the Atlantic coast). Air freight arrives at Maya-Maya International Airport (BZV) in Brazzaville and Agostinho-Neto International Airport (PNR) in Pointe-Noire.

Baggage clearance: Must be cleared at the first airport of entry in Congo. This applies to transit passengers as well.

Overland transit from Pointe-Noire to Brazzaville: Approximately 500 km. The railway (Chemin de Fer Congo-Océan) connects the two cities but has experienced disruptions. Road transport is an alternative. Allow additional transit time.

Security environment: The U.S. State Department advises travelers to exercise increased caution. Crime (including violent crime) and political unrest are concerns, particularly in Brazzaville's outlying neighborhoods. Armed gang activity has been reported.

Infrastructure: Infrastructure is more developed than in the DRC but still limited by regional standards. Pointe-Noire has better port facilities as a major oil industry center.

Cultural & Other Information

- **OpenFactBook (replaces CIA World Factbook):** <https://www.openfactbook.org/countries/congo-brazzaville/>
- **Wikipedia:** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic_of_the_Congo
- **U.S. State Department:** <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/RepublicoftheCongo.html>
- **U.S. Trade.gov -- Republic of Congo:** <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/congo-republic-import-requirements-and-documentation>
- **Foreign Embassies in Republic of Congo:** <http://www.embassy.org/embassies/cg.html>
- **CEMAC Commission:** <https://cemac.int/>
- **VisaHQ -- Republic of Congo Customs:** <https://www.visahq.com/congo/customs/>
- **CDC -- High-Risk Countries for Dog Rabies:** <https://www.cdc.gov/importation/dogs/high-risk-countries.html>

Key country facts: The Republic of the Congo is located in Central Africa, bordered by Gabon, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Angolan exclave of Cabinda. The capital is Brazzaville, situated on the Congo River directly opposite Kinshasa (DRC capital). The official language is French. The economy is heavily dependent on oil production. Pointe-Noire is the economic capital and main port city. The country is a member of CEMAC, CEEAC, and the African Union. The currency is the CFA Franc BEAC (XAF).

Important notes for movers: The Republic of the Congo has a simpler customs regime than its neighbor the DRC, but the two mandatory taxes (2% computer tax and 0.8% ARC tax) apply to every shipment regardless of exemption status, including diplomatic. The 15-day document lead time for the free-entry certificate is strictly enforced. The distinction between secondhand and new vehicles for pre-shipment inspection purposes is important: secondhand cars as personal effects are exempt from COTECNA inspection, but new cars are not (even diplomatic ones). The 5-day health certificate window for pets is unusually tight and requires careful timing.

Quick Links & Resources

- **Find Movers in Republic of Congo**
<https://iamovers.mobilityex.com/index.html#/search?loc=Republic%20of%20the%20Congo&lat=-4.2634&lng=15.2429&range=50&assocs=800&fvw=c&ctry=Republic%20of%20the%20Congo>

- [Foreign Embassies in Republic of Congo](http://www.embassy.org/embassies/cg.html)
<http://www.embassy.org/embassies/cg.html>
- [U.S. State Department -- Republic of the Congo](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/RepublicoftheCongo.html)
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/RepublicoftheCongo.html>
- [OpenFactBook \(replaces CIA World Factbook\)](https://www.openfactbook.org/countries/congo-brazzaville/)
<https://www.openfactbook.org/countries/congo-brazzaville/>
- [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic_of_the_Congo)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic_of_the_Congo
- [U.S. Trade.gov -- Republic of Congo Import Requirements](https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/congo-republic-import-requirements-and-documentation)
<https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/congo-republic-import-requirements-and-documentation>
- [VisaHQ -- Republic of Congo Customs](https://www.visahq.com/congo/customs/)
<https://www.visahq.com/congo/customs/>
- [CEMAC Commission](https://cemac.int/)
<https://cemac.int/>
- [CDC -- High-Risk Countries for Dog Rabies](https://www.cdc.gov/importation/dogs/high-risk-countries.html)
<https://www.cdc.gov/importation/dogs/high-risk-countries.html>