



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

**A GUIDE TO
CUSTOMS
PROCEDURES**

**TEMPORARY
IMPORTATION OF
PRIVATE MOTOR
VEHICLES FROM
COUNTRIES OUTSIDE
THE EUROPEAN
UNION**

**MINISTRY OF FINANCE
CUSTOMS AND EXCISE
DEPARTMENT
NICOSIA**

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this notice is to inform temporary visitors about the legal provisions and procedures applicable on the temporary importation into Cyprus of motor vehicles from countries outside the European Union.

Temporary importation is an international customs practice under which certain goods can be brought into a country conditionally relieved totally or partially from payment of import duties and taxes. Such goods must be imported for a specific purpose and must be intended for re-exportation within a specified period and without having undergone any change except normal depreciation due to the use made of them.

2. Legal Provisions

2.1. Total or partial relief from import duties

Articles 137 to 144 of the Council Regulation (EEC) No 2913/92, establishing the Community Customs Code and articles 553 to 584 of the Commission Regulation (EEC) No 2454/93 laying down provisions for the implementation of the Community Customs Code provide for the temporary importation of certain goods from third countries with total or partial relief from import duties.

2.2. Relief from VAT

By virtue of the Value Added Tax Law No 95(I) of 2000 imported goods, which are relieved from the payment of duties according to the customs or other legislation, are also relieved from payment of VAT.

2.3. Relief from excise duty

The Excise Duties Law No 91(I) of 2004 provides that goods temporarily imported to Cyprus, which are relieved from the payment of customs duties, are also relieved from the payment of excise duties.

3. Definitions

- **Temporary importation procedure** means the customs procedure which allows the use in the customs territory of the Community, with total or partial relief from import duties and without their being subject to commercial policy measures, of non-Community goods intended for re-export without having undergone any change except normal depreciation due to the use made of them;
- **import duties** means:
 - customs duties and charges having an effect equivalent to customs duties payable on the importation of goods;
 - import charges introduced under the common agricultural policy or under the specific arrangements applicable to certain goods resulting from the processing of agricultural products;
- **vehicle** means the following, when intended for private use:
 - motor vehicle;
 - motor bicycle or tricycle;
 - caravan or trailer;
- **person** means a natural or legal person;

- **person established abroad** means a natural person whose normal place of residence is in another country outside the European Union as well as a legal person whose principal place of business is outside the European Union and its capital stock is wholly possessed by a person established outside the European Union;
- **normal place of residence** is the place where a person usually lives for a period amounting to at least 185 days, continuous or not, in a period of twelve months due to his/her personal and occupational ties or, in the case of a person without occupational ties, due to his/her personal ties;

4. Requirements for temporary importation

On importation the vehicle may be delivered to its importer without payment of duties and taxes, if the importer proves to Customs that:

- he/she is the owner of the vehicle, or a person fully authorised by the owner, provided that the owner is also a person (natural or legal) established abroad;
- his/her normal residence is in a country outside the European Union;
- he/she is importing the vehicle for his/her private use only;
- he/she does not possess in Cyprus any other vehicle under the temporary importation procedure;
- he/she intends to use it during his/her stay in Cyprus for a period of time not exceeding six months, consecutive or not, per year;
- the vehicle is registered in a third country, and if not, the vehicle is owned by a person established in a third country.

5. Procedure on importation.

Provided that the requirements referred to in paragraph 4 above are fulfilled, the vehicle is allowed temporary importation without payment of duties and taxes for a period up to six months. Customs form C104 is issued for this purpose and given to the importer. At the expiration of that period, the vehicle must be re-exported.

6. Special instances

Exceptionally, temporary importation may be allowed for a period of time longer than six months, if the importer:

- is a student in Cyprus, in which case he/she will be allowed to use the vehicle throughout his/her stay in Cyprus exclusively for his/her studies;
- is assigned with a task of fixed duration, in which case he/she will be allowed to use the vehicle throughout his/her stay in Cyprus exclusively for the accomplishment of his/her task.

Clarification: Persons assigned with a task of fixed duration shall be deemed to be persons:

- having their normal residence in a third country, who come to work under a contract of specified duration as teaching personnel at the University of Cyprus or at a private institution of higher education recognised by the Ministry of Education and Culture;
- having their normal residence in a third country, who come temporarily to the Republic, in order to work under a contract of employment of a specified duration with the Government of the Republic, a semi-governmental organisation, legal persons of public law, international organisations or foreign state organisations or

institutes established in the Republic, as well as foreign archaeological missions, provided these persons do particularly specialised work;

- having their normal residence in a third country, working temporarily in the Republic as reporters of foreign press or foreign radio and television channels in order to cover specific events;
- transferring their normal residence from another country to Cyprus and they intend to apply for relief on the vehicle; in such a case, these persons may be allowed to use their vehicles temporarily up to a period of one month, pending the submission of an application for relief and a relevant decision by Customs.

7. Conditions to be observed after importation

A motor vehicle temporarily imported into Cyprus:

- shall not be lent, sold, pledged, hired, given away, exchanged or otherwise disposed of without the permission of the Director of Customs;
- shall be used exclusively by the importer for his/her own private needs, or on the Director's approval, by any other person established abroad and duly authorised in writing by the importer to use the vehicle;
- shall not be used by any other person and in particular by a person who is not established abroad;
- shall not be used for the transport of persons for remuneration or for any industrial or commercial purpose, with or without remuneration;
- shall be re-exported before the expiration of the period of the temporary importation granted or before the importer's, departure from Cyprus, if he leaves before the expiration of that period.

8. Importation of spare parts and accessories

Spare parts, accessories and equipment used for repair and maintenance of a car temporarily imported into Cyprus can also be imported under the temporary importation procedure.

9. Driving the vehicle temporarily in Cyprus

Visitors importing a motor vehicle temporarily for their personal use in Cyprus must possess a valid certificate of registration of the vehicle and road license of a third country. If the foreign road license expires during the vehicle's stay in Cyprus, they must pay the relevant road tax fees to the Inland Transport Department in Cyprus. They must also have a valid driving license of their country or an international driving license.

The vehicle must be insured by an insurance company registered and operating in Cyprus, unless it is covered by an International Motor Insurance Certificate, known as Green Card or it bears number plates of a member state of the Multilateral Guarantee Agreement. Countries outside the European Union, which are members to this Agreement, are the Croatia, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland.

10. Termination of the temporary importation of the vehicle

Before the expiration of the six months or longer period allowed to the importer if he/she falls under any of the special instances, the vehicle must be:

- re-exported; or
- placed in a customs warehouse; or

- destroyed under customs supervision; or
- abandoned to Customs; or
- cleared either on payment of the relevant customs and excise duties or on relief from them.

In all these cases the importer must produce to Customs both the vehicle and Form C.104 given to him/her at the time of importation.

It is clarified and stressed that the vehicle must be settled customs wise before the expiration of the period of its temporary importation, because immediately after that date all customs duties and taxes become payable. If the importer fails to settle the vehicle's temporary importation status, **the vehicle will be seized** as liable to forfeiture.

11. Information

For additional information, you may write to the Director of Customs at the following address:

Director,
Department of Customs and Excise,
P.O.Box 24539, 1330 Nicosia

Fax no 22407516

E-mail address: nicosia@customs.mof.gov.cy.

For oral inquiries you may call telephone numbers 22407526, 22407591 or 22407538.