

Import Requirements in Benin

Benin is a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which includes Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea (Conakry), Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. As of January 2015 ECOWAS started the implementation of the "Tarif Exterieur Commun" (a Common External Tariff - CET). The standardized tariff applied to imported goods for ECOWAS member states comprising duties and taxes ranges from zero to 35 percent depending on the nature and the origin of the imported goods. CET is designed to protect industries in ECOWAS member states from dumping and unfair competition. A Valued Added Tax (VAT) of 18 percent is levied in Benin on all activities except salaries and agriculture-related activities, and customs duties are due on imported goods at the importation point of entry. The VAT is refundable to sellers and importers that claim it at the end of the fiscal year.

Documents related to import requirements vary depending on the type of goods imported. In general, importers must submit invoice, bill of lading (B/L), inspection certificate (<https://www.bureauveritas.africa/our-locations>), the importer's import license, attestation of origin of the goods, and an animal or plant health inspection certificate before clearing goods.

There are no specific labeling requirements for goods. Well-labeled goods benefit from quicker identification and customs clearance. However, Beninese law does not allow any foreign natural or manufactured goods to enter or leave Benin if the goods are falsely labeled to reflect that they are from Benin or a country with which Benin has signed a brand protection agreement. No goods without attestation of the country of origin and/or not marked as "imported" are allowed to enter Benin.

Overview

Benin's national standards body develops and implements its own national standardization and certification policy, including for building construction, electricity, and agribusiness. It coordinates national standards development work and ensures the promotion, adoption, and voluntary use of standards. It implements the national certification scheme for products and services and operates the national conformity marking system. It promotes the quality and reliability of products, goods, and services, including for environmental protection. As member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Benin has also aligned its standards with theirs. these.

The European Union has recently provided Benin with assistance to establish a laboratory to test foodstuffs and medication.

Standards

The Benin Agency for Standardization and Metrological Service and Quality Control Management (ANM) grants approval for and disseminates government standards on all products and services. Many standards in Benin are adopted from international standards organizations such ARSO (African Organization for Standardization), ISO (International Standardization Organization), or AFNOR (French Agency for Normalization). Benin is also member of SMIIC (the Standards and Metrology Institute of Islamic Countries).

Conformity Assessment

Conformity assessment for products other than food is conducted by ANM. The Food Safety Control Agency (ABSSA) regulates locally with food product conformity assessment. The Ministry of Health's Pharmacies Directorate has this

responsibility for locally made and imported pharmaceutical products, and the Applied Nutrition and Food Agency (DANA) oversees imported food products.

Product Certification

ANM, ABSSA, DANA and the Ministry of Health's Pharmacies Directorate are the only product certification agencies.

Accreditation

ANM, ABSSA, DANA and the Ministry of Health's Pharmacies Directorate are the only agencies authorized to issue certifications for imports and exports. Pharmaceutical products are tested by Benin's Pharmaceutical Products Control Office. Test certificates from established foreign laboratories are accepted.

Publication of technical regulations

State owned newspaper "La Nation" is the national gazette that posts technical publications.

Prohibited and Restricted Imports

The import of guns, ammunition, narcotics (except those accepted for medical use), and materials that may endanger the environment is prohibited.