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TRAVEL WISELY

**USEFUL INFORMATION
FOR TRAVELERS**



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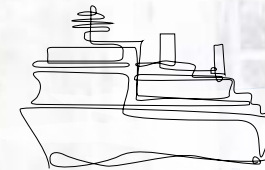


The information provided is purely indicative.







The regulations, laws, decrees and other provisions having the force of law, have precedence over this information which under no circumstances can be levelled against the administration in the event of a dispute.

Preface

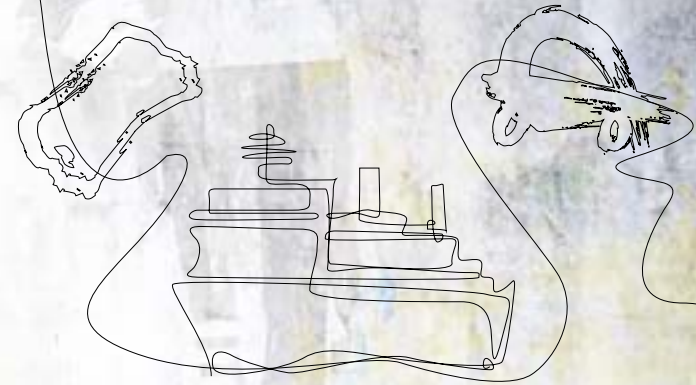
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Preface

You are traveling abroad and you want to bring back souvenirs for your family and friends ?

Within certain limits, you can enjoy partial or full exemption from duties and taxes at import when you bring goods from abroad.

However, when you travel, you should bear in mind that there are restrictions on the amount of cash you are allowed to carry when traveling.

Furthermore, under certain conditions, it is allowed to take your pet.

There are souvenirs that may be harmful to endangered animal or plant species (like ivory statues and jewelry, handbags and shoes made of reptile skin or jewelry and decorations made of coral, etc.).

Last point, some souvenirs can be hazardous to your health, your safety or the economy : counterfeit goods.

We are pleased to inform you about the 'do's' and 'don'ts' in this brochure :

WHAT YOU MAY OR MAY NOT DO.





??????

Exemption from
import duties
and taxes





EXEMPTION FROM IMPORT DUTIES AND TAXES

I WILL RETURN FROM A NON-EU MEMBER STATE

1. WHAT CAN I BRING INTO BELGIUM FROM A NON-EU MEMBER STATE¹ ?

Goods having no commercial character contained in your personal luggage are **exempted** from import duties and taxes within certain limits (see table 1).

You will be granted an exemption in the following cases :

- You purchased the goods in these countries with all taxes included ; export (for instance : purchases in a duty-free shop of an airport) ;
- You purchased goods in these countries with reimbursement or relief from taxes based on their
- You were offered goods as a gift.

2. WHICH EXIT DO I TAKE WHEN RETURNING FROM A NON-EU MEMBER STATE ?

When you return home from a country - that is not a member of the European Union¹ or from a territory with a special tax status² you can always be submitted to a Customs check.

you have nothing to declare or that the quantity of goods that you bring back does not exceed the threshold of the exemptions mentioned in the first table.

The choice of which exit you take constitutes a declaration. When customs notices that you are importing forbidden goods or quantities exceeding the exemptions, you will not only have to pay the due duties and taxes at import, but also a fine.

If you have something to declare :

- choose the red lane (or "Goods to declare") in order to leave the airport.
- use only the green lane (or "Nothing to declare") when you are sure that

¹ The Member States of the EU are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. The United Kingdom is no longer part of the European Union but Northern Ireland remains part of the taxation and customs territory of the EU. For travellers, the United Kingdom is a third country (which means that remission of tax is possible) but Northern Ireland remains part of EU territory (therefore no remission of tax is possible).

² The territories with a special tax status are the Canary Islands (Gran Canaria, Tenerife, etc.), the DOM (French overseas departments that is to say French Guiana, the Reunion island, Guadeloupe and Martinique), the land islands and the Mount Athos, etc. The travelers coming back from the territories with a special tax status of the EU only enjoy the exemptions applicable to the non-EU Member countries.

REMARK :

If you come to Belgium by air from a third country via **an airport located in another Member state of the European Union**, you must declare only the goods contained in your hand luggage to the Customs of this first **airport where the transfer takes place inside the EU**.

3. WHICH GOODS ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE EXEMPTION ?

The exemption does not include :

- goods needed for professional purposes ;
 - goods imported in far greater quantities than those commonly acquired at once by private individuals.
 - goods intended for resale ;
- You must **declare** these goods because the import duties and taxes are due.

4. WHAT IF I IMPORT GOODS IN GREATER QUANTITIES ?

If you **import goods in greater quantities than those for which exemption is granted**, you must **declare them to Customs** in order to avoid the payment of a **fine** in addition to the taxes due:

- Customs will only tax those quantities that exceed the **maximum** (quantities) of tobacco products and/or alcoholic beverages allowed by the exemption.
- Customs will collect taxes on the total value of the imported object from the category 'other goods' (see table 1).



EXEMPTION FROM IMPORT DUTIES AND TAXES

I WILL RETURN FROM A NON-EU MEMBER STATE

TABLE 1

GOODS OF A NON-COMMERCIAL CHARACTER	
Tobacco products¹	Allowed quantities²
Cigarettes	200 pieces or
Cigarillos	100 pieces or
Cigars	50 pieces or
Smoking tobacco	250 grams
Alcohol and alcoholic beverages¹	Allowed quantities
Still wines	4 litres and
Beers	16 litres and
Distilled and spirituous beverages with an alcoholic strength exceeding 22 % vol. Non-denatured ethyl alcohol of 80 % and more vol.	1 litre or
Distilled and spirituous beverages, wine- or alcoholbased aperitifs, tafia, sake or similar drinks with an alcoholic strength of up to 22 %	2 litres
Other goods³	Total maximum amount⁴ by person
Air and sea travelers	430 euros
Other travelers (by land or by private aircraft or boat)	300 euros

1 The exemptions for "tobacco products" and "alcohol and alcoholic beverages" are only granted to travelers who are at least 17 years old.

2 These quantities are applicable to import in Belgium. Each EU Member State can decide to apply smaller allowed quantities.

3 This exemption is lowered to 175 euros for travelers under fifteen years old.

4 These amounts can be reconsidered. Updated information is available at the telephone numbers mentioned at the end of this brochure.

I WILL RETURN FROM AN EU MEMBER STATE

TABLE 2

	GUIDE LEVELS
Tabacco products	
Cigarettes	800 pieces
Cigarillos (cigars weighing maximum 3g/piece)	400 pieces
Cigars	200 pieces
Smoking tobacco	1 kg
Alcoholic beverages	
Spirit drinks	10 litres
Wine	90 litres (of which maximum 60 litres of sparkling wine)
Intermediate products (e.g. port wine, Pineau des Charentes, etc.)	20 litres
Beers	110 litres

I WILL RETURN FROM AN EU MEMBER STATE

1. WHAT CAN I BRING INTO BELGIUM FROM A EUROPEAN MEMBER STATE¹ ?

You will not pay any excise duties in Belgium on the excise goods which you purchased as a private person and for your own use in another Member State of the EU if you transport these goods by yourself. This applies only to goods for which the excise duties have already been paid in the Member State of purchase. "For your own use" means that the good will be used or consumed by you or your household.

In all other cases the Customs will consider these goods as moved into

Belgium for commercial purposes, which means that the excise duties are due in Belgium.

To decide whether the goods are actually intended for the own use of the private person who introduced them into Belgium, the European Union has established the following criteria available to the Administration:

- the commercial status and the reasons for travelling ;

1 The Member States of the EU are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. Northern Ireland remains still a part of the Customs territory of the European Union. The territories with a special tax status are the Canary Islands (Gran Canaria, Tenerife, etc.), the DOM (French overseas departments that is to say French Guiana, the Reunion island, Guadeloupe and Martinique), the land islands and the Mount Athos, etc. The travelers coming back from the territories with a special tax status of the EU only enjoy the exemptions applicable to the non-EU Member countries. Northern Ireland is not included in it.



EXEMPTION FROM IMPORT DUTIES AND TAXES

- the place of storage ;
- the mode of transport ;
- any document related to the products ;
- the nature of those products and their quantities according to the following guide levels (table 2).

These criteria are only indicative levels that draw the attention of the General Administration of Customs and

Excise to the fact that excise goods transported by private person could have a commercial character. In that case, excise duties would have to be paid in Belgium.

The Customs will decide whether the goods are used for commercial purpose or not based only on tangible elements (that corroborate its decision).

2. WHAT CAN I PURCHASE IN DUTY-FREE SHOPS ?

- You travel **within the European Union**¹ :
 - You do not buy duty-free at the duty-free outlets at all, but with payment of the excise duty and VAT.
 - When you travel to a territory with a special tax status, when you buy in duty-free shops in an EU airport, the rules for non-EU Member States (see below) are applicable : your purchases are tax-free.
- You travel **outside the European Union** :
 - Your purchases in duty-free shops in an EU airport are exempted from any tax (and are unlimited)

if you travel from an EU Member State to a non-EU country by means of a non-stop flight or by a stop flight in a Member State of EU (but with any possibility to get your hold luggage back at this stop over).

As a general rule, those purchases are intended to be used or consumed only in the non-EU country and are not intended to be re-imported into the EU.

- When returning to the EU however, you will only enjoy the exemptions mentioned in the first table. You must pay the import duties and taxes on your purchases exceeding the exemption.

3. WHAT TO DO WHEN TRAVELING WITH VALUABLES ?

When you travel to non-EU Member States and take valuables in your luggage, please ask for information from Customs in order to know

formalities to be able to re-import these goods duty-free when **returning to EU journey**.

4. DO YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION ?

You can obtain additional information on the exemptions :

- on **our website** https://finances.belgium.be/fr/douanes_accises/particuliers
- **Circular 2017/C/41 on baggage (French version)** or
- by calling the GAC&E's contact centre on 02 572 57 57 (available from 9 am to 5 pm)



¹ The Member States of the EU are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. Northern Ireland remains still a part of the Customs territory of the European Union. The territories with a special tax status are the Canary Islands (Gran Canaria, Tenerife, etc.), the DOM (French overseas departments that is to say French Guiana, the Reunion island, Guadeloupe and Martinique), the land islands and the Mount Athos, etc. The travelers coming back from the territories with a special tax status of the EU only enjoy the exemptions applicable to the non-EU Member countries. Northern Ireland is not included in it.



Controls on the
movement of
cash





CONTROLS ON THE MOVEMENT OF CASH

1. WHEN DO I HAVE TO DECLARE CASH WHEN TRAVELLING ?

If you plan to enter or leave the European Union with 10,000 euro or more in cash, you must spontaneously declare this to the customs authorities¹.

If you are travelling between another EU Member State and Belgium, you do not have to declare this spontaneously. However, during a customs control you may be asked about any large sums of cash that you are carrying. If you have 10,000 euro or more in cash with you at that

moment, you will have to fill in the declaration form.²

Please note that the forms are different according to whether you travel to or from another EU Member State or to or from a country outside the EU.

The obligation to submit a declaration for cash is part of the European and Belgian strategy to prevent money laundering and terrorist financing.

2. HOW AND WHERE DO I HAVE TO SUBMIT A DECLARATION ?

The declaration must be submitted at the place where you leave or enter the European Union. For example, Belgians travelling to South America via Madrid have to submit the Spanish completed declaration form in Madrid.

The Belgian form is available in the Belgian customs offices and on the website of the customs authorities (https://finance.belgium.be/en/customs_excises/private-individuals/travelling/movement-cash). As is the case for the forms of the other EU Member States, it can also be found on https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/how-declare_en.

3. WHAT ARE THE PENALTIES FOR FAILING TO SUBMIT A DECLARATION ?

If you fail to submit a declaration for amounts of 10,000 euro or more, or if there is any indication of a link with criminal activities, the cash can be detained and you can be exposed to penalties, such as a fine or cash forfeiture.

Moreover, the customs authorities will always draw up a report of findings for the Public Prosecutor's Department. On that basis, the public prosecutor may decide to open a money laundering investigation.

4. WHO HAS TO SUBMIT THE DECLARATION ?

The obligation applies to natural persons and legal persons carrying 10,000 euro or more when entering or leaving the EU, or when entering or leaving Belgium from or to another EU Member State. That also applies when you are carrying cash from or for any

other person or legal person (e.g. the company you work for). When you are travelling in group or with children, the rule applies individually.

5. WHAT IS UNDERSTOOD BY 'CASH' ?

▶ If you are travelling from or to a country outside the EU :

- banknotes and coins (foreign currencies will be converted into euro)
- traveller's cheques and other bearer cheques
- letters of credit and cash bonds
- certain types of gold

▶ If you are travelling from or to another EU Member State :

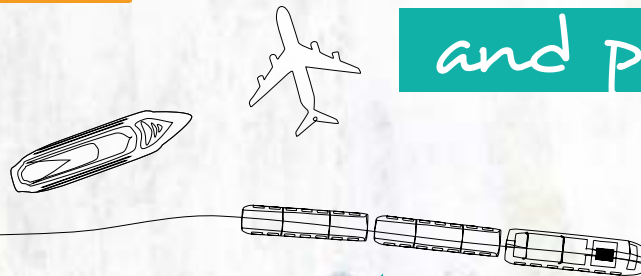
- banknotes and coins (foreign currencies will be converted into euro)
 - traveller's cheques and other bearer cheques
 - letters of credit and cash bonds
- All means of payment mentioned above will be added up in order to determine whether the limit of 10,000 euro is reached.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2018/1672 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on controls on cash entering or leaving the Union and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1889/2005.

² Belgian Royal Decree of 26 January 2014 on supervisory measures for the physical cross-border transportation of currency (Belgian Official Journal of 17 February 2014) – amended by the Royal Decree of 29 August 2021 (Belgian Official Journal of 3 September 2021).



Endangered animals and plants





PROTECTED ANIMALS AND PLANTS

OUR ANIMALS AND PLANTS AND THEIR DERIVATIVES ARE PROTECTED

Think twice before buying nice souvenirs for your family. Every year, many protected animals and plants as well as their derivatives, such as fur, caviar and ivory works of art are brought into Belgium illegally. Should this be considered as organised crime? In some cases, it should.

However, very often it is tourists who, unknowingly, bring these objects into the country as souvenirs.

Such an ill-considered purchase may have far-reaching consequences :

- Illegal trade in protected animals and plants and the objects and products derived from them may threaten their survival.
- Customs will confiscate such souvenirs.
- In many cases, it will result in a considerable fine and imprisonment.

Below you will find some examples of souvenirs which are sold to tourists, but which should definitely not be taken home. The fact that these objects are publicly exposed on foreign markets does not imply that they are legal!

- **Skins and clothing from felines :** coats and bags made of leopards, snow leopards, clouded leopards, tigers, lions, pumas, jaguars, ocelots or cheetahs ;
- **Ivory :** carvings made of elephant ivory and rhinoceros horn : statues, figurines, seals, bracelets, necklaces, chess pieces, chopsticks and complete tusks ;
- **tortoise shield products** (« Bekko ») : jewels, plates, spectacles, hair clips, combs ;
- **Shawls made from wool of Tibetan antelopes** (Shahtoosh wool) ;
- **Skulls of crocodiles, tigers, bears ;**
- **Whale bone carvings ;**
- Guitars and luxury accessories made from **Rio rosewood.**

MORE INFORMATION ON ENDANGERED ANIMALS AND PLANTS ? (CITES LEGISLATION)

Please visit the website of the Belgian Management Authority, being the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment: <https://www.health.belgium.be/nl/dieren-en-planten/dieren/wat-cites>.

Or contact via : E-mail: cites@milieu.belgie.be / Tel.: +32 2 524 97 97

Certain souvenirs can be taken home provided that you have a **CITES export permit** (issued by the country of origin) **AND** a **CITES import permit** issued by the Belgian Management Authority* :

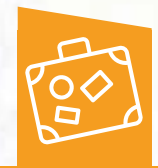
- **Reptile skins :** handbags, briefcases, belts, shoes and wallets made from snake, lizard or crocodile leather ;
- **Coral and jewellery made from coral :** all black, blue or hard corals ; jewellery made from red corals ... ;
- **Certain large shellfish,** giant clams, queen conches and their flesh ;
- Key rings **containing seahorses ;**
- Coats and blankets of **vicuña or guanaco wool ;**
- **Hippopotamus and walrus teeth** carvings ... ;
- **Teeth, jaws and fins** of certain sharks ;
- Feathers or other objects of **wild birds' feathers ;**
- **Stuffed animals :** birds, crocodiles (including teeth), monitors, snakes, etc. ;
- **Snake wine :** alcohol in which specimens of protected species, such as snakes and lizards, are immersed. It is necessary to inquire about the species in the bottle !

Some souvenirs can be taken home without permits provided that the quantity falls within the indicated range :

- **rainsticks** of cactaceae up to three per person ;
- Some specific shellfish :
 - up to **three conch shells** (*Strombus gigas*) per person ;
 - up to **three giant clam shells** (*Tridacnidae*) per person, where each specimen may be an intact shell or two matching halves, not exceeding 3 kg in total ;
- **Up to 125 gr of sturgeon caviar per person** in containers that are individually marked and sealed with CITES labels. If you want to bring in more, you will need a permit.
- **Up to four dead, worked specimens of crocodile leather** (*Crocodylia* spp) such as bags, belts ..., with the exception of meat and hunting trophies ;
- **Up to four dead, dried seahorses** (*Hippocampus* spp) per person ;
- **Specimens of agarwood** (*Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp.) per person :
 - up to 1 kg woodchips
 - 24 ml oil
 - and two sets of beads or prayer beads (or two necklaces or bracelets) per person.



Bringing
counterfeited goods





BRINGING COUNTERFEITED GOODS

1. WHAT ARE COUNTERFEIT AND PIRATED GOODS ?

Counterfeit goods are imitations and reproductions of branded products. Pirated goods are one or more copies which have been made without the consent of the holder of the property right.

Counterfeit and pirated goods constitute an infringement of the intellectual property right.

The goods involved are :

- counterfeit goods (fake designer clothes) ;
- pirated goods (copies of CDs, DVDs, etc.) ;
- goods that infringe a patent (medicine) or a designation of origin (wine) ;
- trade names in so far as they are protected as exclusive property rights under national law ;
- topographies of semiconductor products ;
- utility models and devices which are primarily designed, produced or adapted for the purpose of enabling or facilitating circumvention of technological measures.

2. HOW CAN COUNTERFEIT AND PIRATED GOODS BE TRACED ?

The following tips and tricks will facilitate the tracing and recognition of counterfeit and pirated goods :

- abnormally low prices.
- inferior quality and finish of the product.
- unusual place of sale, black market sale.
- spelling mistakes on the packaging or in the instructions.

3. ARE COUNTERFEIT GOODS DANGEROUS ?

Both counterfeit and pirated goods **constitute a danger to your health and your everyday life**.

Imagine for one moment :

- taking medicine that does not contain the active principle and is therefore ineffective ;
- having a terrible allergic reaction to a cosmetic face cream ;
- being involved in a car accident because your brake pads refuse to work ;
- traveling on a plane whose windows are three times less resistant than the standard ;
- our mobile phone exploding when charging its battery ;
- when smoking your cigarettes, you would inhale two or three times more nicotine and tar than indicated on the packet.

Moreover, counterfeit and pirated goods are a real plague for the national economies and an actual threat to employment within the European Union.

4. WHICH SECTORS ARE MOST AFFECTED BY COUNTERFEIT AND PIRATED GOODS ?

All sectors are affected by these goods. However, the following sectors stand out :

- medicine ;
- cosmetics ;
- cigarettes ;
- toys ;
- drinks ;
- food ;
- mechanical and electronic parts ;
- CD's ;
- software ;
- mobile phones ;
- clothes ;
- ...



BRINGING COUNTERFEITED GOODS

5. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION ?

The Customs Administration plays an important role in the fight against counterfeiting and piracy pursuant to a European regulation applicable to all Member States of the European Union. The Customs Administration is entitled

to take action if counterfeit and pirated goods are imported, exported or re-exported, and is also authorized to intervene on the national territory.

6. HOW IS COUNTERFEITING/PIRACY PUNISHED ?

Any offence with regard to counterfeit and pirated goods can be punished by :

- the confiscation and destruction of the seized goods, as well as the payment of the related handling and destruction costs ;
- a claim for damages by the trademark right holder, whether or not by means of judicial proceedings ;
- in certain cases even :
 - a prison sentence
 - a fine

One piece of advice :

ALWAYS BUY GOODS VIA THE OFFICIAL SALES CHANNELS !





Travelling with your pet





TRAVELLING WITH YOUR PET

WHAT ARE THE RULES FOR YOUR PET ?

Regulations about **travelling with your pet** have been standardized throughout the European Union. There are formalities to be taken into account for all kinds of pets :

- Dogs
- Cats
- Ferrets
- Birds
- Rodents
- Lagomorphs
- Salamanders

Whatever country you plan to take your pet to, it is very important to read the useful information **on the website of the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment**:
<https://www.health.belgium.be/nl/reizen-met-gezelschaps-dieren/>
[https://www.health.belgium.be/fr/voyager-avec-des-animaux.](https://www.health.belgium.be/fr/voyager-avec-des-animaux)

If you **enter the European Union** with your pet from a country outside the European Union, you must **present your pet to the customs authorities at the point of entry for travellers**, for verification of the EU passport and/or health document of the animal, any proof of vaccination, written declaration of the owner ...

When travelling with dogs, cats and ferrets, the following proof is required :

- identity of the animal (EU passport)
- valid rabies vaccination

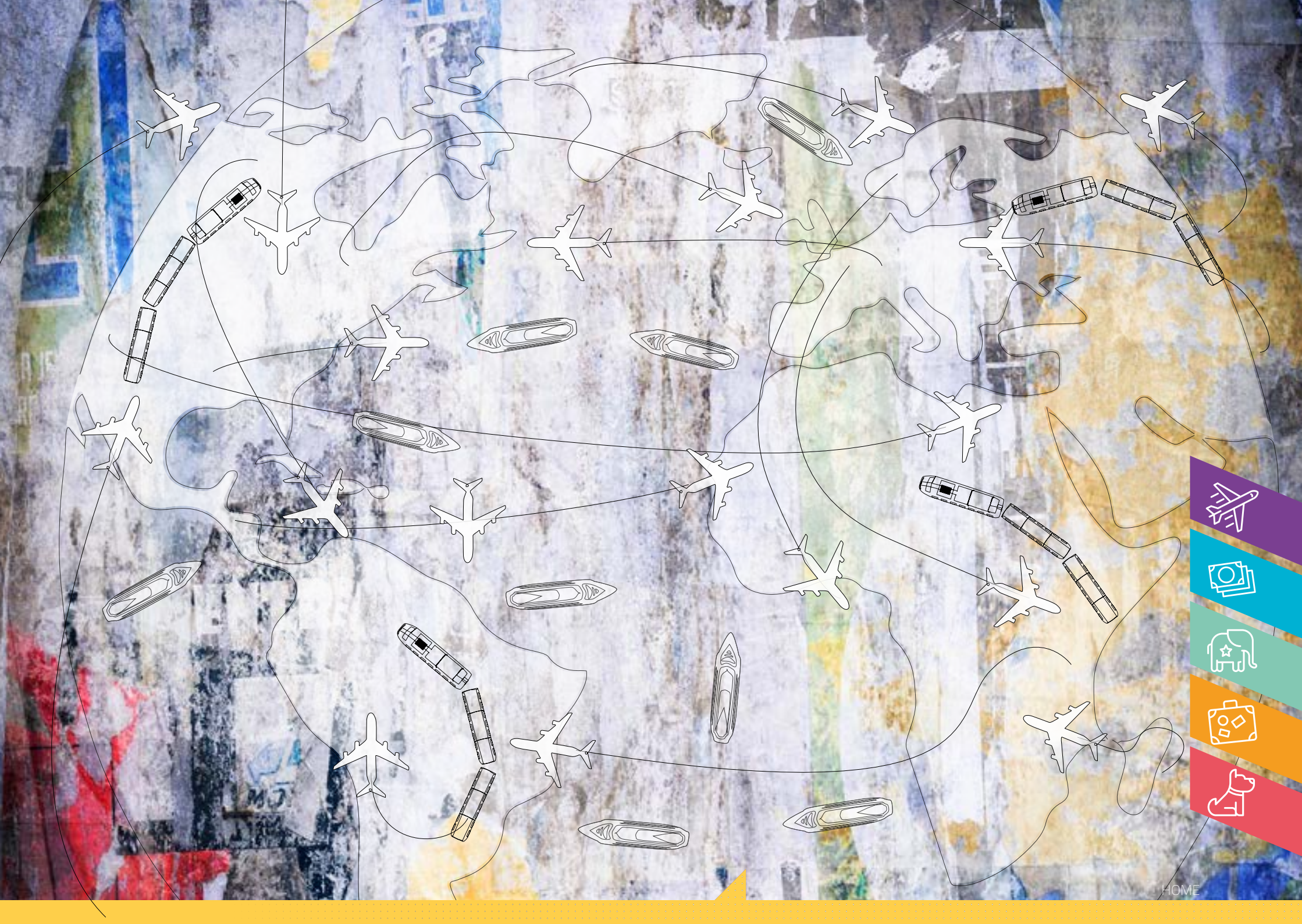
When travelling with birds, the following proof is required :

- identity of the pet

The proof of identity of other animals is also required, in addition to possible other formalities.

BELGIAN CUSTOMS WISHES YOU A PLEASANT JOURNEY !







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