

Directorate General of Customs and Excise (DGDDI) – France
1 April 2020

On the French Customs' website at www.douane.fr, there is a special page which has been set up for operators as part of the management plan for the COVID-19 pandemic:
<https://www.douane.gouv.fr/dossier/informations-coronavirus-covid-19>.

As can be seen on the special COVID-19 page, there are no restrictions on the import of goods, and Customs offices are operating virtually as normal, albeit with reduced staffing owing to the containment measures in place. Therefore, if Customs need to be contacted, this should be done by electronic means (practically all Customs clearance procedures are now being performed electronically, and the time taken for clearance, except in the case of selection for checking, is now down to just a few minutes until goods are released).

As regards the special interim measures on imports, in view of the restrictions linked to containment in France and its partner countries, extra time is being allowed for transit of goods. In addition, having regard to the national emergency in respect of sanitary and medical equipment and supplies, the importers concerned have been given exemptions from Customs duty. Finally, all operators are being accorded payment facilities until the situation returns to normal.

Regarding exports, please note that, owing to the relative shortage of various types of medical and sanitary equipment and supplies, prior authorization must be sought for such goods.

There is an FAQ section to help operators find their way round these provisions.

There is also a business continuity plan (BCP) for the French Customs Administration, should any situation arise which might jeopardize the normal running of Customs activity.