

Highways total 466,305 km. Road haulage, which accounts for 37% of German freight traffic, is in the hands of numerous private companies, but is subject to very strict regulations and tariffs, calibrated by the weight and distance (the RKT). The basic modernization of the Autobahn network is largely complete. However Germany's roads are exceptionally crowded and the accident rate is high.

Warehousing: Warehousing goods in Germany for an agent to draw on at will is a strong selling point.

Warehoused goods can remain the property of the exporter until the agent withdraws them. In government-run bonded warehouses, no import duty or tax needs to be paid until the goods are actually withdrawn; on goods stored in private open warehouses, taxes and duties must already have been paid.

Distribution: There is no single all-embracing distribution system in Germany, and the main offices for even the large chains of wholesalers and retailers are scattered across the country. An agent thus may be useful depending on the type of product. However, the high proportion of imported goods sold means that even the smallest retailers are often familiar with import procedures and can offer advice.

Over 75% of all trade purchases in Germany is attributable to the "ten" largest "umbrella" organizations, often combining retailing and wholesaling functions. Despite this concentration of buying power, exporters may find it necessary to deal with many local representatives.

See section below "TIPS ON APPROACHING THE MARKET" - Using an agent.

Customs Clearance: Goods arriving in Germany must be presented by the carrier to the Customs office. A special presentation list is required only in postal traffic and in such cases where customs clearance does not follow immediately. Senders' declarations can serve as a presentation list as prescribed in international goods traffic. If intended to be cleared through customs at the port of entry, an application and a special customs declaration has to be filed, either by the carrier or by the buyer or the recipient of the merchandise, at the time the customs declaration is made. Application must be made within a period not to exceed 45 days from the date of presentation if the goods arrive by sea, 15 days if other means. Goods intended to be cleared at another place within the country remain under customs bond while in transit. Goods not declared within the prescribed periods are taken under official custody and held pending declaration, at the expense and the risk of the interested parties. Goods may be examined by the importer before being cleared. It is our understanding that the German