

Car Guide for New Residents in Andorra: What to Do with Your Vehicle When Moving

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You've just obtained residency in Andorra or you're about to. Among all the paperwork involved in moving, there's one question you'll eventually need to answer: **what do I do with my car?**

The reality is that most new residents know they need to sort out their vehicle situation, but without a clear deadline, they keep putting it off. Until they receive a warning or a fine from the Andorran authorities.

In this guide, we explain everything you need to know to make the best decision: the real deadlines, your options, what suits your situation best, and how to avoid the most common mistakes.

Legal Deadlines: How Long Do I Have to Register My Car?

As a new resident in Andorra, there are **two important deadlines** you need to know:

Deadline to Register Your Car: 6 Months

The official deadline to register your vehicle with Andorran plates is **6 months from obtaining residency**. In practice, authorities tend to be flexible and the process begins with a warning before imposing fines.

However, we don't recommend waiting. The process takes time and it's better to do it without pressure than with a fine hanging over you.

Deadline for IGI Exemption: 1 Year (This is the Important One)

This is the deadline that really matters. If you import your car within the **first year of obtaining residency**, you can benefit from the **IGI exemption** (Andorra's equivalent of VAT, which is 4.5%).

After that year, you lose the right to the exemption and will have to pay 4.5% of the vehicle's value. For a €30,000 car, that's €1,350 you could have saved.

Our recommendation: Start the process as soon as you have your Andorran residency (NIA or green card) and the consular deregistration from your country of origin. There's no point waiting and risking losing the exemption due to lack of knowledge or procrastination.

The Two Options You Have as a New Resident

When you move to Andorra with a car, you have two possible paths:

Option 1: Import Your Current Car

You can bring the car you already have and register it in Andorra. To do this, the vehicle must meet certain requirements.

Option 2: Sell Your Car in Your Country of Origin and Buy One in Andorra

You sell your vehicle in your home country and buy another one in Andorra, either a car already registered here or one imported from Germany or another EU country.

Which is the best option? It depends on your car and your situation. We'll explain how to decide further on.

Requirements to Import Your Car to Andorra

If you decide to bring your current car, it must meet these requirements:

Maximum Age: 6 Years from Manufacture Date

This is where most confusion arises, so pay attention:

- The maximum permitted age is **6 years from the manufacture date** (not from first registration, which is different).
- **Only the year counts, not the month.** That means in 2025, cars manufactured from

2019 onwards can be imported. In 2026, from 2020 onwards.

- It doesn't matter if your car was manufactured in January or December of that year: only the year of manufacture counts.

Where to verify the manufacture date? On the COC (European Certificate of Conformity). Don't rely on the first registration date shown on the vehicle registration document, as it may be later than the manufacture date.

Practical example: A car first registered in March 2020 but manufactured in November 2019 **can be imported in 2025**. What counts is 2019, not 2020.

Other Vehicle Requirements

- It must comply with **Euro 5 European emissions standards** at minimum (virtually all cars less than 6 years old meet this).
- The steering wheel must be on the left.
- The **COC must be available**. Without this document, the process becomes significantly more complicated.

Owner Requirements

- You must have an **Andorran residence permit** (NIA / green card).
- You must be registered at the Comú of your parish.
- The car must have been **in your name for at least 6 months** before importation.

Documentation Required for IGI Exemption

Virtually all new residents manage to obtain the IGI exemption if they submit the correct documentation. The key documents are:

1. **NIA (green card):** Your Andorran residence permit.
2. **Consular deregistration from your country of origin:** This is the document people usually don't have. It's requested at your country's consulate in Andorra.

What if I'm missing a document? There's a Plan B: you can complete the process, pay the IGI, and later request a refund when you have all the documentation. It's not ideal, but it's an option if you're in a hurry.

When You Should Import vs. When You Should Sell

This is the million-dollar question. Here's our recommendation based on years of experience:

You Should SELL Your Car and Buy in Andorra if:

Your car was manufactured before 2020: There's no option. It cannot be imported, so you'll have to sell it regardless.

Your car has a high value: The more expensive your car, the more it makes sense to sell in your home country and buy in Andorra. Why? Because of the massive tax difference:

- In most European countries, the second-hand market price incorporates 20-21% VAT and registration taxes that were paid originally. This keeps prices artificially high.
- In Andorra, the only tax is the 4.5% IGI.

This means that with the money you get from selling your car in your home country, you can buy a better car in Andorra.

Real Case: From BMW 240i to BMW M2 for the Same Price

One of our clients sold their BMW 240i in Spain. With exactly the same money they received from the sale, we got them a BMW M2 imported from Germany and registered in Andorra.

They upgraded without putting a single extra euro from their pocket. That's the difference taxation makes.

You Should IMPORT Your Current Car if:

- You have a car less than 6 years old (manufacture date) that you want to keep for convenience or attachment.
- You don't want to deal with selling in your country of origin.
- Your car has a moderate value where the tax difference isn't as significant.

The Import Process Step by Step

If you decide to import your car, these are the steps:

1. Deregister the Car in Your Country of Origin

You need to deregister the vehicle with the traffic authority in your home country. We can help you with this process.

2. Customs Procedures

Since Andorra is not part of the European Union, the car must go through customs. This

is where import documentation is submitted and, if applicable, the IGI exemption is requested.

3. Vehicle Inspection in Andorra

The vehicle must pass the Andorran technical inspection (ITV). We handle this step during the import process, so you'll receive your car with a fresh inspection certificate.

4. Registration

Once the previous steps are completed, registration is processed at the Govern d'Andorra's Servei de Tràmits and Andorran plates are issued.

5. Insurance

It's mandatory to take out insurance with an Andorran insurer. Major companies are present in the Principality.

Insurance tip: If your current insurance is close to expiring, it might be worth waiting for it to end before starting the import. This way you avoid paying for two overlapping policies and start directly with the Andorran one.

Other Related Procedures: Driving Licence

In addition to your car, as a new resident you must **exchange your driving licence**. The

deadline is 6 months from obtaining residency.

If your licence is from an EU country, the exchange is automatic: a simple administrative procedure you can do yourself directly at the Govern d'Andorra.

If your licence is from outside the EU, the process may require additional documentation or even a practical test, depending on the country.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

After helping hundreds of new residents, these are the mistakes we see most frequently:

Mistake 1: Confusing Manufacture Date with First Registration Date

The 6-year rule applies to the **year of manufacture**, not the first registration. Always check the COC before assuming anything.

Mistake 2: Waiting Too Long and Losing the IGI Exemption

The 1-year deadline for the exemption passes quickly. Many clients come to us after receiving a warning, in a rush and sometimes having already lost the right to the exemption.

Mistake 3: Not Having the Consular Deregistration

This is the most forgotten document. Request it as soon as possible from your country's consulate in Andorra.

Mistake 4: Trying to Import a Car That Doesn't Meet Requirements

If your car was manufactured before 2020, there's no way to import it. Better to know from the start and plan the sale.

How Much Does the Whole Process Cost?

The main costs of importing a car to Andorra are:

- **IGI (if you don't have exemption):** 4.5% of the vehicle's value. This value is calculated based on the invoice. If there's no invoice (for example, if it's been your car for over a year), the value from the Spanish Tax Agency tables is used.
- **Customs agents:** Approximately €220. They prepare the entire import and export file, both for exit and entry.
- **Government registration fee:** Approximately €230.
- **Annual road tax:** Approximately €150.
- **Number plates:** Around €60.
- **Vehicle inspection (ITV):** Approximately €60.
- **COC (if you don't have it):** Between €150 and €300. It's essential for the process,

so if you don't have it, you'll need to request it.

If you qualify for the IGI exemption due to change of residence, the savings can be significant, especially for high-value cars.

Summary: What to Do with Your Car When Moving to Andorra

1. **Don't put it off.** You have 1 year to qualify for the IGI exemption. After that deadline, you lose money.
2. **Check if your car meets the requirements.** Manufacture year 2019 or later (to import in 2025). Check the COC, not the registration date.
3. **Consider whether it's better to sell and buy.** Especially if your car is high-end, you could end up with a better car for the same money.
4. **Prepare the documentation.** NIA + consular deregistration from your country of origin. Without these documents, there's no exemption.
5. **Request a quote.** At minimum, know the total cost of the process so you can plan accordingly.

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