

WHO PAYS FOR THE PARCEL?

EU CUSTOMS REFORM & CONSUMER PROTECTION

Consumers shop online daily. The e-commerce business model has risen and so has the flow of non-compliant and dangerous products entering the EU.

With 15 million parcels arriving every single day, customs authorities are at the frontline of ensuring these goods comply with EU law. The EU took action in 2026 and decided to reform its Customs Union. This reform will better equip authorities and ensure that traders worldwide respect EU product safety, sustainability, and other key regulations.

What will it change for consumers?

1 July 2026

WHAT'S NEW? NEW CUSTOMS DUTIES OF 3 EUROS ON SMALL PACKAGES IMPORTED FROM OUTSIDE OF THE EU

Consumers are no longer treated as importers in distance sales, which means they are not responsible for paying the customs duties. The new importer, i.e. platform or their indirect representative, is the one paying

WHY? Combat fiscal fraud and improve the customs declarations on small parcels

Gradual establishment between 2026 & 2028

WHAT'S NEW? EU CUSTOMS AUTHORITY

Less dangerous products make it to consumers' homes, thanks to a better identification of rogue traders

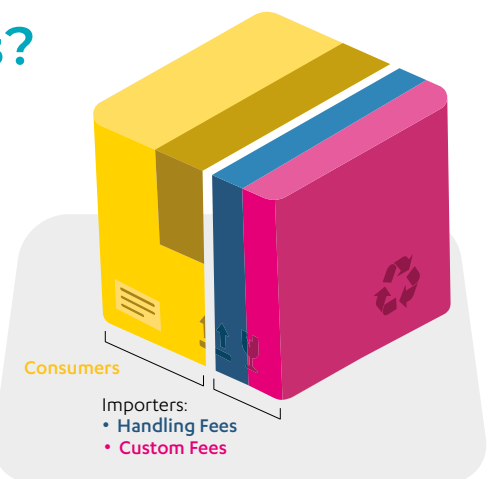
WHY? Strengthen coordination between national customs authorities and develop EU-level risk analysis capabilities

Phased implementation

WHAT'S NEW? LIABILITY OF ONLINE MARKETPLACES

Platforms must ensure products they import respect EU rules. This will better protect consumers. Until this new obligation kicks in no one is held accountable and consumers are at risk of being harmed

WHY? Make platforms responsible for ensuring compliance in e-commerce imports



1 November 2026

WHAT'S NEW? EU HANDLING FEE

The fee must be paid by the importer not by consumers

WHY? A new fee paid by platforms importing the most into the EU. This should proportionally give more resources to customs which are being put under a lot of pressure by these imports

Operational from 1 July 2028 with gradual expansion

WHAT'S NEW? DATA HUB

Less dangerous products make it to consumers' homes, thanks to improved cooperation between customs and market surveillance authorities

WHY? Create a single EU customs data environment, replacing fragmented national systems

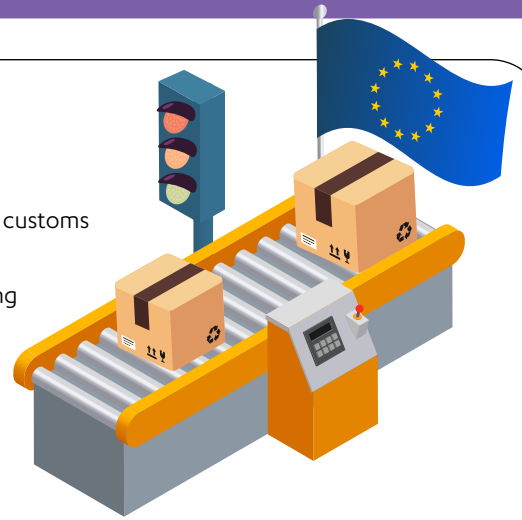
At the border

WHO CAN IMPORT INTO THE EU?

Goods can only be cleared if there is a compliant importer established in the EU customs framework. This can be:

1. an online platform established in the EU acting as importer itself, or appointing a Trust and Check operator as importer or
2. a non-EU platform using an indirect customs representative with Trust and Check status.

If these conditions are not fulfilled, the goods cannot enter the EU market.



WHEN CAN GOODS BE RELEASED AT THE BORDER?

Importers must provide detailed information about their products to the EU Customs Data Hub before the goods arrive in the EU. The reform improves the traceability of e-commerce imports and strengthens cooperation between customs and market surveillance authorities.

Goods deemed unsafe or not respecting EU law cannot be released for sale in the EU and must be re-exported or destroyed at the importer's expense rather than at public expense.

EU-wide penalties for online sellers that repeatedly break the rules: how will it work?

1

CUSTOMS DETECT REPEATED NON-COMPLIANCE

If, during one month, customs authorities find a significant number of violations linked to the same operator, this can be considered "systematic non-compliance".

Example: If customs inspect hundreds of parcels from a marketplace or importer and repeatedly find unsafe, non-compliant, or incorrectly declared goods, this may qualify as systematic infringement.

2

FINANCIAL PENALTIES KICK IN

Once the infringement is considered systematic, Member States must impose financial penalties. The fine must be at least 1% and up to 4% of the operator's entire EU import volume over the past 12 months.

Example: If an online platform imported goods worth €500 million into the EU over the last year, the fine could range from €5 million to €20 million. This makes the sanctions potentially very significant for large platforms.

3

LOSS OF TRUSTED TRADER STATUS

At the same time, the operator loses customs facilitations. This means:

- more customs checks
- slower clearance
- more administrative burden
- loss of privileged treatment at the border

4

HIGHER PENALTIES FOR REPEAT OFFENDERS

If customs find another systematic infringement within 6 months:

- the penalties increase to between 3% and 6% of the annual import value

Using the same example:

For €500 million in imports, the fine could raise to €15 million to €30 million

5

POSSIBLE RESTRICTION OF THE ONLINE INTERFACE

If systematic non-compliance is still observed, authorities can temporarily restrict access to the operator's online interface or website, and take additional enforcement measures. This is essentially the "ultimate escalation" mechanism for persistent offenders.

