International Post Corporation

Import duty to apply to low-value parcels ordered from third countries from July. How to pay the duty and avoid scams?

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From 1 July, a â‚¬3 import duty introduced by the European Commission will apply to all low-value parcels ordered directly from third countries.

The import duty only applies to goods purchased directly from third countries. If an online store is based outside the European Union but ships go Low-value parcels are shipments with a value of up to €150. Parcels worth more than €150 have already been subject to customs duties, with the amount depending on the value of the goods.

The new import duty is €3 per product category. “This means that if you order three pairs of trousers, the import duty will be €3. However, if you order trousers, a grass trimmer and a soup ladle, the import duty will be €9, as these items fall into three different product categories,” explained Sven Kukemelk, Chief Commercial Officer at Omniva.

The import duty only applies to goods purchased directly from third countries. If an online store is based outside the European Union but ships goods from a warehouse located within the EU, the goods have already been customs-cleared and no additional import duty will apply.

The import duty does not apply to gifts sent from one private individual to another.

How is the import duty paid?

For larger e-commerce platforms, customers pay the import duty directly to the online store when placing their order, no additional steps. The online store and Omniva handle customs clearance and payment of the duty on the customer’s behalf. “Just as you pay for shipping costs at checkout, you will also see the import duty at checkout and pay everything in a single transaction,” said Kukemelk.

For smaller online stores that do not have agreements with logistics providers for customs clearance, goods are shipped through the international postal network. In these cases, no import duty is charged at checkout. Once the shipment arrives in Estonia, the customer will receive a notification from Omniva that the parcel

requires customs declaration. Customers can either declare the goods themselves and make the payment directly to the Estonian Tax and Customs Board, or authorise Omniva to complete the customs declaration and pay the import duty to Omniva.

Important: import duties are non-refundable. If an online store allows returns and refunds, the import duty will not be refunded.

How to avoid scams?

The introduction of the new import duty may lead to an increase in scams where fraudsters misuse the names of the Tax and Customs Board or delivery companies to obtain money.To protect yourself from scams:

If you already paid the import duty at checkout, you do not need to pay it again in Estonia.

If you receive a notification that your parcel requires customs declaration, go directly to Omniva's official self-service at minu.omniva.ee, log in and complete all required actions in the secure environment.

Do not click on links that direct you to unfamiliar websites. Do not make payments on websites with an unfamiliar address.

Omniva does not ask you to declare a parcel or pay an import duty via a phone call. Never enter your PIN codes to requests made during a phone call.

Source: Omniva

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