

VAT.SUPPORT · FREE GUIDE

The EU VAT & Ecommerce Compliance Guide

A practical overview of OSS, IOSS, Non-Union OSS and EORI — what each scheme covers, who it's for, and how to work out what your business actually needs before you register anything.



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GETTING STARTED

Do You Need to Register for VAT in the EU?

Your VAT obligations depend on three things: where your business is established, where your goods or stock are located at the point of sale, and who you are selling to (businesses or consumers). This guide walks through the four most common routes into EU VAT compliance for cross-border sellers.

- ✓ You store goods in an EU country, or exceed a local registration threshold → **VAT registration** is usually required.
- ✓ You sell goods B2C across EU borders from stock already inside the EU → **Union OSS** is often the right fit.
- ✓ You import low-value goods ($\leq$ €150) from outside the EU direct to consumers → **IOSS** lets you collect VAT at checkout.
- ✓ You are established outside the EU and sell digital/electronic services to EU consumers → **Non-Union OSS** usually applies.

Not sure which applies to you? Answer a few quick questions in the free self-check at [snapshot.vat.support](#), or book a 15-minute call with a VAT specialist at [vat.support/schedule-a-call](#).

The Four Routes at a Glance

Scheme	Who it's for	What it covers	Filing
VAT registration	Anyone storing goods, importing regularly, or exceeding a country's registration threshold	Local VAT obligations in that specific country	Usually monthly or quarterly, per country
Union OSS	EU-established sellers (or non-EU sellers with goods already in the EU) selling B2C	Cross-border B2C goods & services sold within the EU	One quarterly return
IOSS	Sellers importing low-value parcels to EU consumers	B2C imports with an intrinsic value of €150 or less	One monthly return
Non-Union OSS	Non-EU businesses selling digital/electronic services	B2C electronically supplied services to EU consumers	One quarterly return

This table is a simplified overview for orientation only — it is not legal or tax advice. Eligibility depends on your specific facts, including establishment, stock location, and buyer type.

Import One Stop Shop (IOSS)

IOSS simplifies VAT for B2C shipments from outside the EU valued at €150 or less. You register once, collect VAT from the customer at checkout, and file a single monthly return — instead of the buyer being charged unexpected import VAT and handling fees on delivery.

Who IOSS Is For

- ✓ You sell B2C (business-to-consumer), not B2B.
- ✓ Goods are located outside the EU at the point of sale.
- ✓ Each consignment has an intrinsic value of €150 or less (the goods' price, excluding shipping and tax).
- ✓ You want one registration to cover all 27 EU member states.

Do I need an intermediary? If your business is established outside the EU, yes — an EU-based intermediary must register and file IOSS on your behalf, with joint liability. EU-established businesses can often register directly.

Is IOSS Mandatory?

No. But if you regularly ship parcels under €150 to EU consumers, registering typically improves the checkout and delivery experience — customers see the final price upfront, and parcels clear customs faster because VAT is already accounted for.

How It Works

- ✓ **1** Register for an IOSS number (directly, or via an intermediary if you're outside the EU).
- ✓ **2** Charge VAT at the buyer's country rate at checkout.
- ✓ **3** File one consolidated monthly return covering all qualifying EU sales.

Ready to register for IOSS?

Registration can take as little as three working days. [Book a free call](#) or start at [vat.support/registrations](#).

One Stop Shop — Union OSS

Union OSS is the EU's "one return" option for many cross-border B2C sales. Instead of registering separately in every country where you have eligible sales, you use one OSS registration and report VAT for multiple member states on a single quarterly return.

Who Union OSS Is For

- ✓ EU-established businesses selling goods or services B2C to consumers in other member states.
- ✓ Non-EU sellers whose goods are already located in the EU at the point of sale (for example, FBA or third-party warehouse stock), in qualifying cases.
- ✓ Sellers who want a single reporting mechanism instead of multiple local VAT registrations for eligible transactions.

Important: OSS does not replace every local VAT registration. You may still need local VAT numbers where you hold stock, import goods, or exceed certain thresholds — OSS consolidates *reporting* for eligible cross-border B2C sales, not all compliance.

How It Works

- ✓ **1** Map your sales and stock locations to confirm eligibility.
- ✓ **2** Charge VAT at the buyer's country rate — most EU VAT is shown inclusive of tax.
- ✓ **3** File one quarterly return (a nil return may still be required in quiet periods).

Northern Ireland Note

Sales between Great Britain, Northern Ireland and the EU can involve special rules under the Windsor Framework. If your supply chain touches all three, get guidance specific to your setup before assuming standard OSS rules apply unchanged.

Get a clear OSS plan

Tell us your marketplaces, countries and stock locations — we'll confirm the right route. [Book a call](#).

Non-Union One Stop Shop

Non-Union OSS lets businesses established **outside** the EU sell electronically supplied services to EU consumers through a single quarterly VAT return, filed in one member state of your choice.

Who Non-Union OSS Is For

- ✓ Your business is established outside the EU.
- ✓ You sell electronically supplied services to EU consumers (B2C) — digital media, ebooks, automated online courses, SaaS.
- ✓ Since 1 January 2025, live streams, virtual events and online classes also qualify as electronically supplied services.

B2B sellers: if you mainly sell to other businesses, you likely don't need Non-Union OSS — B2B transactions typically fall under reverse-charge rules instead.

Non-Union OSS vs. IOSS

These two schemes are easy to confuse. IOSS covers **imported goods** valued at €150 or less. Non-Union OSS covers **services** sold to EU consumers. The right one depends entirely on what you sell — many non-EU sellers of physical goods and digital services end up needing both.

EORI — A Related but Separate Requirement

If you import physical goods commercially into the EU or UK, you will also need an **EORI number** (Economic Operator Registration and Identification) — the unique ID customs authorities use to identify your business on every declaration. EORI is **not the same as VAT registration**: you can need one without the other, and using a customs broker does not remove the requirement for your own EORI. Non-EU businesses typically apply for EORI in the first country where they lodge a customs declaration.

Not sure which scheme fits your business?

Run the free 60-second self-check at [snapshot.vat.support](https://vat.support), or [book a call](#) with a VAT specialist — we'll map your obligations across VAT registration, OSS, IOSS, Non-Union OSS and EORI in one conversation.