

Question for written answer E-002945/2021
to the Commission
Rule 138
Alex Agius Saliba (S&D)

Subject: Clarification of the current customs duties situation

The UK left the EU on 31 January 2020. As a result, there have been significant changes to consumer rights when buying online from businesses in the UK. For example, additional import charges and VAT might apply when buying from UK-based websites.

Consequently, consumers might not realise that they have to pay additional fees and customs duties when purchasing a product from a trader outside the EU. In those cases, consumers will often not be aware that the price they are paying for their purchase will not be the final amount, and customs duties and additional charges might be added, which sometimes are as high as the product's value.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem, and how is it ensuring that consumers in the EU are protected and informed of the total price when purchasing a product online, especially if it is from a non-EU website or trader?
2. With online shopping on the rise, consumers should always know the final amount they will pay at the time of purchase, including any VAT or customs duties that will be added later, in order to make an informed choice. They also need to know if they are buying from a non-EU trader or website. How is the Commission going to address this gap in EU legislation?