

ONLINE SHOPPING · THE NOVEMBER CHANGE

THREE ITEMS.
€18.45 EXTRA?

Order three different items from outside the EU and charges could add €18.45.
A worked example from 1 November, including 23% VAT on the charges.

ONE PARCEL · THREE DISTINCT ITEMS

€18.45

in extra charges

A pen, a notebook and a key ring: Revenue's example, with 23% VAT added to the charges.

€9.00

Customs duty
3 × €3

€6.00

Handling fees from 1 November
3 × €2

€3.45

VAT on those charges
23% of €15

Assumes both charges apply and are passed on to you. Product price, VAT on the goods, delivery and any carrier charge are separate. Do not add charges already paid. ^[1]

THE PRICE BEYOND THE PRICE TAG

A bargain depends
on the final total

Revenue confirms the €2 Union Handling Fee starts on 1 November. It comes on top of the €3 duty already applying to qualifying low-value imports. Businesses pay the fee but may pass it on to shoppers. ^[2]

The €18.45 example combines existing duty, the new fees and VAT on both. The November handling fees and their VAT account for €7.38 of that total; the whole €18.45 is not a new November increase. ^[1]

A euro price or an Irish-looking website does not establish where goods are dispatched. Great Britain and Northern Ireland have different arrangements. ^[2]

BEFORE YOU CLICK BUY: CHECKLIST → PAGE 2

START DATE

1 NOV

Revenue's announced date for the handling fee. ^[2]

VAT ON A €2 FEE

€0.46

At 23% VAT, where charged on the fee.
Worked calculation: €2 × 23%. ^[3]

COUNT THE ITEMS

NOT BOXES

More than one chargeable item can be in a single parcel. ^[1]

PAGE 3 · COUNTY RENTS

What rent costs in your county

All 26 counties. Four property types and county averages. Compare monthly rents and the change in county averages since Q4 2021.

Since Q4 2021: Leitrim €628 → €1,019 a month (+62%); Donegal €629 → €1,001 (+59%); Dublin €1,761 → €2,165 (+23%). The figures and what they mean → page 3.

PAGE 4 · HOUSING ACTION

Five questions.
Real answers.

What was delivered? What is delayed? Who acts next? A practical guide to getting answers locally.

YOUR COUNTY. YOUR QUESTIONS. → 4

02 · THE SHOPPING BILL

A five-point checklist before you click Buy.

03 · COUNTY RENTS

Your county's rents, by property type.

04 · HOUSING ACTION

Five questions to ask. Three ways to take part.

SOURCES & READING^[1] Revenue: how the fee applies · ^[2] Revenue: Union Handling Fee, 29 September 2026 · ^[3] European Commission: guidance, 5 October 2026, sections 5.2 and 9.2

CUSTOMS WATCH · A READER’S GUIDE

THE CHECKOUT PRICE. THE LANDED COST.

The amount that matters is the total you pay to receive the goods. Our examples separate import charges from the price of the product.

One parcel can mean several charges

Revenue’s pen, notebook and key-ring example attracts €9 duty and, from November, €6 handling fees. Add €3.45 VAT at 23% on those charges: €18.45 extra. Two identical pens count as one item in its example. ^[1]

The number of packages is not the item count. Two lamps in different colours are not automatically two chargeable items: their customs category and how they are declared matter. ^[3]

VAT applies to the handling fee too

VAT can also apply to the €2 handling fee. At 23%, that adds 46 cent, bringing the fee to €2.46. You may pay it when ordering or through the delivery company before your parcel arrives. Check what you have already paid so you are not charged twice. ^[3]

€2 + €0.46 = €2.46

Illustration: the new fee with 23% VAT.

This example uses 23% VAT and assumes the seller passes the fee on to you. Check whether it is already included in the price.

Read the dispatch and returns terms

Revenue says goods already located in Ireland, Northern Ireland or another EU member state when ordered do not attract these import charges. The new fee also applies to qualifying online imports above €150, where normal customs duties replace the temporary €3 rate. ^[2]

Revenue states: “The fee is NOT refundable, even where goods are later found to be faulty.” ^[2] The €3 duty is generally not refundable on a change-of-mind return; faulty goods are an exception. ^[5] Check the seller’s VAT-refund terms too. ^[2]

EDITORIAL · OPINION

Show the full price before we pay

For a household watching every euro, the relevant price is the amount needed to get a purchase through the front door. A cheap listing is of limited use if the final bill is difficult to establish.

There is a reasonable public interest in safe products, fair competition and effective customs checks. Those objectives still deserve scrutiny. A charge should have a clear purpose, a transparent basis and an explanation a customer can understand.

Retailers should show a complete delivered price wherever possible. If money may be collected later, that should be prominent before payment. The buyer should be able to see what has already been collected and challenge a duplicate demand.

Public bodies have a responsibility too. Explanations should distinguish duty, VAT, the Union fee and any carrier charge. The phrase “per item” needs examples that reflect real shopping baskets, including multipacks and variations of the same product.

Clear information is part of fair treatment. People should be able to compare a local shop with an overseas seller on the same basis: the final cost, the product and the practical terms of returning it.

That is a modest standard. It should be the normal one.

SAVE THIS CHECKLIST

Before you click Buy

1 Check the dispatch location. Where are the goods actually stored and sent from? A euro price or .ie address does not tell you.

2 Check the chargeable item count. Several different items in one parcel can mean several charges.

3 Ask for the delivered total. Does it include duty, handling fees, VAT, delivery and any carrier charge?

4 Save the checkout breakdown. Keep the receipt so you can show what you paid if a later demand arrives.

5 Read the returns terms. Check what is refundable and who pays return postage before ordering.

One, two or three chargeable items?

Distinct items	Duty	Handling	+ VAT at 23%	Total extra
1	€3	€2	€1.15	€6.15
2	€6	€4	€2.30	€12.30
3	€9	€6	€3.45	€18.45

From 1 November, where the €3 duty and €2 fee both apply and are passed on. VAT shown is on these charges only. Product price, VAT on the goods, delivery and any carrier fee are separate. Do not add charges already included at checkout. ^[1-4]

SOURCES & READING

[1] Revenue: how the fee applies · [2] Revenue: Union Handling Fee, 29 September 2026 · [3] European Commission: guidance, 5 October 2026, sections 5.2 and 9.2 · [4] Revenue: buying goods from outside the EU · [5] Revenue: customs rules, 25 June 2026

YOUR COUNTY. YOUR QUESTIONS.

WHAT RENT COSTS IN YOUR COUNTY

Monthly averages for all 26 counties, by property type. These are recorded rents in the RTB dataset, not today’s advertised asking prices.

LEITRIM

€628 → €1,019

+62.2%

Q4 2021 → Q4 2025 · per month

DONEGAL

€629 → €1,001

+59.3%

Q4 2021 → Q4 2025 · per month

DUBLIN

€1,761 → €2,165

+23.0%

Q4 2021 → Q4 2025 · per month

Change in the all-property county average: Q4 2021 to Q4 2025. Calculated from unrounded figures; euro figures rounded for display.

Q4 2025 · AVERAGE MONTHLY RENT (€)

All bedroom counts

County	Detached house	Semi-detached	Terrace house	Apartment	All types Q4 2021	All types Q4 2025	Change 2021–2025
Carlow	1,676	1,329	1,336	1,205	939	1,349	+43.6%
Cavan	1,151	1,213	1,082	1,068	702	1,129	+60.8%
Clare	1,223	1,392	1,199	1,129	815	1,217	+49.4%
Cork	1,598	1,738	1,688	1,428	1,169	1,566	+33.9%
Donegal	1,004	1,106	921	906	629	1,001	+59.3%
Dublin	3,058	2,599	2,433	2,154	1,761	2,165	+23.0%
Galway	1,658	1,838	1,855	1,551	1,191	1,665	+39.8%
Kerry	1,245	1,286	1,286	1,136	814	1,218	+49.6%
Kildare	1,944	1,979	1,832	1,564	1,332	1,734	+30.2%
Kilkenny	1,311	1,228	1,107	1,051	881	1,216	+38.0%
Laois	1,348	1,337	1,252	1,207	907	1,270	+40.0%
Leitrim	1,002	1,040	1,120	991	628	1,019	+62.2%
Limerick	1,724	1,876	1,726	1,551	1,077	1,681	+56.0%
Longford	1,203	1,202	1,059	1,073	709	1,140	+60.8%
Louth	1,662	1,626	1,460	1,310	1,124	1,454	+29.4%
Mayo	1,169	1,184	1,151	1,076	726	1,135	+56.3%
Meath	1,705	1,691	1,619	1,478	1,234	1,558	+26.2%
Monaghan	1,138	1,154	1,117	919	691	1,050	+51.9%
Offaly	1,254	1,301	1,272	1,063	843	1,219	+44.6%
Roscommon	1,183	1,195	1,034	1,017	727	1,115	+53.3%
Sligo	1,265	1,261	1,334	1,048	791	1,203	+52.1%
Tipperary	1,194	1,208	1,077	960	743	1,101	+48.2%
Waterford	1,366	1,452	1,214	1,171	899	1,284	+42.8%
Westmeath	1,413	1,378	1,364	1,200	908	1,285	+41.6%
Wexford	1,336	1,318	1,137	1,092	822	1,203	+46.3%
Wicklow	1,956	1,990	1,755	1,683	1,359	1,751	+28.9%

All types includes every property type in the dataset, including other flats (not shown separately). It is not an average of the four property columns. Euro figures are rounded. County areas include their cities.

The euro rise matters

In 24 of the 26 counties, the average rose by **€324–€431 a month** between Q4 2021 and Q4 2025, from Meath at +€324 to Longford at +€431. Galway rose by €474. **Limerick had the largest euro increase: €603 a month.** Calculated from unrounded figures; subtracting the displayed rents gives €604.

Read the averages correctly

These simple averages can change with the mix of homes rented. They are not the RTB/ESRI mix-adjusted index or the rise in every tenant’s rent. Cavan and Longford both show +60.8% after rounding. Ask what affordable homes are being delivered locally: **page 4**.

SOURCES & METHOD

[6] RTB Average Monthly Rent Report, CSO table RIQ02 · [7] RTB: Average Rent Dataset notes. Q4 2025 and Q4 2021; all bedrooms; county locations. Four-year change = (2025 average ÷ 2021 average – 1) × 100. Extract checked 12 October 2026. Q4 2025 is the latest quarter in this dataset at extraction; other RTB series have later releases.

A READER’S GUIDE · ASK YOUR TD AND COUNCILLORS

FIVE QUESTIONS. REAL ANSWERS.

A housing target is a promise. A finished home is a result. Start with one local project, ask for answers in writing and keep a record of what happens next.

- 1

How many new homes were completed locally last year?
Ask for the source and year. Keep all county completions separate from council social-housing delivery.
- 2

Which major approved schemes have not started, and why?
Ask for named developments, the number of homes and the documented reason for each delay.
- 3

How many vacant homes were brought back into use?
Ask which public schemes were involved and when the homes became available.
- 4

Which infrastructure projects are holding up delivery?
Ask which water, sewerage, transport or other works are needed, and whether funding is secured.
- 5

Who must act next, and what is the deadline?
Ask for the responsible body, the next decision and a date. Follow up when that date arrives.

THREE WAYS TO TAKE PART

Report
Flag a potentially long-term vacant property through [VacantHomes.ie](#). The council can investigate. ^[8]

Participate
Read local proposals at [Planning.LocalGov.ie](#) ^[9]. Support appropriate housing and raise specific planning concerns. Check each notice’s deadline.

Ask together
A residents’ group can send the same five questions, keep dated replies and follow up on agreed actions. Use the [Housing Information Hub](#) ^[10] for public figures.

WORKED EXAMPLE · CHURCH VIEW, RATHMOLYON, MEATH

One named scheme. One useful request.
The *Meath Chronicle* reported on 8 May 2026 that **22 social homes at Church View, Rathmolyon** were at pre-tender design stage, with a council-estimated construction start in **Q3 2026** and completion in **Q1 2028**. ^[11]

A reader could ask: “Did construction of the 22 homes at Church View, Rathmolyon start in Q3 2026 as scheduled? If not, what is outstanding, who must act next, and what is the new start date? Is Q1 2028 still the completion target?”
Q3 2026 ended on 30 September. Illustrative request, not a reply received or evidence that the scheme is delayed.

Your county. Your story.
Tell us the project, what you asked and the reply you received. Include dates and sources; remove other people’s private details.

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SOURCES & READING
[8] Local Government Ireland: tackling vacant homes · [9] Local Government: planning portal · [10] Government: Housing Information Hub · [11] Meath Chronicle: Church View programme, 8 May 2026