



VAT and Customs Duties

VAT affects all transactions involving the provision of goods or services in every EU jurisdiction and in many jurisdictions outside the EU. An understanding of how VAT operates is essential if businesses are to avoid failing to charge VAT when appropriate and unnecessary costs in terms of not being able to reclaim VAT charged to them. Penalties are increasingly stringent for non-compliance.

Our specialist VAT team advises clients on the incidence of VAT, how to structure commercial transactions in a VAT efficient way and registration and compliance generally.

Because of our international network, including VAT, GST and Sales Tax advisers in non-EU jurisdictions, we are able to provide a seamless cross border service, integrating the different rules of the jurisdictions into our advice. By closely monitoring developments, particularly at EU-level, we are able to ensure that our clients do not inadvertently generate VAT liabilities and are aware when VAT issues may affect their business plans detrimentally, and how this can be alleviated.

We also advise on customs duties, including the procedures for importing and exporting goods to and from the EU, the prohibitions and restrictions, the reliefs available (including temporary importation relief and inward and outward processing reliefs), the classification of goods for tariff purposes and valuation issues, so as to ensure that the correct amount of customs duties is paid at the right time.

Most of our VAT lawyers also have direct tax experience, so we are able to give VAT advice in the context of the overall tax implications of any particular transaction, ensuring that any VAT solution does not give rise to adverse direct tax consequences, for example in transfer pricing situations, and creating a permanent establishment.

We have contentious VAT lawyers within the team who can provide assistance in relation to VAT disputes and negotiating settlements. We also have contacts at the EU Commission and can assist with lobbying for tax change.

CAPABILITES

Our Services include:

Incidence of VAT and Structuring

- Advising on the incidence of VAT on transactions, structuring advice and registration and compliance generally.
- Advising on prudent VAT mitigation in the light of the “abuse of rights” doctrine.

CONTACTPERSONEN

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Cross-border Activity

- Advising multi-national businesses on the VAT consequences of trading in, investing in or carrying on business in the EU and the need to register and account for VAT in accordance with the place of supply rules.
- Advising on the impact of the place of supply rules
- Advising clients on all aspects of e-business
- Advising on the creation of fixed establishments
- Advising on the VAT impact of transfer pricing issues
- Advising banks and other financial services institutions on structuring outsourcing contracts to gain as much VAT efficiency as possible and on such issues as branded credit cards and debt assignment.

VAT and Real Estate Transactions

- Advising on the effect of the VAT rules on real estate transactions and the efficient use of the option to tax, and prudent planning in relation to both commercial and residential property.

EU Developments

- Monitoring VAT developments generally and advising clients on appropriate action to take account of those developments.

VAT Disputes and Litigation

- Full service assistance in connection with VAT disputes, including negotiating successful settlements and appealing assessments at every level of tribunal and court.

Customs Duties

- We also advise on customs duties, including the procedures for importing and exporting goods to and from the EU, the prohibitions and restrictions, the reliefs available (including inward and outward processing reliefs), the classification of goods for tariff purposes and valuation issues, so as to ensure that the correct amount of customs duties is paid at the right time.

GST and Sales Tax

- Liaising with our experts in the US and Australia and Asia on the impact of indirect taxes in their jurisdictions

EXPERIENCE

- Acting for financial institutions wishing to outsource services in as VAT-efficient a way as possible
- Acting for an electronic games provider on VAT compliance issues in relation to B2C transactions in many jurisdictions
- Acting for VATit on numerous VAT reclaim and consultancy problems including aviation, TOMS, exhibition organising
- Acting for various US corporations wishing to expand their markets into Europe or reorganise their business models in Europe
- Advising a crate leasing business on VAT compliance in EU and obtaining concessions from the relevant tax authorities
- Mitigating VAT on various real estate transactions

ACHTERGROND

Publicaties

Advocate General

3 August 2021

In Zipvit Ltd (C-156/20), the taxpayer supplied vitamins and minerals by mail order. The UK's national postal service supplied the taxpayer with a number of postal services under contracts which had been individually negotiated.

Country-specific updates - Italy

3 August 2021

The activity of developing and renovating instrumental real estate assets (with a view to their subsequent sale after the reconversion into residential ones) can be kept separate from the sale and rental of real estate units already carried out.

Country-specific updates - UK

3 August 2021

The tax authority has announced that overseas (non-EU) businesses will be allowed a further six months to submit a valid certificate of status (ie until 31 December 2021) in relation to VAT refunds for the prescribed year 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

Court of Justice

3 August 2021

In the joined cases of K (C-58/20) and DBKAG (C-59/20), the Court returned to the issue of the ambit of the exemption for the management of special investment funds, this time in the context of third party supplies.

Recap of the 1 July marketplaces/platforms amendments

3 August 2021

Since 1 July 2021, the VAT rules on cross-border business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce activities have changed

VAT - Monthly Alert - July 2021

3 August 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

Country-specific updates: Spain

1 July 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

The Spanish General Directorate of Taxes has recently issued a binding ruling (V0933/2021) explaining the accrual of VAT where the parties enter into an escrow agreement.

Advocate General opinions

1 July 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

In *Apcoa Parking Danmark A/S (C-90/20)*, the Advocate General opined that a parking fine levied for breaching the conditions of a private car park was consideration for VAT purposes and not compensation outside the scope of VAT, as a service had been provided.

Country-specific updates: Germany

1 July 2021

VAT MONTHLY ALERT

Section 21 (3a) of the German VAT Act, which has been introduced by the Second Corona Tax Aid Act, amends the due date for import VAT which might lead to a reduction of the taxable person's liquidity burden.

Country-specific updates: Italy

1 July 2021

VAT MONTHLY ALERT

With reference to the VAT regime applicable to the implementation of a settlement agreement, the Italian Tax Authority, ruling no. 401 of 10 June 2021 stated that the obligation "not to do something" is considered taxable for VAT purposes.

Country-specific updates: UK

1 July 2021

In *Tower Resources PLC v HMRC [2021] UKUT 123*, the Upper Tribunal (UT) upheld the decision of the First-tier Tribunal that an oil and mining holding company charging fees for management services provided to its subsidiaries represented an economic activity for VAT purposes, which enabled the holding company to reclaim input VAT on its costs.

Court of Justice

1 July 2021

VAT MONTHLY ALERT

In *Titanium Ltd (C-931/19)*, the Court confirmed that a property leased to a third party, managed by an independent agent, does not, of itself, constitute a fixed establishment of the landlord in the member state where the land is situated since a fixed establishment requires human and technical resources.

VAT - Monthly Alert – June 2021

1 July 2021

VAT MONTHLY ALERT

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

2021 Changes to EU VAT Rules

30 June 2021

The VAT e-commerce package, consisting of EU VAT legislation aimed at simplifying VAT for cross-border e-commerce into and within the EU, is set to apply as of July 1, 2021. Our guide summarises the most noteworthy VAT implications for

merchants/operators of electronic interfaces (e.g., marketplace, platform) involved in e-commerce transactions.

Advocate-General opinions

28 May 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

The Advocate General begins her opinion in *Wilo Salmson France SAS* (C-80/20) by saying that the Court has the opportunity in this case to answer one of the most important questions of VAT law in practice, namely whether a business' right of deduction of input tax depends upon possession of an invoice and when the time limit for reclaim input tax begins to run.

Country-specific updates: Germany

28 May 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

The Federal Ministry of Finance extended in its notice dated 3 May 2021, the applicability of the VAT exemption for turnover generated by trading with cryptocurrencies.

Country-specific updates: Italy

28 May 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A sale made under a sale and leaseback agreement does not constitute a supply of goods for VAT purposes as it should be considered as a whole single transaction having financing purpose every time (i) it does not result in the physical transfer of the tangible asset entailing the purchaser-supplier to act as the owner of the asset itself, (ii) it only satisfies the company's real cash-flow needs and, as such, (iii) it has no tax avoidance purpose.

Country-specific updates: UK

28 May 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

HMRC has produced a policy paper on the EU e-commerce package taking effect from 1 July 2021.

Court of Justice of the EU

28 May 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

In two joined cases of *CS and technoRent International GmbH* (C-844/19) the Court was asked whether a refund resulting from an adjustment of the taxable amount must, like a refund of excess VAT, give rise to a right to the payment of interest where it is not made within a reasonable period of time by the tax authority even where the national law does not provide for such an interest payment.

European Commission

28 May 2021

VAT MONTHLY ALERT

The European Commission has published new webpages containing an overview and guidance of the new rules for e-commerce coming into force on 1 July 2021.

VAT - Monthly Alert - May 2021

28 May 2021

VAT MONTHLY ALERT

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

Country-specific updates: Germany

28 April 2021

VAT MONTHLY ALERT

From 1 March 2020 to 31 December 2021, a temporary exemption for donations in kind is available pursuant to the newly issued letter of the Federal Ministry of Finance dated 18 March 2021.

Country-specific updates: Spain

28 April 2021

VAT MONTHLY ALERT

Until 31 March 2021, UK-established VAT taxable persons could make a reclaim of Spanish VAT incurred on goods and services during the year ended 31 December 2020 under the EU VAT refund procedure.

Court of Justice of the EU

28 April 2021

VAT MONTHLY ALERT

In *Q-GmbH (C-907/19)* the taxpayer supplied three types of services to an insurance company in return for a fee: (i) it made available a specialised insurance product with a non-exclusive user licence; (ii) it placed insurance contracts for that insurer, adapting policies if necessary and assessing the risks (although contracts were concluded between the insurer and the policy holders); and (iii) it managed those insurance contracts and the settlement of claims.

European Commission opens feedback period on VAT exemption for vital goods and services distributed in times of crisis

28 April 2021

VAT MONTHLY ALERT

The European Commission has opened the feedback period for its proposal to amend Directive 2006/112/EC (the VAT Directive), so as to provide an exemption from VAT on goods or services supplied to and goods imported by the Commission or an EU agency or body and provided to Member States and citizens during times of crisis—particularly where the EU is distributing them free of charge to Member States according to their emergency needs.

OECD report: Value added tax policy in the sharing and gig economy

28 April 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

The OECD has published a report on how digital platforms can play an important role in the application of VAT/GST policies in the sharing and gig economy.

VAT - Monthly Alert – April 2021

28 April 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

VAT - Monthly Alert - March 2021

1 April 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

VAT - Monthly Alert – February 2021

2 March 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

Our February summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

Saudi Arabia extends tax amnesty scheme enabling international groups to regularize historic tax exposure

1 February 2021

An increasing number of international taxpayers are using the KSA scheme.

VAT - Monthly Alert – January 2021

29 January 2021

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

See our January summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

UK VAT changes on the sale of goods to customers from 1 January 2021

23 December 2020

With the end of the Brexit implementation period approaching at 11pm on 31 December 2020, the UK's tax authority, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) on 5 October 2020, updated its guidance, "Changes to VAT treatment of overseas goods sold to

customers from 1 January 2021”.

Belgium introduces the tax free “recovery reserve” in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

26 November 2020

Following the introduction of the one-off carry-back of tax losses, Belgium has recently introduced a complementary measure intended to strengthen the solvency and cash-flow position of Belgian companies that have suffered a loss pursuant to the COVID-19 pandemic.

VAT - Monthly Alert – November 2020

25 November 2020

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

VAT Monthly Alert October 2020

2 November 2020

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

Oman introduces VAT: A law firm's perspective

22 October 2020

Prudent businesses operating in Oman are already planning for the implementation of Omani VAT and have started reviewing their legal arrangements and contracts.

DLA Piper acts for Mid Ulster District Council (as lead appellant) in successful VAT repayment claim at First Tier Tribunal

19 October 2020

Mid Ulster District Council (formerly Magherafelt District Council), in a group litigation action, as the lead case on behalf of Northern Ireland Councils, represented by the DLA Piper London's VAT group, with Counsels Melanie Hall QC and Harry Gillow, have won an important case against HM Revenue & Customs.

Updated guidance on early termination and compensation payments - impact for real estate

30 September 2020

Following the CJEU decisions in *Vodafone Portugal* (C-43/19) and *MEO* (C-295/17), HMRC has surprisingly changed its published guidance to make it clear that early termination and compensation payments relating to commercial contracts are in most cases consideration for goods or services and subject to VAT.

Updated guidance on early termination and compensation payments

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VAT cash saving tips for the return to office

17 July 2020

Our International VAT leadership team, Daan Arends, Bjoern Enders, Giovanni Iaselli and Richard Woolich, have produced 10 tips concerning VAT strategies that can be used to benefit businesses.

Update: The meaning of a “fixed establishment”

15 July 2020

- Dong Yang Electronics Sp. z o.o. (Case C-547/18) – Supplies held to have been made to the overseas parent and not its local subsidiary
 - Titanium Ltd (C-931/19) – CJEU referral – Can a fixed establishment exist without human or technical resources if none are needed?
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VAT - Monthly Alert - May/June 2020

9 June 2020

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

VAT - Monthly Alert - March/April 2020

8 April 2020

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

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Making International VAT work for you: Eight top tips during the Coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak

2 April 2020

Coronavirus COVID-19 is affecting businesses globally in ways that no one could ever have imagined. The saying, “cash is king” reflects the importance of cashflow to a business and is relevant now more than ever. Here are some key areas that International businesses can review to hold cash longer, gain cash from VAT and help improve cashflow during this unprecedented period.

Making UK VAT work for you: Ten top tips during the Coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak

2 April 2020

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VAT - Monthly Alert - February 2020

5 March 2020

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

VAT - Monthly Alert - January 2020

3 February 2020

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

VAT - Monthly Alert - November/December 2019

20 December 2019

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

VAT - Monthly Alert - October 2019

4 November 2019

[VAT MONTHLY ALERT](#)

A summary of important VAT developments with implications for cross-border business operations.

Mexico: 2020 tax reform proposal

7 October 2019

The proposed reform aims to broaden the scope of activities subject to tax, as well as the reporting obligations of Mexican and foreign taxpayers.
