US Export Duty changes and news for companies

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Introduction

In recent months, the shipping landscape to and from the United States has undergone a real regulatory earthquake.

This report aims to guide you, step by step, through the legislative and operational innovations and to show you, with concrete data and numbers, the impact on shipping processes (costs, transit times, exported volumes).

You will learn how the new rates apply to the main markets (China, EU, Japan, India, Mexico, Canada) and what practical implications they have for medium-large companies and SMEs. We will present you with best practices — from cargo consolidation to near-shoring — to mitigate tariff risk and optimize logistics flow.

Finally, we will explore how ShippyPro can become an ally to manage the challenges imposed by the new US customs rules in a single multicarrier tool.

This material is intended to be an operational support for anyone managing export/import flows towards the United States, offering a complete overview and concrete tools to successfully address the transformations underway.

Disclaimer: The information contained herein is purely informative and does not constitute legal or tariff advice. For a precise interpretation and application of the new regulations, we invite you to contact a professional specialized in customs law or export controls.

Regulations and changes introduced

A tariff border that seemed stable yesterday can turn into an unexpected obstacle today.

In this context, the key word is “adaptability”: companies no longer have years to realign their processes, but must react in weeks or even days.

2025 marked a turning point: the United States – which consumes more than 20% of world trade – redesigned its market access rules, imposing minimum tariffs on 100% of import flows and drastically expanding controls on dual-use technologies.

In the following paragraphs we will therefore explore not only what has changed — from the new reciprocal rates to the cancellation of the “de minimis” exemption, from the strengthening of the Disruptive Technology Strike Force to the additional requirements for export documentation — but above all the reasons for these moves and how they impact the delicate balances of supply chains.

This is not just a list of statutes or tariff codes; it is a window into the dynamics shaping international trade today, and how a regulatory change in the United States can trigger a ripple effect that involves logistics partners, e-commerce platforms, fulfillment hubs, and ultimately, the end customer.

Let us therefore begin our journey into the heart of the “Regulations and changes introduced”, starting from the regulatory framework and arriving at its practical implications.

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End of the “de minimis” exemption

In the United States, the “de minimis” exemption has so far allowed the import of low-value packages (up to $800) without paying duties or US VAT.

With Executive Order 14257, published on April 2, 2025 and effective May 2, 2025, this threshold has been completely abolished: all imported packages, regardless of their value, are now subject to import duty and related customs charges.

Political and economic motivations

The US government justified the decision as a necessary action to close “loopholes” that allowed the entry of low-value goods – particularly electronic components, over-the-counter pharmaceutical products and digital consumer goods – without any tariff contribution, with a negative impact on domestic producers.

According to the White House Fact Sheet attached to the Executive Order, the goal is twofold:

- **Reduce trade dumping by countries that used small-scale shipments to circumvent standard tariffs;**
- **Increase tax revenues from tariffs, with an estimated additional revenue of $3–5 billion annually.**

From a geopolitical point of view, the measure is part of a broader “economic security” strategy, aimed at strengthening the resilience of critical supply chains (e.g. semiconductors) and reducing dependence on foreign suppliers considered “adversarial”. The administration underlines how, during the pandemic, small exempt shipments had transported significant quantities of medical and tech components, creating market distortions.

Timing and implementation phases

The Executive Order was signed on April 2, 2025, with an effective date of May 2, 2025, at 12:01 a.m. ET, to give Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and logistics operators one month to update systems and procedures. The rollout phases include:

- **Phase 1 (April 2025)** – CBP internal software upgrades and formal notification to importers and carriers;
- **Phase 2 (May–June 2025)** – phased application of duties on packages <$800, with monthly reporting of revenue;
- **Phase 3 (July 2025 onwards)** – full enforcement, including random audits and sanctions for under-valuation.

Operational impacts for companies

Medium-large companies must quickly adapt their export processes and shipping management platforms (TMS, ERP) to include the new charges on each individual package. The main adaptation activities are:

- **Revised EDI flows** to transmit updated tariff codes and the full value of each package to CBP;
- **Training of internal staff and logistics partners** on new customs declaration requirements;
- **Recalculation of unit shipping costs**, with impact on pricing towards the end customer;
- **Cash flow management**, as duties must be paid at customs clearance, anticipating unexpected cash outflows.

Rollout Phases

Apr 2025

PHASE 1

- Software adaptation
- Formal notification

Jun 2025

PHASE 2

- Gradual application of duties

Jul 2025

PHASE 3

- Full application of duties
- Introduction of sample audits

Risks of non-compliance

Failure to apply or incorrect application of the new duties exposes to significant penalties: up to 20% of the value of the goods for under-valuation and possible seizures in the event of an attempted intentional evasion. In addition, non-compliant transport companies risk the suspension of operating authorizations on US routes.

According to Cleary Trade Watch, enforcement cases have already begun: in April 2025, two shipments of electronic components from China were seized for incomplete documentation, with fines of up to $50,000 per shipment.

Memorandum on reciprocal tariffs

On February 13, 2025, the President of the United States signed a Presidential Memorandum entitled “Reciprocal Trade and Tariffs,” published in the Federal Register the following day, with the aim of rebalancing American trade flows by imposing tariff measures mirroring those applied by foreign partners.

The initiative comes in response to a trade deficit that reached nearly $1.0 trillion in 2024, among the highest levels in two decades.

Objectives of the Memorandum

1. **Correcting imbalances:** applying “mirror” tariffs to the non-zero tariffs imposed by each country on US goods, in order to neutralize competitive advantages deemed unfair.
2. **Negotiating leverage:** putting pressure on trading partners (primarily China, the EU, Japan) to open their markets to US products in exchange for bilateral tariff reductions.
3. **Protection of strategic industries:** protect key sectors (semiconductors, aerospace, pharmaceuticals) from low-cost imports that exploit non-tariff barriers abroad.

According to the official text, the reciprocal tariffs were to come into effect with a 30-day RR for each “target product list,” leaving room for consultations with the USTR and trade associations before final adoption.

Structure of measures

The Memorandum defines 3 “Lists” of products

List A

- Goods with foreign tariffs ⩾ 50%
- US tariff: 100–125% of value

List B

- Goods with foreign tariffs between 10% and 49%
- US tariff of 10% base, subject to negotiation

List C

- All other goods
- US flat rate of 10% to discourage large sales volumes

For example, on Chinese electronic components, subject to 50% tariffs in China on American products, the US reacted with a rate of 125% (List A) which takes effect from 2 May 2025.

For the EU, which applies an average of 10% on US goods, the US tariff is set at 10% (List C).

Planned implementation phases

Day 0-30

Public consultations and comments from the Industry Trade Advisory Committees (ITAC) for each List.

Day 31-60

Publication of the Final Lists and Adjustment of CBP Customs Systems

Day 61–90

Gradual enforcement, with temporary suspension of some sensitive items (e.g. perishable pharmaceutical products) to avoid immediate shocks

Post Day 90

Full implementation and periodic audits on compliance and impacts

This phased approach has helped mitigate risks of drastic disruption to global supply chains, while maintaining leverage over partners.

First market reactions

- **China:** Beijing called the move “unilateral and protectionist,” announcing countermeasures on US soybeans and aircraft.

- **EU:** The European Commission has opened a retaliatory investigation under Article 301 of the GATT, assessing tariffs on US agricultural products worth €5 billion.

- **Japan:** More constructive dialogue, with USTR convening a working group with METI to consider joint tariff reductions on high-tech.