VIES VAT Validation Blocked (IP_BLOCKED): Alternative VAT Validation in WooCommerce

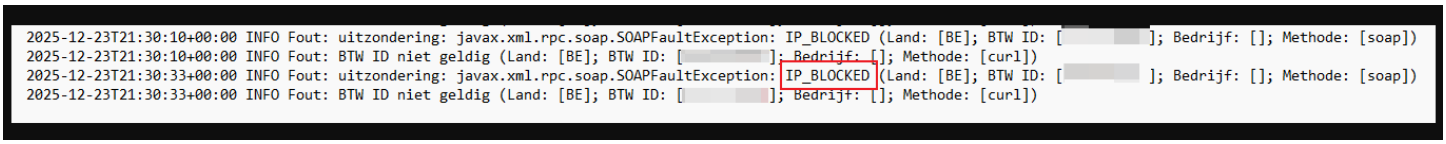
Troubleshooting · https://wpfactory.com/docs/vies-ip-blocking/

VIES IP blocking and alternative VAT validation

If your VAT validation log shows IP_BLOCKED, the VIES service has blocked your server's IP, so EU/UK VAT Manager for WooCommerce cannot reach it. The workaround is to route validation through a third-party API, such as Vatlayer, with a code snippet that uses the alg_wc_eu_vat_validation_response filter, added with a plugin like Code Snippets.

The symptom

VIES (VAT Information Exchange System), run by the European Commission, is the primary service for validating EU VAT numbers. When a server IP is blocked, validation returns failed or unknown responses and your log shows `IP_BLOCKED`.



The European Commission does not publish the exact criteria, but blocks often affect shared hosting or servers making high request volumes. Moving to a new host or IP can fix it but is usually impractical.

Workaround: route validation through a third-party API

The plugin exposes the `alg_wc_eu_vat_validation_response` filter, which lets you replace the validation response with one from another service. The example below uses Vatlayer, which offers a free tier.

Step 1: install a snippet manager

Add the code with a plugin such as Code Snippets so you do not edit your theme's `functions.php`.

Step 2: add the snippet

Create a new snippet and paste the code below. Replace the placeholder key with your own Vatlayer API key.

```
add_filter(
'alg_wc_eu_vat_validation_response',
function ( $response, $method, $country_code, $vat_number ) {
$key = 'YOUR_KEY_HERE'; // set your Vatlayer key
$url =
"https://apilayer.net/api/validate?access_key={$key}&vat_number={$country_code}{$vat_number}";
$curl = curl_init( $url );
curl_setopt( $curl, CURLOPT_RETURNTRANSFER, 1 );
curl_setopt( $curl, CURLOPT_IPRESOLVE, CURL_IPRESOLVE_V4 );
$res = curl_exec( $curl );
curl_close( $curl );
if ( $res ) {
$res = json_decode( $res, true );
$response = json_encode( array(
'isValid'   => $res['valid'],
'name'      => $res['company_name'],
'address'   => $res['company_address'],
'vatNumber' => $res['vat_number'],
) );
}
return $response;
},
10,
4
);
```

Step 3: test

With the snippet active and your key in place, run a test validation on the checkout or in the plugin settings and confirm the number now validates.

Built-in alternative: VATSense



EU/UK VAT MANAGER FOR WOOCOMMERCE

See every feature and the pricing on the EU/UK VAT Manager for WooCommerce plugin page.

View plugin →

For UK, Australian, Norwegian and Swiss numbers, the plugin already integrates VATSense. You can also enable **Enable VATSense fallback** on the **Validation** sub-tab (a VATSense API key is required) so VATSense is used when VIES is unavailable. See VATSense validation for UK and non-EU numbers.

Need a hand?

Our team answers every ticket on the EU/UK VAT Manager support forum.

Related articles

- EU VAT Validation Always Fails
- UK VAT Validation Fails
- Customize the VAT Validation Messages
- EU VAT Validation Options in WooCommerce
- Configuring EU VAT Validation