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NEWSLETTER

EU Parliament votes in favour of trade deal with the US – 15% customs tariffs on EU goods and duty-free access for US goods

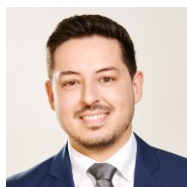
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Following the recent period of severe tension in relations between the EU and the US, the European Parliament is now paving the way for predictable trade conditions with the US. The “Turnberry Deal” is based on negotiations conducted between European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Donald Trump at the Turnberry Golf Club in Scotland in the summer of 2025. With this, both the EU and the US are rebalancing their trade relations. The importation of goods into the EU, which have originated in the US, are set to benefit most from the agreement. For numerous industrial goods, the future customs tariff rate will be 0%. Goods originating in the EU that are imported into the US will, in future, be subject to customs duties of 15%. Whilst industry in particular is hoping for tangible relief, the agreement remains politically controversial. Trade relations between the two economic areas remain tense.

1 Implementation and content

On 16 June 2026, the European Parliament adopted the Regulation implementing the provisions of the Turnberry Deal. Specifically, the customs tariff rate for certain goods originating in the US are reduced to 0%. This affects numerous goods from the agricultural and pharmaceutical industries, as well as from the industrial sector, e.g. steel and aluminium products. In addition to introducing the 0% customs tariff rate, the Regulation establishes tariff quotas for further goods. Under tariff quotas, the importation of goods may be carried out at a reduced rate until the quota volume is exhausted. These include, inter alia, animal products and animal feed products originating in the USA.

On a transitional basis, the origin of a good is to be determined in accordance with the provisions on non-preferential origin of goods (Art. 59 et seq. of the UCC). According to these provisions, a good is considered to be of originating status if it has



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been wholly obtained in the territory of a contracting party (Art. 60 para. 1 of the UCC). If more than one country or territory is involved in the production, the origin of the goods is determined by the place where the goods underwent their last substantial, economically-justified processing (Article 60(2) of the UCC).

The European Parliament was also able to include additional conditions to protect the EU economy. The EU may unilaterally suspend the application of the 0% customs tariff rate or tariff quotas by means of a legal act if the US, for its part, fails to comply with the terms of the Turnberry Deal. In particular, if the US increases the customs tariff rate on goods originating in the EU to more than 15% in breach of the agreement, the EU may, for its part, suspend the preferential treatment granted to the US. The same applies as soon as there is a threat of damage to the European economy from US imports. This may be the case if, as a result of the importation of low-priced goods from the US, goods produced in the EU can no longer be sold. Under the “sunset clause”, the Regulation will initially apply only until the end of 2029. It may be extended unilaterally by the Union. However, it is more likely that renegotiations will take place with the US administration succeeding the current Trump administration.

2 Economic implications and relief for industry

The implementation of the Turnberry Deal could initially provide predictable conditions for the next two years, until the end of the Trump administration. Economic operators can adapt to the import conditions for US goods into the EU or for EU goods into the US. It remains to be seen as to whether this agreement will outlast the Trump administration’s term of office. Of course, an EU Regulation cannot prevent the US from adopting different economic policies in the future.

The implementation will primarily benefit companies involved in the importation of US goods into the EU. Their importations stand to benefit significantly from preferential treatment in future. Companies involved in the importation of EU goods into the US are also likely to benefit. The 15% customs tariff rate can be cautiously used as a benchmark for calculating the costs of importations over the coming months. Of course, there is no guarantee that this rate will remain in place. For the EU economy, the implementation is expected to bring new challenges. Whilst the importation of goods into the Union will become cheaper, the market for EU goods in the US will not become any more favourable. The European Commission estimates that importers and consumers in the EU could nevertheless save around 5 billion euros in customs duties each year.

Sectors with strong transatlantic links, such as the European automotive industry, had spoken out strongly in favour of the agreement. Many of these companies manufacture vehicles in the US for the European market and are now benefiting from the complete removal of the previous 10% customs tariff rate on the importation of US cars into the EU. The customs tariff rate on the importation of goods from the EU into the US are being almost halved, from 27.5% to 15%.

3 Agreement subject to conditions: Transatlantic relations under strain

Although the European Parliament’s approval is a step towards stabilising transatlantic trade relations, the relationship remains complex and continues to be prone to conflict. Whilst the EU and the US were still negotiating the terms of the Turnberry deal, President Trump was already, once again, threatening to impose additional customs duties on French wines and champagne. This was in response to proposals for a digital services tax, which would primarily affect American corporations. The Member States have yet to approve the Turnberry deal.