

Trade negotiations with US can start under certain conditions

- Talks could help ease current tensions caused by US tariffs
- MEPs want car tariffs in, and agriculture out, of negotiations
- Any agreement needs Parliament's consent to enter into force

The Trade Committee on Tuesday endorsed the mandate to start limited EU-US trade talks, but set conditions on the conclusion of a deal.

Starting talks is in the interest of European citizens and companies, as it would ease current tensions in EU-US trade relations, brought about by the US administration's actions, said International Trade Committee MEPs in the report adopted by 21 votes to 17, with one abstention.

They nevertheless note that the conclusion of a trade agreement based on the current negotiating mandate can only be successful if the following conditions are met:

- the US must lift tariffs on aluminium and steel;
- a comprehensive consultation process with civil society and a sustainability impact assessment are carried out;
- the EU insists on including cars and car tariffs in the talks, and on excluding agriculture;
- talks will be suspended if the US levies another tariff;
- more clarity on how rules of origin (which lock in how much of the value of a product must be created locally for trade preferences) are handled during the talks.

Background

The European Commission submitted its [draft negotiating mandates](#) to the Council for approval on 18 January. The mandates will authorise the Commission to negotiate with the US on eliminating tariffs on industrial goods and on harmonising conformity assessment.

Next steps

Parliament will vote on its stance on the mandates in March. EU Council of Ministers is expected to adopt the draft negotiating mandates in the same month. The Commission will start

negotiations on the basis of the final mandate.

Further information

[Committee on International Trade](#)

[Bernd Lange \(S&D, DE\)](#)

[EU-US trade talks: European Commission presents draft negotiating mandates \(18.02.2019\)](#)

[Draft resolution on draft negotiating mandates for EU-US trade talks](#)

[Video of the vote \(18.02.2019\)](#)

[EU-US trade talks: European Commission presents draft negotiating mandates \(18.02.2019\)](#)

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