

MEPs welcome EU-US cooperation in the Trade and Technology Council, call for transparency

Trade MEPs called for transparency in the work of the EU-US Trade and Technology Council as Commission Vice-Presidents Vestager and Dombrovskis gave account of the first meeting of the body.

At a debate on Tuesday where the two Commission executive vice presidents briefed MEPs about the first meeting of the ten working groups of the Trade and Technology Council (TTC), MEPs generally welcomed this reboot of EU-US cooperation which they urged should work toward pragmatic solutions and resolve immediate issues in the areas of trade and technology.

Standards setting

“There is no transatlantic contradiction between promoting innovation in AI and at the same time protecting democracy,” pointed out Vice-President Margrethe Vestager at the meeting joined by the chairs of the committees on [internal market](#), [industry](#) and the [special committee on AI](#). Vice-President [Valdis Dombrovskis](#) added: TTC “is ready for setting the standards for the 21st century” in areas of new technology.

Transparency

MEPs were particularly interested in how common work will ensure there was no revision of EU rules and that legislators, civil societies and business were involved in the work in a transparent way. Several MEPs noted that the work of the council must reflect the EU’s Green Deal commitments, and urged the Commission to use the TTC to look at the American example for legislation on a ban on products from forced labour.

Some trade MEPs suggested involving partners such as South Korea, Japan and Singapore in common efforts to resolve short-term supply chain bottlenecks in the semiconductor area. Others expressed security concerns about TTC discussions in the field of investment screening and called for discussions on export controls on certain American technologies. Several MEPs pointed out that TTC should be a vehicle for establishing common ground for the reform of the World Trade Organisation.

In her response, Vice-President Vestager pointed out: TTC aims to coordinate approaches, not to harmonise legislation in the EU and the US. It is a bilateral forum, but its results will certainly

feed into work with other partners, Vice-President Dombrovskis said, adding: cooperation in the body will not lead to a new trade agreement with the US.

Background

Parliament called for stronger EU-US partnership in the TTC in a [resolution](#) in October. A new forum set up in [June 2021](#), the TTC held its [inaugural session](#) on 29 September 2021. The next meeting of the political leadership of the council is set for next spring.

Further information

[Watch the recording of the meeting \(26.10.2021\)](#)

[Trade committee chair: the momentum is there for EU-US cooperation \(22.10.2021\)](#)

[EP research: EU-US Trade and Technology Council: New forum for transatlantic cooperation \(27.09.2021\)](#)

[Committee on International Trade](#)

Contacts

Eszter BALÁZS

Press Officer

☎ (+32) 2 28 42373 (BXL)

📞 (+32) 470 88 08 77

✉ eszter.balazs@europarl.europa.eu

✉ inta-press@europarl.europa.eu

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