

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2021/2038(INI)	Procedure completed
The future of EU-US relations		
Subject 6.20.03 Bilateral economic and trade agreements and relations 6.40.11 Relations with industrialised countries		
Geographical area United States		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Foreign Affairs	 PICULA Tonino Shadow rapporteur  ZOVKO Željana  TUDORACHE Dragoș  BÜTIKOFER Reinhard  MADISON Jaak  WASZCZYKOWSKI Witold Jan  MATIAS Marisa	25/01/2021
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	 International Trade (Associated committee)	 LANGE Bernd	18/03/2021

Key events			
29/04/2021	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
29/04/2021	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		

15/07/2021	Vote in committee		
26/07/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0250/2021	Summary
05/10/2021	Debate in Parliament		
06/10/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0410/2021	Summary

Technical information

Procedure reference	2021/2038(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54; Rules of Procedure EP 57; Rules of Procedure EP 118
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/9/05861

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report		PE691.419	23/04/2021	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE693.645	28/05/2021	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE693.646	28/05/2021	EP	
Committee opinion	INTA	PE691.423	17/06/2021	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0250/2021	26/07/2021	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0410/2021	06/10/2021	EP	Summary

The future of EU-US relations

The Committee on Foreign Affairs Committee adopted a report by Tonino PICULA (S&D, HR) on the future of EU-US relations.

Members reaffirmed their support for cooperation and partnership between the EU and the US, stressing that the EU's relations with the US are based on common values such as democracy, the rule of law and respect for fundamental freedoms.

Towards a new transatlantic partnership

The report stressed that transatlantic cooperation is the best way to contribute to a peaceful, sustainable and constructive resolution of regional and global problems, including a sustainable and environmentally friendly reconstruction of the economy aiming, inter alia, at carbon neutrality by 2050, as well as the elimination of regional, social, gender and racial inequalities.

The Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) are invited to reaffirm the strategic relevance of the transatlantic relationship to:

- reinvigorate a rules-based multilateral international order with the UN system and international law at its centre and the global consolidation of democracy and democratic values;
- fight the malign influence and disinformation campaigns of authoritarian regimes;
- define the rules for a digital and technological future based on shared values, sustainable economic development and inclusive global growth and jobs;
- define a coordinated position towards Russia and China and a common offer of investing in infrastructure projects in line with the EU's connectivity strategy.

Members noted the new transatlantic commitment to support democracy across the globe and welcomed the clear commitment of the US to strengthen the transatlantic relationship. The report called for a new transatlantic agenda that pursues common interests and promotes multilateral cooperation for a more equitable world, the fight against climate change, and the peaceful and sustainable resolution of conflicts based on the principles of international law, arms control, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and disarmament.

Such an agenda should be built around common strategic objectives, such as: (i) strengthening supply chains for medicines and reforming the WHO; (ii) ensuring adequate access to vaccines for vulnerable countries; (iii) reducing dependence on external energy supplies; (iv) increased

investment in cutting-edge technologies; (v) tackling inequalities; (vi) promoting ecological transformation and (vii) cooperation between transatlantic partners and with third countries focusing on the security and stability of the EU's eastern and southern neighbourhood, the Western Balkans and the African continent.

Members called on the EU and the US to work together, building on the work of the OECD, on global tax issues, including reform of the international corporate tax system. They reaffirmed the EU's commitment to fair taxation in the digital economy, as called for in the new EU-US Agenda for Global Change.

The report also stressed the importance of visa reciprocity between the EU and the US and called on both sides to find a mutually acceptable solution that would allow for a visa-free regime for all EU Member States.

Restoring multilateralism

The report welcomed the fact that the US has reaffirmed its commitment to rules-based multilateralism and alliances with its partners. This is an opportunity to re-engage with the US to develop the transatlantic relationship and to strengthen, together with the EU, as equal partners, the rules-based international order.

Members stressed the need to deepen legislative cooperation and to set up enhanced legislative cooperation structures and an inclusive transatlantic dialogue based on the EU and US legislative branches, such as a transatlantic parliamentary assembly. They also called for enhanced inter-parliamentary cooperation on various topics with a view to exchanging best practices and for enhanced coordination on global issues.

Enhanced cooperation on international trade and investment

Underlining that the EU and the US have the most integrated economic relationship in the world, the report stressed the importance of reinvigorating the transatlantic trade relationship with a view to fostering an open, rules-based trading system and finding common solutions to pressing global challenges, including global health. They stressed the need to reform the global trading system to ensure a global level playing field and to work together to develop new rules, including on unfair trade practices.

Enhanced cooperation on international trade and investment

Underlining that the EU and the US have the most integrated economic relationship in the world, the report stressed the importance of reinvigorating the transatlantic trade relationship to foster an open, rules-based trading system and to find common solutions to pressing global challenges, including global health. They stressed the need to reform the global trading system, to ensure a global level playing field and to work together to develop new rules, including on unfair trade practices.

Addressing security and defence challenges

Members believe that the transatlantic alliance remains fundamental to the security and stability of the European continent, as NATO is the foundation of Europe's collective defence and a key pillar of European security. They support a rebalancing of security responsibilities within the transatlantic relationship and call for greater autonomy for EU Member States in the field of defence to lessen the burden on the US.

On foreign policy, Members are convinced that a common transatlantic approach to China is the best way to maintain a peaceful, sustainable and mutually beneficial relationship with that country. They stressed the need to explore areas of convergence and possible cooperation with the US on China, including the protection of human and minority rights, the easing of tensions in the South and East China Seas, Hong Kong and the Taiwan Strait.

The report supported the intention to enhance transatlantic cooperation on the use of sanctions to pursue shared foreign policy and security objectives.

The future of EU-US relations

The European Parliament adopted by 550 votes to 83, with 55 abstentions, a resolution on the future of EU-US relations.

Members reaffirmed their support for cooperation and partnership between the EU and the US, insisting that the EU's relations with the US are based on common values such as democracy, the rule of law and respect for fundamental freedoms.

Towards a new transatlantic partnership

Parliament believes that the EU should strive for partnership in leadership with the US, focused on the pursuit of shared interests. It should also foster its strategic autonomy in defence and economic relations as a means to pursue its own legitimate diplomatic security and economic interests while strengthening the transatlantic bond.

The Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) are invited to reaffirm the strategic relevance of the transatlantic relationship to:

- reinvigorate a rules-based multilateral international order with the UN system and international law at its centre and the global consolidation of democracy and democratic values;
- fight the malign influence and disinformation campaigns of authoritarian regimes;
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- define a coordinated position towards Russia and China and a common offer of investing in infrastructure projects in line with the EU's connectivity strategy.

Restoring multilateralism

Members welcomed the renewed US commitment to rules-based multilateralism, stressing that this is an important opportunity to re-engage with the US as an equal partner. They called for a concerted EU-US approach in the UN, including UN reform to enhance its effectiveness as

a multilateral organisation.

Members called on the EU and the US to play a leading role in the UN framework on climate change. In this context, they stressed the importance of cooperation in clean energy, low-carbon technologies and products, and cooperation on other pressing issues such as non-proliferation, conflict resolution and the fight against violent radicalisation and terrorism.

Enhanced cooperation on international trade and investment

Stressing that the EU and the US have the most integrated economic relationship in the world, Parliament stressed the need to work hand in hand with the US to build positive momentum, strengthen the multilateral trading system and reform the World Trade Organisation. It called for the establishment of several permanent discussion platforms, such as the Trade and Technology Council and the joint EU-US dialogue on technology competition policy, as they will help to further develop transatlantic trade.

Parliament supported a leading-power approach to partnership with the US, including a coordinated stance on Russia and China, which emphasises the pursuit of common interests in the ecological and digital transformation of our economies.

Addressing security and defence challenges

Members believe that the transatlantic alliance remains fundamental to the security and stability of the European continent, as NATO is the foundation of Europe's collective defence and a key pillar of European security. They support a rebalancing of security responsibilities within the transatlantic relationship and call for greater autonomy for EU Member States in the field of defence to lessen the burden on the US.

The EU and the US should cooperate closely not only on traditional security threats, but also on emerging threats such as technological superiority of hostile countries, hybrid threats, disinformation campaigns and malicious interference in electoral processes. Members called for close cooperation in the field of cyber security.

Closer foreign policy coordination

Parliament reiterated its suggestion to create a Transatlantic Political Council chaired by the VP/HR and the US Secretary of State to enable systematic consultation and coordination on foreign and security policy.

Members believe that China has not only become a systemic rival and competitor but should also be an important partner in addressing many global issues. They are convinced that a joint transatlantic approach to China is the best way to maintain a peaceful, sustainable and mutually beneficial long-term relationship with that country.

In order to avoid transatlantic tensions such as those that followed the conclusion of the trilateral security agreement between the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia (AUKUS), Members stressed the need to explore areas of cooperation with the United States on the China issue, particularly with regard to the protection of human and minority rights, the easing of tensions in the South China Sea, the East China Sea, Hong Kong and the Taiwan Strait.

Deploing the violent takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban following the withdrawal of US and EU forces and the resulting widespread violations of fundamental rights, Members called on transatlantic partners to redouble their efforts to foster long-term peace, stability and progress in Afghanistan by supporting Afghan civil society and human rights defenders, including women's rights defenders.

Lastly, Members believe that the EU should engage more with the US and renew the strategic partnership with the Eastern Partnership and Western Balkan countries.