

WHY VOLT WILL NOT SUPPORT THE EU-US TRADE DEAL

On 26 March, the European Parliament will vote on reducing tariffs on US goods as part of the EU–US trade deal agreed in August 2025. While this vote is limited in scope, it will in practice determine whether the broader trade deal moves forward. After careful consideration, we, the five Volt MEPs, have decided to **vote against** this unbalanced deal. Here is why.

01. What speaks in favour of a deal with the US, even if unbalanced

- **Ensuring short-term business continuity.** The deal could provide temporary stability for exporters, but only if the US fully respects its commitments, which is uncertain.
- **Avoiding further trade escalation with the US** - rejecting the deal could trigger a new round of retaliatory measures, worsen ongoing trade tensions and increase economic risks for the EU.
- **Maintaining stronger transatlantic relations in the broader geopolitical context.** The US could tie this agreement to limiting selling weapons to the EU that support Ukraine.
- **Improved safeguards under EP mandate.** The EP mandate has strengthened the deal by making it temporary (until March 2028), introducing strong conditionality (“sunrise clause”), and adding suspension mechanisms (in case of rule of law breaches or security threats).

02. What speaks against the deal

- **EU was strong-armed into an unbalanced deal using illegal tariffs.** Tariffs used to extract concessions were later struck down by the US Supreme Court. The agreement rests on coercion and unlawful pressure and should be renegotiated.
- **No economic certainty.** Trump’s recent actions demonstrate how unreliable US commitments are. Since the deal, the US threatened additional tariffs against Spain and Denmark over unrelated geopolitical issues. The agreement offers no meaningful stability as it can be overthrown by executive orders anytime.
- **Legitimising economic coercion.** The deal follows a pattern in which the US applies pressure to extract concessions. Accepting this dynamic weakens the EU’s negotiating position and contributes to the erosion of a rules-based global trading system.
- **Undermining Europe’s green ambitions.** The deal includes a pledge to buy around \$750 billion in US fossil fuels, i.e. diverting investment away from renewables and contradicting the EU’s 2030 climate targets, while being highly unrealistic to deliver.
- **Weakening Europe’s strategic autonomy.** The deal runs counter to current efforts to strengthen “Buy European”, EU innovation, and independence in key strategic industries, especially in the energy, defense, and tech sectors.
- **Weakening EU standards and rules.** The deal opens the door to concessions on some key European digital and environmental laws, including the deforestation law and measures to ensure a fair carbon price on imports, risking further erosion of EU's regulatory sovereignty.

We remain committed to a strong transatlantic partnership with the US - yet the current US administration has repeatedly acted in ways that contradict the mutual trust and reliability expected between allies, including by actively supporting the growth of far-right movements in Europe.

Overall, this deal offers uncertain short-term economic relief at a high long-term political cost. Europe must stop conceding under pressure and instead strengthen its strategic autonomy, diversify its trade partnerships, and invest in its own economic and security capabilities. The EU and the US are and will remain co-dependent, but this dependence goes both ways, and it’s time Europe starts to show courage.