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EU lawmakers back Turnberry trade deal with U.S.

The provisional pact would cap U.S. tariffs on European goods at 15% and add safeguards before it takes effect.

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The European Parliament and the Council reached a provisional deal late Tuesday on the “Turnberry” trade agreement with the United States, moving the transatlantic pact closer to entry into force after months of pressure from businesses and lawmakers to provide more certainty on tariffs.

The compromise, struck after last-minute talks between representatives of the Parliament and the member states, would keep in place the broad framework agreed last summer between the European Commission and Washington, while adding

safeguards sought by lawmakers. Under that framework, the European Union would remove customs duties on most imports from the United States, while U.S. tariffs on EU goods would be capped at 15%.

The agreement matters for spirits producers because it affects the cost structure of transatlantic trade in whisky, cognac, vodka and other distilled drinks, as well as steel and aluminum derivative products used in packaging and related supply chains. Industry groups welcomed the breakthrough as a step toward more predictable trade conditions after years of tariff disputes and shifting policy signals from Washington.

“An agreement is an agreement, and the EU honours its commitments,” Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission, said after the deal was reached. Maroš Šefčovič, the European commissioner for trade, said the text was fully aligned with the joint EU-U.S. statement that followed last year’s political understanding.

SpiritsEUROPE, which represents European spirits makers, said the deal was “an important step towards greater predictability and greater stability for businesses active in transatlantic trade.” BusinessEurope, the main European employers’ group, also urged quick implementation.

The negotiations had been under pressure to conclude before a July 4 deadline. The European Parliament’s center-right European People’s Party pushed for a swift adoption of the original terms to avoid further uncertainty for exporters. Liberal lawmakers pressed for stronger safeguards before giving their support.

One of the main changes in the final compromise concerns steel and aluminum derivative products. In place of a so-called sunrise clause that would have allowed automatic entry into force once U.S. conditions were met, the Union gave Washington until the end of 2026 to remove additional customs duties on 407 categories of those products.

The text also includes a suspension clause allowing the European Commission to halt tariff preferences if the United States fails to address EU concerns across all exports. Bernd Lange, the Parliament’s chief negotiator on the file, said that if Washington does not return to the agreed 15% cap, “we will then have to reflect on the way forward.”

Another safeguard is a strengthened review mechanism tied to a sunset clause. Instead of expiring at the end of Donald Trump’s current term in November 2028, as previously discussed, the agreement would now run until March 2029. That would trigger a review two months after the next U.S. president takes office and before the next European elections.

The text also creates a safeguard mechanism if a surge in U.S. imports threatens serious harm to European industry or agriculture. According to Benoît Cassart, a Renew Europe lawmaker from Belgium, Parliament itself would not be able to trigger that clause directly but would have a consultative role intended to help activate it.

The deal still needs formal approval from Parliament. The Committee on International Trade is scheduled to examine it at an extraordinary meeting on June 2, with a plenary vote expected on June 16 or 17.

Across the Atlantic, Andrew Puzder, the U.S. ambassador to the European Union, welcomed what he described as an agreement “to reduce tariffs on US industrial exports,” referring to commitments made by President Trump and von der Leyen last year at Turnberry. He said Washington would review the details closely. Trump had not publicly responded by press time.

For spirits exporters in Europe and importers in the United States, the outcome could shape pricing and margins for months ahead if lawmakers approve it and both sides move quickly to implement it.