



The U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC)

In Detail

Why was the TTC created?

At the [U.S.-EU Summit](#) in June 2021, President Biden, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and European Council President Charles Michel met to discuss the future of the transatlantic partnership and set a joint transatlantic agenda for the post-pandemic era. There were four key items on this agenda: i) end the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for future global health challenges; ii) protect our planet and foster green growth; iii) strengthen trade, investment, and technological cooperation; and iv) build a more democratic, peaceful, and secure world.

As part of the initiative to strengthen trade, investment, and technological cooperation, the U.S. and the EU established a high-level Trade and Technology Council that will meet twice annually to promote competitiveness, spread market-oriented values, uphold and reform the rules-based multilateral trading system, strengthen technological and industrial leadership, boost innovation, and promote critical and emerging technologies and infrastructure.

How is the TTC structured?

The [TTC](#) is led by three American and two European government officials. The U.S. side is co-chaired by Katherine Tai, U.S. Trade Representative (USTR); Gina Raimondo, Secretary of Commerce; and Antony Blinken, Secretary of State. The EU side is led by Valdis Dombrovkis, European Commission Executive Vice President and EU Commissioner for Trade; and by Margarethe Vestager, European Commission Executive Vice President and Commissioner for Competition.

The Council consists of 10 thematic working groups, chaired by relevant U.S. agencies and European Commission services. These working groups “[operationalize the political decisions into deliverables, coordinate the technical work, and report to the political level.](#)”

In parallel with the TTC, the U.S. and EU established a [Joint Technology Competition Policy Dialogue \(TCPD\)](#) that focuses on developing common approaches and strengthening cooperation on competition policy and enforcement in the tech sector. The TCPD was launched in Washington, DC on December 7 by EU Commissioner Margarethe Vestager, U.S. Federal Trade Commission Chair Lina Khan, and the Assistant Attorney General for Antitrust at the U.S. Department of Justice Jonathan Kanter. The TCPD will continue to hold regular high-level meetings, as well as discussions at the technical level in the coming months.

What are the ten thematic working groups in the TTC?

1. Technology standards cooperation
2. Climate and green tech
3. Secure supply chains, including semiconductors
4. Information and Communications Technology security and competitiveness
5. Data governance and technology platforms
6. The misuse of technology threatening security and human rights
7. Export controls
8. Investment screening

9. Promoting SME access to and use of digital technologies

10. Global trade challenges

What are the main objectives of the TTC?

Trade Objectives

- Grow the bilateral trade and investment relationship.
- Avoid new unnecessary technical barriers to trade.
- Support collaborative research and exchanges.
- Promote a level playing field, overcome long-standing differences, avoid future litigation, and more effectively address the challenge posed by non-market economies.
- Engage in discussions to allow the resolution of existing differences on measures regarding steel and aluminum before the end of 2021.
- Work together to resolve tensions arising from the U.S. application of tariffs on imports from the EU under U.S. Section 232.
- Work towards allowing trade to recover from its 2020 lows.
- End World Trade Organization (WTO) disputes.
- Foster a fair, sustainable, and modern international tax system and cooperate to reach a global consensus on the question of taxation of multinational companies through the G20/OECD Inclusive Framework.
- Work cooperatively on efforts to achieve meaningful WTO reform and help promote outcomes that benefit workers and companies.
- Advance the proper functioning of the WTO’s negotiating function and dispute settlement system, which requires addressing long-standing issues.
- Continue to cooperate on special and differential treatment, and on joint transparency proposal.
- Update the WTO rulebook with more effective disciplines on industrial subsidies, unfair behavior of state-owned enterprises, and other trade and market distorting practices.
- Work closely together, and with the wider support of the WTO membership, to conclude a meaningful agreement on fisheries subsidies, and a trade policy response to the COVID-19 pandemic that facilitates expansion of production and equitable access to vaccines.

Technology Objectives

- Coordinate, seek common ground, and strengthen global cooperation on technology, digital issues, and supply chains.
- Cooperate on compatible and international standards development.
- Promote innovation and leadership by U.S. and European firms.
- Cooperate on the development and deployment of new technologies based on shared democratic values and respect for human rights, and encourage compatible standards and regulations.
- Work together to ensure safe, secure, and trusted cross-border data flows that protect consumers and enhance privacy protections, while enabling transatlantic commerce.

- Continue cooperation on consumer protection and access to electronic evidence in criminal matters.
- Commit to strengthen cooperation on space by building on the Galileo - GPS Agreement. This could include making progress on access to Galileo's Public Regulated Service signal, engaging on space-based Earth observation to support climate policies by monitoring CO2 levels and emergency services, as well as exchanging on respective approaches on space traffic management.
- Cooperation within the TTC will feed into coordination in multilateral bodies and wider efforts with like-minded partners, with the aim of promoting a democratic model of digital governance.

When was the first TTC meeting and what were the outcomes?

The TTC held its inaugural meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on September 29, 2021. During the meeting, U.S. and EU officials identified five specific areas that the TTC will focus on in the coming months with the intent of achieving concrete outcomes by the time of their next meeting. These areas are investment screening, export controls, artificial intelligence (AI), semiconductor supply chains, and global trade challenges.

Investment Screening

- Maintain investment screening in order to address risks to national security and public order.
- Agree that investment screening regimes should be accompanied by the appropriate enforcement mechanisms and guided by the principles of non-discrimination, transparency, predictability, proportionality, and accountability, as set forth in relevant OECD guidelines.

Export Controls

- Concur that a multilateral approach to export controls is most effective for protecting international security and supporting a global level-playing field.
- Determine shared principles and areas for export control cooperation, including in export control capacity-building assistance to third countries, and recognize the importance of prior consultations to ensure that the application of export controls is transparent and equitable for EU and U.S. exporters.

Artificial Intelligence

- Agree that AI technologies yield powerful advances but can also threaten shared values and fundamental freedoms if they are not developed and deployed responsibly or if they are misused.
- Develop and implement AI systems that are innovative and trustworthy and that respect universal human rights and shared democratic values.

Semiconductors

- Build a partnership on the rebalancing of global supply chains in semiconductors with a view to enhancing respective security of supply as well as respective capacity to design and produce semiconductors, especially those with leading-edge capabilities.
- Work together to identify gaps in the semiconductor value chain, and strengthen domestic semiconductor

ecosystems.

- Focus initially on short-term supply chain issues, and cooperate with other working groups on mid- and long-term strategic semiconductor issues ahead of the next TTC meeting.

Global Trade Challenges

- Work together to address non-market, trade-distortive policies and practices, improve the effectiveness of respective domestic measures that address those policies and practices, and explore ways to combat the negative effects of such policies and practices in third countries.
- Work together to maintain competitive, free, and fair transatlantic commerce in emerging technologies by avoiding new and unnecessary barriers to trade, while always respecting the EU and U.S. regulatory autonomy and promoting openness and transparency.
- Protect workers and labor rights, and combat forced and child labor.

In addition to the TTC's five areas of focus, each of the working groups will work on the following issues until their next meeting in spring of 2022.

Technology Standards

- Develop approaches for coordination and cooperation in critical and emerging technology standards, including AI.
- Support the development of technical standards in line with U.S. and EU core values, and recognize the importance of international standardization activities underpinned by core WTO principles.
- Identify opportunities for collaborative proactive action and to defend common interests in international standards activities for critical and emerging technologies.
- Develop both formal and informal cooperation mechanisms to share information regarding technical proposals in specified technology areas and seek opportunities to coordinate on international standards activities.
- Foster participation in standards organizations for civil society organizations, startups and SMEs in emerging technologies.

Climate and Clean Tech

- Identify opportunities, measures and incentives to support technology development, transatlantic trade and investment in climate neutral technologies, products and services, including collaboration in third countries, research and innovation.
- Jointly explore the methodologies, tools, and technologies for calculating embedded greenhouse gas emissions in global trade.

Secure Supply Chains

- Advance supply chain resilience and security in key sectors for the green and digital transition. A first focus will be on clean energy, pharmaceuticals, and critical materials.

- Increase transparency of supply and demand, map respective existing sectoral capabilities, exchange information on policy measures and R&D priorities, and cooperate on strategies to promote supply chain resilience and diversification.

Information and Communication Technology and Services (ICTS) Security and Competitiveness

- Work towards ensuring security, diversity, interoperability and resilience across the ICT supply chain, including sensitive and critical areas such as 5G, undersea cables, data centers, and cloud infrastructure.
- Explore concrete cooperation on development finance for secure and resilient digital connectivity in third countries.
- Reinforce cooperation on research and innovation beyond 5G and 6G systems.
- Develop a common vision and roadmap for preparing the next generation of communication technologies towards 6G.

Data Governance and Technology Platforms

- Exchange information on respective approaches to data and technology platform governance, seeking consistency and interoperability where feasible.
- Exchange information and views regarding current and future regulations in both the EU and U.S. with a goal of effectively addressing shared concerns.
- Identify common issues of concern around illegal and harmful content and their algorithmic amplification, transparency, and access to platforms' data for researchers as well as the democratic responsibility of online intermediaries.
- Use voluntary and multi-stakeholder initiatives to complement regulatory approaches in some areas.
- Commit to transatlantic cooperation regarding platform policies that focus on disinformation, product safety, counterfeit products, and other harmful content.
- Engage with platform companies to improve researchers' access to data generated by platforms, in order to better understand and be able better to address systemic risks linked to how content spreads online.
- Engage in a discussion on effective measures to appropriately address the power of online platforms and ensure effective competition and contestable markets.
- Discuss alongside other working groups common approaches on the role of cloud infrastructure and services.

Misuse of Technology Threatening Security and Human Rights

- Combat arbitrary or unlawful surveillance on various platforms, including social media.
- Explore building an effective mechanism to respond to internet shutdowns, in conjunction with the G7 and other like-minded countries.
- Work to protect human rights defenders online, increase transatlantic cooperation to address foreign information manipulation, disinformation, and interference with democratic processes, while upholding freedom of expression and privacy rights.

- Address social scoring systems and collaborate on projects furthering the development of trustworthy AI.

Export Controls

- Engage in technical consultations on legislative and regulatory developments and exchange information on risk assessments and licensing good practices, as well as on compliance and enforcement approaches.
- Promote convergent control approaches on sensitive dual-use technologies, and perform joint industry outreach on dual-use export controls.

Investment Screening

- Focus on exchanging information on investment trends impacting security, including strategic trends of the industries concerned, origin of investments, and types of transactions.
- Exchange information on best practices on risk analysis and systems for risk mitigation measures with a focus on sensitive technologies and sensitive or personal data.
- Work with other working groups such as Export Controls to develop a holistic view of the policy tools addressing risks related to specific sensitive technologies.
- Conduct a joint virtual outreach event for stakeholders.

Promoting Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) Access to and Use of Digital Tools

- Ensure access to digital tools and technologies for SMEs in both the EU and U.S.
- Launch outreach activities that will offer opportunities for SMEs and underserved communities, and their representatives, to share their needs, experience, strategies and best practices with policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic with a view to ensuring a better understanding of the barriers to their digital empowerment.
- Through a series of listening sessions with SMEs and underserved communities, as well as the resulting analysis and reporting, develop recommendations for EU and U.S. policymakers to implement that will help to accelerate access to and the uptake of digital technologies.

Global Trade Challenges

- Focus on challenges from non-market economic policies and practices, avoiding new and unnecessary technical barriers in products and services of emerging technology, protecting labor rights, and environmental issues.