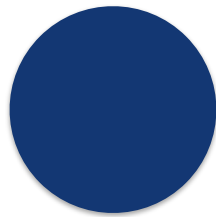


Política Internacional e Geopolítica a era da imprevisibilidade

**INSTITUTO CULTURAL
D. ANTÓNIO FERREIRA GOMES
José Pedro Teixeira Fernandes**

SESSÃO Nº 31

21 / 5 /2025



PARTE I – TEMA PRINCIPAL

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (1)

[FONTE: União Europeia / Serviço de Publicações Oficiais]



A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (2)

[FONTE: UE / DG Comércio]

Trade topics

Trade policy



Trade negotiations & agreements

Up-to-date information on current trade talks, and trade agreements already in place



Access2Markets

Helping small firms make the most of EU trade deals



EU and WTO

The EU's role in the World Trade Organization and our ideas for reform



Transparency

See the texts the EU has tabled in trade negotiations



EU sanctions against Russia following the invasion of Ukraine

The EU has adopted a comprehensive and robust package of restrictive sanctions



Enforcement and protection

How the EU enforces international rules and protects European businesses from unfair trade

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (3)

[FONTE: Tratado sobre o Funcionamento da União Europeia]

Artigo 3.º

1. A União dispõe de competência exclusiva nos seguintes domínios:

- a) União aduaneira;
- b) Estabelecimento das regras de concorrência necessárias ao funcionamento do mercado interno;
- c) Política monetária para os Estados-Membros cuja moeda seja o euro;
- d) Conservação dos recursos biológicos do mar, no âmbito da política comum das pescas;
- e) Política comercial comum.

2. A União dispõe igualmente de competência exclusiva para celebrar acordos internacionais quando tal celebração esteja prevista num ato legislativo da União, seja necessária para lhe dar a possibilidade de exercer a sua competência interna, ou seja suscetível de afetar regras comuns ou de alterar o alcance das mesmas.

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (4)

[FONTE: Comissão Europeia / Comércio]

EU position in world trade

The EU is in prime position when it comes to global trade. The openness of our trade regime has meant that the EU is the biggest player on the global trading scene and remains a good region to do business with.

Trade topics

EU companies accessing world markets • Importing into the EU • Trade policy

The EU has achieved a strong position by acting together with one voice on the global stage, rather than with separate trade strategies.

Europe has become deeply integrated into global markets. Thanks to the ease of modern transport and communications, it is now easier to produce, buy and sell goods around the world, which gives European companies of every size the potential to trade outside Europe.

Workers often deliver their services across different countries within a multinational or by specific service contracts.

As investors thrive in a stable, sound and predictable environment, they are looking for investment barriers to be dismantled and investments to be protected.

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (5)

[FONTE: Comissão Europeia / Comércio]

Facts and figures on the EU's position in global markets

- The EU is the largest economy in the world. Although growth is projected to be slow, the EU remains the largest economy in the world with a GDP per head of €25,000 for its 440 million consumers.
- The EU is the world's largest trading bloc. The EU is the world's largest trader of manufactured goods and services.
- The EU ranks first in both inbound and outbound international investments.
- The EU is the top trading partner for 80 countries. By comparison, the US is the top trading partner for a little over 20 countries.
- The EU is the most open to developing countries. Excluding fuels, the EU imports more from developing countries than the USA, Canada, Japan and China put together.

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (6)

[FONTE: UE / DG Comércio]

Maroš Šefčovič

COMMISSIONER (2024-2029) | Trade and Economic Security; Interinstitutional Relations and Transparency



Maroš Šefčovič is the Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security. His task is to design and implement a free and fair trade policy that enables Europe to reach its competitiveness, security and sustainability goals. He is also tasked with working on an effective and modern customs system that can help to protect citizens and support a level playing field for businesses.

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (7)

[FONTE: UE / DG Comércio]

Responsibilities

- continuing **Europe's leadership role in rules-based trade**, notably through a reformed and strengthened World Trade Organisation
- **concluding ongoing trade negotiations**, notably with countries in Latin America and the Indo-Pacific
- leading the work on **Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships** to bolster EU competitiveness, diversify supply chains and boost the economies of our partners
- **managing and deepening the EU's trade partnerships** around the world, including with the United Kingdom, United States, China, India, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean
- ensuring that EU businesses compete on fair terms on an international level playing field, including by using our **trade and defence instruments**
- finalising and implementing the **Customs Reform package** and setting up a new **EU Customs Authority**
- leading the work on an **economic security doctrine** outlining the strategic use of our economic strategy tools in the EU, which includes new standards for key supply chains to protect our economy
- implementing the **European Economic Security Strategy**, including foreign direct investments, better cooperation on export controls and risks linked to certain outbound investments
- protecting critical technologies and working on the effective design and implementation of **trade sanctions**

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (8)

[FONTE: UE / DG Comércio]

The EU and the WTO

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is made of governments and customs territories that set, apply and enforce the global rules for trade between themselves. Both the European Union (EU) and the individual EU countries are members of the WTO.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is made of governments and customs territories that set, apply and enforce the global rules for trade between themselves.

Both the European Union (EU) and the individual EU countries are members of the WTO.

The WTO's main activities are:

- Being a forum for international trade negotiations (e.g. the [Doha Development Round](#))
- Resolving trade disputes ([Dispute Settlement](#))
- Setting legal rules for trade in the form of trade agreements
- Monitoring members' trade policy through the [Trade Policy Review Mechanism](#)

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (9)

[FONTE: UE / DG Comércio]

The EU's objectives

The EU's objectives at the WTO are to:

- keep the world's trading system fair, predictable and based on common rules
- follow the common WTO rules, and make sure others also play by the rules
- make the WTO more open by interacting with both non-members and other international organisations
- bring developing countries into the WTO, its decision-making, and the global economy
- reinforce the WTO's support for sustainable trade policies worldwide

The European Commission has also put forward a first set of ideas to modernise the WTO and to make world trade rules fit for the challenges of the global economy.

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (10)

[FONTE: UE / DG Comércio]

Negotiations and agreements

Trade topics

Negotiations and agreements

In focus



EU-Chile agreement

EU-Chile Advanced Framework Agreement
Being adopted or ratified



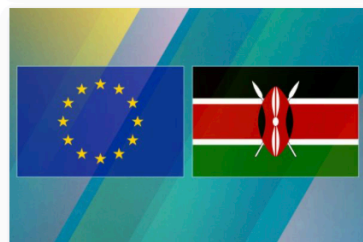
EU-India agreement

EU-India Free Trade Agreement,
Investment Protection Agreement and
Geographical Indications Agreement
Being negotiated



EU-Indonesia agreement

EU-Indonesia Free Trade Agreement
Being negotiated



EU-Kenya agreement

EU-Kenya Economic Partnership
Agreement
In force



EU-Mercosur agreement

EU-Mercosur agreement
Being adopted or ratified



EU-Mexico agreement

EU's modernised Global Agreement with
Mexico
Being adopted or ratified

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (11)

[FONTE: UE / DG Comércio]

Latest News

News article | 8 May 2025

[EU and Japan reaffirm close cooperation on trade and economic security](#)

The EU and Japan reaffirmed their shared commitment to further strengthening their cooperation on trade and economic security at their 6th High-Level Economic Dialogue (HLED) on 8 May.

🕒 2 min read

Press release | 8 May 2025

[Commission consults on possible countermeasures and readies WTO litigation in response to US tariffs](#)

The European Commission has launched a public consultation on a list of US imports which could become subject to EU countermeasures, if ongoing EU-US negotiations do not result in a mutually beneficial outcome and the removal of the US tariffs.

🕒 1 min read

News article | 28 April 2025

[Commission acts against unfairly subsidised imports of mobile access equipment from China](#)

On Friday, the European Commission imposed definitive countervailing duties on imports of mobile access equipment (MAE) from China. The measures aim to shield the EU MAE industry, which employs over 3,000 people across several Member States, from unfair trading practices.

🕒 1 min read

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (12)

[FONTE: Comissão Europeia, 10/04/2025]



European Commission - Statement



Statement by President von der Leyen on US tariffs

Brussels, 10 April 2025

I welcome President Trump's announcement to pause reciprocal tariffs. It's an important step towards stabilising the global economy.

Clear, predictable conditions are essential for trade and supply chains to function.

Tariffs are taxes that only hurt businesses and consumers. That's why I've consistently advocated for a zero-for-zero tariff agreement between the European Union and the United States.

The European Union remains committed to constructive negotiations with the United States, with the goal of achieving frictionless and mutually beneficial trade.

At the same time, Europe continues to focus on diversifying its trade partnerships, engaging with countries that account for 87% of global trade and share our commitment to a free and open exchange of goods, services, and ideas.

Finally, we are stepping up our work to lift barriers in our own single market. This crisis has made one thing clear: in times of uncertainty, the single market is our anchor of stability and resilience.

My team and I will continue to work day and night to protect European consumers, workers and businesses. Together, Europeans will emerge stronger from this crisis.

STATEMENT/25/1028

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (13)

[FONTE: Politico, 8/05/2025]

EU takes aim at US planes, autos in €100B counterstrike against Trump tariffs

Brussels moves ahead with its retaliation, conceding its transatlantic ties with Washington may be beyond repair.

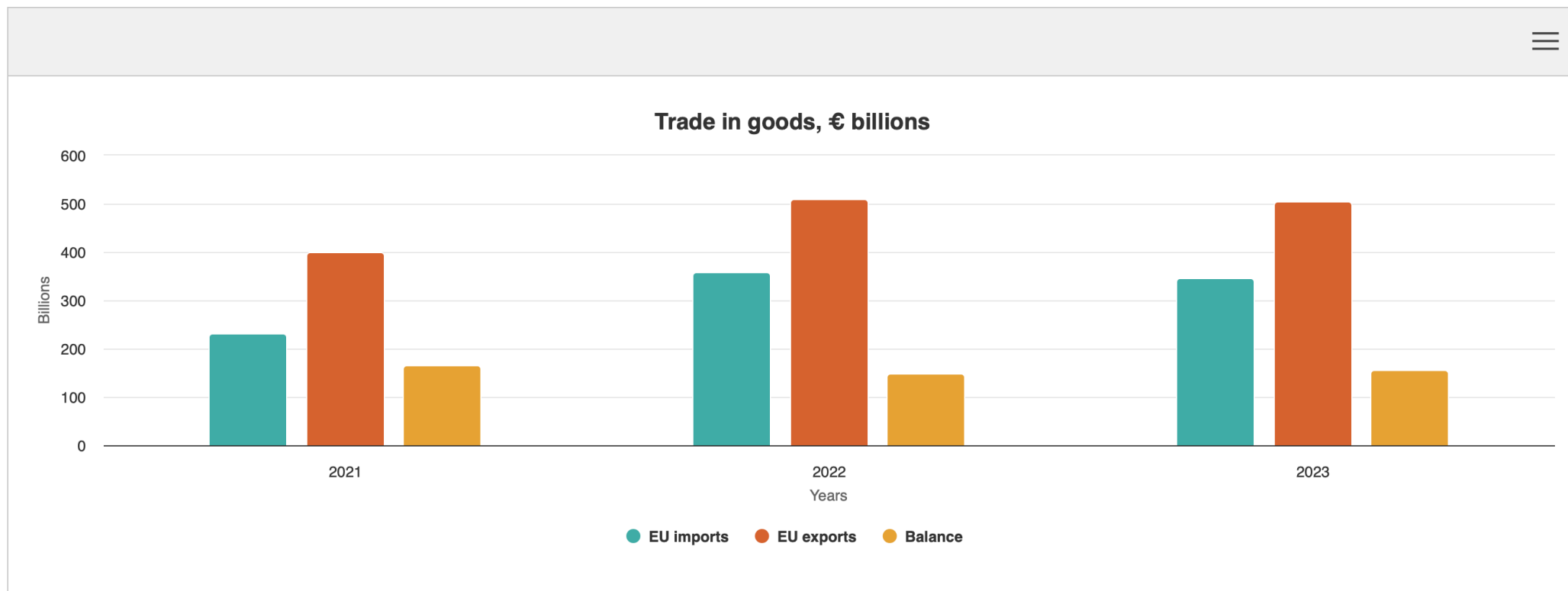
BRUSSELS — The European Union upped the pressure Thursday in its trade dispute with U.S. President Donald Trump by proposing potential tariffs on nearly €100 billion of imports — including big-ticket items like aircraft.

The lists include includes passenger cars, medical devices, chemicals and plastics, and a slew of agricultural products. Also back on the list are bourbon and other spirits, after wine-producing nations France and Italy pressured the Commission to remove them fearing Trump's wrath.

These are part of a 200-page catalog of more than 4,800 goods compiled by EU trade officials in response to Trump's imposition last month of “reciprocal” tariffs as well as tariffs on EU cars. EU imports of these items exceeded €109 billion in 2024 according to Eurostat — aircraft are the biggest at more than €13 billion followed by autos at €7 billion.

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (14)

[FONTE: European Union / Trade]



A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (15)

[FONTE: Politico, 8/05/2025]

The EU is also considering restricting exports of scrap steel and chemical products worth €4.4 billion.

And, in a parallel measure, Brussels would launch a dispute at the World Trade Organization over Trump's imposition of so-called reciprocal tariffs, as well as tariffs on cars and car parts. It is not clear yet when Brussels will officially start the case.

The real objective remains “negotiated outcomes with the U.S.,” European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said in a statement. “At the same time, we continue preparing for all possibilities, and the consultation launched today will help guide us in this necessary work”.

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (16)

[FONTE: Politico, 8/05/2025]

Where new EU tariffs could hit US exports

Here are the most valuable broad categories of U.S. goods the EU is considering subjecting to tariffs based on an analysis of a Commission document cross-referenced with 2024 import data.

Item	Value of EU imports in 2024 in euros
Aircraft	€13.1B
Passenger vehicles	€7.3B
Medical appliances	€6.4B
Computers and components	€5.3B
Diagnostic or laboratory reagents on a backing	€3.6B
Artificial joints, splints, articles applied to the body to compensate for a disability	€3.1B
Instruments and apparatuses for chemical analysis	€3B
Machines and apparatus for the manufacture of semiconductors	€2.8B
Gas turbines	€2.7B
Valves for pipes, boilers, sinks, etc.	€2.3B

Data extracted searching for the CN8 product codes listed in the Commission document on the Eurostat database, and adding the figures up based on the corresponding HS4 code. Some labels have been shortened or reworded for clarity.

Source: European Commission, Eurostat, POLITICO research
Giovanna Coi/POLITICO

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (17)

[FONTE: Politico, 8/05/2025]

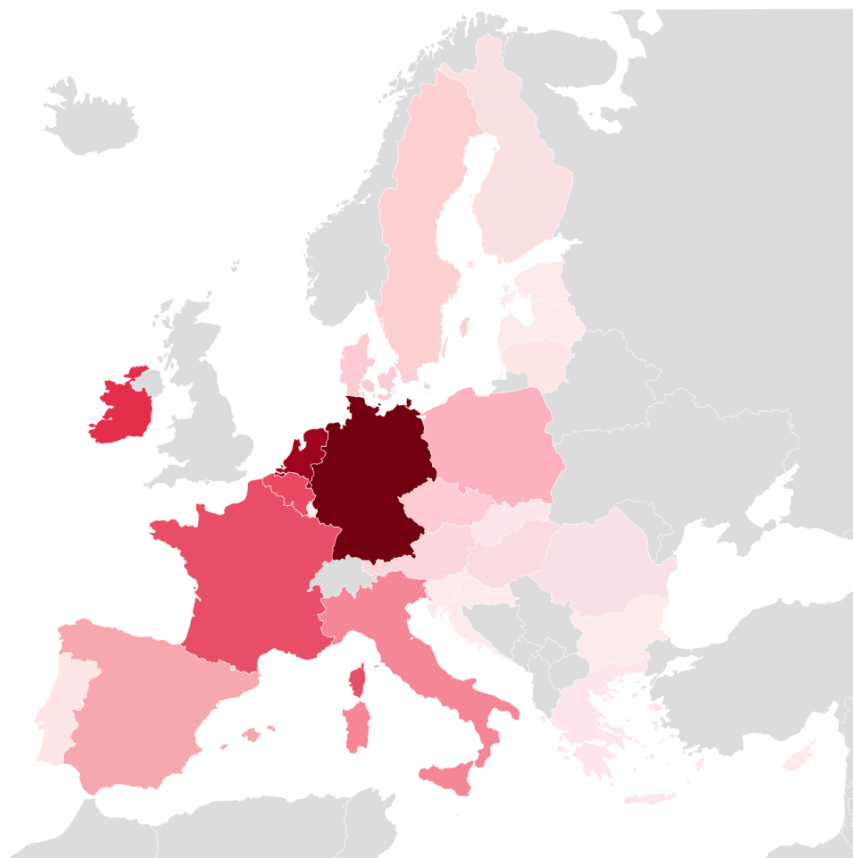
Who's set to pay the price of new tariffs

Map of countries EU countries that imported U.S. goods which the EU is considering subjecting to tariffs, based on an analysis of a Commission document seen by POLITICO cross-referenced with 2024 import data.

Imports from the U.S. in euros



76M 27B



Does not account for re-exports and transit trade. For countries with major ports like the Netherlands and Belgium, distortions in trade statistics may occur as a result of misreporting of commodities passing through their ports on on their way to their final destination. Data extracted searching for the CN8 product codes listed in the Commission document on the Eurostat database.

A União Europeia como actor da política mundial: o comércio (18)

[FONTE: Politico, 8/05/2025]

The lineup is subject to change, as businesses and EU countries will have until June 10 to provide feedback and advocate for sensitive goods to be removed from the list to avoid being caught in Trump's reprisals.

This happened when the Commission in April consulted with EU capitals for its retaliation against Trump's earlier steel and aluminum tariffs, with bourbon whiskey being removed at the request of France, Italy and Ireland. In the end, these measures were announced, but not implemented, as Trump suspended the reciprocal tariffs.

The threatened EU tariffs on aircraft would deal a heavy blow against Boeing, the troubled U.S. plane maker, and could reignite a long-running transatlantic subsidy dispute that was laid to rest after Trump's first term.

"Boeing is very welcome to reply," added the senior official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The total value of the listed products is much lower than the €379 billion of EU exports that is affected by U.S. tariffs. A second senior Commission official said Brussels had shown some restraint, "to not shoot ourselves in the foot. We want to be prudent," to avoid a spiralling tit-for-tat dynamic that would ultimately "hurt our industry."

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (1)

[FONTE: CNBC / Truth Social, 8/05/2025]



A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (2)

[FONTE: The White House, 8/05/2025]

Fact Sheet: U.S. – UK Reach Historic Trade Deal

The White House | May 8, 2025

ESTABLISHING A NEW PARADIGM FOR OUR SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP: Today, on the 80th anniversary of Victory Day for World War II, President Donald J. Trump and Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced a historic trade deal, providing American companies unprecedented access to the UK markets while bolstering U.S. national security. This is a great deal for America.

- President Trump: “The deal includes billions of dollars of increased market access for American exports, especially in agriculture, dramatically increasing access for American beef, ethanol, and virtually all of the products produced by our great farmers.”
 - “The UK will reduce or eliminate numerous non-tariff barriers that unfairly discriminated against American products.”
 - “This is now turning out to be, really, a great deal for both countries.”

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (3)

[FONTE: The White House, 8/05/2025]

- Prime Minister Starmer: “This is going to boost trade between and across our countries. It’s going to not only protect jobs, but create jobs, opening market access.”
- This trade deal will significantly expand U.S. market access in the UK, creating a \$5 billion opportunity for new exports for U.S. farmers, ranchers, and producers.
 - This includes more than \$700 million in ethanol exports and \$250 million in other agricultural products, like beef.
 - It commits the countries to work together to enhance industrial and agricultural market access.
 - It closes loopholes and increases U.S. firms’ competitiveness in the UK’s procurement market.
 - It ensures streamlined customs procedures for U.S. exports.
 - It establishes high standard commitments in the areas of intellectual property, labor, and environment.
 - It maximizes the competitiveness and secures the supply chain of U.S. aerospace manufacturers through preferential access to high-quality UK aerospace components.
 - It creates a secure supply chain for pharmaceutical products.

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (4)

[FONTE: The White House, 8/05/2025]

- The reciprocal tariff rate of 10%, as originally announced on Liberation Day, is in effect.
- The United States will agree to an alternative arrangement for the Section 232 tariffs on UK autos.
 - Under the deal, the first 100,000 vehicles imported into the U.S. by UK car manufacturers each year are subject to the reciprocal rate of 10% and any additional vehicles each year are subject to 25% rates.
- The United States also recognizes the economic security measures taken by the UK to combat global steel excess capacity and will negotiate an alternative arrangement to the Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminum.
 - This deal creates a new trading union for steel and aluminum.
- This U.S.-UK trade deal will usher in a golden age of new opportunity for U.S. exporters and level the playing fields for American producers.
- Today's action also sets the tone for other trading partners to promote reciprocal trade with the United States.

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (5)

[FONTE: The White House, 8/05/2025]

A FRAMEWORK TO BOLSTER ECONOMIC SECURITY: President Trump continues to advance the interests of the American people, enhancing market access for American exporters and lowering tariff and non-tariff barriers to protect our economic and national security.

- On April 18, President Trump had a call with Prime Minister Starmer to discuss our bilateral trade relationship.
- U.S. total goods trade with the UK was an estimated \$148 billion in 2024.
- The UK average applied agricultural tariff is 9.2% while the U.S. average applied agricultural tariff (prior to April 2) was 5%.
- The UK maintains certain tariff and non-tariff barriers that restrict market access and create an unfair playing field for American workers and businesses.
 - For example, the UK imposes tariffs that can exceed 125% on meat, poultry, and dairy products on top of maintaining non-science-based standards that adversely affect U.S. exports.
- On April 2, 2025, Liberation Day, President Trump imposed a 10% tariff on all countries to address unfair trade practices that have contributed to America's trade deficit and imbalances in order to better protect American workers and our national security.

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (6)

[FONTE: FT, 8/05/2025]

Britain's trade deal with Trump may not be good news for the world

Starmer's choice undermines multilateralism and poses risks to the UK

"How much legal structure will this deal have?" a trade lawyer at a prominent firm asked me yesterday, gesturing at the detritus of a meeting on the conference table in front of him. "About the same as this napkin."

Not even the architects of the trade deal announced between the US and the UK would call it a thing of economic or legal beauty. Seemingly without even a signed document — and designed purely to escape the tariffs that Donald Trump imposed on steel and cars — the pact is closer to a protection payment to a mob boss than a liberalising agreement between sovereign countries.

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (7)

[FONTE: FT, 8/05/2025]

Whether the deal is politically worth it is a calculation only Sir Keir Starmer's UK government can make. Certainly it didn't grant US exporters a huge amount more access to the UK market. But whatever short-term benefit it has given to the UK, it hasn't done a whole lot for the integrity of the global trading system.

The UK isn't even one of the economies most affected by Trump's tariffs. Its car industry is largely export-oriented, but mainly towards the EU: the US takes [less than a fifth](#) of UK exports. It has a relatively small steel industry, [less than 10 per cent of exports from which](#) go across the Atlantic. And since it has barely any trade surplus with the US, the UK was also not threatened with the so-called "reciprocal" tariffs above the 10 per cent baseline duty announced on April 2 and then suspended a week later. The EU, for example, faces another 10 percentage points of tariff, if Trump ever finds the courage to bring it in and risk another financial market meltdown.

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (8)

[FONTE: FT, 8/05/2025]

This agreement with the UK is supposed to be followed by a full trade agreement over the next year, but the country has now put itself in a weak bargaining position over that as well. Trump can withdraw these concessions at any time if those talks don't go his way.

Meanwhile, the most important risk is not to the UK itself but the global trading system. Part of the deal involves reducing protection on imports including ethanol and beef from the US but not from other countries, despite this not being a formal legal trade agreement. The UK has thus undermined the "most favoured nation" principle that underlies the multilateral trading system. Officials strain credibility by claiming it's compatible with World Trade Organization rules as part of a broader package. If other countries want to kick up a fuss, a WTO dispute settlement hearing may soon be sorting that one out. By accepting that it will continue to face the 10 per cent baseline tariff, the UK has also normalised a deeply regressive move.

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (9)

[FONTE: Politico, 12/05/2025]

Trump's tariff deals send Europe to the back of the line

Trump calls the European Union “nastier” than China. The EU is taking a deep breath.



Donald Trump imposed a 10 percent baseline tariff in early April, along with 25 percent levies on cars and metals. | Jim Lo Scalzo/EPA-EFE

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (10)

[FONTE: Politico, 12/05/2025]

As U.S. President Donald Trump advances on trade deals with the U.K. and even with arch nemesis China, the European Union is being left out in the cold — laying bare the profound rupture between the once-close allies.

Despite several attempts at negotiating with Washington to remove Trump's tariffs on European goods, the European Commission, which handles trade policy on behalf of the EU's 27 member countries, has yet to achieve a breakthrough.

Trump imposed a 10 percent baseline tariff in early April, along with 25 percent levies on cars and metals. If the two sides fail to reach a deal by early July, a higher tariff of 20 percent would kick in as Trump seeks to even out a transatlantic trade deficit, which he blames squarely on the EU.

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (11)

[FONTE: Politico, 12/05/2025]

Trump struck a pact with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer late last week to reduce U.S. tariffs on U.K. auto and steel exports — the first such move since the U.S. president imposed a swath of tariffs in early April on goods from across the world.

And on Monday, China nailed its own breakthrough, with Washington and Beijing slashing their tariffs to 30 percent and 10 percent, respectively, on each other's goods.

Hours later, Trump called the EU “nastier than China.” His vitriol is enduring: “The European Union was formed in order to screw the United States,” he said in March before launching his full-scale trade war.

As Washington cuts deals with friend and foe alike, the appeals for tariff relief from Brussels are going unanswered. The bloc — and the €1.6 trillion transatlantic trade relationship — are languishing at the back of the line.

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (12)

[FONTE: Kiel Institute for the World Economy, 12/05/2025]



News

US-China Tariff Pause: Some Relief for USA and China, Minimal Effects on EU

12.05.2025

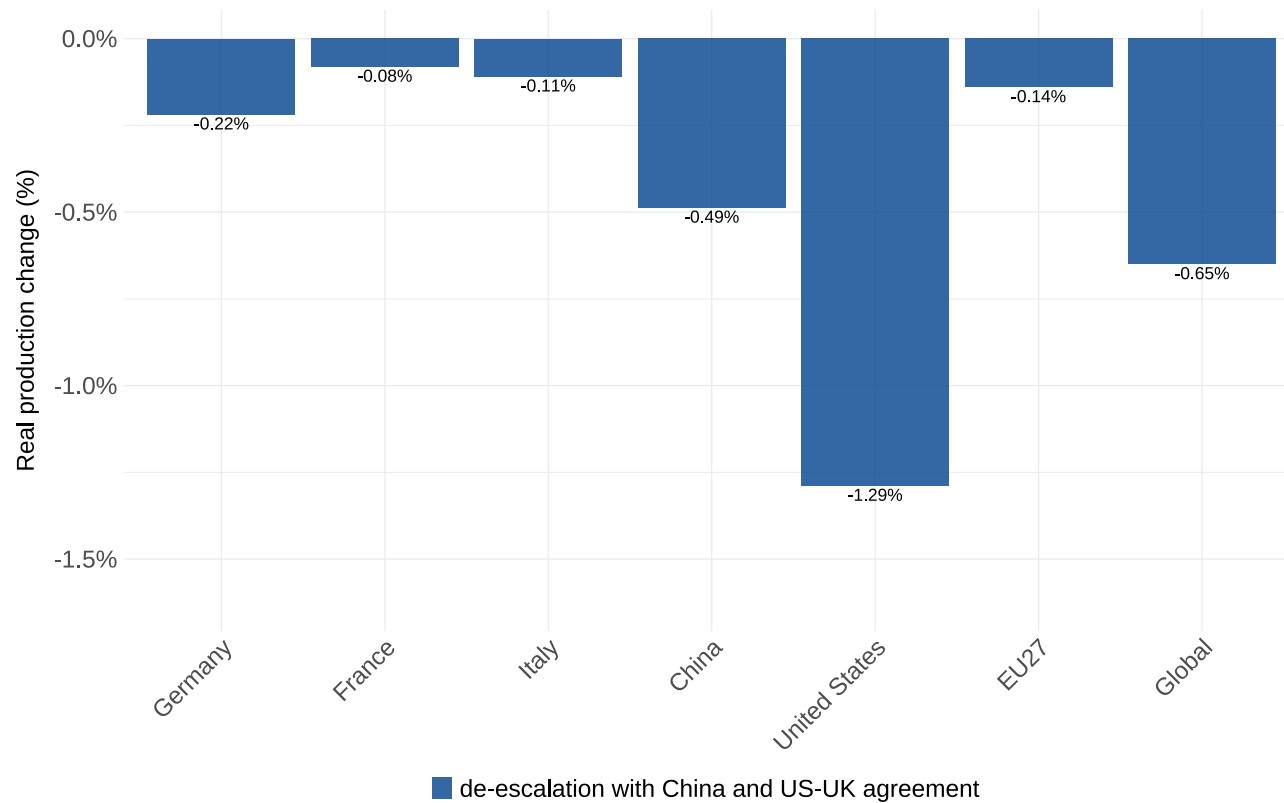


The 90-day “tariff pause” announced today between the US and China is expected to provide noticeable short-term relief, especially for the US economy. Simulations using the KITE model from the Kiel Institute for the World Economy indicate that inflationary pressure in the US may decrease. Current calculations suggest that prices will rise by around 4.3 percent in the short term, which is 1.2 percentage points lower than under the escalated tariff levels with up to an additional 145 percent tariffs from before.

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (13)

[FONTE: Kiel Institute for the World Economy, 12/05/2025]

Short-run changes in real production (in %)



Source: Hinz et al. (2025) — <https://kiel.institute/tariffs> — May 12, 2025

KITE Model

A União Europeia ultrapassada pelo Reino Unido nas negociações com os EUA? (14)

[FONTE: Kiel Institute for the World Economy, 12/05/2025]

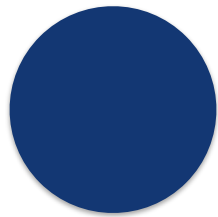
Minimal impacts for Germany and the EU

For Germany and the EU, the effects of the tariff pause remain minimal. The already moderate impacts of the trade conflict change only marginally due to this temporary relief. “Neither Germany nor other EU countries are substantially affected, as the US tariff regime continues to apply globally. However, uncertainty remains, and European businesses must continue to prepare for a volatile situation,” Mahlkow added.

Global situation slightly improves

Globally, the situation is also expected to improve slightly in the short term, albeit less than in the US and China. Simulations indicate that global trade will decline less sharply in the short term compared to previously much higher tariff rates of up to +145 percent. Exports from China to the US are now expected to fall by only 19 percent within a year, with global trade decreasing by 0.65 percent.

Julian Hinz, Research Director for Trade Policy at the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, emphasizes nonetheless: “Trade means prosperity. The EU should use this pause to continue positioning itself as an open and reliable partner in global trade. Only in this way can further escalation and economic isolation be avoided.”



PARTE II – NOTAS BREVES

A nova diplomacia dos EUA para o Médio Oriente e as suas múltiplas consequências (1)

[FONTE: The Economist, 12/05/2025]

Trump resets America's Middle East policy in surprising ways

Hawks are out and pragmatists are in, at least for now

May 12th 2025



Photograph: AFP

THE SAUDIS put on plenty of pomp for Donald Trump when he visited Riyadh, their capital, this week: f-15 fighter jets to escort his plane, riders on Arab horses to accompany his motorcade, lunch in a palace with chandeliers the size of cars. But the most enduring image came from a nondescript antechamber, where on May 14th he shook hands with [Ahmed al-Sharaa](#), Syria's president, a former jihadist who not long ago had a \$10m American bounty on his head.

A nova diplomacia dos EUA para o Médio Oriente e as suas múltiplas consequências (2)

[FONTE: Michael Hirsh / Foreign Policy, 15/05/2025]

A New Authoritarian Era in the Mideast?

By embracing Syria's Sharaa, Trump sanctifies Arab autocracy.

[Michael Hirsh](#) May 15, 2025, 2:48 PM



U.S. President Donald Trump departs the Al Udeid Air Base in Doha, Qatar, for Abu Dhabi.

U.S. President Donald Trump departs al-Udeid Airbase in Doha, Qatar, as he heads to Abu Dhabi on May 15. Win McNamee/Getty Images

A nova diplomacia dos EUA para o Médio Oriente e as suas múltiplas consequências (3)

[FONTE: Michael Hirsh / Foreign Policy, 15/05/2025]

The meeting this week between a U.S. president who doesn't care a fig for democracy and a former anti-American jihadist who is swiftly discovering that democracy isn't likely to work in his country—war-torn Syria—

Donald Trump made that clear even before he shook hands Wednesday with Ahmed al-Sharaa, the Islamist Syrian leader who once spent five years [imprisoned](#) by the United States in Iraq and later toppled Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

In a [speech](#) in Riyadh—where he [credited](#) his new autocratic confederates, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, for prodding him to lift sanctions on Syria—Trump said he was quite consciously leaving behind the failures of past Washington policies.

“In the end, the so-called ‘nation-builders’ wrecked far more nations than they built—and the interventionists were intervening in complex societies that they did not even understand themselves,” Trump said in a clear critique of the U.S. architects of the 2003 Iraq invasion and its quixotic aim of spreading democracy in the region.

A nova diplomacia dos EUA para o Médio Oriente e as suas múltiplas consequências (4)

[FONTE: Michael Hirsh / Foreign Policy, 15/05/2025]

"In the end, the so-called 'nation-builders' wrecked far more nations than they built—and the interventionists were intervening in complex societies that they did not even understand themselves," Trump said in a clear critique of the U.S. architects of the 2003 Iraq invasion and its quixotic aim of spreading democracy in the region.

Instead, Trump said, the best way forward is "the Arabian way." The "great transformation" in the Middle East "has not come from Western intervention noise," or "a radical rejection of your heritage but rather from embracing your national traditions and embracing that same heritage that you love so dearly," he declared.

But let's be clear: Over the past century or so, that "heritage" has embraced either autocracy and oppression on one hand, or radical Islamism on the other, and there's been little in between. Despite Trump's touting of "the gleaming marvels of Riyadh and Abu Dhabi" in his speech, the tragedy of the Arab world is that neither dictatorship nor political Islamism has worked in genuinely lifting those societies into modernity.

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[FONTE: Michael Hirsh / Foreign Policy, 15/05/2025]

And now Trump is effectively sanctifying tyranny for the long run, some critics say.

"We're headed for a new form of authoritarianism in Syria and the region," Nader Hashemi, a scholar of Islamic politics at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, said in a phone interview.

"Because you have an authoritarian-leaning president of the United States who's coordinating with leaders who are also authoritarian, any commitment to human rights and democracy will be nonexistent. Trump's authoritarianism at home is actually emboldening other autocrats to move in that direction. They're saying, 'If he can make certain students disappear from campuses, so can we.'"

Sharaa, to give him credit, has [pledged](#) an open and inclusive Syria, and many Mideast experts praise him for saying the "right" things on national unity and respect for minorities, and at least [fudging](#) when it comes to whether he will impose sharia, or Islamic law.

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[FONTE: Michael Hirsh / Foreign Policy, 15/05/2025]

Joshua Landis, head of the Center for Middle East Studies at the University of Oklahoma and author of the forthcoming *Syria at Independence: Nationalism, Leadership, and Failure of Republicanism*, said Trump's lifting of sanctions was "a great victory" for Sharaa.

"Without it, his government would, in all likelihood, fail. As it is, he now has a fighting chance to jumpstart Syria's failing economy. It is also good news for Syrians, most of whom are in a state of abject poverty," he said in an email.

But Landis added: "The consolidation of Sharaa's government and power is also likely to mean that Syria will be ruled by a highly authoritarian and Islamist government. The constitution puts all power in the president's hands. He gets to appoint all parliamentarians directly or indirectly. He appoints the Supreme Court and heads the army and security forces."

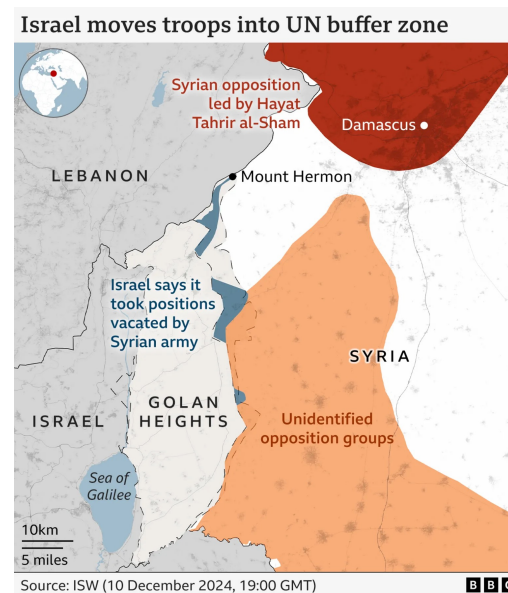
To be fair, it's not that Trump has a lot of choices. And he's probably right to criticize what he called "the so-called 'nation-builders'" and "neocons" of past U.S. governments who "spent trillions and trillions of dollars failing to develop Kabul, Baghdad, [and] so many other cities."

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[FONTE: Times of Israel, 16/05/2025. MAPA: BBC, 10/12/2024]

Report: Israel holding talks with Syria on Sharaa regime joining Abraham Accords

Meeting said held recently in Azerbaijan between IDF Operations Directorate chief, Syrian and Turkish officials; Jerusalem reportedly open to border deal, normalized relations



Israel has been holding secret talks with Syrian officials in recent days, including on the possibility of the new regime joining the Abraham Accords, according to a report Thursday, a day after US President Trump [invited](#) new Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa to join the accords and normalize ties with Israel.

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[FONTE: Times of Israel, 16/05/2025]

The talks are being mediated by the United Arab Emirates, Channel 12 news said, also referring to unspecified wider regional moves being advanced by the United Arab Emirates. A Haaretz report, by contrast, said the talks were being mediated by Qatar and had been going on for months.

Sharaa confirmed last week that security-related talks were being held through mediators, though he did not comment on potential diplomatic relations.

Channel 12 said one meeting was held in recent days in Azerbaijan, where Israel was represented by the chief of the IDF Operations Directorate, Maj. Gen. Oded Basyuk. He met with representatives from the new Syrian government, with Turkish representatives also present, the report said.

Trump on Wednesday urged Sharaa to join the Abraham Accords, as the two leaders met in Riyadh for the first direct talks between leaders of the countries in 25 years.

Trump later told reporters that Sharaa backs such a move. "I told [Sharaa], I hope you're going to join [the Abraham Accords] once you're straightened out, and he said yes," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One. "But they have a lot of work to do."

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[FONTE: Michael Hirsh / Axios, 15/05/2025]

The foreign emoluments clause: What it is and how it relates to Qatar's jet offer

[Avery Lotz](#)



Illustration: Sarah Grillo/Axios

[President Trump](#) has faced immense blowback after he deemed it "stupid" to reject an unprecedented [\\$400 million jet](#) gifted by the Qatari royal family.

The big picture: [Critics contend](#) that accepting the luxury [Boeing 747-8 jet](#) could be a constitutional violation — to be precise, some have said it oversteps the foreign emoluments clause.

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[FONTE: Michael Hirsh / Axios, 15/05/2025]

- Trump, in a Sunday Truth Social post, [characterized](#) the situation as the Defense Department "getting a GIFT, FREE OF CHARGE, of a 747 aircraft to replace the 40 year old Air Force One, temporarily, in a very public and transparent transaction."
- He's also [said](#) the plane would go to his presidential library and that he would not use it after leaving office, suggesting that it would be decommissioned.
- White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt has said that any gifts from foreign governments are "always accepted in full compliance with all applicable laws," but even [some Republicans](#) and Trump loyalists are wary of the idea.

State of play: The plane would be [a historically massive gift](#) — one that experts say poses clear ethical and national security concerns but presents murkier legal ground.

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[FONTE: Michael Hirsh / Axios, 15/05/2025]

What is an emolument?

Simply, an emolument is any salary, fee or profit from employment or holding office.

- Article I of the Constitution [states](#) that "no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State."
- Article II [prohibits](#) the commander-in-chief from receiving any emolument from the states.

Yes, but: Congress has allowed presidents and federal employees to keep gifts from a foreign government [as long as](#) they don't exceed \$480, Axios' Sareen Habeshian and Noah Bressner report.

During his first term, Trump faced [multiple lawsuits](#) over alleged violations of the emoluments clauses, priming the courts to take up historic litigation.

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[FONTE: Michael Hirsh / Axios, 15/05/2025]

What do legal experts say about the Air Force One conundrum?

For legal experts who spoke with Axios, whether or not the gift represents a Constitutional violation relies on the details of the deal under which the jet is accepted.

- Either way, it's created an "ethical headache," said Jessica Tillipman, The George Washington University Law School's associate dean for government procurement law studies, who specializes in corruption issues.

Daniel Weiner, the director of the Brennan Center's Elections and Government Program, told Axios that if the jet is accepted by the U.S. government and remains in the possession of the U.S. government, "it doesn't really pose an Emoluments Clause issue."

- He said it's a different story if there is any provision where the jet is transferred out of the government's custody to "some sort of private foundation, and then potentially made available for President Trump's use after he leaves office as a private citizen."

Context: "The key question is: Does it remain in the possession of the United States, or is it transferred to some sort of private foundation?" Weiner said.

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[FONTE: Frannie Block e Jay Solomon / The Free Press, 14/05/2025]



A nova diplomacia dos EUA para o Médio Oriente e as suas múltiplas consequências (14)

[FONTE: Frannie Block e Jay Solomon / The Free Press, 14/05/2025]

If you were just a casual reader of these facts—an ordinary American who doesn't think much about the Middle East after America's traumatic wars of the 2000s—you would think Qatar is a top American ally, a trustworthy partner, and a key hub of international commerce—a country in good enough standing that the president of the United States would use its plane as Air Force One.

But Qatar is also a seat of the Muslim Brotherhood, a crucial source of financing to Hamas, a diplomatic and energy partner of Iran, a refuge for the Taliban's exiled political leadership, financier and cheerleader of Palestinian terrorism, and the [chief propagandist of Islamism](#) through its media powerhouse, Al Jazeera, which reaches [430 million people](#) in more than 150 countries.

A nova diplomacia dos EUA para o Médio Oriente e as suas múltiplas consequências (15)

[FONTE: Frannie Block e Jay Solomon / The Free Press, 14/05/2025]

Key members of Qatar's royal family have made their admiration for Islamism—and Hamas specifically—very clear. Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, the mother of Qatar's emir and the chairperson of an educational nonprofit funneling millions into American schools, praised the mastermind of the October 7, 2023 massacre, Yahya Sinwar: "He will live on," [she wrote on X](#) after his death last year, "and they will be gone."

The question is: How did a refuge of Islamist radicalism, a country criticized for [modern-day slave labor](#), become the center of global politics and commerce? How did this tiny peninsular country of 300,000 citizens and millions of noncitizen migrant workers manage to put itself smack-dab in the center of global diplomacy—and so successfully ingratiate itself within the Trump administration?

Over the past few months, *The Free Press* investigated these questions. What we found is that no obstacle, no history, no bad headline is too big for Qatar's money.

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[FONTE: Times of India, 16/05/2025]

Gift diplomacy: How Qatar bought its way into America's power circles

Qatar's offer to provide a \$400 million Boeing 747 to the US government-to be potentially used as Air Force One-has reignited scrutiny of the Gulf monarchy's decades-long strategy to buy influence across every corner of American power: Military, academia, politics, media, and business. The jet, dubbed "a palace in the sky," is only the most visible symbol of Qatar's outsize ambition to embed itself in Washington's elite. Why it matters

- The proposed jet isn't a first. In 2018, Turkey's President Erdogan received a similar gift from Qatar. So did Yemen's late dictator Ali Abdullah Saleh. Even Saddam Hussein's Iraq once got a Qatari jumbo jet, back in 2000. Qatar gives planes the way other countries give medals.

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[FONTE: Times of India, 16/05/2025]

- However, at stake is far more than a luxury plane. The Gulf state's economic firepower-derived from the world's third-largest natural gas reserves-has funded an unparalleled soft-power blitz, transforming a desert nation of 300,000 citizens into one of Washington's most influential foreign players.
- The implications? A reshaped US foreign policy posture in the Middle East and a growing chorus of questions about sovereignty, security, and ethics.
- Qatar is now the largest foreign donor to US universities, funneling over \$6.3 billion into schools like Georgetown, Cornell, and Northwestern.
- It has spent over \$225 million on lobbying and PR in Washington since 2017-more than triple what Israel spent in 2021 and almost two-thirds of China's spending.
- Its sovereign wealth fund controls an estimated \$524 billion-equal to over \$1.5 million per citizen-and includes ownership stakes in US infrastructure, real estate, and venture capital.

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[FONTE: Times of India, 16/05/2025]

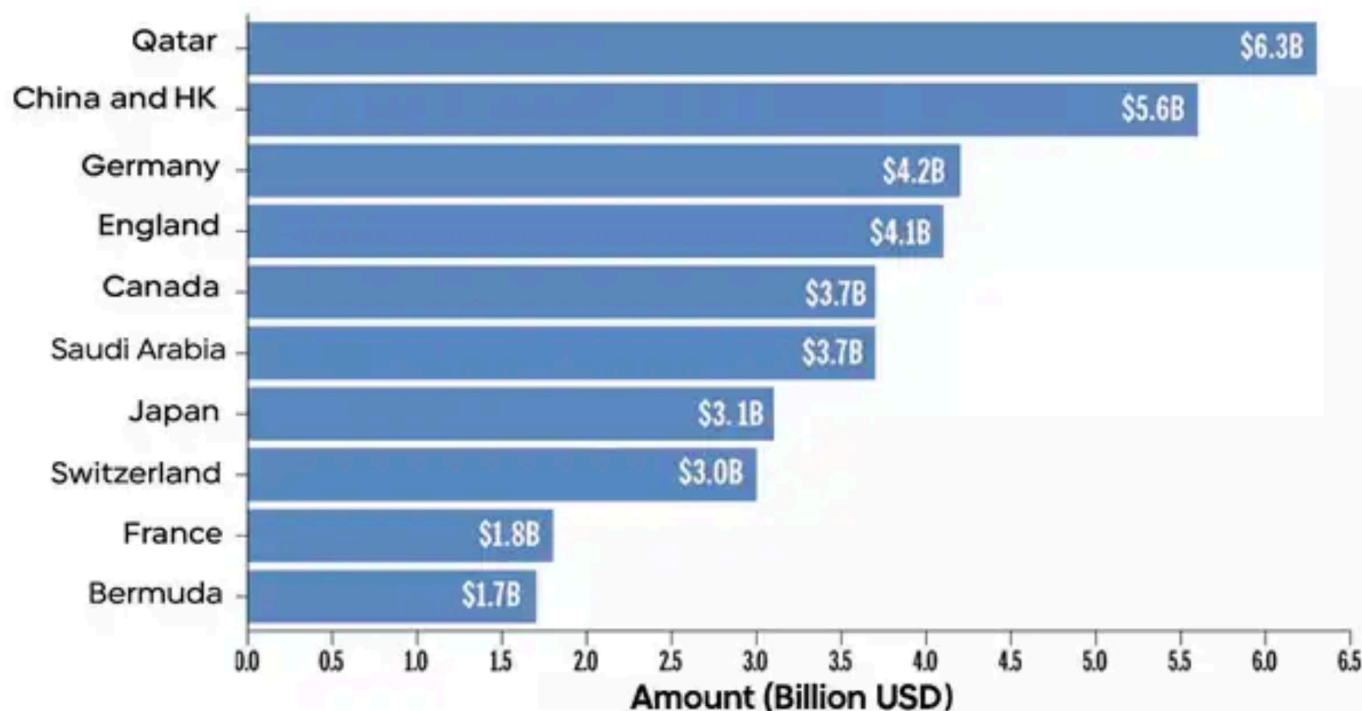
The big picture

- As per a Free Press report, Qatar's leverage isn't limited to elite politics. Its biggest long-term bet is education.
- The country has created Education City outside Doha-a gleaming complex of US university branches, funded entirely by the Qatari state.
- Qatar paid \$760 million to Georgetown University alone and \$1.8 billion to Cornell, with similar deals for Texas A\&M and Northwestern.
- Critics say the influence shows: classroom censorship, limited academic freedom, and a whitewashed portrayal of Qatar's political system.
- In 2023, Texas A&M announced it would shut down its Doha campus by 2028, citing rising national-security concerns. But Georgetown and others renewed their partnerships, and continue to accept Qatari money despite rising pressure from lawmakers and watchdogs.

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[FONTE: Times of India, 16/05/2025]

Top foreign funders of US colleges and universities (all-time)

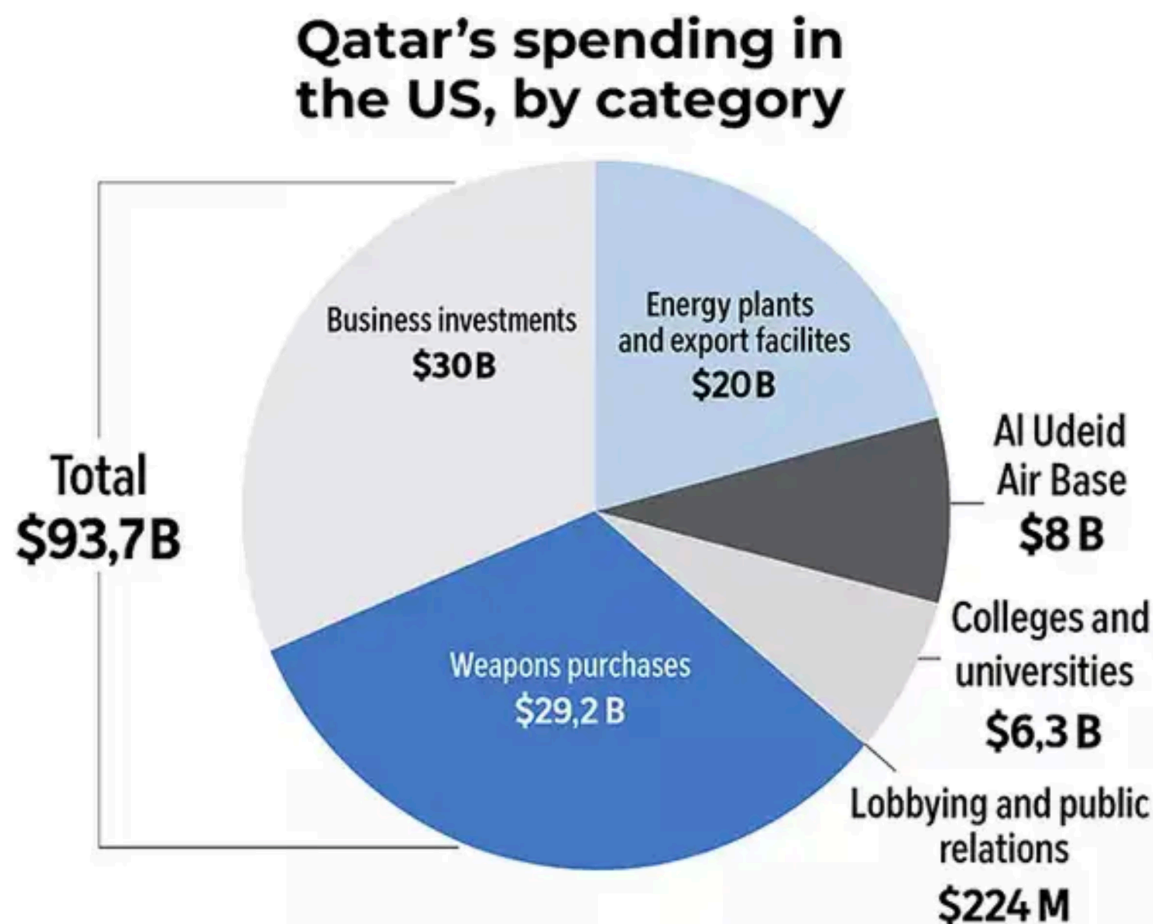


(SOURCE: NETWORK CONTAGION RESEARCH INSTITUTE)

Source: The Free Press

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[FONTE: Times of India, 16/05/2025]



Source: The Free Press

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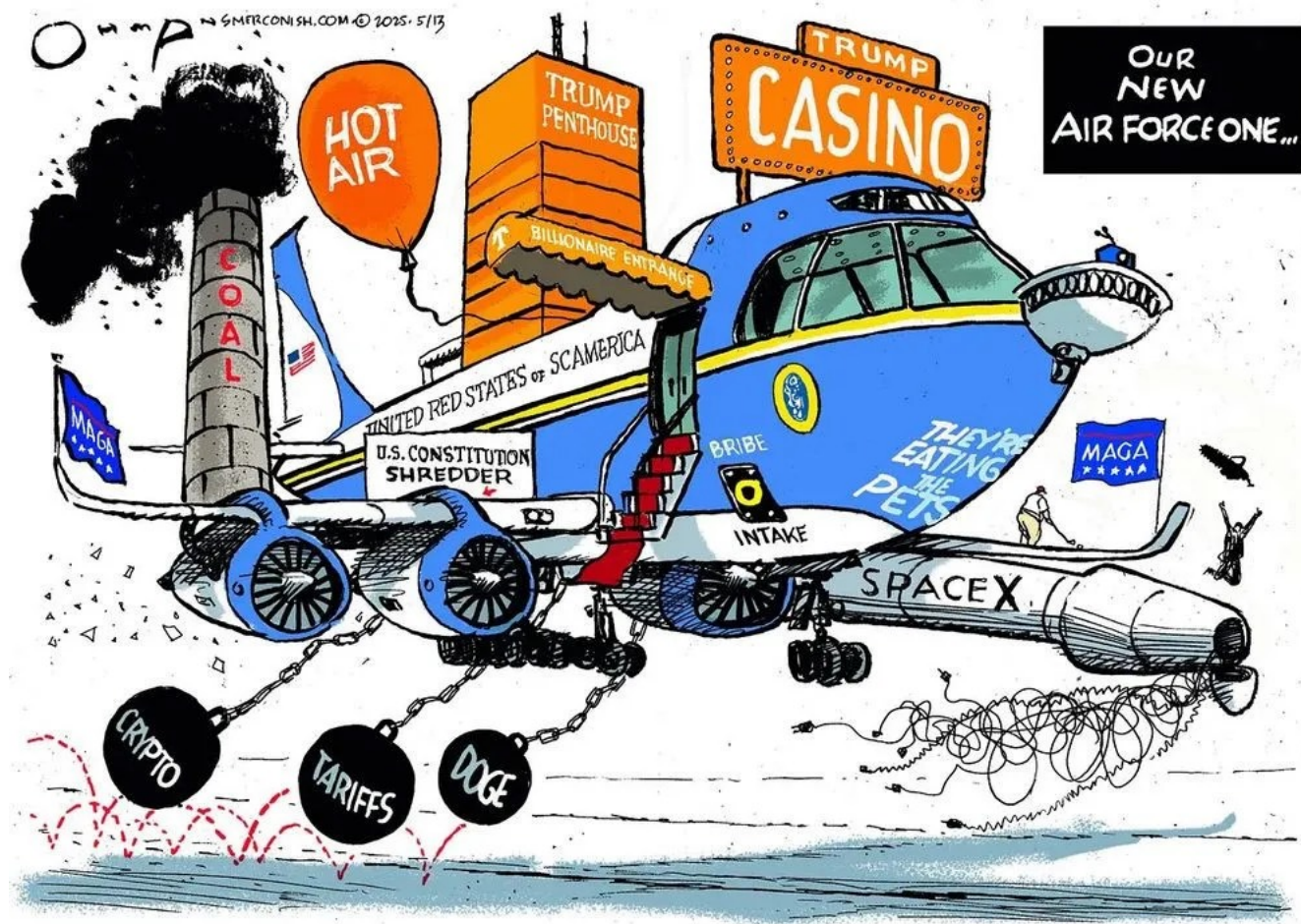
[FONTE: Times of India, 16/05/2025]

Between the lines

- Since 2017, Qatar has spent at least \$225 million on lobbying and public relations in Washington. The government's FARA filings show over 18 firms on its payroll, including prominent names from both political parties.
- Qatar's relationship with the Trump world has turned into a strategic pipeline for influence:
- Attorney general Pam Bondi, who signed off on the 747 deal, previously represented Qatar at a DC lobbying firm billing \$115,000 a month.
- Steve Witkoff, a Trump confidant and special envoy to the Middle East, had a failed New York investment rescued by Qatar for \$623 million. He is now helping broker real estate and security deals with Doha.
- Susie Wiles, Trump's chief of staff, previously led Mercury Public Affairs, which worked for Qatar's embassy.
- The ties are so deep that watchdogs warn of violations of the Emoluments Clause, which bars federal officials from accepting gifts from foreign governments, the Free Press report said.

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[FONTE: Greg Mitchell / Substack]



Sugestões de leitura

