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Trump threatens EU with 50% tariff

The US president said the new levy could enter into force due to trade imbalances with the bloc



US President Donald Trump. © Robert Perry/Getty Images

US President Donald Trump has recommended a "straight 50% tariff" on the entire European Union, as the trade deficit with the bloc is around \$240 billion annually, according to the US trade representative's office. He suggested that the new rate will start being applied on June 1.

Writing on his Truth Social account on Friday, Trump suggested that the EU was initially formed "for the primary purpose of taking advantage of the US on Trade," and stated that the bloc has been "very difficult to deal with."

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He further claimed that the EU's economic policies, taxes, regulations and *“unfair and unjustified lawsuits against American companies”* have led to a trade deficit with the EU of *“more than \$250,000,000 a year,”* which he described as *“totally unacceptable.”*

It was later pointed out that the US president had cited the wrong figure, as the trade deficit with the EU is not \$250 million, as Trump wrote, but rather around \$240 billion, according to data from the US trade representative's office.

“Our discussions with them are going nowhere! Therefore, I am recommending a straight 50% Tariff on the European Union, starting on June 1, 2025,” Trump announced, adding that there would be no tariff on products *“built or manufactured in the United States.”*

In April, Trump imposed a sweeping 20% tariff on all EU goods as well as a 25% tariff on all car imports and metals. However, he later suspended the 20% levy for 90 days, keeping only a 10% baseline tariff.



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Last week, the US president stated that the EU had proven to be very difficult to deal with regarding trade practices, claiming that the bloc was *“in many ways nastier than China.”*

“They treated us very unfairly,” Trump said. *“They sell us 13 million cars; we sell them none. They sell us their agricultural products; we sell them virtually none,”* he claimed, vowing that Washington would *“equalize”* the situation and that *“Europe is gonna have to pay a little bit more.... And America is gonna*

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pay a lot less."

Friday's announcement comes as Trump has significantly revamped Washington's tariff policies since returning to office in January, claiming that the entire world had supposedly been taking advantage of the US.

On April 2, which he dubbed *"Liberation Day,"* Trump imposed a baseline 10% tariff on all goods imported to the country as well as additional surcharges on countries such as China, Mexico and Canada, citing significant trade imbalances.

Shortly after the move, he suggested that the US would later negotiate individual deals with all US trade partners. However, earlier this month, he announced that Washington would set the terms unilaterally. He explained that *"it's not possible to meet the number of people that want to see us,"* claiming that the US had received deal requests from some 150 countries.

The White House has not yet disclosed the terms of these deals or the exact rates that would be applied.

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