European Parliament resolution on the AVMSD obligations in the transatlantic dialogue

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Three months after the EU concluded a trade agreement with the United States, on 23 October 2025, the European Parliament adopted a resolution calling for the rejection of any attempt to consider the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) to be a distortion of trade. This followed criticism of EU audiovisual legislation by the US administration, who labeled it as a trade barrier. Previously, President Donald Trump had also threatened to impose a 100% tariff on films produced outside the US.

In a memorandum published on 21 February 2025 and entitled "Defending American Companies and Innovators from Overseas Extortion and Unfair Fines and Penalties", President Trump indeed emphasised that foreign legal regimes limit cross-border data flow and require American streaming services to fund local productions. In particular, the obligation for on-demand providers to feature at least 30% of EU-produced content in their catalogues has been repeatedly denounced. The United States Trade Representative further echoed this in the 2025 US National Trade Estimate Report, referring to the AVMSD as part of a foreign trade barrier.

In contrast, Members of the European Parliament defend the EU's AVMSD as "legitimate regulation in the public interest". Meeting in Strasbourg, they emphasised that Europe’s audiovisual industry rules must remain untouched. As the EU’s key instrument for creating a single market for audiovisual media services, the Directive aims to foster cultural diversity while ensuring fair conditions for all operators, including television broadcasters, on-demand platforms, and video-sharing services.

In its resolution, the Parliament therefore urges the European Commission to "reject any attempt to consider the AVMSD a distortion of trade, and to defend it as a legitimate regulatory instrument [...]". It further emphasises the importance of excluding audiovisual media services from trade negotiations in order to safeguard the EU and its Member States' ability to design and implement cultural and audiovisual policies that protect and promote cultural diversity. Parliament also stressed that the Directive "operates neutrally and without discrimination for both domestic and foreign providers, thereby ensuring fair competition and a level playing field".

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These developments come as the Commission prepares for the evaluation and possible revision of the AVMSD in 2026.

European Parliament resolution of 23 October 2025 on Audiovisual Media Services Directive obligations in the transatlantic dialogue (2025/2776(RSP))

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-10-2025-0256_EN.html

Defending American Companies and Innovators from Overseas Extortion and Unfair Fines and Penalties

https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/defending-american-companies-and-innovators-from-overseas-extortion-and-unfair-fines-and-penalties/

2025 National Trade Estimate Report

https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/files/Press/Reports/2025NTE.pdf

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