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Answer given by Mr Šefčovič  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(8.1.2026)

1. The implementation of the EU-US Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA)<sup>1</sup> is closely and jointly monitored by the EU and the United States (US) through regular coordination and review. Both sides monitor the implementation of validation and audit processes to ensure that operators benefit from comparable treatment. The Commission will continue to focus on proper implementation, ensured through regular coordination, review and monitoring by the Joint Customs Cooperation Committee to address any arising issues.

2. The two programmes and their mutual recognition are based on the international framework of the World Customs Organisation and aim to enhance the security and safety of the supply chains. Authorised Economic Operators (AEOs) are favourably considered in the risk assessment for controls related to security and safety, to the extent possible.

The Commission's priority is to ensure a consistent application and monitoring of the MRA. As customs simplifications, which are not related to security and safety, fall outside its scope, expanding the MRA in this direction is not currently envisaged.

3. The EU AEO programme<sup>2</sup> offers benefits, including reduced controls, to all AEOs regardless of size or sector, including engineering companies; however, for MRA purposes, benefits are related only to safety and security controls.

Outside the AEO context, the Commission is engaging actively with the US regarding the administrative burdens on EU companies caused by the inclusion process for steel and aluminium derivative products under the US measures on steel and aluminium under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962.

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<sup>1</sup> Decision of the US-EU Joint Customs Cooperation Committee of 4 May 2012 regarding mutual recognition of the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism programme in the United States and the Authorised Economic Operators programme of the European Union (2012/290/EU), Official Journal of the European Union L 144, 5 June 2012: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:22012D0290>.

<sup>2</sup> [https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/customs/authorised-economic-operator\\_en](https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/customs/authorised-economic-operator_en).