



Euro MPs have approved a new deal to allow US anti-terror investigators to access Europeans' bank data. The vote followed tough negotiations with US authorities after a previous agreement was blocked by the European Parliament in February.

EU negotiators say the new deal gives EU officials authority to monitor the US investigators' actions.

The deal gives the US access to bulk data from Swift, a firm that handles millions of bank transactions daily. Washington says the Swift deal is crucial to fighting terrorism, as part of the US Terrorist Financing Tracking Programme (TFTP) set up after the September 2001 attacks on the US.

Top US officials, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, lobbied the EU over the data transfer deal. The agreement was passed with 484 MEPs in favour and 109 against. There were 12 abstentions.

In February Euro MPs rejected an earlier draft agreement, saying the privacy safeguards were inadequate.

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