



Fifth meeting of the Joint Committee of the EU-Japan Agreement for an Economic Partnership

Joint Minutes

Reggio Calabria, Villa San Giovanni, 16 July 2024

On 16 July 2024, the Joint Committee established by the Agreement between the EU and Japan for an Economic Partnership (EPA) held its fifth meeting in Reggio Calabria, Villa San Giovanni. The meeting was co-chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, KAMIKAWA Yoko and the Executive Vice President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Trade, Valdis DOMBROVSKIS.

The Joint Committee commended the steady implementation of the EPA in various fields including trade volume between Japan and the EU, which has increased more than 15% both in imports and exports after the entry into force of the EPA as it reached its 5th anniversary. The Joint Committee looked back at the developments since the previous meeting. It welcomed the entry into force on 1 July 2024 of the Protocol amending the EPA on the free flow of data, the amendment of the Annexes on geographical indications (GIs), the completed authorisation of oenological practices, as well as the first face-to-face meeting of the Joint Dialogue with Civil Society after four years.

The Joint Committee assessed the implementation of the EPA particularly in the areas of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures for the trade of agricultural products, GIs, government procurement, regulatory cooperation, and trade and sustainable development (TSD).

As regards SPS measures, both sides confirmed the commitments based on the Joint Statement of Japan-EU Summit in 2023. Both sides also recognised the work done and stressed the need to finalise the remaining process for the mutual recognition project on regionalisation concerning Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, and confirmed the importance of cooperation on steady progress in the work on both sides.

As regards GIs, both sides confirmed their cooperation for a further extension of the relevant Annexes in an acceptable manner for both sides.

As regards government procurement, the EU co-chair called for further technical work to achieve the effective functioning of a single point of access to tenders in Japan. The Japanese co-chair stated that it would continue to be discussed at the expert-level.

As regards regulatory cooperation and TSD, the Japanese co-chair requested the EU to carefully explain new regulations to stakeholders including Japanese companies, and to take appropriate measures for the implementation of new regulations such as the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation, Regulation on fluorinated greenhouse gases and Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism. The EU co-chair referred to ongoing dialogues and long transition periods for those measures. The EU co-chair raised the need of further cooperation on offshore wind power, including certification procedures, deployment of floating offshore wind projects in Japan's Exclusive Economic Zone, and the access of foreign vessels (cabotage). The Japanese co-chair suggested to continue discussions at technical level.
