



Joint Minutes of the First Meeting of the Committee on Regulatory Cooperation under the Agreement between the European Union and Japan for an Economic Partnership

Video Conference, 20 January 2020

The first meeting of the Committee on Regulatory Cooperation under the Agreement between the European Union (“EU”) and Japan for an Economic Partnership (“EPA”) took place on 20 January 2020 via a video conference.

Participants from MOFA, METI, the Delegation of Japan to the EU, the Directorates-General TRADE, SANTE, GROW, and the EU Delegation to Japan attended the Committee meeting. They had a fruitful exchange of views on the scope and functioning of the committee as well as on matters related to Section A in Chapter 18 of Japan-EU EPA (Good Regulatory Practices and Regulatory Cooperation).

The meeting agenda was adopted (cf. annex).

The Committee confirmed that, for the time being, it would work in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Joint Committee adopted on 10 April 2019, which will apply *mutatis mutandis*. Once the Parties gain practical experience through the implementation of Chapter 18, additional specific rules of procedure would be adopted, including on ways to reflect views of the private sector.

Both sides confirmed that the Committee’s functions can be broadly be described as follows:

- (i) stocktake/overview of regulatory cooperation activities regarding matters covered by other specialised committees of the EPA and Japan-EU cooperation fora, with a view to promoting regulatory cooperation and, where necessary, help streamline activities;
- (ii) serve as a contact point for business stakeholders to submit input on regulatory cooperation, without prejudice to the possible follow-up on specific proposals by other specialised committees, where relevant;
- (iii) sort out and identify possible items of regulatory cooperation;

(iv) promote good regulatory practices.

Both sides exchanged views on ways and mechanisms that would enable the Committee to function in accordance with the above-mentioned roles and acknowledged the importance of overseeing discussions on existing or possible regulatory cooperative activities discussed in other specialised committees and Japan-EU cooperation fora.

Referring to the Japan-EU Business Roundtable (BRT) as one of the main channels for EU and Japanese businesses to put forward views and proposals, Japan and the EU confirmed the importance of considering the voices of the private sector to promote Japan-EU regulatory cooperation. They confirmed their intention to utilise the Committee as a forum where they would exchange information on and examine recommendations or proposals from stakeholders of both sides.

Both sides exchanged information on their practices to ensure “early information on planned regulatory measures” as stipulated in Article 18.6. The EU explained that the European Commission describes all planned major regulatory measures and initiatives in its annual work programme, which is available on its website, in order to ensure early warning and raise awareness about regulatory developments at the EU level. Japan explained that the Cabinet Secretariat compiles and publishes a list of laws expected to be submitted to the National Diet before the start of each Diet session. Japan also described its “e-Gov” system where all laws and regulations under the public consultation process are listed online, and further explained that the ministries publicise online overviews of long-term policy strategies or relevant documents.

Both sides discussed how they would overview and follow up on cooperative activities discussed in other specialised committees and Japan-EU cooperation fora. The EU mentioned that a compilation or a list of activities discussed in other committees and fora would be useful for further discussion on this topic and to promote synergies; both sides confirmed their willingness to work together to draft it ahead of the next meeting of the Committee.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to further enhance Japan-EU regulatory cooperation.
