



Joint Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the Committee on Trade in Goods under the Agreement between the European Union and Japan for an Economic Partnership

Brussels and Tokyo (by videoconference), 17 January 2023

The fourth meeting of the Committee on Trade in Goods under the Agreement between the European Union (“EU”) and Japan for an Economic Partnership (“EPA”) took place on 17 January 2023. The meeting was held by video teleconference.

The meeting allowed a fruitful exchange of views on matters related to Chapter 2 of the EPA (Trade in Goods) between the EU and Japanese participants. On the Japanese side, there were participants from MOFA, MAFF, MOF, METI and the Mission of Japan to the EU; on the EU side, the Directorates-General TRADE and AGRI, as well as the EU Delegation to Japan, were represented.

The enclosed meeting agenda was adopted (cf. attachment).

The committee exchanged information and views on the evolution of bilateral trade in goods in 2021 and over the year 2022, as well as world trends. Both sides noted that EU-Japan trade flows have returned to pre-Covid-19 levels and continue to increase. Both sides acknowledged the large exports of Covid-19 vaccines from the EU to Japan. Both sides also ascertained with satisfaction the increased preference utilisation rate of the EPA and confirmed their common objective to continue joint efforts to facilitate an increase in trade flows, taking advantage of the EPA to that effect.

The committee confirmed the timeframe for the annual exchange of the trade statistics under Article 2.32 of the EPA. In response to the EU’s request, the fourth exchange of data aggregated at both EU level and EU Member State level will take place at the end of June 2023. The content and format of the exchange will correspond to the practice of last year. Japan appreciated that the EU shared the list of data of MFN and preferential tariff rates.

The committee reviewed the statistics concerning the EPA utilisation of tariff preferences, Preferential Utilisation Rate, (PUR) by economic operators in 2021, which were increasing – 71% (Japan’s estimations) for exports from the EU to

Japan and 65% (EU's estimations) for exports from Japan to the EU compared to 2020 – 63% and 60%) respectively. The committee affirmed both sides' willingness to facilitate, to the extent possible, a continuous increase in the utilisation figures, including through awareness raising activities. Both sides concurred on their intention to further cooperate to assess the evolution and facilitate the use of preferences. Both sides shared the view on the importance of stepping up efforts to support companies, including SMEs, to promote the utilisation of the EPA.

With regard to tariff rate quotas ("TRQs"), both sides exchanged views as regards the utilisation of TRQs, in particular the TRQs for cheese, starch and malt for fiscal year 2021. Both sides noted improvements over last year in filling rates of several products, but also concurred to continue monitoring the situation.

The committee referred to the progress achieved in the implementation of phase 3 for the mutual authorisation of oenological practices under the Working Group on Wine held on 7 October 2022. The EU stands ready to start the final internal procedures as soon as Japan can reciprocate.

The committee took note of the discussion on the implementation of UN regulations listed in appendix 2-C-2 to Annex 2-C of the EPA after the third meeting of the Working Group on Motor Vehicles and Parts held in June 2022. The EU proposed to hold the next Working Group on Motor Vehicles in 2023.



4th Meeting of the Committee on Trade in Goods under the Agreement between the European Union and Japan for an Economic Partnership

**17 January 2023, DVC
17:00~19:00 Tokyo (9:00~11:00 Brussels)**

Agenda

- 1. Opening Session**
- 2. Adoption of the Agenda (Article 22.3.3(e))**
- 3. Trends in bilateral trade in goods**
- 4. Exchange of trade statistics (Article 2.32)**
 - a. Organisation of the next annual exchange**
 - b. Assessment of the EPA utilisation rate**
- 5. Implementation of Chapter 2 and Annex 2-A**
 - a. Use of tariff-rate quotas**
 - b. Activities of the Working Groups under the auspices of the Trade Committee (Article 22.4)**
- 6. Recap of the session**
- 7. Closing session (date and venue of the next meeting)**