

Joint Statement
of the second meeting of the European Union - Japan Digital Partnership Council

The second meeting of the European Union - Japan-Digital Partnership Council took place in Brussels on 30 April 2024. The meeting was co-chaired by the European Commissioner for the Internal Market, Thierry BRETON, the Japanese Minister for Digital Transformation KONO Taro, the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications, MATSUMOTO Takeaki, and the Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry ISHII Taku.

The European Union and Japan (hereinafter referred to as “both sides”) reaffirmed the importance of the ever-closer strategic partnership between the European Union and Japan in upholding the free and open international order based on the rule of law and in promoting their shared values and vision for the digital transformation including human-centric approach to digital transformation and respect for fundamental rights. Both sides took stock of progress since the first meeting of the European Union-Japan Digital Partnership Council (Tokyo, 3 July 2023) and announced new deliverables. They also highlighted the importance of stronger stakeholder engagement including through the EU-Japan Business Round Table and dedicated initiatives of the EU-Japan Center for Industrial Cooperation.

The following topics were discussed:

1. Promoting a common stance on Data Free Flow with Trust

Both sides welcome the launch of the Institutional Arrangement for Partnership, including the establishment of the DFFT Expert Community at the OECD which will facilitate and advance Data Free Flow with Trust on the basis of concrete projects and best practices coming from both the technological and legal fields building on the recent bilateral agreement on cross-border data flows. Both sides continue to cooperate on further strengthening the Institutional Arrangement for Partnership including at the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting 2-3 May 2024. Commissioner Breton and Minister Kono signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation on Digital Identities and Trust services** that may be presented at the OECD including the Ministerial Council Meeting on 2-3 May 2024 as a bilateral best practice to facilitate Data Free Flow with Trust.

Both sides welcomed the ongoing discussion to expand the scope of the EU adequacy decision for Japan to academia and the public sector. This development could further boost research and regulatory cooperation, to the advantage of both sides. Both sides will also continue working on promoting convergence between their regulatory approaches to data flows in order to foster interoperability, in particular through cooperation on instruments such as model contractual clauses.

2. Bilateral cooperation on data governance

Both sides will continue cooperation with a view to promoting interoperability among **Common European data spaces and Japan data spaces (including DATA-EX and Ouranos Ecosystem)** involving their respective industry associations. This cooperation will also cover standardisation in this area.

3. Semiconductors

In line with the Memorandum of Cooperation on Semiconductors signed on 4 July 2023 between the European Commission and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, both sides envisage to explore the possibility of establishing a team of experts which will develop a collaborative research programme covering sustainable manufacturing, heterogeneous integration and leading-edge production processes. They are also preparing an Administrative Arrangement on a **Public Support Transparency Mechanism** which will enable information exchange of public support provided by each side to the semiconductor sector with a view to ensuring a level playing field.

4. Submarine cables

Both sides confirmed the importance of deploying secure and resilient submarine cable infrastructures, in line with the **Memorandum of Cooperation on submarine cables for secure, resilient and sustainable global connectivity**, signed on 3 July 2023, between the European Commission and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. Both sides would continue cooperation on developing direct connectivity links between Europe and Japan, for example, via the Arctic, taking into account potential of commercial opportunities, trusted cross-border data flows and oceanographic research. Both sides cooperate with like-minded countries involved in transoceanic undersea cables including Arctic connectivity to join forces with their trusted entities to manufacture, install, operate and maintain submarine cables.

5. HPC/Quantum Computers

Both sides confirmed the importance of continuous cooperation in **High Performance Computing** and identified bilateral cooperation in hybrid Quantum-HPC applications and use cases. Concerning **Quantum**, both sides decided to explore topics of cooperation for **joint projects in basic research in Quantum** subject to the annual budgetary planning of each side. They also decided to explore some complementary areas of cooperation such as the creation of a joint library of algorithms, the enabling technologies to make access to quantum computing as simple as possible for a wider audience, notably small firms, and the exchange of researchers and engineers on various industrial sectors among both sides.

6. Cybersecurity

Both sides concurred on continuing to promote the compatibility of their respective product security frameworks, notably the upcoming European Cyber Resilience Act and Japan's Internet of Things (IoT) labeling scheme currently under development. Both sides concurred on cooperating when implementing these frameworks, including by strengthening expert cooperation on standards development activities and coordinating with other like-minded partners. They also concurred on exploring possibilities for cooperation to address the cybersecurity skills gap and to enhance collaboration in capacity building including through the annual "Industrial Control Systems Cybersecurity Week" for the Indo-Pacific Region which includes the ASEAN countries, co-hosted by Japan, the European Union and the United States. Both sides will continue to look into the possibilities to cooperate on information sharing activities.

7. 5G, Beyond 5G/6G

Both sides welcome the launch of the call in early 2024 of **collaborative research concerning 6G**, namely for the evolution of Radio Access Networks (RAN), following 6G standardisation orientations, paving the way for future advancements towards AI-native radio access networks. Both sides concurred on supporting global standardisation initiatives such as the 3GPP which will be instrumental in developing 6G technologies that reflect a common vision for 6G. Both sides also highlighted the value of open ,secure, innovative and resilient networks and to strengthen the cooperation on the development of such networks including virtualized ones which require cloud services alongside established architectures. Both sides concur on cooperating on promoting secure and trusted digital connectivity in third countries and explore cooperation in line with the EU-Japan Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity.

8. Artificial Intelligence

Both sides acknowledge and welcome the establishment of EU AI Office and Japan's AI Safety Institute and are committed to future collaboration between the organisations on the basis of a future administrative arrangement. Both sides stressed the need to further advance the Hiroshima AI Process and its outcomes that promote safe, secure and trustworthy AI, and they are committed to accelerating its outreach beyond the G7 including at the forthcoming OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (2-3 May). In addition, both sides will share updated information about the Japanese and the EU organisations that support the Hiroshima Process International Code of Conduct for Organizations Developing Advanced AI Systems and will encourage their commitment to this Code. Both sides will continue to foster interoperability between AI governance frameworks on the basis of the Hiroshima AI process. As a first step towards interoperability, both sides will share information on their AI governance frameworks including the AI Pact initiated by the European Commission and the AI Guidelines for Business developed by Japan.

9. Online Platforms

In order to ensure a safe online environment where freedom of expression is guaranteed, both sides will deepen cooperation in the area of online platform regulation. Both sides will explore establishing a **regular information sharing channel** at the appropriate level. In order to foster fair and contestable digital markets in the field of digital markets regulation and competition on online platforms, both sides will further continue to deepen bilateral and multilateral cooperation by sharing challenges and experiences in policy development and implementation.

10. Next Digital Partnership Council meeting

The third meeting of the Digital Partnership Council is planned to take place in 2025 in Tokyo.