

The background of the image features the European Union flag (blue with twelve yellow stars) on the left and the Japanese flag (white with a red circle) on the right, both appearing to be draped and waving. The text is centered over the blue portion of the EU flag.

**EU-JAPAN  
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP  
AGREEMENT (SPA)**

Enhanced Cooperation to Resolve Global Challenges

## ACTING TOGETHER

Japan is a strategic partner for the EU, sharing values that include democracy, the rule of law, open markets and respect for human rights. We cooperate on a wide range of issues ranging from peace-building and anti-piracy missions to science and innovation.

With so much to gain, I sincerely believe that the EU and Japan can both benefit from a closer partnership on all fronts, where we jointly tackle such global challenges as climate change, energy security, terrorism and development. It is also necessary to acknowledge the importance of personal exchanges between citizens in the EU and Japan, which are crucially contributing to enhancing our mutual understanding and consolidating a strong and durable bilateral relationship.

Based on a longstanding cooperation, shared values and principles such as democracy, the rule of law, human rights, good governance, multilateralism and open market economies, the EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) is a framework to promote political and sectoral cooperation and joint actions in more than 40 areas of common interest.

To support the implementation of the SPA, the European Union launched the Support Facility for the Implementation of the EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2019, which aims to quantitatively and qualitatively upgrade bilateral relations by enhancing EU-Japan relations and enriching EU-Japan dialogues through the organisation of conferences, workshops, technical seminars and visits, studies and other initiatives. These activities bring together stakeholders from Japan, the EU and the Member States, providing a framework for practical cooperation, joint projects and mutual understanding.



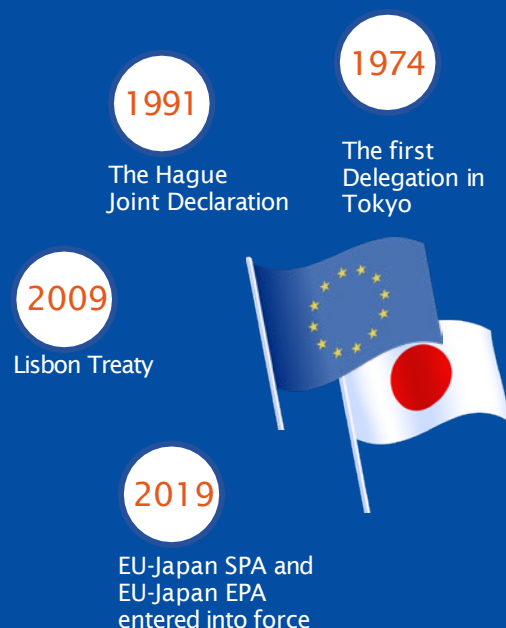
Jean-Eric Paquet,  
Ambassador of the European Union (EU) to Japan  
DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO JAPAN

## EU AND JAPAN RELATIONS

### A LONG HISTORY OF JOINT COLLABORATION

The European Union has had a diplomatic office in Japan since 1974, when what was then the European Communities opened the first Delegation in Tokyo, and this has evolved to become the Delegation of the European Union with the Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force in December 2009.

The scope of the overall relationship has broadened in recent years and now goes far beyond the earlier trade-related focus of the 1970s and 1980s. Building on shared fundamental values, top leaders have met at the annual EU-Japan Summit since 1991 (The Hague Joint Declaration).



## TODAY'S PARTNERSHIP, STRONGER THAN EVER

The EU-Japan partnership has undergone a major uplift over the past five years. The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), as well as the EU-Japan Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure, form a comprehensive institutional framework for enhanced bilateral cooperation across a variety of domains. The recently published EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific adds to the overall enabling structural environment of the bilateral relationship.



### The EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)

is a legally binding pact covering political dialogue, policy cooperation as well as cooperation on regional and global challenges, including environment and climate change, development policy and disaster relief, and security policy.



### The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)

is the largest free trade agreement ever, covering a third of the world's GDP. This ambitious, comprehensive pact is not only about stimulating growth and trade liberalisation: its added value lies in its contribution to setting norms at a high level in areas like environmental protection, social, and labour standards.



### The Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure

was signed during the first Europe-Asia Connectivity Forum in September 2019, and signals the EU and Japan's intentions to work together on all dimensions of connectivity, bilaterally and multilaterally, promoting the highest standards of economic, fiscal, financial, social and environmental sustainability.



### The Green Alliance

was launched in May 2021. The cooperation under the Green Alliance ranges from climate, environment, circular economy and clean energy to other sectors such as transport, trade, research and innovation, and financial regulation.



### The Digital Partnership

was signed in 2022. It is EU's first-ever Digital Partnership, through which EU and Japan aim to deepen their cooperation in areas of high economic potential, such as on Generative Artificial Intelligence, digital transformation of SMEs, interoperability of trust services underpinning digital trade and data free flow, semiconductors and sustainable submarine connectivity.

### KEY REGULAR DIALOGUES

Alongside these agreements, the EU and Japan continue to hold regular dialogue meetings on a variety of policy areas. The key regular dialogues are:

- ICT Policy Dialogue
- Cyber Dialogue
- Space Dialogue
- Industrial Policy Dialogue
- EU-Japan Customs Cooperation
- High Level Dialogue on the Environment
- High Level Bilateral Dialogue on Climate Change
- Energy Dialogue
- Food Safety Dialogue
- High Level Dialogue on Fisheries and Maritime Affairs
- Macroeconomic Dialogue
- EU-Japan Joint Financial Regulatory Forum
- Transport Policy Dialogues
- Competition Policy Dialogue
- Gender

Additionally, the EU and Japan have a regular dialogue on human rights and cooperate in various forums, such as the UN Human Rights Council and in the UN 3rd Committee. This very practical cooperation across a variety of policy fields contributes to establishing international norms.



# EU-JAPAN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

## Main Goals

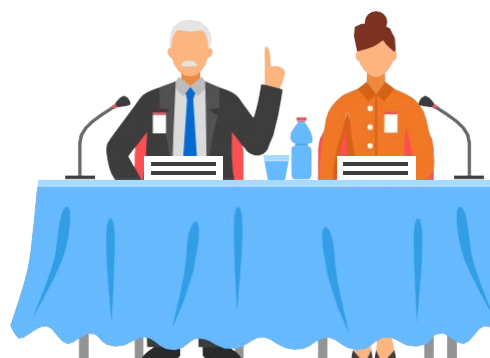
### THE PURPOSE OF THE SPA, AS STATED IN ART.1 IS TO:

1. Strengthen the overall partnership between the Parties by furthering political and sectoral cooperation and joint actions on issues of common interest
2. Provide a long-lasting legal foundation for enhancing bilateral cooperation as well as cooperation in international and regional organisations and fora
3. Contribute jointly to international peace and stability through the promotion of peaceful settlement of disputes in conformity with the principles of justice and international law
4. Contribute jointly to the promotion of shared values and principles, in particular democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms

SHARING AND PROMOTING VALUES



COLLABORATING IN INTERNATIONAL FORA



SETTING NORMS AND STANDARDS

## EPA and SPA Timeline

- 2011**
  - Preparations launched for both the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and a binding Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA).
- March 2013**
  - Negotiations launched for both agreements.
- July 2017**
  - Agreement reached on the EPA
- April 2018**
  - Negotiations conclude on the SPA after 13 rounds
- July 2018**
  - SPA and EPA signed at the Tokyo summit
- November 2018**
  - European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee endorsed the SPA
- December 2018**
  - European Parliament's plenary gave its consent to the SPA

## Main Features

The EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) is the first bilateral framework agreement between the EU and Japan. It aims to ensure closer political and economic cooperation on a whole host of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues.

### THE SPA IS UNIQUE BECAUSE:



It strengthens the overall partnership, by promoting political and sectoral cooperation and joint actions in more than 40 areas of common interest.

Therefore, the agreement will be the basis for the EU and Japan to jointly promote stability, peace and prosperity globally, as well as an open international system. It has a far-reaching impact on relations between the EU, its Member States and Japan for years to come.

## Priority Areas

- Peace and Security**  
 As like-minded global partners, the EU and Japan have a shared responsibility and commitment towards achieving peace, stability and prosperity of the world as well as human security. They are resolved to work closely to address major global challenges related to crisis situations, disarmament, terrorism, organised crime, personal data and cyber issues, maritime affairs and judicial cooperation.
- Environment and Energy**  
 The SPA puts the EU and Japan in the forefront of environmental protection, which includes energy and climate change, emphasising joint cooperation in the framework of relevant international agreements and instruments. The EU and Japan must take the lead in combating climate change and its adverse effects and work in close coordination in international organisations and fora, including energy, sustainable agriculture, forestry and fishery resources.
- New Technologies and Innovation**  
 The shaping of the digital future is one of the most important issues in the EU and Japan. The SPA consequently contains a number of relevant articles about the shared interest in enhancing cooperation on science, technology and innovation, including outer space. Regarding the area of information and communication technologies, the SPA contains clear references to key issues, such as electronic communications, including internet governance and online safety.
- Social Affairs and People-to-People Exchanges**  
 Japan and the EU will work together to address common challenges in areas such as urbanisation, employment, migration and health, including those arising from demographic dynamics and pandemics. At the same time, people-to-people and institutional exchanges in the areas of culture, tourism, higher education, youth and sports will be promoted and enhanced.

## Cooperation Fields

- 1 Democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms
- 2 Promotion of peace and security
- 3 Crisis management
- 4 Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction
- 5 Transferring control of conventional weapons, including small arms
- 6 Promoting the investigation and prosecution of serious crimes
- 7 Counter terrorism
- 8 Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risk mitigation
- 9 International and regional cooperation and reform of the United Nations
- 10 Development policy
- 11 Disaster management and humanitarian action
- 12 Economic and financial policy
- 13 Science, technology and innovation
- 14 Transport (aviation, maritime and railway sectors)
- 15 Outer space
- 16 Industrial affairs
- 17 Customs
- 18 Taxation
- 19 Tourism
- 20 Information society
- 21 Consumer policy
- 22 Environment
- 23 Climate change
- 24 Urban policy
- 25 Energy
- 26 Agriculture
- 27 Fisheries
- 28 Maritime affairs
- 29 Employment and social affairs
- 30 Health
- 31 Judicial affairs
- 32 Combating corruption and organised crime
- 33 Combating money laundering and financing of terrorism
- 34 Combating illicit drugs
- 35 Cyber issues
- 36 Passengers' name records
- 37 Migration
- 38 Personal data protection
- 39 Youth education and sport
- 40 Culture

# SUPPORT FACILITY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU-JAPAN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (SPA)

## The Facility

The EU launched a **Support Facility** in 2019 to contribute to the effective implementation of the SPA, including strengthened cooperation in selected policy areas of EU-Japan mutual interest.

The project aims to enhance awareness, understanding and transparency of the EU-Japan SPA amongst stakeholders and the general public, to support EU-Japan policy dialogues, to promote the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders and to align **legislative** and **policy** approaches in areas of mutual interest, including by implementing **joint EU-Japan initiatives**.

THE SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE FACILITY INCLUDE THE ORGANIZATION OF:

- Conferences
- Workshops
- Technical seminars and visits
- Studies
- Legal analysis
- Innovative activities that enhance and enrich EU-Japan relations and dialogues

## How It Works

The initiatives to be promoted are usually identified in the context of High-Level Sector Dialogues and EU-Japan bilateral talks, which take place on a regular basis. The activities are a response to the priorities and mutual interests of the EU and Japan, and they involve both the EU Directorates General and their Japanese counterparts in a proactive way.

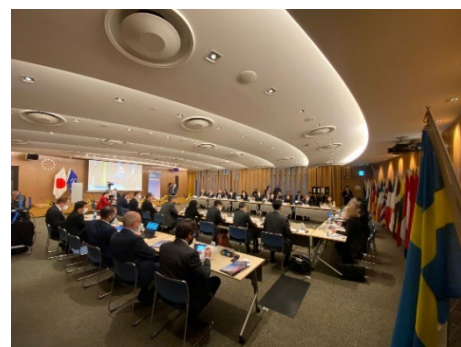
## How to Get Involved

The SPA aims to involve a broad spectrum of stakeholders. **Public entities, private businesses, civil society organisations and academics** with connections to EU-Japan relations are encouraged to participate in the activities and propose new potential initiatives aligned with the priorities and shared interests of the EU and Japan.

## Completed Activities

The EU and Japan have already collaborated on several projects in a variety of areas, bringing together stakeholders and experts with an aim towards strengthening bilateral ties, bolstering innovation and informing future policies. These include:

- Connectivity Seminar to share connectivity initiatives and examples of specific projects for collaboration between the EU and Japan in December 2022
- Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights related 4 workshops, including a side event of G7 Summit, to enhance bilateral cooperation in the area gender, 2022-23.
- Literature review, gender stakeholder mapping, institutional exchange and 3 thematic workshop to incorporate the issue of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Japan's recovery efforts from Covid-19 in 2022-23.
- Green Transition Seminars (Batteries, Plastic, Renewable energy, Climate science) to provide an opportunity to debate European environmental and climate change policies with the broader stakeholders in Japan in April 2023.
- SID Seminars to disseminate information on the EU's and Japan's activities under Mission Innovation; and to present policy developments and concrete actions related to the development of Solar Energy technologies in July 2023.
- Seminar to mark the 75th anniversary since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Connectivity Seminar held at the EU Delegation to Japan, December 2022



Working lunch, with the presence of EU Commissioner Dalli, within the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Japan's recovery efforts from Covid-19 in 2022-23, June 2023



Panel-discussion during the Seminar to mark the 75th anniversary since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, December 2023

The opportunities for EU-Japan collaboration promoted and funded by the support facility can cover a wide range of areas, including:



### Connectivity Cooperation

The EU and Japan's approach to connectivity and sustainable infrastructure is based on clear values and interests, namely that connectivity must be sustainable, comprehensive, and rules-based.



### Green Recovery and Climate Change

The EU and Japan share the aim of becoming climate-neutral by 2050. We have formed a Green Alliance to accelerate the transition of both economies towards becoming climate-neutral, circular and resource-efficient in the coming decades.



### Digitalisation

Both Japan and the EU have the interest to define practical areas and modalities of digital cooperation, explore multilateral or trilateral cooperation prospects with other like-minded partners, and assess their implications for their respective technological development, their weight in the digital economy, and their capacity to frame the global digital governance.



### Security & Defence

Collaborating on capabilities in the areas of maritime security, peacekeeping, *cybersecurity* and disinformation to adapt to a shifting geopolitical landscape.



### Outer Space

Identifying opportunities to provide mutual support to establish and improve capabilities and share information about actions and events that might affect the safety and stability of the space domain. Both the EU and Japan can benefit from information sharing and mutual learning among legal and policy practitioners.



### Health

Collaboration between the EU and Japan will help repair the immediate economic and social damage brought about by the coronavirus pandemic. Our societies and our economies must be greener, more digital, more resilient and a better fit for the current and forthcoming challenges.

## Useful Information

EU-Japan SPA (legal text, EU languages): [eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT)

EU-Japan SPA (legal text, Japanese / English): [www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/erp/ep](http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/erp/ep)

Delegation of the European Union to Japan: [eeas.europa.eu/delegations/japan](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/japan)

Mission of Japan to the European Union: [www.eu.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop\\_ja/index.html](http://www.eu.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop_ja/index.html)

European Parliamentary Research Service: Japan: [epthinktank.eu/tag/japan](http://epthinktank.eu/tag/japan)

EEAS: EU-Japan Relations: [eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en](http://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en)

MOFA: EU-Japan Relations: [www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/eu/index.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/eu/index.html)

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