

EU-Japan: Council adopts decision to sign trade agreement

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European Union and Japan have agreed on a new, ambitious and progressive trade deal that will enable European companies to tap into Japan's large market

On 6 July, the Council adopted a package of decisions on the **economic partnership agreement with Japan** (EPA), including:

- a decision on the **signature** of the agreement;
- a decision to request the **consent of the European Parliament for the conclusion** of the agreement.

The Council adopted a decision on the signing and provisional application of a **strategic partnership agreement** (SPA) between the EU and Japan on 26 June 2018.

The EU and Japan are expected to sign both agreements at a summit on 11 July 2018 in Brussels.

Economic partnership agreement

The EPA is a highly ambitious and comprehensive trade agreement. When fully implemented, 99% of the tariffs applied on EU exports to Japan, which currently amount to about €1 billion, will be removed.

The agreement will create sizeable new opportunities for EU agricultural exports, removing the existing Japanese tariffs on products such as cheeses or wines, while protecting EU intellectual property rights on Japanese markets. It will also open up services markets and significantly increase EU companies' access to Japan's procurement bids.

The EPA is based on the highest standards of labour, safety, environment and consumer protection. It is also the first trade agreement including a specific commitment to the Paris climate agreement.

Trade negotiations with Japan had been conducted since March 2013. At the EU-

Japan summit of 6 July 2017, both parties reached agreement in principle on the main elements of a free trade deal, known as the economic partnership agreement (EPA). Negotiations on all outstanding issues were concluded in December 2017.

Negotiations with Japan continue on investment protection standards and investment protection dispute resolution. The firm commitment on both sides is to move towards an agreement in the investment protection negotiations as soon as possible.

Strategic partnership agreement

The SPA is the first-ever framework agreement between the EU and Japan. It seeks to strengthen cooperation and dialogue across a broad range of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues. It highlights the shared values and common principles that constitute the basis for the deep and long-lasting cooperation between the EU and Japan as strategic partners, including democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The agreement will reinforce the cooperation in fields such as international peace and security, cyber crime, energy security, climate change mitigation, innovation and judicial and law enforcement cooperation.

The EU and Japan have established a strategic partnership in 2001. On 29 November 2012, the Council authorised the Commission and the High Representative to open negotiations with Japan on a framework agreement aimed at further strengthen the EU-Japan relationship. The negotiations were successfully concluded in April 2018.

[Visit the meeting page](#) [Download as pdf](#)

[EU Trust Fund for Africa: additional €90.5 million to strengthen border management and protection of migrants in North Africa](#)

This follows last week's European Council's [conclusions](#) in which Leaders committed to stepping up support along the Central Mediterranean route. The new programmes under the [EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#) will increase EU assistance to refugees and vulnerable migrants and improve partner countries' ability to better manage their borders.

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** commented: *"Today's new programmes will step up our work to managing migration flows in a humane and*

sustainable way, by saving and protecting lives of refugees and migrants and providing them with assistance and by fighting against traffickers and smugglers. It is our integrated approach that combines our action at sea, our work together with partner countries along the migratory routes, including inside Libya, and in the Sahel. This work has already brought results and will bring more if member states will be consistent with the commitments they have been taking since the establishment of the Trust Fund at the Valletta summit, in 2015."

Commissioner for European Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes **Hahn**, added: *"Partnership is key to respond to the challenges posed by irregular migration. By working together with our southern neighbours we can tackle this challenge and bring benefits to the partner countries, the migrants and Europe. Today's new programmes will provide support to authorities to improve border management but at the same time will also ensure protection and emergency assistance for vulnerable migrants."*

The newly adopted €90.5 million in assistance will fund 3 programmes, which will complement ongoing EU efforts in the region:

- Through the programme on **border Management for the Maghreb region** worth €55 million, the EU will support efforts of national institutions in **Morocco** and **Tunisia** to save lives at sea, improve maritime border management and fight against smugglers operating in the region. This programme, implemented by the Italian Ministry of Interior, together with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), will focus on capacity building and providing and maintaining equipment;
- Building on existing [programmes](#), the EU will reinforce its support to the protection of refugees and migrants in **Libya** at disembarkation points, in detention centres, in remote southern desert areas and urban settings. The **"Integrated approach to protection and emergency assistance to vulnerable and stranded migrants in Libya"** programme, worth €29 million, will be implemented together with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). It will also promote initiatives to develop economic opportunities for migrants in the domestic labour market, together with the Libyan Ministry of Labour;
- With an additional €6.5 million, the EU will reinforce its **assistance to vulnerable migrants**, supporting the 2014 Moroccan National Strategy on migration. It will facilitate access to basic services for vulnerable migrants and improve local associations' and organisations' capacity to effectively deliver those services. Civil Society Organisations will implement this programme.

Background

The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa was established in 2015 to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. The budget allocated so far amounts to €3.43 billion from the EU, EU Member States and other donors. So far, 164 programmes across the 3 regions (North of Africa, Sahel/Lake Chad and Horn of Africa) have been approved for a total amount of around €3.06 billion.

With today's addition, €461 million from the North of Africa window were mobilised for 19 programmes responding to multiple needs across the region and beyond.

The programmes adopted follow the commitment of the [European Council of 28 June 2018](#) to step up support along the Central Mediterranean route for coastal and Southern communities, humane reception conditions, cooperation with countries of origin and transit, and increase assistance to countries affected by increased flows along the Western Mediterranean, in particular Morocco. The EU continues to maintain its support to the activities conducted in Libya by the International Organisation for Migration and the UN Refugee Agency.

For more information

[‘North of Africa Window’ of the EU Emergency Trust Fund](#)

Factsheets: [The North of Africa Window](#) and [Libya](#)

[Communication of 25 January 2017: Migration on the Central Mediterranean route. Managing flows, saving lives](#)

[Annex to the Communication](#)

[Central Mediterranean Route: Protecting migrants and managing irregular flows](#)

EIOPA seeks evidence on the use of Big Data

Today, the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) launched a European Union-wide thematic review on Big Data as a follow-up to the European Supervisory Authorities' cross-sectorial [review of the use of Big Data](#) published in March this year.

The purpose of the thematic review is to gather empirical evidence on the use of Big Data by insurance undertakings and intermediaries along the whole insurance value chain, i.e. in pricing and underwriting, in product development, in claims management, as well as in sales and marketing. The review specifically focuses on the motor and health insurance markets.

More information in the [press release](#).

EIOPA issues Mediation Opinion regarding the determination of the correct insurance class for statutory risks

Today, the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) published its Mediation Opinion regarding the determination of the correct insurance class for the insurance policy known as “statutory risks” in France.

The mediation conducted by EIOPA’s Mediation Panel involved the Autorité de contrôle prudentiel et de résolution, the French national supervisory authority, as host authority and the Central Bank of Ireland, as home authority of those insurance undertakings that offer this policy on a freedom to provide services in France.

In line with the risk-based approach of Solvency II and with the aim of promoting consistent supervisory practices, the Mediation Panel concluded that the determination of the insurance class should reflect the nature of risk of the given insurance policy rather than its actual legal form. Accordingly, the Mediation Panel supported the classification of “statutory risk” insurance policy in class 1 (Accident) and class 2 (Sickness) for new authorisations. In case the insurance policy contains death or any other life coverage, an authorisation for life insurance activity is also required.

Furthermore, insurance undertakings should have relevant expertise to ensure appropriate pricing, adequate provisioning and claims management practices, relevant to the risks to be covered and to the target market in the host Member State.

The Autorité de contrôle prudentiel et de résolution and the Central Bank of Ireland, both agreed with the conclusions of the Mediation Panel. The Opinion, approved by EIOPA’s Board of Supervisors, is available [here](#).

Background

The **Mediation Panel** is mandated to settle disagreements between the national competent authorities in accordance with [EIOPA’s founding Regulation](#).

The **statutory risk** insurance policy covers the maintenance of the civil servants’ salary in case of sickness, maternity, work incapacity or disability, and the payment of death benefits to the civil servant’s beneficiaries.

Insurance class 1 in Annex I of Solvency II refers to “Accident”, while **insurance class 2** in Annex I of Solvency II refers to “Sickness”.

EU Trust Fund for Africa: additional €90.5 million to strengthen border management and protection of migrants in North Africa

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High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** commented: *“Today’s new programmes will step up our work to managing migration flows in a humane and sustainable way, by saving and protecting lives of refugees and migrants and providing them with assistance and by fighting against traffickers and smugglers. It is our integrated approach that combines our action at sea, our work together with partner countries along the migratory routes, including inside Libya, and in the Sahel. This work has already brought results and will bring more if member states will be consistent with the commitments they have been taking since the establishment of the Trust Fund at the Valletta summit, in 2015.”*

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