

Letter of congratulations from President Donald Tusk to Pedro Sánchez on his appointment as Prime Minister of Spain

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Joint statement by Commissioner Věra Jourová and Haruhi Kumazawa, Commissioner of the Personal Information Protection on the state of play of the dialogue on data protection

Commissioner Haruhi Kumazawa and Commissioner Věra Jourová held a very constructive meeting in Tokyo on 31st May 2018 with the aim to advance the process towards mutual adequacy findings.

They reaffirmed that a simultaneous finding of an adequate level of protection by both sides will complement and enhance the benefits of the Economic Partnership Agreement between Japan and the EU, which is currently

proceeding for the signing, and that the finding will also contribute to the strategic partnership between Japan and the EU.

They took note of the significant progress achieved in the past months. This includes, in particular, the agreement on solutions to bridging relevant differences between the two systems such as the Supplementary Rules, to be adopted by the Personal Information Protection Commission (PPC) following the public comment procedures, coupled with the Basic Policy on the Protection of Personal Information (Cabinet decision). It also includes the clarifications by the European Commission of the legal nature and effect of the EU General Data Protection Regulation in the European Economic Area states as well as the content of certain General Data Protection Regulation provisions.

They agreed to intensify the work with the shared commitment to complete as soon as possible both procedures – the designation of the European Economic Area by the Personal Information Protection Commission as a foreign country establishing a personal information protection system recognised to have equivalent standards to those in Japan based on Article 24 of the Act on the Protection of Personal Information (APPI) and the parallel decision by the European Commission that Japan ensures an adequate level of protection of personal data pursuant to Article 45 of the General Data Protection Regulation.

They affirmed that the Personal Information Protection Commission and the European Commission will continue to consult each other with a view to finding mutually acceptable solutions whenever there is a need for cooperation with respect to personal data based on the framework for mutual and smooth transfer of personal data between Japan and the EU.

Background

As announced in January 2017 in its [Communication](#) on Exchanging and Protecting personal data in a globalised world, the Commission has launched a dialogue with the aim of reaching an “adequacy decision” with Japan. Adequacy decisions allow for the free flow of personal data to countries with “essentially equivalent” data protection rules to those in the EU.

First joint investigation team between France and Italy

31 May 2018

In May 2018, Eurojust held a coordination meeting with representatives of the judicial authorities of France and Italy, as well as the French and Italian National Desks at Eurojust, to set up a joint investigation team (JIT) in the context of a serious case of transnational nature. The resulting JIT

agreement was the first of its kind to be signed by the two Member States concerned, also thanks to the recently adopted Italian legislation implementing Council Framework Decision 2002/465/JHA.

Eurojust will facilitate the cooperation between France and Italy by providing the necessary financial and logistical support to this JIT. As one of Eurojust's most effective judicial cooperation tools, this JIT will assist in coordinating the parallel investigations of the French and Italian authorities involved, through the exchange of case-related information and evidence in a speedier and more efficient manner. This JIT will ensure that the ne bis in idem principle is respected, thus avoiding the unnecessary investigation and prosecution of the same suspect through two different national jurisdictions.

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Italy and Poland

31 May 2018

Today, the representatives of the judicial authorities of Italy and Poland, as well as the National Members for Italy and Poland at Eurojust, held a coordination meeting to enhance the implementation of the first joint investigation team (JIT) agreement ever signed between the two Member States concerned, which will assist in coordinating the national authorities' investigations into a large-scale case of excise fraud, involving evasion of alcohol duty.

According to the investigations in Italy and Poland, the members of an organised crime group (OCG) have been importing to Italy industrial alcohol of chemical origin from Poland, to which no excise duty applies. The alcohol was then sold on the Italian market as liquor for consumption, although the false documentation accompanying it indicated that it was produced for other uses, such as for disinfection purposes. The analysis of some alcohol already seized confirmed that the imported goods were indeed dangerous for human consumption. The OCG has been profiting from this fraud by illegally avoiding paying the excise duty applicable to liquor.

The goal of this JIT is to ensure the swift progress of the parallel ongoing investigations through coordinated actions and the exchange of case-related information and evidence, thus dismantling the transnational OCG and bringing its members to justice. Eurojust will facilitate the functioning of this JIT and the cooperation between Italy and Poland by providing the necessary financial and logistical support.