










Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2023/2107(INI)	Procedure completed
EU-Japan relations		
Subject 6.40.08 Relations with Asian countries 6.40.11 Relations with industrialised countries		
Geographical area Japan		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Foreign Affairs		26/04/2023
		 BÜTIKOFER Reinhard	
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 KOKALARI Arba	
		 LUCKE Karsten	
		 PAET Urmas	
		 CHAGNON Patricia	
		 MAUREL Emmanuel	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
European Commission	 International Trade (Associated committee)	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Trade	HOGAN Phil	

Key events			
12/07/2023	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
12/07/2023	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
16/11/2023	Vote in committee		

23/11/2023	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0373/2023	Summary
13/12/2023	Results of vote in Parliament		
13/12/2023	Decision by Parliament	T9-0463/2023	Summary

Technical information

Procedure reference	2023/2107(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54; Rules of Procedure EP 57
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/9/12574

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report		PE752.823	14/09/2023	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE753.822	06/10/2023	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0373/2023	23/11/2023	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0463/2023	13/12/2023	EP	Summary

EU-Japan relations

The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by Reinhard BÜTIKOFER (Greens/EFA, DE) on EU-Japan relations.

The EU and Japan will celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations in 2024. The EU-Japan relationship is one of exceptionally like-minded partners, built on a solid basis of shared values, democracy, free trade, common goals and mutually compatible interests, making Japan one of the EUs most important and trusted partners globally.

Pointing out that the EU and Japan together account for almost 25 % of global GDP, Members stated that the partnership can and should play an important role in helping to shape a peaceful, rules-based, inclusive, just, sustainable and prosperous international order.

Cooperation

The report encouraged both the EU and Japan to demonstrate the required political will to ratify the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA). It pointed out that the EU, including its agencies and financial institutions, also needs to cooperate very closely with Japan in the G20, the WTO, the UN and its specialised agencies, the UNFCCC, international standardisation organisations and financial institutions and other international formats in the pursuit of peace, maritime security, non-proliferation and the resilience to hybrid threats, as well as of human rights, prosperity, the rule of law and the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Members welcomed the important steps taken by the Japanese Government and the Republic of Korea to build a future-oriented relationship, as both countries are critically important like-minded strategic partners of the EU. They recognised Japans grave concerns about the threat posed by North Koreas unlawful ballistic missile programmes and increasing belligerence.

The report strongly appreciated Japans robust and unwavering support, including USD 7.6 billion of financial assistance and grant aid for Ukraine in support of its self-defence against Russias war of aggression, especially through the delivery of transport vehicles, bulletproof vests and mine-clearing equipment.

Defence

The report highlighted that both the EU and Japans enhanced defence policy frameworks provide new opportunities for cooperation, including on securing sea lines of communication, combating piracy and terrorism, and upholding freedom of navigation in the region. Japans participation in the EUNAVFOR ATALANTA operation military exercise was welcomed.

Members proposed the creation of an EU/NATO/AP4 (Japan/Korea/Australia/New Zealand) security dialogue format and encouraged the European External Action Service to post a military attaché in Tokyo.

Environment

The committee regretted the fact that the EU-Japan Green Alliance of 2021 still remains a largely unfulfilled promise. The report noted that Japan has expressed its continued commitment to enhance mutual environmental ambition at national and multilateral levels in line with the EU-Japan Green Alliance. However, they would welcome a more active role in this regard from the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation

and the EU-Japan Business Round Table, particularly on recycling.

Energy

The report called for the acceleration of EU-Japan energy cooperation, particularly in the areas of liquefied natural gas, electricity market reform and innovative renewable energy technologies. It stressed the need to enhance the EU-Japan dialogue towards energy security, advocating a green transition and reducing dependence on totalitarian regimes for basic supply chains.

Human rights

Lastly, the report emphasised the human rights dialogue, where the EU and Japan can discuss, for example, the death penalty, which still exists in Japan and which the EU opposes fundamentally, and other human rights issues of mutual interest. Members also reiterated their concern about parental child abduction.

EU-Japan relations

The European Parliament adopted by 559 votes to 32, with 44 abstentions, a resolution on EU-Japan relations.

Japan is the EU's closest strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific region. Both sides share a very broad range of values and goals. Parliament strongly emphasised the EU's interest in deepening and broadening this partnership bilaterally and also in plurilateral and multilateral contexts. It pointed out that the EU and Japan together account for almost 25 % of global GDP, the partnership can and should play an important role in helping to shape a peaceful, rules-based, inclusive, just, sustainable and prosperous international order.

Cooperation

Acknowledging the key role played by the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement and Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), Parliament encouraged the EU and Japan to demonstrate the required political will to ratify the SPA, calling for the full implementation of both agreements.

While welcoming the excellent cooperation within the G7, particularly on economic resilience and economic security, Parliament stressed that the EU must also work closely with Japan within the G20, the WTO, the United Nations and its specialised agencies, under the UNFCCC, in international standard-setting bodies and international financial institutions, and in other international fora, in the service of peace, maritime security, non-proliferation and resilience to hybrid threats, as well as human rights, prosperity, the rule of law and the achievement of the UN's sustainable development goals.

Members noted with interest Japan's efforts to promote a reliable structure of regional stability guided by the concept of a secure and open Indo-Pacific region. They welcomed the important steps taken by the Japanese Government and the Republic of Korea to build a forward-looking relationship. They also acknowledged Japan's serious concerns about the threat posed by North Korea's illegal ballistic missile programmes and its growing belligerence.

Parliament also intends to work with Japan on an ongoing basis to oppose China's overly assertive policies towards its neighbours.

Defence

Parliament highlighted that both the EU and Japan's enhanced defence policy frameworks provide new opportunities for cooperation, including on securing sea lines of communication, combating piracy and terrorism, and upholding freedom of navigation in the region. Japan's participation in the EUNAVFOR ATALANTA operation military exercise was welcomed. Members proposed the creation of an EU/NATO/AP4 (Japan/Korea/Australia/New Zealand) security dialogue format and encouraged the European External Action Service to post a military attaché in Tokyo.

Parliament called for a comprehensive security partnership between the EU and Japan as the basis for enhanced consultations, common exercises, shared defence research and development and work on joint contingency planning for dangerous crises.

Economic security

Members proposed an economic security dialogue in the context of the EU-Japan High Level Economic Dialogue. They pointed out the huge relevance of international cooperation on the governance and standardisation of digital services and trade in digital goods, including binding international rules, in particular with a view to data security.

Environment

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Energy

Parliament called for the acceleration of EU-Japan energy cooperation, particularly in the areas of liquefied natural gas, electricity market reform and innovative renewable energy technologies. It stressed the need to enhance the EU-Japan dialogue towards energy security, advocating a green transition and reducing dependence on totalitarian regimes for basic supply chains.

Human rights

Lastly, the resolution emphasised the human rights dialogue, where the EU and Japan can discuss, for example, the death penalty, which still exists in Japan and which the EU opposes fundamentally, and other human rights issues of mutual interest. Members also reiterated their concern about parental child abduction. They proposed the creation of an EU-Japan young leaders forum on global partnership in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals.

BÜTIKOFER Reinhard	Rapporteur	AFET	18/09/2023	Embassy of Japan to the European Union
BÜTIKOFER Reinhard	Rapporteur	AFET	04/09/2023	German Embassy in Japan
BÜTIKOFER Reinhard	Rapporteur	AFET	23/08/2023	Brussels School of Governance
BÜTIKOFER Reinhard	Rapporteur	AFET	23/08/2023	European Center for International Political Economy
BÜTIKOFER Reinhard	Rapporteur	AFET	22/08/2023	Friedrich-Ebert- Stiftung
BÜTIKOFER Reinhard	Rapporteur	AFET	22/08/2023	Auswärtiges Amt (Abt. Ostasien, Südostasien und Pazifik)
BÜTIKOFER Reinhard	Rapporteur	AFET	21/08/2023	Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung
BÜTIKOFER Reinhard	Rapporteur	AFET	21/08/2023	Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik