



European Economic and Social Committee



EU-JAPAN COOPERATION IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE: TRADE & MIGRATION POLICIES

JOINT SEMINAR WITH THE EU-KANSAI INSTITUTE

CONCEPT NOTE

Date	9 March 2016
Time	9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Venue	Meeting room JDE 63 EESC, Brussels
Interpretation	English, French, Japanese

Background and rationale

One of the objectives under the EU-Japan cooperation called "Shaping our Common Future", is "Bringing together peoples and cultures" and includes "developing civil society links and encouraging inter-regional exchanges". The EESC is the part of this cooperation process and brings an important contribution to EU-Japan relations by addressing not only issues related to bilateral cooperation or to the role of civil society in general, but also problems of global importance such as sustainable development, international trade and climate change.

Over the years, a close cooperation between the EESC and the several EU Institutes in Japan (EUIJ) has developed. This cooperation notably manifests itself in the organisation of joint seminars on issues of mutual interest, such as boosting economic growth, higher education, healthy aging, women's empowerment, energy, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and models for civil society engagement under (bilateral/bi-regional) trade agreements.

Seminar

This year's seminar in Brussels is organized together with the EU-Kansai Institute and is entitled "EU-Japan cooperation in Comparative Perspective". It aims to examine similarities and differences in the bilateral and bi-regional trade agreements each party is concluding with the United States, the TTIP and TPP agreements respectively, and to assess to what extent these negotiations will inform the future EU-Japan FTA/EPA.

In addition, one session will be dedicated to the topical issue of asylum and migration policies, and will look at similarities and differences between the two countries' approaches to migration.

The half-day joint seminar will be held on 9 March 2016, and will welcome about 50-60 participants.

Objectives

The overall objective of the seminar is to exchange views and perspectives on the chosen topics, in order to reinforce mutual understanding and further intensify cooperation between both parties' civil societies. Specifically, the seminar will look at how approaches and attitudes to international trade and migration differ or align, and will look to better understand the reasons underlying these attitudes and approaches.

A specific objective relevant to the session in which the ongoing trade negotiations between the EU, Japan, and the United States (among others) will be examined, is for civil society stakeholders on both sides to come to a better understanding of what to expect in the upcoming final stages of the negotiations. This will allow these stakeholders to further define a concerted position towards the authorities on both sides.

Structure and programme

The half-day event is built around two thematic sessions, with a high-level opening session and closing session:

- I) High-level opening session;
- II) Session 1: a comparison between the future EU-Japan FTA/EPA, TTIP and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement;
- III) Session 2: Session 2: differences and similarities in both countries' approaches to Asylum and Migration, and integration policies in case of long-term stay;
- IV) Conclusions and closing remarks

Structure of the thematic sessions (the order of presentations is in accordance with the speakers' list presented in the draft agenda)

Session 1 will provide a comparison between the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the future EU-Japan FTA/EPA and TTIP agreements respectively.

- *Presentation 1 (10 minutes)*: A general overview of the now concluded TPP agreement;
- *Presentation 2 (10 minutes)*: The future TTIP and EU-Japan agreements in comparative perspective;
- *Presentation 3 (10 minutes)*: Possible interplay between the TPP, TTIP and the EU-Japan FTA/EPA agreements.

The presentations will be followed by commentaries from two parties involved in the ongoing negotiations (each – 5 minutes).

Session 2 will be structured along the same lines, focussing on the topic of asylum and migration, and the issue of the integration in case of a long-term stay:

- *Presentation 1 (12 minutes)*: An overview of asylum and migration policies in place at EU level with regard to refugees and exiles, as well as economic migrants;
- *Presentation 2 (12 minutes)*: A comparative analysis from the Japanese point of view;

These two presentations will be followed by commentaries by two experts (each – 5 minutes), presenting perspectives on intra-European migration and experiences from a third country/region.

Participants

The conference's target audience consists of representatives of European and Japanese civil society organisations, diplomats, members of the European Parliament, EU officials, trade and migration experts at think tanks and similar organisations, academics and other stakeholders. The conference aims to bring together about 50-60 participants.

Follow-up

The conference's outcomes will be shared with a wide network of professionals, officials and practitioners involved in EU-Japan relations.

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