

# **EU/Japan Economic Partnership Agreement: free flow of data**

2023/0450(NLE) - 14/03/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 453 votes to 34, with 60 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol amending the Agreement between the European Union and Japan for an Economic Partnership.

The European Parliament gave its consent to the conclusion of the protocol.

The EU and Japan are among the largest digital economies in the world. The EU seeks to accelerate and harness the benefits of the further digitalisation of the global economy and society. Data governance and cross-border data flows are crucial to this development. Data is the lifeline of many businesses and a critical component of business models and supply chains across many economic sectors.

By decision of 12 July 2022, the Council approved negotiating directives for the Commission to negotiate the inclusion of provisions on cross-border data flows in the Agreement between the European Union and Japan for an Economic Partnership. The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) that entered into force on 1 February 2019, foresaw that the EU and Japan would assess the need for the inclusion of provisions on cross-border data flows within 3 years of the date of entry into force of the EPA.

On 24 October 2022, the EU and Japan launched the negotiations on cross-border data flows. On 28 October 2023, the negotiations were concluded in principle at the EU-Japan High-Level Economic Dialogue (HLED).

This Agreement brings much needed legal certainty that data flows between the EU and Japan will not be hampered by unjustified data localisation measures, and ensures the benefit from the free flow of data with trust in full compliance with our respective rules on data protection and the digital economy.

The outcome of the negotiations confirms EU and Japan continued commitment to the rules-based international trading system and joint determination to shape global data flow rules that respect shared values and respective regulatory approaches. Moreover, this Agreement will contribute to deepening the partnership with Japan, which is a crucial EU partner in the Indo-Pacific.