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EU-Japan Agreement

Preliminary Review on behalf of the Green/EFA Trade Working Group

The negotiations for the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, which were launched in 2013, have reached the final consent procedure phase, accumulating in a vote in the European Parliament scheduled for 11-13 December 2018.

In this context, the Trade Working Group for the Green/EFA Group requested the following internal analysis to detail issues of concern based on information available at the time of writing. The information is to assist MEP's decision-making before the vote.
The analysis is not intended to be a fully comprehensive look at all aspects of the EU-Japan agreement, but rather an insight into the problematic areas that the Greens/EFA Group has consistently raised in previous trade agreements as well as EU trade policy as a whole. Some novelty elements contained for the first time in this agreement are also discussed.

It is clear that from the issues raised the Japan-EU agreement has departed in some ways from previous free trade agreements negotiated by the EU Commission. The inability thus far to agree with Japan on the inclusion of an investor protection mechanism, as one example, is to be welcomed, though negotiations to include ICS are ongoing at the time of writing. However, many of the same concerns that the Group has raised in previous agreements remain, such as the non-enforceable nature of the Trade and Sustainable Development chapter and the restrictions put on governments' regulatory space, be it in services, regulatory cooperation or the exercise of measuring non-tariff barriers.

The EU-Japan deal will be publicly presented as a symbol of an open, liberal trade regime, in contrast with the protectionist measures taking place in the US and elsewhere. The attack on the rules-based international trading system makes it all the more important for the EU to embed its' values and live up to its commitments for sustainability and ecological responsibility in the agreements it signs. Based on the following analysis, we conclude that the EU-Japan agreement is another missed opportunity to fulfil this often-cited mantra.

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Responsible MEPs



Klaus Buchner

Member



Yannick Jadot

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Member

Attached documents

JEFTA Trade WG Analysis

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