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# EU and Japan boost strategic cooperation on digital and on critical raw materials supply chains

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The strategic partnership between the EU and Japan continues to grow and to become even more dynamic, as the two partners are strengthening their cooperation in areas of high economic potential, which contribute to economic resilience and security in the current geopolitical context and accelerated technological shifts.

Today, in the context of the [EU-Japan summit](#), the leaders welcomed:

- The signing of a **Memorandum of Cooperation to support secure and resilient submarine cable connectivity** and a **Memorandum of Cooperation on semiconductors** at the **first Japan-EU Digital Partnership Council meeting** on 3 July. The EU and Japan confirmed their shared goal of advancing digital to foster economic growth and promote a human-centric digital transformation based on shared democratic principles and fundamental rights.
- The signing of the **Administrative Arrangement** between the Commission and the Japan Organisation for Metals and Energy Security (JOGMEC) on 6 July, **aiming at reinforcing cooperation on critical raw materials supply chains.**

President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, said: “Economic security is a common concern for Japan and the EU. We share similar dependencies, and we both need to de-risk our supply chains. One of our objectives is to reduce overreliance for products that are vital for our economies, like critical raw materials and semiconductors on a handful of suppliers – many of them based in China. I am very pleased that we have concluded cooperation arrangements on both topics. We have so much to gain by working together on this.”

## Key outcomes of the first Japan-EU Digital Partnership Council

At the first Japan-EU Digital Partnership Council meeting on 3 July, the two partners signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation to support secure, resilient and sustainable submarine connectivity**. In particular, they will jointly promote actions to develop submarine cable connectivity via the Arctic, providing secure and

high-quality connectivity between the EU and Japan, with the potential to extend it to Southeast Asia and the wider Pacific region.

The EU and Japan also signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation on semiconductors**, paving the way for in-depth cooperation in research and development; an early warning mechanism of critical disruptions in the semiconductors supply chain; and cooperating on advanced skills for the semiconductor industry.

Beyond these two Memoranda of Cooperation, the EU and Japan agreed on enhancing cooperation in a wide range of topics of common interest such as artificial intelligence (AI), including generative AI; cooperation on quantum and high-performance computing, including reciprocal access for researchers to their supercomputers – Fugaku on the Japanese side, and LUMI, Leonardo and Mare Nostrum 5 on the EU side; research and standardisation in 5G and beyond; data governance and promoting best practices to enable free flow of data with trust; and cybersecurity, including information sharing and joint training. Both sides decided to explore future common actions in areas with high economic potential such as digital transformation of SMEs and interoperability of digital identities, and electronic signatures to boost digital trade exchanges.

The Council meeting was co-chaired by the European Commissioner for the Internal Market, Thierry **Breton**, the Japanese Minister for Digital Transformation, Taro Kono, the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications, Takeaki Matsumoto, and the State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Fusae Ota.

The Japan – EU Joint Statement of the first meeting of the Japan – EU Digital Partnership Council is available [online](#).

## **Reinforcing cooperation on critical raw materials supply chains**

Last week, ahead of the EU-Japan Summit the Commission and the Japan Organisation for Metals and Energy Security (JOGMEC) signed an **‘Administrative Arrangement on Cooperation in Critical Raw Materials Supply Chains’**, at the occasion of the visit of the President Hajime Wakuda of JOGMEC to Brussels on 6 July.

The agreement is part of the EU’s objective to strengthen its global engagement with reliable partners at the multilateral level and through mutually beneficial partnerships, as outlined in the recent [Critical Raw Materials Act](#) proposed by the Commission.

The agreement is an opportunity to deepen cooperation with a forward-looking and ambitious EU partner like Japan on issues that are essential for the green and digital

transition of our industries. It will allow to share information and deepen respective understandings in supply chain risk management, innovation, and recycling and circularity frameworks and exchanging information on projects and relevant support instruments.

## **Next steps**

The EU and Japanese co-chairs of the Japan-EU Digital Partnership Council intend to meet again in 2024 in Brussels to review progress and take further steps to deepen the Partnership.

Meetings and information exchange under the heading of the Administrative Arrangement on Cooperation in Critical Raw Materials Supply Chains have already started taking place. JOGMEC will also be invited to participate in dedicated workshops at the next EU Raw Materials Week on 13-16 November 2023.

***(European Commission)***