Joint Statement

of the third meeting of the European Union – Japan Digital Partnership Council

12 May 2025, Tokyo

The third meeting of the European Union (EU) - Japan Digital Partnership Council took place in Tokyo on 12 May 2025. The meeting was co-chaired by the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy Henna VIRKKUNEN, the Japanese Minister for Digital Transformation TAIRA Masaaki, the Japanese State Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications ADACHI Masashi, and the Japanese Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry TAKEUCHI Shinji.

The EU and Japan (hereinafter referred to as "both sides") reaffirmed the importance of the ever-closer strategic partnership. Both sides took stock of progress since the second meeting of the European Union-Japan Digital Partnership Council (Brussels, 30 April 2024) and announced new deliverables.

Both sides reaffirmed the increasing relevance of the Digital Partnership and joint collaboration it stimulates in the context of **geopolitical challenges.** It contributes to setting the basis for **strengthening mutual economic resilience and economic security, as well as upholding a rules-based international order**. Therefore, both sides confirmed their intention to continue to foster this strong partnership. Both sides are committed to further enhancing cooperation in the framework of the Digital Partnership with the objectives to (i) **boost competitiveness, innovation and resilience** in emerging technologies through advancing cooperation in research and innovation; (ii) play a leadership role in **shaping global digital governance and innovation for a human-centric and values-based approach;** and (iii) enhance **mutual economic security** by promoting **resilience in digital critical technologies**.

1. **Boosting competitiveness, innovation and resilience in emerging technologies through advancing cooperation in research and innovation**

Building on their economic strengths, it is a priority for both sides to boost their competitiveness, innovation and resilience in emerging digital technologies that are essential for their economy and economic security. Developing joint research and facilitating knowledge exchange between researchers under the Digital Partnership contributes to this goal and allows both sides to leverage their strengths and mutually innovate.

On **semiconductors**, both sides confirmed their interest in collaborative research on finding safe and sustainable alternatives for chemicals such as PFAS in semiconductor manufacturing, on heterogeneous integration and chiplets, as well as on devices and processes beyond 2nm technology. Both sides are committed to exploring the opportunity of collaborative research on these topics in the near future.

On **Beyond 5G/6G**, a joint EU-Japan research project, called '6G MIRAI-HARMONY', began in April 2025. The project teams from the EU and Japan will conduct research and development aimed at AI-native networks realising user-centric communications. To achieve this goal, both project teams from established industry players and academic partners will

exchange extensive know-how and facilitate the projects cooperatively. Both sides recognised the importance of the joint research project and confirmed that further collaborative research on Beyond 5G/6G is to be considered in the future, taking into account the progress of the above-mentioned project.

On **5G**, recognising the progress in the development of Open RAN in EU and Japan, both sides reconfirmed the importance of open and secure networks and promoting secure and diverse supply chains.

On **quantum technology**, both sides welcomed the launch of a targeted research call for collaborative projects on quantum computing which addresses advanced algorithms and codes for academic and industrial applications and provides reciprocal access to the relevant EU and Japanese facilities including quantum and high-performance computers. With an emphasis on applications such as biomedical and material sciences, weather and climate modelling and predictions, the call aims to foster advancements that will contribute to solving common societal challenges using quantum technologies. In addition, both sides welcomed the signature of the Letter of Intent on strengthening cooperation in the area of quantum science and technology between the European Commission on behalf of the European Union and the Cabinet Office of Japan to further enhance cooperation in the quantum field. Both sides look forward to the research project that has been selected, and to the results of the cooperation. Both sides welcomed the exchange of views on quantum communications technologies.

2. Leadership in shaping global digital governance and innovation for a human-centric and values-based approach

Both sides together play a leadership role in innovation and in shaping global digital governance and technologies according to their values to the benefit of their citizens. Together they can pave the way forward and team up with like-minded partners. The Digital Partnership has been crucial in promoting this approach in Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital identities and trust services, protection of personal data, cybersecurity, as well as for online platforms. In addition, both sides recalled the entry into force, on 1 July 2024, of the protocol amending the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement with regard to cross-border data flows, recognising it as a further step in advancing Data Free Flow with Trust.

On **AI**, both sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to promoting innovation and safe, secure and trustworthy AI as well as working towards signing an Administrative Arrangement for further cooperation on AI. Both sides reaffirmed the need to further advance the Hiroshima AI Process outcomes, to expand its outreach beyond the G7 and to continue exchanging information in the context of international AI governance initiatives.

On **digital identities and trust services**, both sides continued the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation on Digital Identities and Trust Services to contribute to the implementation of Data Free Flow with Trust and welcomed the progress made towards concrete use cases. To pave the way for interoperability and mutual recognition of academic credentials through digital identity and trust services, both sides welcome the formulation of a scoping document based on which a pilot project could be launched to assess the technical feasibility. The scoping document involved that the project would use wallet infrastructures

and verifiable credentials signed or sealed electronically in accordance with respective regulations. Through the project, both sides aim to demonstrate how cross-border interoperability could be ensured among countries with different governance and technological architectures.

On **data governance**, for improved data sharing, both sides began exchanges towards a possible joint working group. The working group will facilitate practical discussions on improved data sharing, including interoperability between common European data spaces and Japanese data spaces, for example in the automotive sector with the involvement of the private sector such as industry associations. Both sides reconfirmed their commitment to advancing the work towards tangible interoperability resulting in increasingly seamless and secure exchange of data, fostering cross-sectoral and cross-country innovation and efficiency. Both sides envisage to explore measures that strengthen Data Free Flow with Trust as a means to build more resilient and reliable supply chains.

On **protection of personal data**, both sides confirmed the steady progress in the ongoing talks to expand the scope of the EU adequacy decision for Japan to academia and research as well as to the public sector. Both sides welcomed the Joint Press Statement[1] in which they confirmed that such talks have particularly advanced in the area of academia and research with the two sides confirming their commitment to progress within the next months with a view to concluding talks swiftly. The authorities from both sides also decided 'to step up their cooperation on developing trusted data flows with like-minded partners' in the Joint Press Statement.

On **online platforms**, both sides reemphasised the commitment to ensuring a safe online environment where the fundamental rights of users are protected. To that end, regulatory exchanges took place on effective online platform governance. Both sides confirmed their intention to deepen this cooperation in discussions between the Japan Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology. These enhanced discussions would consider deepening cooperation on the protection of minors. Both sides continued their close cooperation to promote fair and contestable digital markets by holding regular technical exchanges on Japan's Act on Promotion of Competition for Specified Smartphone Software and the EU's Digital Markets Act. Both sides confirmed their intention to deepen and formalise this cooperation by working towards signing an Administrative Arrangement between the Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC) and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Competition. The EU also participated in the Global Forum on Digital Competition hosted by JFTC in January 2025 in Tokyo.

On **multilateral cooperation**, both sides committed to building on the successful bilateral collaboration to enhance coordination in multilateral fora such as the G7, G20, the WTO and

[1] Joint press statement by Michael McGrath and Ohshima Shuhei, Commissioner of the Personal Information Protection of Japan - European Commission

the OECD including the OECD Expert Community dedicated to advancing Data Free Flow with Trust through the Institutional Arrangement for Partnership.

3. Enhancing economic security by promoting resilience in digital critical technologies

Economic security in digital, critical and emerging technologies is an important political priority for both sides. Their strategies of partnering, protecting and promoting are mutually beneficial and are advanced by the work under the Digital Partnership. By collaborating on topics such as cybersecurity, submarine cables, critical infrastructure, 5G and Beyond 5G/6G, semiconductors and quantum, both sides are enhancing their mutual economic security and supporting the digital economy by developing resilience in critical technologies. Both sides recognise the importance of the collaborative efforts under the EU-Japan High Level Economic Dialogue.

On **cybersecurity**, the sixth EU-Japan Cyber Dialogue was held on 11 November 2024 to enhance cooperation on cyber issues. Both sides exchanged information on regulatory developments in cybersecurity, such as protection of critical infrastructure and product security. In particular, both sides welcomed expert cooperation on standard development activities for the Cyber Resilience Act and Japan's IoT labelling scheme JC-STAR to facilitate the implementation of product security on Japanese and EU markets and acknowledged that in order to address the cybersecurity of Internet of Things products in its entirety, both technical and non-technical nature of cyber threats should be taken into account. They also welcomed the work on the SBOM Global Joint Guidance. Moreover, both sides advanced cooperation to enhance cybersecurity skills of the Indo-Pacific Region through the Industrial Control Systems Cybersecurity Week together with the US. In addition, both sides will further identify cybersecurity capacity-building activities. Both sides welcomed the fact that the next edition of the Cyber Dialogue would be held in Brussels, and the International Cybersecurity Challenge in Tokyo in 2025.

Both sides reinforced the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation on **submarine cables** for secure, resilient and sustainable global connectivity. Secure critical infrastructure and connectivity is essential for cross-border digital transactions and a safe online environment. Both sides have continued the discussions on the Arctic connectivity projects that are in the process of working towards establishing secure connectivity between Europe and Japan. They reaffirmed their commitment to supporting the Arctic route to reduce data latency and facilitate Data Free Flow with Trust emphasising the importance of a commercially viable route. Both sides recognised the importance of the first submarine cables crossing the Arctic Ocean and the need for both sides to elevate this pioneering work to a priority. Both sides confirmed their intention to continue the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation on submarine cables through support actions that could include awareness raising, financial support (subject to the availability of resources), demand aggregation, and as appropriate, facilitating relevant administrative processes. In addition, both sides confirmed their intention to explore synergies in supporting secure and resilient connectivity in third countries, specifically in the Indo-Pacific.

On the economic security aspects of **semiconductors**, both sides enhanced the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation on semiconductors. Resilience of semiconductor supply chains was reinforced through the Administrative Arrangement on a semiconductor public support transparency mechanism signed in May 2024, as well as the early warning mechanism to address the risks of supply chain disruptions. In terms of enhancing supply chain resilience, both sides continued detailed coordination and information exchange on mature nodes chips and risks related to the semiconductor supply chain. Both sides confirmed their intention to further continue cooperation to maintain resilient and reliable semiconductor supply chains including through the established joint mechanisms as well as in the G7 semiconductors Point of Contact group for instance by tackling risks posed by non-market policies and practices.

4. A collaborative path of joint leadership in digital technologies under the EU-Japan Digital Partnership

In the context of geopolitical challenges, the importance of economic security, and the need to increase competitiveness, both sides reaffirmed the importance of the EU-Japan Digital Partnership as a tool to deliver on common goals. Both sides confirmed that after three years of fruitful work, the Digital Partnership will increasingly move towards concrete and tangible deliverables and require the engagement of industry. Aiming to make outcomes concrete, both sides affirmed the need for more technical work including pilot projects. Both sides confirmed the importance of the involvement of a variety of stakeholders, including business associations, civil society and think tanks.

The EU, employing the Team Europe approach, and Japan will continue the work in all areas identified at the third Digital Partnership Council. Both sides confirmed their intention to take stock of the progress they will have achieved at the fourth Digital Partnership Council to be held in Brussels in 2026.