

CALL TO ACTION

Raising awareness of new challenges and taking advantage of the EPA
under the new normal of the COVID-19 pandemic

How does/did the COVID-19 affect us?

- Early on it created supply-chain problems
 - Production sites had to close due to personnel not being able to access the factories.
 - Logistics became a problem.
- People could not travel, and are still somewhat restricted
 - People vital to production or the movement of supply could not reach either own production sites or the sites of the customer.
 - Difficulties in meeting with partners.
 - A switch from in-person meetings to virtual meetings.

Effects on the EU-Japan trade

- Trade between EU and Japan decreased, just as it decreased worldwide
- Interaction between EU and Japan decreased due to travel restrictions
- To commence new projects were and continue to be problematic

How to use the EPA, and the SPA, to counter the effects of COVID-19

- Trade is like breathing, you cannot exclusively exhale.
- Use the agreement to foster closer relationship between EU and Japanese companies.
- EU and Japan need to show the world that it continues to believe in open and free trade.
- EU and Japan should harmonise COVID-19 test methods to facilitate obstacle-free international travels
- EU and Japan should already now start discussions/set up a bilateral committee on how to best avoid negative effects on trade during a pandemic and to exchange best practices
- The EPA should be used to facilitate further cooperation in the field of digitalisation