

Joint EU-Japan statement following the first EU-Japan policy dialogue in education, culture and sport

On 6 July 2018, Tibor **Navracsics**, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, and Yoshimasa Hayashi, Japan Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), met in Budapest to officially launch the EU-Japan Policy dialogue on Education, Culture and Sport.

In the field of **education**, both leaders confirmed the importance of promoting international cooperation in higher education. Erasmus+ was highlighted as a flagship programme, offering an excellent tool to promote international mobility and allow students to develop essential transversal skills, while contributing to enhancing the relevance and quality of education. Modernisation of education, skills development and the role of teachers in the transition towards its “Society 5.0” were presented by Minister Hayashi, leading to a discussion on the role that education should play, including in ensuring social inclusion.

With regard to **culture**, Commissioner Navracsics and Minister Hayashi recognised the possibility of pursuing cooperation between the EU and Japan in this field and looked forward to further discussions.

Sport offers an interesting opportunity for peer-learning, particularly with regard to measures to preserve the integrity of sport and to promote mutual understanding. The topic is high on the agenda of both parties, in view of the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024.

The meeting was also the occasion for Commissioner Navracsics and Minister Hayashi to launch two new Japan-EU joint initiatives:

1. **A joint call for proposals** to co-finance consortia of excellent European and Japanese universities to develop highly integrated master programmes and provide scholarships for talented students from Europe and Japan to study abroad. The joint call will be published in the framework of the EU Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree action and the Japan Inter-University Exchange Project (IUEP).
2. **A short-term staff-exchange programme** for EU and MEXT officials to promote peer-learning and boost cooperation.

Both initiatives emphasise the importance of people to people contacts within the EU-Japan relations, especially within the framework of the Japan-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) which is expected to be signed in the near future.

It was decided to continue to have the policy dialogue and that Japan will host the next meeting.