

Joint press statement by Michael McGrath, Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection and Ohshima Shuhei, Commissioner of the Personal Information Protection of Japan

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Brussels, Belgium

Today, Commissioner Ohshima Shuhei of the Personal Information Protection Commission (PPC) of Japan and the Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection Michael McGrath met in Brussels.

The meeting provided an opportunity to further develop the strategic partnership between the EU and Japan on data protection and data flows. This partnership is based on the 2019 mutual adequacy arrangement which created the world's largest area of free and safe data flows and was further strengthened by the first review of the arrangement in 2023. Following reforms of the Japanese data protection legislation, PPC and the European Commission have started talks on the extension of the scope of the EU adequacy decision to also cover data flows to academia and research and the public sector. 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 two sides also agreed to step up their cooperation on developing trusted data flows with liked-minded partners, including in the framework of the “adequacy network” launched by the Commission in March 2024. This could notably take the form of extending mutual adequacy arrangements to new countries, building “bridges” between sets of model contractual clauses used in different jurisdictions or promote the adherence to international instruments such the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) “Principles for government access to personal data held by private sector entities”. Commissioner McGrath and Commissioner Ohshima will hold regular meetings with a view to advance that joint work. Their next meeting is foreseen to take place in September when Commissioner McGrath plans to travel to Japan.