

Abstract

Trade relations between Japan and the European Union have undergone dynamic development since the end of World War II, which has not provided the desired results for many decades. Most of the negotiations that took place during the 60 years after the war failed on the demands and conditions of both parties, from which they did not want to withdraw. It was in the case of Japan that there was always a problem in the protection policy of the domestic market, the reduced competitiveness of foreign companies and the protection of domestic products through high tariffs, which always prevented the realization of mutual trade. In 2012, after the new LDP government took office, Japan's position changed, and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe began negotiations with the European Union on new trade cooperation. These negotiations were part of Abe's plan to rebuild the Japanese economy, which was in recession after a poor economic strategy in the 1980s and global financial crises followed by the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011. In response, Abe introduced the so-called three arrows - a set of domestic and foreign economic measures to kick-start the Japanese economy. Negotiations with the EU then took place together with other countries, however, these trade meetings were among the most important in terms of world trade, given the common trade history and the possibility of economic growth on both sides. The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) then entered into force in 2019 and, in addition to the largest free trade area, presented an ambitious plan to improve mutual trade, which includes, among other things, complete reduction of tariffs or easier investment opportunities.