

Official name:	JAPAN
Governmental system:	Constitutional monarchy
Head of State:	Emperor Akihito
Prime Minister:	Shinzo Abe
Minister of Foreign Affairs:	Taro Kono

The relations between the Republic of Serbia and Japan are traditionally good and friendly along with the interest in intensifying cooperation and strengthening political dialogue.

Political relations:

„**The Year of Friendship of Serbia and Japan**“ is **1882**, when the first diplomatic correspondence between the Serbian King Milan Obrenović the First and Japanese Emperor Meiji was realized.

Visits:

Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe visited Serbia on 15-16 January 2018. During the visit, the Prime Minister of Japan and his delegation had a joint plenary meeting with President of R. Serbia A. Vucic, Prime Minister of R. Serbia A. Brnabic and Serbian cabinet ministers. A separate meeting was also held between representatives of the two countries' trade authorities, including representatives of 16 Japanese and approximately 30 Serbian companies. On the occasion of the visit, an Agreement to Dispatch Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers to the Republic of Serbia was made between the Ministry for European Integration of R. Serbia and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), effected by exchange of diplomatic notes, in the framework of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) programme.

Political consultations at the level of Assistant Foreign Ministers were held in Tokyo in 2010, 2013 and 2017, as well as in Belgrade in 2011, 2014 and 2018. The last round of political consultations was held in Belgrade on 7 May 2018. The MFA delegation of R. Serbia was led by MFA Political Director Z. Vujic, and the Japanese one by H. Kawamura Deputy Assistant Minister and Ambassador for Japanese Western Balkans Initiative at the Japan MFA.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan K. Nakane visited Serbia on 8-9 September 2017. The Japanese official was received by President of R. Serbia A. Vucic and Prime Minister of R. Serbia A. Brnabic. During the visit, the signing of an Agreement concerning the project for construction of desulphurisation facility for thermal power plant "Nikola Tesla A" took place.

Visit by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) was realized on 7-9 June 2017. Representatives of Japanese companies on this occasion participated in a Seminar co-organized by the Development Agency of Serbia – RAS and the Foreign Investors Council – FIC.

M. Matsuura, Mayor of the Japanese city of Hōfu and chair of the Japan Association of City

Mayors, was on a visit to Serbia from 17-20 April 2017, on which occasion he was received by FDPM and MFA I. Dacic.

President of Japan-Serbia Friendship Tadashi Nagai (former Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Serbia) visited Serbia between 6 and 12 October 2016, together with the members of the Friendship delegation. S. Kitaoka, President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), visited Serbia between 4 and 6 October 2016, when he met President Tomislav Nikolic and Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic.

Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Defence S. Fujimaru visited Serbia between 4 and 6 May 2016.

At the OSCE Ministerial Council held in December 2015, the Japanese delegation was headed by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Y. Muto.

Minister of State at the Office of the Prime Minister of Japan M. Taira, in his capacity as Special Envoy of the PM, visited Serbia on 12 May 2015, when he was received by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Aleksandar Vucic.

I. Aisawa, President of the Japan-Serbia Parliamentary League of Friendship, visited Serbia, with a delegation, between 1 and 5 May 2015, when he met with Serbian President T. Nikolic, FDPM and MFA I. Dacic, Minister of Finance D. Vujovic and members of the RS National Assembly Japan-Serbia Friendship Group.

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Assistant Minister of Mining and Energy S. Tanaskovic, together with representatives from the Mining and Metallurgy Institute Bor, visited Japan in February 2017.

State Secretary of the MFA N. Stevanovic visited Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto between 20 and 28 October 2017.

In the previous period, visits to Japan were paid by: former President of the RS B. Tadic in March 2011, on which occasion a Joint Statement was signed with Prime Minister Kan, a decision of the Japanese Government was announced to grant a yen loan for the "Nikola Tesla" thermal power plant as well as on visa liberalization for the citizens of R. Serbia; Speaker of the RS National Assembly S. Djukic-Dejanovic visited Japan in November 2011; then MFA V. Jeremic in October 2009; and DPM and Minister of the Interior of R. Serbia I. Dacic in December 2010.

Economic relations:

In 2017, trade in goods amounting to EUR 147.9 million was recorded, of which exports from

the RS amounted to EUR 43.1 million, and imports from Japan to EUR 104.8 million.

Total trade in goods between the two countries in 2016 amounted to EUR 153 million, and in 2015 it amounted to EUR 137 million.

The total grants and loans to Serbia from Japan since 1999 have been over EUR 507 million and comprised donations, technical cooperation and yen credit.

The first Japanese investment in the Republic of Serbia (2006) was the acquisition of "Senta Tobacco Industry" by the "Japan Tobacco International" (more than EUR 100 million worth of investment so far).

In late 2009, Japanese corporation "Panasonic" established a company for manufacturing lighting components in Svilajnac, investing EUR 15 million (at the moment, the factory employs approximately 400 persons).

In 2010, "Asahi Food and Healthcare" and "Mitsui Co" companies completed the project relating to "Alltech-Fermin", Senta, amounting to EUR 25 million.

Japanese company "Yazaki" opened a factory of automotive cables sets for Daimler trucks in Sabac on 26 September 2017, which is currently one of the largest green field investments in Serbia (the investment amounted to EUR 25 million, including also employment of 1,700 workers and projected annual exports of approximately EUR 120 million).

An Agreement on the construction of municipal solid waste management and electricity and heat production facility in Vinca was signed on 29 September 2017 by Mayor of Belgrade S. Mali and representatives of the Japanese-French consortium Itochu-Suez. The investment amounts to around EUR 300 million, and it is expected that the project, the implementation of which will be launched in 2018, will fully rehabilitate the dumpsite in Vinca.

[Bilateral agreements](#)