



## AE MicroMacro - Japan

*Piotr A. Głogowski*  
*February 25, 2020*

### Official Polish delegations to Japan and areas of cooperation

**What happened?** On January 20-22, Polish PM Mateusz Morawiecki (with a group of officials including the Minister of Climate Michał Kurtyka) paid an official visit to Japan. Less than a month later (February 17-23), Senate Marshal Tomasz Grodzki paid a similar visit. Both delegations, within their respective capacities, assigned functions and different political position and held talks with Japanese politicians and business representatives,

**The brief description.** In 2019 Poland and Japan celebrated the 100th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations. Numerous cultural events and official visits, including the one of Nakasone Hirofumi (the Chairman of the Japanese-Polish Parliamentary Group in the Chamber of Counselors) were organized and preparations for the official visit of the Polish PM to Japan began. The delegation visited Japan between January 20-22 and – on the sidelines of the Morawiecki’s official meeting with Japanese PM Shinzo Abe – the meetings focused on economic issues were held. PM Morawiecki met representatives of Polish and Japanese businesses to discuss various infrastructure investment possibilities – among them a particular emphasis has been put on the Central Communication Port (CCP).

Energy issues were also highlighted with reference to Polish plans for nuclear energy and Japanese experience in the field of coal-to-gas conversion. The meeting was summarized by PM Morawiecki who said that two countries "are connected by business, investment, economy, and geopolitics." Similar declarations were voiced during the visit of Marshal Grodzki, but with a significant practical difference – in January Cubo Toru (the president of



# ASIA EXPLAINED

TO ANALYZE, TO DEBATE, TO UNDERSTAND

[Toshiba Corporation](#)) declared the establishment of a manufacturing plant and distribution center in Gniezno (worth 100mIn PLN)

## Why it matters for Poland?

[UN Comtrade data for 2013-2018](#) indicate that Polish exports to Japan after a decrease in 2014, 2015 and 2017 returned in 2018 to the value from 2013 (slightly above 670mIn USD). The situation of Japanese exports to Poland looks slightly better, which in the same period increased from 1.6bIn USD to 2.1bIn USD. [Also from 2016, an increase in the value of Japanese direct investments in Poland can be seen.](#) Thus, one should consider whether the selection of topics presented to the Polish PM was appropriate in terms of a long-term encouragement of Japanese entrepreneurs to 1) cooperate with Polish businessmen; 2) participate in larger infrastructure projects. The topic of nuclear energy - despite its attractiveness [for public opinion](#) - seems to be irrelevant, as [its development plans have been repeatedly postponed, and the recent assumptions \(launch of the first block in 2033\) also seem unrealistic.](#) However, the establishment of CPP may have significant impact on the dynamics in relations with Japan, because (similarly to nuclear energy case) the Japanese have the appropriate know-how in large scale infrastructure projects and talks with potential partners will intensify in the future ([inversely as in the case of the "Polish atom"](#)).

Significant national projects can certainly draw the attention of the Japanese companies, but the open question remains to what extent cooperation at the medium business level can be intensified? The Polish administration should pay special attention to the [recently signed EUJEPA](#) and [The Pact on Infrastructure Cooperation as a valuable framework for cooperation.](#)



## **ASIA EXPLAINED**

**TO ANALYZE, TO DEBATE, TO UNDERSTAND**

On the other hand, the visit of Marshal Grodzki helped in upholding contacts with Japanese counterparts but will not matter much for the practical aspects of the bilateral relations.