

**Submission to the International Trade Committee
On the Japan-UK Trade Deal**

Prepared by The Restart Project

11 November 2020

1. The Restart Project (<https://therestartproject.org>) is a London-based charity and social enterprise that encourages and empowers people to extend the lifetimes of their Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE). We run community events in London called “Restart Parties,” where members of the public work with skilled volunteers to fix their broken EEE. We support a UK-wide network of similar initiatives, collecting data on barriers to repair. Our work also includes a wider strand of repair activism and advocacy. We teach repair skills to schoolchildren and educate product design students about design for repairability. We work in collaboration with other repair organisations and environmental lobby groups worldwide to influence policy on repair, and product lifetime extension in the EEE sector.
2. A growing movement around Right to Repair is coming together across the world, to prevent unnecessary electronic waste. In Europe, The Restart Project has co-founded a Right to Repair Campaign (<https://repair.eu>) bringing together over 35 organisations in 15 European countries, including in EU member states as well as in the UK and Norway.
3. It is because of our ongoing work on right to repair policy that we take this opportunity to submit evidence. We are concerned that the trade deal is a departure from the EU-Japan agreement in the enforcement of intellectual property infractions, which could negatively impact UK consumers and the UK repair sector
4. Article 14.18 contains references to technical protection measures (TPM), and anti-circumvention measures. It doesn't mention any specific exemptions that would be applicable. This is potentially very problematic for repair, as increasingly software is responsible for whether a product can or can't be repaired.
5. TPMs can be used to restrict access to the software embedded in consumer products; therefore increasingly TPMs might need to be circumvented in order to replace this software, and prevent unnecessary obsolescence, which could lead to e-waste.
6. We therefore ask that Parliament confirms under what conditions the UK can establish circumvention of TPMs, as so far in the European law some exceptions are allowed.