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## ABSTRACT OF PRESENTATION

### **The EU through the Eyes of Korea**

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This paper presents the result of a survey conducted in Korea to analyse the perceptions regarding the European Union (EU) among Korean elites.

In surveys conducted for both Korean public and elites, the EU was ranked in fourth place in terms of important overseas partners for Korea, after the United States, China, and Japan. Meanwhile, the EU, although located far away from Korea, was thought to be an important future partner in many aspects, including in economic and diplomatic relations. Since Koreans' primary interests lie in the economic sector, the EU was considered to be an important market as well as investment destination for Korean companies. Also many hoped that ongoing negotiation for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the two entities (Korea and the EU) would be a stepping stone for closer relations in future.

In general, the images of the EU, as perceived by both the Korean public and elites were very positive. Bilateral relations between the EU and Korea were not thought to be very strong, but were seen to be developing. Many respondents from both the public and elite groups believed that the EU could become an important partner for Korea. In addition, it was noted by many that Korea's biased relations with the United States could be more balanced, perhaps through an increasing involvement with the EU. It is thought that if Korea stays closer with the EU, Korea's foreign relations would be more diversified and balanced. While the EU did not appear in the Korean news very often, Europe's friendliness and long history and culture certainly seemed to be on the minds of the Korean people.