



## THE RIGHT CONDITIONS FOR ENHANCED EU-JAPAN BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS

Allow me to speak candidly: the current global macroeconomic landscape may not be the most uplifting topic for a rainy autumn afternoon. However, there are reasons to look ahead with optimism.

According to the Bank of Japan, the nation is on a gradual path to recovery, with a projected real GDP growth of 1.3% for fiscal year 2023. Similarly, in the European Union, the latest summer economic forecasts from the European Commission indicate a modest uptick in GDP growth, forecasting an increase of 0.8 percentage points for the calendar year 2023 and 1.4% for 2024. But beyond these economic figures, there is a brighter outlook on the horizon. The recent EU-Japan Summit held on 13 July underscored the strong alignment between Japan and the EU across various fronts. Both partners are united in their efforts to enhance the resilience and security of their respective economies. Key areas of agreement include the full implementation of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, the acceleration of collaboration in digital transformation and critical raw materials supply chains, intensified efforts in the energy transition sector, and closer collaboration on joint investments in partner countries, particularly through connectivity projects. On the microeconomic front, from the perspective of the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation, there are even more compelling reasons for optimism. We have witnessed a continued eagerness among European companies, especially SMEs, to expand their footprint in Japan. The economic missions organized by the Centre have been highly successful, fostering significant interest and business connections.

Japan undoubtedly presents a wealth of opportunities as a market. Japanese authorities and agencies offer various incentives to foreign companies prepared to invest in the country. The weakened yen also makes Japan an attractive destination for European investors. Lastly, the region's geopolitical stability solidifies Japan's reputation as one of the safest places to invest in Asia.

At the EU-Japan Centre, our commitment remains unwavering in fostering collaboration between European and Japanese businesses through our diverse range of activities, all of which can be explored on our website. I also invite you to follow our [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) accounts to be timely informed.



In conclusion, I extend my warmest wishes to the EU-Japan Business Round Table as they celebrate their 25th annual event this year. The meeting will take place on 7 November in Brussels. This milestone serves as a testament to the enduring and robust ties that bind Japan and the EU. Happy reading!

By **MANUEL HUBERT**, Managing Director, EU side, of the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation.



### NEWSLETTER SURVEY

The EU-Japan Centre invites you to fill in a survey about your experience with us. Give feedback and help us improve the EU-Japan Centre's quarterly flagship newsletter!

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/form/newsletter-survey>



**EU-Japan Centre**  
for Industrial Cooperation  
一般財団法人日欧産業協力センター

日欧産業協力センターでは、季刊英文ニュースレター「EU-Japan News」を通じて、さまざまな日・EU関係の情報を発信しています。

日欧産業協力センターより ..... 1-8

欧州委員会/日本政府関係機関より

・ News from the EU ..... 9-10

・ News from Japan ..... 11

・ 日・EU関係イベント案内 ..... 12-18

日・EU中小企業間のパートナーシップ促進支援  
エンタープライズ・ヨーロッパ・ネットワークより

・ ビジネスパートナー募集情報、他 ..... 19-20

### IN THIS ISSUE

- > CENTRE'S NEWS ..... 1-8
- > EU NEWS ..... 9-10
- > JAPAN NEWS ..... 11
- > EU-JAPAN NEWS ..... 12-18
- > EEN PARTNERING OPPORTUNITIES ..... 19
- > CALENDAR ..... 20

# THE EU-JAPAN BRT WILL ADDRESS ECONOMIC SECURITY, GREEN TRANSITION, STANDARDISATION, AND DIGITAL ISSUES

The 25th annual meeting of the EU-Japan Business Round Table (or "BRT") will take place in Brussels on 7 November.

The meeting will bring together EU and Japanese business leaders and representatives of the EU and Japanese Authorities to discuss issues of common interest. This will be the final meeting co-chaired by Philippe Wahl (Chairman & CEO, La Poste Groupe) and the first meeting co-chaired by Nobuhiro Endo (Executive Advisor, NEC Corporation).

This annual dialogue reviews recent developments in EU-Japan government-to-government and industrial relations and examines areas for potential future EU-Japan action both in the EU/Japan and in third markets. The meeting will feature in-depth discussions of the possibilities for EU-Japan cooperation on 'Economic Security & Supply Chains'; on the 'Green Transition'; on 'Standardisation & Regulatory Harmonisation, R&D and Skills'; and on 'Digital & AI'.

Senior representatives of the European Commission and Japanese Ministries of Foreign Affairs; Economy, Trade & Industry; and Internal Affairs & Communication will take part in the meeting. During the meeting, the BRT will adopt its 2023 set of recommendations to the EU and Japanese Authorities and will submit them to the Commission.



Photo from the 1st BRT meeting in 1999 (left to right) BRT co-Chairs Tadahiro Sekimoto & Étienne Davignon greet European Commission President Romano Prodi

A report on the meeting will be published in December's EU-Japan NEWS.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/brt/annual-meeting-2023>



## THE CENTRE'S JAPANESE WEBSITE REVAMP

A few months after the revamping of the English website of the EU-Japan Centre, we are happy to announce that we have finished remodeling the Japanese version of the website! Have a look through to get familiar with the new and improved layout, our activities, and the benefits you can acquire from our support.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/ja>

## HOW JAPANESE COMPANIES CAN **BENEFIT FROM EEN**



The Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) is the world's largest business support network, funded by the EU Commission to support EU businesses to innovate and grow internationally.

EEN comprises 600 organisations in over 50 countries. Member organisations include chambers of commerce and industry, regional development organisations, universities and research institutes, as well as innovation agencies.

Within this framework, the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation is the unique and sole representative for Japan, therefore providing Japanese SMEs with an entry door to access the EU market. Active in that capacity since 2012, we have contributed connecting Japanese and European companies towards building business partnerships. This has been done through dissemination of Japanese companies' business offers & requests

profiles, co-organisation of EU-Japan B2B matchmaking events, and other types of support.

Since the EU-Japan Centre became an official member of the network, the EEN and the Centre have been working together for the past 11 years to facilitate 93 partnership agreements between Japanese and European companies and have (co-) organised more than 160 events that led to over 8,300 B2B meetings to the benefit of Japanese and European SMEs.

Most successful and promising sectors have been food, ICT, industrial equipment, as well as biotech and life sciences. One recent success is the popular Japanese Food and Beverage Days online B2B event held

annually since 2021, which has directly or indirectly led to many achievements. This is another indicator that EEN B2B matching services can be beneficial to Japanese companies using this support.

The Centre is thus pleased to invite Japanese SMEs to reach out to our EEN Japan Desk to help them facilitate meetings with EU companies and support their business development in the EU. European affiliates of Japanese companies can also benefit from the network by participating in B2B events online and on-site organised by various EEN partners all over the EU. (See also page 19 for news from the Network)

➔ <https://www.een-japan.eu/ja>

## NEW LIST OF CASE STUDIES OF EU-JAPAN BUSINESS COOPERATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation recently published a list of 25 projects between EU and Japanese companies taking place in Southeast Asia.

While the EU and Japanese markets have many opportunities, it is important to remember that there are also untapped business opportunities in growing markets like Southeast Asia. Through these case studies, the EU-Japan Centre aims to encourage EU and Japanese companies to consider collaboration in Southeast Asia. These projects show that EU and Japanese companies can complement each other in these markets. For example, EU companies can take advantage of the position of their Japanese partners which are often well-established and well-connected in the region.

They can be an entry door to a local tender and can also benefit from Japanese ODA loans, which finance many projects in Southeast Asia. On the other hand, EU companies can provide competitive products and advanced technologies. From train signal systems to chemical processing technologies, EU companies can meet the needs of Southeast Asian markets and Japanese companies. In addition, one of the best practices identified was that being present in Japan remains key if EU companies want to work with Japanese partners in Southeast Asia because the decision-making process is



often made in the headquarters in Japan, and not in the subsidiaries in Asia. The EU-Japan Centre compiled this list of case studies by monitoring EU and Japanese companies' activities in Southeast Asia and by interviewing some of the companies involved in the projects. The EU-Japan Centre did not contribute to the realisation of these projects, but it aims at promoting best practices and at providing a deeper understanding of these types of partnerships. For more information about these case studies, please contact the EU-Japan Centre at: [EJ3A@eu-japan.or.jp](mailto:EJ3A@eu-japan.or.jp)

➔ [https://www.eu-japan.eu/sites/default/files/imce/EJP3A/Case\\_studies\\_EU\\_Japan\\_Southeast\\_Asia\\_en.pdf](https://www.eu-japan.eu/sites/default/files/imce/EJP3A/Case_studies_EU_Japan_Southeast_Asia_en.pdf)

## PROMOTING EU-JAPAN BUSINESS COOPERATION IN AFRICA AT THE STEPP FORUM 2023

On 13 September 2023, the EU-Japan Centre was invited to speak at the Sustainable Technology Promotion Platform (STePP) Forum organised by UNIDO's Investment and Technology Promotion Office, Tokyo (UNIDO ITPO Tokyo).



UNIDO ITPO Tokyo aims to promote a selection of Japanese technologies to accelerate the transfer of sustainable technologies to developing and emerging markets. These technologies cover five areas: energy, environment, agribusiness, human health, and disaster management. They can be found through UNIDO ITPO Tokyo's STePP ([http://www.unido.or.jp/en/activities/technology\\_transfer/technology\\_db](http://www.unido.or.jp/en/activities/technology_transfer/technology_db))

During the event, the EU-Japan Centre presented existing case studies of EU-Japan business cooperation in Africa to an audience of Japanese STePP companies, which were mainly SMEs.

The Centre also encouraged the audience to consider EU companies as possible partners in Africa and to think about complementarity rather than competition. In addition, the EU-Japan Centre introduced its helpdesk and services supporting trilateral cooperation.

The event was an excellent opportunity for the EU-Japan Centre to meet Japanese SMEs developing sustainable technologies and interested in working in emerging markets.

This was the second event collaboration between the EU-Japan Centre and UNIDO ITPO Tokyo.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/eu-japan-business-cooperation-asean-africa-and-latin-america>

➔ [http://www.unido.or.jp/en/outcome/technology\\_transfer/11513](http://www.unido.or.jp/en/outcome/technology_transfer/11513)

## STAY UP TO DATE WITH **JAPANESE PUBLIC SECTOR PROCUREMENT**

Will your company build the new website for Japan's National Personnel Authority, or will your technology contribute to a scientific breakthrough at RIKEN - Institute of Physical and Chemical Research?

For EU companies it can be a challenge to obtain an insight into the activities of the public sector in Japan. Information available in English is limited and it is often hard to find more details about competitive tenders or projects offered by Japanese government organizations in order to assess whether it is a potential business opportunity.

The Japan Tax & Public Procurement (JTPP) Helpdesk publishes a weekly selection of tenders (Weekly Digest) with goods and services that Japanese organizations are planning to buy.

With this Digest, the JTPP Helpdesk aims to provide more detailed information than what is published on Japan's English language procurement website managed by the Japan External Trade Organization. Whenever publicly available, the digest provides direct links to specifications, email addresses and information about other deadlines and other details usually not mentioned in English announcements. The selection is provided in a practical Excel format that allows subscribers to easily filter and search for opportunities of their interest.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/weekly-digest-public-sector-tenders>



JTPP Helpdesk's Digest is a free service available to companies and non-profit trade promotion organizations based in the EU, and is sent out every Monday by email.

In addition to receiving the digest, you can also contact the JTPP Helpdesk for further assistance and information on specific opportunities found in the selection.

Interested? You can subscribe at the following link!

## LAST CHANCE TO GET A PLACE ON THE **RATIONAL LEAN IN EUROPE VISIT**

You have until 16 October to apply for a place on December's Lean in Europe visit to RATIONAL in Landsberg am Lech, Germany.



RATIONAL was Germany's 'Factory of the Year' in 2022 and is the world-leader for multifunctional appliances used in professional kitchens to produce 140m meals a day. It has more than 600 patents in operation or in application.

The visit will take place on 7 & 8 December and include a Gemba tour of 3 plants; presentations on RATIONAL's story, customer focus, Lean processes and organisation; and its apprenticeship process; lean discussions; a cooking demonstration to see the product in action and a debriefing.

There are 30 places available for this visit which will be led by Prof. Richard Keegan (Adjunct Professor of Lean Operational Excellence, Trinity Business School).

Priority will be given to applicants with a clear role in shaping their company's lean strategy / process management activities who explain why their company would like them to take part in this visit and who have not attended previous Lean in Europe visits.



Former participants may wish to encourage a colleague who has not been on a previous visit to do so, so that they get the chance to benefit from the Lean in Europe activity. Applications are welcome from companies located in an EU27 member-state or in an EU Single Market Programme country.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/lean-europe-visit-31-rational>

### **THE LEAN IN EUROPE ACTIVITY WILL END IN MARCH**

After the RATIONAL visit, just two more will be organised, including to Kostwein



Maschinenbau GmbH. To be sent details of the Kostwein visit and of the final visit when they are available, please contact [lean@eu-japan.eu](mailto:lean@eu-japan.eu)

## CALL FOR APPLICANTS **WCM MISSION IN JAPAN – MARCH 2024**

Immerse yourself in insightful workshops and Japanese factory visits to witness first-hand many world-class innovations!

Are you a manufacturing industry enthusiast seeking global exposure and cutting-edge insights? Look no further! The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation is launching its next World Class Manufacturing (WCM) mission in Japan. This extraordinary opportunity aims to connect industry leaders, such as yourself, with like-minded professionals to share expertise and explore possibilities for a LEAN prosperous future.

Taking place on 11-14 March 2024, the 53rd edition of the Centre's World Class Manufacturing mission will provide an

exclusive platform for participants to delve into Japan's renowned manufacturing excellence. Gain invaluable knowledge on topics ranging from lean manufacturing principles and automation technologies to quality control and process optimization. By participating in the WCM Mission, you will be exposed to engaging discussions and unique networking opportunities with Japanese industry pioneers and experts.

**Deadline for applications: 12 October 2023**

Places are limited, please visit our website for more information.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/world-class-manufacturing-mission-ii>

## WCM MISSION - **MARCH 2023 SESSION**

The 51st Challenge toward World Class Manufacturing (WCM) mission was organised by the EU-Japan Centre on 13-17 March 2023. 15 participants, working in various sectors from 11 Member States, took part in this course.



The objective of this course was to offer an insight into the Japanese way of developing and implementing WCM methods in a very practical way. During this 5-day training, participants learned how to identify the real cause of their current challenges and improve the situation by themselves. A visit to 4 Japanese companies operating in the automotive sector was organized to show the participants how the methods are adopted at the *real Gemba* - the Japanese manufacturing sites.

### **PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS AND TESTIMONIALS**

*"The training was very interesting. Throughout the week, I learned the lean principles. First. To keep it simple and above all do it immediately. Second. Everything can be improved, so look, see, communicate, do, check... again and again. Third and maybe the most important. Be persistent in your efforts, in order to be trusted and to lead others."*

By **VENTSISLAV PETKOV DRANDEV**, CEO, V. I. P. Ltd., [www.vipco-bg.com](http://www.vipco-bg.com)

*"Practical DOJO exercise was very useful and helped me understand how to apply standard work and Kaizen in practice. Great teamwork too. I learned about the differences in Work In Process buffers and tact and cycle times."*

By **DEIVIDAS AKELIS**, Lean Manager, PakMarkas <https://www.pakmarkas.com>

*"During the training, I was able to observe really simple solutions for practical problems, like making use of gravity and using the simple concept of strings (potential energy)."*

By **FERDINAND KARLAS**, Head of Product, Tata Steel Netherlands <http://www.tatasteleurope.com>



*"Seeing wide use of visual and auditory signals on my journey through Japan, I thought that was important. I now see that improvements come from passion, challenges, creative thinking and determination – doesn't matter where you are. Thank you all for an exceptional week in Japan. So many learnings and in an incredible country. Looking forward to re-visiting Japan again in the future."*

By **ANTHONY COLLINS**, CEO, Topflight Travel Group, <https://www.topflight.ie>

## GET READY FOR JAPAN 2023 – 6<sup>TH</sup> EDITION

The 6th Get Ready For Japan (GRFJ) programme was organized by the EU-Japan Centre on 15-26 May 2023. 14 companies (12 SMEs and 2 start-ups) from 8 EU member states participated in this year's programme.



The 2-week Get Ready for Japan scheme offers EU managers the unique opportunity to experience and understand both the cultural and economic elements that define and explain Japan's business and technological achievements. Continuously improved to meet the latest expectations about business in Japan, the programme provides EU businesspersons with professional Japan-related expertise. It is focused on business management and consists of a combination of lectures, case studies, role plays and company visits. This is designed to help participants become thoroughly informed about the actual conditions of Japanese business through practical analysis and research.

During the programme, 9 lectures on Japanese culture, economy and marketing in Japan, 2 regional visits to Ota City Industrial Promotion Organisation and Yokohama City, 1 company visit, and a 2-day joint seminar on "cross-cultural communication and international business management and negotiation for international business operations" were organized. Within the frame of the mission some participants could also benefit from individual company meetings with potential Japanese partners organized physically or virtually.

Stay in touch with the EU-Japan Centre for the 2024 session.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/get-ready-for-japan-training-programme>

### PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS AND TESTIMONIALS

This enthralling collection of testimonials showcases the impact that the Get Ready for Japan programme had on participants. Through their testimonials, participants reveal the profound shifts in perspectives that took place as they navigated the Japanese business landscape. Assimilating invaluable lessons on adaptability, respect, and harmonious collaboration, they witnessed the efficacy of the art of Japanese business etiquette in establishing enduring connections and effective communication strategies.

*"It was an amazing experience to learn so much about Japan during the 2-week stay in Tokyo. No matter what I had learnt beforehand during online webinars by the EU-Japan Centre, eventually in Tokyo I have realised that "nemawashi" plays not only a key role in doing business in Japan, but it's the only way to do so. In addition, cultural barriers and specific business communication styles are as important as "nemawashi".*

*Thanks to the training course we have changed the entire process of preparation of a business proposal for our Japanese customers. Company presentation,*

*production processes in terms of prototype manufacturing, quotation and business communication will be adapted to Japanese requirements.*

*Please be prepared for a time-consuming, highly structured process that requires your full and long-term commitment. No matter your knowledge and experience, please expect the unexpected. Japan is a place unlike any other on the globe. Thank you very much, arigato gozaimasu!"*

By **PIOTR WOLOCH**, Business Development Manager, MDT sp. z o.o., <https://www.mdt.pl/en>



Continues next page



Continuing from previous page



*“Even if I used to go to Japan every year to promote our company’s services, the opportunity to participate in the Get ready for Japan programme came exactly at the right moment. This 2-week intense programme gave me a precise 360-degree picture of the current Japanese business world: the lectures about the culture, the history, the politics and the macroeconomics of Japan, and business intercultural management, reminded me of many cultural gaps that I encountered in my career and gave me ideas on how to overcome them. I got to better know Japanese customers’ behaviour and learned various tools that I will certainly use in my daily business with Japanese counterparts. It was very interesting to compare what we learned to the culture of the different participants’ countries too, since it gave us a European perspective.*

*The programme exceeded my expectations with its high-quality lectures and business experts that we had the chance to meet! The part I liked most was the roleplay exercises that we could experience in Prof. Parissa Haghirian classes: it was really useful meeting very experienced Japanese businessmen and women and asking for their suggestions and advice! Even if I have a lot of experience with working in Japanese with Japanese customers, I recommend the programme to both people who want to approach the Japanese market for the first time and to those who want to develop or diversify their business in Japan. I was honoured to be selected to participate in the “Get ready for Japan” programme, thank you.”*

By **GIULIA CIAMMAICHELLA**, CEO, Link Japan srl, <https://linkjapan.it>

*“Gained knowledge from GRFJ programme helped us understand the root causes of issues in the areas we have been having difficulties with while doing business with Japanese clients. Main areas we will improve are related to communication, response timing and managing expectations. GRFJ programme’s seminars on communication were very helpful in understanding first-hand the areas we could improve in. After the program, the differences between EU and Japanese companies’ management style and culture are much more visible and understandable. With an understanding of the challenges between EU and Japan companies, it is much easier to relate and seek common ground while doing business together.”*

By **JUSTINAS SLEKYS**, Project Manager, Altechna R&D, <http://www.altechna.com>



## “ABOUT JAPAN” REPORTS AND WEBINARS

### SUPPORT YOUR BUSINESS IN JAPAN

The following reports and forthcoming webinars have been planned within the frame of the Centre’s EU Business in Japan support. The EU Business in Japan content provides practical information for European Union businesses in need of clear guidelines to trade with or invest in Japan, cooperate with Japanese partners, understand local regulations... Over 400 reports and recorded webinars are available free of charge for members. Not yet an account? Create one now.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan>

#### LATEST PUBLISHED REPORTS:

- Confectionery Market in Japan  
➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/library/publication/report-confectionery-market-japan>
- Importance and Advantages of Interim Management for Strategic Business Development in Japan  
➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/library/publication/report-importance-and-advantages-interim-management-strategic-business-development-japan>

#### FORTHCOMING ABOUT JAPAN WEBINARS:

- Market Situation and Potentials in Japan for Plastic Recycling Technologies, 17 October 2023
- Japanese Business Culture- How to influence decision-making processes in Japanese organisations, 24 October 2023
- The Log House Market in Japan, 07 November 2023
- Newspace Market in Japan, 28 November 2023

Register here:

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events>

## INTERVIEW SERIES: THE PEOPLE BEHIND EU-JAPAN COOPERATION

EU-Japan cooperation takes many forms. Time and time again, we read news reports about agreements signed between the EU, or its Member States, and Japan, about trade missions and cultural events, about joint innovation and dialogue. But the question remains: Who are the people behind these efforts? What is their story and how did they become involved in developing international cooperation?

The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation is happy to introduce the second installation of a series of articles meant to introduce the individuals and organizations making EU-Japan collaboration possible. We hope you enjoy a snippet of the interview with our second guest.



Mr. **MARCUS SCHURMANN**, CEO, German Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan - AHK Japan  
➔ <https://japan.ahk.de/en>

**Q: What is your professional background? How did you first get in contact with Japan and its culture?**

**Marcus:** Starting with my educational background, I have a BA in Business Administration from a three-year programme within the German dual education system that included an apprenticeship. Since then, I have always had an interest in living and working abroad, and often travelled to the former eastern bloc. I went to China in 1989, as a kind of study tour, and had the idea of continuing my journey eastward in the direction of Japan. Looking for a way there, I was accepted for a scholarship by the Carl Duisberg Society and combined language classes and an internship. I arrived there roughly one week before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Finally, I started my first job in the company that I had the privilege of supporting during my internship.

**Q: In your previous roles with German companies, what challenges and opportunities did you personally encounter?**

**Marcus:** My first employer, Docter Optic, was a manufacturer of aspherical lenses, which were used in car headlights and were at the forefront of technology at the time. As you can imagine, the size of the Japanese automotive industry attracted many German SME's such as my company.

*One of my very first tasks was to establish business relations with its relevant counterparts. This was a huge challenge for me, being still very young, trying to understand the business culture and the decision-making process of companies. I learned that there is a different speed of business, a peculiar "Japanese speed". In general, I found that cultural assimilation in Japan demands a lot of respect and understanding for how things work.*

*There is one experience about Japan being an island nation and Japanese customers relying on foreign business partners that I will never forget. Considering that Japan and Germany are so far away, what happens in the event of disruptions to the supply chain? This matter is hugely sensitive in Japan. When the Gulf War started in 1990, I remember there was a shipment near the Suez Channel, on its way to Japan. I received a phone call from one customer who had just heard the news on the radio that the war had broken out. They asked me if I could make sure that the shipment would arrive in Japan on time. I was wondering at the time how the customer could ask such a question. How shall I know? I understood with that phone call how sensitive customers are when they work with overseas suppliers, especially in industries where quality, reliability and punctuality are key. This was an important learning experience for me then, and it is still relevant today.*

*When it came to providing an answer, I said: "Yes, of course. It will arrive on time" and planned for a worst-case scenario. At that time, I also learned how important personal relations are because the customer had observed that I was really trying hard to get the situation resolved, even though logically they were very much aware of the challenge of getting the shipment into Japan on time at all. As a result, as they have seen my commitment, it helped me in the long run to earn trust.*

**Q: Since 2000, you have been working as COO and CEO for the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan (AHK Japan). Can you tell us about your mission and activities as an organisation?**

**Marcus:** We are a bridge between Germany and Japan – the first contact point for German businesses in Japan, especially when they start expanding to the Japanese market. AHK Japan is also a huge platform for dialogue and exchange, and we provide a lot of services from a foreign trade promotion perspective. Being the official representation of German business in Japan, one of the key tasks that I must fulfil is keeping an eye on what the hot topics in both our countries are. This gives a lot of leverage to develop member related activities and services.

The interview continues online at:

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/publications/highlighting-contributors-to-eu-japan-cooperation-marcus-schurmann>



## EU AND JAPAN BOOST STRATEGIC COOPERATION ON DIGITAL AND ON CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS SUPPLY CHAINS

The strategic partnership between the EU and Japan continues to grow and to become even more dynamic, as the two partners are strengthening their cooperation in areas of high economic potential, which contribute to economic resilience and security in the current geopolitical context and accelerated technological shifts.

On 13 July, in the context of the EU-Japan summit, the leaders welcomed:

- The signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation to support secure and resilient submarine cable connectivity and a Memorandum of Cooperation on semiconductors at the first Japan-EU Digital Partnership Council meeting on 3 July. The EU and Japan confirmed their shared goal of advancing digital to foster economic growth and promote a human-centric digital transformation based on shared democratic principles and fundamental rights.
- The signing of the Administrative Arrangement between the Commission and the Japan Organisation for Metals and Energy Security (JOGMEC) on 6 July, aiming at reinforcing cooperation on critical raw materials supply chains.

President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, said: *“Economic security is a common concern for Japan and the EU. We share similar dependencies, and we both need to de-risk our supply chains. One of our objectives is to reduce overreliance for products that are vital for our economies, like critical raw materials and semiconductors on a handful of suppliers – many of them based in China. I am very pleased that we have concluded cooperation arrangements on both topics. We have so much to gain by working together on this.”*

The EU and Japanese co-chairs of the Japan-EU Digital Partnership Council intend to meet again in 2024 in Brussels to review progress and take further steps to deepen the Partnership. Meetings and information exchange under the heading of the Administrative Arrangement on Cooperation in Critical Raw Materials Supply Chains have already started taking place. JOGMEC will also be invited to participate in dedicated workshops at the next EU Raw Materials Week on 13-16 November 2023.

Source: European Commission

➔ [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_23\\_3831](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_3831)

## THE 41<sup>ST</sup> EU-JAPAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY MEETING

The Chair of the Delegation for relations with Japan (D-JP), Ms Christel Schaldemose, welcomed Honourable Japanese Delegates to the 41st EU-Japan Inter-Parliamentary meeting (IPM) in Strasbourg on 12-13 July 2023. Mr Hajime Funada, Co-Chair of the IPM was accompanied by 6 members from the Japanese Diet and 2 members from the Japanese House of Councillors. At the end of the 41st EU-Japan Inter-Parliamentary meeting a Joint Statement was signed by the Chairs Ms Schaldemose and Mr Funada.

The Delegations reiterated their unwavering commitment to further deepening of the strategic partnership between the EU and Japan, and the free and open international order based on the rule of law. The strengthening of the bilateral relations recently including the green alliance and the digital partnership, and the benefits of advancing research cooperation have been well noted.

Among other points, the statement called for the establishment of international rules for safe and transparent Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Recognizing the importance of advancing openness, fairness, impartiality, privacy and inclusiveness to promote responsible AI, it affirmed the contribution to the promotion of the Hiroshima AI process agreed at the G7 Hiroshima Summit, including topics such as governance, safeguard of intellectual property rights, promotion of transparency, response to information manipulation, including disinformation, and responsible utilization of these technologies. Read the whole statement here. Source: European Parliament

➔ <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-jp/activities/inter-parliamentary>



## FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEPS CONCLUDE **VISIT TO JAPAN**

MEPs from the Foreign Affairs Committee focused on strengthening cooperation on foreign policy and connectivity in the Indo-Pacific region during their two-day visit to Japan.

A delegation of the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee visited Japan on 24-25 July to discuss foreign policy cooperation with one of the EU's closest allies in Asia.

During the visit to Tokyo, MEPs held productive discussions with their counterparts in the Japanese Diet and the Japanese government, including the State Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Cybersecurity. A meeting with leading think tank representatives on connectivity and EU-Japan foreign policy cooperation provided further insights into the direction in which EU-Japan cooperation can be strengthened and deepened.

Discussions had a strong focus on the security situation in the Indo-Pacific, the roles both Japan and the European Union can play to support a rules-based international order, and the strong support for Ukraine of both Japan and the EU.

Urmas Paet, Chair of the delegation, said: "The EU-Japan partnership is even more important in the currently turbulent times, when like-minded partners should stand as united as possible in defence of the international rules-based order."

Source: European Parliament

➔ <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20230725IPR03503/foreign-affairs-committee-meps-conclude-visit-to-japan>

## FACTSHEET ON **EU-JAPAN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

The EU-Japan strategic partnership continues to grow deeper and more dynamic.



The partnership is based on longstanding cooperation, common interests and shared values, supporting human rights and democracy, multilateralism, and a rules-based international order based on the UN Charter, as well as open, free and fair trade and a green transition.

Japan is the EU's closest strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific region and a key ally for the implementation of the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific released in September 2021. A factsheet summarizing the main aspects of the agreement was released in July by the European External Action Service (EEAS). Source: EEAS

➔ [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eu-japan-relations\\_en?s=169](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eu-japan-relations_en?s=169)

## AN ADDITIONAL 42 **EU AND JAPANESE GIs PROTECTED**

In the framework of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, both parties will protect an additional 42 geographical indications (GIs), such as Raclette de Savoie, Vinagre de Jerez for the EU and sanuki shiro miso (miso paste), or Osaka wine for Japan.

This is the third time that the list of geographical indications protected in Japan and in the EU is extended, following the additions of 56 GIs in February 2021 and 56 in February 2022. The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, which entered into force on 1 February 2019, protects the listed agri-food names against imitation and usurpation, bringing mutual trade benefits and introducing consumers to guaranteed, authentic products from two regions with a rich culinary and cultural tradition. The EU and Japan also agreed to add up to 6 GIs from Japan by the end of this year and to decide in 2025 on another extension of the list of protected GIs.

Japan is the 5th largest outlet for EU's agrifood exports. The main products exported by the EU to Japan include pork, wines and spirits, cigars and cigarettes, cheese, chocolate and sugar confectionery and other processed agricultural goods. The EU imports mainly soups and sauces, vegetable products, as well as food and cereal preparations. More information as well as the list of new registered products is available in below link. Source: European Commission



➔ [https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/news/eu-japan-additional-42-geographical-indications-protected-both-sides-2023-09-27\\_en](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/news/eu-japan-additional-42-geographical-indications-protected-both-sides-2023-09-27_en)

## SMRJ'S "CEO BUSINESS MEETING" OPEN TO EUROPEAN COMPANIES

As a governmental entity, the Organization for Small & Medium Enterprises and Regional Innovation, Japan (SMRJ) supports overseas companies that are seeking to develop new products, establish joint ventures and technical cooperation with Japanese SMEs, or that are simply considering purchasing products from local SMEs.

Within this aim, SMRJ offers a free of charge business matching support, the "CEO Business Meeting", to help overseas companies' CEOs meet their counterparts in Japanese SMEs. For the past ten years, SMRJ has arranged business meetings, both online and on-site, for two thousand companies, mainly from Asia.

The negotiation success rate of the meetings held last year was over 70%, with many business deals achieved, covering exports, new product development, joint developments, technology collaborations, and establishment of joint ventures.

Starting this year, with the support of the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation, SMRJ will be widening the range of its "CEO Business Meetings" support toward companies based in Europe as well. This region is of most interest for Japanese SME companies that are highly motivated to collaborate.



SMRJ is planning three "CEO Business Meeting" events next year targeting very specific sectors.

- Eco-Tech CEO Business Meeting  
Target sectors: new energy, energy-saving machines and systems, new materials, urban development, and de-carbonization.
- The innovative Industry CEO Business Meeting  
Target sectors: aerospace, robotics, industrial machines, IT, AI, factory automation, and EV

- The medical CEO Business Meeting  
Target sectors: medical equipment, healthcare, and nursing  
SMRJ is looking forward to the participation of many overseas companies looking for collaboration with Japanese SMEs. For more information, interested companies can contact SMRJ's marketing support department: [ceo-network@smrj.go.jp](mailto:ceo-network@smrj.go.jp)

Source: SMRJ

➔ <https://www.smrj.go.jp/english/ceo>

## TOSBEC HOLDS SEMINARS FOR FUTURE ENTREPRENEURS

TOSBEC, the Tokyo One-Stop Business Establishment Center, co-established by the Government of Japan and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, unifies the procedures that foreign companies and start-ups need to complete to establish a business.

Through personalized service provided by staff knowledgeable in administrative procedures and experts, the Center helps to facilitate the prompt completion of various filing procedures required when starting a business, including those for certification of articles of incorporation, company registration and notification of incorporation, taxes, social security, and immigration. Furthermore, to meet the needs of companies, the Center also offers support for electronic applications as well as interpretation and translation services in several languages.

Currently, the Center offers seminars for those planning to start up business in Tokyo to learn the related knowledge from experts, either online or at one of its in-person events. Some seminars are provided in English, and participation is free.

- Tax accounting essentials for entrepreneurs
- How to make a business plan for subsidiaries in Japan; for new and restructuring businesses
- Key Points of Recruitment and Labour Contracts

For enquiries:  
+81-3-3582-4934,  
[support@tosbec.org](mailto:support@tosbec.org)



Source: Adecco Ltd.

➔ <https://www.startup-support.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/onestop/event/en>



## **NEW COOPERATION** BETWEEN HIGASHIOSAKA CITY IN JAPAN AND THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF DÜSSELDORF

Düsseldorf always had strong bonds with Japan, it hosts one of the most important communities of Japanese expatriate in Europe and over 600 Japan-affiliated companies are located in the region since the mid of the '50ies. Higashiosaka is a Japanese city well known for its “monozukuri” (“creation of things”) culture - a Japanese concept designating the art of designing and producing technical objects with skill and passion.

Taking advantage of the forthcoming 2025 World Expo to be held in Osaka, the local development agency launched the Higashiosaka Industry Promotion Program with the scope of promoting the best of local manufactures worldwide. The agency set up a website “Tech Plaza Higashiosaka” (<http://www.techplaza.city.higashiosaka.osaka.jp/english>) featuring various companies specialized in monozukuri manufacturing and spanning over multiple sectors: customized metal goods, environmental devices, lighting fixtures, electronic parts and so on...

In its internationalization process, Higashiosaka approached the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Düsseldorf - IHK Düsseldorf, seeing in this organization a possible partner for the promotion of their website. After sharing information about the project, both organizations saw a potential field for cooperation that would enable them to support companies in their respective regions. The process also involved AHK Japan, the representative office in Japan of the German Chambers of Commerce Abroad organization, that is usually the first contact for German companies looking for partners in Japan.

Once all aspects were defined, IHK Düsseldorf released on its website a dedicated page promoting the “Tech Plaza Higashiosaka” project, where German companies looking for Japanese manufacturers can now identify relevant partners within the listed Higashiosaka’s companies. Interested companies can also receive tailored consulting services, whenever required, to find appropriate partners matching their needs. IHK Düsseldorf, AHK Japan and Higashiosaka are now looking forward to follow-up received inquiries and to help companies build business relations between Düsseldorf and Higashiosaka.

Source: Higashiosaka City

➔ <https://www.ihk.de/duesseldorf/aussenwirtschaft/auslandsmaerkte/japan/japan-produzenten-finden-5898758>

## PRESENTATION OF IHI AEROSPACE AND **B2B WITH THE CZECH SPACE INDUSTRY IN PRAGUE**

The honorary president of the industry association Czech Space Alliance Petr Bares, and the Ministry of Transport - Space Department represented by Ondřej Svab, organised in Prague a “get-to-know” session between two top level executives of IHI Aerospace Japan and representatives of Czech space industry.

The event followed last year’s meetings of a Czech aerospace delegation to Tokyo with IHI, JAXA and several other companies. The June 2022 mission in Tokyo was organised by the Czech Aerospace Cluster in cooperation with a representative of the Czech Space Alliance.

The Prague meeting took place in June 2023 at the Ministry of Transport and was introduced in Japanese by Mr. Ondřej (nickname Onsen-san) Votruba, who had directed the Czechinvest office in Tokyo for many years. The first item on the agenda was a very interesting presentation of IHI Aerospace by the member of the Board Mr. Tomotaka Ishikawa. This was followed by individual B2B interviews between the IHI team consisting



of the Board Member Mr. Ishikawa and the General Manager Group, Business Development Department, Mr Kohei Taya with all the Czech companies present. The Czech space industry has demonstrated sustained interest in the Japanese space program, had a national booth at every Japan Aerospace Exhibition since 2008, and will be there again in 2024. It

also attended Spacetide events. It enjoys excellent support from the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation. The Centre helped organise several events at the Czech Embassy in Tokyo, which was attended by top executives of the Japanese space industry and JAXA, including a JAXA astronaut.

Source: Czech Space Alliance

## JAPAN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGENCY AND THE EUROPEAN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY ORGANIZATION **SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION**

On 24 July 2023 at Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)'s Tokyo Headquarters, Kazuhito Hashimoto, President of JST, and Dr. Fiona Watt, President of the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO), signed a Memorandum of Cooperation.

The signing ceremony took place during President Watt's visit to JST. Future collaboration with EMBO, which provides training programs for young researchers and facilitates international networking of top talent in the life science fields, is expected to promote the career development and international mobility of JST researchers. Source: Japan Science and Technology Agency

➔ [https://www.jst.go.jp/report/2023/230725\\_e.html](https://www.jst.go.jp/report/2023/230725_e.html)



## **DEVELOPING YOUR BUSINESS** IN SLOVAKIA

The Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency (SARIO) in cooperation with the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Tokyo organized an investment seminar "Developing your business in Slovakia" which took place on 12 September 2023, in Tokyo on the premises of the EU Delegation - Europa House.

The seminar focused on Slovak automotive, electronics, and ICT sectors to present investment opportunities to potential Japanese investors.

Mr. Roman Hauser, the Deputy Head of the Slovak Embassy in Tokyo, introduced the activities of Japanese companies in Slovakia and emphasized the continuous development of mutual relations between Japan and Slovakia.

Mrs. Simona Jurkovičová and Mrs. Stanislava Plascencia Lubinová, Senior Consultants of SARIO, presented to the representatives of approximately 40 Japanese companies the investment opportunities, incentives, governmental support mechanisms, and services of SARIO together with the success stories of Japanese companies established in Slovakia.

Mr. Ryo Koba, Senior Director for Global Strategy (Europe) at JETRO brought up trends of Japanese investors established in Europe, challenges Japanese investors are facing in Europe, and highlighted the comparative advantages of Slovakia from the perspective of Japanese investors.

Mr. Manuel Hubert, Managing Director of the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation, presented the services this organization provides to Japanese companies while entering the European market.

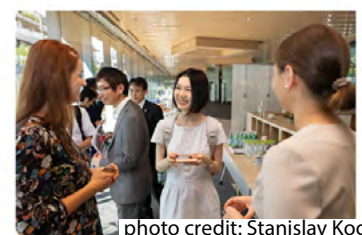


photo credit: Stanislav Kogiku

Mr. Takashi Kamioka, Director of Quality Assurance of MinebeaMitsumi, closed this event with the success story of Minebea Slovakia. The company has been successfully operating in Slovakia since 2016 and employs approximately 1,400 people. He stated that the company is extremely satisfied in Slovakia, and highlighted the strong support from the Slovak government, and the quality, and expertise of the Slovak labour force.

SARIO is currently preparing its annual largest B2B international event the Slovak Industry VISION Day (<https://www.slovak-industryvisionday.com/t-en>) that will take place on 23 November 2023, and all Japanese companies interested in cooperation with Slovakia are cordially invited to join.

Source: SARIO

➔ <https://www.sario.sk/en>

## SHIGEKATA MIZUNO, KYOTO RESEARCH PARKS, JOINS IASP INTERNATIONAL BOARD

The International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation (IASP) recently celebrated their 40th annual World Conference in Luxembourg on 12-15 September 2023.

Under the theme “Megatrends in Innovation Ecosystems: What are the impacts for STPs & AOIs?”, the conference provided a platform for discussions about the pivotal role that innovation ecosystems can play in consolidating global efforts to combat the most pressing threats the world is facing today.

The IASP Luxembourg Conference brought together a unique combination of global innovation managers and agents, gathering more than 80 speakers and over 500 delegates from over 55 different countries, including prominent figures in government, business, and innovation. During the conference, IASP members convened on 14 September for the association's General Assembly, where a new President and new International Board members were officially ratified.



Shigekata Mizuno, on the left, with IASP CEO Ebba Lund and the other new members of the board

Notably, Mr. Shigekata Mizuno from Kyoto Research Park was welcomed to the Board, becoming only the second Japanese member to serve on the board in the association's history. The IASP constitution articulates the importance of diverse geographic representation within the Board to be able to reflect its global scope, and we are glad Mr. Mizuno can contribute to strengthening the global nature of our network.

Mr Mizuno took this opportunity to express that he *"would like to utilize this opportunity to contribute to the IASP, by supporting the development of innovation ecosystems of each region and the collaboration among the various regional ecosystems"*, proudly highlighting IASP's global impact.

Source: IASP

➔ <https://www.iasp>

## F2F HEALTH MATTERS COLLECTIVE INTERNATIONAL TRADE MISSION TO JAPAN SUCCESSFULLY FINALISED!

During five days, 19-23 June 2023, F2F Health Matters project consortium with the expertise of consultants in Japan dedicated efforts and resources to embark selected European companies to discover the Japanese market and to get a real insight of what to expect for future collaborations around innovation, but also the right strategy to follow in order to make their internationalisation journey a success.



The mission was held in Tokyo, where SMEs were supported to meet experts, consultants, and potential business partners in order to present their healthy food products and supplements, and to learn the specifics of the Japanese market. The companies had also the opportunity to attend JAPAN'S FOOD EXPORT FAIR, a food fair that allowed European SMEs to make direct contact with new potential partners.

The Champion SMEs participating in the internationalisation mission were the following: Bioextract (Belgium), Asabe (Belgium), Anta de Cima - Sociedade Agrícola Unipessoal Lda (Portugal), Wild Bunch & Co. (Portugal), Cake Lucky SAS (France), POLARIS (France), Marie Morin (France), Vino Peter Lisicky s.r.o. (Slovakia), SPACElab s.r.o. (Slovakia), Opre' Cidery s.r.o. (Slovakia), Real Conservera Española, S.L. (Spain) and Dairypet, S.L. (Spain).

### Elite Programme

All the selected SMEs have also been part of the Elite SMEs coaching and training programme, which provided training courses for the Japanese market, coaching and access to a dedicated SMEs Community.

### Market Intelligence Repository

Furthermore, F2F Health Matters project gives free market intelligence information on its website. In the section “Markets”, users will be able to find market reports on Japan. There is also available information on the other four countries targeted by the project: South Korea, Vietnam, Canada, and United Arab Emirates.

Source: F2F Health Matters

➔ <https://f2f-project.eu/markets/japan>

➔ <https://youtu.be/3vv5twS-Nck> (video of the mission)

## TOWARDS GREEN TRANSITION: **FIRST POLISH HYDROGEN MISSION TO JAPAN**



Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH), Tokyo Office, organized their first hydrogen mission to Japan from 11 to 15 September 2023! The mission was led by PAIH's Board Member, Mr. Grzegorz Oszast.



As the third producer of hydrogen in the European Union, Poland promoted its innovative hydrogen solutions in Japan. Eleven entities from Poland participated in the mission: PESA, Pomeranian Special Economic Zone, Clean Energy Operator, Hynfra, Industrial Development Agency (ARP), ORLEN, MEDCOM, Walbrzych Special Economic Zone "INVEST-PARK", Wrocław University of Science and Technology, PGE Group and Polish Development Bank (BGK).

On 11 September, participants had the opportunity to visit the world's largest hydrogen-production facility – Fukushima Hydrogen Energy Research Field (FH2R). On 12 September, representatives of Toshiba welcomed the Polish mission to their headquarters in Kawasaki where both parties discussed their hydrogen-related projects. Later that day, PAIH held a hydrogen seminar during which guest speakers from NEDO, Kawasaki City, Kawasaki Heavy Industries and Itochu Corporation presented their hydrogen solutions, while the representatives of Polish companies did a pitch session followed by networking between Polish and Japanese entrepreneurs.

The culmination of the mission was participation in Smart Energy Week 2023 (20th International Hydrogen & Fuel Cell Expo) held at Makuhari Messe from 13 to 15 September. PAIH organized the Polish Pavilion where Polish companies exhibited their solutions and held B2B meetings with potential partners from Japan. According to the show organizers, a total of 38,277 visitors attended the three-day trade fair.

A catalogue (in Japanese) with the description of Polish entities participating in the mission can be downloaded from below link.

Source: Polish Investment and Trade Agency

➔ [https://www.paih.gov.pl/files/?id\\_plik=50013](https://www.paih.gov.pl/files/?id_plik=50013)



## **THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION** RETURNS TO TOURISM EXPO JAPAN



The European Travel Commission (ETC) is thrilled to announce its participation in Tourism EXPO Japan 2023, an event dedicated to promoting international tourism and fostering global travel partnerships. ETC's presence at the expo marks a significant milestone in the revival of European tourism, inviting Japanese visitors to discover the rich and diverse experiences awaiting them across the continent.

Tourism EXPO Japan 2023, scheduled from 26 to 29 October 2023 in Osaka, promises to be a prime platform for tourism industry professionals, enthusiasts, and travellers looking to explore new horizons. ETC's participation demonstrates its commitment to reigniting the interest and enthusiasm for European travel destinations.

Visitors to the European Travel Commission's booth will have the opportunity to engage with representatives from 11 ETC members and partners from Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, France,

Germany, Greece, Hungary, and Portugal, and discover the cultural, natural, and historical treasures that await them across Europe. The ETC booth will feature firsthand insights into Europe's top destinations, ensuring that attendees leave with a newfound appreciation for the continent's allure.

As part of the forthcoming mission to Japan and ETC's participation at the expo, ETC's CEO, Eduardo Santander, will join the Tourism EXPO Japan's Ministerial Round Table. Source: ETC

➔ <https://www.2-t-expo.jp/exhibitors/view/en/45261/BtoC/1>

## A JAPAN-SPAIN INTERCULTURAL GUIDE RELEASED

The Japan-Spain Intercultural Guide published by the SHACHO KAI Association of Japanese companies culminates a trilogy of publications that reflect extensively on Japanese management, starting with the publication in 2014 of the White Paper on Japanese Companies in Spain, and continuing in 2018 with the work “Why Japanese Companies Succeed”.



The Guide brings together the contributions of several authors and integrates the dual Japanese and Spanish vision of the main cultural factors with an impact on management: Geography, History, Art, Language and Thought and Spirituality. In addition, in the process of preparing the Guide, two in-depth interviews were conducted with first-person protagonists of interculturality. In short, it is a guide aimed at Spaniards who want to promote their professional relations with the Japanese and at the Japanese who want to better understand the mentality and professional idiosyncrasy of Spaniards. The Guide is available in Spanish and Japanese for free. Source: SHACHO KAI Association of Japanese companies

➔ <https://shachokai.es/guia-intercultural-japon-espana>

## A SEASON FULL OF OPPORTUNITIES TO PRESENT THE ITALIAN QUALITY PRODUCTION IN JAPAN

During the past four months, the Trade Promotion Section of the Italian Embassy in Japan engaged in promoting Italian excellence in several events on multiple fronts, with a significant response from the Japanese audience.

The season started on 12 June at the Gajoen Tokyo Hotel with the special one-day initiative organized by the Trade Promotion Section of the Italian Embassy in Japan, Borsa Formaggi 2023, a workshop entirely dedicated to Italian cheeses and dairy products.

In 2022, imports of Italian cheese in Japan increased significantly (33,3%) compared to the previous year (source: Trade Data Monitor on data Ministry of Finance, Japan).

Considering the constantly growing interest in cheese, the event, including sample tasting, offered a good B2B opportunity for the 16 Italian companies that displayed a range of more than 60 different products, giving the opportunity to the operators to taste the wide selection.

➔ <https://www.ice-tokyo.or.jp/event-category1/borsaformaggi2023>

Soon after, at the 31st edition of Interior Lifestyle Tokyo (14-16 June), the leading exhibition in Japan for the interior design market, the Italian Pavilion hosted 18 companies.

Italian design is appreciated and known in Japan for its ability to synthesize in a single product three essential elements: usability, quality and beauty, without neglecting the fundamentals of sustainability and ergonomics, highly evaluated in the Japanese market.

➔ <https://www.ice-tokyo.or.jp/event-category3/interiorlifestyle2023>

At the 35th edition of the International Agricultural Machinery Show, in Hokkaido (6-10 July), 9 companies exhibited in the Italian Pavilion.

According to the data published by the Japanese Ministry of Finance, Japan's imports of agricultural machinery recorded an increase of 21,34% in 2022 compared to the previous year, and among the foreign supplier countries to Japan, Italy ranked third.

➔ <https://www.ice-tokyo.or.jp/>

From 11 to 13 October, at Pacifico Yokohama, The Trade Promotion Section of the Embassy of Italy has organized the Italian Pavilion at BioJapan 2023, with 9 companies, to promote the internationalization of Italian innovative biotechnology SMEs and support the development of industrial collaboration and scientific-technological partnership between Italian and Japanese companies and research institutes.

➔ <https://www.ice-tokyo.or.jp/bio2023>

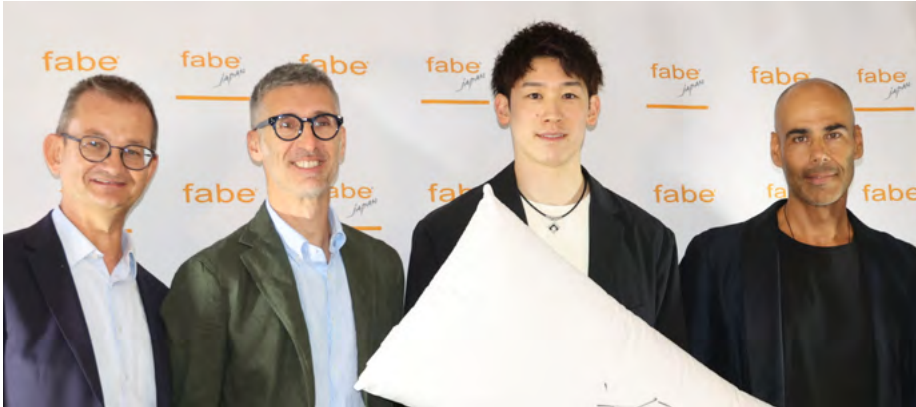


Source: Trade Promotion Section - Embassy of Italy in Japan



## ICCJ'S DIGITAL STRATEGY BOOSTS ITALIAN SME IN JAPAN

In recent years, the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ICCJ) has broadened its range of services to support Italian SMEs seeking to start or expand their operations in Japan. This expansion has been driven by a significant focus on digital initiatives.



From left to right: Marco Pizzetti - Fabe representative, Pierluigi Fabemoli - Fabe CEO, Yuki Ishikawa - Professional volleyball player, Davide Fantoni - ICCJ General Secretary

One of the early companies asking for ICCJ's support in its digital expansion was the Italian pillow manufacturer Fabe, which has been present in the Japanese market since the 90s. In early 2018, when Fabe first contacted ICCJ to enhance its digital presence in Japan, the challenges were many: only one type of pillow was available in the market, the product was exclusively sold through the importer's paper catalogue, and its image was primarily associated with an elderly audience.

The first steps taken by ICCJ were the creation of a website <https://fabe.jp> and the launch of a series of advertising campaigns on Google. This provided the brand with additional digital channels for the promotion and the sales of its product.

Source: Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan

To rejuvenate both the audience and the product's image, ICCJ has been assisting Fabe since 2022 in the creation of its own Instagram, Facebook, and LINE pages. With a weekly schedule of original digital content crafted by sleep experts, the brand could effectively reach diverse demographics. This effort was further reinforced in the summer of 2023 with the signing of Japanese volleyball star Yuki Ishikawa as the brand ambassador of Fabe. The athlete's popularity has had a profound impact on the product's image, now associated with a dynamic and healthy lifestyle.

The positive outcomes of this collaboration prompted the decision by the importer to expand the product line available for sale in Japan, introducing six new pillows to the market starting in autumn 2023.

The successful results of this partnership will serve as a strong incentive for ICCJ to further expand its digital services for Italian SMEs.

## BELGIAN ALGORITHM DETERMINES JAPANESE ELECTRICITY PRICES



N-SIDE ([www.n-side.com](http://www.n-side.com)), a Belgian scale-up providing software and services for leading energy players to solve complex issues through better decision-making, and Japan Electric Power Exchange (JEPX), the only power exchange that facilitates the trading of electricity in Japan, jointly announced their collaboration last June. N-SIDE will provide JEPX with an algorithm to set the day-ahead electricity market prices and executed volumes in Japan.

The integration of N-SIDE's Power Matching Algorithm into JEPX's systems will contribute to a more efficient and sustainable electricity market in Japan. The algorithm will optimize supply and demand matching in a closed-gate auction fashion, ease the implementation of complex bid types, and accommodate a large number of market participants. Ultimately, it will support the sustainable growth of the electricity market and contribute to carbon neutrality in the land of the rising sun. Philippe Chevalier, CEO at N-SIDE, expresses his enthusiasm for the unprecedented collaboration, stating, "We are delighted to partner with Japan Electric Power Exchange

and to bring our power matching algorithm to the Japanese electricity market. We believe that our collaboration will drive positive change and help shape the future of the Japanese electricity sector. Moreover, this partnership marks our entry into the Japanese market, with a new office in Tokyo, and demonstrates our commitment to pursue our international expansion".

"N-SIDE's industry expertise and cutting-edge power matching algorithm provide us with the assets to nurture our vision to foster a dynamic and efficient electricity market in Japan. By seamlessly integrating their powerful algorithm into our platform, we aim to empower market participants with the

exchange system that contributes to improving market fluidity and to achieving a more sustainable energy landscape, comments Satoshi Anzaki, IT System Engineer at JEPX. The partnership between N-SIDE and JEPX represents a significant step forward in the optimization of Japan's day-ahead electricity market. It combines N-SIDE's innovative solutions with JEPX's extensive market knowledge and expertise, creating a formidable force that will reshape the electricity trading system in Japan to help the energy field speed up the integration of renewable energy sources. (Abstract from N-side press release)

Source: Embassy of Belgium in Japan

## THE 17<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL EAJS CONFERENCE AT GHENT UNIVERSITY

During 17–20 August 2023, the Institute for Japanese Studies at Ghent University organized the 17th International Conference of the European Association for Japanese Studies (EAJS). This is the largest event for specialists in Japanese Studies. It consisted of 25 parallel sessions and attracted a total of 886 in-person delegates, with 242 more following online.

Welcoming all Ghent visitors were the public exhibition “Kimono Today” and the film documentary series “Japanese Margins.” Japanese court music (gagaku) performances by the American artists in residence Prof. Dr. F. Rambelli, A. Lindsey, and T. Piercy were also very popular.

The conference was opened by the EAJS president Prof. Dr. Verena Blechinger-Talcott (Berlin) and the rector of Ghent University Prof. Dr. Rik Van de Walle. The mayor of Ghent, Mathias De Clercq, Japanese ambassador H.E. Mikami Masahiro, vice president of the Japan Foundation, Dr. Sato Yuri, and the president of the Toshiba International Foundation, Omori Keisuke, expressed a warm welcome. Afterwards, Prof. Dr. Sonoda Shigeto (Tokyo), gave a keynote lecture on the “Asianization of Asian Studies and its impact on Japanese Studies”. These events took place in the magnificent Aula Academica of Ghent University, followed by a reception for all participants and sponsors.



The conference included publishers’ exhibitions and many side events: PhD workshop at Leuven, pre- and post-conference workshops sponsored by the Flemish Research Council and Ghent University research projects in Japanese Studies, meeting of the Toshiba International Foundation scholar alumni, and a workshop on presentation techniques by Prof. Dr. Kuriyama Shigehisa (Harvard). A party celebrating the 50th anniversary of the

EAJS in the historical buildings of the Vismijn near the castle of Ghent attracted more than 450 participants.

The conference ended with a general meeting and a very positive news for Ghent University: Ghent’s Prof. Dr. Andreas Niehaus has been elected to be the next president of the European Association for Japanese Studies.

Source: Ghent University

➔ <https://eajs.eu/2023-programme>

## INNOVCARE PROJECT SELECTED FOR THE FRANCE 2030 PRIORITY RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON AUTONOMY

The Fondation France-Japon de l’EHESS and its partners are pleased to announce the selection by an international jury of the INNOVCARE project: “Care-led Innovation: The Case of elderly care in France and Japan”. This project, coordinated by the FFJ, has been selected under the Priority Research Programme (France 2030): “Autonomy: ageing and disability”.

The aim of the INNOVCARE project is to develop an alternative concept of care-led innovation based on a comparative study of robotics, AI and digital technologies that can help older people to live independently, but which have limitations identified by those working in the field and by the scientific community. This project tries to overcome these limitations by working towards a better match between social and individual needs and the contributions made by these technologies. The project brings together a consortium of 18 partners, including 7 from Japan: École des Hautes Etudes en

Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Sorbonne Université, Université de Bordeaux, Université de Bretagne-Occidentale, Assistance Publique – Hôpitaux de Paris (AP-HP), Université Sorbonne Paris Nord, Fondation Croix-Rouge, The French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), The French Institute for Demographic Studies (INED), Assistance Publique – Hôpitaux de Marseille (AP-HM), PS Institut, Sophia University, Hamamatsu University School of Medicine, Doshisha University, National Institute of Public Health, Osaka University, Tokyo Institute of Technology and Toyo University.

It has a substantial budget that will enable it to carry out large-scale interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral research over a period of 5 years, with researchers in the social sciences, robotics specialists, doctors and people working in the field on a major issue that is profoundly challenging our societies.

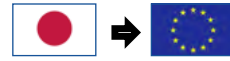
The consortium is looking for more partners, both in academia and private institutions. Please feel free to contact EHESS at: [ffj@ehess.fr](mailto:ffj@ehess.fr)

Source: EHESS

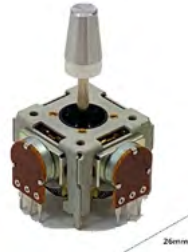
➔ <https://innovcare.hypotheses.org/>

## PARTNERING OPPORTUNITIES

JAPANESE COMPANIES LOOKING FOR PARTNERS IN THE EU

➔ <http://een-japan.eu/opportunities>**REQUEST FOR DISTRIBUTOR OR AGENT**  
**Sector: toys**

A Japanese company offers environmentally friendly wooden 3D puzzles representing both popular brands and traditional themes  
Profile ID: **BOJP20220909006**

**REQUEST FOR AGENT**  
**Sector: electronics**

Japanese electronic components manufacturer offers miniaturised potentiometers, joysticks and slip rings  
Profile ID: **BOJP20220909001**

**REQUEST FOR DISTRIBUTOR OR AGENT**  
**Sector: Industrial equipment**

Japanese pipe fitting manufacturer looking for partners  
Profile ID: **BOJP20220909004**

**REQUEST FOR DISTRIBUTOR OR AGENT**  
**Sector: gardening**

Japanese garden tool manufacturer looking for partners  
Profile ID: **BOJP20220922004**

**REQUEST FOR DISTRIBUTORS**  
**Sector: home interior**

A Japanese knitting lace manufacturer is offering heat shield lace fabrics  
Profile ID: **BOJP20220922003**

**MANUFACTURING SERVICES OFFERED**  
**Sector: medical equipment**

Japanese manufacturer of magnesium made canes and wheelchair frames is seeking EU partners  
Profile ID: **BOJP20220920002**



## ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK EVENTS

➔ <https://een.ec.europa.eu/events>**TECHNOLOGY OFFERED**  
**Sector: medical equipment**

Japanese patented technology for fundamental mechanism of peristaltic pumps  
Profile ID: **TOJP20220909008**

**MANUFACTURING SERVICES OFFERED**  
**Sector: aerospace**

A Japanese qualified manufacturer of forging parts for the aerospace sector is offering its services  
Profile ID: **BOJP20220909010**

## ENERGY GLOBAL EXPO AND CONGRESS

14-15 November 2023, Valencia, Spain + online  
Sectors: renewable energies, environmental  
Registration deadline: 15 November 2023

Instituto Valenciano de la Competitividad Empresarial is organizing a hybrid B2B matching event during the Energy Global Expo and Congress. The matchmaking event targets energy and climate matters, and will give the opportunity to meet actors of the current energy transition, and providers of technologies, solutions, and tools to alleviate the energy crisis and accelerate the ecological transition.

➔ <https://energy-global-expo-congress-b2b.b2match.io>



DATE/LOCATION	DETAILS	CONTACTS
19 October 2023 Hybrid - Tokyo, Japan	<b>SEMINAR AND INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS</b> High-Level Event - Financing Opportunities for EU-Japan Business Cooperation in Africa	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation <a href="https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/financing-opportunities-eu-japan-business-cooperation-africa">https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/financing-opportunities-eu-japan-business-cooperation-africa</a>
23 October 2023 Hybrid - Tokyo, Japan	<b>SEMINAR</b> Airport Concession: Private Management of a Public Infrastructure	Maison franco-japonaise <a href="https://www.mfj.gr.jp/agenda/2023/10/23/ls_benoit_rulleau/">https://www.mfj.gr.jp/agenda/2023/10/23/ls_benoit_rulleau/</a>
24 October 2023	<b>WEBINAR</b> About Japan webinar 219: How to influence decision-making processes in Japanese organisations	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation <a href="https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events">https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events</a>
7 November 2023	<b>WEBINAR</b> About Japan webinar 220: The Log House Market in Japan	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation <a href="https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events">https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events</a>
6-10 November 2023 Tokyo, Japan	<b>TRAINING MISSION</b> World Class Manufacturing - November session	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation <a href="https://www.eu-japan.eu/world-class-manufacturing">https://www.eu-japan.eu/world-class-manufacturing</a>
15 November 2023 Osaka, Japan	<b>WORKSHOP</b> "German Economic Roundtable" in Osaka Global Talents and International Teams As Corporate Advantage? Strategies for Human Resource Management in Japan and Germany/Infrastructure	German Consulate General Osaka-Kobe; German Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan (AHK Japan); Japanese-German Business Association (DJW) <a href="https://www.djw.de/de/veranstaltungen/djw-veranstaltungen/german-economic-roundtable-osaka-20231115">https://www.djw.de/de/veranstaltungen/djw-veranstaltungen/german-economic-roundtable-osaka-20231115</a>
28 November 2023	<b>WEBINAR</b> About Japan webinar 221: Newspace Market in Japan	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation <a href="https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events">https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events</a>
5 December 2023	<b>WEBINAR</b> About Japan webinar 222: Aligning strategy with Japanese counterpart	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation <a href="https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events">https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events</a>
7-8 December 2023 Landsberg am Lech, Germany	<b>COMPANY VISIT</b> LEAN in Europe - Visit to RATIONAL Aktiengesellschaft Application deadline: 16 October 2023	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation <a href="https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/lean-visits-europe">https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/lean-visits-europe</a>
31 Jan - 3 Feb 2024 Tokyo, Japan	<b>MATCHMAKING MISSION</b> Nanotech Cluster & SMEs Mission	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation <a href="https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/nanotech-clustersme-mission">https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/nanotech-clustersme-mission</a>
28 Feb - 1 March 2024 Tokyo, Japan	<b>MATCHMAKING MISSION</b> Green Economy Cluster & SMEs Mission Application deadline: 30 October 2023	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation <a href="https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/green-clustersme-mission">https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/green-clustersme-mission</a>
28 Feb - 1 March 2024 Tokyo, Japan	<b>MATCHMAKING MISSION</b> Digital Cluster & SMEs Mission Application deadline: 24 November 2023	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation <a href="https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/digital-cluster-sme-mission">https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/digital-cluster-sme-mission</a>



**EU-Japan Centre**  
for Industrial Cooperation  
一財団法人 日欧産業協力センター

is a joint venture co-funded by the European Union and the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). Its aim is to foster the development of industrial cooperation between companies from both regions through training programmes for businesspeople, for EU and Japanese students and researchers, and through information services and an industrial dialogue.

This quarterly newsletter is produced by the EU-based office of the EU-Japan Centre, and is primarily intended to provide EU/Japan-related news.

## ANY EU-JAPAN-RELATED NEWS?

Feel free to contact us if you would like your EU-Japan-related news/event to be announced in our forthcoming newsletter : [newsletter@eu-japan.eu](mailto:newsletter@eu-japan.eu)

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