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Chamber of Commerce
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EDITORIAL

The Key to Success

By Mr Yuji Kawase, President of Mitsui & Co. Benelux S.A./N.V., President of Nihonjinkai and Vice-President of the BJA

It is a great honour and my pleasure to become Vice-President of the BJA.

Many events took place in 2016 in order to celebrate the 150 years of friendship between Japan and Belgium. And after this eventful year, 2017 is just another step bringing us closer to the 200th anniversary of the privileged relationship between our two countries.

Taking the opportunity of this article, I would like to share with you some wise words from the Chinese philosopher Mencius, which also inspired my speech for the New Year Reception at the Japanese Ambassador's house and which will remain my motto for the rest of the year:

"In order to do something, the timing is important, but it isn't as important as the geographical advantage. Similarly, the geographical advantage is important, but it isn't as important as the unity of the people."

This means that one cannot achieve anything without the unity of the people. Of course, timing and geography are crucial. Yes, the environment is essential. But bringing people together and ensuring a good collaboration is truly the key to success.

In the past, the wise men only took action when these three conditions were met. Nowadays, we simply cannot wait for all the stars to align. Perfect conditions are too rare and we should therefore put all our effort into bringing the people together, hoping that timing and geography will follow.

Unity is an important value in the Land of the Rising Sun. But as Japan is an island, most of the people

have the same nationality and speak the same language. It is therefore not so challenging to bring the people together. It is however a whole different story when Japanese have to work abroad. Indeed, we are generally not so good at uniting people on the international stage, as we are not used to living in a multicultural and multilingual society. We have a lot to learn from our Continental colleagues on this matter, as they are much more comfortable living in a diverse environment. And I believe the Belgian case is particularly relevant: three different people, speaking three different languages, who live in harmony under the motto "Unity makes strength"... This is quite inspiring and I am sure you will all agree that beautiful Belgium has a lot to teach us.

All the more so in these times, as Brussels has become a global hub with BREXIT and the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement. I am truly excited to be in Belgium in this historical moment and to be able to witness the great changes that are taking place.

Indeed, keeping Mencius's words in mind, we could say that stars are now aligning. Timing is on our side, as leaders have finally managed to reach a political agreement on the EU-JAPAN EPA on 6 July 2017. Furthermore, being based in Brussels definitely grants us a geographical advantage for the upcoming discussions. And it is now our role to ensure the unity of the people, to cherish the great relations between Belgium and Japan, and to foster harmony. Once again, let me express my profound desire to further strengthen the relationship between our two countries, our two regions. The three elements are just around the corner. And today more than ever, great success seems to be in sight.



Mr Yuji Kawase

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Paralympic Team Belgium on course for Tokyo 2020

The 2016 Rio Paralympic Games are still fresh in Belgian memory. Who could forget them? They were historic for Belgium. The Paralympic Team Belgium brought home no fewer than eleven medals, including five golds. Setting the bar very high for Tokyo 2020...

The Paralympic Games are the equivalent of the Olympic Games for athletes with physical, visual or intellectual im-



The Belgian Paralympic Movement: a national committee and two leagues

A direct offshoot of the [International Paralympic Committee](#), the [Belgian Paralympic Committee](#) (BPC) represents the Paralympic Movement and its values in Belgium. The BPC works to give Paralympic athletes all opportunities to excel and inspire the country with their performances.

The BPC has two members: the [Ligue Handisport Francophone](#) and [Parantee-Psylos](#), the only recognized federations in Flanders and Wallonia-Brussels for professional disability sports. Together they work with physically, visually and mentally impaired athletes at all levels, from recreational to professional sport.

pairments. They're held every four years, shortly after the Olympics, in the same city and venues. They're also organized by the same organizing committee.

The Paralympic Games have changed significantly since they were launched in Rome in 1960, becoming one of the world's biggest sports events. London 2012 and Rio 2016, the most recent Summer Paralympic Games, were a huge leap forward in that direction. In September 2016, 2.15 million spectators filled Rio's stadia. The television viewing figures were estimated at 4.1 billion and over 2 billion people watched the Games online.

The Paralympic Games are the high point in any athlete's career. In September 2016, following a long selection process, a delegation of 29 Belgian athletes moved into Rio's Paralympic village. They competed in 8 of the 23 sports on the programme. The Belgian Paralympic Committee's official target was eight medals. After eleven intense days of competition, the medal count reached... eleven! Belgium picked up four more medals than at London 2012, which was already an incredible feat.

The five gold medals in particular are unique rewards for exceptional achievements, the product of many years of hard work and sacrifice. In athletics, Peter Genyn won the wheelchair sprint double (class T51) over 100 m and 400 m. Florian Van Acker became the first intellectually disabled Belgian athlete to win a Paralympic title in table tennis. 16-year-old Laurens Devos was crowned youngest Paralympic champion in the history of table tennis (class 9, hemiplegia). Michèle George, who picked up double

gold in para-dressage at London 2012, came home with another gold (freestyle test) and silver (individual test).

Before Tokyo 2020, the PyeongChang Winter Games in 2018

Like their Olympic equivalent, the Paralympic Games are held in summer and winter. Although winter sports are less well established in Belgium, the Belgian Paralympic Committee also has ambitions for the next Winter Games, which will be held in PyeongChang, South Korea, from 9 to 18 March 2018.

With those performances, the Paralympic Team Belgium finished in the top 25 of the medal table.



Belgium at the Summer Paralympic Games since 2000

Year	City	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total medals
2000	Sydney	1	4	4	9
2004	Athens	3	2	2	7
2008	Beijing	0	0	1	1
2012	London	3	1	3	7
2016	Rio	5	3	3	11

Tokyo 2020 in sight

The celebrations were barely over when the Belgian Paralympic Movement began to aim even higher for Tokyo. The Belgian Paralympic Committee and its two members, the Ligue Handisport Francophone and Parantee-Psylos, are working hard to develop Paralympic sport in Belgium, from recreational to top-class level. Increasing sports facilities, introducing sport into rehabilitation centres, talent spotting, raising public awareness of Paralympic values, managing professional athletes... are just some of the essential projects ahead of the Tokyo Games. The Belgian Paralympic Committee hopes that its delegation will be bigger and stronger than in Rio, with

the highly anticipated comeback of team sports (wheelchair rugby, goalball, five-a-side football, etc.).

And the stakes are high! The 2020 Tokyo Games, which have already been renamed the “Games of the Future”, are being held 100 years after the 1920 Antwerp Games, the only Olympics that Belgium has hosted, and promise to be unforgettable. The Organizing Committee’s pledge to incorporate the smartest global technologies into the twenty competition sites is inspiring the athletes... See you in 2020!

Want to know more?

Visit www.paralympic.be or follow us on Facebook or Twitter BEParalympics.



Join the Belgium Paralympic Team on its Road to Tokyo!

The Belgian Paralympic Committee and its leagues are preparing the “Road to Tokyo” with a series of activities and public and corporate events. Want to get involved? We welcome your support! The Committee is always looking for assistance, logistical support, volunteers... Contact us at office@paralympic.be or guillaume.gobert@paralympic.be (+32 2 474 51 50).

BJA Exclusive visit to The Port of Zeebrugge ゼーブルージュ港特別訪問

Thursday, 11 May 2017 - Zeebrugge



Mr Emmanuel Van Damme, Chief Commercial Director of the Port Authority, exchanging views on the facilities of the Port to some Japanese members.



The members were warmly welcomed by the CEO of the Port Authority, Mr Joachim Coens, who stressed the importance of the Japanese companies for the Port.



The audience listened attentively to all the opportunities the Port offers to companies.

Thanks to the generous support by the Port Authority, the BJA was thrilled to welcome over 50 members at the Zeebrugge Port House on a sunny day of May for an exclusive visit of the port facility and Toyota Distribution Center & Technical division.

The members were warmly welcomed by the CEO of the Port Authority, Mr Joachim Coens, who stressed the importance of the Japanese companies for the port. He was followed by Mr

Emmanuel Van Damme, Chief Commercial Director, who gave an extensive presentation on the port facilities and services.

Following the presentation, the members boarded on two buses to visit the port facility and the Toyota Distribution Center & Technical division, where they could enter the impressive ateliers with many different beautiful vehicles. The event concluded with a networking cocktail back at the Port House.



The Membership Committee

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The task of the Membership Committee is to attract and retain members and to inform them about the value of the BJA. This Committee is composed of a chairperson and six full members, dynamic people who work for Japanese or Belgian companies in a variety of sectors.

We meet at least 4 times a year with a view to finding new opportunities that will appeal to our members and to engage in high-level networking. The Membership Committee also produces an annual report for the Annual General Assembly and organizes seminars on various topics. Furthermore, we issue recommendations and make suggestions to the Executive Committee to ensure that our association will grow from strength to strength.

It is our pleasure to inform you that we are working on a new event which will be organized in collaboration with the YES Committee. We intend to organize a seminar, open to current and future members, on business culture exchanges between Japan and Belgium, during which people will have an opportunity to share their experiences so that we can all gain a better understanding of the differences and similarities between our two countries.

And last but not least, we will be launching a satisfaction survey which will enable us to better tailor our activities throughout the year to your actual needs and expectations. Your feedback is important to us and we do hope that many of you will take part!

The members of the Committee and I really look forward to meeting you at our next event.

If you want to be active in our Committee as well, do not hesitate to contact us at the BJA Office.

By Mr Vincent Schepens, Membership Committee Chair

Learn more about the BJA at:
www.bja.be

Join the BJA LinkedIn group at:
www.linkedin.com/groups/1775861

Televic and Japan

By Mr Geert Benoit, Managing Director of Yamagata Europe and BJA Editorial Committee Member

Televic is located in an industrial area in Izegem, where the company was established in 1946. This region of West Flanders used to be famous for the production of shoes and brushes. So, on a sunny afternoon in May, I put on my best shoes to meet Lieven Danneels, CEO of the Televic Group, and Mr Deschodt, the General Manager of Televic Conference.

On my walk from the parking area to the central gate and reception area of the company, I passed a few Televic employees who were dressed in white lab coats, just like medical doctors. The message was clear, I entered an area where engineering is taken seriously and executed at a top level.

Televic is an engineering company that develops high-end communication systems for niche markets. The four niche markets where Televic is focusing on are education, conferencing, healthcare and railway. These four divisions operate as separate companies with individual R&D, sales and production teams. Lieven Danneels is the overall co-CEO of the mother company that overlooks strategy, centralized services and central marketing. The Conference and Rail divisions are mostly internationalized: Conference does 75% of its turnover outside Belgium, Rail 90%. The Education division does 50% outside Belgium, and the Healthcare division is the most local division with 70% local business. Besides Belgium, the company has R&D and production facilities in China, Bulgaria and the US, Sales offices in the UK and France and JV's in India and China. The aim of the interview was to hear about the experiences of Televic in Japan.

Japan is important for the company. Actually, Mr Danneels just came back from Japan. Both he and Mr Deschodt travel to Japan a few times a year. They like Japan, for its sophistication, cleanliness, focus on quality, organizational skills and good food. "We can learn from them" says Mr Danneels, "and by being active on the Japanese market, we are challenged to become even better". The Conferencing division has been operating in Japan since 8 years and has a solid and steady relationship with a Japanese distributor for their products and services. They first met the distributor, EdgeTech, at an international trade fair and then deepened the relationship during a mission within the framework of EU Gateway to Japan. EdgeTech is Tokyo based and has built up an impressive client portfolio with Televic in Japan: Tokyo University, Sophia University, Mitsui Bussan, Alpine, Softbank, First class references for a first class product that is the best wireless conference solution in the market. Special adaptations for the Japanese conference market were not really needed. On the other hand, Televic notices that their Japanese clients are less open to software

upgrades because changes and upgrades could cause quality issues to well running systems. This quality awareness is probably one of the reasons that the Japanese distributor has such a solid testing lab, a set-up that Televic rarely sees at their distributors in other countries.

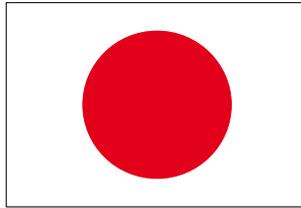
Mr Danneels explains that for all their products and services, building a solid and loyal partnership with distributors is crucial. Televic always opts for exclusivity in partner relationships. Building long term relationships founded on mutual loyalty is a key value for Televic, and a perfect fit with Japanese culture to boot. This is the case with EdgeTech, and also with their partner for the rail business: Jepico. The rail division has a totally different sales cycle and is very technical in its nature. It requires a business approach where Televic works together extremely close with the end-client because of the sheer amount of specific technical requirements. In Japan, where building relationships is in general a lot slower than in most countries, the railway division has hired a Belgian Japanologist to assist the technical employees and engineering team to better understand and smoother cooperate with the Japanese distributor and Japanese end-clients. With Hitachi Rail, it took 6 to 7 years to gain the necessary level of trust before a first contract was signed for the EU market. The next frontier is the Japanese railway business in Japan that is famous for its unrivalled punctuality and safety. Luckily, with Abe as prime minister, there is a new mentality to open up public tenders to non-Japanese players, creating real, albeit still very challenging possibilities. Besides the Conference and Rail divisions, the Televic Education division also sees possibilities in Japan.

Last year Televic participated in the Belgian state visit to Japan. Mr Danneels explains that these kind of official visits are very important to Televic, especially in countries where hierarchy plays an important role like in most Asian countries. "It creates the ideal opportunity", explains Mr Danneels "to invite very high level persons from our clients, which in the case of the Railway division is extremely important because we work with large industrial groups like Hitachi, Mitsubishi, Kawasaki. Also being accompanied by high level politicians or members from the royal family grants a huge amount of credibility to us as a company. On top of that, because Belgium is a smaller country, such occasions offer real possibilities to position yourself even as a midsize or smaller company".

When asked to formulate some advice for newcomers to Japan, Mr Danneels first mentioned that the Flemish and Japanese business mentality really match very well, but went on to caution that special attention is needed:

1. You need a local partner.
2. They have a different view on quality than we have.
3. Realize that they have a lot of 'hidden' rules/customs you do not see or know as an outsider.





EU AND JAPAN REACH AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The European Union and Japan have reached an agreement in principle on the main elements of an Economic Partnership Agreement.

This will be the most important bilateral trade agreement ever concluded by the EU and as such will for the first time include a specific commitment to the Paris climate agreement.

For the EU and its Member States, the Economic Partnership Agreement will remove the vast majority of duties paid by EU companies, which sum up to €1 billion annually, open the Japanese market to key EU agricultural exports and increase opportunities in a range of sectors. It sets the highest standards of labour, safety, environmental and consumer protection, fully safeguards public services and has a dedicated chapter on sustainable development. It also builds on and reinforces the high standards for the protection of personal data that both, the EU and Japan, have recently entrenched in their data protection laws.

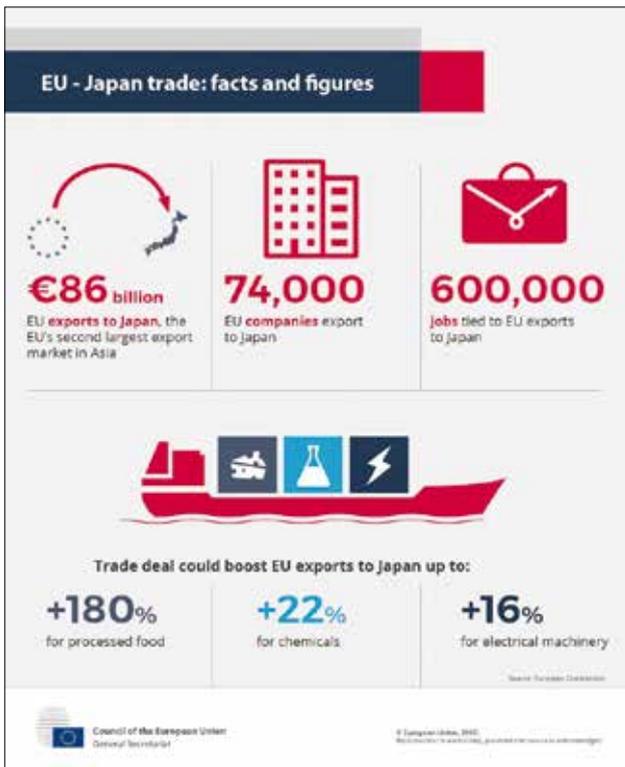
The Economic Partnership Agreement will increase EU exports and create new opportunities for European companies, big and small, their employees and consumers.

The value of exports from the EU could increase by as much as €20 billion, meaning more possibilities and jobs in many EU sectors such as agriculture and food products, leather, clothing and shoes, pharmaceuticals, medical devices and others.

Based on the agreement in principle, negotiators from both sides will continue their work to resolve all the remaining technical issues and conclude a final text of the agreement by the end of the year.

Source:

ec.europa.eu/commission/news/eu-japan-economic-partnership-agreement-2017-jul-06_en



Potential tariff reductions

Imports from EU	Soft cheese, including camembert (up to 29.8%)	Tariff to be abolished over 15 years on some items
	Pork (up to ¥482 per kilo for low-priced products)	Likely to be reduced to TPP level of ¥50 per kilo
	Wine (15% of the price or ¥125 per liter)	Tariff to be abolished
	Pasta (¥30 per kilo on spaghetti)	Tariff to be abolished
Exports from Japan	Automobiles (10%)	Tariff to be abolished over 7 years after agreement takes effect
	Household appliances (up to 14%)	Tariff to be abolished on majority of products
	Sake (Up to €7.7 per 100 liters)	Tariff to be abolished

Figures in parentheses indicate the current tariff.

Source: www.facebook.com/Belgianembassytokyo/photos/pcb.1184023505035923/1184023388369268/?type=3&theater

EU-Japan news

JOINT STATEMENT ON JAPAN-EU EPA AND SPA 37TH JAPAN-EU INTER-PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE, STRASBOURG, 5 JULY 2017

The Delegations to the 37th Japan-EU Inter-parliamentary Conference from the National Diet of Japan and the European Parliament issue the following joint statement:

1. In light of the challenges that the rule-based international order faces and the growing uncertainty within the international community, the two Delegations recognize the increasing importance for Japan and the EU to cooperate as partners sharing fundamental values such as democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.
2. While expressing their concerns over the growing tendencies toward protectionism in many parts of the world and recognizing the need to pay due attention for the concerns by the citizens, the Delegations emphasize the importance for Japan and the EU, in such a situation, to take the lead in promoting open trade, which is a vital foundation for inclusive and sustainable economic growth, whilst recalling that its benefits must be equitably shared across the whole of

society. In addition, taking into account the fruits of cooperation between Japan and the EU to date, the Delegations recognize the need for a legal framework to further strengthen the strategic partnership between Japan and the EU in a wide range of fields, including parliamentary exchanges such as the Japan-EU Inter-parliamentary Conference.

3. The Delegations welcome the significant progress towards a political agreement in principle on the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement and Strategic Partnership Agreement as an important milestone, while noting that this is not the end of the road and the agreement's legal text remains to be finalized. As parliamentarians, the Delegations will carefully and closely monitor and analyze the final outcome.

Source:

www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/123980/FINAL-JOINT-STATEMENT.pdf



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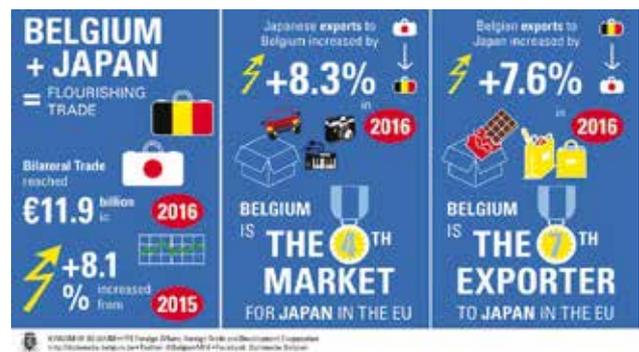
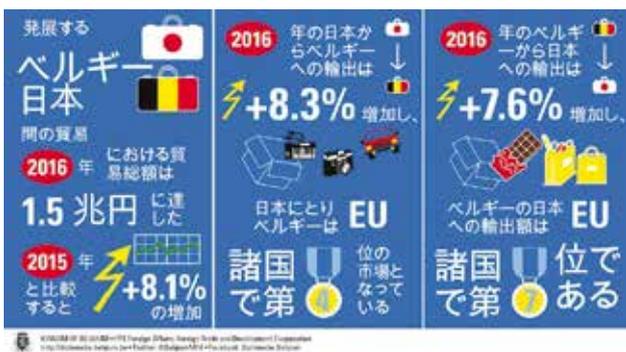
DIDIER REYNDERS WELCOMES POLITICAL AGREEMENT ON THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF AN ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND JAPAN

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced an agreement on the essential elements of an economic partnership agreement between the European Union and Japan. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Didier Reynders welcomes this announcement. It is an important step towards the most important bilateral commercial agreement that the European Union has ever concluded.

This agreement has promising perspectives for Belgian companies. Small and Medium Enterprises will benefit a tailored treatment on a Japanese market that is traditionally difficult to access. The economic potential is high given the importance

of Japan in our economy, for both exports and investments. The agreement offers supplementary access for the most important Belgian sectors such as agriculture (beer, meat), chemicals and pharmaceuticals, maritime services, textiles and digital trade, while important safeguards are foreseen for public and audiovisual services. The ‘Jambon d’Ardenne’ and the ‘Beurre d’Ardenne’ will be recognized as geographical protected indications.

Source:
diplomatie.belgium.be/en/newsroom/news/2017/didier_reynders_on_economic_partnership_between_eu_and_japan



IMPORTANT CHANGE AT THE HELM OF THE JAPAN BELGIUM SOCIETY

On 1 June 2017 an important change took place at the helm of the Japan Belgium Society (JBS). Mr Takao Kusakari of NYK Line handed over the JBS chairmanship to Mr Kimikazu Sugawara of Kaneka. Both companies are long-standing partners of Belgium and have invested heavily in the economic relations between Japan and Belgium.



Ambassador Sleeuwagen thanked Mr Kusakari for his outstanding leadership as president for more than eight years. He also thanked Mr Sugawara for his availability to take up the chairmanship for the coming years. The JBS will continue to be a crucial partner for the Em-

bassy in the future. With the transition, the JBS secretariat will also change. The new contact details are: The Japan-Belgium Society, C/O Kaneka Corporation, e-mail: japanbelgium1969@miracle.ocn.ne.jp and tel: +81 (0)50 3181 4330. The website will be updated soon: www.japan-belgium.org

Source:
 Newsletter Embassy of Belgium in Tokyo

BJA REPORT

**Exclusive Visit to Daikin Europe
ダイキンヨーロッパ社特別訪問**

Thursday, 22 June 2017 – Ostend



Daikin Europe's Vice-President, Mr Wim De Schacht (middle) answering all questions from the members.



Mr Masatsugu Minaka (right), President of Daikin Europe, welcomed the members with great pleasure.



Mr Frans Hoorelbeke, Chairman of Daikin Europe and BJA Board Member, extended a warm welcome to all the BJA members.

On 22 June, the BJA had the great pleasure to invite 40 members for an exclusive visit of Daikin European headquarters in Ostend. Founded in 1972, the Ostend factory is now the headquarters for Daikin's European development, production, administration, sales and marketing activities throughout the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region.

After some welcome words by Mr Frans Hoorelbeke, Chairman of Daikin Europe and Mr Masatsugu Minaka, President of Daikin Europe, the members were given a thorough presentation of Daikin Europe's activities by its Vice-President, Mr Wim De Schacht.

After putting on their protective glasses and headphones, the members started the thrilling visit of the factory, where they could discover how Daikin's famous air-conditioning units are built and tested. They were also shown the extensive range of Daikin's innovative products in the showroom.

The event ended with a networking cocktail, where the impressed members exchanged their appreciation of the visit.



The BJA members listened carefully to the detailed presentation on Daikin Europe.





How will spinach and gardening help you work more efficiently with Japanese colleagues?

Japan Consulting Office (JCO) is known for its hands-on approach, where business people train business people. What we teach is based on what you need to know for the challenges you face daily. Our courses are designed specifically to address the questions that come from employees in Japanese companies and companies working with Japan. One of the common questions we hear from European colleagues is “Why do we need to give so many reports?”

Japanese culture is group-oriented, so decisions are taken by the group, normally based on consensus. Because of this, everyone needs to have the same information and that information needs to be shared efficiently across the entire group. Hence, the Japanese have a system called horenso. Horenso literally means “spinach” but in the business context, it is a contraction of three words: hokoku, which means to report; renraku, which means to communicate; and soudan, which means to ask advice.

When Japanese employees join a company, they are thrown into this environment from day one. They are taught horenso, or to report, communicate, and ask advice on a regular basis. One characteristic of this method is its “bottom-

up” nature, where information tends to flow upward automatically. Staff report to their managers, managers report to general managers, who in turn report to directors and so on. Similarly, subsidiaries report to headquarters. This allows higher management to clearly understand what is going on and to make an informed and thoughtful decision. It also helps to explain the large number of reports requested of subsidiaries by headquarters!

Understanding this system, it is logically good practice for Europeans to share information more regularly with their Japanese colleagues, and spontaneously report to management. “No news is good news” is a Western concept. Reporting only when problems occur or when the task is completed is often not enough. Japanese tend to report more regularly throughout the progress of the task. Keep in mind that not all reporting is formal; informal updates, time next to the coffee machine and after-hours are important and help maintain this flow of information!

Understanding horenso can also help to answer another another common question from Europeans: “How do I get information as decisions seem to be taken

already when I arrive in a meeting?”

Some information will naturally reach everyone, but not all. This is where getting involved and ensuring you are implicated in informal discussions and information sharing is so important. Try to take advantage of discussions before a meeting, as this is where things tend to happen in a process the Japanese call nemawashi. Nemawashi is an informal process whereby all the people involved in a given decision will be consulted prior to the formal meeting. There is no predefined form - it may be a side meeting, over a drink or coffee, anywhere you would have the opportunity to influence. Trying to influence or challenge a decision in a meeting is very often too late.

Nemawashi comes from a gardening term used to describe the process whereby you transplant a tree from one place to another. Nemawashi is the act of uncovering different root sections one by one to give the tree ample time to adapt. It is a process that implies time, care and focus in order to gently move to a certain place.

For both horenso and nemawashi, relationship-building is key. Taking advantage of informal opportunities to discuss or share information will solidify these relationships, encourage information flows and enable you to be part of decision-making processes. Everyone benefits from investing in relationships.

We are happy to announce that Japan Consulting Office (JCO) has received the “1st BEST Supplier” and “Highest appreciated training institute” award from Mitsubishi Turbocharger and Engine for the second time.

This prestigious recognition is the result of the high quality of our training programs, our practical approach and the visible change in behavior following the training: through increased mutual understanding, efficiency and communication at work are improved.

“I wish I had known that before” is a comment we regularly receive from participants, even those with more than ten years of work experience in a Japanese company.

To learn more about JCO and our most popular training programs, please contact us or visit www.japanconsultingoffice.com



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Research and innovation is an important factor for Belgium-Japan relations

By Mr Masatomo Nomura, Chair BJA Investment Committee and Founder of Nomura Consulting Europe

Both Belgian and Japanese societies have to stay internationally competitive by being innovative. The Investment Committee of the BJA has identified research and innovation as one of the key areas in which the two countries can cooperate - through joint research projects and investment.

To promote cooperation in research and innovation between the two countries, the Investment Committee organised an 'Innovation Seminar' on 7 June. One of its objectives was to present opportunities for research collaborations between world-class research institutions in Belgium and Japanese technology businesses. Such collaboration could lead to a cutting edge technology of the future. Another objective was to raise the awareness of Belgian business environment for research and innovation internationally by inviting representatives from Japanese companies not only in Belgium but also its neighbouring countries.

During the seminar organised on 7 June (please see the article and pictures in the following page), we learnt:

- › Belgium is one of the top countries in the EU and in the world in research and innovation;
- › The strong support and commitment of Belgian government to research and innovation activities. For example, it has been providing attractive tax incentives even during the economic crisis;
- › Belgium's strengths in life sciences and biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, digital economy, and security technology; and
- › The research activities of imec and GIGA, two of world class research institutions in Belgium, and opportunities for international collaboration with them and through Innoviris, the supporting agency for Brussels Capital Region.

There are many success stories of Japanese companies in Belgium including collaborative research activities. It seems that there is certain compatibility between the two business cultures. The experience of Japanese companies in Belgium is documented in the series of books published by this committee in 2000, 2006 and 2012.

For the occasion of this seminar, the Investment Committee prepared a brochure 'Belgium and its Neighbours' Business Climates Compared Edition 2017'. This popular brochure is the third edition since its first publication in 2014. It complements the other brochure of the Investment Committee: 'Research and Innovation in Belgium' published in 2016. They can be obtained through the BJA site: www.bja.be/publications_statistics.php

The brochure 'Belgium and its Neighbours' Business Climates Compared Edition 2017' compares a series of the key business indicators of Belgium with those of its neighbouring countries

such as France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UK. We have endeavoured to be as objective as possible and have only taken comparisons from select internationally-renowned studies.

It looks at four areas: global attractiveness, headquarters and holding companies, logistics, and research and development.

There is a big gap between the perception of Belgium and reality. It may be because of its small size or the modesty of the people. In the 2016 Country RepTrak™ Study (Reputation Institute), more than 48,000 people from the G8 countries were surveyed about the reputation and perception of 55 countries. Belgium came 16th.

However, when researchers measure the real performance, Belgium is often ranked top. Belgium's high scores are mainly based on the following:

- › the availability of a highly educated and productive workforce;
- › the availability of a multilingual workforce;
- › its investor-friendly tax environment;
- › its geographical location and access to other European countries; and
- › the presence of the key institutions of the European Union.

Brussels is one of the leading cities in Europe for business. Not only because of its central location in Europe, but also because of its internationally open business culture and the ease of doing business, reasonable level of office rent and an investor-friendly tax regime, It is a highly regarded location.

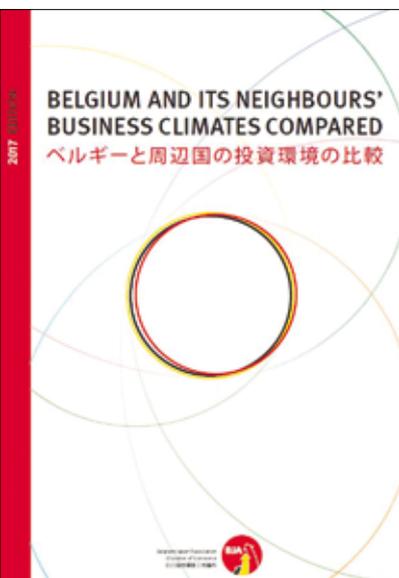
When it comes to logistics, Belgium is consistently among the top logistics locations in Europe because of the strong combination of excellent infrastructure, accessibility and superb cost efficiency for distribution.

Concerning research and development, Belgium is among the top countries in the world for the quality of scientific research institutions. The quality of mathematics and science education is among the top 3 in the world. Its linkages between research institutions and industry and entrepreneurship are at the top of the EU, which indicates the high potential of bringing the fruits of research onto markets. Furthermore, Belgium is ranked 4th when it comes to innovation.

As a message to policy makers, we would like to point out that the current advantages of Belgium should not be taken for granted. The competition among Belgium and its neighbouring countries is fierce. In particular, research and innovation is a priority for many countries all over the world. It is therefore imperative for Belgium to keep on improving its business conditions.

日本とベルギーの間の研究とイノベーションにおける協力の重要性

BJA投資委員会委員長、野村コンサルティング・ヨーロッパ代表 野村正智



日本とベルギー社会は、ともに、国際競争力を維持するためにイノベーションを必要としています。BJA 投資委員会では、共同研究プロジェクト・投資を通して、両国が協力できると考えています。

両国間の研究とイノベーションを推進するために、6月7日に、「イノベーション・セミナー」を開催しました。将来の最先端技術開発に向けて、ベルギーに所在する国際的に最先端を行く研究所と日本企業の技術力との協力関係を強化すること、ベルギーの研究とイノベーションに関する事業環境を、国際的に広く知らしめることを目的としていました。セミナーでは、

次のことが明らかになりました。(次ページの記事と写真もご覧ください。)

- ▶ ベルギーは、EU のみならず世界的に、研究とイノベーションの最先端の国である。
- ▶ ベルギー政府は、研究とイノベーション活動に対する、優遇税制を含む、強力なサポートへコミットしている。
- ▶ ベルギーの強みは、ライフサイエンス、バイオテクノロジー、アドバンスト・マニュファクチャリング、デジタル経済、セキュリティ技術にある。
- ▶ 世界的な研究機関である imec と GIGA との国際共同研究開発の機会がある。また、ブリュッセル首都圏においては、Innoviris が研究とイノベーションを支援している。

ベルギーにおける日系企業の成功事例は、共同研究を含め、数多くあります。両国のビジネス・カルチャーには、互に通じるものがあるようです。日系企業のベルギーにおける事業活動については、2000年、2006年、2012年に当委員会が作成した、「ベルギー進出日系企業の状況」において、詳しく描かれています。

さらに、投資委員会では、このセミナーにあわせて、「ベルギーと周辺国の投資環境の比較 2017年版」を作成しました。この人気のある小冊子は、2014年の発行以来、すでに2度改訂版が発行されています。この小冊子では、ベルギーと、イギリス、オランダ、ドイツ、フランス、ルクセンブルクなどの周辺国の事業環境を比較しています。できるだけ客観的な比較を行うために、国際的評価の高い調査報告書を多数検討した上で厳選し、分析しています。

ちなみに、当委員会では2016年に、この小冊子を補完する「ベルギーにおける研究とイノベーションの動向」も作成して

います。いずれも、BJA のサイトから入手できます。

「ベルギーと周辺国の投資環境の比較 2017年版」では、総合力、本部・持株会社、物流、研究開発の4分野について、事業環境の国際比較を行いました。

一般的なベルギーに対するイメージと、ベルギーの経済的な実力の間には大きなギャップがあるようです。これはベルギーが国土の小さな国だからかも知れませんが、対外的なアピールが不足していることに原因があるのかも知れません。

レピュテーション・インスティテュートによる国の評判調査 2016年報告書では、G8諸国の国民48,000人余に、55カ国の「イメージ」を尋ねたところ、ベルギーの評判は第16位でした。

しかし、「実際の評価」を行う調査では、ベルギーはしばしばトップに位置づけられます。

ベルギーの評価が高い理由として、次の点が挙げられます。

- ▶ 労働者の教育水準が高いため、生産性が高い。
- ▶ 多言語を使用できる人を、容易に雇用できる。
- ▶ 投資家にとって有利な税制を持つ。
- ▶ 地理的に欧州の中心にあり、他の国々へのアクセスが容易である。
- ▶ EU (欧州連合) の本部が置かれている。

ブリュッセルは、欧州のトップ・ビジネス都市のひとつに位置づけられています。欧州の中心に位置するという地理的な好条件だけではなく、国際的、ビジネスが行いやすい、オフィスの賃貸料が安い、有利な税制を持つなどの特色が、高い評価の理由となっています。

物流の分野で、ベルギーは欧州トップの評価を得ています。物流インフラが整備されていること、欧州各地へのアクセスが容易であること、費用対効果が優れていることがその理由です。

研究開発の分野では、科学研究機関の質が、国際的に非常に高い評価を受けています。また、数学と科学教育の質は、世界第3位にランクづけられています。また、研究開発におけるベルギーの産学協同と企業家精神は、EUトップの評価を得ており、研究の成果を商品化する潜在的能力の高さを示しています。さらに、総合的なイノベーション能力については、ベルギーは世界第4位と評価されています。

このように、ベルギーの事業環境は優れていますが、ベルギーの政策当局者に対するメッセージとして、現在ベルギーが持っている優位性を当たり前と考えるべきではない、ことを伝えたいと思います。ベルギーと周辺国の競争は、たいへん激しいものがあります。特に、研究とイノベーションは、世界中の多くの国で、重点政策とされています。ですから、ベルギーにおいても、事業環境を不断に改善し、一層魅力的な事業環境を築く必要があると思われます。

BJA Seminar: Innovation with World-Class Research Institutions BJAイノベーション・セミナー

Wednesday, 7 June 2017 - Residence Palace, Brussels



HE Ambassador Hajime Hayashi, Japanese Ambassador to Belgium, and Mr Wim Eynatten, Partner at Deloitte and BJA Legal and Tax Committee Chair listening to Prof Gilbert Declerck, Board Member at imec International and BJA President.



HE Mr Peeters, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Employment, Economy and Consumer Affairs, in charge of Foreign Trade, opened the seminar, followed by Mr Nomura, Founder of Nomura Consulting Europe and BJA investment Committee Chair presenting the key findings of the brochure.



Mr Maarten Willems, Business Director Smart Electronics & Smart Applications of imec, presented the case of imec with regards to cooperation in R&I.

When it comes to innovation and the business opportunities it brings, Belgium is one of the best places to invest and do business. With that in mind, the BJA Investment Committee organized a seminar on this topic, with more than 40 guests attending.

After some insightful opening remarks by HE Mr Kris Peeters, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Employment, Economy and Consumer Affairs, in charge of Foreign Trade, Mr Masamoto Nomura, Founder of Nomura Consulting Europe and BJA investment Committee Chair presented an overview of research and innovation activities in Belgium.

Following this introduction, the seminar continued with presentations from the representatives of innovation institutes from the three regions: Mr Maarten Willems, Business Director Smart Electronics & Smart Applications of imec, Prof. Jacques Piette, Honorary Director of GIGA-Molecular Biology of Disease and Dr Magali Verdonck, Deputy Director General of Innoviris.

Mr Wim Eynatten, Partner at Deloitte and BJA Legal and Tax Committee Chair then gave an overview on the tax incentives for research and innovation in Belgium.

The seminar was closed by Prof Gilbert Declerck, Board Member at imec International and BJA President, who invited the participants to enjoy the networking reception.



The audience was numerous and attentive with many questions raised at the networking cocktail.



The EU General Data Protection Regulation: Is your organization ready?

By Ms Angela Nowosad, HVG advocaten-avocats, angela.nowosad@hvglaw.be

The adoption of the General Data Protection Regulation ('GDPR') in the EU on 27 April 2016 was long awaited. The GDPR replaces the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC which was the basis of European data protection law since '95. Rapid technological developments and globalisation have brought new challenges to the protection of personal data requiring a stronger and more coherent data protection framework.

With the introduction of more stringent and prescriptive data protection obligations, backed by hefty fines, the GDPR is a game changer for many organizations.

As the GDPR is a regulation, Member States need not transpose it into national law. It will be applicable as of 25 May 2018.

What are the main changes?

1. EXPANDED TERRITORIAL SCOPE

The GDPR will apply to all EU based controllers and processors where personal data is processed in the context of its activities, regardless of where the processing takes place. Even without EU presence, the GDPR will apply whenever (i) an EU resident's personal data is processed for the offering of goods/services or (ii) the behaviour of an individual within the EU is monitored.

2. 'NEW' RIGHTS

Besides reinforcing already existing rights, the GDPR also introduces certain new rights for data subjects.

Stricter rules will apply to automated individual decision-making, including profiling. Here the GDPR will truly have a global impact as it establishes its jurisdiction over non-EU controllers monitoring the behaviour of EU residents (e.g. automatic refusal of online credit applications, e-recruiting practices). Furthermore, data subjects have the right to object to profiling for direct marketing purposes, including profiling, at any time and free of charge.

The right to be forgotten has been explicitly taken up in the GDPR giving data subjects the right to request controllers the erasure of their personal data without undue delay. This will be challenging because the controller must ensure that the data is deleted from all of its systems including those of third parties to whom the data controller provided the data.

New is the right to data portability, allowing data subjects to receive and transfer their personal data from one controller to another where the processing is carried out by automated means. The data must be transmitted in a structured, commonly used and machine readable format.

3. MANDATORY BREACH NOTIFICATION

Organizations will have to report data breaches to the competent supervisory authority no later than 72 hours after becoming aware of the breach, unless the breach is unlikely to result in a risk to the rights and freedoms of the data subject. If no notification was made within the deadline, the organisation must justify the delay.

The notification must mention the nature of the breach, the contact details of the DPO, the likely implications of the breach and the measures taken to address and where possible mitigate any adverse effects.

Save for certain limited exceptions, organizations will also have to inform the data subject without undue delay if the breach is likely to result in a high risk to their rights and freedoms.

4. DESIGNATION OF A DPO

The GDPR has provided rules for the mandatory and voluntary appointment of a data protection officer. The appointment is mandatory for public authorities, organizations who conduct large scale systematic monitoring or who process large amounts of sensitive personal data as part of their core activities.

The DPO is the single point of contact for the supervisory authority and should advise the organisation on GDPR compliance.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY

Security is tied to risk. The GDPR makes various suggestions on security measures organizations can take (e.g. pseudonymisation, encryption).

Controllers and processors who adhere to an approved code of conduct or certification mechanism can use this to demonstrate compliance with the security standards set by the GDPR.

6. PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Organizations must undertake privacy impact assessments when conducting risky or large scale processing of personal data.

7. PRIVACY BY DESIGN

Data protection compliance must be embedded in the development of new products, services and processes from the very beginning, rather than considering it as an add-on at the end. Organizations will be required to design policies, procedures and systems that follow privacy by design principles.

Why should your organization comply with the GDPR?

One of the main reasons for compliance is the introduction of fines up to 20,000,000 EUR, or 4% of the total worldwide annual turnover, whichever is highest.

There are of course other reasons for seeking GDPR compliance than avoiding penalties. As businesses are shifting towards a more data-driven model, GDPR-compliance will increase customer confidence and customer retention strengthening your organization's brand and reputation.

Organizations should assess their current practices and detect the blind spots within their business to determine the next steps to become GDPR compliant.

Exclusive Chocolate Tasting at ROYCE' Chocolate

Sunday, 21 May 2017 - Antwerp



On Sunday, 21 May, BJA members, families and friends gathered at the beautiful tea lounge of ROYCE' Chocolate in Antwerp. ROYCE' Chocolate is a Japanese chocolate brand and they opened their first European flagship store in Antwerp last year.

Why bringing Japanese chocolates to Belgium? You might have doubts about ROYCE' Chocolate coming to Belgium, probably the most competitive chocolate market in the world. We learned ROYCE' has unique products that cannot be found in any other chocolatier. Hence, ROYCE' is known as a manufacturer of one of the most popular products sold at many airports in Japan.

For example, unlike most Belgian chocolatiers, ROYCE' does not sell any praline. Instead, they created the Potatochip Chocolates. Normally, if we cover one side of a potato chip with chocolate, the potato chip will absorb the moisture from the chocolate and the potato chip gets soggy. However, ROYCE' Potatochip Chocolates are crispy. Mr Marc Van Autreve explained us that ROYCE' uses a special kind of potatoes only available in Hokkaido and their composition makes it possible to have crispy potato chips even after covering them with chocolates.

Many products are directly shipped from Japan, but ROYCE' Chocolate in Antwerp also offers a wide range of pastries freshly made following the recipes of ROYCE' in Japan. For our exclusive tasting event, ROYCE' offered us to try their Nama Croissant, which combines a croissant with their Nama (= fresh) chocolate inside. Mr Van Autreve explained us a unique difference between Japanese and Belgians. Belgians don't like holes in croissants and prefer heavy texture, while Japanese see holes in a croissant as a sign of a good croissant. We can say that the obsessions towards big holes in croissants created Nama Croissant in Japan.

If you missed joining our tasting event, visit ROYCE' Chocolate in Antwerp to taste unique Japanese chocolates and you will see why ROYCE' is so popular in Asia, America, Middle East, and soon in Europe.

Special thank you to ROYCE' Chocolate in Antwerp for providing a special tasting opportunity for BJA Friendship Committee!

ROYCE' Chocolate

Wapper 16
2000 Antwerpen
www.royce-europe.com

* Product photos are taken from ROYCE



Japan and Belgium: well-being at work from a cross-cultural perspective 日本とベルギー両国における、職場ウェルビーイングへの取り組み～異文化における視点から～

Tuesday, 13 June 2017 - Leuven



Mrs Kato, Managing Director of Many Truths, explains about integrating Belgian and Japanese working culture.



The guests board the 'solar train' to take a tour of the city of Leuven.



The visit of the famous Stella Artois brewery was highly appreciated.

To bring Belgian and Japanese employees closer to each other, Pulso Europe, JEAP Peacemind, Leuven MindGate and the BJA organized an afternoon seminar focused on the topic of well-being at work.

Numerous participants were welcomed by Mrs Yasmin Handaja, Senior Manager at Pulso Europe, who gave an insightful presentation on corporate responsibilities in Belgium and Japan. Following, the English-speaking guests attended the presentation of Mrs Masako Kato, Managing Director of Many Truths, on integrating Belgian and Japanese working culture while the Japanese-speaking audience listened to Mrs. Kaoru Ichikawa, Ph.D. and Executive Vice President of JEAP Peacemind, discussing the issue of adjusting to a new culture as expats.

After a short coffee break, Mr Dirk Antonissen, Partner at Pulso Europe, and Mrs Ayumi Nishikawa, President of JEAP Peacemind presented the key-findings of the seminar, before invit-

ing the guests to board on a 'solar train' to take a tour of the city of Leuven, followed by a visit of the famous Stella Artois brewery. The event ended with a walking dinner.



news for the members

MARKET OF 105 BILLION EUROS OPEN TO FLEMISH BIOTECH COMPANIES

Flanders.bio, the life sciences cluster in Flanders, and the Japan Bio Industry Association (JBA) are to collaborate closely. During ‘knowledge for growth’, the annual get-together of the life sciences cluster in Ghent, an agreement between the two organisations was signed.

“This is an important agreement” Henk Joos, Managing Director of flanders.bio stressed. As a result of this agreement our Flemish companies gain direct access to the Japanese medicines’ market, which has an annual turnover of 105 billion euros. It is the world’s second largest market for medicines and diagnostics after the United States.

Japan, just like Flanders, faces a growing aging population. After the economic slowdown in 2011 as a result of the earthquake, the tsunami and the leak at the nuclear power plant, the country is once again looking for new, innovative medicines. When the effectiveness of new medicines is shown, they are often allowed onto the Japanese market sooner than e.g. in the US. For Flemish and Belgian life sciences companies this is an important trump card. Henk Joos: “During the past three years we noticed that Japanese pharma and biotech companies are putting greater effort into open innovation and are actively looking for co-operation. This plays to the advantage of our businesses.”

Japanese Investments

Japanese companies invested over a billion euros in Belgian life sciences companies thanks to takeovers, but also as a result of concluding cooperation agreements with companies including Ablynx, ADX Neurosciences and reMYND. Lieve Ongena, Senior Science Policy Manager at VIB (Flemish Institute for Biotechnology) travels to Japan annually in order to bring investments from

Japanese biotech companies and research cooperation agreements to Flanders. A famous example is the Yakult research lab in Ghent. This dairy drink was originally based of the intestinal flora of the Japanese. “In order to adapt the product to the European market, several years ago, we were able to convince the company to establish its European research lab in Ghent. It was above all our dynamic biotech cluster and know-how that attracted the Japanese” says Lieve Ongena. Gaining the confidence of a Japanese partner usually takes many years. “This is a problem for smaller biotech players. Thanks to our cooperation with JBA there was a relationship of trust straight from the start. As a result, in the future, we will be able to bring investment projects to the Flemish biotech cluster even more quickly.”

1,000 Japanese businesses

The agreement between flanders.bio and JBA was signed in Ghent in the presence of the Federal Public Health Minister Maggie De Block. flanders.bio represents 350 life sciences companies in Flanders. The Japan Bioindustry Association (JBA) unites 1,000 businesses. Mr Yoshiaki Tsukamoto, Executive Director of the JBA: “Flanders is a significant player in innovative medicine. In addition, flanders.bio is one of the few biotech clusters in Europe with businesses from the agro food industry and industrial applications’ sector. For us this agreement with flanders.bio is an important step. As a result we are able to be even more successful in uniting our potential.”

Source:

www.flandersbio.be/en/industry-insights-news/flandersbio-news/2017/may/market-of-105-billion-euros-open-to-flemish-biotech-companies

**UNIQLO WILL SOON DRESS BRUSSELS FASHIONISTAS**

The Japanese ‘ready-to-wear’ brand confirmed that they will open a Brussels flagship boutique in ‘The Mint’, the brand new shopping centre that is to open its doors this fall (or autumn) on ‘Place de la Monnaie’.

The company decision was preceded (as from 2015) by multiple meetings with ‘Brussels Invest & Export’ and ‘Atrium’ as well as the visit of Brussels Minister-president Rudi Vervoort to their Headquarters at the end of 2016.

The brand is known for the quality of its stores where fashion with clean and clear lines within a very urban style is mixed with innovative textiles and all this at very democratic prices.

Aficionados of ‘Uniqlo’ will be extremely pleased to have their favourite brand at their doorstep soon.

Source:

BI&E communications dept.

INSURER MS AMLIN IS COMING TO BRUSSELS

MS Amlin, part of the insurance group Mitsui Sumitomo & AD which ranks among the world's top ten insurance companies, has recently communicated that, following the Brexit, it will establish a European subsidiary in Brussels. MS Amlin specializes in reinsurance, marine and aviation and property and casualty and employs about 2400 people at 26 locations worldwide.

In its justifications, MS Amlin refers inter alia to the business friendly environment in Belgium, the high quality of the regulatory framework and the geographical centrality of Belgium in Europe.

Johan Van Overtveldt: "We are very pleased that, shortly after Lloyd's and QBE, we will be able to welcome a third major player in Brussels. This confirms, once again, that our approach to promote Brussels as a financial centre is paying off abroad. Moreover, by focussing on specific activities such as insurance, market infrastructures and FinTech (innovative financial technology), progress is being made in broadening the financial landscape in Brussels."

Source:

vanoverveldt.belgium.be/en/insurer-ms-amlin-coming-brussels



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The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce is happy to present you the new issue of the BJA Directory. The BJA Directory has the objective to be a comprehensive source of information on the BJA-members. In addition, a list of the data of Japanese companies in Belgium is added as well. The directory is a handy reference on Belgian-Japanese business performance.

By introducing the members, it has the aim to be a powerful resource for building, managing and expanding networking and business opportunities, cultural exchange, finding jobs, evaluating goods and services, and

researching trends or publications. Our directory puts our members in direct contact with other members, and interested parties can easily locate and contact our members. It assists business expansion on a local, regional, national and/or international level, as well as it enhances the opportunities for fostering cultural and friendship relations between the citizens of the two nations. It offers an excellent view on the importance of the network of the Belgian and Japanese companies in Belgium, and therefore is a unique resource publication to identify "who is who" in Belgium with regard to Japanese business and vice versa.



belgian
foreign trade agency



BELGIUM & JAPAN

2016

Japan = 17th client EUR 3,561.7 million: +7.6%

Japan = 9th supplier EUR 8,337.4 million: +8.3%

Trade balance: EUR -4,775.7 million

Major sections

Export	Share	Import	Share
Chemicals	47.4%	Transport equipment	49.8%
Transport equipment	12.0%	Machinery & equipment	25.0%
Optical instruments	10.5%	Chemicals	10.0%

2015

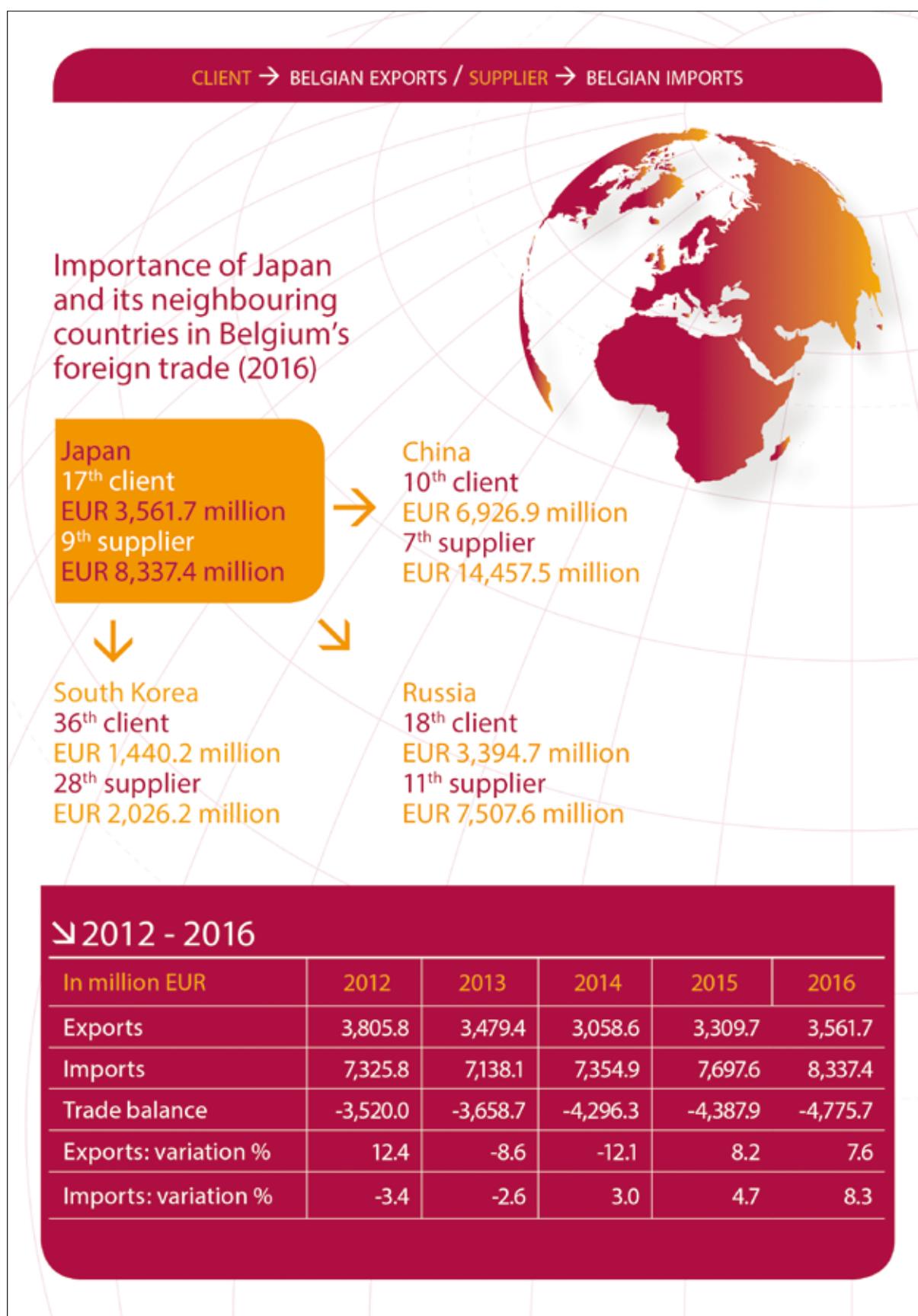
Japan = 17th client EUR 3,309.7 million: +8.2%

Japan = 10th supplier EUR 7,697.6 million: +4.7%

Trade balance: EUR -4,387.9 million

Major sections

Export	Share	Import	Share
Chemicals	48.0%	Transport equipment	46.8%
Transport equipment	11.4%	Machinery & equipment	25.1%
Optical instruments	9.3%	Chemicals	12.3%



news from the members

DELEGATION FROM GHENT OPENED BELGIAN BEER FESTIVAL IN TWIN CITY KANAZAWA

By Prof Dr Andreas Niehaus of the University of Ghent and Mrs Inge Willemsen of City of Ghent



This year Kanazawa was again one of the cities chosen to host the Belgian beer festival. A delegation from Ghent, represented by the Mayor of Ghent, Daniël Termont, Inge Willemsen (Coordinator International Relations), Katrien Laporte (Director Design Museum Ghent) and Prof. Andreas Niehaus (Ghent University) was invited by the city of Kanazawa as guests of honour to the Belgian Beer Weekend from 8 to 11 June. The delegation opened the festival together with Mayor Yamano and the First Secretary of the Belgian embassy, Brent Van Tassel, as well as a representative from the Ishikawa prefecture and the Hokkoku Shimbun Newspaper. After the opening we enjoyed not only 78 different sorts of (tasty) Belgian beer, but also Belgian food (Belgian fries, burgers, ice cream) and Belgian music. During the beer festival two exchange students from Ghent enthusiastically talked about Belgian beer culture. To a public audience of about 45 interested guests, Prof. Niehaus introduced Ghent University; Ms Willemsen did so for the sister city relation between Ghent and Kanazawa.

Last year Ghent and Kanazawa celebrated 45 years of their sister city relation and one of the highlights was the start of a new cooperation agreement. This visit was also the perfect opportunity to continue working on the realization of different projects and events, which will even further strengthen the relationship between the two cities as well as the two universities. During the intense three days' program the delegation visited the city hall, the 21st Century Museum, the Utatsuyama Kogei Kobo atelier, soccer stadiums, the harbour, the Ono soya sauce brewery, the new concert hall Ongakudo and other places, including the Kenrokuen park.

At Kanazawa University the delegation met with the university's President, Koetsu Yamazaki, and other representatives in order

to discuss the extension of the existing exchange program for students, the framework of an internship program for students at the city administrations of Ghent and Kanazawa, as well as scientific exchange, including a joint conference on pharmaceuticals next year. Already in September Ghent will welcome 22 students from Kanazawa for a summer program in Flemish art. The mayors of both cities also agreed to strengthen the exchange of young people, and Kanazawa would like to welcome coach Hein Vanhaezebrouck from football team AA Gent to give a training session to young soccer players from Kanazawa.

The sister city exchange also focuses on the strong points of the two cities, which is music for Ghent and arts and handcrafts for Kanazawa, for which the cities were recognized by the UNESCO.

During the visits to the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art and the Utatsuyama Kogei Kobo Atelier, Mrs Laporte was able to further develop the plans to exchange an exhibition on 'composites and design', which is planned in the Design Museum Ghent in 2018-2019, and to work out an expo on Art Nouveau and Japonism in glass art to be exhibited in both cities.

And one of the highlights certainly was a concert given by the youth Jazz band "JAZZ-21". The band had been in Ghent for workshops together with the Ghent Youth Jazz Orchestra and concerts three years ago. During a small concert, the young musicians proved that they had studied hard. As Mayor Termont commented: "They could well become professional musicians!" This short stay in Kanazawa has been very successful in creating new opportunities and the Mayor of Ghent has already invited a delegation of Kanazawa to come to Ghent as guests of honour during the Light Festival in 2018.



KANEKA BOOSTS ITS PRODUCTION AT MS POLYMERS (FLANDERS)

The Japanese multinational Kaneka is investing EUR 34 million in its subsidiary in Flanders in order to enhance production capacity. By the end of 2017, a new production line will be created and a loading dock will be built.

Japanese company with worldwide subsidiaries

As a leading technology-driven chemical company, Kaneka has subsidiaries all over the world and business activities ranging from chemicals, functional plastics, food products, life science and synthetic fibres to electrical and electronic materials. The subsidiary in Flanders operates in the field of functional and foam plastics.

Large investment fuels Flanders-based industry

Kaneka's investment of EUR 34 million is meant to enhance

the production capacity of synthetic polymers. To increase the factory's capacity, a new production line will be created. At the same time, a loading dock will be built alongside the canal adjacent to the factory. Kaneka hopes to start expanding by the end of 2017 to become fully operational one year later.

Long-term international collaboration

The factory in Flanders was founded in 1970 and was the first overseas subsidiary of Kaneka. This investment further anchors the multinational in Flanders. The increased capacity will continue to stimulate the chemical industry in the region.

Source:

www.flandersinvestmentandtrade.com/invest/en/news/kaneka-jp-boosts-its-production-ms-polymers-flanders

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