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Chamber of Commerce
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EDITORIAL

The blossoming of 150 years Belgium-Japan

By Mr Masatsugu Minaka, President, Daikin Europe N.V., President Nihonjinkai and Vice-President BJA



Mr Masatsugu Minaka

It is a great honor and privilege for me to assume the role of Vice-President of the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce (BJA), whose mission is mainly dedicated to further deepening the relationship between Belgium and Japan, not only in business but also in the cultural interactions. In this framework, I would like to fulfil the expectations of the BJA and contribute to enhancing our relationships. It is indeed a great honor for me to do that through the BJA.

On this occasion, I would like to express my deep consideration to the fact that we are celebrating this year “the 150th anniversary of friendship relations between Belgium and Japan”. After an official opening of the anniversary, many events have highlighted our long-time diplomatic relationship, by remembering the older days and respecting the traditions and culture of both our countries, such as information sessions, workshops, exhibitions, concerts and many more. For the 2nd half of this year, I am also excited to make this anniversary more memorable for all of us, as a member of the Celebration Committee as well.

For my professional career, this is my 2nd assignment in Belgium (from 2004). I will never forget what I felt the first time I arrived in Brussels in 1992. It was calm here and I was impressed by the historical surroundings. It is still inherent everywhere in Belgium, although it has been much modernized in the past quarter century.

I enjoy a lot being together with the warm and friendly people here, and one of my favourite

things is also viewing the beautiful scenery while driving.

Given that I have been recently traveling to Japan for at least a month long, I confess appreciating such a feeling upon return. I personally think that both Belgian and Japanese people are likely to act in a similar gentle approach, and also therefore our diplomatic relationship have been continuing constructively for more than a single century.

Recently I have learned much from “Belgium”. Belgium is in the midst of the EU countries, and for many Belgium represents the EU itself. With “Brexit”, it will affect to some extent the EU economy. The “Geopolitic issue” has been drastically increasing the problems in the EU everywhere. No one knows what will happen next. But, even with all of these difficulties, I believe, Belgium will continue to perform a representing role of the EU. That is why I wish to point out again that Japan has many opportunities to learn from Belgium.

With the completion of one of the biggest events, the “Flower Carpet” in August, we will be almost around the final corner of the year 2016. The Autumn season is the best time when we enjoy “reaping the fruits” but also we will be “getting ready to commence the next year and the following stage”.

Once again I would like to express my strong appreciation that we continue to celebrate this year together and prepare for another half century towards our friendship relations for 200 years, by sharing a lot with each other and by learning from each other.

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150 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN JAPAN • BELGIUM

2016 EVENTS AT THE JAPANESE GARDEN IN HASSELT

www.japansetuin.be and www.facebook.com/JapanseTuinHasseltBE

DATE AND TIME	WHAT	DESCRIPTION
3 and 4 September 10h – 18h	Manga & Cosplay Festival Autumn	Anyone who is interested in Japanese pop culture will certainly want to take in the Manga and Cosplay festival. These two expressions of modern Japanese pop culture promise a sparkling and colourful spectacle with manga comics and glitzy cosplay performance art with costumes and accessories as a source of inspiration. During the Festival you can delve into the world of manga comics, the colourful performance art with costumes and props from cosplay, J-pop and other colourful modern expressions of Japanese culture. Participants can show their costumes, buy and sell manga comics, attend workshops, etc. The often playful cosplay costumes will also make this festival a delightful occasion for newcomers to the scene.
		
18 September	Golf Tournament	You can also cement friendly and business relations during a game of golf. That is something they have known about for many years at the Nippon Golf Club in Hasselt, which came into being as a meeting place for Flemings and Japanese. To celebrate the 150 years of diplomatic relations, there will also be a collaboration between this prestigious golf club and the Japanese Garden. With the support of the BJA, they will run a golf tournament for the general public, with Japan as the theme. This is the day after the BJA Golf event itself on 17 September. That day you can include a special Japan stroll, take part in a beginner's golf lesson or try out all kinds of activities on the subject of golf in Japan. By hopping onto the free shuttle, you can effortlessly go back and forth between the Japanese Garden and the Flanders Nippon Golf Club.
13-25 September	Exhibition of Eric Schelstraete and Aimee Yamamoto	Eric Schelstraete, Belgian and Aimee Yamamoto, Japanese, work together to decorate the pavilion of the Japanese Garden with their artworks. Eric is an engraver who will exhibit some of his engravings and Aimee will show some of her self-made tapestry. Their cooperation symbolizes the 150 years of Friendship between Japan and Belgium, which is one of the main themes this year in the Japanese Garden.
		
1-9 October	Kikumatsuri – Chrysanthemum Festival	For us in the West, Chrysanthemums are especially reminiscent of funerals or commemorations in the cemetery, but in the Far East these flowers are a symbol of happiness. The chrysanthemum or kiku is even the symbol of the Japanese emperor! A great reason therefore to organise a festival or matsuri around this surprisingly versatile flower and to make the garden a very special eye-catcher. In 2016 the Hasselt chrysanthemum festival will be jointly supported and coordinated by Tomas de Bruyne. He debuted in Japan and is now famous all over the world for his flower designs. His work was also highly praised at the Floraliën in Ghent this year, in the cathedral.
		
2 October	Performance of Sakura 5 and brassband of the Japanese school in Brussels	On the first Sunday of the Chrysanthemum Festival, the Japanese Garden will be cheered up by two performances. The first one will be of a female group of Japanese singers named Sakura 5. They will sing inside of the new pavilion of the Garden. Afterwards, the brassband of the Japanese School of Brussels will do their performance in the Garden as well. A group of around 30 children will liven up the Garden with their beautiful music.
8 October	Performance of Aco+Taka	The Japanese duo Aco+Taka lives in Paris and will visit the Japanese Garden on the second Saturday of the Chrysanthemum Festival. They will have an accordion performance in the Garden and play for this occasion famous Flemish songs.
9 October	Noh Day with Noboru Katsumi	Noboru Katsumi is a Noh performer and teacher. He is linked to the famous Waseda University in Tokyo. On the last day of the Chrysanthemum Festival, he will give a brief explanation about Noh and he will also perform three Noh pieces of twenty minutes each.
30 October	Flower offering ceremony	Silence and respect for nature: they remain the most important symbols of the Japanese Garden. The Japanese Garden will also round off the season in that atmosphere. That is why we have planned a flower offering ceremony in cooperation with Yoean, an organisation that studies and practises Shingon Buddhism, one of the largest movements in Japanese Buddhism. We invite all gardeners or garden lovers to come and lay down their cut flowers in the late afternoon and thus pay their respect to these beautiful living organisms.
		

YES X First Briefing Session Cross-Cultural Communication and Business Culture

Thursday, 23 June 2016 – Restaurant Kamo, Brussels



(on the left) Mr Olivier Van Beneden, Managing Director of Japan Consulting Office, generously shared many practical examples and insights into understanding doing excellent business in Japan.



Mr Kamo, Star Chef of Kamo Restaurant, meticulously prepared the delicious dishes.



The YES Participants surrounded by experts on Japan, listening carefully to all advice.

The BJA's YES Committee had the pleasure to invite the selected YES X laureates to the first YES Briefing Session on "Cross-Cultural Communication with Japanese business people".

On this occasion, Mr Olivier Van Beneden, Managing Director of Japan Consulting Office, was invited to give an overview of the cross-cultural framework in business situations in Japan with many practical examples and insights into understanding how to do excellent business. Other Japan experts, being Prof. Gilbert Declerck, BJA President and Member of the Board of imec International, Mr Yoshikazu



Matsumoto, Managing Director of Cast Inc. and Mr Eric Resler, Lawyer at Reslex, shared their profound knowledge and insightful experience on other important aspect of business, as well.

Thanks to the generous support by the Restaurant Kamo, we enjoyed this briefing session privately in the one and only Michelin star Japanese restaurant in Belgium.

A wonderful starting event to achieve great success in Japan!



YES X Program (Young Executive Stay) Commercial export mission to Japan

9-16 October 2016



THE SELECTED CANDIDATES

This year, the YES program, a commercial export project under the auspices of His Majesty King Philippe of Belgium will be held for the 20th year (the so called 10th edition YES X).

The YES program aims to train young executives in successful Japanese business practices, at moderate costs, and in a short amount of time. For this purpose, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Japan will organize a one-week training program in Japan, beginning with two briefing sessions in Belgium – with one moment in the presence of His Majesty King Philippe of Belgium on 10 October.

The training in Japan will consist of an intensive panel discussion and meeting business leaders and the remaining days of introducing each participant to the potential partners and customers in his/her business area. Each participant will enjoy the support of a ‘business coach’, an experienced business person residing in Japan. In addition, students of Sophia University will help the participants with market studies and preparation.

We hereby would like to thank the organizations that support the preparation and the briefing sessions: The Embassies, the Regional Export Agencies (AWEX, BIE & FIT), Unizo International, UWE, and the industry.

The co-organizers hereby proudly present the selected YES X participants:

- > **Excentis NV**
- > **Kate’Art Editions**
- > **Wildiers bvba**
- > **ImmunXperts SA**
- > **GBO Innovation makers**
- > **Desobry**
- > **Before the wave**
- > **Ann Cox Glass Jewelry**



EXCENTIS NV		www.excentis.com
Sector	Testing, consultancy, training and test and measurement products for telecommunication operators and product vendors	
Candidate	Mr Luc Martens, CEO (53 years)	
Company activities	<p>Excentis a leading provider of highly specialized testing, consultancy and training services for access (internet standard DOCSIS on cable TV networks) and home (WiFi) network technologies and related services (e.g. PacketCable (VoIP)).</p> <p>Excentis acts as the independent and neutral lab for EuroDOCSIS and EuroPacketCable certification testing for cable network companies. Born out of this testing and consultancy expertise, the company has developed a unique highly flexible, user friendly and cost-effective testing product: the ByteBlower TCP/IP traffic generator/analyzer. Another unique service is the Wi-Fi performance test benchmark executed in a real home. Excentis’ customers are international telecommunication companies such as the operators Liberty Global and Vodafone, chip suppliers such as Broadcom and Intel and equipment suppliers such as Cisco, Arris, Technicolor, and Samsung.</p>	
Company expectations	As Japan is the country with the second largest number of broadband customers and has important telecommunication product vendors and service providers, the intention of the visit is to find out what the potential market is for our services and products.	
Target	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding the Japanese market of broadband telecommunication networks and services, 2. Building a good reseller network for the ByteBlower product, 3. Realising in Japan in the long term a revenue of more than 15% of our turnover. 	



KATE'ART EDITIONS

www.kateart.com



Sector	Book Publisher
Candidate	Catherine de Duve, Founder (46 years)
Company activities	In 2001 Kate'Art Publishing launched a collection entitled: 'Happy Museum!'. It is dedicated to cultural events and especially to children and families. Thanks to this new initiative, children will have their own catalogue, created and adapted especially for them and their family. World premières launched the young publishing house, with for example 'The Secret of Fernand Khnopff', 'The Little Bruegel', 'The Big Museum!', 'The Little Matisse', 'Turner Whistler Monet', 'The Little Klimt'... These interactive books bewitch the young as much as the adult public; they create new dynamics in museums, international exhibitions and cultural events.
Company expectations	We are planning to visit Japan because it's very important to visit our future clients, to visit the museums and their bookshops. We have a very famous agent who is interested to help us. We have met several publishers in Frankfurt, Paris, London and Bologna Bookfair since many years. We need to meet people with an agent. We have 10 different contacts to meet in Tokyo.
Target	Kate'Art Editions wishes to develop its activity in Japan and sell in bookstores, schools, Japanese shop online and museumshops.



WILDIERIS BVBA

www.wildiers.be

Sector	Artisan food production
Candidate	Emilie Wildiers, Owner (34 years)
Company activities	Jams with 50% or 70% fruit Jams without added sugar : 100% fruit spreads Confits to eat with meat, pate, cheese Elderberry syrup Belgian Pickles Beer spreads New brand = Ooh ooh ah ah best of Belgium
Company expectations	We have limited experience in Japan. After our participation at Sial in 2014 we are in contact with a Japanese company that was very interested in our new brand (Ooh ooh ah ah banana jams). After a few months the first pallet with banana jams was shipped to Japan. Everything went very fast and that in combination with our limited experience in exporting to Asia, especially Japan made that not everything went 100% like it should have been. We therefore see this opportunity to go Japan as extremely important to be better prepared and understanding and knowing the market.
Target	<p>With this trip to Japan our first goal is to understand the Japanese customers. We would like to know their needs, their buying habits. Then we would like to look for one or maximum 2 distributors/importers that have experience in fine foods, Belgian products.</p> <p>We would like to find one good partner to help develop and distribute the Ooh ooh ah ah/best of Belgium brand and on the other hand find another experienced partner for whom we can create tailor-made solutions, in jams, confits, syrups, pickles for the brand Wildiers. We do not aim mass production and selling, we prefer to work with good solid partners in certain areas of Japan.</p> <p>In 5 years we would like Japan to know Wildiers brand as the best company to produce high quality, handmade products (jams, confits, syrups, pickles). Small batches of products made to fit customers' needs.</p> <p>In 5 years we would like Japan to know Ooh ooh ah ah as a fun brand with new typically Belgian products, focussing on being the ideal surprising gift with top Belgian food products like waffles, speculoos, beers,....</p> <p>In 5 years we want at least 15% of our turnover to be in the Japanese market.</p>





IMMUNXPERTS SA www.immunxperts.com

Sector	Immunogenicity (service provider)
Candidate	Sofie Pattijn, Founder & CTO (46 years)
Company activities	ImmunXperts was created in 2014 by a number of people with a long track record in the field of immunogenicity and offers, together with partners, a broad service package in the field of immunogenicity, immunoncology and Stem Cell Therapy. In collaboration with our scientific advisors and international partners, ImmunXperts offers access to a unique team of seasoned immunogenicity experts. Our partnership model allows us to tap into a broad network of subcontractors and academic collaborators, resulting in a wide range of technologies and broad service offering to accelerate safer and better drug development including in silico and in vitro immunogenicity assays, services for the isolation and cryopreservation of primary cells, in vitro functional immune-oncology assays, development support for potency assays for Stem Cell Therapy products and ImmunAcademy (theoretical and practical training).
Company expectations	We have visited 3 companies in Japan in 2015 to introduce ImmunXperts. From this visit we are in discussions with 2 pharmaceutical companies in Japan for a potential business deal in 2016.
Target	Within 2 years we would like to increase the number of contacts and customers and build a relationship with the top 15 Japanese pharmaceutical companies to support their drug development programs. We hope that this will lead to some type of business deal with at least 3-5 more of these companies.



GBO INNOVATION MAKERS www.gbo.eu

Sector	Product design services
Candidate	Eric Dumortier, Director & Partner (41 years)
Company activities	GBO Innovation makers offers industrial product design services to its local and global clients, from idea to product launch. We help our clients to improve or design their innovations to be successful leaders on their markets. GBO Innovation makers is active in the field of FMCG-packaging design, product design and industrial design. Our experiences are very wide and we are working for very diverse clients such as John Deere, D.E. Master Blenders, Philips Healthcare, Tupperware, Avery Dennison, AB Inbev, Samsonite, ... In Japan we currently work for companies such as Roland Corporation and Amano Corporation.
Target	Our company target will be to expand our network and existing clients in order to further help Japanese companies to design their new innovations.





DESOBRY		www.desobry.be
Sector	Biscuits, chocolate biscuits, assortments of biscuits	
Candidate	Dimitri Van Meerbeeck, Business Developer (36 years)	
Company activities	<p>Since 1947, The Desobry Biscuiterie produces some of the best cookies of Belgium. Taste, delicacy and character built the reputation of the Belgian “Maître Biscuitier”. Today, we continue to follow the same principle and we still bake biscuits with the best ingredients creating more than 35 sumptuous varieties. A family owned business, Desobry’s quality is unanimously recognized in Belgium, the country of biscuits and chocolate, as well as abroad, where the company sells 75% of its production. We offer the “best of both worlds” – real Belgian chocolate and top quality biscuits.</p>	
Company expectations	<p>We sell directly to 3 retailers: Kaldi (€ 250k), Yamaya (€ 25k) and Seiyu (€ 180k) We plan to find the ideal partner (importer/distributor) in order to develop a long term strategy and to cover completely the retail market, as well as Ecommerce, food service, and other channels that can only be dealt by a local partner.</p>	
Target	<p>We currently have sales of € 450k to Japan. My goal in the next 3 years is to double these figures. Next to some direct sales to major retailers (Aeon, Seijo Ishi, Costco, etc.), I want our future partner to develop sales channels in smaller retail ers, upscale shops, department stores, e-commerce and food services. Desobry would also like to take the YES program opportunity to draw a first draft of a retail implementation in Japan.</p>	



BEFORE THE WAVE		www.studiopetervanriet.com
Sector	Design Studio	
Candidate	Johan Van Mol, Managing Partner (43 years) Peter Van Riet, Managing Partner (45 years)	
Company activities	<p>Radical Design Program to create new revenue streams: from discovery to market. A changing and interconnected world requires business to rethink their value propositions in order to remain relevant. We start with a discovery stage and end with supporting production or a pilot.</p> <p>We design new products and services: from design brief to production.</p> <p>Build innovation and customer centric capabilities: We offer consulting and coaching services to build internal capabilities at our clients.</p>	
Company expectations	<p>We intend to present our Radical Design Program to Japanese companies. This program aims to come up with new product concepts, new service concepts and/or new go-to-market concepts. These concepts are based on profound design research and take into account trends and company strategy.</p> <p>This program is suited for Japanese companies who want to develop new products and services for an EU/ Global market or to rethink existing products and services for a EU/Global market.</p>	
Target	<p>We would like to become the partner of one or more Japanese companies for innovation and design services, with a turnover growing from 100.000 € to 250.000 / year.</p>	





ANN COX GLASS JEWELRY (Jewelry)

www.anncox.be



Candidate	Ann Cox, Owner (53 years)
Company activities	What is more beautiful than a piece of jewellery that reflects your inner beauty? Since 2007 Ann Cox creates exceptional jewellery made of glass combined with other materials. Passionate by the glass, Ann travelled from the Netherlands to the United States to learn the craft of jewellery design Ann's work is full of colour. She sees colour as a spark of 'joie de vivre' that she loves to share with the women who wear her pieces. She lets women experiment with her jewellery: a chain for your glasses can also be worn as a bracelet or a necklace... Each piece is available in various colours and customisable to meet different requirements. Ann Cox's work is the result of passion, dedication and craftsmanship. All her creations are handmade in Belgium.
Company expectations	Mrs Cox expects to be able to explore the market for her jewelry in Japan, and to be able to meet some distributors of different department stores.
Target	The target is to have a solid client data base, to find an agent for the brand and maybe even to own a brand concept store!

Introduction to the BJA Office

› JOACHIM DURNEZ, ASSISTANT

Born and raised in Brussels, I studied contemporary history and European studies at the Free University of Brussels, and specialized in Japanese history, in particular Belgium-Japan relations in the Meiji Era and EU-Japan relations since 1991. In 2006, I had the chance to study for one semester at the International Christian University of Tokyo (ICU), where I deepened my knowledge of Japanese language, culture and way of life. After working in a museum in Brussels and for the public administration I joined the BJA team in August 2012 as Assistant, the ideal job to experience Belgium-Japan relations on a day to day basis and contribute –albeit modestly– to further deepen the bonds of friendship between our two countries. Besides all things Japanese, I practice fencing and other sports and dance the tango. I also write, draw, paint and sculpt. I am involved in LGBTQI associations and I am co-founder of the LGBTQI Brussels-Wallonia Students Federation.

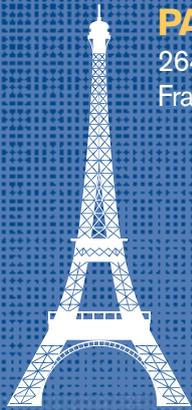
› MIKA MATSUMOTO, PROJECT MANAGER

Born in Tokyo, I moved to the US through an exchange student program as of my high school time, and spent my College times in the West Coast areas, then later graduated from the Michigan State University. My first working experience started at the Sheraton Hotel in New York, then an opportunity came to join the Waldorf Astoria Hotel as a Director of Convention and Group Services. In 1992, unexpectedly I found myself in Belgium, being a part of the pre-opening team of the Conrad Hotel in Brussels, today called Steigenberger Wiltcher's Hotel. The hotel was officially opened in April 1993 and I enjoyed myself to be in charge of the sales for Japan and the rest of Asian market. In 2001, I bid farewell to my hotel career, and in 2003 another lovely opportunity arrived to join the BJA, and I am blessed with two wonderful colleagues, Anja and Joachim, to work together. Privately I am also blessed with three precious children and a husband at home, and together we share the same interests such as golfing, camping in the summer, skiing in the winter, are just a few.



› ANJA OTO-KELLENS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Throughout my life, connecting with people from across the globe has been a core pillar. My interest in international cooperation led me to obtain a Master in Japanese Studies at the KUL, followed with residence and study in Osaka and a post-graduate degree International Relations (Peace Studies), all the while enjoying an internship at the UNFPA Brussels to experience firsthand the difference between theories and the reality of international organizations. I also started to work for the international Japanese press in Brussels on a frequent basis - leading me through the European institutions, NATO, and others. When the opportunity arose, I returned to Japan to study and do research at Kobe University. I came back to Belgium with a degree of Master of Laws (International Law – Specialization: Conflict Prevention) and another experience at UNOCHA Kobe, focusing mainly on research regarding the Southeast Asian region. It is an honor and pleasure to be part of the BJA. I also enjoy being part of the Board of the Marilo Fund under the King Boudewijn Foundation and of course being member of the Celebration Committee of the 2016 Celebrations Belgium-Japan. Next to my job, I am dedicated to mineralogy, stone creations and writing poetry.



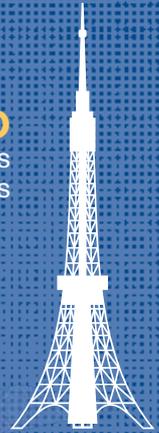
PARIS

264 km from Brussels
France : 67 M consumers



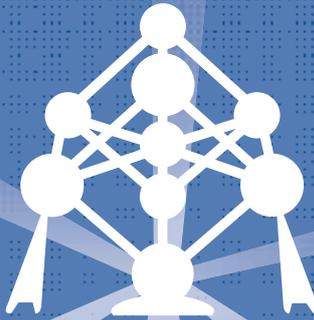
NEW YORK

5,897 km from Brussels
USA : 321 M consumers



TOKYO

9,465 km from Brussels
Japan : 127 M consumers



BRUSSELS

CAPITAL OF EUROPE
KEY TO 500 M EUROPEAN CONSUMERS
& SPRINGBOARD TO THE WORLD



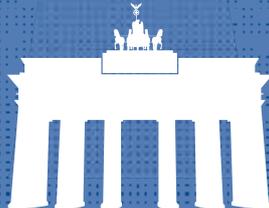
LONDON

321 km from Brussels
United Kingdom : 64 M consumers



RIO DE JANEIRO

9,443 km from Brussels
Brazil : 204 M consumers



BERLIN

652 km from Brussels
Germany : 81 M consumers



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building new perspectives

New accounting criteria: towards further simplification

By Mr Peter Suykens, Partner HVG advocaten-avocats and Mr Reinart Vos, Lawyer HVG advocaten-avocats

New size criteria for companies

For financial years starting as from 31 December 2015, increased criteria have been introduced to determine the size of a company. New companies need to estimate and apply these criteria in good faith at the beginning of the financial year.

1. SMALL COMPANY

A company is considered small if it exceeds at most one of the following criteria.

SMALL COMPANY	
Staff	50 FTE employees
Annual turnover, excluding VAT	9,000,000 €
Balance sheet	4,500,000 €

New is that companies must exceed (or no longer exceed) these criteria during two consecutive financial years before they change status. For example: a small company in financial year X will only become a large company in financial year X + 3 if it exceeds more than one criteria in financial years X + 1 and X + 2. A one-off exceptionally profitable year will thus no longer impact a company's status.

In principle, the criteria regarding annual turnover and balance sheet are calculated on an individual basis. However, for parent companies and companies belonging to a consortium, these criteria are calculated on a consolidated basis. Relevance: small companies may (i) prepare financial statements according to the abbreviated format and (ii) for small non-listed companies there is no obligation to draft an annual management report.

2. MICRO COMPANY

New is the concept of 'micro company'. A micro company is a small company which exceeds at most one of the following criteria:

MICRO COMPANY	
Staff	10 FTE employees
Annual turnover, excluding VAT	700,000 €
Balance sheet	350,000 €

A subsidiary or parent company cannot be considered a micro company. The transition from a micro company into a small or large company or vice versa can only take place if the criteria are exceeded (or are no longer exceeded) during two consecutive financial years.

Relevance: micro companies can prepare their financial statements according to a determined micro schedule and are not obliged to draft an annual management report.

3. GROUP OF LIMITED SIZE

The legislator has replaced the concept 'small group' by 'group of limited size'. A group is considered of limited size when a company together with its subsidiaries, or companies that together make up a consortium do not exceed more than one of the following criteria:

GoLS	
Staff	250 FTE employees
Annual turnover, excluding VAT	34,000,000 €
Balance sheet	17,000,000 €

If the group exceeds (no longer exceeds) at least two criteria, it will only impact the status of the group if it occurs during two consecutive financial years. The above criteria should be calculated on a consolidated basis.

4. IMPORT CONSEQUENCE FOR EXISTING COMPANIES

The new legislation applies to financial years starting after 31 December 2015.

For the first financial year starting after 31 December 2015, it should only be verified whether the company exceeds one of the new criteria on the balance sheet date of the last financial year. If previously the company qualified as a large company, it may be that it immediately qualifies as a small company for the financial year starting after 31 December 2015 if it exceeds no more than one of the new criteria.

Appointment of the auditor

The Belgian Companies' Code imposes the obligation to appoint a statutory auditor if it concerns (i) a listed company, (ii) a large company or (iii) if the company belongs to a group that is required to prepare and to publish consolidated annual accounts.

As a result of the increase of the criteria for small companies, fewer companies should appoint an auditor. Moreover, the criteria of a group of limited size increased so that a number of groups of companies will no longer be obliged to draw up and publish consolidated annual accounts and consequently, escape from the obligation to appoint a statutory auditor (cf. infra).

Obligation to draw up and publish consolidated annual accounts

Each parent company must prepare consolidated annual accounts and an annual management report on the consolidated annual accounts if it controls, alone or jointly, one or more subsidiaries. Also, in case the company belongs to a consortium, consolidated annual accounts should be drawn up in which all companies belonging to the consortium are included.

A company shall be exempt from the obligation to draw up consolidated annual accounts and an annual management report on the consolidated annual accounts if it belongs to a group of limited size.

Please do not hesitate to contact us in case you would like to obtain more information on this topic via peter.suykens@hvglaw.be and reinart.vos@hvglaw.be

Joint Foreign Chambers Special Evening Event

Wednesday, 22 June 2016 – Steigenberger Wiltcher's Hotel, Brussels



Mr Griffiths and Mr Dhanens of JTI discussing Belgium's opportunities with Mr Timmermans of the FEB.



#YES2Belgium!



The Chairmen of the co-organizing Chambers seated together with the Prime Minister and the panelists of the evening

Together with 10 other Foreign Chambers, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce had the privilege to invite members to join the international business community for a special event with Prime Minister Charles Michel as we say #Yes2Belgium as a place to invest and do business.

After a short speech by the Prime Minister, a high-level panel discussion followed. We enjoyed listening to the insights of Mr Per Allmer, President Western Europe, Middle East and Africa, Bombardier Transportation, Mr Corrado Sciolla, CEO Europe & Global Telecom Markets, BT, Mr Mark Hutchinson, CEO Europe, GE, Mr Robert Blackburn, Regional President, Europe, Japan, ANZ, Global Innovative Pharma, Pfizer, and last but not least Dr Johan van Zyl, President & CEO, Toyota Motor Europe and BJA Board Member.

The evening continued with a seated dinner, succeeded by a

networking dessert and the soccer game Belgium-Sweden on big screens.



Prime Minister Charles Michel, Mr Per Allmer, President Western Europe, Middle East and Africa, Bombardier Transportation, Mr Corrado Sciolla, CEO Europe & Global Telecom Markets, BT, Mr Mark Hutchinson, CEO Europe, GE, Mr Robert Blackburn, Regional President, Europe, Japan, ANZ, Global Innovative Pharma, Pfizer, and last but not least Dr Johan van Zyl, President & CEO, Toyota Motor Europe and Mr de Cattaläy, Moderator.



Ikebana - a passion in life

By Mrs Ilse Beunen, Ikebana Artist



What is Ikebana?

In Japanese, the word ikebana consists of the kanji 生け(ikeru) which means living and 花(hana) which means flower. So literally ikebana means living flower. Ikebana is the art of bringing flowers and branches to life by the way they are arranged.

The attractiveness of Ikebana

Ikebana is the art of creating aesthetic casual looking natural arrangements, often with very little material. Ikebana arrangements add value to the space and environment in which they are placed, in this way they attract immediate attention.

An important aspect when creating an ikebana arrangement is the interaction between the creator and the green material. This often results in moments of contemplation and reflection. It brings you as the creator closer to nature. And the audience, which is enjoying your creation, can experience moments of peace and stillness as well.



Besides Buddhism, the native religion of Japan is Shintō. Shintō is a nature religion with a strong respect and love for nature and reverence for the past. One of the aspects of Shintō is that everything has a soul or spirit, not only plants and animals but also rivers, waterfalls, stones and mountains. This acceptance that all living things have a soul or spirit is very important in Japanese gardens and Ikebana.

Nowadays, Ikebana adapts to the modern way of living, but still with respect of the past and traditional styles.

When learning Ikebana you start with basic styles and forms before you can create your own style. From the moment you master the basics and the techniques, there is more freedom to express oneself.

In Ikebana it is through the use and interaction with natural materials that one expresses oneself.

When creating Ikebana you never can make two identical arrangements. Flowers and branches are always different. An Ikebana arrangement is a moment in time. The material is always different and also the mindset of the creator varies in time. This makes Ikebana exciting and challenging, because you have to make the best possible arrangement with the material at hand.

One shouldn't be sad that Ikebana exists only for a short time. Nothing lasts forever, and this way you have always space to put your next creation, which will be better than your previous one, because with each new arrangement, your skills will improve. It's the way of life and even decay has its beauty.

Ikebana arrangements can be made in tall vases. They are called Nageire arrangements, which means literally 'throwing in', although that's the last thing you do. Arrangements in flat wide mounted containers, are called Moribana arrangements. In Ikebana, it's not common to use Oasis (floral foam) to fixate the flowers, but special tools like Kenzans (fakirbed) or ship-po's are used.

Ikebana arrangements are asymmetrical. Asymmetry brings an aesthetic harmony and vibrancy to your arrangement. It builds a tension between the space which is filled up, and space left empty.

A little history

Ikebana developed out of the Buddhist flower offertory. Buddhism was introduced in Japan probably somewhere in the 6th or 7th century.

In Japanese history the Muromachi Period (14th -16th century) is an interesting and important time. This is the period that the foundation of the Japanese culture and arts like, among others, garden design, tea ceremony, Noh play, Zen Buddhism, and also Ikebana is formed. The oldest and still existing school formed during this period is the Ikenobo school.

Over the centuries until today many schools have been formed, with their own rules, styles and principles. At this moment

there are 2000 Ikebana schools registered with the Japanese Ministry of Education.

Many of these schools are internationally active. This makes that admirers of this art form can learn Ikebana also outside Japan. Especially nowadays with the internet and social media even smaller schools get discovered outside Japan.

The biggest and most well-known schools outside Japan are Ikenobo, Ohara and Sogetsu. Sogetsu is the school I learned in Japan.

My first contact with Ikebana

After graduating as a landscape designer, I left for Japan together with my husband with the intention to stay for 18 months, but all together we lived in Japan for 11 years.

A few months after arriving in Japan, I came in contact with Suzuki Shigeichi a landscape architect near the city of Nagaoka. Nagaoka is situated in Niigata prefecture, about 300 km north of Tokyo. With the support of the Honda – Belgium Foundation and the Canon Foundation I could become his apprentice and learn the secrets of the Japanese ways of designing gardens.

He taught me that it was important to study and understand a lot of aspects of the Japanese culture in order to understand the spirit of a Japanese garden. I studied tea ceremony, the art of wearing kimono, calligraphy and also the art of Japanese flower arrangement.

At first I liked that you could make a complete arrangement with only a few materials. Everything was new for me, and I was very excited. I couldn't learn fast enough, and absorb everything. In my youthful eagerness, I only thought about graduating as quickly as possible to start developing my own creations. It took me a while to understand that I was wrong. From the moment, I took a step back, slowed down, and took time to really learn and enjoy the process; I understood a lot of aspects better.

In Ikebana and a lot of Japanese traditional arts, the way to and the effort and joy to reach the goal, are more important than reaching the goal itself. Furthermore, the acceptance that all living things have a soul or spirit was a very significant part of my training to design Japanese



gardens but also when I was studying Sogetsu Ikebana.

Now many years later and being a teacher myself, I know that the learning never stops. If you like Ikebana, you can keep on exploring and growing your skills. Ikebana is a way of living, respecting all living things and acknowledge the uniqueness of the material you use and the people you encounter.

Ikebana from passion to business

Ikebana is often thought of as a hobby. Also for me it started as a hobby, but I am aiming to build an Ikebana business. Coming back to Belgium, I started to teach Ikebana. Starting from scratch it took a while before it took off, but now I teach already 16 years Sogetsu Ikebana in Belgium. Recently, I launched online Ikebana classes not only for beginners and advanced Ikebanist, but also for people who just want to explore a bit, and get acquainted with Ikebana.

A significant part of my business is the creation of Ikebana arrangements for companies, hotels, and events. One of the recent fun events to do was the Ikebana decoration for the inauguration of the ANA flight between Brussels and Tokyo.

However, to build a sustainable business the awareness for Ikebana has to increase. Participating in events such as the Floralties in Ghent is one way to increase

Start exploring Ikebana yourself

Everybody can learn Ikebana, especially when you love flowers and nature. Ikebana is more than just flower arranging. Creating Ikebana is a moment of reflection and meditation. In the past samurai warriors created Ikebana arrangements, and recently Sumura ss, one of the Sogetsu masters, is having Ikebana classes for business leaders in Japan. So why not start exploring yourself!

awareness, but I pour also a lot of effort into the social media. Recently I reached more than 10.000 followers on Facebook and more than 1600 on Instagram.

I got noticed on the social media by the publisher “Stichting Kunstboek,” who asked me to make an introduction book about Ikebana. The book, “Exploring Ikebana”, was published in October 2015 and is available in bookstores.

2016 – a special Ikebana year

In 2016, the study groups of Sogetsu, Ikenobo and Ohara celebrate their 25th anniversary here in Belgium, with several activities planned during the year. The three schools could exhibit at the Floralties in Ghent, on the occasion of the anniversary of 150th year diplomatic relations between Belgium and Japan.

Furthermore, Akane Teshigahara, headmaster of the Sogetsu School, participated in the Floralties last April. As the chairperson of the Belgian Sogetsu Study Group, I was very honored that we could welcome her, and assist with the different Ikebana activities. Ikebana is often perceived as an art form where only small arrangements in vases or containers are made. However, Sogetsu Ikebana is also famous for its land-art and huge installations in bamboo.

With the help of her Japanese team and

more than 30 Ikebanist from Belgium and The Netherlands, Akane Teshigahara, created a huge and striking bamboo installation. She also gave an exciting demonstration, organized by the Japanese Embassy, with a gigantic finale.

CALENDAR

There are regularly Ikebana events and exhibitions organized by the study groups or by individual Ikebana artists.

Upcoming events as of end of August:

Jetse Floralia

Ikebana Exposition by Ilse Beunen at the Jetse Sint-Pieters church in flowers for the yearly flower concert and the city’s year market.

- > Place: Sint Pieterskerk Kardinaal Mercierplein
- > Date: 26 August till 29 August
- > Time: from 15.00 till 24.00 H
- > Entrance: Free

Sogetsu Ikebana exposition

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Sogetsu Azalea study group and the 35th anniversary of the Dutch Sogetsu branch, both groups will hold a joined exhibition. This exhibition takes place in Roosendaal, The Netherlands

- > Date: from 30 September till 2 October.
- > Time: from 10.00 till 18.00 H
- > Place: Galerie Anita Ammerlaan, Markt 39 Roosendaal
- > Entrance: Free

MY SOCIAL MEDIA

- > **Facebook** page where I report on Ikebana activities in Belgium: www.facebook.com/IkebanaBelgium
- > **Instagram:** My portfolio www.instagram.com/ilse_beunen
- > **Newsletter:** Follow my weekly Ikebana activities www.ikebana.be/newsletter
- > **Website:** www.ikebana.be
- > **Mail:** Feel free me to contact me at ilse@ikebana.be for any questions

MY CLASSES

- > **Online classes** for Beginners and Advanced: www.ikebana.be/videos.html Especially for BJA members 30% reduction until the end of October. Use the coupon: BJAIkebana
- > **Regular classes** Every Monday and Thursday in Antwerp more details on www.ikebana.be
- > **Books in English and French** www.ikebana.be/books

OTHER IKEBANA SCHOOLS IN BELGIUM

- > www.ikebana-ohara.be
- > www.ikenobo.be
- > www.sogetsu.be
- > **Saga Goryu** astrid.maton@gmail.com

Brussels Days

16-20 May 2016 - Tokyo



From 16 until 20 May, Tokyo hosted the 11th edition of the Brussels Days. Without any doubt this 2016 edition was very successful. A delegation of business leaders and executives operating within Brussels' Creative Industries, led by Minister-President Rudi Vervoort and Secretary of State Cécile Jodogne, were in Tokyo to, among other things, strengthen the economic and commercial bonds and to forge new business ties between both capitals.

Now more than ever Brussels has to show the world that its "open for business" as Brussels Secretary of State Cécile Jodogne stated in Nagoya at a seminar about Brussels. As this year marks both the 150th anniversary of friendship between Belgium and Japan and the reinstatement of direct flights between Tokyo and Brussels, Tokyo was an obvious choice for this 2016 edition of the Brussels Days.

At the Brussels Days 2016 participated some 22 Brussels companies, 12 top level political and business meetings were organized, 6 seminars took place and over 200 Japanese business contacts met with the Brussels delegation in B2B meetings and at the networking events following the seminars.

The goal of Brussels Invest & Export, during this Brussels Days was to give the participating Brussels SME's the opportunity to establish a first contact with potential future clients and partners. As Fabian Jean Villanueva of Base Design an international branding firm with offices in Brussels, Geneva and New York stated this "support was really precious".

On Wednesday 18 May two authentic Brussels flower carpets were inaugurated to the great joy of the Japanese audience. The movie screening and piano recital 'Snake Dance' on Tuesday and the opening of the Belgian Beer Weekend in Yokohama on Thursday completed the evening program with a total of more than 600 guests.

With the public space of the Embassy transformed in the exposition the art of assemblage, a scenography of Brussels architect Lhoas & Lhoas under the artistic direction of Base Design and with the support of MAD Brussels, the Brussels Days 2016 in Tokyo were an unprecedented edition as a potential investor noted during the investment networking lunch.

Source: Brussels Investment & Export



Ommegang

Tuesday, 5 & 7 July 2016 - Grand Place, Brussels

Summer seemed not to come to Brussels this year – or at least it felt like this in June. July came, and still it continued to rain everyday and it made me worry a lot because the Ommegang was just around the corner...

This year the Ommegang was held on 5 and 7 July, and it was a very special event for us because the Celebrations Committee 2016 had agreed to arrange a parade with a group of people wearing traditional Japanese costumes from the 16th century to match the Ommegang to celebrate the 150th year of friendship between Belgium and Japan.

The Ommegang is held under any weather condition. I learned that the Ommegang is not held for 2 consecutive days, but have one day in between, because participants need a day to dry their costumes in case of rain on the first day.

This was the biggest issue when we started planning the parade. Real kimonos are too expensive and no one wants their kimono to get wet. So, instead of asking people to wear their own kimono, we decided to look for secondhand kimonos and costumes made for parties, and provide them to participants. BJA Friendship Committee took the role to gather participants and organise costumes for them.

The 5th of July was a chilly day for summer and there were lots of gray clouds in the sky, but it did not rain. Members of Araumi Daiko led our parade, followed by Ambassador Ishii and his wife in real kimonos, 2 armored samurais, and 23 volunteers organised by BJA Friendship Committee.

Many audiences were delighted with our parade – especially with the Japanese snacks we gave away and with the ninja performance. We received big applauses throughout the parade.

For all of us, this was an once-in-a-lifetime experience to walk around the Grand Place wearing Japanese traditional costumes and being part of the Ommegang. Many participants told me they truly enjoyed joining the parade!

Looks like the sky enjoyed our performance too and since the Ommegang, we had a beautiful week with lots of sunshine. Our performance brought summer to Brussels.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Embassy of Japan and Celebrations Committee 2016 for their strong support in realising the parade, All Nippon Airlines for their help in bringing back 10 boxes of costumes, wigs and swords from Japan, and all the participants for their active participation and cheerful performance.

Mrs Saori Nishida, Director of Japan Connection, and Chairwoman of the BJA Friendship Committee



Position Paper on Belgian Corporate Income Tax Reform

By Mr Wim Eynatten, Chairman Legal & Tax Committee, Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce and International Tax Partner at Deloitte

1. Introduction: setting the scene

On the occasion of the 2016 budget control, the Belgian federal government agreed on 9 April 2016 on the principle of a corporate income tax ("CIT") reform. According to the budget control notifications, the Finance Minister is requested to propose, by 30 September 2016, alternatives to reform the CIT regime, allowing to address the challenges facing the country's competitive position.

Having an attractive CIT system - for both SMEs and MNEs - is one of the fundamental cornerstones of a strong business and investment climate, which particularly allows open economy countries such as Belgium to maintain employment and economic growth.

The Belgian CIT system has always been characterised by a high nominal tax rate (currently 33.99%). This high nominal rate is only relative, as the effective tax rate - depending on the company's profile - can potentially be reduced by making use of a number of important tax incentives, which have traditionally allowed the Belgian CIT regime to positively distinguish itself from the CIT regimes of countries with which Belgium competes for direct investment. However, this con-

clusion no longer holds, considering that some Belgian tax incentives are losing their attractiveness and that competitor countries continue actively promoting their tax climate. In times where actions against 'aggressive tax planning' are flourishing (cf. the OECD's BEPS project and related EU initiatives such as state aid investigations and a proposal for Anti Tax Avoidance Directive), MNEs actively question the location of their economic activities and it can be expected that Belgium will face challenges to retain and/or attract regional headquarters of MNEs and economic investments in the future if the Belgian CIT system is not reformed efficiently.

Recent changes to the Belgian holding company tax regime (introduction of 0.412% tax on capital gains on shares, introduction of 5:1 thin cap rule on inter-company loans, introduction of fairness tax) and the absence of a 100% participation exemption for dividend income (only 95% dividend-received-deduction) have rendered Belgium less attractive as a regional headquarter / holding location compared to other EU Member States (e.g. Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UK).

In addition to the recent corporate tax changes the impact of the Sixth State Reform on the Expatriate Tax Regime may further reduce Belgium's competitiveness for hosting headquarters. This Sixth State Reform will furthermore significantly increase the administrative costs of payroll and tax compliance for expatriates.

This position paper outlines how the BJA Legal & Tax Committee believes - following a consultation with its members, i.e. Japanese MNEs investing in Belgium - the Belgian CIT regime should ideally evolve in order to deal with these challenges and in order to remain competitive for retaining and attracting regional headquarters of (Japanese) MNEs in Belgium.

These CIT reform measures should furthermore be adopted within a broader framework of increasing legal certainty and predictability, so as to ensure that corporate taxpayers can accurately plan their activities, employment and investment strategies in the long term.

Finally, these CIT reform measures should simplify the CIT regime in view of reducing the CIT compliance cost of companies doing business in Belgium.

2. BJA vision on Belgian corporate tax reform

In order to strengthen the competitiveness of Belgium for retaining and attracting foreign direct investment, the BJA Legal & Tax Committee believes that the strategic focus of the CIT reform

should be on realising a significant tax rate reduction in combination with (continued) support of innovation, investment & employment and with a simplification of the CIT regime.

2.1. A COMPETITIVE CORPORATE INCOME TAX RATE IS A PREREQUISITE

In Belgium, corporate profits are subject to tax at a nominal rate of 33.99%, which significantly exceeds the statutory rates in the Netherlands (25%), Ireland (12.5%),

the UK (20%), Luxembourg (29.22%) and Switzerland (7.83%, to be increased with cantonal and municipal taxes). As regards the UK it should furthermore be

noted that a further reduction to 17% is foreseen for 2020 and that in the context of Brexit a further reduction to 15% has been announced. As regards Luxembourg

it should be noted that a Luxembourg corporate tax reform has been announced reducing the statutory CIT rate to 27.88% in 2017 and to 26.01% in 2018.

In order to improve the competitiveness of the Belgian CIT regime, the statutory corporate income tax rate should be reduced significantly. In order to send a powerful message to Japanese and other foreign investors the Belgian statutory CIT rate should be reduced to maximum 20% by 2020.

The assessment of the net budgetary impact of such a considerable reduction of the corporate income tax rate

may be a complex exercise. Guidance may be found with other European countries that have transitioned from a relatively high corporate tax rate in the recent past. The UK could be a good example since it successfully combined a gradual but substantial reduction of its corporate tax rate with the introduction of additional measures to improve investment climate (such as patent box regime, participation exemption, relaxation of CFC rules, etc.).

The broadening of the corporate tax base following the implementation of BEPS and EU measures will compensate for any negative revenue effects of such

a statutory rate reduction.

The measures that have been (or are being) proposed by the OECD and the EU (such as transfer pricing (documentation) rules allowing the Belgian tax administration to accurately enforce the arm's length standard, an interest deductibility limitation, anti-hybrid rules, CFC rules, an exit tax, anti-avoidance rules in Belgian domestic tax law and double tax treaties, etc.) are intended to significantly increase global tax revenues. The Belgian government budget will obviously considerably benefit should Belgium implement (some of) these measures. This will create room for, e.g., a tax rate reduction to compensate for any loss of competitiveness.

2.2. TAXATION OF INCOME FROM SHAREHOLDINGS

The taxation of dividend income and capital gains on shares are important drivers for holding company location decisions, which is generally considered to bring about positive externalities (e.g., triggering the location of headquarter functions and decision centres at the same location, even more so in these current times of ever increasing demand for economic substance).

To improve the investment climate and to retain and/or attract holding (and hence

headquarter) companies and decision centres, Belgium should (i) move from a 95% to a 100% dividend-received-deduction regime, (ii) abolish the 0.412% taxation of capital gains realised by MNEs on shares; and, (iii) abolish the fairness tax. We believe that the abolition of such measures will have a negligible impact on the state budget, whilst having a significant return on investment in terms of stimulating direct and indirect employment.

These existing measures create an unfa-

vorable perception of unnecessary complexity, making Belgium less attractive compared to countries typically competing for the location of holding company and regional headquarters such as the UK, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Ireland and Switzerland. The introduction of a full participation exemption and the abolition of the fairness tax would definitely make Belgium more competitive in retaining and attracting holding companies and linked thereto, decision centres.

2.3. EXISTING TAX INCENTIVES SHOULD BE MAINTAINED

Specific tax incentives should remain in place, if only from a reputational point of view as a reliable and stable investment location. In addition, these incentives are key for a number of sectors and investors that make a considerable contribution to the local economy. They contribute to the country's overall image as investment friendly location.

2.3.1. Notional Interest Deduction

The Notional Interest Deduction ("NID") has seen its impact (even for quite a few of the finance and treasury companies) on the effective tax rate greatly reduced because of the low interest rate on the ten year government bonds. Enhancing the measure to restore its positive impact on the effective corporate tax rate should not be a priority considering

the substantial headline rate reduction requested. At the same time and given its BEPS and state-aid proof character, keeping the measure is strongly recommended so as not to (further) jeopardize the country's reputation as a stable and reliable investment climate and to accommodate the gradually decreasing but still significant number of Belgian treasury centres (to whom the Notional

Interest Deduction regime was offered as an attractive regime after abolition of the coordination centre regime, and which historically generated significant parallel investments into broader investment and decision centres in Belgium). As regards NID it should furthermore be noted that Italy recently introduced a notional interest deduction regime and that also Switzerland foresees introduction of a notional interest deduction regime at the discretion of individual cantons within the context of the Swiss Corporate Tax Reform.

Given the introduction of NID regimes by competitor countries it would not be wise to abolish the Belgian NID regime.

2.3.2. R&D Tax Incentives and Patent Income Deduction

The Patent Income Deduction (“PID”) will be adjusted to be in line with the “Modified Nexus Approach” as agreed

by the OECD and European Commission. This clear legal framework of acceptable specific tax incentives should be implemented to the fullest extent possible within the allowed scope.

To retain, and even improve, the attractiveness of the PID regime, Belgium should make maximum use of the available options under the Modified Nexus Approach, such as (i) extending the qualifying IP rights to a broader scope of IP assets; (ii) extending the qualifying IP income to capital gains on qualifying rights as well as compensation for damages; (iii) having the benefits of the regime kick-in at the moment of application of the IP right; (iv) increasing the percentage of the exemption from 80% to 90% or ideally 100%; (v) providing for a carry-forward mechanism; (vi) not providing for a recapture mechanism of historic R&D expenditure before the benefit of the regime kicks in; (vii) en-

suring R&D expenditure incurred in foreign branches is regarded as qualifying expenditure; and, (viii) grandfathering the application of the old PID regime until the final date of 30 June 2021.

2.3.3. Expatriate tax regime

In addition to a competitive CIT regime, the Belgian expatriate tax regime is very important to retain and attract regional headquarters, centres of excellence and decision centres. Without expatriate tax regime the cost of key functions employed within (regional) headquarters, centres of excellence (e.g. R&D centres) and decision centres would no longer be competitive in Belgium.

The continuation of the existing expatriate tax regime in its current form will therefore be essential to have a competitive labor cost for (regional) headquarters, centres of excellence and decision centres.

2.4. IMPLEMENTATION OF BEPS AND EU INITIATIVES

The BJA welcomes the work done by the EU and OECD in the area of taxation but believes that Belgium should adopt a ‘wait and see’ attitude to see how other countries’ CIT legislation changes as a result of the BEPS project and related

EU developments; and, that Belgium should in any case not (unilaterally) introduce measures that are not ‘minimum standards’ in the BEPS project or mandatory under EU law.

More specifically as regards the proposal for an Anti Tax Avoidance Directive (“ATAD”), the BJA believes that Belgium should implement all the optional derogations regarding the limitation of deductibility of interest expenses.

3. Conclusion

The BJA and the Japanese companies doing business in Belgium welcome the contemplated CIT reform. It will be essential that such CIT reform will reinforce the competitiveness of Belgium for keeping and attracting regional headquarters and investments of multinational enterprises.

The BJA would also like to express that it appreciates the measures already taken by the government to reduce the wage gap with our neighboring countries and that the BJA would like the Belgian government to continue improving the competitiveness of labor costs in Belgium. The BJA welcomes the opportunity to

work together with the government for the better of the country and would like to have a meeting with the Minister of Finance to discuss the priorities of Japanese companies doing business in Belgium in greater detail.



150 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN JAPAN • BELGIUM EVENT CALENDAR

Note: All details are subject to change. Many more events are to be held throughout the year 2016.

Please visit the 150th anniversary website (www.be.emb-japan.go.jp/150jb/en/index.html) for updates and contact organizers for further information.

DATES	EVENT	VENUE
2,4,6,8,10 September	Snake Dance - The Recital	BOZAR, Mons, Ghent, Antwerp, Ostend
8-18 September	Ikebana and calligraphy exhibition	Wavre
20 September - 8 October	Japanese Old Books Exhibition	UCL
21-24 September	2016 Conference of the European Society of Historical Demography	KUL
24 September	Symposium on "The New Era of Carillon Art- How Bells connect Belgium and Japan"	Mechelen
28 September	The Pilgrimage to the 88 Sacred Temples of Shikoku: A Meditation between Two Worlds	JICC
1-9 October	Chrysanthemum festival	Hasselt Japanese Garden
4 October	Ohara School of Ikebana Demonstration- Fifth Headmaster Hiroki Ohara	JICC(tbc)
7-9 October	Brussels Harp Festival	Edificio, Library Solvay
7-28 October	Maiko no hikari photo exhibition	JICC
11-22 October	Film Fest Gent	Kinopolis, Gent ICC
14 October 2016 - January 2017	"The Feverish Era" contemporary art exhibition	BOZAR
21 October 2016 - 12 February 2017	Ukiyo-e Exhibition	Far East Museum
22-23 October	The International Aikido Celebration	Brussels Tour & Taxis
10-15 November	Razor Reel Flanders Film Festival	Bruges
12 November	Noh Play by Kyutaro Hashioka	BOZAR
12-13 November	International Festival in Antwerp	Antwerp
12-14 November	ART Festival	Brussels (Galerie Ravenstein)
12-13 November	Japan Folk Festival 2016 in Brussels	Flagey
12-27 November	Ars Musica	Brussels (BOZAR etc), Liege, Mons, Namur, Charleroi, Brugge
18 November	Ysaye's Music Series	Music Instrument Museum
19 November	Kuma Anime Film Festival	Brugge
19-25 November	Festival International du Film de Bruxelles (FIFB)	Brussels
19 November 2016 – 25 July 2017	Traditions Masquees du Japon	Mask Museum
23 November	Zen Adages From A to Z (lecture by Prof Thele)	Liege
24 November	Marilo Fund symposium	Brussels
24 November -12 December	IBASHO photo exhibition	Antwerp
26 November	Japanese Speech Contest	Japanese School
29 November	10 th European Naginata Championship and 25 th European Naginata Federation Anniversary	ULB Sport Hall

news from the members

10 MILLIONTH TOYOTA BUILT IN EUROPE

On 12 December 1992, the first Toyota European-built vehicle, a Carina E, drove off a Toyota production line here in Europe. Fast forward nearly a quarter of a century and Toyota can now boast that 10 million cars have been built at its nine manufacturing plants in Europe. To mark this prestigious occasion, a ceremony was held at the Toyota European Regional Head office in Brussels. Two production members were invited

from each of the manufacturing plants, vehicle logistics hubs and parts centres across Europe. Each plant received an award from Toyota Motor Europe CEO and President, Dr Johan Van Zyl. Johan van Zyl, commented: “Toyota’s heartbeat is in manufacturing, and our thousands of European team members are very proud to have reached 10 million cars produced in Europe.”

Source: Toyota Motor Europe



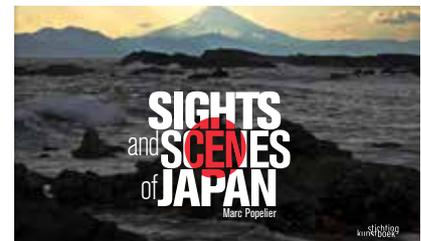
NEW BOOK AVAILABLE: SIGHTS AND SCENES OF JAPAN BY MARC POPELIER

Japan is a country with a unique and somewhat mysterious culture. It is a land of diversity and contradictions. You will find ancient customs, cherished and unchanged for over thousands of years, as well as cutting edge technology and the latest gadgets. In Japan one is amazed with the charmingly courteous way travellers are treated and the delicacy with which Japanese food is prepared and served. It is a country where the majority of its population lives in vast cities such as Tokyo and Yokohama. But it is also a country with stunning landscapes made up of thousands of is-

lands lying on the Pacific Ring of Fire. Marc Popelier’s life-long love for the country has crystallized into the pages of this book. It is a perfect introduction to Japan and will surely tempt anyone to visit or to rediscover this fascinating country. Marc Popelier is a business and financial professional with extensive international management experience in logistics, retail, automotive and the electronics industry related to or in Japan. He focuses on supporting and establishing long term business relationships between Japanese and Western companies. His close bond with

the country and his frequent visits resulted in a unique and impressive photo archive compiling Japan’s most picturesque sights and most striking scenes.

www.stichtingkunstboek.com



Sights and Scenes of Japan / Texts and photography by Marc Popelier / 208 pages / € 40,00 / ISBN 978-90-5856-561-7

SYMBOL FOR 150 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN JAPAN AND BELGIUM SHIPPED FROM ZEEBRUGGE

Belgium and Japan are celebrating a 150 year long diplomatic relationship this year. As a symbol of this partnership, two statues will be placed in Hanyu, Durbuy’s sister city in Japan. Durbuy has donated two stones from its quarries for these statues. The port of Zeebrugge, International Car Operators Zeebrugge and shipping liner NYK organized the



stones’ transportation from Zeebrugge to the port of Yokohama. On the first of August 1866, Belgium and Japan have signed a ‘Treaty of Friendship, Trade and Navigation’. As a symbol for this long lasting bond between the two countries, two statues are being made, one by the Belgian artist William Livermore and another by the Japanese artist Kazuoshi Hirai. Both statues will be placed in the city of Hanyu. Japanese terminal operator ICO and Japanese shipping liner NYK have contributed their cooperation to ship the stones from the Belgian port of Zeebrugge to Japan, which emphasizes the bond between the two countries. The statues’ stones weigh about 1,5

tonnes and have left the port of Zeebrugge today on board of the ship ‘Iris Leader’, an NYK car carrier with a capacity of 6.800 vehicles.

“The port of Zeebrugge has a strong relation with Japan. There are Japanese shipping companies active in Zeebrugge, Japanese stevedores and Japanese production plants: Toyota, NYK, Toyofuji, Mitsui, K Line, KESS, UECC, Bridgestone, Sumitomo, Meiko, Dainin, AGC Glass, Mitsubishi, Mazda, Suzuki, Nissan, etc. Forty percent of the vehicles handled in Zeebrugge are Japanese” according to Joachim Coens, CEO Port of Zeebrugge.

Source: Port of Zeebrugge



KIJDRECHT LOCK READY TO BRING MORE PROSPERITY TO FLANDERS

Biggest lock in the world ensures access to Waasland harbour

King Filip, minister Ben Weyts, the chairman of the European Investment Bank Werner Hoyer and alderman Marc Van Peel of Antwerp, in charge of port affairs, have solemnly inaugurated the huge Kieldrecht Lock. This biggest lock in the world has a price tag of €82 million and ensures smooth access to the Waasland harbour. The Kieldrecht Lock strengthens the competitiveness of the Port of Antwerp and will attract new economic activity to Flanders.

The Grande Lagos of shipping company Grimaldi was granted the honour of entering the brand-new Kieldrecht Lock as the very first ship. With a length of 500 m, a width of 68 m and an operational depth (TAW) of some 17.80 m, the biggest lock in the world can accommodate the largest seagoing vessels. The Maritieme Toegang (maritime access) of the Department of Mobility and Public Works, together with the Port Authority of Antwerp and a building consortium, had been building the Kieldrecht Lock for almost 5 years, making the project one of the biggest Flemish works in the past few years. The Kieldrecht Lock enables smooth access to the Waasland harbour in Antwerp. Until then, the smaller Kallo Lock was the only gate to the Waasland harbour. This meant that the ships could have to wait for more than three hours. Any problem with the Kallo Lock could paralyse the whole Waasland harbour. The Kieldrecht Lock now enables a second, bigger, more upstream access to the docks on the left bank of the Scheldt river. In future, the ships can expect faster and smoother access to the harbour.

The government of Flanders and the Port Authority of Antwerp had together invested €82 million to realise the Kieldrecht Lock. Flanders had assumed 75% of the investment costs. The Flemish Minister of Mobility, Ben Weyts, talked about an investment

with a leverage effect which will benefit the whole of Flanders: “The Kieldrecht Lock will give shipping companies an additional reason to choose Flanders. We will strengthen the international competitiveness of the Port of Antwerp and attract new economic activity to our region. Our Flemish ports can offer the whole world fast, punctual and smart services”, says minister Weyts.

Antwerp alderman Marc Van Peel, in charge of port affairs, and also chairman of the Port Authority, is also satisfied. “The Kieldrecht Lock forms a necessary key to the further development of the port on the left bank of the Scheldt River. In recent years, our port had successfully overcome many hurdles, now ranking as number two in Europe. In order to retain that leading position, Antwerp must have a highly necessary basic infrastructure such as well-functioning locks that are adapted to the increased scale of international shipping. However, Antwerp also needs space to grow, which explains the first phase of the construction of the Saeftinghedok – a new tidal dock on the left bank of the Scheldt river – the next infrastructural project that is high on the agenda”, according to Van Peel.

Importance of the ports to the TEN-T network

The port of Antwerp as a main port is an important junction in the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). Through the TEN-T network, Europe wants to promote sustainable transportation, job creation and economic growth and the cohesion within the European Union. Both the European Commission and the European Investment Bank recognise the importance and the role of the maritime sector in the area of more efficient, multimodal and sustainable goods transportation, and consequently supported the construction of the Kieldrecht Lock. For the EIB the new lock inaugurated today

constitutes a strategic infrastructure asset for Europe, increasing the navigation capabilities, ensuring maritime and river transport and increasing the international attractiveness of the Port of Antwerp.

Dr Werner Hoyer, President of the EIB declared: “The Kieldrecht lock symbolises some of the goals of a Union seeking more growth, competitiveness and jobs. As Europe is slowly stepping out of the economic crisis and so as to make sure that our single market and international trade prosper, we need a connected Union, without barriers, with efficient, viable and sustainable transport infrastructure and networks. The EU Bank is proud to have played a part in the realisation of this extraordinary infrastructure work. I pay a tribute to the ambition and to the infrastructure of Antwerp, Flanders and Belgium as a whole”.

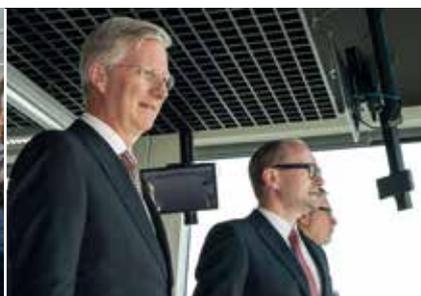
Via the company NV Deurganckdoksluis, the government of Flanders and the Port Authority of Antwerp invested €82 million in the construction of the second lock for the Waasland harbour. The European Investment Bank and KBC Bank lent €60.5 million and €1.3 million respectively. Via the TEN-T programme, Europe granted a subsidy of €5 million for the construction of the Kieldrecht Lock.

Expertise and collaboration

The lock was built by the Tijdelijke Handelsvereniging Waaslandsluis, a building consortium comprising Jan De Nul, CEI De Meyer, Betonac, Herbosch-Kiere and Antwerpse Bouwwerken. Thanks to their expertise and good collaboration, the immense construction work was able to be delivered well within the planned time span.

Furthermore, Geotechniek (soil research and monitoring) and Flanders Hydraulic Research (Waterbouwkundig Laboratorium) of the government of Flanders made an important contribution to the project by studying the impact of the current on the construction work and training pilots in a simulator.

Source: Port of Antwerp
www.portofantwerp.com/en/news/kieldrecht-lock-ready-bring-more-prosperity-flanders





THE 2ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOR THE EUROPEAN NETWORK OF JAPANESE PHILOSOPHY (ENOJP): CELEBRATING THE 150 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN BELGIUM AND JAPAN

- › **Date:** 7, 8, 9 and 10 December 2016
- › **Venue:** Université Libre de Bruxelles (www.ulb.ac.be)
- › **Language of the Conference:** English, French, Japanese
- › **Entrance:** FREE

This conference aims to achieve a scholarly advancement of the field of Japanese philosophy in European languages (as the second annual conference of the ENOJP) and also, in honour of the 150th anniversary of the diplomatic relationship between Japan and Belgium, it will accommodate a number of presentations that mark scholarly exchanges between European and Japanese scholars in the general field of philosophy.

There will be panels that range from various topics in the intellectual history of Japan to the general topics of philosophy that are actively pursued both in the islands of Japan, Belgium and other European countries. These communications of the finest

scholars both from Japan, Belgium and Europe will not only contribute to the general awareness and growth of the field of Japanese philosophy in Belgium and the rest of Europe, but also will establish stronger networks of philosophical minds between Japanese and European scholars in Brussels. We believe that this conference in the heart of Europe will serve as a great occasion for Japanese, Belgian and European scholars to celebrate the 150 Years of the friendship between Belgium and Japan.

Confirmed Keynotes Speakers

- › Prof James Heisig, Nanzan Institute for Religion & Culture
- › Prof Akinobu Kuroda, University of Strasbourg
- › Prof Raji Steineck, University of Zurich

Further information on the Network, as well as on this and the previous Conference, is available from the ENOJP internet page: enojp.org



PERSONALIA



William Delsemme, Economic and Commercial Attaché for the Brussels-Capital Region in Tokyo

NEW ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL ATTACHÉ FOR THE BRUSSELS-CAPITAL REGION IN JAPAN

William Delsemme officially took over his position as Economic and Commercial Attaché for the Brussels-Capital Region in Japan on 1 July 2016. He is not a newcomer because he already has considerable experience. Indeed, William already represented Brussels for four years in Brazil (Sao Paulo) before moving to Asia (Singapore) under the joint leadership of Wallonia and Brussels-Capital for 15 years. A globetrotter and a polyglot, William already masters five languages (French, Dutch, English, Portuguese and Spanish) and is taking his first steps in Japanese. “Doing business is, firstly, a human encounter and, for that, languages are important. Furthermore, in Japan, cultural aspects are closely linked to business”, he explained. William did not wait for 1 July to embark on his Japanese adventure. He already participated in the organisation of the Brussels Days, which were held in Japan from 16 to 20 May and which, all agreed, were a great success. “It is

the most large-scale and most successful event in my career with the Brussels-Capital Region as much from a commercial point of view as in terms of image”, he explained. It is true that William Delsemme is embarking on the Japanese adventure in a favourable context because 2016 marks the 150th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Belgium and Japan. Therefore, this year will be filled with cultural and diplomatic events, which will provide the opportunity to initiate or confirm business relations. “The Japanese market is well suited to our Brussels offering because both our products and services, which meet very high quality standards, correspond to the demanding Japanese standards”, points out William Delsemme. Therefore, the context is very promising for his new life in Japan. “Taking over a new position as an attaché overseas: it’s always a little like a rebirth and I want to benefit from a true cultural and professional encounter with Japan”, he concludes.

The BJA would like to extend a warm welcome to its newest members:

Corporate Member

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the BJA enhances our visibility with Japanese companies and solidifies our relationships with current Japanese clients.



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We would also like to express our appreciation to our BJA Sponsor Members >





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Every moment.

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(equivalent to 28mm)
Exposure: F/5.6
1/1600 sec
ISO320
WB: Auto Handheld



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(i) For SLR camera high-zoom-ratio lenses with 15x magnification capability.
Current as of December 2010. (Source: Tamron).

- * The Sony mount does not include the VC (Vibration Compensation) image stabilization functionality, as the body of Sony digital SLR cameras includes image stabilization functionality.
- * This lens is not designed for use with 35mm film cameras and digital SLR cameras with image sensors larger than 24x16mm.

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