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TO JAPANESE CULTURE

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EDITORIAL

By Fabienne L'Hoost, Director General
of the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency (BFTA)



Dear members of the Belgium-Japan Association and Chamber of Commerce,
Dear readers,

The year 2021 marked the celebration of the 155th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between Belgium and Japan. This milestone underlines the long-standing economic and political relationship between our two countries and is a witness of the appreciation of one another's culture.

This excellent bilateral relationship is also cemented by the close bond the Japanese imperial family and the Belgian royal family share. In 2016, Their Majesties King Philippe and Queen Mathilde paid a State Visit to Japan to strengthen the two countries' friendly and cooperative relations and more recently, in 2019, the Belgian Sovereigns visited Japan to attend the Ceremony of Enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor.

As we are still living in exceptional circumstances due to the pandemic, it is of utmost importance to maintain this strong Belgian-Japanese political and economic relationship that will bring our countries great opportunities to deepen our partnership and longstanding friendship in the near future.

One such opportunity will be the upcoming Belgian Economic Mission that Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium will preside in Japan from December 5th to 9th, 2022. She will lead a large official, business, and academic delegation across the country's major cities in her capacity of Representative of His Majesty the King of the Belgians. Organized by the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency (BFTA) in close collaboration with the three regional authorities for export promotion and the FPS Foreign Affairs, this mission will undoubtedly attract a high number of Belgian businessmen and women from a wide range of sectors and have positive outcomes on both the Japanese and Belgian economies.

When looking at current Belgian-Japanese trade relations (first 9 months of 2021), Japan was the tenth largest supplier of goods to Belgium and Belgium's ninth main client. Three sectors made up the lion's share of both Belgian imports and exports of goods from and to Japan: transport equipment (mainly vehicles), machinery and equipment, and chemicals (mainly pharmaceutical products). Total Belgian imports of goods from Japan reached €7.1 billion (up 2.8 % compared to the first 9 months of 2020) whereas total Belgian exports of goods to Japan amounted to €6.4 billion (up 170.7% compared to the first 9 months of 2020). This increase was mainly due to higher Belgian exports of vaccines against SARS-related coronaviruses. Last year, Belgium displayed a trade deficit of €647.4 million with Japan, with imports from Japan being higher than exports to the country.

Finally, thanks to the Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and Japan that entered into force on 1 February 2019, European firms no longer face tariffs and trade barriers when exporting to Japan. The agreement is already starting to bear fruit. In fact, in 2020, Belgium was the fifth largest European exporter of goods to Japan and the second largest European importer of goods from Japan. However, as the study "Belgian Exporters and Free Trade Agreements" carried out by the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency showed, our companies could seize even more commercial opportunities by further exploiting the Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and Japan.

In this generally improved trade context, I trust the upcoming Belgian Economic Mission to Japan will reinforce our close ties and bring our economic and political relationship to a higher level.

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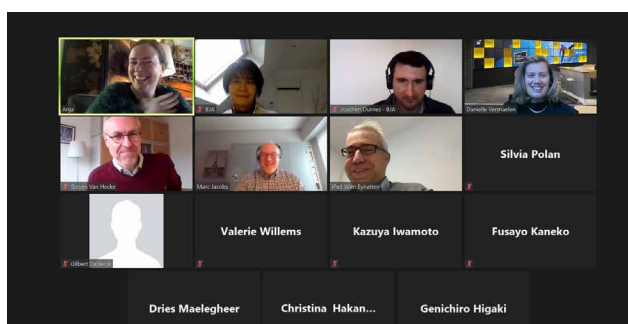
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BJA Webinar on the European Union in perspective: what is currently at stake? BJA ウェビナー: 欧州連合の視点から見る近日の課題

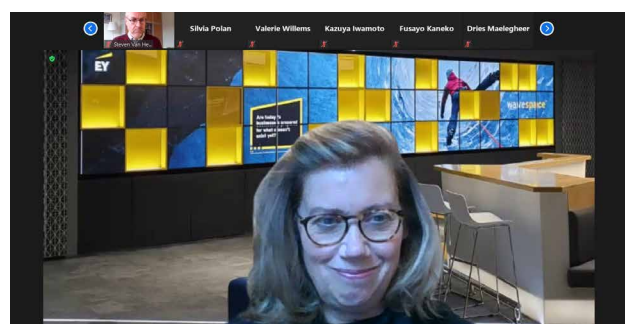
With KU Leuven Professor Steven Van Hecke - ルーバン・カトリック大学教授 Steven Van Hecke 氏に聞く
Thursday 9 December 2021 - Digital Event



Professor Steve Van Hecke giving his outlook on the EU's perspective



The audience happily joining the on-line webinar



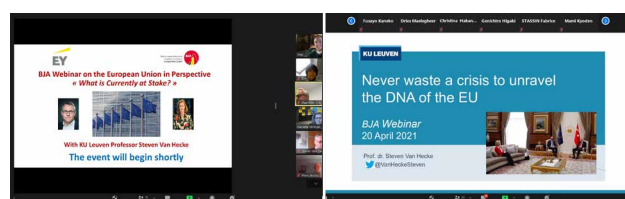
Danielle Vermaelen moderating the Q&A session

After a highly appreciated webinar about the European Union with KU Leuven Professor Steven Van Hecke in April, the BJA EU Committee was thrilled to organize another webinar with him. This time the webinar focused on the issues at hand in EU. Danielle Vermaelen, Partner at EY and BJA EU Committee Chair welcomed over 40 enthusiastic participants and opened the webinar by introducing Professor Van Hecke, a specialist of comparative and EU Politics at KU Leuven.

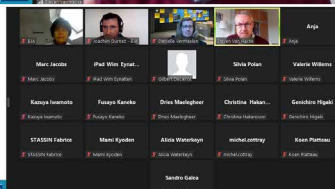
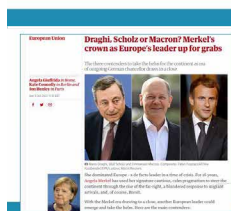
What is currently at stake for the European Union? Among many important issues EU faces today, Professor Van Hecke first gave his thorough views on the impact of the recent German elections, the upcoming French Presidency of the European Council, some strained relations between the EU with Hungary and Poland, and other geopolitical issues. In addition, Professor Van Hecke shared his insights on EU's short-

and long-term perspectives and some of the key areas such as fiscal, climate change, and migration, where EU needs to wisely steer through during the post-Covid period.

The webinar ended successfully with a Q&A session kindly moderated by Mrs Vermaelen and Professor Van Hecke eagerly responded in detail to various questions posed. The BJA thanks EY for the generous support in making this valuable webinar possible.



Long term perspective(s)



EU-Japan news

THE 6TH MEETING OF THE JAPAN-EU JOINT COMMITTEE ON COOPERATION IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The sixth meeting of the Japan-European Union Joint Committee on Cooperation in Science and Technology took place online on 30 November 2021. The summary of the meeting is as follows.

H.E. Mr Nakane Takeshi, Ambassador for Science and Technology Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and Mr Jean-Eric Paquet, Director-General of the Directorate General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission co-chaired the sixth meeting of the Japan-EU Joint Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, organised under the Japan-EU Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement, which entered into force on 29 March 2011 and both sides welcomed its 10th anniversary.

The meeting was attended by Ambassadors of Japan to the EU and the EU to Japan, representatives of Ministries and Agencies concerned from Japan as well as officials from the European Commission services and Member States representatives.

Co-chairs noted that research and innovation are among the key areas of cooperation between Japan and the European Union and recalled their strategic importance, demonstrated by the Annex of Joint Statement of the 27th Japan-EU Summit in May 2021. Each side explained the development of the 6th Science, Technology, and Innovation Basic Plan (2021-2025), 'Communication on the Global Approach to Research and Innovation, Europe's strategy for international cooperation in a changing world' and Horizon Europe 2021-2027 respectively, all of which adopted in 2021.

Both sides discussed present activities, new initiatives and the ways to strengthen multilateral and thematic cooperation in the areas of fundamental research and innovation values. They also discussed principles including Research Integrity, Ethics and Open Science, climate change and green energy, Green Alliance, arctic research, automated and connected driving, the linkage between Horizon Europe Missions, focusing on Soil Mission, and Moonshot Research and Development Program, foresight and boosting bilateral cooperation on fusion research for DEMO.

Both sides noted the importance of using bilateral discussion that we work strongly at multilateral level, citing the G7, the International Bioeconomy Forum and its working groups, as well as Mission Innovation. They also noted that under Horizon Europe the Connected Cooperative Automated Mobility -CCAM topics international cooperation is encouraged, in particular with projects or partners from Japan.

Both sides also discussed future opportunities of further collaborations on biofuels and Japan presented quantum technology, and both sides identified the opportunity that the National Institute of Science and Technology Policy (NISTEP) and Joint Research Centre (JRC) could start discussion on possible collaboration on foresight activities, while taking note on the ongoing successful cooperation between the JRC and the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), in the frame of the Research Framework Arrangement (RFA) signed in 2017.

Both sides explored how Japan and the EU can enhance their cooperation given the priorities set out in the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the European Union on Cooperation in Science and Technology. Both sides reconfirmed their intention to work together for the further development of cooperation.

Concerning the framework conditions for cooperation, both sides noted the opportunities provided following the signature of three Implementing Arrangements, which allow researchers funded by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) and Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED) to connect with the teams of researchers in Europe supported by the European Research Council (ERC). Besides the above-mentioned Implementing Arrangements, further cooperation between organizations such as AIST, New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) and EU's Joint Research Centre is considered as important for the EU-Japan collaboration. In addition, both sides discussed the framework of human capital development and frontier research and modalities of cooperation. The EU explained the close cooperation mechanism of Association to Horizon Europe that is available for Japan and encouraged further discussions.

Both sides agreed to hold the next Joint Committee Meeting in Brussel in 2023. The date will be coordinated through diplomatic channels.

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press3e_000279.html

JAPAN-EU FOREIGN MINISTERS' TELEPHONE TALK

On 6 December, commencing at 7:00 p.m. for approximately 20 minutes, Mr Hayashi Yoshimasa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, held a telephone talk with Mr Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice-President of the European Commission. The overview of the talk is as follows.

1. At the outset, Minister Hayashi stated that the Japan-EU relations have become closer than ever before due to the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), and that he would like to further develop this relationship by cooperating with High Representative Borrell. In response, High Representative Borrell congratulated Minister Hayashi on his appointment to office and stated his willingness to work with Minister Hayashi to further enhance bilateral cooperation, including the Japan-EU Green Alliance.
2. Minister Hayashi welcomed the EU's Joint Communication on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. He also expressed his appreciation for this December's launch of EU's Global Gateway, the goal of which is sustainable development and support for quality infrastructure. In response, High Representative Borrell stated that he would like to advance cooperation with Japan in a wide range of fields such as security, defense, connectivity, and economic security including supply chain. They shared the view to steadily advance Japan-EU cooperation in these fields.
3. They shared the view to strongly oppose unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in the East and South China Seas. They also exchanged views regarding the situation in North Korea, including its nuclear and missile development, and confirmed they would continue coordinating on how to respond to North Korea, including in regard to the abductions issue.
4. They shared their view to continue to work closely together to respond to COVID-19 under the new circumstances of the outbreak of the Omicron variant. In addition, Minister Hayashi requested the early lifting of import restrictions on Japanese food products.

Source: https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_003065.html



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NEW TAX REGIME

FOR EXPATS IN BELGIUM



By Günther Boeyens - Partner Global Employer Services, Carolien Van Gestel - Senior Manager Global Employer Services, and Tom Moesen - Experienced Junior Global Employer Services, Deloitte

Background

In 1983 the Belgium special tax regime was introduced via a circular letter in Belgium. The idea for the tax regime was to attract foreign talent, allowing foreign executives and specialists temporarily employed in Belgium to benefit from a reduction of Belgian income tax and social security contributions. Broadly, under the special expatriate regime:

- › The employee is considered a Belgian non-resident, meaning that only Belgian-source income is taxable in Belgium;
- › The employee is entitled to exclude tax-free allowances (within certain limits) from taxable income;
- › Taxpayers may exclude from taxation the proportion of compensation relating to days spent on business outside of Belgium.

The tax regime has been a clear differentiator in helping companies to attract and retain talent and expertise in Belgium in a competitive global environment.

The regime was introduced via a circular letter and therefore was not embedded in legislation. The lack of legal basis, the complexity of implementation of the regime, and the fiction of deemed non-residency in Belgium have all put pres-

sure on the application of the regime.

The new tax regime as of 1 January 2022, would align the Belgian regime more closely with that of neighbouring countries and provide a legislative basis for the regime. Considering the changes in the scope, conditions, and benefits of the new regime, it is expected that there will be a significant effect on all companies using the special tax regime as an incentive to attract or retain top talent in Belgium.

Key Features of the new regime

CONDITIONS

For employees and self-employed executives in charge of day-to-day management of the company who do not qualify as “researchers”, the following conditions would apply to qualify for the Belgian special tax regime:

- › A minimum gross compensation threshold of EUR 75,000. The threshold would be pro-rated where the employment/directorship does not cover a full calendar year.
- › During the 60 months prior to the start of the employment in Belgium the individual must:
 - Have lived at least 150 kilometres from the Belgian border
 - Not have been considered Belgian resident

- Not have been subject to Belgian tax on professional income in Belgium

- › The individual must be recruited directly from outside Belgium by a Belgian entity (not necessarily part of a multinational group) or a not-for-profit organisation.

Belgian nationals satisfying all of the above conditions also may qualify for the new Belgian tax regime.

For qualifying researchers as defined in the legislation the minimum compensation threshold would not apply. To be seen as a researcher, the individual must have a specific diploma or 10 years of experience and devote at least 80% of their worktime on qualifying research.

BENEFITS

- › The employer may pay an additional tax-free cost proper to the employer of up to 30% (capped at EUR 90,000) on top of the agreed compensation. A lower percentage or exclusion of specific types of income is also possible but should be contractually agreed. This additional lump sum “cost proper to the employer” of up to 30% cannot be included in the minimum gross compensation threshold of

EUR 75,000. The EUR 90,000 threshold would be pro-rated where the employment/directorship does not cover a full calendar year.

- › It is expected that the social security position would be aligned with the tax exemption however an explicit exemption of social security is not included in the draft bill submitted to Parliament and still needs to be confirmed;
- › The payment of school fees and certain relocation expenses would continue to be tax exempt, subject to conditions;
- › The benefits under the special regime would be available for an initial period of five years, with a possible three-year extension;
- › The new regime could continue to apply where there is a change of employer (and provided all other conditions are met).

Belgian residency

Under the new regime, normal residence rules apply and likely most employees would be Belgian tax resident, as opposed to the default of not resident for Belgian tax purposes under the current regime, resulting in additional tax and other reporting formalities.

It still would be possible to establish Belgian non-residency where an annual residency certificate is provided by the other state. On the other hand, individuals would be entitled to invoke double tax treaties concluded by Belgium to prevent potential double taxation.

Procedure

The application process for the new regime would be shortened, requiring applications to be made within three months after joining the company or not-for-profit organisation compared to

the old tax regime, where the application had to be filed within six months following the month in which the assignment starts.

Additionally, employers would be required to provide an annual listing of beneficiaries to the tax authorities by 31 January of the following year.

Transitional measures

Detailed and complex transitional measures with opt-in and opt-out mechanisms are foreseen which will require close attention and case-by-case consideration.

Individuals who have been in Belgium and subject to the current special expatriate tax regime for more than five years and individuals subject to the current regime who have been in Belgium for less than five years but would not meet

The 2022 Belgian Governments' Budget proposal includes an update to the Belgian Special Tax Regime effective January 1, 2022 with a (potential) transition regime at individual level of 2 years when already in Belgium for more than 5 years (*)



Eligibility



Tax impact tax concessions



Application

Current regime

- Belgian company or establishment belonging to international group
- Managerial function or highly qualified specialist
- Recruited or assigned from outside of Belgium
- Both employees & self-employed directors
- No Belgian nationality (or no dual nationality)
- Temporary nature of employment in Belgium (no formal maximum duration)
- Balance of center of personal and economic links and interests should be stronger with home country as compared to Belgium

- Deemed Belgian non-residency (reporting of Belgian source income only)
- Tax-free allowances up to €11.250 or €29.750 (for recognized R&D or coordination centers) (also exempt from social security)
- Travel exclusion limiting taxation to Belgian working days only (not exempt from social security)
- School fees, moving expenses, settling-in, etc. can be paid/reimbursed tax-free on top

- By the end of the 6th month after start date of employment in Belgium
- Approval tacitly renewed but communication required on structural changes to personal and/or employment situation

New regime as of 01/01/2022

- No requirement for employer to belong to international group
- Minimum salary threshold: compensation of more than €75k (exception for researchers)
- Employee & self-employed directors of 1st or 2nd category but requirement to be in charge of daily management activities
- During the last 60 months before the start of employment in Belgium:
 - Not having been a Belgian tax resident and not having subject to Belgian non-residence tax on professional income in Belgium
 - Living at least 150 km from the Belgian border
- Belgian nationals may qualify
- Maximum duration of 8 years (5 years + 3-year extension)

- Belgian tax residency (reporting of worldwide income) unless non-resident under double tax treaty provisions
- The employer may pay an additional tax-free 'cost proper to the employer' of 30% (capped at €90k) on top of the agreed compensation
- The payment of school fees and certain relocation/settling-in expenses paid by the employer would continue to be tax exempt, subject to conditions

- Within 3 months after start of employment in Belgium
- Additional application to be filed for 3-year extension within 3 months after expiring of initial 5-year period
- Employers required to provide an annual listing of beneficiaries to the tax authorities by 31 January of the following year
- Change of employer is possible (but discrepancy in draft legislation)



the conditions to qualify for the new regime, may continue to benefit from the current regime until 31 December 2023, provided they meet all the requirements of the existing regime. They then would become Belgian tax resident as from 1 January 2024, unless tax resident in another state.

Those individuals who have benefitted from the current special tax regime for less than five years and also would meet the conditions to qualify for the new regime will have to make a choice either to opt-in to the new regime or to opt-out and remain subject to the current regime until 31 December 2023. When opting for the new tax regime, they will only be able to benefit for the remainder of the five plus three years which is the time limit of the new tax regime. When opting to stay with the old tax regime, the required conditions of the old regime still need to be met.

The employers will need to decide on behalf of each individual separately whether or not to opt-in or opt-out of the new tax regime. The decision to opt-in will need to be made and communicated to the Belgian tax authorities by 31 July 2022.

Your Challenges and How to deal with change?

The new Belgian special tax regime will have impact on the various business domains such as reward, finance, and employment law.

As an employer, you will need to define appropriate actions to prepare your organisation and your employees that fall under the regime as well to tackle the communications towards your qualifying employees.

With an initial impact analysis of your employees, you can assess their ability to opt-in for this new regime and whether this is interesting as employer.

Also, reaching out to the different internal stakeholders will be important. Depending on the options per employee (opt-in, opt-out, ordinary Belgian resident taxpayer), specific support will be needed to inform on changes and next steps.

Finally, the impact for each employee individually will need to be determined. Based on the compensation and rewards package, including the various benefit plans. You might need to review the employment contracts and commitments made at onboarding or assess the labour law implications of such commitments.

For more information on managing the changes to the Belgian Special Tax Status: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/be/Documents/tax/ges/Managing%20the%20changes%20to%20the%20Belgian%20Special%20Tax%20Status.pdf>

BELGIANS IN JAPAN

PROF.
DIMITRI
VANOVERBEKE

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

During the Christmas holiday period, I had the honour to interview Prof. Dimitri Vanoverbeke, who was appointed as a full-time professor at the Law faculty of the University of Tokyo in Japan. Until last year he was professor of Japanese studies at KU Leuven. As the professor stayed in Belgium for a few weeks with his family in Brussels, he was kind enough to make some time for an interview about Japanese university life, living in Japan during Covid times, the impact of Covid on Japanese society and what we all can learn from Japan. Unfortunately, Omicron torpedoed our plans to have a live meeting. Instead, we did the interview via Teams.

You entered Japan during the pandemic, how were the first days?

I started teaching in April (note: the Japanese academic year starts in April), but the first few months I was teaching online from Belgium because of VISA issues related to Covid. I only arrived in Japan in July, after the first semester and just before the Olympics. The first weeks after my arrival, I stayed in the same hotel as the Japanese national basketball team, and when I saw all these tall Japanese guys entering the elevator, I thought I was dreaming or still jetlagged: I usually am the tallest guy in Tokyo.

What exactly do you do at the university?

I am teaching a class of 2nd grade students on the subject of the sociology of law. It is a group of 350 students, this is maybe more than I had in total in my 20 years of teaching Japanology in Leuven.

I am teaching in Japanese; most of these 350 students are Japanese nationals, while some are non-Japanese who are born in Japan.

Is the work comparable to what you did in Belgium at KUL?

In Leuven I was a generalist teaching Japanese politics, society, law, and economics among other subjects; my task was to introduce Japan in a very broad way. It was very motivating to empower youngsters who already had an interest in Japan. What I do in Japan now is totally different, today I teach Japanese students in Japan at a Japanese University about Japan, more specifically about the way that law operates (or at

times fails to operate) in an ever-changing Japanese society but through the eyes of a non-Japanese.

Japan and the Faculty of Law at Todai are traditionally very much focused on the US when it comes to foreign affairs, but I can bring a different and novel European perspective. Inevitably I always keep a comparative view on Japan. The most important difference is that I am not teaching as a generalist anymore. Now, I work very specifically and my area of research is the way that law contributes to order in a specific social context. Why did Japan choose for certain judicial institutions in the past and how do the choices of the past affect the cur-





rent role that law plays in this country. How Japanese think about rules is also one of the areas of my research which is a timely topic, as it also includes the question why Covid-19 related rules issued by the government are widely followed. Recently I have been publishing mainly about the criminal justice system in Japan. We all know the story of the spectacular escape by Carlos Ghosn. In the wake of his escape, the discussion of the Japanese way of interrogating by the police and prosecutors was put on the international table. It is known that 99% of the persons who face the judge in court are convicted. In most convictions the accused has confessed, sometimes even when they did not commit the crime. The real 'trial' however takes place in front of the prosecutor who will take a lot of time to investigate and if there is even a slight possibility for the suspect to be acquitted in court, the prosecutor will choose to let the suspect go. The prosecutor, in other words, will lose face if the suspect he sends to court will be declared 'not guilty' by the judge. It is also interesting to go back in time and look how the practice of interrogation in the criminal justice system developed and whether this system can be an example for other nations considering that Japanese society is one of the safest in the world.

What is the biggest difference between a Japanese university and a Belgian university? And what can Belgian universities learn from Japanese universities?

Actually, KU Leuven and Todai are not

so different, and have a similar approach to university life. The level of interaction (between students and academic staff) is also similar to KU Leuven. Of course we have to note that Todai as a University is not very representative within the landscape of Japanese Universities.

Todai is at the absolute top and the law faculty is also seen as the top faculty at Todai, with very stringent entry exams. Even after entering the university, students study very hard for exams that are comparable with Europe. Students are also very ambitious, read and write English, and some of them also master French or German.

Students at Todai Law Faculty are traditionally seen as the future diplomatic and civil servant elite. Some even try to pass one of the three associated exams (admittance to the bar as judge, prosecutor or lawyer, the entry exam as diplomat for the MoF or the entry exam as civil servant) while they are still studying. It shows that most of the students are very motivated.

It is however not true anymore that Todai has a monopoly on these high level governmental functions. More and more civil servants come from other top universities like Waseda, Keio, Chuo and Hitotsubashi. We can say that academic in Japan is changing and is less a pyramid, and more diverse than it used to be. Also the fact that I was recruited shows that there is a wish to move to

more diversity and reveals a break with the image of a closed off elite. However, there still is a long road ahead because among the 72 full-time professors at the Faculty of Law, there are only 4 female professors and only 2 non-Japanese.

Speaking of diversity, the foreigners are also not very diverse. If I am not mistaken, you are not the only Belgian professor at the faculty.

Indeed, and it is a real coincidence but a nice coincidence, especially if you know that the other non-Japanese full-time professor is Simon Vande Walle, son of my former colleague at KU Leuven, Willy Vande Walle. It is nice because we exchange info and experiences about life at a Japanese University. In these Covid times, for some scenarios, there are no procedures yet, like rules for remote work from "abroad". The administration almost freaked out about this topic, but as a pair of Belgians, we know how to play this game and find creative solutions, while avoiding the conflict and oppositions that others would probably run into. We do not try to change the system; you would need more than 2 Belgians to get this done ...

Living as a foreigner in a country that virtually closes its borders must not be easy. What is the role of the Belgian Embassy in this crisis?

I have very good contacts at the Embassy: I have been welcomed 3 or 4 times already in my short stay, and I am very well supported by the Ambassador, her staff and by FIT (Flanders Invest-

ment and Trade) and am happy to find many of my fellow students of Japanese studies at the KU Leuven. The Embassy works hard to organise live events even in these Covid times. One such event was about “Studying in Belgium” and took place in October. We hosted over 50 attendees from different Japanese Universities.

However, the difficulty to get into Japan for foreign students is creating frustration for the students who are planning to study in Japan. Among them are quite a few students from my former faculty in Leuven, where spending one year at a Japanese University is part of the curriculum. The embassies get a lot of inquiries about this strict policy, because at the same time Japanese students are allowed to go abroad.

What is your view on the way Japan as a country handles the pandemic?

The Japanese approach is very strict. Sometimes I fear that the costs outweigh the benefits. Mainly the social costs become so high because Japan needs international contacts. I am afraid of isolation in the aspect of attitude. It is safe and comfortable and Covid legitimises this situation, but often, I fear that it becomes an excuse not to allow or interact with the world outside of Japan. Japan was moving toward more and more foreign interaction, tourism was booming. Looking at the demographical problems in Japan, diversity is needed for the future development of a country that is heading towards a deep crisis due to a declining population and aging society among other issues. Covid stopped all this and broke the trend. I fear it will have an impact on the long term.

For a society to thrive, the notion of “empathy” is crucial. Because of Covid, there is a fear of foreign things that can bring in bad viruses. This is creating distance and gives the impression that homogeneity and the normal mainstream is safer and better. But you need diversity to foster empathy, homogeneity is not normal. I believe that the Japanese

so-called homogeneity is not real, there is a huge diversity within Japan. International contacts create and force an openness towards diversity, which is important to create empathy. This is an area where the BJA can and does play an important role too, as a platform to create understanding between Japanese and Belgian business communities.

Personally, I am afraid for Japan that once a procedure is in place, it will be hard to get rid of it because a new procedure used in an exceptional situation can become normal procedure. So, my message is clear: “it is time to open the borders again”.

Japan had only a very limited number of Covid deaths so far, what can we learn from their approach?

They did not establish strict sanctions and called for the people to be careful with a clear message. Japanese officials early on warned citizens to avoid the san-mitsu or “3cs”: closed spaces, crowded places and close-contact. Everybody knows this. Of course, the Japanese were already trained and raised to wear a mouth mask. The authorities called for voluntary respect for these measures. We have to note also that when you do not follow the warnings, your name can be published which will ruin your reputation. This is cheap and effective.

Internationally, it is considered that Japan mastered the sanitary crisis very well. In a recent special about Japan, the Economist coined Japan as the harbinger in handling different types of crises related to demography, mega-cities, stagnating economy, close presence of a strong China, natural disasters, ... What is your opinion about this?

I think that Japanese society is very resilient, finding pragmatic solutions to various crises it must cope with. The solutions, however, often come bottom-up and less top-down. I see the government in Japan more as a facilitator or mediator of bottom-up forces that find innovative solutions to crises. A small

government that leaves the initiative to experts and stakeholders is probably a key to a resilient society that can overcome different types of crises is the way that I see Japan. It is often overlooked when observing Japan that civil society plays a very important role in the dynamics of Japanese society.

In this kind of bottom-up approach to societal issues, I think that Japan and the EU have many common approaches and shared interests. The most important value that they share, in my opinion, is that of an open society where government is a facilitator for the creative forces at various levels of society.

To end the interview, let me jump back to the Olympics. Who was the biggest star for you? And for the Japanese?

All in all, before the Olympics began, the general mood was very critical, but once it started, the atmosphere quickly turned with the many successes of the Japanese athletes.

My favourites are actually two pairs. First one is the marathon athletes Bashir Abdi and his Dutch friend Abdi Nageeye who helped our Belgian athlete to get Bronze in the marathon. This was a sign of friendship and empathy that was a lesson for all of us about the Olympic ideal.

The second pair of heroes is Simone Biles and Naomi Osaka. They both showed us that “it is OK not to be OK”. Naomi Osaka was expected to get the gold medal, but she lost in an early stage. For me, what they did was important, like the #metoo movement. All these sport professionals carry a very heavy weight and stress, which is so terribly far from the original Olympic ideal.

Thank you, I wish you a safe flight and smooth entry in Japan!

Let’s hope that by the time this interview is published by the BJA, I will be able to meet Professor Vanoverbeke live and in person in Tokyo.

AN INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE CULTURE:

IAIDŌ

By Dr Takeshi Morisato (KU Leuven, Japanese Studies Program), BJA Editorial and Cultural Committee Member

laidō 居合道 is not easy to visualize or describe what it is about with words especially when most of us try to think about it in Belgium. Kendō and Jūdō are probably much easier for us to understand as a part of Japanese martial arts traditions. At least we have seen the matches on TV or internet. If you are mature and fortunate enough to have watched Hollywood movies in the 80s and 90s, we know Karate (and we would have to give some tribute to our Mr Miyagi or Mr Jean-Claude Van Damme). Perhaps Aikido might be known through the notorious examples set forth in Steven Seagal movies.

Judo has been a part of the Summer Olympics since 1964 and Karate just joined the ranks in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. There are different styles of

Karate but there are a few internationalized styles of Karatedō like Kyokushin or Shodokan Karate that may sound familiar to readers, and Aikido also enjoys the international presence through Aikikai regardless of a number of other styles deriving from its charismatic founder, Ueshiba Morihei 植芝盛平 (1883–1969).

It is still very difficult even for the specialist of Japanese studies to tell the history of other martial arts like Kyūdō, Naginata, Jōdō, etc., let alone the significance of practicing them in our modern technological age. The same goes for the tradition of laidō. Who founded it, what organizations promote and manage it, and how should we place it in our society today? I would like to answer these questions as a way of introduction to

laidō and leave some room for following articles that further explore the beauty and the value of this traditional practice from Japan.

The word, laidō 居合道

laidō consists of two words, *lai* 居合 and *dō* 道. As many of us might already know, *dō* signifies the concept of the “way.” It is a classical idea more or less corresponding with our concept of “discipline” in European languages. It goes back to the ancient term in Chinese, *dao*, (as Laozi’s Daodejing 道德經) and generally has a wider range of meaning than the term “discipline” in English. It does not indicate a kind of systematic knowledge that once you have it, you can almost automatically apply it to solve a number of determinate problems in a specific field of human knowing. But it is



Photo by Kryz Amon on Unsplash

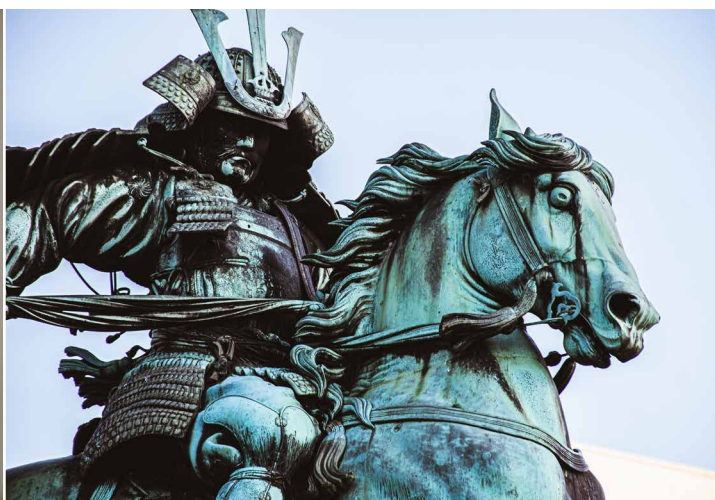


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Photo by Susann Schuster on Unsplash

more about a way of being or a way of life that affects your sense of existence as a whole and guides your interrelation with all the other people and things in the world to become what they are supposed to be.

So, when we say we are practicing Judo or Kendō, it does not only mean that we are practicing special techniques to efficiently subdue or strike our opponents but also by practicing these techniques, we are learning how to face both external and internal fears, how to treat other sentient beings and things with respect and honor, and ultimately learn how to be who we are both individually and communally in the world. It is not difficult for us to imagine a specialist of a specific discipline (like doctor, lawyer, or professor) to be morally corrupt. You can be an excellent doctor while not caring much about social justice. You can be a great professor while being super rich or failing to recycle. That is because a technical knowledge can be divorced from moral value in this context. However, it would be impossible for a master of Karatedō or Jūdō to bully the weak or disregard any kind of justice while fulfilling her/his role as a master. The ultimate goal of these “ways” is applicable to many relational and aesthetics practices like Sadō, Kadō, Shodō, etc., in Japan and laidō falls within this category.

Then what is *lai* 居合? It originally came

from the term *lawaseru* 居合わせる, which describes a situation in which you happen to be there before the other. The best way to visualize this is to see two people (probably in kimono) sitting in a Japanese room and they happen to be there without their prior knowledge of it or planning on this encounter. In this sense, the term *lai* meant any techniques to be done (with or without swords) while sitting down in a small space. Because of that, it was distinguished from another term, *tachiai* 立ち合い, which signifies techniques that one would carry out when standing up. For this, think of a sumo wrestling match or two samurais outside for a duel in Kurosawa movies. Naturally, during the Edo period, Kenjutsu and Iaijutsu/Battōjutsu were separate from each other by following this logic and laidō has assumed an initial posture in which the practitioner sits next to (or stands with) a sword without any prior intention of a conflict. Unlike any other martial arts that uses swords, laidō begins and ends with the sword inside its sheathe.

History

Honchōbugeiden (本朝武芸小伝) was written in the middle Edo Period (1700–50). It tells us in ten chapters the origin of various martial arts schools in Japan. According to this book (among many others), the foundation of laidō (namely Iaijutsu) was laid by Hayashizaki Jin-suke (1542?–1621) who established the Shimusō Hayashizaki School (which

became a foundation for many other schools later on). The historical record shows that his laidō practice presupposed the situation in which two persons are sitting next to each other in close distance. While the opponent has a short sword, thus having an advantage over the situation, the Iai practitioner has to learn how to overcome the opponent with a long sword. In other words, it was initially practiced as a way to protect oneself regardless of the disadvantageous circumstance, and this paradoxical approach was never meant as a main part of swordsmanship. It was meant to cultivate one's preparedness for the situation that one cannot predict and prepare for in advance.

Then, a number of schools were established during the Edo period. After the Meiji restoration, however, many of them went out of business due to the rampant westernization and modernization processes. In 1895, Dainihon Butokuden was established to promote and preserve this specific tradition. Still after the end of the Second World War, GHQ ordered its dissolution, and a number of Japanese swords were discarded (both as an instrument and a symbolism of past violence by the Japanese military government). In 1952, when Japan was liberated from the occupation, All Japan Kendō Federation was established as a de facto successor of the Dainihon Butokuden. However, as you can see, Kendō was created to practice swordsmanship with shinai (made out of Bamboo, thus evading both domestic and international criticisms of swordsmanship as promoting violence in Japan) and because the new federation only focused on this “peaceful” practice, laidō was not part of its program.

In 1954, the 20th grand master of Musō Jikiden Eishinryū, Kōno Hyakuren, established “All Japan laidō Federation” (accommodating over 20,000 members today). However, Kendō federation established an Iaidō section in 1956. After the death of Kōno in 1974, there was a controversy among disciples over



Photo by B Vi on Unsplash



Photo by Jonathan Borba on Unsplash

the succession, which resulted in the emergence of three other federations. As you can see, there are five major federations that promote laidō and each of which houses different styles of laidō. All Japan laidō Federation alone, for instance, oversees ten different schools (*ryūha*).

The majority of laidō practitioners in Japan follow Musō Jikiden Eishinryū but it is quite complicated to trace the history of this single school. Kono's Musō Jikiden Eishinryū was practiced in Tosa region (present day Kochi) as Musō Shineiden Eishinryū and Musō Shindenryū was funded post-war by a legendary martial artist, Nakayama Hakudō 中山博道 (1872–1958). We can probably write a whole book on this historical figure alone but what interests us the most is this willingness to follow diverse styles among laidō practitioners. Unlike Kendo and Jūdō, which have been federalized and especially in case of Jūdō, it has not become a world-phenomenon as a sport. Once it has an internationally recognized rules of engagements, there will be easy-to-understand competitions where amateurs can rank the players from the sideline. laidō seems to have none of these. Its motion is deliberate and slow. It seems to attract a wider range of demographics and there is no visible or loud discussions about which school has produced the greatest champion. The tradition that has not been internationally homogenized usually enjoys some depth that takes some time for outsiders like us to understand.

Spiritual Cultivation

The instrument of laidō, i.e., katana, itself has such a profound sense of art. But this would require an elaboration on this aspect of laidō in another article. According to some reflections, the martial artist, who uses this piece of art, must go through some spiritual cultivation, which resembles the meditative practice of Zen. This spiritual element of laidō piqued many great minds in the history of Japan and we can see in the biographies of the famous historical figures like Ii Naosuke (井伊直弼), Yamauchi Yōdō (山内容堂), Itagaki Taisuke (板垣退助), and Fukuzawa Yukichi (福沢諭吉).

Itagaki Taisuke comes from a family that transmitted Musō Jikiden Eishinryū as masters, and when abovementioned Nakayama Hakudō visited Kochi for practicing lai, Itagaki introduced him to the civil rights activists and the laidō master at his family dojo, Hosokawa Yoshimasa. It was not unusual for the leading political figures in Japan during the Meiji and the Taisho period to practice laidō regardless of the well recognized fact that swords are certainly useless in a gun fight. Itagaki was also known as a collector of Japanese swords at that time.

Fukuzawa Yukichi practiced Tatsumi Ryū lai since his youth and received *Menkyokaiden* (license of total transmission) when he became an adult. He often became a target of attempted assassination by those who detested the rapid influx of the western philosophy in Meiji Japan. However, Fukuzawa always managed to

run from these problems without getting into a single sword fight. Surely, evading an actual fight follows the logic of “victory inside the sheathe” in laidō (which tells us the idea that a great sword master should win a battle without letting the opponent draw their weapons). But to run away from the battle altogether is rather unusual. According to historians and philosophers, it seems that Fukuzawa considered laidō as a way of life (*kyūdo* 求道) and did not consider it as a means for killing the others for his own safety. Some critics appraise this aspect of Fukuzawa's life. It reminds them of his resemblance to Katsu Kaishū and Yamaoka Tesshū, who were also known for their swordsmanship but never used their katanas to hurt the others. Till his death in old age, Fukuzawa kept practicing laidō.

Concluding remarks

We have seen the etymological origin and the short history of laidō in Japan. We have also seen some significant historical figures and how they practiced laidō. They practiced this ancient martial arts not for showing off their kill-moves but for some kind of spiritual cultivations or self-betterment. The world of katana is also rich in aesthetics and historical tales worthy of our future explorations. What I would like to do in the follow-up articles then is to interview some of the laidō practitioners in Belgium and ask them what it means for them while introducing more relevant historical and cultural episodes. We look forward to sharing our findings on a surprising cross-cultural evolution of Japanese laidō in Belgium.

GSK AND IMEC TO COLLABORATE ON DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION IN PHARMA

A collaboration between GSK, a multinational pharma company whose vaccines headquarters are in Wallonia, and imec, a leading nanoelectronics research centre based in Flanders, is bringing together in Belgium two of its most innovative sectors. The cross-over collaboration between the two scientific domains has the ambition to create disruptive new solutions for the pharmaceutical sector, building on Belgium's well-established reputation in biopharma.

The partnership between GSK and imec follows a year of explorative collaboration and research leading to promising preliminary results. It will focus on specific R&D and biomanufacturing projects. In R&D, GSK and imec will explore how nanotechnology can accelerate the development and production of new vaccines through disruptive highly parallelized solutions. In biomanufacturing, nanotechnology will be used to automate and improve control of manufacturing processes.

GSK and imec are currently working together on several projects that arose from Makeathon workshops organized by GSK. These workshops allow experts from both organizations to interact and focus on specific interdisciplinary challenges to conceive new, high-impact products for the future of vaccine development and bio-manufacturing.

Thomas Dermine, State Secretary for Economic Recovery and Strategic Investments, in charge of Scientific Policy: *"Belgium has leading pharmaceutical companies, top hospitals, a strong industrial ecosystem in life sciences including many start-ups, top biotech research at universities and the world leading R&D in nanoelectronics. By leveraging expertise and knowledge, sharing one vision and dividing costs of disruptive R&D, such a collaboration between GSK and imec will drive innovation and pave the way to a revolution in healthcare. Moreover, this collaboration consolidates Belgium's strategic role in vaccine research and development and fully mirrors the ambition of the Government to strengthen the position of Belgium as the "Health and Biotech valley of tomorrow".*

Jamila Louahed, Vice-President Research and Development GSK Vaccines in Belgium: *"GSK is very excited to co-create with an important deep tech company that is part of Belgium's strong biotech ecosystem. mRNA is a major opportunity for the future of vaccines and a key priority for our company. The combination of our expertise in biopharma and imec's nanotechnology capabilities can impact the development of new vaccines including mRNA vaccines which are a major opportunity. We aim to use this collaboration to develop new vaccine technologies that are tailored to people's needs, and to also make vaccine manufacturing faster and more efficient".*

Liesbet Lagae, scientific director life sciences and fellow at imec: *"By joining forces in disruptive R&D and bringing the power of chip technology to the world of healthcare, we envision a future of highly personalized care. Also, our collaboration aims at driving innovation in biomanufacturing, enabling automation and better control of manufacturing processes. We are looking forward to discovering future synergies between nanoelectronics and pharma."*

About GSK

GSK - a leading global healthcare and pharmaceutical research company - is committed to improving quality of life by helping men and women do more, feel better and live longer.

GSK Vaccines, one of three divisions of GSK (Vaccines, Prescription Medicines and Consumer Health Products), is one of the world's leading vaccine manufacturers, with a portfolio of more than 20 vaccines for infants, adolescents and adults as well as 18 other vaccines in development. Vaccines are produced by GSK every day and shipped to people in 158 countries. In Belgium, the more than 9,000 employees of GSK make it the largest pharmaceutical company.

About imec

Imec is a world-leading research and innovation centre in nanoelectronics and digital technologies. Imec leverages its state-of-the-art R&D infrastructure and its team of more than 5,000 employees and top researchers, for R&D in advanced semiconductor and system scaling, silicon photonics, artificial intelligence, beyond 5G communications and sensing technologies, and in application domains such as health and life sciences, mobility, industry 4.0, agrofood, smart cities, sustainable energy, education, ... Imec unites world-industry leaders across the semiconductor value chain, Flanders-based and international tech, pharma, medical and ICT companies, start-ups, and academia and knowledge centres. Imec is headquartered in Leuven (Belgium), and has research sites across Belgium, in the Netherlands, Taiwan and the USA, and offices in China, India and Japan. In 2020, imec's revenue (P&L) totalled 680 million euro.

Imec is a registered trademark for the activities of imec International (IMEC International, a legal entity set up under Belgian law as a "stichting van openbaar nut"), imec Belgium (IMEC vzw supported by the Flemish Government), imec the Netherlands (Stichting IMEC Nederland), imec Taiwan (IMEC Taiwan Co.), imec China (IMEC Microelectronics (Shanghai) Co. Ltd.), imec India (IMEC India Private Limited), imec San Francisco (IMEC Inc.) and imec Florida (IMEC USA Nanoelectronics Design Center Inc.).

Source: <https://www.imec-int.com/en/press/gsk-and-imec-collaborate-disruptive-innovation-pharma>

news from the members

MARKET LEADER DAIKIN INVESTS TO RESPOND TO GROWTH ACCELERATION IN EUROPEAN HEAT PUMP CATEGORY (+20% CAGR)

“Ambitious investments in production capacity and R&D will allow Daikin Europe to expand market and product leadership,”

says Patrick Crombez of Daikin Europe

Market leader Daikin Europe sees an inflection point in the European hydronic heat pump market, with growth rates anticipated to increase from 10% CAGR to 20% CAGR. This will lead to annual heat pump installations of 4 million heat pumps by 2030, up from 1 million in 2021. Daikin Europe is responding by investing in production and innovation capacity, warehousing and logistics and increased training for installers and service technicians across the EMEA region.

Patrick Crombez, General Manager Heating and Renewables at Daikin comments,

“Switching our heating systems to heat pumps represents a historical transformation to low-carbon heating, with benefits for climate change but also healthier living environments. We are proud to lead this transformation in Europe.”

Daikin Europe’s business unit ‘Heating & Renewables’ is growing fast and - as the European market leader in this category – is outperforming the European heat pump category growth.

“For us 2021 has been a turning point for heat pumps,”
says Patrick Crombez. “Consumers and policy makers have never been more eager to decarbonize heating systems.”

Over the past decade, the European market for heat pumps has grown at a strong pace, with an annual growth rate of 10% (CAGR) from 2011 to 2020, resulting in the expected installa-

tion of 1 million heat pumps in 2021.

In the coming years, Daikin – in line with other industry experts - anticipates a sharp acceleration in heat pump adoption. By 2030, it expects 4 million heat pumps will be installed each year, representing an annual growth rate (CAGR) of 20%.

At that point, 1 out of 3 heating systems installed will be a heat pump, up from 1 out of 10 in 2020. While this represents steep growth compared to recent years, Daikin Europe considers this the minimum to ensure a move to a decarbonized residential heating market in Europe.

Patrick Crombez:

“From all available data, it is clear that heat pump adoption is hitting an inflection point this year and the already robust growth of the category will only accelerate.”

A key driver for heat pump growth has been the introduction of legislation governing new builds in many European countries, ranging from general regulations in France such as RT2012 (which sets a new minimum standard for thermal insulation of dwellings), to a ban on combustion boilers in the Netherlands.

Additionally, incentives in France, Germany and Italy have successfully increased the appeal of heat pumps in the replacement- and renovation market.

At the same time, heat pump technology has evolved to make heat pumps an attractive option: the arrival of ‘high temperature’ heat pumps means existing fossil fuel boilers can be replaced without the need to update or modify existing radiators.

Daikin Europe invests in production capacity, innovation

In the coming years market leader Daikin intends to more than triple its European heating production and expects their heating business to become one of the key pillars of Daikin’s revenue by 2025.

Today, 5 of 14 Daikin’s EMEA factories are dedicated to heat pump production. All Daikin heat pumps sold in Europe are developed and produced in Europe, with main Daikin factories

news from the members

in Germany, Belgium and the Czech Republic.

A recently announced investment plan for the next 5 years includes a sizable investment in the heat pump category.

*Patrick Crombez, Daikin Europe notes,
"Without offering a detailed breakdown of
our investments, a substantial part of Daikin EMEA's planned
840 million EUR investment over the next 5 years will be
allocated to heat pumps. This will allow us to expand our
European market leadership in heat pumps."*

Part of the investment aims to expand production capacity to keep up with demand. Another area of investment is the planned construction of a cutting-edge development complex 'European Development Center (EDC)' in Ghent, Belgium, allowing Daikin to strengthen its leadership in innovation and to allow a faster and wider development of heat pumps. The EDC complex represents an investment of €140M, will offer 380 jobs locally and will also function as the Daikin global centre for heating product development.

Daikin Europe expands European warehousing, training and deliveries to support transition to decarbonized heating

In 2021, production of Daikin Europe heat pumps will amount to 1.5 million units (covering residential, commercial and industrial hydronic heat pumps produced within the EU).

It currently handles some 71,000 deliveries per day from its 30 warehouses all over Europe, and it is ready to scale this to meet demand.

*Patrick Crombez comments,
"In the next few years, we will increase our
number of warehouses to allow us to reduce delivery distance
to our customers. Our integrated stock and warehouse
management approach allows us to move stock faster,
offer better service and lower logistics costs."*

Finally, Daikin Europe offers support and training to installers in 54 training centers across Europe.

Training ranges from starter courses on installation of heat pumps and direct expansion technology, to advanced troubleshooting courses and service controls on new products.

*Patrick Crombez says,
"Despite the difficult conditions
due to COVID-19, we are proud to report that the number of
trainees - both online and in real life - doubled in 2020. Our
investments strengthen our existing production and distribution
network and allow us to look forward to the next decade with
confidence and excitement."*

Supporting "a historical transition"

The investments and growth plans of Daikin Europe Heating and Renewables fit into its vision of decarbonizing residential heating throughout Europe. As fossil fuel-based residential heating is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, this transformation will allow Europe to achieve its ambitious emissions reduction targets for 2030.

*Patrick Crombez states,
"The coming years will be pivotal in decarbonizing
the heating of residential and commercial buildings.
It's a truly historical transition that will contribute to a stable
climate, safer and healthier homes, and more
affordable energy bills. We are proud and we could
not be more excited to take the lead in this
transition in Europe."*

Source : https://www.daikin.eu/en_us/press-releases/market-leader-daikin-invests-to-respond-to-growth-acceleration-in-european-heat-pump-category.html

news from the members

BRUSSELS AIRPORT - RECORD GROWTH FOR CARGO WITH AN INCREASE IN VOLUMES OF 30% COMPARED TO 2020, BEST RESULT IN 15 YEARS

In 2021, Brussels Airport welcomed almost 9.4 million passengers, that is 39% more than in the crisis year 2020, but a decline of 64% compared to 2019. Especially in the first half of the year the passenger figures were heavily impacted by the Covid crisis and the

travel restrictions, the number of passengers began to rise again from the summer onward. The cargo division of Brussels Airport performed exceptionally well in the past year; there was a strong growth in all cargo segments and Brussels Airport is the most important

European hub for vaccine transport, with more than 800 million Covid-vaccines handled since November 2020. The total cargo volume rose to 843,000 tonnes, an increase of no less than 30% compared to 2020.



"For two years now, the aviation sector has been seriously impacted by the corona crisis, but I am pleased that we were able to achieve a strong increase in passenger numbers in 2021, especially in the second half of the year. While the start of 2021 was still heavily affected by the travel restrictions and measures, from the summer onwards recovery began, and we saw travellers return.",
says Arnaud Feist, CEO of Brussels Airport.

"So, I am hopeful about the future. We see that people want to travel and, together with all our partners, we make this possible in a safe way. The recovery will be gradual, but we expect to be able to continue this positive trend in 2022. In addition, our cargo division has seen an unprecedented growth, with an increase in volume of 30% compared to 2020. The demand for air cargo was exceptionally high, and thanks to our investments, digitisation and our strong cargo community, Brussels Airport was able to handle this growth with ease. With our expertise in the transport of pharmaceuticals, as the main hub for the export of vaccines in Europe, we could do our part in the battle against Covid with more than 800 million vaccines transported, and we will undoubtedly continue to do this in the year ahead."

Cargo: record growth of 30% compared to 2020, best result in 15 years

In 2021, 843,140 tonnes in freight were transported, representing a 30% increase compared to 2020. For the air freight volumes, we see a rise of no less than 31% compared to 2020, and 33% more than in 2019, the best result since

Brussels Airport Traffic December 2021

	December					January - December				
	2021	2020	2019	growth '21 vs '20	growth '21 vs '19	2021	2020	2019	growth '21 vs '20	growth '21 vs '19
Passengers										
Originating	424.406	154.566	804.997	+174,6%	-47,3%	3.921.947	2.751.267	10.791.833	+42,6%	-63,7%
Transfer	90.759	34.226	178.693	+165,2%	-49,2%	758.309	575.521	2.342.786	+31,8%	-67,6%
Transit	4.145	2.331	9.058	+77,8%	-54,2%	18.207	32.893	72.904	-44,6%	-75,0%
Total Departing Passengers	519.310	191.123	992.748	+171,7%	-47,7%	4.698.463	3.359.681	13.207.523	+39,8%	-64,4%
Arriving pax (excl Transit)	435.237	146.987	909.068	+196,1%	-52,1%	4.658.758	3.383.714	13.152.480	+37,7%	-64,6%
Total number of passengers	954.547	338.110	1.901.816	+182,3%	-49,8%	9.357.221	6.743.395	26.360.003	+38,8%	-64,5%
Movements										
Passenger flights	9.309	3.393	14.798	+174,4%	-37,1%	81.038	64.557	203.149	+25,5%	-60,1%
Cargo flights	2.016	1.798	1.278	+12,1%	+57,7%	22.601	18.858	14.629	+19,8%	+54,5%
Non-commercial flights	1.259	1.117	1.403	+12,7%	-10,3%	15.094	12.398	16.682	+21,7%	-9,5%
Total Movements	12.584	6.308	17.479	+99,5%	-28,0%	118.733	95.813	234.460	+23,9%	-49,4%
Cargo (tons)										
Full Freighter	23.034	15.492	14.449	+48,7%	+59,4%	276.732	193.555	135.560	+43,0%	+104,1%
Integrator	23.736	23.820	17.796	-0,4%	+33,4%	294.331	244.632	206.707	+20,3%	+42,4%
Belly cargo	9.882	6.035	14.716	+63,8%	-32,9%	97.046	73.427	158.435	+32,2%	-38,7%
Total flown cargo	56.651	45.347	46.962	+24,9%	+20,6%	668.110	511.613	500.702	+30,6%	+33,4%
Trucked cargo	13.189	12.176	16.150	+8,3%	-18,3%	175.031	134.937	166.518	+29,7%	+5,1%
Total cargo	69.840	57.523	63.112	+21,4%	+10,7%	843.140	646.550	667.220	+30,4%	+26,4%

Figures are indicative, subject to change and are provided for information purposes only.

2007. This is the largest annual growth ever achieved at Brussels Airport and this makes Brussels Airport one of the strongest growing European airports in cargo volumes. The quality of cargo handling and continuity remained guaranteed, without congestion or additional waiting times, thanks to the efforts of all cargo partners on Brussels Airport.

Growth was achieved in all segments: full freighter, integrator, belly cargo and trucked cargo. Especially the full

freighter segment performed strongly, with a continuation of the growth with 43% compared to 2020 and a growth of no less than 104% compared to pre-Covid times (2019).

In December freight transport at Brussels Airport increased by 21% compared to December 2020. The growth of air freight is particularly strong in the full freighter segment (+49%) and also in the belly cargo (+64%) due to the steady growth of the number of regular passenger flights. The integrator ser-

vices stabilised at a high level (-0.4%), after the strong and continuous growth in recent months.

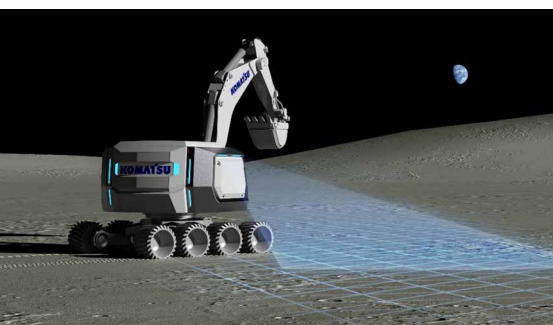
The transport of vaccines to and from Brussels Airport continued. Since the start of the vaccine transport in November 2020, more than 800 million vaccines were transported, which more than ever confirms the position of Brussels Airport as the most important pharma hub in Europe.

Source: <https://www.brusselsairport.be/en/pressroom/news/results-2021>

news from the members

KOMATSU SELECTED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES FOR OUTER SPACE AUTONOMOUS CONSTRUCTION MANAGED BY THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT

Participating in the Project for Promoting the Development of Innovative Technologies for Autonomous Construction, Such as on the Moon.



Adaptation of lunar construction equipment by using digital twin technology (conceptual)

Komatsu Ltd. (hereafter “Komatsu”) (President and CEO: Hiroyuki Ogawa) has applied for the request for proposal concerning the Project for Promoting the Development of Innovative Technologies for Outer Space Autonomous Construction (lead-managed by Japan’s Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (hereafter “MLIT”) with collaboration by Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology). This Project was decided by the MLIT in July this year as part of its Strategic Program for Accelerating Research, Development and Utilization of Space Technology (Stardust Program). On 18 November 2021, Komatsu’s proposal of the Development of Digital Twin Technology for Lunar Construction Equipment has been selected as an eligible target of Technology related to Autonomous Construction (Automation and Remote Control).

Under the leadership of the Council of Promoting the Development of Innovative Technologies for Autonomous Construction, an inter-ministry collaboration body, all selected companies and organizations will diligently conduct research and development of their individual technologies. In this way, in the near future Komatsu

will contribute to Japan’s achievement of advanced construction and research and development of outer space construction activities, such as on the moon. future.

In the ongoing three-year, mid-term management plan, to be completed in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022, Komatsu is working to achieve safe, highly productive, smart, and clean workplaces of the future by advancing products (automation and autonomy of machines) and processes (optimization of construction operations). Concerning the selected Development of Digital Twin Technology for Lunar Construction Equipment, Komatsu will utilize accumulated technologies in both products and processes.

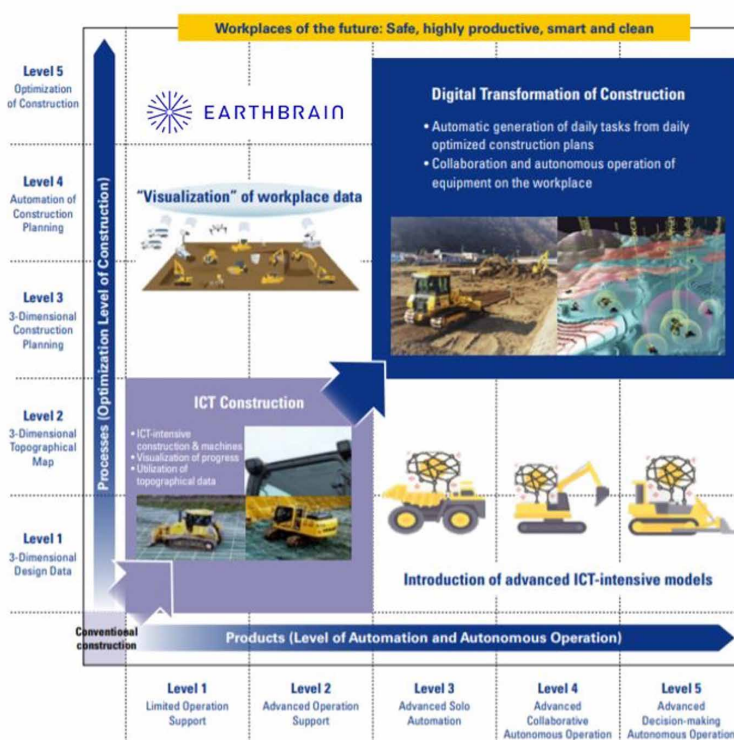
Because it’s complicated to approach actual objects on the moon’s surface, Komatsu believes that digital twin technology is essential, precisely recreating

site conditions and machines. To develop this technology, Komatsu will conduct a feasibility study to verify the possibility of developing high-precision digital twin technology, the basic technology of lunar construction equipment. Specifically, Komatsu will create and operate a hydraulic excavator in cyberspace and compare its movements with actual equipment on Earth to verify the simulator’s precision. Komatsu will also set the surface conditions of the moon as cyberspace, and check the movements of the excavator in the simulator in order to identify the issues facing our lunar equipment.

Towards the next 100 years, Komatsu will continue to create value through manufacturing and technology innovation to empower a sustainable future where businesses, people, and our planet thrive together.

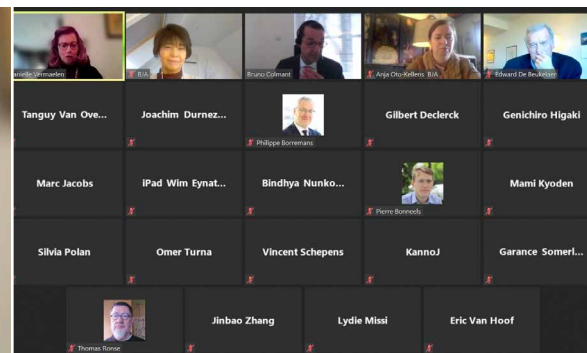
Source: <https://www.komatsu.jp/en/newsroom/2021/20211118>

Achievement of safe, highly productive, smart and clean workplaces of the future by advancing products (automation and autonomy of machines) and processes (optimization of construction operations)



BJA Webinar “EURO: Past & Future” with Prof Dr Bruno Colmant BJA ウェビナー: EURO通貨 - 成果と今後の課題 Bruno Colmant 教授に聞く

Monday 7 February 2022 - Digital Event



Prof Dr Bruno Colmant sharing his expertise on the Euro

Danielle Vermaelen moderating the event

The participants eagerly learning about the many challenges the Euro faced

Exactly 30 years after the Maastricht Treaty materialized the Euro, the BJA was thrilled to invite Prof Dr Bruno Colmant to discuss history and significance of the common European currency and its future developments.

Author of more than 80 books on finance, accounting and taxation, and of at least 5000 financial press articles, Prof Dr Colmant holds a degree in Business Engineering and a master in Industrial Administration. He also has a master in Fiscal Sciences and he has a PhD in Applied Economics. He is a professor at UCLouvain, ULB, Vlerick, ICHEC & St-Louis. Having worked for multiple financial institutions, Prof Dr Colmant is uniquely placed to discuss this topic.

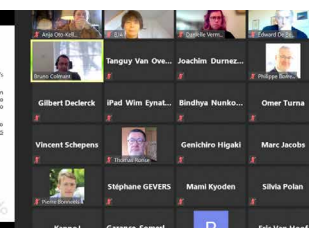
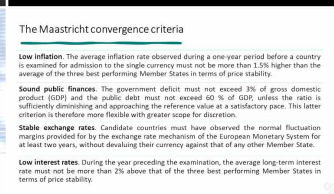
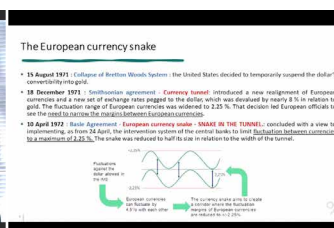
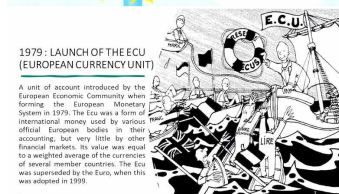
After welcoming the participants, Danielle Vermaelen, Partner EY and BJA EU Committee Chair introduced Prof Dr Colmant to the audience.

Prof Dr Colmant started his presentation by discussing the historic reasons that made the Euro possible, including the German Reunification, and the many political and economic

challenges that had to be overcome even before the first coins were minted. He then stressed the overall success of the Euro despite the many crises the currency had to face since its introduction, and how it looks quite different today than at its launch.

Finally, he touched upon the future challenges the Euro faces, in the broader framework of the European fiscal, financial and industrial policies, before answering the questions from the audience.

The BJA thanks EY for the generous support in making this valuable webinar possible.



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

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NTT DATA is a leading IT and business services provider and trusted global innovator, headquartered in Tokyo, and with over 140,000 professionals operating in more than 50 countries. As the sixth largest IT services company in the world, NTT DATA supports clients in their digital development through a wide range of consulting and strategic advisory services, cutting-edge technologies, applications, infrastructure, modernization of IT and BPOs. We contribute with vast experience in all sectors of economic activity and have extensive knowledge of the locations in which we operate. Our emphasis is on long-term commitment, combining global reach with local intimacy to provide premier professional services.

In Belgium, where our presence started in 2010, we have gained a leading position working with the European Institutions, and collaborating with private companies in Insurance, Telecommunications, Industry, Life Science, Utilities, and local Public Sector.



NTT DATA

We are looking forward to sharing experiences, bringing our support, and exploring collaborations with the BJA members. We also value the opportunities offered by BJA to know more about the Japanese culture to our local executive team.

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MSC Belgium

MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company is a global business engaged in the shipping and logistics sector. Present in 155 countries, MSC facilitates international trade between the world's major economies, and among emerging markets across all continents.

Founded in 1970 and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, since 1978, MSC is a privately-owned organization driven by the Aponte family. A world leader in container shipping, MSC has evolved into a globally respected business with a fleet of 600 vessels and more than 100,000 staff.

MSC delivers goods and services to local communities, customers, and international business partners. With access to



an integrated global network of road, rail and sea transport resources, the company prides itself on delivering global service with local knowledge.

MSC Belgium and its connection with Japan

Mediterranean Shipping Company was founded in Brussels in 1970 by Captain Gianluigi Aponte and moved its headquarters to Switzerland in 1978. In 1999 MSC established MSC Belgium, located in Antwerp, Europe's 2nd largest port. In that same year MSC Japan was also established in Tokyo. To this day, MSC is a family-owned company that highly values the personal connection with their customers.

Over the past decades, trade between Belgium and Japan has continued to grow. For example, car parts manufactured by Japanese car makers are imported from various ports in the Far East and arrive in the Port of Antwerp to be further distributed in Europe.

The export of the famous and delicious Belgian fries is a beautiful example for another success story. A quarter of the export reefers (climate-controlled containers) are destined to Japan, and they carry the delicious Belgian gold. MSC plays an important role in the trade between Japan and Belgium and is your go-to partner for shipment related enquiries.



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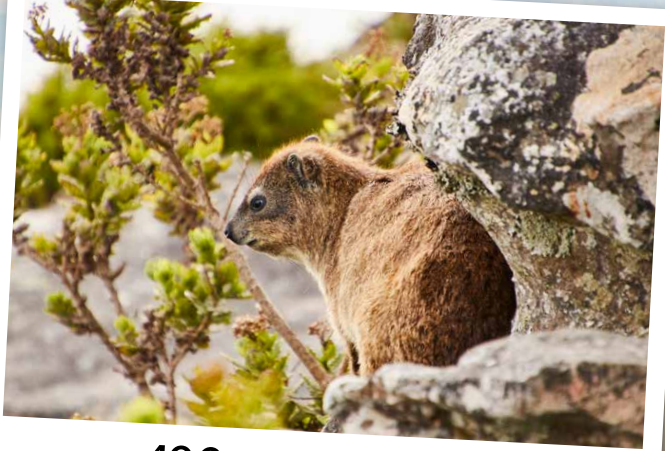
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