

# Belgium-Japan Association

## & Chamber of Commerce ASBL- VZW



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## Trade Flows & Cultural News

### Trade Relations EU-Japan

by *Mr Didier Stevens*, Chairman BJA EU Committee; Manager Government Affairs, Toyota Motor Europe

The EU and Japan form two of the main pillars of the world economy next to the US.

Together, they account for two fifths of world GDP, with Japan accounting for one seventh or some 14 %, and around 10% of world exports and imports. Japan is also the largest economy by far in Asia, accounting for two thirds of regional GDP, and is the EU's fifth largest trading partner in the world. In 2004, the trade between the EU and Japan in goods and services was worth 116 billion euro. In fact Japan is the EU's fifth largest export market and also fifth largest source of imports. With the greatest savings of any nation (¥1,200 trillion, equivalent to 250% of Japan's GDP) and the largest foreign currency reserves in the world (USD 844 billion), Japan is a rich country and promises enormous opportunities for European businesses. Europe is equally a very important market for Japan. Accounting for around 20% of world exports and imports, and 30% of total world stocks of foreign direct investment (FDI), the EU is the world's largest trading economy as well as the world's prime source of FDI outflows. With an 7,2% share of the EU import market, Japan is the fourth largest source of imports into the EU. Japan is also a major investor in the EU.

This important trade relationship once had a strong trade surplus in favour of Japan, however trade figures have become much more balanced recently. Trade disputes no longer dominate economic relations since Japan embarked on structural reforms for its own good and for the benefit of the international community. In recent years both partners have developed a cooperative relationship, which is highlighted by the recent Mutual Recognition Agreement – the first bilateral trade agreement between Japan and the EU. Both partners have created a number of informal 'dialogues' in specific or general areas, in addition to ministerial meetings and Government-level yearly Summits.

The priorities for the 16th Japan-EU Summit (in 2007) will be: (1) promoting peace and stability, (2) coping with global and societal challenges, (3) strengthening the economic and trade partnerships and (4) bringing together people and cultures. In particular, the last two priorities could be considered as the main objectives of the BJA EU Committee.

The BJA EU Committee is focusing at finding ways to bring EU activities and the BJA member's business

interests closer together. The goals of this committee are, therefore, to continue to listen to the members, to try to identify their needs, and to further enhance the understanding of the EU and facilitate relations with its representatives accordingly.

To realise these goals, the BJA EU Committee is meeting regularly and is organising a number of events. Most recently, a business luncheon took place regarding the German EU Presidency. On this occasion, the German Ambassador to the EU, HE Dr Schönfelder gave a presentation about the priorities of the upcoming German EU Presidency, which included: the European economy, energy, enlargement. Members were given ample opportunity to share ideas with HE Ambassador Schönfelder during an informal dialogue session.

Among other activities planned are a visit to the European Parliament and another to the European Commission. Visiting the EP, planned for early 2007, will not be limited to a tour of the buildings, but will mainly aim to discuss 2 to 3 points on the EP's agenda at that moment with relevant Members of the European Parliament and to receive a briefing on the works of the EP-Japan delegation.

Also planned early 2007 is a visit to the European Commission. The objective is to have an information and dialogue session on "European Energy policy" with relevant Commission officials and if possible the Commissioner.

But contacts can also be made in a more relaxed atmosphere. Considering this, some Committee members are arranging a billiard tournament between Japanese business people and EU related officers. This will take place during the winter 2006/2007.

If you are interested in such kind of events, or have ideas about interesting events and topics of discussion, please don't hesitate to become member of the BJA EU Committee.

And last but not least, as newly appointed Chairman of the BJA EU Committee, I would like to thank, on behalf of all the BJA members, my predecessor, Mr Patrick Schobbens for his efforts and wish him all the best in his new functions.



**Mr Didier Stevens**,  
Chairman BJA EU Committee  
Manager Government Affairs,  
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## YES V Program - First Briefing Session

7 September 2006, Hotel Amigo, Brussels

On 7 September, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce held the first briefing session in the framework of the, with BLCCJ co-organized, YES V Program at Hotel Amigo. Thanks to the great support of several guest speakers, the participants could deepen the knowledge about “Business in Japan”.

After a welcome word by Mr Sepulchre, CEO of Sogeman and Chairman of the Membership Committee, and Mrs Blondé, Managing Director of zeal and Chairman of the YES Committee, the rest of the participants, including candidates of YES V program as well as MBA students from Waseda University in Tokyo introduced themselves.

Prof. Vanoverbeke, KU Leuven, began the series of lectures with a presentation concerning the Japanese business culture from an academic point of view. Following, Mr Oyama from JETRO described a wide range of information sources in terms of the current Japanese economic situation in general and the market situation by industry and commercial system in specific. After the

lunch, Mr Masaki, Representative of Japan Management Association Group (JMAC) presented “Doing business with Japan”, highlighting the management style in Japan and the window of opportunities for Europeans. Before ending the First Briefing Session, all YES V candidates enjoyed the Japanese language lesson by Prof. Sakurai of KU Leuven. They learned basic Japanese greetings with some exercises, simple grammatical explanations and some tips for every kind of business situation.

During the coffee break and lunch, all participants had casual conversations to share interests, information and experiences. Through this session, attendants could develop business networks in addition to a deepened understanding of Business in Japan.



The MBA Students of Waseda University showing their unified zeal for assisting the YES Participants to make their projects a success in Japan.



Mr Winderickx of BLCCJ enjoyed the company of former teachers and speakers at the Briefing Session; Prof. Sakurai and Prof. Vanoverbeke of the KU Leuven.



Mrs Blondé, Chairman of the YES Committee and Managing Director of zeal (middle), enjoying the company of Mr Jadoul of Qualiphar and Mrs Collet of AWEX.



Mr Masaki of JMAC and Mrs Abraham of La Pierre Bleue Belge discussing different management styles in Japan.



The YES Participants listening attentively to the words of the speakers.



## YES V Program - Second Briefing Session Visit of HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium

12 October 2006, AW Europe, Braine l'Alleud

Thanks to the generous support by AW Europe and several guest speakers, on 12th October, the YES Second Briefing Session of the BJA was held at AW Europe to welcome HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium just before lunch time.

In the morning, after a welcome word by Mrs Ann Blondé, Chairman of the YES Committee and Mr Susumu Kasai, President & CEO of AW Europe, two former YES participants, Mr Luc Dochez of Tigenix (participant of YES IV 2004) and Mr Wing Chung Leung of Unibind-Peleman Industries (participant of YES I 1998), introduced several important tips in doing business in Japan through their experience and testimonial presentations.

The YES Program is a commercial export project under the auspices of HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium, who honored the YES Program with his presence that day. During the cocktail, HRH encouraged all YES candidates. His enormous support to the YES program was very much appreciated and his extensive conversations with the participants during cocktails expressed again his deep interest in foreign trade with Japan and Japanese investors in Belgium.

After lunch, Mr Masaaki Hayashida, Managing Director of Nippon Express Belgium, gave a lecture concerning "Service in Japan". In addition, Prof. Willy Vande Walle, Department of Japanese Studies at KU Leuven, addressed the audience with examples of Japanese business insights. With these expert speeches, all attendees increased their understanding about the service level in Japan.

Through the briefing sessions, every participant could cultivate a broad initial view with regards to doing business in Japan, pre-departure.



From right to left: Mr Yamamura of Aisin Europe, Mr Kasai of AW Europe, HE Ambassador Naito, HRH Prince Philippe, Mr Knop and Mr Kaisin of AW Europe



Bringing a toast 'Kanpai' to the success of YES.



Mr Van Riet of Beyond Snow and Mrs Schepers of Prefamac sharing their business plan with HRH Prince Philippe, while Mrs Blondé, Chairman of the YES Committee, points out the excellent opportunities for the Belgian candidates in Japan.



During the Executive Meeting, Japanese investments were discussed by HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium, Mr Willame, President of the BJA, HE Ambassador Naito, Mr Yamamura, Managing Director of Aisin Europe, Mr Hawia, Economic Advisor to HRH, and Mr Kasai, President and CEO of AW Europe.

*Pictures: Courtesy by Mr Duquesne of E. & H. De Beukelaer*



## A Magical Evening in the Forests - Roaming of the Deer

30 September 2006, Libin

On Saturday 30th of September, the Cultural Committee of the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce had the pleasure of inviting the members of BJA, their families and friends to the forests of Libin in the Ardennes to listen to the roaring of the deer. Nearly 50 enthusiastic participants including many children joined to experience this rare and majestic moment during the season of mating that drives the male deer to roar and roam through the fields.

Mr Laurent Jacquet, Alderman of Libin greeted the participants upon arrival, followed by a warm welcome speech by Mr André Guillaume, Mayor of Libin, who kindly honored us with his presence throughout the evening. The participants then received a thorough

video presentation about the deer by the forest expert Mr Jean-Pol Juckler, which was kindly translated into Japanese by Mr Yukio Hakkaku, Director of Cultural and Information Centre and a member of BJA Cultural Committee. Followed by delicious regional delicacies and cocktails, the participants made a magical walk in the forest under the guidance of the forest experts and heard the impressive roaring of deer at night.

Thanks to the generous support by the city Libin, who is celebrating 10 years of relations with its sister city Miyagawa, the event has ended with great success as all participants enjoyed the warm hospitality extended by the city and this truly unique experience of touching the greatness of nature.



The Mayor of Libin, Mr André Guillaume, expressed his heartfelt appreciation of the wonderful relation his city has with sister city Miyagawa



In the first row, two cultural committee members, started imagining the greatness of nature; Mr le Hodey and Mr Hakkaku.



The two forest experts (left) guided the groups into the night, flanked by Mr Jacquet of the City of Libin and Mr Albert of Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ



Family members of the Goto family, the Watanabe family and the Takeuchi family anxiously waited for the thrilling experience to start walking in the dark forest and hearing the roaring of the deer at Libin.



## Press release and Business Luncheon for the book : The experience of 20 Japanese companies in Belgium - 2006- 16 October, Concert Noble Brussels

On the 16th October, the official press release of BJA's new publication, "The experience of 20 Japanese companies in Belgium - 2006 - " was held by the Investment Committee of the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce (BJA) at Concert Noble in Brussels.

The press conference started with a welcoming speech by Mr Willame, President of the BJA. Subsequently, Mr Nomura, Chairman of the BJA Investment Committee, gave an outline of the book and the current Japanese companies' investment situation in Belgium. Following the presentation, Mr Thielemans, Chairman of the BJA Business Committee and Vice-President of the BJA, concluded the press conference part.

During the following business luncheon, Mr De Gucht, Belgian Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs, addressed the subject of Japanese investments in Belgium. Thereafter, HE Ambassador Naito of the Japanese Embassy in Belgium showed gratitude toward the Belgians to warmly accept and support Japanese enterprises' business in his speech.

During the cocktail-time and business luncheon, every attendance enhanced business networks beyond nationalities. This event was also a wonderful opportunity to have some last words with HE Ambassador Naito, before returning to Japan end of October.

*BJA would like to thank the Federal Public Service of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, Cooperation & Development and the regional investment agencies for their generous financial help in making the book a reality.*

*BJA also would like to express gratitude to all the companies who have given their time and support to participate in this publication, and to all the organizations and individuals who have helped to promote this endeavor.*

For book ordering details: [www.bja.be](http://www.bja.be) or [info@bja.be](mailto:info@bja.be)  
For HE Minister De Gucht's speech, please visit:  
[www.bja.be/publications\\_statistics.php](http://www.bja.be/publications_statistics.php)



From left; HE Minister De Gucht, Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs, HE Ambassador Naito, Mr Moorkens, Honorary Vice-President, Mr Tsuboi, President of Nippon Shokubai Europe - one of the profiled companies in the book -, and Mrs I'Hoost, Deputy Director General Belgian Agency for Foreign Trade.



From left: Mr Willame, President of the BJA, HE Ambassador Naito and Mr Nomura, Chairman of the BJA Investment Committee.



Mr Thielemans, Vice-President of the BJA and Managing Director Corporate Banking of Fortis, proudly wraps up the press conference highlighting the strong points of Belgium and welcoming new Japanese investors to come.



HE Minister De Gucht, Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs, praising the initiative of publication while highly valuating Japanese investments into Belgium.



## Friendship Committee news

### Beer Tasting Event

24 September, Brussels

On Sunday 24th September, the BJA-Friendship's event was held, which was dedicated to one of the most famous Belgian products: BEER! It was a good occasion to taste beers at Beer Mania, a shop providing traditionally-made 400 beers at a tasting room. Participants were almost 30 people to enjoy 9 different kinds of Belgian beers: lambic, white, ... and also the "Mea Culpa" only made by Beer Mania. It was a great Sunday afternoon, since everybody had a casual chat and tasted beers in a good mood! It was an enjoyable event. I am sure that all attendants are already waiting for the next BJA-Friendship event!!

Lionel

いつもに較べて、はじめてお会いする方が多く、“ビール”という同じ興味から集まった者同士、会話もはずみ、日曜の午後のよい気分転換となりました。このオリジナルのビールや凝ったデザインのビールグラスなどからオーナーのこだわりが伺え、“ビール”に改めて魅せられてしまいました。多数のビールを少しずつという、個人では味わえないな人も嬉しい企画でした。

本橋 恭子  
MOTOHASHI Kyoko



### Farm Visit

16 July, Vieux-Genappe

For the second time, the BJA Friendship Committee organized a visit to the Ferme Pedagogique in Vieux-Genappe, not far from Waterloo. All the elements were there to have an excellent activity: nice weather, many Japanese and Belgian participants (including families) and a very friendly and relaxing atmosphere.

It was clear that for some people it was their first visit to a farm and the younger elements of the group were particularly excited. After a brief explanation of the history of the farm Mr Bodard, the farmer, took us by tractor around some of the fields, stopping occasionally to look at the different types of vegetables and grains they are producing. He and his wife then escorted us around the farm giving detailed information on how they do their daily work while presenting the animals

of the farm (pigs, rabbits, cows, chicken, ducks,...) The children even had the opportunity to give feeding-bottles to baby cows and to play with baby rabbits!! The animals themselves certainly did not disappoint and a variety of smells and noises came our way as we walked around.

To end the activity, we were invited in the farm garden to eat delicious home-made pancakes and waffles, as well as beer and soft drinks.

It was a great experience, which we all enjoyed. The activity was so successful that we are already planning the 2007 edition!

*Olivier van Beneden, Chairman BJA Friendship Committee*



## Friendship Committee news

The BJA Friendship Committee's website: [www.bja-yc.be](http://www.bja-yc.be)

The Friendship Committee (BJA-FC) began creating their specific website beginning 2003. After several brainstorming sessions, lively meetings and hard labour, the website was publicly launched mid-August 2003. Since then, more than 64.000 visitors came through the website, now welcoming currently an average of 116 visitors every day.

The BJA-FC's website provides the visitors with information on who the committee members are, the **calendar of activities**, and an **archive of hundreds of activity pictures**. It has been the policy to have the website and all communication in both English and Japanese so that everybody feels at home within the organization.

The BJA-FC's events are of course proudly announced, and one will find all the detailed information about next events as soon as this information becomes available.

In the picture archive, numerous pictures of BJA-FC's previous events are to be found! In the 4 lists available (2003-2006), participants will recognize other participants they have met at the time, and people hesitating to participate will certainly want to take part soon!

On the special page announcing other Belgium-Japan related events, not organized by the BJA in general or the BJA-FC specifically, one will find other events concerning Belgium-Japan relations taking place in Belgium. Visitors will find events such as "Let's talk in Japanese!" allowing learners of Japanese to meet and talk with Japanese, Japanese official announcements (Speech Contest, Study Tour, Government Scholarship, ...) or suggestions for free time (Japanese cinema and concerts in Belgium or broadcasts of interest on television).

The 'links' and 'address book' will help the visitor to find other useful information, such as a Japanese restaurant, shop or organization in Belgium, or a school of Japanese!

And last but not least, the '**special mailing-list**' allows anyone to keep informed and receive BJA-FC's latest information by email. The BJA-FC sends approximately 2 e-mails per month, depending on the organized events. The mailing-list actually contains 600 e-mail addresses, and most inscriptions were made through the website.

Have a look at the BJA-FC's website at [www.bja-yc.be](http://www.bja-yc.be) ! The Belgium-Japan Association Friendship Committee hopes that you will enjoy your visit!



今回のBJA-FC(Friendship Committee)はウォータールーに近いビュー・ジェナツペのペダゴジック農園の見学会です。雲ひとつない晴天の中、約40名が参加しました。今回我々を快く迎えてくださった農園の主ボダール夫妻、忙しい農園経営の側ら、学校の生徒や一般の方々を対象に教育農園としての役割も担っているとのこと、我々も貴重な農場体験をさせて頂きました。機械化された近代的な搾乳機がある一方で、広々とした農場では牛がのんびりと草を頬張り、そんな牧歌的な中をトラクターで移動、時折吹く風がなんて気持ちの良いこと。広い農場の見学が終わった後はお待ちかね、ティータイム。手作りワッフル、クレープそしてサンドイッチの食べ放題。参加メンバーいつの間にか旧知の友のような雰囲気の中話も弾み、とても楽しい一日となりました。

*Osamu CHONAN, participant*

## Facts and Figures on Japan

### Hiroshima Prefecture - Hiroshima City, “City of Innovation”

by James Clarke, Economic Affairs Section, Hiroshima City Hall

Hiroshima city, at the geographic centre of Western Japan, is built in one of the most sheltered harbors on the Seto Inland Sea area and within a 200 km radius one can find 20 million people, representing a GDP of approximately 800 billion dollars. It is the center of industry for the Chugoku-Shikoku region, an area economically larger than many European countries, and acts as the regions economic nerve center. Combined with an advanced distribution system consisting of multiple advanced port facilities, two airports, and extensive rail and road links, many companies have chosen to locate their headquarters in Hiroshima city. It is even used by many companies as a test market for their products, as consumer and market averages closely follow national trends and success in Hiroshima often provides an accurate indication of success elsewhere in the country.

The city is a vibrant, growing city, which derives a large part of its economic strength from local manufacturing industry, with core competencies being automotive production (Mazda), and machine part production. Also showing strongly are the service industry and the wholesale and retail trades, and in recent years business activity in high-technology fields such as electronics, electronic parts and telecommunications has increased significantly. In fact the mayor and business leaders have, for a number of years now, been pushing the modernization of the city on several fronts: actively promoting research and development by laboratories and universities, undertaking projects to keep Hiroshima on the cutting edge (such as the e-City Hall project (computerization of City Hall)), and setting in process several major construction projects to revitalize Hiroshima by building infrastructure and attracting investment, especially by original, creative and innovative companies.

An offshoot of the research and design requirements of its manufacturing businesses was that Hiroshima already possessed a great number of innovative companies engaged in new design and design processes, and manufacturing systems. Many of these companies hold the top market shares in Japan or the world, or are the sole operators in their particular field. This innovation is the engine being harnessed to drive current and future growth.

One of the highest education levels in Japan, combined with the concentration of industry, has also resulted in an accumulation of highly-skilled personnel and infrastructure. This is given as a major reason for location to Hiroshima by businesses operating here,

and in spite of the high quality of the labor force, a benefit for companies in Hiroshima city is a salary level lower than most other similar-sized or larger cities. Very competitive business setup and running costs, and a comprehensive system of subsidies and tax breaks make Hiroshima an attractive option. This is especially true of ‘The Hiroshima Station Urban Development District’ and the ‘Seifu-Shinto area’, the development of which the city is actively promoting, and as such have been allocated additional incentives.

‘Seifu-shinto’, the regions largest construction project, is an attempt to build “a city within a city”, an area for “Living, Working, Learning and Recreation”. Located on a 4,750ha site west of the city, it is divided into areas separated by function, and is only 15 minutes from the city by highway. Commuting options will be expanded within the near future by a new train line.

The city’s vibrant lifestyle found it included recently in Lonely Planets list of the worlds top cities. It enjoys a mild climate provided by its position in the Seto Inland Climate Zone, and is sheltered by the Chugoku Mountains to the north (also provides skiing in winter) and the Shikoku Mountains to the south-west, it averages more than 2000 sunshine hours per year, has a low cost of living, and commuting times that are amongst the shortest in Japan. As one online travel guide stated:

“This historic city is much more than its Peace Memorial Park and a stepping stone to Miyajima. It has much to offer year-round... world-class museums, gardens, temples, professional baseball, shopping and more are all to be found in Hiroshima City.”

So, in summary, a place of history, culture, fun and creativity, economic strength and economic potential, Hiroshima City.

For any (business) information about Hiroshima, please do not hesitate to kindly contact:

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Hiroshima



## News from the members

### NYK approves acquisition of RORO terminals in Belgium

The Board of NYK in Tokyo approved the takeover of the Belgian RORO terminals in Zeebrugge and Antwerp from PSA.

This decision is in line with NYK's medium term strategy, set-out in the NEW HORIZON 2007 policy document, to improve NYK's port infrastructure to ensure stable marine transportation.

Svein Steimler, Managing Director of NYK Line (Europe) RORO Ltd commented: "This decision means that NYK, already the global leader in RORO transportation, is set to expand the scope of its quality services to customers in RORO terminal operations. After extended and fruitful negotiations with PSA, NYK will continue investing in Belgium, being one of the leading North European export and import corridors."

"We are aiming to continue NYK's policy of building state-of-the-art RORO terminal facilities, in terms of quality and systems, to meet the expectations of our customer base and to continue our proactive approach towards the handling and transportation of cars and other rolling cargo."

Source: NYK line

日本郵船、フランダースの自動車専用ターミナルを取得  
日本郵船株式会社は、シンガポール港湾公社 (PSA Corporation Ltd.) との間で、ベルギーのゼーブルージュ港およびアントワープ港における3つの自動車専用ターミナルを取得する事で合意したと発表しました。これらのターミナルは既に日本郵船社の欧州における重要なハブ港となっており、ベネルクス3国、フランス、ドイツ、スイス、オーストリア向け完成車の荷揚げや、スウェーデン、ポーランド、スペイン、ポルトガル向け完

成車のフィーダー船への積み替え等、同社の取扱いは年間約11万台(2005年)に達しています。

この取得により、日本郵船社はこれら3つのターミナルを欧州における最重要拠点として位置付け、より一層の荷役の効率化を進め、競争力のある完成車の一貫輸送体制を構築していくとのことです。

Source: FIT

### Exchange of Diplomatic Notes for Entry into Force of the Japan-Belgium Social Security Agreement

October 23, 2006

Diplomatic notes for the entry into force of the Agreement between Japan and the Kingdom of Belgium on Social Security (Japan-Belgium Social Security Agreement, signed on February 23 (Wed), 2005) were exchanged on October 23 (Mon), Belgian time, in Brussels, between Mr Shohei Naito, Japanese Ambassador to Belgium, and Mr Karel De Gucht, Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs. **This Agreement will enter into force on January 1, 2007.**

It has been a pending issue between Japan and the Kingdom of Belgium that employees and others who are temporarily sent to the other country by corporations, etc. are obliged to join both the pension systems and health insurance systems of both countries, which imposes an economic burden on the corporations and their employees. It has also been an issue that such people who are temporarily sent from Belgium to Japan are ineligible to receive pensions, as their enrollment periods in the system of Japan fall short of the necessary duration. The Japan-Belgium Social Security Agreement is intended to solve these and other relevant issues,

## News from the members

by adjusting the application of, in Japan, pension and health insurance systems, and in Belgium, systems of pension, health insurance, workers' accident compensation insurance and employment insurance, as well as establishing entitlement to benefits of those temporarily sent to the other country by adding together the period of coverage in the systems of both countries. By this Agreement, those sent for a period of five years or less will be in principle subject only to the pension and health insurance systems of the original country. It is expected that the entry into force of this Agreement will reduce the burden imposed on the corporations and employees and further promote human and economic exchanges between Japan and Belgium.

日・ベルギー社会保障協定の効力発生のための外交上の公文の交換について

社会保障に関する日本国とベルギー王国との間の協定(日・ベルギー社会保障協定: 平成17年2月23日(水)署名)の効力発生のため外交上の公文の交換は、ベルギー時間10月23日(月)、ブリュッセルにおいて、内藤昌平駐ベルギー大使とカレル・デ・フフト外務大臣との間で行われた。これにより本協定は平成19年1月1日(月)に効力を生ずることとなった。

日・ベルギーにおいては、企業等より相手国に一時派遣される被用者等について、日・ベルギー両国の医療保険制度の双方に加入が義務付けられ、社会保障料の二重払いの問題が生じている。また、ベルギーから我が国に一時派遣去れる被用者等については、我が国における就労期間が短いため年金の受給に必要な期間を満たさず年金を受給できないとの問題が生じている。日・ベルギー社会保障協定は、日本においては年金・医療保険、ベルギーにおいては年金・医療保険・労災保険・雇用保険の適用を調整すること、並びに両国での保険期間を通算してそれぞれの国における年金の受給権を確立することにより、これらの問題を解決することを目的としており、この協定により、派遣期間が5年以内の一時派遣被用者等は、原則として、派遣元国の年金制度及び医療保険制度にのみ加入することとなる。

この協定の発効により、企業と被用者等の負担が軽減され、日・ベルギー両国間の人的交流と経済交流が一層促進されることが期待される。

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan  
[www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2006/10/1023-2.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2006/10/1023-2.html)

### Tele Atlas Achieves European Coverage Milestone

Tele Atlas, a leading global geographic content provider, announced it has reached a major European milestone by delivering complete digital map coverage

of Western Europe. With the addition of detailed Ireland and Northern Ireland maps to the existing database of countries, Tele Atlas European maps now cover more than 7.8 million total kilometres, the equivalent of travelling around the Equator 195 times or a return trip to the moon 10 times. Within Western Europe, the database now reaches more than 386 million inhabitants, includes 1.7 million 'standard' points-of-interest (POIs) and nearly 90 percent of all house numbers across the region.

In addition, Tele Atlas has made significant advancements in Eastern Europe, incorporating data from the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), and from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Russia. The regional additions bring Tele Atlas' total coverage to more than 536,000 kilometres in Central and Eastern Europe. Data for all of Europe features extensive interconnecting road networks augmented by detailed street networks for many of the main population centres.

Tele Atlas European digital map coverage incorporates data from a combination of professional drivers, innovative mobile mapping van technology and other authoritative sources. The data includes detailed turn-by-turn and address information to ensure the highest level of accuracy. Tele Atlas leads the market with new product enhancements, including 3D landmarks, terrain elevation data for all of Europe and more than 70 categories of POIs. Additionally, the company offers the most comprehensive coverage for phoneme data in Western Europe to support all major speech technologies.

Source : [www.teleatlas.com](http://www.teleatlas.com)

### Study grants offered to Japanese students for post-graduate studies in Belgium

Every year, the Flemish Community and the French Community of Belgium offer respectively 5 and 3 scholarships of a term of one year to Japanese students who wish to continue their studies at a Belgian university. Candidates must be under the age of 35 and hold a university degree.

The scholarships cover all fields of study available at Belgian universities: Humanities and Social Sciences (Literature, History, History of Art, Laws, Political Sciences, Economics, Commerce, Pedagogy, Psychology, Sociology, Music, Fine Arts, etc.) and Natural Sciences (Pure Science, Engineering, Agriculture, Pharmacy, Medicine, Dentistry, etc.).

The candidates are required to submit their application

## News for the members

to the Embassy of Belgium in Tokyo, where a preliminary selection examination is organized (written examination and interview). The retained candidates' files will then be forwarded to the authorities in Belgium which will take the final decision.

The details of the scholarships for the academic year 2007-2008 (term: from September 2007 to June 2008) will be announced by October 2006 (<http://www.diplomatie.be/tokyo/>). **The deadline for submission of the applications is end of December 2006 and the examination is normally planned for January 2007.**

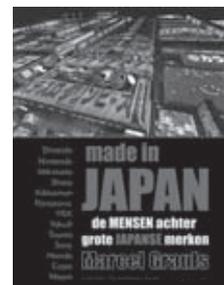
For more information, please contact the Belgian Embassy (tel. 0081-(0)3/3262-0346). You can also find information on the website of the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), [www.jasso.go.jp](http://www.jasso.go.jp).

Source: Belgian Embassy in Japan

Book on Japan by Belgian author Marcel Grauls,  
**Made in Japan**  
*The people behind the big and famous Japanese marks*

“Made in Japan” is not a management book, a political history or a book about geisha's or Bonzai-trees. This book describes the stories of the lives of 13 ‘mark-makers’ who started to work as child in little work shops but ended their lives at the head of a company with establishments over the whole world.

Shiseido, Nintendo, Sharp, Yakult and Toyota are just a small selection of the marks described in this book. The book is for sale in every book shop in Belgium (written in Dutch).



BJA presents:

# Directory 2006-2007

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The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce is happy to present you our third issue of the BJA Directory 2006-2007. The BJA Directory has the objective to be a comprehensive source of information on the BJA-members. In addition, a list of the data of 260 Japanese companies in Belgium is added as well. The directory is a handy reference on Belgian-Japanese business performance. By introducing the members, it has the aim to be a powerful resource for building, managing and expanding networking and business opportunities, cultural exchange, finding jobs, evaluating goods and services, and researching trends or

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

## News for the members

### Belgian filmmaker in the footsteps of Hiroshige

Belgian filmmaker Luc Cuyvers, whose films have been broadcast worldwide (see [www.mnfilms.com](http://www.mnfilms.com)) has set his eyes on Japan. Though his next project has little to do with the ocean topics he tends to cover, he professes it is one he has long wanted to do. "Virtually all of my previous films have included a major Japanese co-producer", he explains, "which gave me the opportunity to travel back and forth to Japan many times". With each trip the desire grew to do a portrait of Japan that goes beyond the cliché-ridden films that often appear on western screens. His choice eventually fell on a road movie of sorts, provisionally and simply entitled Tokaido.

"Actually it is a film about two roads", Cuyvers says: "an old one-- once Japan's most important road-- and a new one, paved on top of it. So in a sense we get a mix of two road trips. In the first we follow Hiroshige, who traveled the Tokaido in the early 1830s. In the second we trace his footsteps to figure out what remains of what he saw". Cuyvers emphasizes that, while simple, the concept goes far beyond merely comparing past and present. Because understanding Japan, in his view, requires a trip into its past, and one could do far worse than pick the Tokaido for that excursion. With Hiroshige he also acquired a terrific guide. Japan's great artist indeed not only made the trip at a fascinating time, in the waning days of the Edo era, he also left a superb impression of what he saw and experienced along the way.

The film will thus be somewhat of a travel-history hybrid, a style Cuyvers mastered in the internationally acclaimed "Into the Rising Sun", a multi-million dollar series, which chronicled the Portuguese expansion. He likes that approach because it allows him to make intelligent films that still appeals to the public at large. Comparing Hiroshige's impressions with what remains of them "provides a wealth of opportunities for a terrific film", as he puts it. "In the cities, much of what Hiroshige saw has vanished, of course, but the search is fun and entertaining. Tracing his footsteps gets us in contact with Japanese living, working or traveling between Tokyo and Kyoto; sometimes on foot, other times on a commuter train, in a truck, a taxi, a fishing boat or whatever we can find and whatever keeps us in touch with and in sight of the old road..." Much the same way ordinary people provided Hiroshige a great deal of inspiration, interaction with today's Japanese thus becomes a key ingredient of the film. "And so the Old Tokaido continues to link people" Cuyvers concludes. "Only it doesn't really do so between different places as much as it does between different times."

Cuyvers' proposal obtained enthusiastic endorsements from the commissioning editors at Belgium's two public broadcasters, and he is now getting a major French channel involved, with whom he has cooperated on several occasions. Yet aside from co-production funds, he would also like to obtain corporate support from Japanese companies operating in Belgium or Europe. "Our films are generally not only shown in Belgium or Europe", he says, "but worldwide so we can provide our sponsors a good deal of visibility, either as an acknowledgment or - where appropriate - in terms of branding. But I hope that the key reason a Japanese company may want to get involved is to get Belgians and Europeans in general to better understand and appreciate Japan. And I feel a film like Tokaido, would go a long way in achieving that."

### Any BJA member interested in helping out, even with creative ideas, can reach Cuyvers at [lc@mnfilms.com](mailto:lc@mnfilms.com).

On the production's wish list are funds as well as in-kind support: transportation, for instance, both to and in Japan, as well as lodging in Tokyo, Kyoto and various places in between; and especially logistical support. "We urgently need a bi-lingual production researcher in Tokyo", Cuyvers says. "The longer I can get this person to prepare the production, the better the film." He would also love to hear from readers who may have associates living or working near the Old Tokaido, or who may have particular stories that could be of interest to the film.

Cuyvers is now implementing his production schedule, which will take him back to Japan for more detailed scouting in the spring and shooting either shortly thereafter or more likely in the Fall—his preferred filming period. That schedule will allow the film to be released worldwide in 2008.

### A Japanese artist at the Museum of Ixelles

The Museum of Ixelles is preparing an exhibition dedicated to the "Portraits de l'autre" in contemporary art (21.02 - 29.04.2007). The exhibition (and its catalogue) will present a new set of a hundred works. A selection of 8 large size photographs of the Japanese photographer Ishiuchi Miyako will constitute one of its strong points. These images belong to a series entitled "Mother S 2000 - 2005 - Traces of the future". Touching, intimate and universal, these images primarily deal with the spectacular transformation of women's place in Japanese society since the second world war. They also show, simply, what remains of a mother after her



MN Film teams have tended to focus on maritime topics. Now they have set their eyes on Japan.

## EU-Japan Relations

EU - 日本

death: some used up lipstick, a bruised breast, a silk shirt in light, a pair of shoes, a dental plate... These images reveal the love of a girl for her mother: they evoke old age without excessive modesty as well as the discrete seduction of a woman, after Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Ishiuchi Miyako was born in 1947 in Yokosuka. Honoured with many prizes, exhibited in the whole world (she represented the Japanese pavilion at the latest Biennale of Venice in 2005), her work has never been shown in Belgium yet. The Museum of Ixelles would be particularly proud to be the first to reveal her work to the Belgian public, with the support of a sponsor.

It is within this framework that the Museum is in search of a generous sponsor who would participate in the transportation expenses of these works from Japan. The approximate cost of this budget heading of the exhibition is about 5.000 euro. Such a partnership will not fail to be highlighted.

Contacts: Museum of Ixelles, Rue Jean Van Volsem 71, 1050 Brussels. Nicole d'Huart, Curator, and Claire Leblanc, associated Curator,  
Tel.: +32 2 515 64 27, musee-ixelles@skynet.be



### Tuition-free mission on FDI in Japan: call for applications

The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation is a joint venture co-financed by the European Commission and the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI).

The EU-Japan Centre's Tokyo Head Office opened in 1987. The European Office opened in Brussels in 1996. The organization's aim is to encourage investments in Japan: indeed, FDI in Japan is becoming a business reality in a way that it has never been before, but also there is a favorable perception of the EU as attempting to achieve the golden mean between economic rationality and social cohesion. For EU corporations seeking a base in East Asia, Japan is now set fair both for the commercial reality and the perceptual presentation.

The EU-Japan Centre will organise a tuition-free mission on FDI in Japan in February 2007. Expected participants should become equipped to act as the corporate "FDI in Japan Project Leader" able to oversee the entire sequence of events.

More information: [www.eujapan.com/europe/fdi.html](http://www.eujapan.com/europe/fdi.html)

*Source: EU-Japan Center for Industrial Cooperation*

### EU companies have designs on Japan First trade mission of new Gateway to Japan Program took place

26 design companies from 12 EU Member States participated in a Trade Mission on Interior Lifestyle from 30 October to 3 November, as part of the export-support program "EU Gateway to Japan" (GTJ). The companies had the opportunity to display their products and meet

with Japanese business people of the same sector.

"European design has a positive image in Japan in terms of originality and creativity. It is considered to be a benchmark for quality when opposed to imports from Asia and other regions. The GTJ Trade Mission will give the participants a unique opportunity to promote their products directly to their Japanese counterparts, and hopefully facilitate their entry in a rapidly growing market", said Eric Hamelinck, Project Manager Gateway to Japan, DG Relex, Unit for Relations with Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand, European Commission.

The event, taking place from 30 October to 3 November in Tokyo, was the first of the Gateway to Japan 3 Plus campaign, launched by the European Commission in April 2006 and due to host 6 additional events until mid-2007.

Jacqueline Heijs-Pham, designer for Belgian company "JHP Concept", took part in the Interior Lifestyle Trade Mission for the second time. She said: "I would absolutely recommend this experience to anyone interested in the Japanese market. You can't get in without the knowledge and understanding that events like this facilitate."

The GTJ Trade Mission coincided with an important moment for the Design sector in Japan: the "Tokyo Designer's Week" (2-6 November), one of the major events of the kind in Japan, celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

On 1 November, the "European Design Award" was conferred to young designers living in Japan. The award was part of the EU-Japan Design Competition, launched in April 2006 by the European Commission Delegation in Japan and the Finnish Presidency.

The participants of the GTJ Trade Mission took advantage of all these initiatives aiming to promote EU-Japan co-

## EU-Japan Relations

operation in the area of design and to raise awareness in Japan about European design.

For more information on the campaign:  
[www.gatewaytojapan.org](http://www.gatewaytojapan.org).

Source: EUROCHAMBRES

### The Sixth Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM6)

September 2006

#### Date and Participants

The Sixth Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM6) was held in Helsinki, Finland on 10 and 11 September 2006. The Helsinki Summit, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the ASEM process, was participated by the leaders of Japan, China, Korea and 10 ASEAN countries as well as the leaders of 25 EU member states and the European Commission (a few members were represented at ministerial level).

#### Overview of discussions

##### *Session 1: Strengthening Multilateralism and Addressing Security Threats (Afternoon, 10 September)*

The Chairman invited discussions by asking how to strengthen the multilateral approach on common challenges and threats which Asian and European countries faced.

Prime Minister Koizumi, referring to terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, and piracies as major common challenges, introduced Japan's efforts on those issues in concrete terms. Prime Minister Koizumi also took up the North Korean issues, and stated that the international community should be united in calling for an early resolution of the abduction issue as well as its nuclear and missiles problems.

Leaders shared the view on the importance of multilateral approaches centred around the United Nations to address common threats including transnational organized crime, three major infectious diseases and new types of influenza.

##### *Working dinner: Regional Developments (Evening, 10 September)*

Leaders discussed the situations in the Korean Peninsula, Myanmar and the Middle East, including Lebanon and the Iranian nuclear issue.

Prime Minister Koizumi stated that the abduction by North Korea was an issue of international scope, in which victims from South Korea and some European countries were involved. He called for cooperation

from each of the partners for an early resolution of the issue.

##### *Session 2: Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations (Morning, 11 September)*

Leaders observed a silent moment for the victims of 9/11 five years ago. Many leaders emphasized the importance of mutual understanding through the dialogue among different faiths and cultures, and stated that ASEM could play an important role in this field. There was a report on the outcome of the Fourth Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting (ASEP4) where educational exchange had been discussed.

##### *Working lunch: Sustainable Development including Environment and Energy Security (11 September)*

Leaders discussed energy security, responses to environmental concerns and climate change.

Prime Minister Koizumi explained Japan's efforts in the field of environment and energy based on its experiences of pollution during the high economic growth period, and stated that ASEM was an important framework in considering how to pursue both environmental protection and economic development.

##### *Session 3: Globalisation and Competitiveness (Afternoon, 11 September)*

Leaders exchanged opinions on cooperation within the ASEM framework in responding to opportunities and challenges of globalisation, regional trade agreements, and implementation of the ASEM5 Economic Declaration. Leaders expressed deep regret about the suspension of the WTO negotiation, which aims at liberalization and development in response to globalisation. They shared the view on the need for early resumption of the negotiation. There was a report from the Asia-Europe Business Forum (AEBF).

##### *Session 4: The Future of ASEM (Afternoon, 11 September)*

The participation of three countries and one organisation (India, Pakistan, Mongolia and the ASEAN Secretariat) from the Asian side, and two European countries (Bulgaria and Romania) in the ASEM process was decided.

The chairman reported the launch of the ASEM Virtual Secretariat, referring to Japan's contribution.

#### Outcome Documents

As a result of the discussions, the following three documents were issued.

- *Chairman's statement*

[www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/asem/asem6/chair\\_](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/asem/asem6/chair_)



## Games and their economic importance

By Sven Cornette, Network Engineer, Yamagata Europe

According to certain investigations, Americans spent more last year on games and hardware than on movie tickets – a shift that is not only occurring in the United States but in other areas of the world as well. The gaming business is not a game anymore.

For about 20 years Japan has had a major share of this industry. I must specify that when I'm talking about games and hardware, I'm talking about console games. These are computers specifically built for gaming, whereas a PC can be used for both work and fun. At the moment there are three major players in the market: Nintendo, Sony (PlayStation) and Microsoft (Xbox). Two of these three are Japanese companies. How did this happen?

Back in the 80s the video game console market was in the hands of American video game companies. But in 1983 this market crashed due to an overload of consoles (Atari 2600, Bally Astrocade, Colecovision and Mattel Intellivision, just to name a few), poorly made games and the rising popularity of the PC, which became affordable for consumers (some of us might remember the Commodore 64). One of the results of this crash was the shift in dominance in the home console market from the United States to Japan. Nintendo introduced its Famicom (Family Computer), or Nintendo Entertainment System (for the American market), and was the major player by 1987. Sega was the next most important player, but was only moderately successful in Europe. A second result was that all software was made or licensed by Nintendo. The Sony PlayStation, a video game console of the 32/64-bit era, came into play during the mid-1990s (the rise of 3D) and is strangely enough the result of a deal gone wrong between Sony and Nintendo. So, for a long time, Japan not only dominated the hardware market but the software market as well.

In the early days this was not very difficult. Games had little textual content so they translated the text in their Japanese version and sold it in the U.S. Since the Japanese video game market has always been very profitable, Japanese companies concentrated on creating games that they thought would sell well in their domestic market. But as games became more complex with voices and text this technique became difficult and the number of Japanese games released in the U.S. declined. This did not mean that American hardware or software developers stepped in to take over the Japanese market share. In fact, they did not, because the market was saturated with domestic systems and games. The Xbox tried to do so, but when one looks at even recent sales figures it holds barely 1% of the market share while the remainder is shared by Nintendo and Sony which alternately hold the lead position as each firm releases new hardware and software products.

The competition from abroad became fiercer, however, so the domestic game market began to shrink for Japanese companies. In response, game developers and hardware producers began broadening their horizons. For example, Nintendo created a game called "Dr Kawashima's brain training", a game to train and improve the brain. Aimed at the growing older segment of the population in the West and Japan, this marketing strategy proved to be a huge success. Sony developed Talkman translation software for the PlayStation portable. With this software these companies expanded their product ranges beyond the game market to tap into new consumer groups. Square Enix, a game software developer, is creating content for cellular phones and personal computers as well as digital home appliances using its experience and technical expertise gained from the game software business. Even the government seems to have plans to increase the interest in Japan's game industry. In a report issued in August entitled the "Game Industry Strategic Framework", Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry ("METI") has issued three recommendations that could seriously impact the gaming industry, with the "Academy Awards of gaming" as one of its more interesting features. Theoretically this could mean that the Tokyo Game Show, Tokyo International Film Festival, and Tokyo Anime Fair could be merged together into a single massive event.

And where does Belgium fit in all this? Well, here too the gap with DVD and movie ticket sales is closing. In 2004 the Belgian game sector had a turnover of 182 million euros. Of this amount, 31% represents sales of hardware and consoles and the other 69% the sales of software and games. Last year 4.1 million games were sold for a total of 192 million euros. This means that the gaming sector is becoming as important as the music and movie industries. This growth percentage is reflected in newly created jobs. The gaming industry is good for 4000 jobs in Belgium. Most of them are in retail since we regrettably do not have many professional game software developers (about 220 of the 4000 people). But this may change. Imec, a Leuven-based research centre for microelectronics and member of the BJA, is currently investigating the possibilities for transferring game technology to mobile phone software platforms. More and more companies are also starting to create online mini-games to promote their names in a more playful way.

So, it is not just game console technology that is evolving but the general attitude towards games as well. While games and the surrounding culture were the rock 'n roll of the 21st century, awareness is slowly growing that will lift games out of the recreational category for use in areas such as education and healthcare. This is an encouraging trend.

## What would Prometheus say today?

### A quick comparison between energy use in Japan and Belgium

by Bertrand Waucquez, Member of the Editorial Committee.



Prometheus according to G. Moreau (Wikipedia)

*When Prometheus, the Titan who, according to Greek mythology, stole fire from Olympus to give it to man and therefore started the era of energy consumption, he was probably not aware of the huge burning of fossil fuels we would experience “shortly” after the industrial revolution.*

Under “business as usual” conditions, most studies suggest that world demand for primary energy might grow 3-fold by 2050 and more than 4-fold by 2100. Atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> could then reach 800 ppm (parts per million) by 2100, almost 3 times the pre-industrial level (current level in 2006: 380 ppm). At no point in the last 650,000 years before the pre-industrial era did the CO<sub>2</sub> concentration go above 300 ppm.

In his very interesting and well documented motion picture “an inconvenient truth”, Al Gore recently explained the emergency of global warming, and what we can do to counteract it. Otherwise, humanity will be running a huge and risky climate experiment.

In fact, some scientists still deny the earth is warming at all. Others accept the earth is going through a warming period but deny the primary cause is man-made emissions of greenhouse gases. Given the complexities of climate, there are always other possible arguments in denial of the effects of greenhouse gases. Real optimists accept that the earth is warming as well as accepting that greenhouse gases are the principal contributor, but they suggest that the end results will be net beneficial rather than damaging to the earth and its inhabitants.

Nevertheless, no matter whether or not climate changes have to do with the burning of fossil fuels and the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that go along with it, most people agree that we should try to save these valuable resources simply because they are present in finite quantities on earth. There are no obvious and immediate solutions in the short term without global political will to act, but one thing which we certainly can do to help is to try to use less energy. After watching “an inconvenient truth”, a few weeks ago, I had the idea to make a quick comparison between Japan and Belgium, and found some interesting figures (Table 1):

- While having comparable (slightly higher) GDP per capita, Japan uses much less energy than Belgium in the main sectors (Industry, Transport, Residential, Commercial...)
- The total electricity generation per capita is comparable (air conditioning, electric appliances and lighting are important energy consumers due to Japanese climate conditions)

- As far as CO<sub>2</sub> is concerned, direct emissions related to housing are much higher in Belgium (larger “4-wall” houses, more available space per capita – see “forest area”)
- Rail transportation of passengers is much more frequently used in Japan than it is in Belgium.

Japan is one of the most advanced countries in the world in terms of its energy efficiency but improvements using better available technologies are still possible and would result in a significant reduction in energy demand.

Of course, the situation in Japan cannot simply be transposed to Belgium: we are not going to change the size of our houses, or their shapes, and in many cases, there are few alternatives to the use of cars today. But maybe we can better isolate our homes, put more clothes on in the winter (or dress lightly and open windows in the summer instead of using energy in air conditioning, which is actually creating more heat than cold!), walk, bike, and use public transportation wherever available.

All these are small individual steps that will allow each of us to make a difference, and hopefully prepare us to switch to more green power. This goes beyond the scope of the current article, but may we also suggest some interesting websites for further information?

#### **[www.energyrichjapan.info](http://www.energyrichjapan.info)**

The “Energy Rich Japan” (ERJ) report examines how Japan’s energy need can be reduced and ultimately be covered by a sustainable energy system using exclusively local, renewable energies. This is shown utilising a demand model, a supply model and a simulation of the electrical system.

#### **[www.climatecrisis.net](http://www.climatecrisis.net)**

Calculate your impact on the climate in terms of the total amount of greenhouse gases you produce – it is quite interesting to see our direct impact when using cars, air flights, heating...

#### **[www.eujapan.com/europe/energy.html](http://www.eujapan.com/europe/energy.html)**

EU-Japan program on alternative energies

*B. Waucquez, 2006-10-29 (the author lived in Japan from 1986 to 1989)*

## Comparison of some key statistics between Japan and Belgium

	What	Unit / Comment	Japan	Belgium	Diff (%)
General Statistics	Population (2003)	thousands	127,559	10,378	
	Total area	thousands km <sup>2</sup>	378	31	
	Population	inhabitants per km <sup>2</sup>	337	335	
	Forest area	% of total area	69	22	
	GDP (2004)	USD per capita	36,500	33,800	
Final energy consumption by sector in 2003 (1)	Total	Toe per capita (3)	2.77	4.11	48
	Industry		1.15	1.63	42
	Transport		0.73	1.00	37
	Other		0.89	1.47	66
Total electricity generation in 2003		TWh (2)	1,037.67	83.56	
		Per capita (kWh)	8,135	8,051	-1
CO <sup>2</sup> emissions in 2003	Total	Tonnes per capita	9.41	11.57	23
	Electricity & Heat		3.61	2.37	-34
	Industry		2.06	2.96	43
	Transport		1.96	2.54	30
	Residential		0.52	1.98	278
	Other		1.26	1.73	38
Transport of passengers (2002 data for Japan, 2003 data for Belgium)	Total	Billions pass.-km	1,225	132	
	Rail		385	8	
	Buses & coaches		86	14	
	Private car		757	110	
	Rail / Total	%	31	6	-80
	B & C / Total	%	7	10	48
	Private car / Total	%	62	83	35
<b>Notes:</b>					
(1) Including non-energy use					
(2) Terawatt hours (10E12 watt hours), excluding output from pumped storage plants					
(3) Tonnes of oil equivalent					

Source: Energy Balances of OECD Countries, 2002-2003, IEA/OECD, Paris, 2005

## NEW BJA PUBLICATION

Strategically located in the heart of Europe, Belgium has a lot to offer to foreign investors: a well-developed infrastructure and a skilled, multilingual labour force are the assets most widely appreciated. Some 240 Japanese companies have invested in Belgium so far, of which twenty were selected in view of the current publication. These twenty companies, either small companies or big multinationals, represent various economic sectors, and come from different regions in Japan, but they all share an appreciation of the Belgian business environment and a strong sense of satisfaction regarding their operations in Belgium. Through these positive testimonials, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce hopes to convince many more Japanese companies that Belgium is an exceptionally attractive investment location. Our message to these readers is: welcome to Belgium!

THE EXPERIENCE OF 20 JAPANESE COMPANIES IN BELGIUM - 2006  
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## Interview

### Koh-ichi Masaki on life in Belgium

by Kris Sierens, Managing Partner of BeforeTheHype and Member of the Editorial Committee

Living abroad is not always the perfect match. Some people though seem to have a knack for finding their place and quickly learn to enjoy life and truly love that new country. The following interview is with someone who has plenty of experience living abroad and who has some interesting insights. While he sees and appreciates the beauty of living in a small country, he also finds that sometimes they can be too modest about their own virtues.

Koh-ichi Masaki arrived in Belgium in 1987. Now he is the director of the Japan Management Association Consultants Inc. JMAC is the oldest Japanese consulting company and is an association of various Japanese companies accredited by the Japanese Ministry of Economics. Their goal is to transfer production and R&D technology to Europe. They have offices in Brussels, Göteborg, Milan, and Paris. The staffs at each office are primarily local but trained by Japanese specialists.

Mr. Masaki started his professional career as design engineer of NEC, then worked for the European Commission. After obtaining MBA from IMD of Lausanne, he joined Ford. Throughout his career, he has lived in a number of countries, so he is in an excellent position to make an accurate comparison between all of them. These days he lives in Knokke and Brussels.

His first impression of Belgium, arriving in the North Station in Brussels was depressing. 'What an awful place', he thought. But it took him only six months to begin to truly understand the Belgians and since then he adores the little country. The façade is perhaps poor, but once you begin to see the country from the inside, you see a totally different image. Belgians don't show off, which can be a very positive thing in the eyes of many people. But sometimes this attitude can work against you. Perhaps it is the reason why we Belgians are not very adept at marketing our country.

Belgium is an exceedingly nice country to live in according to Mr Masaki. The infrastructure and communication facilities are much better compared to those found in other European countries. He is also very familiar with the pros and cons of having a democratic country that also has a king. But he is quick to point out the fact that the Belgians have always chosen to have a king and that the primary role of the person is to maintain traditions. This is something that Mr Masaki finds both admirable and an overall advantage.

Mr Masaki not only meets people during his professional life, he likes to integrate and socialize with his Belgian friends and contacts. He finds that Belgians are very internationally minded and that they adapt to foreigners quickly and flexibly. The average Belgian is fluent in several languages and that, of course, helps foster this good-naturedness. They don't complain too much and



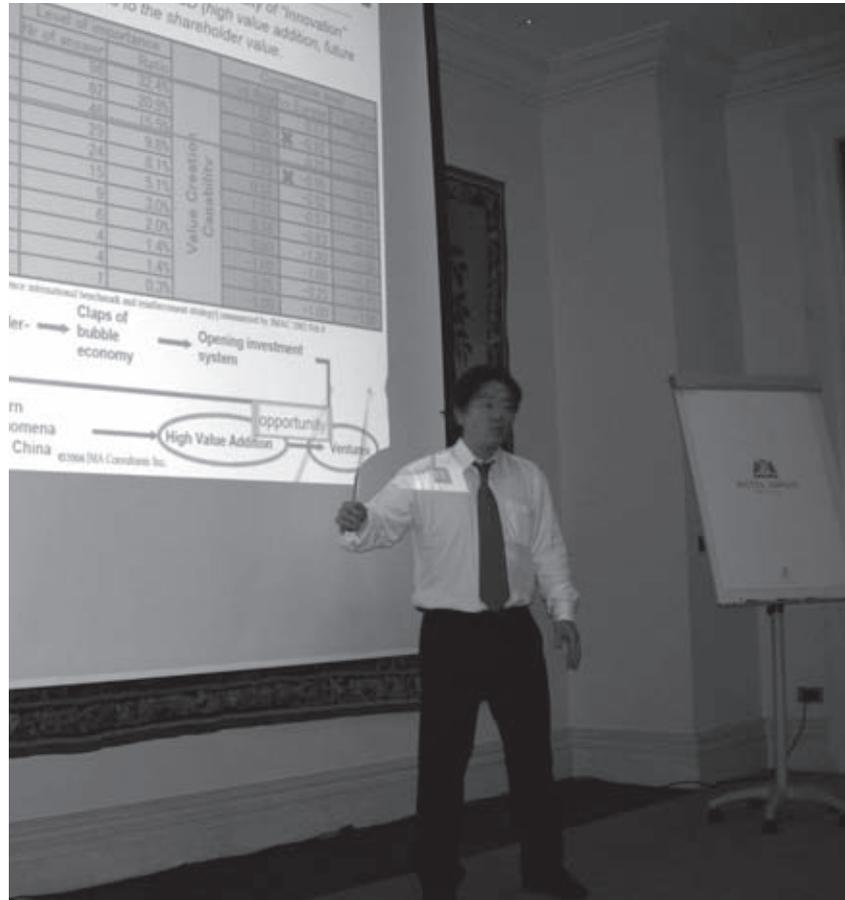
when they do complain, it is almost always with a good reason. Politicians remain reserved and seldom exhibit a domineering attitude. He does observe that Belgians have a bit of an 'eel' attitude. For example, for Germans, one plus one always equals two. Belgians on the other hand always seem ready to discuss the question. Mr Masaki finds this to be a better attitude. The level of education is also very high, mainly because of the excellent universities and the solid school system.

A big difference for Mr Masaki is the way people communicate on a business level. Although Europe is in somewhere between Japan and the USA, the involvement of the legal system looms over everything. Japanese business people are not used to putting everything down on paper immediately and therefore sometimes think that Europeans don't trust them. Japanese people like to do business by giving their word and interpersonal relations are much more important than contracts or business school degrees. Beside the fact that we insist on putting everything on paper, taxation is very high. But Mr Masaki understands very well its necessity if a good welfare system is to be maintained.

Ten years ago he met his wife and although this is his best reason for remaining here, he really loves Belgium. In his free time he likes to go horseback riding and dance the salsa. Favourite places besides Knokke include Nandrin, Brussels, and Gent. Bruges is also

a very nice place to visit, but more like a jewel box that you wouldn't necessarily want to live in full time. The gastronomic delights are numerous with many outstanding restaurants to choose from. Mr Masaki particularly enjoys the Gentse Floraliën, which he has invited his entire family to. But this is yet another area that lacks the kind of worldwide marketing effort it deserves. Should he ever have to return to Japan permanently, he would surely miss the space, the international, cosmopolitan attitude, and the feeling that the essence of all of Europe can be felt throughout Belgium.

As always, we ask for suggestions to help local Belgian business people understand Japan better and secure their success. Mr Masaki stresses first that Belgium should emphasize its strong innovation and creative attitude. When selling a product, don't focus on the product itself, because that can easily be copied. Sell the image, tell stories that create a differentiating added value. Never lower the price. Take Belgian chocolate, which is a success, not because of the product (however excellent it might be), but because of the elegance and class associated with it. All Belgians should take this to heart so that this small but beautiful country can be marketed abroad — and especially in Japan — as it deserves.



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*Life is but a dream  
yet I am here planting onions  
a cheerless feeling*

Koi Nagata

Personalia

The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce would like to express its deepest gratitude to HE Ambassador Shohei Naito for all the warm cooperation during his term in office 2003-2006. His efforts and dedication to improving the relations between Belgium and Japan are admirable and an example for us all. The BJA would like to wish Ambassador Naito and his wife a blessed return to Japan, with the sincere hope to meet again in the future.



Good memories are shared in joy

The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce would like to wholeheartedly congratulate Mr Johan Maricou, former Minister Plenipotentiary Asia Desk of the Federal Government Foreign Affairs and BJA Business Committee Member, in his appointment of new Belgian Ambassador to Japan. His successor, Mr Jacques Vermeulen, is welcomed as the newest Business Committee Member.

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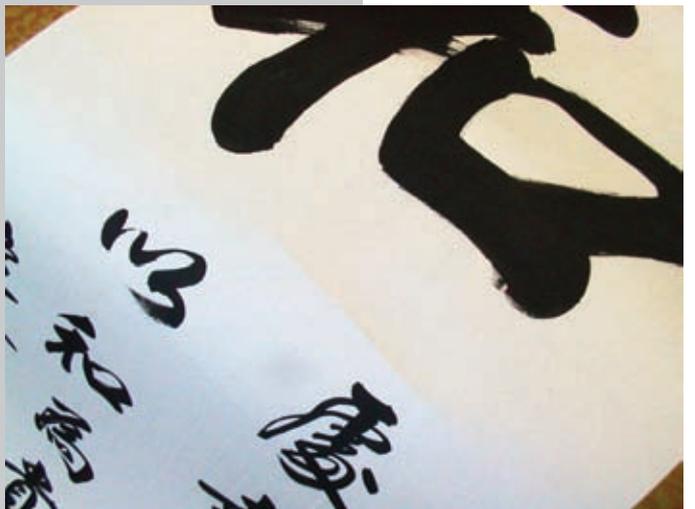
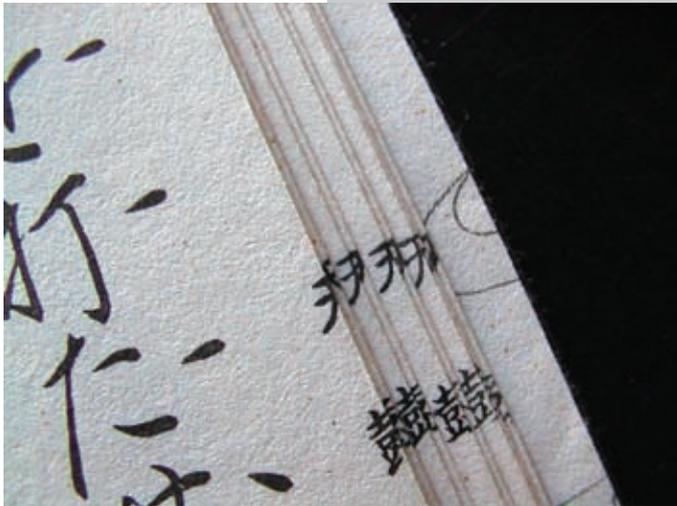
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