

# Belgium-Japan Association

& Chamber of Commerce ASBL- VZW



## Trade Flows & Cultural News

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### EDITORIAL

## Economic diplomacy

By HE Ambassador Johan Maricou, Belgian Ambassador to Japan

Economic diplomacy has always been an important aspect of a diplomatic mission abroad. This is still the case for diplomacy at the Federal level even when for quite some time now export and investment promotion have become jurisdictional matters of the Regions as a result of consecutive State Reforms. Since his inauguration Foreign Affairs Minister Karel De Gucht, in concertation with the Regions, has called on his Federal diplomatic corps to pay even more so than in the past close attention to the economic aspects of their mission and to interact dutifully with the Regional Representatives at their Embassy.

It goes without saying that with a presence of probably over 200 Japanese companies in Belgium, which are represented in all possible sectors of the economy, the Belgian Embassy in Tokyo has an important calling to keep close contact with the headquarters and the management of these companies as much as possible. In the last two years the Embassy visited about 50 of these companies with a production unit, an R&D center, a European headquarter, a logistical services unit, a distribution center, a financial institution etc in Belgium. Each time also Representatives of the Regions participated in these visits, which principally took place in the Kanto and Kansai Regions as well as in the surroundings of Nagoya. Usually the Belgian delegation also took up the opportunity to hold discussions with members of the local authorities such as Governors, Vice-Governors, Mayors, Port Authorities or local bureaus of METI.

Of course these visits extend well beyond the level of courtesy calls. Each time our discussion fathoms the importance and position of the company in the

Japanese and world economy as well as in world trade. In many cases these companies belong to their economic sector's most important players in the world. But it is especially important to hear from these companies, of which some have developed activities in Belgium for over 30 years now, how they experience Belgium's current investment climate and about the further possible outlook for their investment or presence in our country. They are also always asked for any specific problems they may encounter and how government authorities in Belgium could possibly step into solving the problems.

In general terms, reactions show a consistent pattern. Belgium remains an attractive destination for investment and economic activity with an excellent location in the economic, political and administrative heart of the European Union, and with in most respects good connections to the hinterland. The presence of skilled, multilingual, reliable and loyal staff at all levels is an important asset. Many companies have entrusted management to Belgian personnel, with good results. Almost all companies noted the quality of life in our country - friendly people, a quiet working environment, rich cultural heritage, attractive natural surroundings, which offer many recreational possibilities, excellent cuisine etc. Japanese describe Belgians as rather open people with whom it is easy to have contact and make friends. The existence of many international schools in and around Brussels is also an important trump card, which makes investment and presence in our country attractive to Japanese companies.

*keep reading on p. 2 >>*



HE Mr Johan Maricou

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## YES VI Program - Second Briefing Session

29 October 2008, Le Châtelain All Suite Hotel



(left to right) One of the guest speakers, Mr Dimitri Vanoverbeke, Professor for Japanese studies of KUL joins for a photo with Mr Karel De Wolf, Export Manager of Ganda Ham, Mrs Noriko Ito, International Sales Manager and Mr Bob Van de Velde, President of Metropolis Music Publishers.

Another guest speaker, Mr Koh ichi Masaki, Brussels Office Representative, JMAC Brussels Office and Member of the BJA Board of Directors, presented "Doing business with Japan" highlighting the management style in Japan and the window of opportunities for Europeans.

All participants joined for a group picture after the briefing session.

In the framework of the YES VI, co-organized with BLCCJ, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce held the second briefing session on 29 October at Le Châtelain All Suite Hotel. Thanks to the great support of few guest speakers during the lunch, the participants could gain further knowledge about "Doing Business in Japan".

Firstly, Mrs Oto-Kellens, Executive Director of BJA, welcomed wholeheartedly the participants to this session and expressed her sincere wishes to all YES candidates for their successful visit to Japan with the YES program next month.

Professor Vanoverbeke of KU Leuven began the series of lectures with a presentation concerning the Japanese business culture from an academic point of view. Following, 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.

During the lunch, all participants had casual conversations to share interests, information and experiences. Through this session, attendants could fully set their mind into this new challenge in exploring the Japanese market and deepen their commitment to convert their business into success.



» Less attractive are the sometimes cumbersome bureaucracy and the excessive red tape. Many companies have experienced difficulties with regard to relocation of the business managers' family members. Environment-related legislation and regulations are sometimes confusing and burdensome for the activities of the company. But especially the high wage costs and social legislation such as the automatic wage indexation sometimes pose difficulties to the Japanese investor. With the enlargement of the European Union and also the increasing purchasing power and thus the creation of new markets in Eastern Europe, the urge to step

up investment in production units in that part of Europe is growing, due to the lower labor costs there (although labor costs represent but one dimension of work).

Most of the above-mentioned company visits took place before the global financial crisis, but based on many contacts and talks since September 2008 it appears that possible reorientation and adaptation of investment- and business plans pertaining to Japanese presence and activities in our country will not have more damaging consequences than elsewhere in the world.

## The Young Executive stay Program YES VI in Japan

9-23 November 2008



After going through a strict selection procedure, being instructed by experts and business people about dealing with business in Japan during two briefing sessions, being introduced to all facets of what to expect in Japan, all the hard work in Belgium ended and Japan was awaiting. The YES candidates were ready to do business.

Tokyo welcomed the YES participants in a warm atmosphere of 21 degrees Celsius on 9 November for a period of two weeks. The young executives, the BJA and the BLCCJ directors met up with the respective business coaches, Sophia University students and other parties involved in the program during a welcome cocktail. A time to relax before the first week filled with seminars, case studies, company visits and the second week of business-to-business contacts would lift off.

A special moment, never to forget, was a privately guided tour of the Imperial Gardens by Mr Sato, Chamberlain of His Majesty Emperor of Japan. Mr Sato was stationed in Belgium a long time ago, but his kindness towards the BJA and the participants on the YES Program was beyond words – an exchange of greetings of the YES delegation with Their Majesties Emperor and Empress of Japan made this visit inside the inner part of the gorgeous Imperial grounds unforgettable and deeply moving. Words of gratitude are not enough to express this honour bestowed upon us.

Four dynamic YES participants share their experience of doing business in Japan in the following articles.

### Mr Karel De Wolf of Ganda Ham

“The Yes program is a great opportunity to start up business in Japan. For Corma it was a challenge to restart our business in Japan after a period of 7 years due to a ban of Belgian pork meat. As a new member of the staff and responsible for export, one of my aims was to reintroduce Ganda Ham in Japan.



To be honest, before I assisted the first briefing session in Belgium the only thing I knew about Japan was that they had another culture of food and religion than we have. Their way of greeting one another by bowing differ from our handshaking. The successive briefing sessions and seminars gave us the first hand information we needed. Starting with former Yes-participants who explained their on-the-floor experiences followed by explanations through professionals living in Japan for years. It gave us the knowledge in order for us to be released in Tokyo and the rest of Japan.

Doing business with foreign countries demands some in advance desk research about the new market to know what these consumers might expect from your product. Besides the desk research it is important for a product like Ganda Ham to know the habits of the native people. What is their view on the product and what are our competitors presenting? Where better can you get this feeling than in stores or supermarkets. It is astonishing to see all this beautiful packed food, the presentations and the way staff offer these products. We even discovered opportunities to sell the goat's cheese from Le Larry, another company within the Ganda group.

Through the skills and tools gained by the YES program I was able to imagine how to restart our presence on the Japanese food market. At this moment we are developing adapted



Mr Sato surrounded by the YES delegation in front of the Imperial Palace.

## BJA REPORT

products, both ham and goat's cheese, for the Japanese market.

Next March we will, together with our importer, be present at the international food fair Foodex in Tokyo. Here we will promote Ganda Ham and Le Larry Goat's cheese: all-natural products with no use of preservatives. Besides the velvety and rich full taste, our products are available both organic and conventional.

Thanks to the Yes program and the support of both BJA and BLCCJ we gained a lot of precious time. It wouldn't be obvious to realise all this on my own in such a short time. We may not forget the great job that the students from Sofia University and the business coaches did for us too. I wish to thank them for the commitment to help us obtain our aims.

The relations we made during the program with participants, members of the organisation, the coaches, the students and other business contacts are very important for the future. A future in which we will try to improve our business in Japan and the rest of Asia.

The Yes program can be a success story for your company. But remember your input and willingness to deal with Japanese behaviour and culture is a big issue to succeed."

### Mr Laurens Gehéniau of Viyo International

"To be honest I had to be convinced in applying for the YES program, my western oriented mind could not believe the "rumours" about the Japanese market, stating that the Japanese market is one of recommendation. As we deal with a lot of countries we were not aware of this kind of economy. Luckily Mrs Blondé, Chairwoman of the YES Committee, had the zeal and the drive to persuade us to join the challenge.

A long story short at the end of June we received a nice phone call of Mrs Anja Oto-Kellens of the BJA, that we were selected to join the Yes VI program in November 2008.

And then the work began, we were appointed a student of the Sophia University and a business coach, who would assist us in preparing our stay in Japan.

Our designated student, Ms Yuki Okano, was of great help and she came to visit us the first week of September where we welcomed her in our offices, together with her colleague students, who were appointed to the other Belgian companies that joined the mission.

During this visit we made a full company presentation of the Viyo products and briefed Yuki completely, so that she was well-armed to look for suitable partners in Japan. We also asked them about their culture and habits in order to be well prepared and to avoid making mistakes. At the end of the day we went for a visit for the Nello and Patrasche monument in

Antwerp, which was clearly a very well known story for our Japanese guests!

During the following months we managed to get several appointments and this with the respected help of Mr Bert Winderickx of the BLCCJ and Mr Georges Nagels of FIT in Tokyo. At the end of October we had 2 meetings a day, which was our goal. Ready for Tokyo!



In Japan, I had to make a crossing to Seoul and Beijing and on Wednesday evening I joined my Belgian partners, who enjoyed the seminars that took place from Monday till Wednesday. On Thursday the Viyo meetings began and we travelled with the bullet train around, till Osaka, where I had the opportunity to visit the largest fair for Veterinarians: "Dorinken".

The meetings progressed and thanks to the good connections of all, we even had several meetings with multinationals, which I personally never would have been able to meet! And these contacts brought me a lot of market information and it also gave me the possibility to verify the data and information I collected during my preparation phase.

The atmosphere between the Belgian companies was very relaxed and at the end of the day we shared our experiences and explored some nice restaurants in Shibuya.

Impressed by the punctuality, the dedication and quietness of the Japanese people, I felt embarrassed arriving at Brussels Airport and hearing all the noise of the Belgian people, after 13 days Japan, I was already adapted to their habits.

We, as Viyo International look forward to enter in a prosperous business relationship with a few Japanese companies, because we believe that the Japanese cats and dogs deserve our high quality products! Mid December we received already a signed NDA with a very respected large Japanese manufacturer, so, "so far so good"!

For more information please check: [www.viyo.com](http://www.viyo.com) and click on JA for the Japanese website

To be continued and domo arigato gozaimasu to the BJA and Kaneka in Oevel for the welcome at the start in September."

### Mr Bob Van de Velde of Metropolis Music Publishers



“Japan is a fascinating country... . During the past 17 years, I toured in Japan more than 10 times as a professional musician. Yet, everytime there are new things to discover, new surprises to enjoy and ... new gadgets to explore! This time was not very different, except for the fact that it was my first time to enter Japan as an executive, eager to establish a professional distribution of our products in Japan.

So on the morning of 10 November, Mrs Noriko Ito (our commercial director) and myself are ready to leave for Tokyo. Our suitcases are packed with Belgian chocolates, sheet music samples and catalogs to introduce our company to the Japanese market. Upon arrival, I can immediately benefit from the language skills of Mrs Ito, who is native Japanese. For her, this trip is not only business but also a reunion with her relatives in Tokyo... . During the preparation for the YES program, Mrs Ito organised a busy schedule of appointments with potential business partners in Tokyo. The expertise and efforts of our business coach, Mr Duco Delgorge, were very helpful in the preparation of these meetings.

The hotel, located in the Tokyo business district next to the Imperial Palace, is an excellent base, not too far from Tokyo Station. The first days, running from one meeting to another, I feel a little bit ‘lost in Tokyo’ as I constantly try to catch up with Mrs Ito, who is obviously used to the crowds and the packed subway trains. However, after a few days, the soothing Japanese efficiency and courtesy has its effect and makes me feel as if I have been living in Tokyo for years. With very little free time between the meetings, I try to enjoy Tokyo as much as I can: a walk around the Imperial Domain in the evening, shopping in the busy Shibuya - and Ginza districts, exploring the latest electronic gadgets in Yodobashi, taking

pictures of ‘Fuji-San’ from Tokyo Tower, having a quick lunch in a typical Noodle-bar, enjoying a dinner-party with our Japanese friends from Osaka.

In the evening, it’s great to meet the other YES-participants for dinner in one of the excellent restaurants in the neighbourhood. Although our companies and our ambitions in Japan are all very specific, we all share the same feelings of excitement, amazement and admiration for the Japanese culture and way of life.

As the YES program proceeds, business meetings become more ‘to the point’, terms are discussed and deals are closed. And finally, at dinner with our new Japanese partners after the ‘sayonara-party’ in the Luxemburg Embassy, it becomes clear that this trip is the start of a new, exciting adventure: “Metropolis Japan”.



### Mr Jean-Marc Dewilde of Elsyca

“Companies that envision starting up business in Japan face many bridges to cross. When charging ahead unprepared, every facet of the entrepreneurial process in the Japanese context can feel awkwardly counter-intuitive to the Western-shaped mind-set.

As an answer to this commonly heard but frequently ignored fact, the YES program provides an attractive combination of an executive training program and a personalized trade mission. In the case of Elsyca, this has proven very valuable...

Elsyca, the company

Elsyca is an engineering start-up company, spun off from the Brussels University and the Von Karman Institute. Our core expertise lies in electrochemical intelligence, which has culminated in a unique state-of-the-art simulation platform

that allows modeling, simulation, and optimization of a wide range of electrochemical processes.



#### Interest in the Japanese market

Elsyca has, since its inception, mainly done business in the European and North-American subcontinent. Although business media continue to portray India and China as the nec plus ultra for entrepreneurship, Elsyca, being a technology-oriented SME, was convinced that Japan had more to offer:

Firstly, the Japanese industry stands out worldwide for its relentless aim to raise quality standards through continuous improvement programs based on new enabling technologies. This makes it the ideal habitat for Elsyca's capabilities that strive to improve processes in terms of key performance indicators such as productivity, cost, quality and environmental efficiencies.



Secondly, Japan hosts all the market segments to a high degree of industrialization where Elsyca has an active interest in: from chemical, automotive and aerospace industry over marine and oil & gas up to the fabrication of printed wiring boards and semi-conductors.

And finally, there are the economic facts that one cannot disregard: Japan is not only the de facto economic hub for Asia but also still the world's second-largest economy in terms of the gross domestic product.

When in Rome, do as the Romans do ...

The YES program served as a platform to accomplish a range of objectives in the shortest amount of time: gaining insight into the local culture and business ethics, evaluating the customer expectations, testing out the validity of our value proposition within the Japanese context, and all of this for a range of market/product combinations.

Learning about Japanese social and behavioral concepts in the seminars was especially valuable since it accentuated the Japanese values that Western companies also need to adhere to: be trustworthy, show perseverance, deliver on promise, and - until such day - be patient.

With the help of the business coach, Mr Dirk Van Eester, and of Noguchi-san, student at Sophia University, Elsyca then tested the waters with prospects in the automotive, aerospace, and heavy industry market, and the results were promising... Our expertise generated appreciation and interest, a lot of questions were answered to and fro, the value proposition was confirmed, and in one case we received immediately a request for quotation.

#### Concluding

The main value of the YES experience was that Elsyca could make a sound judgment on whether, how, and where to go forward. We are now better aware of the required investments, we understand the short- and long-term potential, and we can set realistic milestones to continuously monitor and adapt the go-to-(Japanese-)market plan.

For the time being and despite the gloomy economic situation, we decided to focus on the heavy industry market for surface finishing. We will be back in Japan for the Nanotech exhibition, we will, with the support of our local partner, revisit existing contacts, and we strive to have closed our first major opportunity in Japan by that time!"

## Business Luncheon on REACH (new European Chemicals Regulation) ビジネスランチセミナー:REACH (新欧州化学物質規制)

Friday, 7 November 2008 - Hunton & Williams, Brussels

The EU Committee of the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce was pleased to invite the BJA company members to a business luncheon focused on the next steps in the REACH process, in the beautiful venue of Hunton & Williams

Firstly Mr Didier Stevens, the Chairman of the BJA EU Committee, opened the seminar with his welcome words and introduced the first speaker, Mr Mike Penman of Mike Penman Consulting who gave the update on REACH: overview, pre-registration status, regulation, etc. Following, Professor

Lucas Bergkamp, Partner of Hunton & Williams, delivered his presentation focused on Next Steps after Pre-Registration: Data-Sharing in SIEFs. Then Mr Eric Pass, Director Corporate Planning of Nitto Europe, presented the case study on REACH implementation at Nitto Denko.

The seminar concluded with a panel discussion over a light lunch. Several questions and answers were actively exchanged among the panel and over 30 enthusiastic participants, to whom this occasion provided a detailed insight into pre-registration status, the next steps and beyond.



Mr Didier Stevens, Project Senior Manager Government and Technical Affairs of Toyota Motor Europe and Chairman of EU Committee, welcoming the participants.



Over 30 participants listen to the presentation enthusiastically.



Mr Eric Pass, Director Corporate Planning of Nitto Europe presents the case study of REACH implementation at Nitto Denko.



(left to right) Mr Mike Penman of Mike Penman Consulting, Professor Lucas Bergkamp, Partner at Hunton & Williams, and Mr Eric Pass, Director Corporate Planning of Nitto Europe lead a panel discussion over lunch.



**BJA REPORT**

# Business Seminar - Marketing Japanese Brands Across Borders in Today's Europe 今日の欧州における日系ブランドマーケティング対策についてのビジネスセミナー

Thursday, 4 December 2008 - ING, Brussels



(left to right) Mr Daisuke Sato, Second Secretary of Embassy of Japan, Mrs Kumiko Sato, Director, Financial Institutions Japan of ING, Mr Masaaki Hayashida, Managing Director of Nippon Express Belgium, and Mr Satoshi Oyama, Director of JETRO Brussels discuss opportunities in Europe for Japanese brands.

The Membership Committee of the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce was pleased to invite the BJA company members to a business seminar entitled Marketing Japanese Brands Across Borders in Today's Europe. Firstly Mr Masaaki Hayashida of Nippon Express Belgium, Member of the BJA Board of Directors opened the seminar with his welcome words. Following, Mr Nicolas Sepulchre, the Chairman of the BJA Membership Committee introduced the first speaker, Mr Colin Hensley, General Manager Corporate

Affairs & Planning of Toyota Motor Europe who gave his presentation on Corporate Advertising. Then Mr Eric Dauchy, PR Manager of Toshiba TEC Europe brought a presentation more focused towards European PR. The last presentation on Pan-European Marketing was delivered by Mr Tom Decuyper, Marketing Manger of Daikin Europe, followed by the panel discussion over perception on Japanese Brands in Europe led by the moderator, Mr Derek Moloughney of Executive Training. With enthusiastic participation by the audience, highly active and deep discussion was exchanged among the panels including Mr Olivier Cornil, Sales Manager Benelux of ANA and Mr Hugo Pietermans, Marketing Director De Beukelaer of Pentax and the three speakers. The seminar was concluded by Mr Philippe Masset, member of the Executive Committee of ING Belgium who kindly offered its venue for this seminar.

After the seminar a networking cocktail was generously sponsored by Japan Tobacco International where the participants and the speakers could join together to continue exchanging their opinions about effective Marketing strategies in today's Europe.



(left to right) Mr Eric Dauchy, PR Manager of Toshiba TEC Europe, Mr Olivier Cornil, Sales Manager Benelux, and Mr Tom Decuyper, Marketing Manager of Daikin Europe, join the panel discussion, moderated by Mr Derek Moloughney of Executive Training, together with two other panellists, Mr Colin Hensley, General Manager Corporate Affairs & Planning of Toyota Motor Europe and Mr Hugo Pietermans, Marketing Director of H. De Beukelaer & Co.



Mr Stefan Blondé, CEO of Blondé (left), having an extensive conversation during cocktail with Mr Tom Decuyper, Marketing Manager of Daikin Europe.



Mr Masaya Yamamoto, Sales Manager of Kyodo PR (left) enjoys cocktail together with Mrs Junko Kanno, Key Account Manager of Management Centre Europe.





## BJA New Year Coctail BJA 新年カクテルパーティー

Monday, 19 January 2009, Conrad Brussels

In honor of HE Mr Nobutake Odano, Japanese Ambassador to the European Union, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce had a great pleasure in inviting the members to celebrate the New Year at the beautiful venue of Conrad Brussels, one of the BJA member hotels.

To this first BJA event of the year, over 200 members and their guests were welcomed by the “Wadaiko” performance by “AraUmi Daiko”, a BJA company member. Mr Thomas Leysen, Chairman of Umicore and the President of the BJA opened the evening by wishing the guests a healthy and fruitful year, followed by HE Mr Nobutake Odano, who extended his New Year greetings by introducing himself as the new Japanese Ambassador to the EU and expressing his sincere hope for a continuous growth on the relations between Belgium and Japan.

Immediately after the traditional ‘Kagamiwari’, ‘AraUmi Daiko’ delivered another short performance. The guests were all thrilled and impressed by the strong but nicely harmonized beat of ‘Wadaiko’ and they continued to enjoy the whole evening with pleasant conversations with other members over delicious sushi and sake.



After the strong beat of ‘Wadaiko’ performance, (left to right) Mrs Dom, Mrs Moortgat, CEO of AraUmi Daiko, Mr Dom, Senior Manager Finance & Purchasing of AW Europe, and Mr Kaisin, Director of AW Europe get together for a memorable photo.



(Left to right) Mr Wielemans, Managing Director of Hotel Metropole, Mr Toyoshima, Chairman & CEO of Toyota Boshoku Europe, Mr Ishida, Coordinator of Toyota Motor Europe, Mr and Mrs Sakurada, Vice President and Mr Nakazato, Senior Manager of Toyota Digital Cruise Europe, sharing each other’s aspirations for 2009.

Wishing for a continuous growth on the relations between Belgium, Europe and Japan: (left to right) Mr Mahler, Honorary Vice President of BJA, HE Ambassador Odano of the Mission of Japan to the EU, HE Ambassador Hayashi of the Embassy of Japan, and Baron Nothomb, Honorary Ambassador of Belgium.



‘Meeting people’ ensures a good start of the year: (left to right) Mr Nakamura, new Managing Director of Nippon Express Belgium, Mr Yasuda, President & Managing Director of Sumitomo Benelux, Mr Hayashida, former Managing Director of Nippon Express Belgium, and Mr Sogabe, President of Nippon Shokubai Europe.

FRIENDSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

# Shinnenkai (New Year Party) Dinner 新年会ディナー

Saturday, 17 January 2009 - Brussels



Warm, friendly, happy, interesting... This is what I felt about the New Year Party 2009 of BJA Friendship Committee organized at a nice restaurant in the heart of Brussels. More than 60 participants came and we occupied the second floor. The meals were delicious and thanks to the organizers, we had a lot of fun during the Bingo game. What's more, the party gave us an opportunity to talk with many people who were all interested in the Japanese culture. The atmosphere was really friendly. And then, we went to a café nearby. It was an unforgettable evening for me.

Lisa

今回初めてBJA - FCのイベント(新年会)に参加させていただきました。私はBNK(ベルギー日本語教師会)の会員として、日本語学習者支援の活動の一つである「話そう会」のオーガナイズを担当しているのですが、今回は白の友好を深めるという大きな目標は同じだということで、BJAFCの新年会に「話そう会」をジョイントさせていただきました。

参加者は総勢60名。ピエールさんの挨拶の後、皆で乾杯して、新年会が和やかに始まりました。旧知の友人、話そう会のメンバー、初めてお目にかかった方、話を進めるうちに皆さんどこかで繋がっていたりして、お互いの友人を紹介し合っているうちにあっという間に時間が過ぎて行きました。デザート後は、お待ちかねのビンゴゲーム。さっきまでワイワイガヤガヤと賑やかだった会場が当たりの番号が出るたびに一瞬静まりかえり、一つの番号に皆で一喜一憂、とても楽しかったです。

この会のお知らせに書いてあったとおり、お陰様で、2009年が楽しく愉快にスタートできました。本当にありがとうございました!

次回、また他のイベントでもジョイントさせていただけることを今から楽しみにしています。今後ともよろしくお願い致します。

BNKベルギー日本語教師会  
高木三知子



# Brussels Christmas Market ブリュッセルのクリスマスマーケット

Sunday, 7 December 2008 - Brussels

I'm Audrey, new in town, and as I lived one year in Japan in 2002, I wanted to keep in touch with the Japanese community here in Brussels. I contacted the BJA to have more information in aim to meet people in love with Japanese culture. As the Friendship Committee organized a meeting for the Christmas season they invited me to join them... The sunny and fresh weather was just perfect to meet everybody and have a charming visit of Brussels through the Christmas Market!

So we met next to the Huge Blue Christmas Tree and I was so pleased by the way people were just easy going, speaking French/English/Japanese naturally! It is so good and warm to meet people this way when you're new and alone in town!

So we visited the whole Christmas Market place, talking to each other about our experiences, having hot wine or chocolate, and I was so happy to realize that I was not the only one in this world to miss Japan! I could share it with people who have the same interest for Japanese culture as me - a meeting so exiting and useful!

After the great "light show" on the Grand Place we went to have a drink all together and a Belgian Specialities' dinner: I discovered the "Apple Chicken" - good to know!

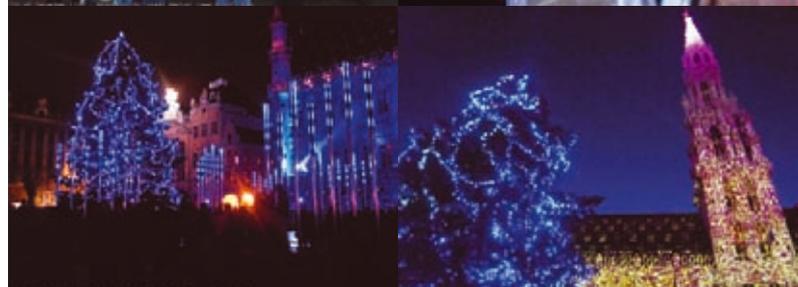
So in one afternoon, with the BJA's members, I discovered a lot about Belgian culture and good Japanese spots in Brussels!!

Could I ask for more? Yes!! An invitation for another party with everybody!!!

Happy New Year to all of you and thanks for your help and good advice!

Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu !!

Audrey B.



# 山国のそらに遊べる落花かな

草間時彦

*in the mountainside sky  
cherry petals play  
as they fall ...*

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The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce is happy to present you our fifth issue of the BJA Directory 2008-2009. 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.

## A Japanese view on Belgium - Mr Toru Ishikuma, Managing Director Yamatake

By Mr Kris Sierens, Managing Partner BeforeTheHype and Editorial Committee Member

One of the typical success factors of the Japanese way of doing business is to establish a consensus through good communication and preparation. Mr Toru Ishikuma reminds us to bear this in mind when doing business with Japanese businesses or in Japan itself. He also politely reminds us that not all Japanese like to play golf while staying in Belgium. Personally, he particularly enjoys the unusual and beautiful culture as well as the fun of playing rock music, or taking long trips in the car. Belgium is wonderful country to enjoy, offering many possibilities for great life.

His family also came with him to Brussels. The youngest studies at the Japanese School in Brussels; one son is now in Canada and the third is in Japan. Mr Ishikuma notes that the two older boys miss Belgium and their friends. In his free time, Mr Ishikuma plays piano and guitar, with a strong preference for rock music. He goes to concerts as often as possible. He finds that Belgians and even ex-pats seem to have more time for their family and take advantage of the many options here to enjoy life.



Yamatake currently employs sixteen people working in Europe. Three are Japanese, nine are Belgians, and the rest from various European countries. Mr Ishikuma looks for certain traits in his employees, especially a willingness to accept a challenge and an international spirit. They also must have the mindset to make every effort to understand what the other person really means and wants. The difference here is that people are less

inclined to seek the underlying story or to seek a fuller explanation. This is certainly something Belgians can learn from Japan. A united team feeling has to be a priority. They must talk and discuss a problem or even an opportunity until they reach a consensus. Once something is decided, everyone understands it and goes forward as a team. Another thing that can be learned is that things need to be made available in a very short time. Through proper preparations, anticipating, and communicating, virtually all problems can be avoided. What Japanese people can learn is that there's also another world outside Japan and therefore background information is very important.

Yamatake began in 1907 as a trading company for automation equipment. They subsequently became a manufacturer of measurement control devices and gradually evolved into process, factory, and building automation. It was during 1990's that Yamatake came to Europe as part of a joint venture with Honeywell. Brussels was the company's first choice for its headquarters because its business partner was already here as well as the transparency and the easy access to the rest of Europe. After the joint venture was concluded, Brussels remained the European head office of Yamatake. Its business relationship with Honeywell has remained strong and continues today.

At the end of December Mr Ishikuma returned to Japan but he prefers to go abroad again. What he will miss most about Belgium is of course the fine dining and the rich and diverse culture. Many world-class performing artists can be experienced at very reasonable prices. But he will also fondly remember being able to drive long distances in his car.

Mr Ishikuma first came to Belgium in 1995 and stayed for four years as the Yamatake representative at Honeywell. In 1999, he returned to Japan. For him, Belgium is a land rich in various cultures with many flavours of traditional life. Japan on the other hand offers a more monotone lifestyle. After subsequently living four years in the US, he has ample experience to make such a comparison. In 2004, he came back to Belgium as the managing director of European operations. Mr Ishikuma noted a number of changes when he came back for the second time. He sensed that the average Belgian had become a bit more international, while still managing to keep their traditions solidly embedded. For Ishikuma, Belgium has always remained a unique country, where two main cultures and languages co-exist, yet often have widely divergent opinions.

Before leaving, Mr Ishikuma shared a tip on how to become successful in Japan. 'Establish a good and reliable relation with your Japanese customers. Japanese people unconsciously protect themselves and tend to keep at a distance. Once you become accepted, a close bond is created. So leave some distance, but do try to get closer to your customers mind.'

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## ブティック・ルイズ

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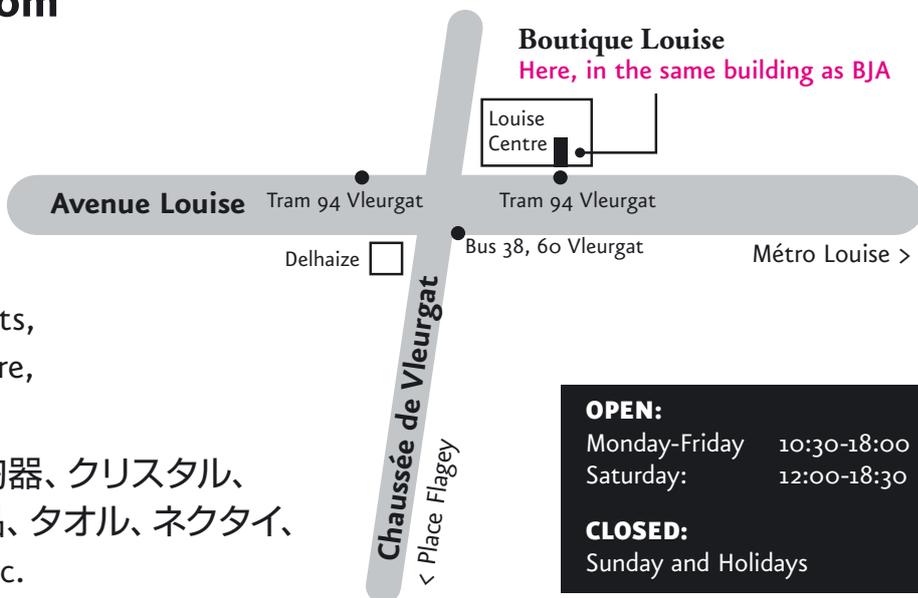
### 会員募集

会員の方には、特典がございます。

- ・会員だけの特別割引
- ・セール、商品のご案内 etc.

Leather Goods, Writing Instruments,  
Crystal, Watch & Jewels, Chinaware,  
Cosmetics and Kitchenware etc.

取扱商品：化粧品、革製品、陶器、クリスタル、  
銅、ベルギー工芸品、タオル、ネクタイ、  
スカーフ、ペン類 etc.



**OPEN:**  
Monday-Friday 10:30-18:00  
Saturday: 12:00-18:30

**CLOSED:**  
Sunday and Holidays



### スタッフ募集

1.事務  
電話対応や、伝票整理など  
10時から18時まで

2.サービススタッフ  
昼 10時30から14時30  
夜 18時から22時30

3.調理場スタッフ  
昼 10時から14時  
夜 17時30から22時

### RECRUIT

1.Office work  
Phone operator, Filing  
10h00 - 18h00

2.Hall staff  
Lunch time 10h30 - 14h30  
Dinner time 18h00 - 22h00

3.Kitchen staff  
Lunch time 10h00 - 14h00  
Dinner time 17h30 - 22h00

※労働ビザをお持ちの方を募集しています。

Every staff has 2 days holiday in a week.  
2 weeks vacation during summer and new year.

# T A G A W A r e s t a u r a n t

### FOR MEETING AT OFFICE.....

#### TAKE AWAY BENTO BOX

- 1.TORIKARA 18.50  
Rice, deep fried chicken, cooked vegetables
- 2.NORI BENTO 7.00  
Teriyaki grilled white fish, chicken skewer on rice
- 3.KATSUDON 9.00  
Cooked pork cutlet with egg and onion on rice
- 4.MAKUNOUCHI BOX 25.00  
Rice, fried dish, salad, grilled salmon, fried chicken and shrimp
- 5.SUSHI LUNCH BOX 30.00  
Sushi, fried dish, salad, grilled fish, cooked vegetables
- 6.SHOKADO BOX 38.00  
Sashimi, Fried dish, grilled fish, cooked vegetables

### FOR DINNER PARTY.....

#### DELIVERY DISHES available from 50 persons

- 1.HORS D'OEUVRES (portion) 12.00
- 2.SASHIMI ASSORTMENT (portion) 30.00
- 3.SUSHI (piece) 3.50
- 4.YAKITORI (piece) 3.00
- 5.KUSHI AGE (piece) 3.00

DELIVERY CHARGE 50.00EURO

Restaurant TAGAWA  
AVENUE LOUISE 279, 1050 BRUSSEL  
TEL 02/640.50.95 FAX 02/648.52.30



## If you want to live twice - Mie Prefecture

By Mrs Tiene Vertriest, Business Development Manager of Yamagata Europe and Editorial Committee Member

After a five-year period of growth, Japan, like the rest of the world, is experiencing a slowing of its economic expansion. Nevertheless, investing in the Japanese economy remains worthwhile. After all, reports show that the Japanese economy continues to perform well and that interest in Europe and European companies remains alive. Japan is still the second-largest economy in the world and therefore continues to be a very attractive market.



Only 2% of all investment in Japan comes from overseas, one of the lowest levels in the OECD. This could be interpreted as Japan being less than very open to foreign investment. However, this is not the case. The national government, together with the prefectures, continue to work hard at attracting foreign investors. There are many opportunities in a variety of sectors. The sectors that are currently performing well in the area of foreign investment in Japan, are biotechnology,

pharmaceuticals, the chemical industry and logistics. As it happens, these are the very sectors that are heavily represented in the Mie prefecture and with expansion in the Greater Nagoya area.

Mie Prefecture is centrally located on Honshu. It is ideally situated between the two major economic zones of the Chubu and the Kinki Region. It is a long narrow prefecture, stretching 170 km from north to south and 80 km across from east to west. It covers an area of 5,777.14 km<sup>2</sup> (2007) and has a population of approximately 1.87 million inhabitants (2008). The capital city is Tsu.

Mie-prefecture is part of the Greater Nagoya Initiative (GNI). Greater Nagoya is defined as the area within a 100km radius of Nagoya city, the fourth-largest metropolis in Japan. The Greater Nagoya Initiative Centre (GNIC) links prefectures, cities, industries, universities and research institutions to promote international industrial cooperation and to attract foreign investment.

Greater Nagoya's GDP accounts for more than 1% of the world's GDP and 10% of the GDP of Japan itself. The region has the highest concentration of manufacturing sites in Japan and is considered a monozukuri ("the art of making things,

and the spirit of research and creativity") centre for Asia and the World. Greater Nagoya is also home to market leaders in the IT, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology sectors. Just one example of the economic importance of the region, is that 44% of the automobiles produced in Japan, come from Greater Nagoya.

A point of interest to foreign investors, is that GNIC provides opportunities for foreign companies to partner with the leading companies already established in the region. These include companies such as Toyota, Brother Industries, Sharp, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Decaux, Apple and many more.

Why Mie Prefecture? Mie Prefecture has a strong industrial base, including manufacturers in the automotive industry and petrochemical industry. In addition, it is expanding into more advanced industries, including the manufacture of semiconductors and liquid crystal displays, biotech and medical industries. Foreign companies are already part of this innovative industrial scene. For example, BASF has plants and labs in Yokkaichi, including the centre of its Japanese R&D activities. Several projects have been set up to stimulate the development of more knowledge-intensive industries, which are expected to continue to do well in the future. One example is the Medical Valley Project, which joins industry, government and academia in further consolidating medical, health and welfare industries as the industries of the future.

Another of the primary advantages of Mie prefecture is its location. It lies midway between Osaka and Nagoya, which are recognized as two major consumer markets. Mie Prefecture is also an ideal import/export location, because of easy access by sea, air and land. The port of Yokkaichi has been identified as a "super connection port", being Japan's most important container-handling port. Central Japan International Airport is nearby and serves as a central hub.

If you're not convinced yet, do not forget that despite the concentration of heavy industry, Mie Prefecture remains an attractive place to live. About 1/3 of the land area is defined as natural parks. The prefecture also has a rich history and cultural heritage. Ise Jingu is famous as the shrine where the ancestral goddess of the Imperial Family is worshipped. In 2004, the beautiful pilgrimage road from Ise to Kumano, was registered as a World Cultural Heritage site. Ise Bay has many beautiful islands and one of these, "Pearl Island" in Toba harbor, has made Mie Prefecture famous for its pearls. Even more famous are the ama, women free-divers, traditionally diving for fish, shellfish, and eventually pearls. Or was it James Bond who made the ama famous? In any case, if you want to live twice, consider Mie to be the place to start a new or expanded business life.

## BREAKTHROUGH IN EU-JAPAN AVIATION RELATIONS

Following Vice-President Tajani's visit to Tokyo and his constructive talks with the transport Minister of Japan Mr Kaneko, a far-reaching agreement has been achieved which will pave the way to significantly enhance the air transport relations between both sides.

Vice-President Tajani has stated "I am extremely pleased that the EU Commission and Japan have agreed to further develop and strengthen

their aviation relations. This is indeed good news for our citizens and for our industry. This represents a win-win situation for both sides".

The EC and Japan have agreed:

- the recognition of the European designation of carriers in the bilateral agreements with EU Member States;
- closer cooperation to seek solution in relation to security restrictions on liquids;

- to strengthen the cooperation concerning reciprocal acceptance of certification of aeronautical products through the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

This closer cooperation may also cover other relevant aviation issues including air traffic management and, in particular, the SESAR programme.

Source: <http://www.deljpn.ec.europa.eu/modules/media/news/2009/090116.html>

## COMPARATIVE STUDY IMMIGRATION

By Matthias Lommers, Associate at Laga and Editorial Committee Member

In the absence of an elaborate immigration policy on a larger European level, and further to the shortage of highly skilled people on the European labour market, EU Member States have entered into a battle for brainpower and are trying to attract as many third country professionals as possible by facilitating their immigration rules for this category of employees over the past few years.

This study, which is published by our office on a bi-annual basis, is the result of co-operation between Laga and our foreign member firms. It aims to provide an objective overview of the immigration processes to be complied with following the employment of third-country highly-skilled workers in: Belgium, The UK, Germany, Italy, France, The Netherlands and Spain.

In the first part of the study, which is not included in this brief overview, we provide a brief overview of the immigration processes in the different countries, then we compare the necessary requirements in the second part. The comparison chart shows that the Belgian migration (work permit) process is by far the fastest and easiest to comply with. Indeed, if we look at the time it takes to process a work permit application in Belgium (about 2 weeks) and what the conditions are in order to obtain a work permit for a highly skilled employee (earning at least EUR 35.638 gross on a yearly basis in 2009), we can only conclude that it has become easier for third country nationals to be employed in Belgium compared to the past as well as compared to our surrounding countries.

	Belgium	The Netherlands	UK
Specific work permit for highly qualified personnel	Yes, Work permit type B	Yes, for inter-company transferees of multi-nationals	Yes, Regular work permits or through the Highly Skilled Migrant Program
Specific conditions	At least a bachelor degree	The employee should fulfill a key position and should have a diploma of a Higher Vocational or University level	Specific conditions with regard to education and previous work experience
Minimum gross salary	35.638 Euro per year	49.087 Euro per year raised annually	Must meet minimum wage and satisfy the comparative earnings test
Business trip without work permit	Yes, persons attending client meetings or internal meetings in closed circles, for up to 5 working days per calendar month per meeting)	Yes, under strict certain conditions	Yes, under certain conditions
Work permit application processing time	2 to 3 weeks (depends on region)	2 to 5 weeks	5 to 14 weeks depending on the category of work permits
Validity period work permit	1 year, can be extended each year	2 years and 11 months, can be extended (under restricted conditions)	Depends upon type of work permit and possible restrictions  Maximum 5 years.

## A MORE ATTRACTIVE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA BUT STAGNATING EU R&D INTENSITY: NO TIME TO TAKE A BREAK!

The 2008 Science, Technology and Competitiveness (ST&C) key figures report provides for the first time an overview of progress from 2000 to 2006 in both EU R&D investment and in implementing the European Research Area (ERA). It shows that Europe's pool of researchers is growing and the EU is becoming more attractive for foreign researchers and for private R&D investments from the US. However, the stagnation of the EU-27's R&D intensity (R&D expenditure as % of GDP) at 1.84% is denting the EU's ambition to become a globally competitive knowledge-based society. Despite increased investment in research by many Member States and an improved efficiency of their research systems, the EU is still far from reaching its Lisbon target of investing 3% of GDP in R&D. A continued low level of business R&D investment, linked to an EU industrial structure with a smaller high tech sector than in the US, hampers the EU's performance. The 2008 Innovation Scoreboard published in parallel provides detailed results of EU innovation performance. Both reports prove that the EU must change its industrial structure, gear up on innovation and ensure more and better use of R&D.

Commenting on these reports, EU Commissioner for Science and Research, Janez Potočnik, and Vice President Günter Verheugen, responsible for enterprise and industry policy, stated: "In a time of crisis, it is not the moment to take a break in research investments and in innovation. They are vital if Europe wants to emerge stronger from the economic crisis and if it wants to address the challenges of climate change and globalisation. The EU does have many assets,

notably an increasingly attractive European research area and a continuously improving innovation performance. But there is still work to be done, especially on the relative underinvestment by business. The Commission's initiatives to improve the EU's research efficiency, to stimulate innovation and to develop high tech markets are putting the EU on the right tracks".

The main findings of the ST&C report 2008 show that

1. Research is a key competitive asset in a globalised world.
2. The overall EU R&D intensity is stagnating but this hides diversity at the national level.
3. Private Sector Investment intensity still too low.
4. Excellence in research: a growing pool of researchers a still lower capacity of knowledge exploitation than competitors.
5. An increased attractiveness to foreign investments and S&T professionals.

For more information:

**Full report on Science, Technology and Competitiveness (ST&C) key figures 2008:** <http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/>

**Full report on Innovation Scoreboard 2008:** <http://www.proinno-europe.eu/metrics>

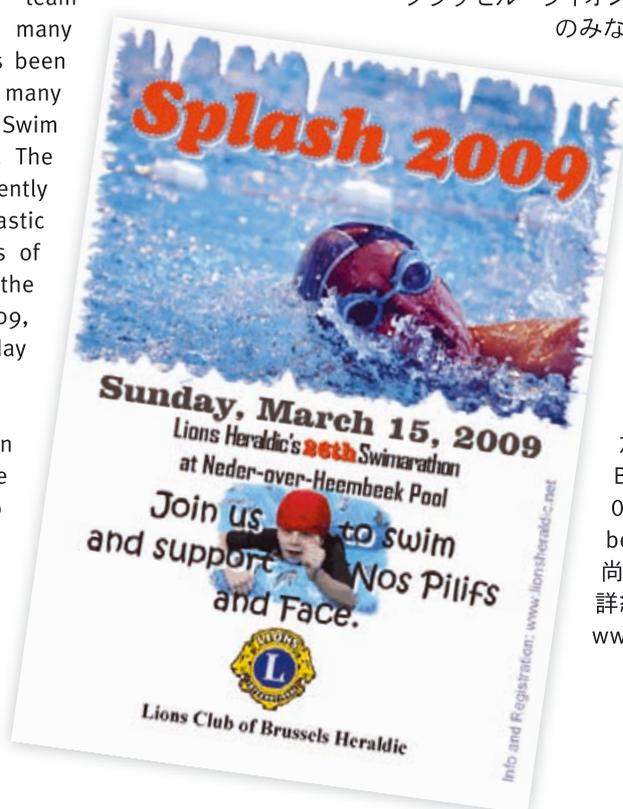
Source:  
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/92&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

France	Germany	Italy
Yes	Yes, highly qualified personnel can obtain a permanent residence permit allowing work for each and any German employer	Yes, Work permit model D for highly qualified personnel
Higher education or university diploma	Higher education or university diploma	Employee must fulfill specific conditions regarding skills and education and must hold a management position
2.000 Euros per months in case of transfer in the same group 5.000 Euro per month for executives	86.400 Euro per year	Must not meet a minimum threshold but their remuneration must guarantee a reasonable standard of living
Yes, under certain conditions	Yes, under certain conditions	Yes, when the non-EU national remains in Italy for a period not exceeding 3 months
6 to 8 weeks for highly qualified personnel 3 to 5 weeks for executives	6 to 8 weeks	From 6 months to 1 year depending on the region
3 years in case of transfer in the same group 1 year, can in principle be extended each year	1 year, can in principle be extended each year	Depends on the type of work: 6 months for seasonal work, 1 year studying, coursework or professional training and 2 years for self employment, permanent employment and for family reunification

## JOIN US IN 'SPLASH', A SWIM MARATHON CHARITY EVENT BY LIONS CLUB HERALDIC

The Lions Club Heraldic supports many charities, both in Belgium as well as abroad whenever there are projects that can help enormously to those less fortunate than others. A privately organized team called 'KAMIKAZE' with many Japanese volunteers has been actively participating for many years to 'SPLASH', a Swim marathon charity event. The KAMIKAZE team is currently looking for more enthusiastic swimmers and sponsors of all nationalities to join the team for the Splash 2009, taking place on Sunday March 15th, 2009.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Mika Matsumoto at the BJA Office, 02/644 14 05 or send e-mail [info@bja.be](mailto:info@bja.be). To find out more about 'Splash', please visit [www.lionsheraldic.net/Splash.htm](http://www.lionsheraldic.net/Splash.htm).



ライオンズクラブ・ヘラルディック主催のチャリティイベント、スイマラソンにあなたも参加しませんか

ブラッセル・ライオンズクラブ・ヘラルディックではベルギーのみならず、他国における主に身体障害者の為の教育施設や医療設備など様々な面での援助活動企画しており、その一環として毎年3月にスイマラソン、SPLASHを開催しています。そしてこのチャリティイベントに多くの日本人ボランティアを主体としたカミカゼチームが長年参加してきました。そこで今年2009年3月15日、日曜日に予定されているこのチャリティイベントに参加頂けるスイマーとスポンサーを探しています。

年齢、国籍は問いません、ご家族の参加も大歓迎ですので御興味のある方はBJAの松本までご連絡下さい。電話 02/644 14 05 又は e-mail [info@bja.be](mailto:info@bja.be).

尚、このスイマラソン Splash に関する詳細はこちらのホームページをご覧ください [www.lionsheraldic.net/Splash.htm](http://www.lionsheraldic.net/Splash.htm)

## A MANGA LIBRARY IN LEUVEN

Enrolment in Japanese culture and language courses around Belgium continues to climb every year. A great many of these new students of Japanese point to one single point of origin for their fascination with Japanese language and culture: manga. Interest in manga and other aspects of Japanese pop culture has skyrocketed in Belgium over the last few years, both among companies searching to market Japanese products here and among the general public, for whom a manga is often the first piece of Japanese culture they ever (consciously) consume.

### A trend that deserves to be encouraged

The staff and students of the Japanese Studies program at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven have been conducting research into Japanese popular culture for many years now, and are proud to announce the establishment of Belgium's first free and open manga library. Visitors can

borrow about a thousand manga, manga magazines, dojinshi (amateur manga), and books on Japanese popular culture. Books and manga are available in many languages -mainly Japanese, but also French, English and Dutch- and many genres, from classic gekiga to contemporary favourites. The collection started out as part of a two-year research project called 'Let's Manga' and has grown to its current size largely through generous donations by Kansai University, Glénat Benelux publications, and many private individuals. We hope the library will be enjoyed by Belgian and Japanese visitors alike.

The library is located in the university's Faculty of Arts, in the center of the city of Leuven and a ten-minute walk from the train station. Opening hours are every Tuesday and Thursday from 14h to 17h45, or by appointment.

## IMEC AND PANASONIC EXPAND STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

With IMEC, Flanders houses a world-leading research center on nanoelectronics and nanotechnology. Recently, IMEC and Japanese electronics provider Panasonic decided to expand their research alliance.

IMEC and Panasonic have been cooperating in research into advanced semi-conductor process technology since 2004. Now, 3 new research domains are being added to the program. Commencing December of this year, the Panasonic IMEC Center will conduct R&D on advanced network technology, such as dynamically reconfigurable software-defined radio, ultra-low power consumption wireless communication technology for healthcare and lifestyle monitoring and biomedical technology, e.g. next generation biosensors.

Headquartered in Leuven, IMEC bridges the gap between fundamental research at universities and technology development in industry. Its staff of over 1,600 people includes more than 500 industrial residents and guest researchers. It turned over EUR 244.5 million in 2007.

Panasonic Corporation is a global market leader in the development and manufacture of electronic products for a wide range of consumer, business, and industrial needs. Based in Osaka, Japan, the company recorded consolidated net sales of 9.07 trillion yen (USD 90.7 billion) for the year ended March 31, 2008.

*Source: De Morgen Newspaper*

## EUROPE'S LARGEST SONY CENTRE OPENS IN ANTWERP

Sony's largest flagship store in Europe is not located in London or Paris. The Japanese electronics giant picked the city of Antwerp for its location because Antwerp is a trendy place where people are continually on the lookout for new innovations.

Sony Center United is located at the Eiermarkt in the former Hifnesse building in the main shopping center of Antwerp. On a floor area of 6000 m<sup>2</sup>, it markets Bravia flatscreens, Vaio laptops, Sony Ericsson cellphones, PlayStation consoles and the like. Almost the entire Sony product range is on sale there.

Sony Europe marketing director Kazuki Iwamoto officially opened the store. He said that Sony Centre United is where customers can try out all of Sony's products and experience the 'touch and feel' of Sony. It also communicates the company's core values to the outside world. Customers are helped here by highly trained and experienced salespeople.

He added that Sony opted for Antwerp because it is a trendy city and its inhabitants are eager to try out new, innovative products. The same goes for people that visit this city from around the country or from abroad.

*Source: De Standaard Newspaper*



Please visit the **library website** for details:

<http://japanesestudies.arts.kuleuven.be/popularculture/mangabib>

Source: Mrs Nele Noppe  
Japanese Studies, Katholieke  
Universiteit Leuven

Blijde Inkomststraat 21 - bus 3318  
3000 Leuven - Belgium

### Let's Manga project

<http://japanesestudies.arts.kuleuven.be/popularculture>

### Let's Manga research knowledge base

[http://groups.diigo.com/groups/lets\\_manga](http://groups.diigo.com/groups/lets_manga)

### Fanfic Forensics

[www.nelenoppe.net/fanficforensics](http://www.nelenoppe.net/fanficforensics)

## BUSINESS ROUTE 2018, A GREAT FUTURE AHEAD FOR BRUSSELS METROPOLITAN REGION

From the perspective of the business community, Brussels-Capital Region and its immediate surroundings are strongly intertwined. They form a functional economic entity, as opposed to the administrative and political fragmentation. Time is right to look for synergies across the borders of jurisdictions.

Brussels Metropolitan Region (BMR) being the economic driver for the entire nation, accounting for 30% of economic activities and employment, the need for an integrated vision of the region is crucial. A strategic approach towards a positive climate for sustainable economic growth to ensure long-term socio-economic development and long-term success in Brussels Metropolitan Region.

Business Route 2018 draws up that one vision of the future, a joint initiative by the three regional employers' associations, Flanders' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VOKA), Brussels Enterprise Commerce and Industry (BECI) and the Walloon Region of Enterprises (UWE), with the active support and participation of the Federation of Enterprises in Belgium, FEB - the products and voice of enterprises in Belgium.

Business Route 2018, one vision for growth built on three cornerstones:

- Strengthen the role of BMR as the capital of Europe
- Develop knowledge-driven niches in worldwide growth markets
- Turn BMR into a vibrant city region, attractive to talent and business

Business Route 2018, working together on a wide range of action plans and projects that will re-emphasize the unique strengths of BMR:

- **Become visible as the European meeting place**
- **Develop knowledge-driven niche activities in worldwide growth markets**
- **A vibrant city, attractive to talent and business**

Business Route 2018 has the long term in mind.

It wants to create a solid foundation today towards a positive climate for sustainable economic growth tomorrow where both business community and the authorities fulfil an important role finding new business opportunities on one hand and create the climate in which they can fully blossom on the other hand.

With Business Route 2018, the world of business has taken the lead in working out a long-term strategy that provides Brussels Metropolitan Region (BMR) with many new chances for increased prosperity and more jobs for more people.

Launching the vision and project proposals is only the beginning. Now it is time to make them come true. The four employers'

organizations will develop the proposed action plans and support their practical implementation with a dedicated project office.

Of course, as many social stakeholders as possible will be involved, including authorities, trade unions, socio-cultural associations and the green movement.

In the face of many challenges, especially in the difficult economic circumstances of today, success will depend on their support.

Other metropolitan regions have already shown the way

... Let's make it happen today!

*Source: Brussels Metropolitan Region;  
for more information <http://www.metropolitanbrussels2018.eu/>*

### PERSONALIA

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

#### Corporate Member



#### Ernst & Young

Ernst & Young has established specialized teams, dedicated to serving Japanese organizations and is confident that BJA membership will enhance our commitment to and relationships with the Japanese community in Belgium.

We operate a world wide network of people with a shared way of working and commitment to quality. Our services help organizations to retain confidence of investors, manage risk, strengthen controls and achieve their potential.

This we do in the following areas:

- Independent assurance to ensure accurate critical information for investors and stakeholders, a clear perspective to audit committees and constructive input to management.
- We created highly networked tax consulting teams who advise on planning, compliance and reporting and maintaining good relationships with authorities.
- We offer integrated, objective advisory services, designed to help companies evaluate opportunities, execute transactions more efficiently and achieve their strategic goals.
- We help businesses to make and sustain improvements, while responding more quickly to change.

Joe Englishstraat 52-54, 2140 Borgerhout  
Tel: +32 3 270 1200  
jan.lambrechts@be.ey.com  
BJA Contact: Mr Jan Lambrechts, Partner

### Associate Member

#### Rhenus Logistics

Rhenus Logistics creates value-added solutions. Passionate people create dedicated logistical solutions based on understanding our customer's specific needs, generating mutual growth and prosperity through excellent performance.



We make the difference:

- In new markets
- In difficult markets
- When dealing with complex operations
- We identify with the customer's market
- All our actions are customer driven

We provide solutions in:

- Worldwide Logistics
- Business processes & Information technology
- Legal issues
- Fiscal & Customs formalities
- Financial matters

Noordersingel 21, 2140 Antwerp  
Tel: +32 3 224 5675  
hugo.geerts@be.rhenus.com  
www.rhenus.com  
BJA Contact: Mr Hugo Geerts, CEO

#### SYL

Serge Laeuffer is a business consultant for small & medium size enterprises, with nearly 20 years on hand experience in financial & operational management both from a strategic and an operational perspective. He graduated with a dual BA in Japanese language & economics. His interest for Japan, its people and its culture has led him to develop a thorough experience and knowledge of the Food & Beverage industry. Eager to develop cross valuation partnerships and enhance relations between Belgium and Japan, his contacts portfolio in the F&B but also Biotech & Pharmaceutical industry together with his hand-on approach and understanding of both cultures have been a valuable



asset to numerous partners.

W. Degreefstraat 8, 1560 Hoeilaart  
Tel: +32 47 845 4082  
serge\_laeuffer@yahoo.co.uk  
BJA Contact: Mr Serge Laeuffer, Owner

#### Alpine Electronics (Benelux)

Alpine Electronics Benelux is a branch office of the German affiliate of Alpine Electronics Inc. of Japan which in turn is a consolidated subsidiary of Alps Electric Co. Ltd., We at Alpine Benelux handle sales & services of Alpine brand products in the Benelux retail market. We handle car audio & visuals as well as car navigation & drive assistance products. Our European head quarters are located in Stuttgart for OEM and in Munich for the After Market business. We joined BJA this year to increase our visibility as a sales office of Japanese origin located in Belgium and operating inside the Benelux.

Leuvensesteenweg 510/6, 1930 Zaventem  
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ban@alpine.be  
www.alpine-europe.com  
BJA Contact: Mr John Ban, Senior Branch Manager

#### Royal La Rasante

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[www.royallarasante.be](http://www.royallarasante.be)  
BJA Contact: Gregory Marlier, Corporate Sales Manager

### Individual Members

#### Couple members

Mr & Mrs Valk-Ishii

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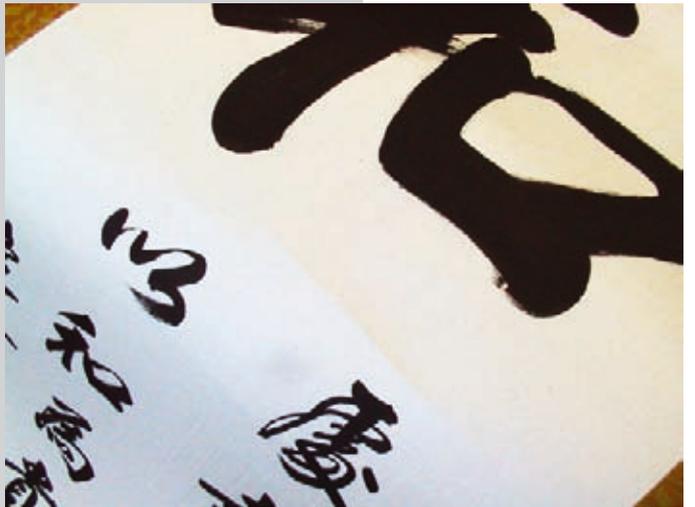
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