

EURO BIZ JAPAN

FEBRUARY
2018



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RECRUITMENT JAPAN

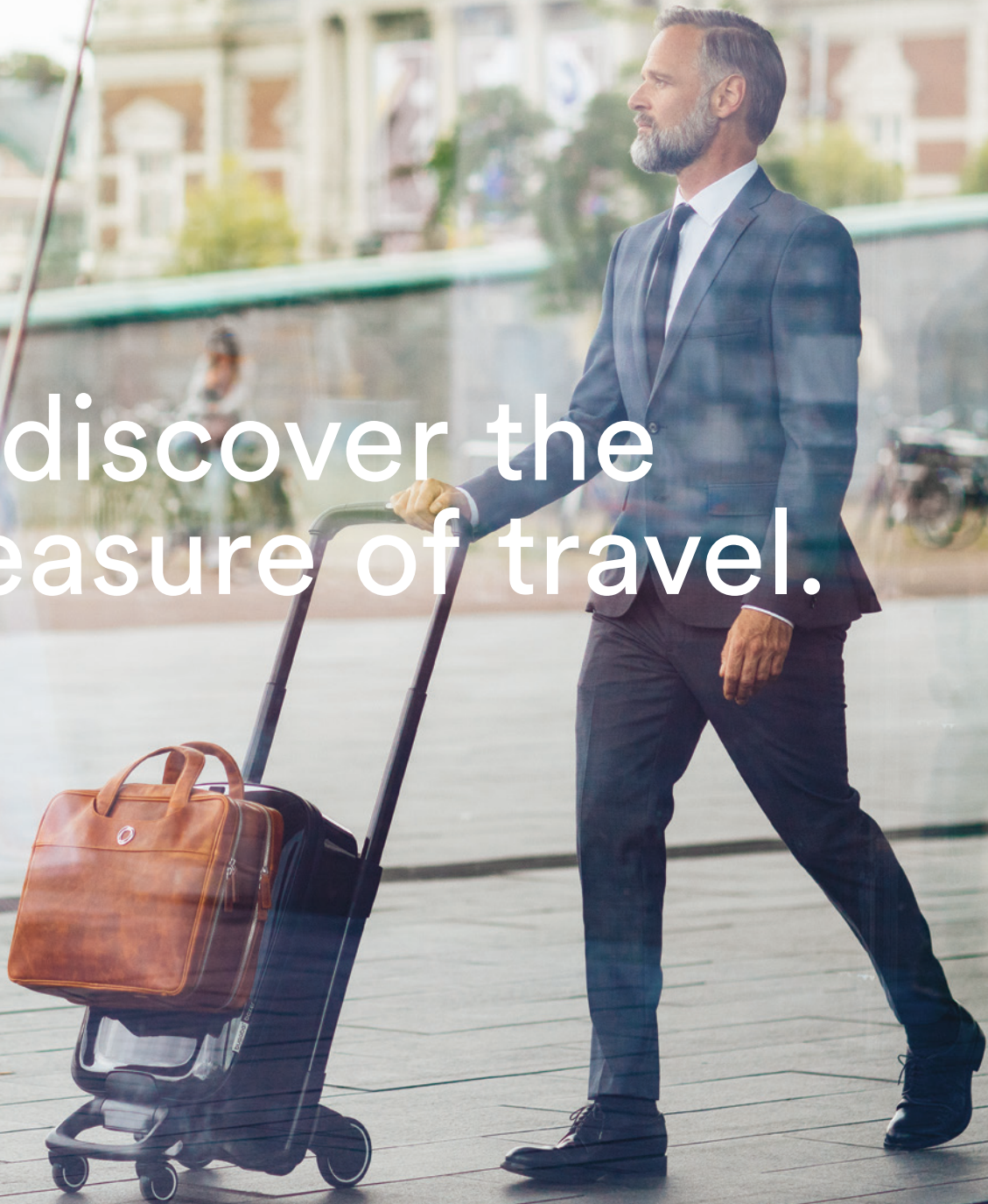
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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
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UNLEASHING POTENTIAL

*Recruit Group's bilingual talent businesses rebrand
to synergise their positioning in Japan*



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**The Mission of the
European Business Council**

To promote an impediment-free environment for European business in Japan.



10

Unleashing potential

By Gavin Blair





First Focus

The building of the To-ji Temple, a UNESCO heritage site, was completed in the year 796. Its five-storied pagoda — a symbol of Kyoto — was erected in 826 and is the tallest in Japan, standing at 57m.

Centuries later, in 2012, Yeong-Ming Wang patented the selfie stick, which went on to become one of the best-selling gifts of 2014. A number of public venues around the world have banned or restricted the use of selfie sticks — in spite of their popularity with tourists — on the grounds of safety and inconvenience to others.

Perhaps the city of Kyoto might consider a ban?

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Writing in and about Japan since 2000, **Gavin Blair** contributes articles to magazines, websites and newspapers in Asia, Europe and the US on a wide range of topics, many of them business related.

➔ *“It was reassuring to hear that the secretive investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) system, which seems heavily skewed in favour of corporations over nations, has been dropped by the EU for future trade deals. But less reassuring is that it is still in effect for thousands of already-signed trade deals.”*



Alena Eckelmann studied on the Executive Training Programme in Tokyo, and then began to write about business, culture, travel and people in Japan. She contributes articles to magazines and websites both in Japan and in Europe.

➔ *“The mechanics of wind energy generation is easy, but catching the wind is not. Similarly, manufacturing of wind turbines is straightforward, yet the politics surrounding wind energy needs a storm in its sails to get moving. I hope Japan will fully utilise her potential, especially of offshore wind power, in the very near future.”*



Allison Bettin received her degree in journalism at the University of Hong Kong before relocating to Tokyo. She has written for *Eurobiz Japan* for over two years on topics such as environmental technology, international economics, and wine.

➔ *“In my travels to Europe, I’ve always marveled at how fabulously delicious the wines are, and how fabulously inexpensive they are, too. In this month’s Cellar Notes, I look at why the world’s most classic wine regions are producing great-value wines, and which regions are doing it best.”*



A former newspaper and wire service reporter, **Geoff Botting** has called Japan home for over a quarter of a century. He now works as a freelance journalist and translator, writing mostly about business, economics and travel.

➔ *“The Legal Services Committee is watching and waiting. For years, it’s been urging the end of a requirement stating that foreign lawyers must spend time abroad gaining work experience. The Japanese government started taking a hard look at the measure in 2015. And now, finally, reform might just be around the corner.”*

EURO BIZ JAPAN

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Subscription is free for members of the EBC and national European chambers of commerce.

Subscription rates are: one year ¥9,000; two years ¥15,000; three years ¥22,000; ¥800 per copy. Rates include domestic postage or surface postage for overseas subscribers. Add ¥7,500 per year if overseas airmail is preferred. Please allow two weeks for changes of address to take effect. Subscription requests should be sent to eurobiz@paradigm.co.jp

If you prefer not to receive this magazine, and for all matters related to distribution, please send an e-mail to eurobiz@paradigm.co.jp

Eurobiz Japan welcomes story ideas from readers and proposals from writers and photographers. Letters to the editor may be edited for length and style.

La Vie en Rose

Pink Ball 2018

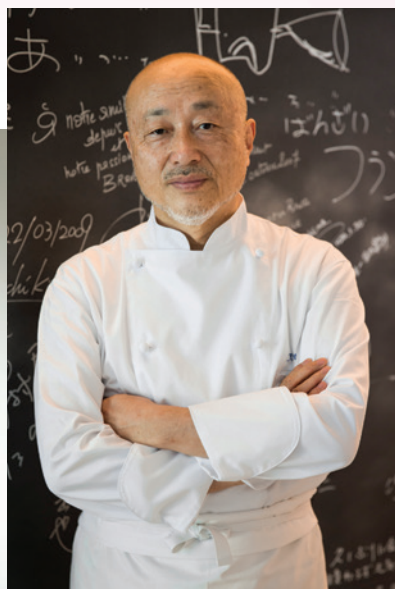
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On the brink of massive change

The airport experience has become easier for travellers over the last decade with online check-in, e-tickets and mobile boarding passes. But as technology continues its ceaseless development, we are once again on the brink of widespread change. Biometrics could soon eliminate the need for boarding passes and passport checks altogether. Currently, fingerprint scans and facial recognition technology are being tested at some airports in Europe and the US.

Scandinavian Airlines (SAS) is working on palm vein scanning technology as a way to expedite the check-in and boarding process. I heard about this impending transformation in the industry during my interview with Leif Nilsson, general manager for Asia-Pacific at

SAS, and have not stopped thinking about its implications. Read this month's EBC Personality article (page 28) to find out about Nilsson, his Swedish upbringing and SAS.

This year marks 150 years of diplomatic ties between Sweden and Japan. Swedish Ambassador to Japan Magnus Robach spoke to me about how this anniversary will be celebrated and, more importantly, how he believes it will take the relations between the two nations to an entirely new level. Read the full interview on page 20.

Japan's wind industry is another area that is on the threshold of massive transformation. A number of regulatory barriers should soon be removed, potentially clearing the way for renewables to make up a much higher percentage of Japan's energy mix. Find out more about the progress that is being made and some of the obstacles that still need to be overcome in Alena Eckelmann's *Winds of change* (page 14).

In this world of relentless change, keep looking for those opportunities that will bring significant and meaningful benefits for the greatest number of people. ●

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TRIATHLON GROUP

Triathlon Group is a professional service firm and a leading actor in performance improvement. We serve large, multinational, Nordic clients internationally. We engage in client assignments to deliver lasting improvements in organisations, based on our areas of specific expertise.

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INVESTING IN JAPAN

TEXT BY GAVIN BLAIR

PHOTOS BY KAGEAKI SMITH

UNLEASHING POTENTIAL

Recruit Group's bilingual talent businesses
rebrand to synergise their positioning in Japan



Competition is heating up for a limited talent pool of bilingual professionals to staff a booming corporate Japan. In this climate, two businesses – the bilingual arms of Japanese recruitment giant Recruit Group – serving the sector are undergoing a rebranding. On 1 April, CDS will become RGF Executive Search Japan, while RGF HR Agent Japan will become RGF Professional Recruitment Japan. These changes are aimed at clarifying their positions in the market and their service offerings for clients and candidates in Japan and across Asia.

RGF Executive Search Japan was founded as CDS 20 years ago by three expat recruiters, and was one of the pioneer foreign-owned agencies in the nascent sector. It was sold to Recruit Group in January 2008, becoming one of the first businesses acquired by the conglomerate as part of its expansion into serving foreign clients and overseas markets. RGF HR Agent Japan was originally set up as a division of Recruit Group’s domestic operations, but in October 2014, it became part of the same international recruitment group as CDS.

The new RGF Executive Search Japan will continue to focus on roles for managers up to top executives, while RGF Professional Recruitment Japan will keep its focus on management positions and below. The inevitable overlap on middle management positions is something Struan McKay, CEO of RGF Executive Search Japan, says they “have always been comfortable with.”



Foreign multinationals make up 70% of RGF Professional Recruitment Japan’s clients and 90% on the RGF Executive Search Japan side

“It was intentional; Japan is a job-rich, candidate-short market and companies have different approaches to recruitment,” explains McKay, who began his career in factory management with Nissan and Nestle in the UK before entering the recruitment field in Japan. “We thought that having a small, reasonable degree of overlap would maximise our potential for serving clients in a market where it is difficult to recruit bilingual talent.”

Although there is overlap, the two companies employ different methods in their quest for the right candidates.

“RGF Professional Recruitment Japan is predominantly a database-driven company,” explains Matt Nicholls, Managing Director of RGF Professional Recruitment Japan. “We get a requirement from a client and we can react quickly. We have a deep database of candidates we can immediately activate.”

RGF Executive Search Japan, as the name implies, is more search-focused, involving market mapping, research and headhunting for a particular requirement.



“We challenge each of our consultants to become the most knowledgeable expert in their particular area of specialisation”

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EUROPEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL IN JAPAN
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According to McKay, the company's strength lies in its bespoke in-house research capabilities, and the market knowledge and extensive, hands-on experience of its consultants, who have an average of 9.5 years in the industry — well above the level of its competitors.

"We also have a strong focus on deep specialisation, and what we call market mastery," McKay adds. "We challenge each of our consultants to become the most knowledgeable expert in their particular area of specialisation, who knows more about what's happening with the industry, the clients and the candidate pool than anybody else."

RGF's own mix of staff is split approximately evenly between Japanese and non-Japanese, with more than 20 nationalities represented across its offices in Tokyo and Osaka. And in what is still often viewed as a male-dominated industry, around 45% of its employees are women. Some 36% of management roles are held by women — a percentage both firms are keen to increase as part of an ongoing diversity drive.

Foreign multinationals make up 70% of RGF Professional Recruitment Japan's clients and 90% on the RGF Executive Search Japan side. When it comes to regular domestic talent, "the Recruit Group has some very strong recruitment solutions of its own for Japanese clients that we don't attempt to compete with," says McKay.

The rebranding is part of an Asia-wide brand integration, designed to unify various companies that the Recruit Group has acquired over the years under its global RGF brand. There are currently 45 RGF offices in 26 cities, covering 11 countries and markets.

9.5 years

RGF Executive Search Japan consultants have an average of 9.5 years' experience in the industry

"For clients that are multinationals and work across various geographies in Asia, it will make it much clearer to them what our organisation is and the fact that the brand they've learned to trust in other markets is actually the same brand here," says McKay. "Today, someone who works with, for example, RGF Executive Search Singapore, may have no idea that CDS is effectively the same business, with the same ownership and the same service offering in Japan."

Having the Recruit brand behind the companies is an advantage across the board, according to Nicholls, who says it has helped RGF Professional Recruitment Japan quadruple in size over the last couple of years.

"Although we deal mostly with international companies, the people who work at them are mostly Japanese, as are most of our candidates. So, the brand is a massive advantage on both sides," explains Nicholls, who founded and then sold a recruitment agency in the UK before coming to Japan.

"There are a lot of candidates out there who only feel comfortable trusting their

personal information and their careers to a Japanese business, but who want to work for an international company," Nicholls adds. "And the rebranding makes it clear we fill that niche."

Although placing bilingual Japanese staff in multinationals operating in Japan is the main pillar of the business, RGF Professional Recruitment Japan also recruits from overseas.

"We place a lot of non-Japanese candidates who come from our Asia network — Indian, Chinese and Vietnamese developers, engineers and programmers, particularly in the mobile gaming sector," notes Nicholls.

Other areas facing acute shortages include strategic consulting, engineering and e-commerce, according to McKay.

"In a market where the supply and demand gap is already unsustainable, every sector needs innovative and creative hiring solutions," adds McKay. "The wholesale shift, in almost every industry, from traditional marketing to a more dynamic digital strategy has created one of the most extreme examples of imbalance; there is extraordinary demand across the board."

Additionally, Japan's greying population makes a shortage of healthcare professionals unavoidable, but this is exacerbated by another factor.

"The competition is fierce and the demand is very strong, and the candidates — even compared with other sectors in Japan — tend to be more conservative and more risk-averse, and therefore reluctant to consider career change," says McKay. "This situation underscores why clients should care deeply about which firm represents them to potential candidates and persuades them to come to the table." ●

"In a market where the supply and demand gap is already unsustainable, every sector needs innovative and creative hiring solutions"



FEATURE

TEXT BY ALENA ECKELMANN

WINDS

“Several issues need to be resolved so that we can develop wind power faster and introduce it on a much larger scale”

OF CHANGE

Progress and obstacles in Japan's wind power industry

Japan's wind power industry is getting ready to soar.

International and domestic players are introducing new technology and investing in a greater deployment of wind energy. Now it is up to the Japanese government to get the legal and environmental framework in place to help this sector take wing.

"Japan is a key market in the APAC [Asia-Pacific] region right now, offering high potential both onshore and offshore," say Álvaro Bilbao, Siemens Gamesa's CEO for the APAC region. "We are supporting the country to reach its renewable energy targets."

In *Japan's Energy Plan*, the government has set the direction for the country's energy

policy with a commitment to decrease reliance on nuclear power and increase the use of renewable energy sources.

The objective is to raise the share of renewable energy from 15% in 2016 to 22-24% by 2030. This will include 1.7% of wind power, up from the current 0.6%.

Japan's total installed wind power capacity reached 3.2 gigawatts (GW) at the end of 2016. The Japan Wind Power Association (JWPA) believes that targets of 10GW by 2020 and 36GW by 2030 are realistic.

"Several issues need to be resolved so that we can develop wind power faster and introduce it on a much larger scale," explains Yoshinori Ueda, general manager of communications at JWPA. "We need to reduce installation costs; improve the electric grid infrastructure; install large, high-performance turbines; promote offshore wind power; and activate a domestic supply chain."

In many places in Japan the average wind speed is between 5 and 7 metres per second (mps) – too weak for wind power generation. Or else, the land is mountainous, making it difficult to install windmills.

KANEKO & ASSOCIATES

If you're brave enough to say 'Goodbye', life will reward you with a 'Hello'.

—Paulo Coelho

Kaneko & Associates, a retained executive search firm with offices in Tokyo and Los Angeles, is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

"Fateful encounters and departures are the basis of my profession," says Nobi Kaneko, president of Kaneko & Associates. He has

witnessed countless "Hellos" by successfully placing top talent in positions around the world for the many companies who have put their trust in him and his work.

With the rapid evolution of technology, there has been a lot of talk about its impact on the executive search business.

"Of course, we need to move with the times, but we are still a 'people business,'" Nobi says.

He is a firm believer that in order to sufficiently build relationships and connect companies with first-rate candidates, he needs to be fair,

open and faithful to each person he works with, be it a client or a candidate.

It is because of this conviction that Nobi decided to sponsor the Museum of Broken Relationships — founded in Croatia, but now a worldwide phenomenon — for its first exhibition in Japan as a unique way to commemorate Kaneko & Associates' 20th anniversary.

The Museum of Broken Relationships is a collection of items, each a heartbreaking memento of a past relationship — either romantic or platonic — accompanied by a personal story by its anonymous contributor. Each donated item stands as proof that a relationship existed, but also that each individual gained enough strength to leave that relationship behind and move on in life. The museum reveals people's true sentiments and their inner strength, and Nobi felt this matched well with what he sees in his business.

The Museum of Broken Relationships exhibition will be held from 31 March to 14 April at 3331 Arts Chiyoda. Until mid-February, you can submit your mementos and personal stories of heartbreak anonymously to the Museum of Broken Relationships exhibition in Japan.

Nobi Kaneko with Olinka Vistica and Drazen Grubisic, co-founders of The Museum of Broken Relationships



For more information, visit: <https://brokenships.com/?open=contribute>

Museum of Broken Relationships main site: <https://brokenships.com/>

www.kanekoassociates.com

“Good candidates are seaside plains and hillsides in Hokkaido and Tohoku with an average wind speed of 8mps,” says Ueda. “So, 88% of planned wind energy projects in Japan are located there.”

Rural areas have low population density and, consequently, a lower demand for electricity and a weak electric grid. Wind-power developers want more electricity to be fed into these areas, but power supply is curtailed by the owners of the grid — Japan’s big electric power companies.

“An expansion of the grid and strengthening of power lines are necessary, which requires a substantial investment,” Ueda states. “Japan’s electric power companies are not prepared to carry this cost and are requesting that wind power developers pay. However, we cannot accept such a costly solution.”

The 2016 EBC white paper points to cumbersome standards and regulations in Japan, such as land use schemes and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), as reasons for slow progress of large-scale wind power projects.

“The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Ministry of the Environment are currently considering a shortening of the Environmental Impact Assessment process by half, as well as an upgrade of the application size for turbines under the EIA from the current 10MW [megawatts] to 50MW,” says Ueda. “Foreign wind-turbine manufacturers have good prospects in the Japanese market if they offer class-T wind turbines that can withstand tropical cyclones but also achieve a high performance at a low average wind speed.”

Domestic firm Hitachi has developed its own unique system to handle the strong winds that frequently assail Japan. The particular configuration of its wind turbines reduces the wind load by positioning the rotor downwind of the tower, meaning that it is not subject to crosswinds even if power generation is halted because of high winds.

“Compared to an upwind rotor configuration, our system not only improves the safety of turbines in strong winds but it also reduces the cost of installing foundations or floating platforms used for offshore turbines,”

88%

88% of planned wind energy projects in Japan are located in Hokkaido and Tohoku

says Hideaki Imachi, public affairs and government relations officer at Hitachi’s Power and Energy Business Administration Division.

The company has developed a range of wind-turbine generator systems that cover the 5MW, 2.5MW, and 2MW classes. And it now has the infrastructure to handle all activities from development and design to manufacturing, sales and maintenance of its wind turbines.

As the offshore wind market in Japan expands, the demand for partners with experience in investments, project development and installations of offshore wind farms is growing.

“Offshore development in Japan is expected to reach a mature phase with some new projects executed within two to three years,” says Bilbao of Siemens Gamesa.

The Spanish-German turbine maker has been present in Japan for 20 years. Some 237 of its wind turbines, capable of producing 416MW, have been installed and have been in commercial operation since 1999. In addition, another 47 wind turbines (representing 155MW) are currently being installed here. Siemens Gamesa also has a strong footprint in the rest of Asia. It has installed turbines producing more than 11.3GW in several Asian markets, with 5GW in India alone.

While this level of installed capacity sounds impressive, it is the wind power penetration level that really reflects a country’s commitment to wind energy. In this regard, Denmark is leading the world.

Onshore and offshore, wind turbines currently provide more than 37.6% of Denmark’s electricity. The ratio is expected to reach 50% by the end of 2021 and 100% by 2050.

“Visionary politicians, a committed industry and strong R&D have made Denmark one of the global leaders today,” says Danish Ambassador to Japan Freddy Svane. “We develop cutting edge and holistic solutions that range from efficient wind turbines to smart electric grids.”

“Japan is a key market in the APAC region right now”

Denmark has been a first mover in the wind industry for decades and has become a role model for other countries. Representatives of Japanese firms regularly tour key sites in Denmark and meet experts from the Danish wind industry in order to gain expertise in this area.

“Offshore solutions are rapidly expanding as a suitable and sustainable option for electricity generation worldwide,” says Ambassador Svane. “I hope that Japan will tap into her huge potential for offshore wind. It will be win-wind.” ●



The bone of contention

The EU and Japan don't see eye-to-eye on investor-to-state dispute settlements

For the wheels of global capitalism to run smoothly, companies need to be secure in the knowledge that overseas investments will not be harmed or scuppered by sudden shifts in the political or regulatory landscape. In order to address this, investor-to-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanisms have been included in thousands of bilateral trade agreements. However, concerns about shifts in power from nation states to multinational corporations, reports of profiteering abuses of ISDS, and the lack of transparency in proceedings have led to a hardening of citizens' attitudes against the system.

As a result of public outcry, ISDS was replaced in the EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and became a bone of contention in the currently shelved Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). ISDS also has been a major sticking point in the recently concluded EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). The Japanese side wished to continue with ISDS rather than adopt the investment court system, which the EU now favours.

Critics of ISDS point to a series of factors they claim skew their operations in favour of multinational corporations over countries, which can hinder efforts to implement, for example, public health and environmental protection measures. Supporters of the system call this scaremongering and maintain that the worst-case scenarios envisaged by opponents simply don't occur. The lack of transparency in ISDS cases, one of the central criticisms levelled, make it difficult to establish the truth.

Most ISDS systems work by having a panel of three arbitrators decide the merits of a case and award — at times huge — financial compensation to companies whose business they decide has been damaged by the actions of a government. The arbitrators are often corporate lawyers, sometimes the same ones representing companies in other disputes. Clearly, there is the potential for conflicts of interest and inherent bias in favour of corporations. In addition, cases are not heard in public, and there is little or no recourse to appeal judgments.

“EU member states have concluded more than 1,400 bilateral investment treaties and all of them have the ISDS system,” said an EU official close to the EU–Japan EPA negotiations. “However, public mood regarding ISDS has changed and, since 2015, the EU approach has been the investment court system.”

In a document called *A new EU trade agreement with Japan* released on 8 December, 2017, the European Commission goes so far as to say, “For the EU, ISDS is dead”, implying that Japan has not budged from its position of favouring this system.

However, insisting on ISDS today seems wrongheaded, especially in light of its track record.

127
cases

There have been 127 confirmed ISDS cases brought against EU member states over the last two decades

A 2014 report by Friends of the Earth cited that there had been 127 confirmed ISDS cases brought against EU member states over the previous two decades, with 97 of those relating to issues of energy and the environment. The largest pay-out was of more than €550 million, awarded to a Dutch bank against the Slovak Republic over its health insurance policies. Another case, brought by a Swedish energy company against the German city of Hamburg in 2007, claimed that tighter environmental regulations related to water would cause it €1.4 billion in losses (plus interest and costs) for a coal-fired power station project. The city eventually backed down, despite claiming the regulations were to meet EU standards, and adopted weaker environmental protection regulations.

An Asian branch of tobacco giant Philip Morris pursued an ISDS case in 2012 against Australia, claiming that the country’s laws on plain cigarette packaging damaged its business. The company used a trade agreement between Australia and Hong Kong, where its Asia operations are headquartered, as the basis of its claim. However, the case backfired: arbitrators last year ordered Philip Morris to pay Australia’s costs, reported to be around AUD \$50 million. Subsequent concerns about ISDS contributed to Australia insisting at the last minute that the mechanism be pulled from its bilateral trade deal with Japan.

Despite the opposition voiced elsewhere, the Japanese government has remained firm in its resolve to see ISDS included in the EU–Japan EPA.

“It is more about a blueprint for Asia, because you need investor protection in Asia, though not that much in Europe,” according to Dr Martin Schulz, senior economist at the Fujitsu Research Institute.

However, of the EU’s now-preferred investment court system, Schulz said, “The EU approach is very much European in establishing virtual courts that can hear cases, going one step beyond private negotia-

tions — which concern citizens’ groups so much because private corporations are usually much stronger there.”

Following the outcry in Europe that accompanied the TTIP negotiations, the EU held a public consultation on ISDS that attracted more than 150,000 responses. The resulting rethink led to the decision to introduce investment courts, which will be used for the first time to settle disputes under the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with Canada. As well as investment courts being open to the public, they are permanent tribunals overseen by professional judges

“Europe is absolutely clear: we will not go back to the old ISDS system”

rather than corporate lawyers. They also allow both third-party submissions and the right of appeal.

“The big problem is that this is not really flying in Asia, where governments are very concerned about any restrictions on their rights,” explained Schulz.

With Japan and the EU still not seeing eye-to-eye on the issue, discussions on how to settle investor disputes are continuing.

“Europe is absolutely clear: we will not go back to the old ISDS system,” said the EU official close to the negotiations. “It is indeed up to Japan to find a way to adopt this approach, but they are quite sceptical.” ●



On 11 November 1868, Japan and Sweden signed a Treaty of Friendship, Navigation and Commerce, just two and a half weeks after the official start of the Meiji period.

This year marks 150 years of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries. Swedish Ambassador to Japan Magnus Robach sat down with *Eurobiz Japan* to speak about what's planned for this special anniversary year, Sweden's involvement in creating safety standards for a new generation of robots, and the visit of Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Victoria to Japan last year.

What are the embassy's goals for 2018?

The main goal for this year is to use the 150th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Sweden and Japan to bring our relations to a new level — especially our economic relations. But there is dialogue in many areas, and we will be nurturing existing dialogues and cooperation, and also giving incentives for new initiatives.

How will Sweden and Japan celebrate?

There will be celebrations in Japan and in Sweden. Here in Japan, we're planning four major conferences, four or five major exhibitions, a music month and a number of high-level official visits. In the second half of the year, there will be quite a lot of focus on design and lifestyle.

From an economic point of view, the main event will be the Sweden–Japan Business Summit in April. We're doing this in cooperation with Keizai Doyukai [the Japan Association of Corporate Executives]. The theme is reinventing business in a competitive world. Our

ambition is to bring together the established international firms — the Ericssons, the Toyotas, the Volvos — with the disruptors and startups to discuss how they can interact, how they can encourage each other. It will be intellectually dynamic, but in the end, we hope that people will find business partners.

Prime Minister [Shinzo] Abe visited Sweden in early July of last year. The 150-year anniversary was mentioned as an important event, and there will probably be a number of agreements signed during this anniversary year. So, it's not just the economic actors and the private sector, but at the political level, governments are also involved in a closer dialogue. We have a dialogue in the area of security



Moving to a new level

Swedish Ambassador to Japan Magnus Robach



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and defence, for example, where we also hope for additional impetus during 2018.

What are some new areas of bilateral cooperation?

One major industrial event worth mentioning is the launch of the Northvolt project. It's a huge project to manufacture batteries at a mega-factory located in Northern Sweden. Its aim is to provide the European market with state-of-the-art battery technology. One primarily thinks of the automotive industry, but it's by no means limited to that. The reason this is particularly interesting here is that Japan is a technology leader in battery manufacturing. However, manufacturing batteries in Japan is very expensive — they have technology, but they may not necessarily have all the conditions for becoming a mega-manufacturer. Northvolt has been designed in partnership between Japanese technology providers and other stakeholders, such as investors and government itself. This is a very promising project in view of Sweden–Japan relations.

ABB recently entered into an alliance with Kawasaki on robotics. There's a new generation of robots called collaborative robots. I went to a robotics fair in early December where they were on show. It's quite fascinating. A funny example: when filling bento boxes, you have harder objects and softer objects. Now, nobody can match the speed and precision of a robot putting the harder objects in the bento, but for the softer ones — whether it's sushi or whatever — it's a very difficult thing. Humans are needed to put those in, which means that the robot and the human will literally sit across the table from each other filling in this box. The robot might be

intelligent in some ways, but the problem is, it can also be quite dangerous. So, what Kawasaki and ABB have agreed is to work on a security standard for collaborative robots. They are competitors, but they have formed an alliance to move the business forward in this strategic area. It's another original and interesting example of collaboration.



You spoke at the Japan Press Club in December with four other Nordic ambassadors. What did you speak about?

I talked about migration, and I described it as a stress test for Swedish society and for long-term benefits. My message was fundamentally that Sweden has greatly benefited from migration over the years.

Since the Second World War, there have been different waves of migration. During the Balkan wars, we peaked at around 60,000 asylum seekers in 1995, whereas in 2015 we had 182,000 asylum seekers from a different part of the world. The focus is now very much on integration, so that we can reap the positive effects, in the medium and longer term, of those who have come to our country. People will continue to want to become part of our society if we have the proper policies in place on training, schooling, access to the labour market. But we may need to make some changes to our welfare model to make this possible; and this is, of course, why there is such discussion.

Could you tell me about the visit of Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Victoria to Japan last year?

This is a story that started in the autumn of 2016 when Her Highness participated

in an event in the Maldives, initiated by the Stockholm Resilience Centre. They had managed to invite nine or 10 representatives of some of the largest seafood companies in the world. The top two seafood companies in the world are Japanese: Maruha Nichiro and Nihon Suisan. There were also Thai, South Korean and a number of Norwegian companies represented. Her Highness's participation made an impression on all the senior participants of these companies. Together, they made 10 commitments on sustainable fishing and care of the oceans. And they are working now on how to translate these into actions and strategies.

When she came to Japan, we had an event here at the embassy where an additional member from the Japanese seafood company Kyokuyo Suisan signed up for this initiative — which is called SeaBOS [Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship]. Her Highness also visited one of the first tuna preparation plants to have been certified by the Marine Stewardship Council, somewhere near Sendai. And she went to AEON, which has a very ambitious plan to gradually introduce more certified fish and seafood products in their stores.

Why has Princess Victoria taken up this particular cause?

She was invited by the secretary general of the UN to be ambassador for the organisation's sustainable development goals. She grew up next to the sea, so she chose the two that were closest to her heart: one was healthy oceans and the other was clean water. She's been very committed to this role. ●



Sweden

An ideal environment

After two decades of deregulation and budget balancing, as well as an overhaul of its tax system, Sweden has transformed its economy. It is now stable, fiscally responsible and sees regular, annual economic growth. The country has been ranked seventh for global competitiveness, according to the World Economic Forum, and fourth on Forbes' Best Countries for Business 2018 list, which looks at factors such as property rights, taxes, technology and investor protection. Sweden is today undeniably a good environment for business.

In imitation of their nation, many Swedish companies are creating a good environment for their customers. Munters, a global leader in air treatment and climate

solutions, is an ideal example. Founded in 1955, the firm manufactures systems to maintain optimal temperatures and air conditions for businesses in a range of sectors, including agriculture, healthcare and data storage. For example, Munters' systems have made heating and cooling more cost effective and environmentally friendly at IKEA properties, have improved ventilation for a mine engineering firm in the US, and have kept temperatures comfortable for sows at a pig-breeding farm in Denmark, resulting in more piglets born.

Vitrolife makes products for use in the in vitro fertilisation (IVF) process – from sperm preparation and oocyte retrieval through to embryo transfer – and helps to create the best possible environment for embryos to develop. Since 1994, when it was one of the first suppliers for IVF




laboratories, Vitrolife has insisted on the highest quality and rigorously tests its incubators, microscopes, needles, centrifuge tubes and pipettes so that a greater number of couples can see successful treatment outcomes. The firm's culture media – liquid solutions used in the retrieval, handling and transfer stages of IVF – replicate conditions in the female reproductive tract, making for an optimal environment outside the womb.

Established in 1849 as a textile manufacturer, Mölnlycke Health Care today exists to maintain a sanitary environment in hospitals and during surgical procedures. Its wound care division manufactures products such as dressings, compression bandages and emollients while its surgical division makes drapes, gowns and facemasks. The firm produces 400 pairs of surgical gloves every minute, and every three seconds, one of Mölnlycke's single-use drapes is used during surgery somewhere in the world.

Dometic enables people to experience the great outdoors while enjoying many of the comforts of home. Originally the leisure appliances division of Swedish home appliance giant Electrolux, Dometic was divested from the company in 2001. Its range of products for motorhomes, boats and trucks include portable fridge and freezer units, microwave ovens, coffee makers, air conditioners, vacuum cleaners, awnings and tents. It even sells compact wine cellars with anti-UV glass to help make picnics perfect out in the wilderness.

Play is an essential part of a child's development, so any good environment for children will include good toys. Founded in the Swedish town of Osby in 1884, BRIO is now a global business with subsidiaries in Germany, France and Japan. Since 1958, it has sold its iconic wooden toy trains with cars that can be connected by magnets. The firm's offerings have expanded over the decades to become an entire BRIO world with everything from airports and police stations to farms and camping sets.

As Sweden and Japan celebrate 150 years of bilateral relations this year, it is a good opportunity to create an even better environment for trade between the two nations. ●

 **Trade with Japan**

Imports from Japan: €1.54 billion
Exports to Japan: €1.88 billion

SOURCE:
SWEDISH NATIONAL BOARD
OF TRADE (2016)



Area

450,295 km².
Coastline: 3,218 km.

Climate

Temperate in south with cold, cloudy winters and cool, partly cloudy summers. Subarctic in north.

Major cities

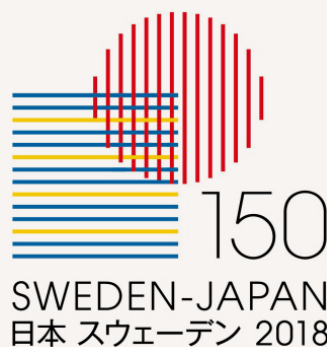
Stockholm (capital), Göthenburg, Malmö, Uppsala and Västerås.

Population

9,960,487 (2017, estimate).
Urban population: 86.1% of total population (2017). 39.42% are 25–54 years of age.

Natural resources

Iron ore, copper, lead, zinc, gold, silver, tungsten, uranium, arsenic, feldspar, timber and hydropower.





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Leif Nilsson

A life of dazzling experiences

In northern Sweden, there is a small town called Lycksele that is frequently treated to the dazzling light shows of the Aurora Borealis. Leif Nilsson, general manager for Asia-Pacific at Scandinavian Airlines (SAS), was fortunate enough to grow up beneath this radiant spectacle.

“W e get to enjoy the Northern Lights – that Japanese people pay so much to go and see – and we have it every night,” he says. “We could play hockey on the street because the light was so strong. There weren’t that many street lights, but you could see the whole street very clearly.”

When Nilsson was 12 years old, he left Lycksele and moved with his family to Stockholm. After university and military service, he completed a Master’s course in business, economics and social studies and then spent a year specialising in teaching at Uppsala University.

“My only interest, after finishing military service, was that I wanted to be a teacher,” he

states. “I got my licence to teach and taught economics at a high school for two years.”

Nilsson had a strong theoretical foundation in finance and business, but when an opportunity arose at SAS, he thought a couple of years at a company would be a good way to get some practical experience in his field – before returning to the classroom a better-informed teacher. However, his experience in the business world ended up dazzling him more than he could have imagined.

“After one year, I said, ‘Please take back my books and everything, I don’t need them anymore’. It was so fantastic to work at the company,” Nilsson says. “I closed the door on my teaching career and moved into SAS.”

In 1946, the three national carriers of Denmark, Norway and Sweden realised they were too small to compete on the international stage and merged to form SAS. Five years later, the firm became one of the first airlines in Europe to establish operations in Japan. Those early flights between Scandinavia and Japan took 55 hours and required nine stops.

In 1980, the company was struggling financially – with losses of \$17 million annually – and Jan Carlzon became CEO. By 1983, he had completely transformed the firm: SAS was profitable again and received the Airline of the Year award.

“All the young people wanted to work for SAS,” Nilsson recalls. “It was on top of the world at that time.”

Do you like natto?

Time spent working in Japan:

Ten years in total; first four, and now six.

Career regret (if any):

No. Luckily, being in a company as big as SAS, I’ve come into new positions in different departments at the time I wanted them.

Favourite saying:

Escalate possible solutions, don’t escalate problems.

Favourite book:

For non-fiction, Jan Carlzon’s *Moments of Truth*. For fiction, Stieg Larsson’s *Millennium* trilogy.

Cannot live without:

Family.

Lesson learned in Japan:

Mistakes happen, but the focus in Japan is to learn from your mistakes; to document each one and ensure that it does not happen again.

Secret of success in business:

Deliver more than expected.

Favourite place to dine:

Bulgari II Ristorante, when there’s a jazz event on. They have a fantastic chef there, Luca Fantin.

Do you like natto?:

I’ve tried it, but no. I prefer a kind of fermented fish from Sweden called Surströmming.

“My only interest ... was that I wanted to be a teacher”

After several years in Stockholm doing a range of different jobs, he was offered the position of business controller in Bangkok in 1999. He and his wife had discussed the possibility of moving abroad and saw this as the opportunity they had been waiting for to get out and see the world.

“It has always been our interest to travel,” states Nilsson. “Our parents often told my



wife and me to save up for an apartment, but we always went travelling as soon as we got some money.”

Since moving to Thailand, Nilsson’s career has been centred on Asia. He also held positions at SAS’s cargo firm in Tokyo and Beijing before taking up his current position as general manager for Asia–Pacific.

This year, Nilsson is focused on increasing traffic between

Scandinavia and Japan. Haneda airport will be opening 50 more slots for airlines, and he is determined to secure one for SAS.

“It’s a very humble goal,” he states, “but it will help passengers from Scandinavia reach more destinations in Japan.”

Over the years, Nilsson and his wife have travelled extensively. Japan, in particular, has dazzled the couple. And they have certainly made the most of their time here, travelling to all 47 prefectures.

“I keep a map marking all the places I’ve driven and where I’ve been,” says Nilsson.

He highlights, as being particularly memorable, trips to the Tateyama Kurobe Alpine Route in Toyama, *onsens* in the mountains of Beppu in Kyushu, and Mount Nokogiri in Chiba.

“If you stay at home, you feel restless, like you should be using the day in a better way,” he observes. “That’s what drives me – wanting to see and experience new things.” ●

EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

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TEXT BY DAVID UMEDA

There are advantages to an international education.

"Today's challenges demand a different kind of education, one that allows students to gain strong intercultural competencies and understand multiple perspectives," explains Jennifer Hepworth, president, **EF Academy International Boarding Schools**.

"An international education allows students to develop a better range of soft skills — such as time management, critical analysis, team work and independent thinking — than their peers who have followed national qualification programmes," she adds.

At **Tokyo Children's Garden**, an international school education offers the opportunity for students to engage and learn in a multicultural environment.

"In a diverse community, children learn about different cultures and ways of thinking, which helps them to appreciate and respect those differences," says Ann Nishigaya, principal. "This is important in today's global society."

At **Poppins Active Learning International School (PALIS)**, children are taught to communicate ideas and take the perspective of

someone else who could be living somewhere across the globe.

"Teachers here are trained to listen to the 'Hundred Languages of Children' while developing and nurturing children's ways of expression accordingly," explains Betty Shimozaki, school director.

An early start in an international school will build a foundation for globally minded citizens, according to **St. Alban's Nursery School**.

"Children have the opportunity to learn in a multi-age environment alongside students from around the world," points out Gilma Yamamoto-Copeland, nursery director. "We emphasize self-confidence, compassion and mutual respect — qualities essential for our future leaders."

The advantages of an international education at **Chateau des Bambini Montessori School, Tokyo** are that the children will have the opportunity to meet foreign nationals and learn about different cultures.

"They can experience new customs and traditions as well as see the world," says Eriko Jones, founder and proprietor. "By meeting different peo-

ple, the children will have a better understanding and respect for individuals."

The very foundation of an international education in the IB programme at **Hiroshima International School (HIS)** is a critical awareness of perspectives.

"There is also an understanding that a diversity of perspectives exists, and that you should be able to identify and critically evaluate those perspectives in relation to one's own values and beliefs," says Damian Rentoule, principal. "Education provides tools that our students will carry with them for the rest of their lives."

The type of education offered at **Saint Maur International School** in Yokohama fosters the development of life-long learners, as well as cultural and religious understanding.

"We believe that such learning can be achieved through a variety of means," explains Jeanette K. Thomas, chairperson of the board of directors. "By focusing on appreciating people and their differences while also recognising their commonalities."

International education at **Seisen International School** offers students, faculty and the larger community the opportunity to develop ideas and competencies that cross borders.

"Not only do students access information and skills beyond national curriculums," points out James Hatch, high school principal, "they also interact with peers from across the globe and develop such soft skills such as multilingualism, diplomacy and a service-orientated, globally inclusive view."

GLOBAL

At EF Academy, an international education breaks down barriers and opens opportunities. Students learn the value of diversity. They approach problems knowing there might not be one right answer or solution.

"We live in an increasingly complex world that demands this ability to create connections and foster collaborative relationships," Hepworth concludes.

"At St. Alban's, our students quickly learn to take differences for granted, with English as the common link — mixing with so many nationalities in class and in fun activities," observes Yamamoto-Copeland. Examples include when the dads come to help make Valentine's gifts for mums, or they all go potato digging at a Japanese farm somewhere.

"Our students can achieve a vast knowledge about society and also on innovations related to

"We live in an increasingly complex world that demands this ability to create connections and foster collaborative relationships"

information and communication technologies, for example," says Jones of Chateau des Bambini Montessori. "This approach to education will enhance the student's ability to acquire knowledge and to adopt and apply knowledge in order to think independently and collaborate with others."

At **New International School of Japan**, the students are united by their theme of study, but have access to an enormous range of information, data, ideas, languages and points of view.

"All of this supports them in their research, thought and expression, which gives real substance to their diversity," explains Steven Parr, founding director/head of school. "This, to us, is the way to live and learn in a globalised world."

At Saint Maur, focusing on various faiths and cultures enables a deeper understanding of those aspects which are common to all human beings and their aspirations.

"These bind us so that we can work together to improve society through a deep understanding and conviction, based on concrete experience as international students and educators," says Thomas.

Accessing top-quality professional development that meets the unique needs of international teachers and their students is a challenge, according to Hatch of Seisen.

"As most teachers are trained in a national setting, the move to an international school can demand new skills and mindsets," he stresses. "Supporting teachers in this transition is what top international schools strive to do."

UP AHEAD

"Understanding the cultural background of each student in an international school can be a challenge for teachers," explains Nishigaya. "At Tokyo Children's Garden, we keep student numbers low to allow us to get to know each student and family individually. We encourage families to celebrate cultural differences and embrace the diversity of our students."

Families come from various backgrounds at PALIS. Some have lived in Tokyo for years while others have just arrived.

"We ensure that the needs of the children, as well as the needs of the family, are met," says Shimozaki. "Our day is done when we see the entire family go home with smiles on their faces!"

According to Parr of New International School, "I think a significant challenge is to find ways to support and develop academic proficiency in languages other than English and, especially, other native languages."

The school favours a translanguaging approach.

"And we help students develop academic proficiency in both English and Japanese," he adds. "But the other languages are also important."

Rentoule of HIS observes that we are definitely facing a challenge in the way that an increasingly personalised feed of news through social media restricts the variety of information and perspectives that we encounter in our day-to-day lives.

"And so it is an important reason to foster the critical-thinking skills of our children," he concludes.

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INVESTING IN JOBS

Placing a premium on education

TEXT BY DAVID UMEDA

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"Most of the managerial jobs that need post-graduate education nowadays require considerable knowledge on globalisation, international finance and markets," explains Wenkai Li, dean and professor in the GSIM. "IUJ, with 75% of its students from outside Japan and

25% from Japanese corporations, is the ideal place to prepare students for such careers."

RESULTS THAT COUNT

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At the school, students also are encouraged to apply what they learn in the work place.

"Such skills are highly appreciated and needed by corporations hiring graduates," adds Li.

Approximately 40% of Lakeland University Japan's students are from countries other than Japan, representing over 55 nations from five continents.

"This internationalisation has prepared them for both international graduate studies and the diverse global working world beyond which they need to communicate almost constantly with counterparts worldwide," says Brender.

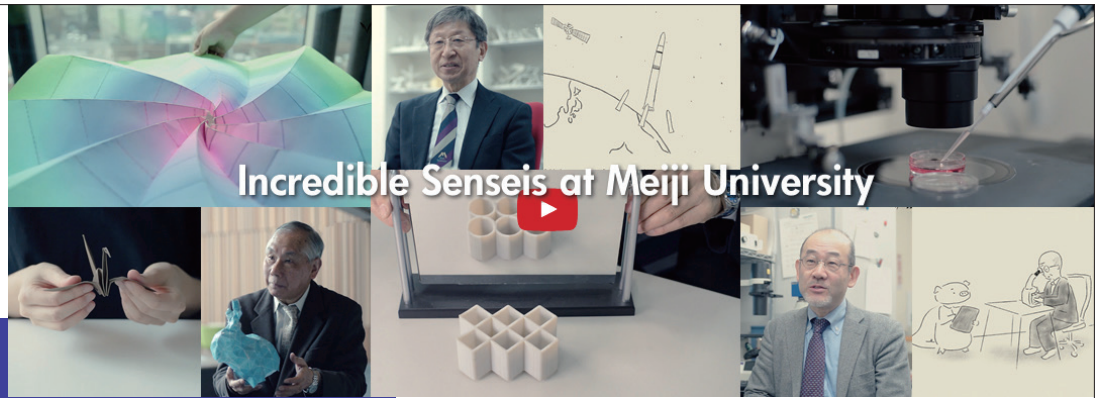
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The Holy Grail of the green

Proper putting

When it comes to putting, it's a toss-up as to what golfers do more to try and find that perfect stroke: change their putter or change how they grip it.

Changing your putter is easy. You go to a store, try out a bunch of putters, think you like one and take it home. You use it for a few weeks, your putting doesn't improve and you go back to using your old putter.

So then you're faced with the second option: changing how you grip your putter. But there are some basics that need to be sorted out before you start doing weird things with your hands.

The basic putting stroke is a pendulum motion from the shoulders and upper body that sets your putter in motion. Keep your arms and wrists locked straight and hit through the ball, not at it. The idea is to eliminate any chance of straying off your intended line. One degree of error and you can miss the hole. It's as simple as that.

First, you need to align your eyes directly over the ball. You might think you're doing this, but it's easy to be slightly off target and that can make the difference between a good putt and a bad one. For putting, lean slightly more forward than with other golf strokes. It really is worthwhile to go to a swing

analyser to see exactly what you're doing wrong.

Another factor to address that is often overlooked is where the putter head should be positioned when you start your swing — on the ground or in the air? When you're lining up your putt, it's easier to have the club head resting flat on the ground for greater accuracy. And, as with the driver, the stroke should be marginally on the upswing.

When you strike the ball, follow through and avoid moving your head. As with the other clubs in your bag, your backswing determines the speed and distance of the ball. Finish the stroke with your head down and then go and take the ball out of the hole.

If the ball doesn't drop, well obviously you need to change your putter again ... or your grip.

With putting, almost any idiosyncratic grip and swing goes. Some use the same interlocking setup they grip their irons with, but this grip has a fatal flaw for putting: it allows too much wrist movement — a big no-no.

The key to putting is to make the grip as neutral as possible so that neither hand dominates your stroke. In other words, apply similar pressure from each hand and then just make a pendulum motion from your upper body.

The standard grip is similar to your grip for other clubs, but without interlocking the

fingers. The putter should be held more by the hands than the fingers. Point your right index finger down the shaft (towards the ground) and rest your left index finger over the fingers of your right hand but so they also point down around the right hand. This, crucially, helps to prevent too much wrist action and rotation as you putt.

There are a number of ways to grip the putter — from the conventional to the bizarre. But the simple fact is you can use any grip you're comfortable with and, as with a new club, you just have to get used to it. Whatever the grip that you use, strike the ball with a consistent, repeatable action. Or, to put it another way, find the Holy Grail. ●





The thwarted third arrow

Frustrations of economic reform in Japan should not deter global investors

It is too early to make an investment case for Japan based on improved domestic demand, something that has yet to be unleashed by much-needed supply-side economic reform. However, there is currently a good case for Japanese equities, based on the country's prowess as a leading exporter of high-value goods.

Loose monetary and fiscal policies are helping to keep the yen weak, which supports the export sector. In addition, exports are benefiting from a strong cyclical upturn in global demand, with the IMF forecasting 3.6% global GDP growth this year.

The current lacklustre interest in Japan by global investors — despite the record profitability of its companies and attractive valuations relative to Wall Street — is therefore somewhat surprising.

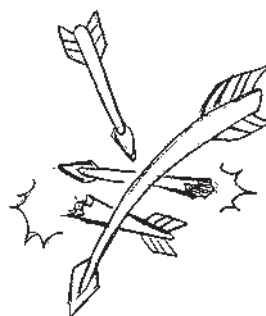
In December, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe appealed to the Japan Trade Union Confederation to increase the initial pay rise request of 4% that it was making to employers. Slow wage growth has held down household spending growth in Japan and has frustrated attempts by the Bank of Japan to stimulate inflation.

Higher pay would redistribute the cash held in corporate balance sheets — which are swelling thanks to record profits — into the hands of workers who would spend it, so boosting the circulation of money and the amount of demand in the economy.

But the appeal, which in many other countries would have led to Abe being accused of populism and pandering to the workers, fell on deaf ears. His advice was rejected by the unions, who are expected to settle for the same 1.2% pay rise that they finished with after last year's negotiations. They see little to be gained from undermining their employers.

This episode is simply one of many frustrations and set-backs that Abe has suffered in his attempt to push through his “third arrow” of economic reform and so set the country on a path of sustainable economic growth.

In contrast, the first two “arrows” of reform — loose monetary and fiscal policies — met with quick success on their introduction and help make



today's short-term case for an overweight position in Japanese stocks. The resulting weaker yen has supported exports, and this, together with higher import prices, has encouraged consumer price index inflation to return to positive numbers. Real GDP grew 1.4% in last year's third quarter, broadly in line with other developed economies. And all this while the country faces significant demographic challenges.

Japan has responded to a shortage of workers with greater automation. This has increased productivity per

worker and strengthened Japan's global lead in robotics.

Now robust global growth is being added to the mix. The result is that the Japanese stock market — which has a bias towards cyclical sectors, such as tech and construction equipment — is on a roll. The Nikkei 225 index reached a 26 year high in December, while the month before, the TOPIX pushed through the psychologically important 1,800 barrier.

A December Tankan survey of Japanese business, issued by the Bank of Japan, shows very strong business confidence, supporting the argument for buying Japanese stocks to benefit from a cyclical upturn in global growth.

And what of efforts to raise workers' pay? Starting in April, corporate tax rates will be adjusted to encourage companies to award annual pay raises of 3% or more. Whether this will boost consumption, or simply lead to higher household savings, remains to be seen. It's also important to keep in mind that mandatory curbs on excessive overtime may actually reduce take-home pay in spite of higher hourly wages.

The importance of supply-side economic reform, when implemented, will be to make the Japanese economy — and its stock market — less dependent on exports and the vagaries of the global economy.

But in the near term, investors stand to benefit from that dependency and from the positive effect it has on the overall Japanese economy — while it lasts. ●

Tom Elliott is an international investment strategist with the deVere Group in London.





The answers are blowing in the wind

Asia Offshore Wind Day 2018

The winds of change are blowing in the Asia-Pacific region. With its offshore wind market starting to boom, particularly in Taiwan and Australia, Japan is poised to see a similar explosion of activity over the next decade.

ous problems: some are topographical, such as deep seabeds, while many are regulatory, such as a lack of transparency for market entry. However, these issues are being dealt with one at a time.

“Technology has continued to develop, giving us floating wind turbines, which help us overcome the challenges of our deep seas,” she explained. “There has also been continuous progress in the governmental and legal areas ... which is promising for the future of the industry.”

According to Takahata, the Japanese government has proposed legislation related to offshore wind projects that will include permission to use sea areas for more than 25 years, and the introduction of a fair and transparent auction system.

“If the legislature is successful in passing these reforms this year as planned, we hope to see investment and development to follow next year,” she said.

Yoshinori Ueda, board member of the Japan Wind

Energy Association (JWEA), spoke of the nation’s sizeable capacity for wind power development.

“Japan has about 91 gigawatts [GW] of offshore wind energy potential,” he said, citing research conducted by Japan’s Ministry of the Environment.

Currently, there are only 65 megawatts (MW) of offshore wind power installed in Japan, he explained. Nevertheless, the tide is turning. More than 20 projects, representing 9.6GW, are in the pipeline, many of which are now undergoing environmental impact assessments.

The government’s official goal is for onshore and offshore wind power to occupy

1.7% — a meagre 820MW — of its energy mix by 2030. But, the JWEA is pushing for a government goal of 36.2GW, of which 10GW would come from offshore wind farms and supply 9% of Japan’s electricity needs.

Sophie Cherrier, co-founder of Green Giraffe, a financial advisory boutique focused on renewable energy, spoke about Europe’s leading position in the offshore wind market.

“Why is it relevant to look at Europe when looking at offshore wind?” she asked, before explaining: “Over 16GW of installed capacity out of 18GW installed worldwide is in Europe. Germany and the UK are the leaders in that respect ... Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands are also well advanced, especially given their relatively smaller size.”

Cherrier related some lessons that Japan should bear in mind as its offshore wind sector begins to mature.

“Some of the key factors of success for the European industry are based on having a stable, long-term regulatory framework,” she said. “Developing the local supply chain as a first step, ensuring that you attract sufficient investors, and making the banks comfortable with the sector are really the keys.”

During the last session of the conference, Michael Hannibal, a partner at Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners, expressed his belief that Asia could surpass Europe in capacity and technology.

“I think the ambition should be higher than avoiding the mistakes made in Europe,” he said. “The ambition for APAC [Asia-Pacific] ... would be to learn, but then to raise the bar. The new standard could be the APAC standard, and then Europe would have to learn — [and that would] drive innovation and development faster.” ●



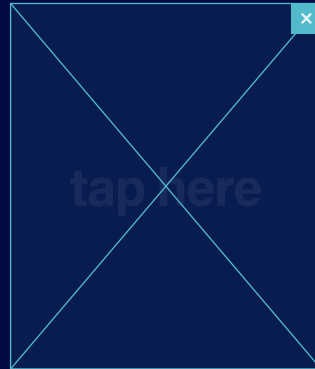
(Above)
Yoshinori Ueda
of the Japan
Wind Energy
Association



(Right) Sophie
Cherrier of
Green Giraffe

On 25 January 2018, more than 200 leaders in the wind power sector, including executives, investors, insurers and academics, came together for the Asia Offshore Wind Day 2018. Held at Toranomon Hills, the conference was organised by the Asia Wind Energy Association.

The conference’s first speaker was Masako Takahata, general counsel at Eurus Energy Holdings, a Toyota-Tepco joint venture. She noted that, in Japan, offshore wind development projects are facing numer-



Who blocks the blockers?

The battle between ad-blockers and business

Much of the online content we view every day — from Gmail emails to Facebook posts to articles on the BBC — is free. While paywalls are becoming more common, free content has fueled the phenomenal growth of the internet over the past quarter century. But, as we all know, it comes with ads embedded into everything, including YouTube videos and SNS messages.

These ads are so ubiquitous as to be nearly unnoticeable, yet for those who find them pesky enough, there's always ad-blocking software. For every ad blocked, however, there's a lost business opportunity for advertisers and platforms hosting them.

"With just the slightest push from ad blockers, the vibrant, if flawed, digital environment turns into an ecosystem that more closely resembles the TV landscape of the 1950s in which advertisers had only three networks to choose from for their reach," wrote Susan Bidell, a senior analyst at market research firm Forrester.

Some businesses have retaliated. In 2016, Facebook did an end-run around Adblock Plus, a popular ad-blocking software from German developer eyeo, by making its non-commercial content indistinguishable from ads. Last September, though, Adblock

Plus struck back, announcing it was "outfoxing Facebook's latest attempt to hide the ads on their site so ad blockers can't block them."

The Adblock Plus software uses a filter to look into Facebook posts for signs suggesting the presence of an ad, and it then blocks those posts.

While that cat-and-mouse game is set to rage on, the use of ad blockers is on the rise. It was up 30% in 2016, according to a report by PageFair, an organisation that helps advertisers with ad-blocking issues. It found 615 million devices blocking ads worldwide, of which 62% were mobile; privacy, security, user experience and bandwidth were among ad-related complaints in a survey of over 4,600 users.

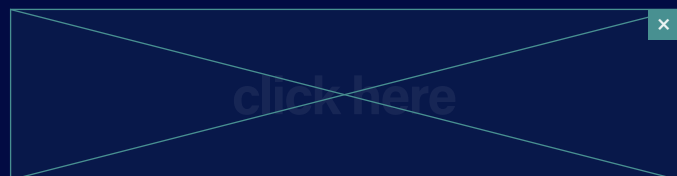
Last year, however, PageFair noted that Facebook had doubled down on its efforts to block the blockers — a bet that, by mid-year, had resulted in \$709 million in revenue from ads that were immune to ad-blocking software.

"This corresponds with experiments with publishers over half a decade of tackling adblock, which have taught us that tamper-proof ad serving works best," PageFair Head of Ecosystem Johnny Ryan wrote in a blog post.

Other content providers have also tried to push back against users with ad-blocking software or plug-ins. Forbes.com, for instance, scans site

requests for ad blockers and forces users to turn them off to gain access to the site. The Atlantic springs a paywall on visitors who have ad blockers installed.

The technology war between those who need advertising and those who don't want it will not end soon. This also comes down to an ethical issue of where a business's rights end and those of the consumer begin. Ideally, advertisers and content platforms should have the right to monetise their content while consumers should also be able to choose whether or not they're exposed to ads. But let's face it, ads support online content and they're not going away anytime soon. Ad blockers are really just tilting at windmills. ●



FEBRUARY 1-MARCH 29

A Time of Hope and Promise

Daughters are honored during the Girls' Doll Festival

Every year on March 3rd, Hina-Matsuri — or the Girls' Doll Festival — is celebrated across Japan. It is a time of hope and promise, as Japanese families pray that their daughters will grow up happy and in good health.

Keio Plaza Hotel Tokyo will be hosting its annual Hina-Matsuri exhibition again this year during the months of February and March. It will feature a large traditional display representing the Japanese court of the Heian period (794-1185 A.D.) — including Emperor and Empress, ladies in waiting, and musicians — along with 6,800 handmade hanging silk dolls. These hanging ornaments were made exclusively for our display using old quilts and kimono



“a wonderful way to remember your time with us.”

fabric, and each one holds its own meaning. For example, monkeys are said to drive away bad luck, pillows provide good sleep and health, and ducks ensure a loving marriage.

Our striking displays will provide you with some great photo opportunities, a wonderful way to remember your time with us.

Ten of our restaurants and lounges are joining the celebration with their own Hina-Matsuri-themed menu items, using the choicest seasonal ingredients and served on colourful, exquisite dishware.



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Following the Scent

Incense through the ages

Incense came to Japan from China during the Asuka period (538–710) together with Buddhism. However, over the centuries, Japan developed its own distinct incense culture. Flourishing especially during the Heian period (794–1185), it was used as a perfume, and sachets of blended incense became a popular gift. During the Kamakura period (1185–1333), aloeswood was a favourite among the emerging samurai class, which the warriors' found calming before they went into battle. Through the ages, incense has also been a part of Japanese art, a source of inspiration for songs and poetry.



The Art of Incense

An exhibition to let you see the scents

In collaboration with the distinguished incense shop Yamadamatsu in Kyoto — which was founded during the Edo period (1603–1868) — and the city of Kyoto, the Keio Plaza Hotel Tokyo has arranged for an unprecedented display of incense, as well as lacquer and earthenware incense burners made by famous artists and craftspeople. The exhibition reflects the long history of incense in Japan. *Waka* poetry from the Heian period also will be showcased, revealing the way incense has influenced Japanese literature and the art of calligraphy.

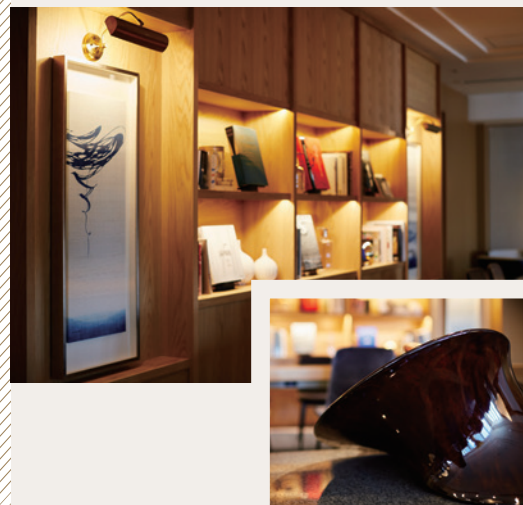


A Special Gift for Guests of Premier Grand

From February 1 to March 31, 2018, guests staying on our Premier Grand floors who order special Hina-matsuri menu items at our in-hotel restaurants will be given a Japanese incense sachet. Speak with one of our Premier Grand concierges in the Club Lounge to make a reservation at a restaurant — or show your restaurant receipt to a concierge — and you can receive this special gift.



CLUB FLOOR
Premier Grand



Premier Art

Japanese Dye, Ink and Lacquer Crafts

The design and layout of our luxury club lounge, Premier Grand, was inspired by the traditional Japanese garden. With nature as its theme — including motifs such as flowing water, gentle breezes and streams of natural sunlight — this space of relaxation is filled with dye, ink and lacquer crafts by contemporary artists, showcasing traditional Japanese art techniques.

For example, Genta Ishizuka's "Tsuya-no-furumai" is an exceptionally powerful presence in the middle of the lounge, exuding both strength and softness through its unique form and the luster of its lacquer. Hiromi Oka's expressive works of indigo dyes, which dynamically convey a variety of aspects and the movement of water. Yuji Sakai's bold ink works express the vitality of life.

Enjoy the unique Japanese aesthetic sensibility while you unwind in this "garden" of relaxation.



Premier Grand Room Rates

Club Room Premier Grand
Regular rate: from 45,000 yen
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Legal Services

Waiting for justice to be served

For many years, the main issues of the EBC's Legal Services Committee saw almost no progress. However, a ray of hope emerged in 2015, in the form of a study group set up under the auspices of Japan's Ministry of Justice.

"This has been groundbreaking, although the process has been slow," says Committee Chair Rika Beppu.

Tasked with formulating specific reform proposals, the study group spent a year deliberating two key issues affecting foreign lawyers in Japan. In the first six months, members focused on a work-experience requirement for registered foreign lawyers in Japan, known as *gaiben*. The remaining time was spent discussing whether these lawyers should be allowed to form corporations with their Japanese counterparts, a move that would enable their firms to open branches.

The first issue, on work experience for *gaiben*, is the top priority for the committee, according to Beppu, who is also a partner at Squire Patton Boggs. Under

the current regulation, *gaiben* can be registered in Japan only after gaining three years of work experience in law in their home countries. Two of those years must be done outside Japan.

The study group came out with two reform options: that the work experience period be reduced to two years, one of which would be done overseas and the other in Japan; or that work experience be kept at three years, but with two in Japan and only one outside the country.

Not surprisingly, the committee prefers the first of these options.

The set of proposals has yet to go to the Diet, and it may be a while before they become law, Beppu says.

"At least we know the Ministry of Justice has made a recommendation for the work experience requirement to be changed," she notes.

Advocacy issues

➤ Approval of foreign lawyers in Japan

The rule requiring a set number of post-qualification years of experience for such lawyers should be abolished.

➤ Branching

Gaiben and Japanese lawyers should be allowed to establish *hojin* law firms together.

➤ Limited liability

A limited liability structure should be introduced in Japan, in line with structures in other countries.

The EBC Legal Services Committee has long been urging reform of the *gaiben* approval system. Committee member Edward Cole says the requirement poses problems in terms of business operations and fairness — Japanese lawyers are free of any similar obligation to get experience on laws of other countries before advising on them in Japan.

"Is it appropriate that the physical location where some-

one is working determines the quality of the experience in our interconnected world?" he asks.

As for the second issue, of being able to form branches, *gaiben* have recently been allowed to create corporations, called "A *hojin*". Yet foreign and Japanese lawyers are still barred from forming "B *hojin*" with one another, limiting the legislation's usefulness. The study group is recommending that this restriction be lifted.

But there's a hitch that could possibly hold up reform for several years. The Japan Federation of Bar Associations is insisting the Diet handle the two issues together. In the meantime, Beppu says she has been told by ministry officials that Japan's patent attorneys are continuing to oppose the idea of lifting the ban on the formation of B *hojin* by *gaiben* and Japanese lawyers.

The reason for the attorneys' resistance is very simple. They fear the proposed reform would take away part of their own business.

She notes that these patent attorneys had earlier mounted a successful lobbying campaign.

"Because they were successful a few years ago, which resulted in only the A *hojin* becoming law, they now cannot change their stance," she explains. "There is some hope that if the issues are done separately, we would just want the work-experience one to go ahead."

In the meantime, young foreign lawyers aiming to acquire the *gaiben* qualification, as well as their firms, continue to do a lot of watching and waiting.

"Some have stepped away from practicing in Japan to get the work experience," Beppu says. "These individuals and the firms should not have to wait any longer than necessary from now on." ●

Change starts with individuals

A Japanese pharma giant embraces diversity

Organisations become strong by seeking out the best talent — without any gender bias. Japan's Takeda Pharmaceutical Company is one firm that has put this into practice and is now reaping the rewards of diversity.

The department I am in charge of, Takeda's Oncology Therapeutic Unit for Japan and Asia, has 16 Japanese and Chinese staff — eight women and eight men. And gender equality extends to our management team, with a 50–50 split among the 12 members.

However, it wasn't always like this. I joined Takeda in 1983, two years before Japan's Equal Employment Act came into force. As with many traditional Japanese companies at that time, Takeda's employment policies were based on long-standing norms. One condition, for example, stated that female employees had to commute to work from their parents' homes, as they were not expected to be self-supporting. Since my family was based in Tokyo — where I had graduated from a pharmaceutical university — I was only permitted to apply for a position at Takeda's relatively small Tokyo branch. During my job interview, I was told that women at the company were only assigned general tasks, such as serving tea and coffee, and my pharmaceutical knowledge was of little value.

I was first assigned to the development department in the agricultural chemical division where serving tea was indeed one of my duties. My first job was to memorise everyone's cup and tea preferences for the twice-daily servings.

With women prevented from working past 8:00pm or going on overnight business trips, it was understandable that there were no female leaders whom I could look up to as role models. Rather than allow the rules to limit my effectiveness, I quietly found ways to do more, such as leaving for the office at 5:00am or taking the first bullet train for one-day visits to our labs in western Japan.

“I encourage both women and men ... to push themselves to pursue the changes that they wish to see in their organisations and society”

My efforts did not go unnoticed and, with the support of my manager at the time, I became the first woman at Takeda to be allowed to take an overseas business trip and the first to be promoted to a managerial position in the division. Although I hadn't consciously set out to be a pioneer for gender equality, I welcomed these signs of change. The tide began to turn with the recognition

that Japan's traditional practices weren't only holding women back, but were also a damaging business strategy.

Following the rapid globalisation of the past 15 years, the Takeda of today is a very different company from the one where I first served tea to my male colleagues. I have spent several years stationed in the US, and now head one of our key business units in Asia.

The pace of change sped up again in 2014 when Christophe Weber became CEO. The efforts he has spearheaded to transform Takeda into a highly innovative and global company have put an ever-greater focus on diversity. This, we now acknowledge, is a powerful catalyst for groundbreaking ideas and new approaches to tough health challenges worldwide.

For example, the recent approval of a groundbreaking cancer drug was only possible thanks to a long-term collaboration between a diverse group of researchers around the world. They each brought their own individual perspectives and expertise to tackle the unmet needs of multiple myeloma patients.

Reflecting on my career so far, I recognise that while it is essential for changes to be implemented at a policy level, they often start with individuals. I encourage both women and men to not be confined by fixed ideas and outdated corporate or social rules but, rather, to push themselves to pursue the changes that they wish to see in their organisations and society — and embrace the opportunities that life, in time, will bring. ●

Yukari Nishikata is a senior director and head of the Oncology Therapeutic Area Unit for Japan and Asia at Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited.





At the beginning of December, the shortlist of mascots for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics was announced. A total of 2,042 entries — each with one mascot for the Olympics and one for the Paralympics — were sent in by the public. Some 6.5 million schoolchildren at every elementary school in the country will be shown the designs, and each class will be able to submit one vote. The winner will be announced on 28 February, following the closing ceremony of the PyeongChang Olympics.

Which set of mascots do you think will win?



A

55%

“A looks like the one elementary kids would go for (not sure of the wisdom of this voting system, though). These mascots look the most anime-ish.”

B

9%

“B will win. The A pair have chessboards for faces. The ones on the C ticket look like they’re on drugs.”

C

36%

“The cat and the tanuki are representative of Japan. I think traditional sensibilities will win out.”

To vote in the next Eurobiz Poll, find details in our Eurobiz Japan newsletter. Subscribe by visiting eurobiz.jp.



Bang for the bottle

Wine regions producing some of the world's most affordable wines

Europe not only produces the world's most historic wines, but also some of its most affordable. While producers in the US and the rest of the New World have high production costs due to land prices, European vineyards, having been passed down generation after generation, have long been paid off. The wine trade is so ingrained in the European economy that the EU actually subsidises wineries, so that their wines are competitively priced when they hit other countries' shelves. This makes European wines some of the best-value wines on the market.

LOIRE VALLEY, FRANCE

Sublime Sauvignon Blancs and earthy Cabernet Francs of outstanding value can be found in France's heartland, the Loire Valley. Running northwest through central France to the Atlantic, the banks of the Loire River have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site for the region's unique contributions to French history. Joan of Arc, for example, led her armies to victory by the Loire during the Hundred Years' War.

The Loire Valley has never gained the hype of Bordeaux, Burgundy or Champagne, despite the region's high-quality offerings, such as Chenin Blanc from Vouvray, Sauvignon Blanc from Sancerre and Cabernet Franc from Chinon. Combine that with relatively inexpensive land prices and a burgeoning organic wine scene, and you've got one of France's most affordable regions for excellent wine.

PIEDMONT, ITALY

There is much more to Piedmont, Italy's most north-westerly wine region, than high-priced Barolo. The region is known as Italy's Burgundy, thanks to the plethora of small, family-owned vineyards that focus heavily on quality and distinct terroir. Nebbiolo is considered the region's key grape, as it is responsible for the unrivaled wines Barolo and Barbaresco. Yet Piedmont's workhorse grapes, including Barbera and Dolcetto, produce food-friendly wines of distinction as well. Since Piedmont is known for its more expensive wines, these



lesser-known varietals tend to be of great value.

Barbera d'Asti and Barbera d'Alba are labels to look for if you're in search of a true Italian red. They are medium-bodied with high acidity and display bright red cherry notes. Dolcetto tends to be even lighter in body than Barbera with a dry, slightly bitter finish. And if a sweet white is what you're craving, pick up a bottle of Moscato d'Asti, possibly Piedmont's greatest success story.

DOURO, PORTUGAL

It's said that the Douro Valley is the world's most beautiful wine region — and rightly so. Verdant terraced vineyards rise above the majestic Douro River. This is where Ports and dry wines of world-class quality are produced. Northern Portugal, where the Douro Valley is located, is hot and dry, so the region's reds tend to be some of the most concentrated in the world. The local Touriga Nacional grape produces luscious wines of headier fruit, whereas Touriga Franca wines are spicier. Wonderful wines from this region can be found for about the price of your next lunch. ●





Thomas Döbeli

Company: Chopard Japan

Official title: General Manager

Originally from: Zurich, Switzerland

Length of time in Japan: I arrived in 2002, one week before the FIFA World Cup final (which I got to see live at the stadium — an unforgettable memory).

Hungry? Where do you like to go for a bite?

I love the Japanese food (and the interior design!) at Nichigekka close to our Ginza Boutique.

What do you do to stay in shape?

I have two young kids. Playing together with them keeps me fit, and it's great fun.

Name a favourite movie:

Braveheart.

Favourite musicians:

Bruce Springsteen and Tsuyoshi Nagabuchi.

Favourite albums: *Live 1975–85* by Bruce Springsteen, and *Japan* by Tsuyoshi Nagabuchi.

Favourite TV show: I don't have a TV.

Favourite book: Any book of Hans Falk's art.

What's something a lot of people don't know about you?

I worked as a stagehand at big rock

concerts when I was a student. That's how I got the money to visit Japan for the first time in 1993.

Cats or dogs?

I had both. I love both.

Summer or winter?

Winter in the Swiss mountains, summer at the seaside in Japan.

What's your ideal weekend?

Playing together with my kids by the sea, then having dinner at home with friends.

Where do you go for a drink after a busy week?

Froggies in Chigasaki. A cozy bar with excellent live music. Part of my guitar plectrum collection, from my days as a stagehand, is on the wall.



Etsuji Suzuki

Company: Kienbaum Japan / K.J. Consultants K.K.

Official title: Representative Director & President

Originally from: Wakayama, Japan

Hungry? Where do you like to go for a bite?

The *soba* shop Honmura-an, a 10-minute walk from Ogikubo station.

What do you do to stay in shape?

I go to the fitness club at least twice a week and play badminton.

Name a favourite movie:

Cinema Paradiso.

Favourite musician:

John Coltrane.

Favourite album: John Coltrane's *Ballads.*

Favourite TV show: I love *Nandemo Kanteidan*, which is an antique appraisal show.

Favourite book:

Lifeline: The Biology of the Unconscious by Lyall Watson.

What's something a lot of people don't know about you?

I'm a painter, and I held my first solo-exhibition last year. You can see some of my paintings at www.geocities.jp/etsuji_suzuki/

Cats or dogs?

I love them both. It depends on my mood which I prefer.

Summer or winter?

Winter. Summer in Japan is getting too hot — I'm not a fan of global warming.

What's your ideal weekend?

Going for a walk in a rural area to find a subject for my next painting.

Where do you go for a drink after a busy week?

There is a teppanyaki restaurant near my flat in Shin-Yokohama. It's a good place to go even if I'm on my own.

“Ideal weekend? Going for a walk in a rural area to find a subject for my next painting.”

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The Agenda

FEB
19SWISS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN**Luncheon:
Kengo Kuma, architect****TIME:** 12:00-14:00**VENUE:** Shangri-La Tokyo**FEE:** ¥6,500 (members), ¥7,000
(non-members)**CONTACT:** info@sccij.jpFEB
28

JOINT NORDIC EVENT

**Team Building Bowling
Competition****TIME:** 19:30-22:30**VENUE:** Shinagawa Prince Hotel
Bowling Center, Annex Tower**FEE:** ¥7,500 (two games, after-party fee)**CONTACT:** Respective chambers of
commerce

Organised by SCCI.

FEB
19BELGIAN-LUXEMBOURG CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE IN JAPAN**Monthly Beer
Gathering****TIME:** 19:00-22:00**VENUE:** Belgian beer café in Tokyo**FEE:** You pay for what you drink**CONTACT:** info@blccj.or.jpMAR
1SWISS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN**Swiss Days @
The Imperial:
Switzerland-Japan
Economic Forum****TIME:** 13:00-16:30; followed by cocktails**VENUE:** The Imperial Hotel, Tokyo**FEE:** Free**CONTACT:** info@sccij.jpFEB
20SPANISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
IN JAPAN**Luncheon with
Dr Jaime Martin, Repsol****TIME:** 12:00-14:00**VENUE:** Roppongi Hills Club,
Club Room II**FEE:** ¥6,500 (members), ¥8,000
(non-members)**CONTACT:** info@spanishchamber.or.jpMAR
2

EUROPEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL*

**2nd International
Space Exploration
Forum****TIME:** 09:00-17:25**VENUE:** The Westin Tokyo**CONTACT:** <https://goo.gl/TmZK2U>* Organised by the Cabinet Office, MEXT,
METI and JAXA.FEB
21ITALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN
JAPAN**Aperitivo della Camera****TIME:** 19:00-21:00**VENUE:** iCas Storia Jingumae**FEE:** ¥2,000 (members), ¥3,000
(non-members)**CONTACT:** projects@iccj.or.jpMAR
14SWISS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN**Luncheon: Hiroyuki
Ishige, chairman and
CEO, JETRO****TIME:** 12:00-14:00**VENUE:** Grand Hyatt Tokyo**FEE:** ¥6,500 (members), ¥7,000
(non-members)**CONTACT:** info@sccij.jpFEB
22IRELAND JAPAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**IJCC Farewell to the
Ambassador of Ireland
to Japan****TIME:** 19:00-21:00**VENUE:** Conrad Tokyo**FEE:** ¥6,000 (members), ¥7,000
(non-members)**CONTACT:** secretariat@ijcc.jpMAR
17IRELAND JAPAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**I Love Ireland Festival
2018* (also March 18)****VENUE:** Yoyogi Park, Shibuya**FEE:** Pay for what you purchase**CONTACT:** secretariat@ijcc.jp

* Live Irish music and dancing, food and drink

SCANIA

Scania Japan

Mikael Lindner, CEO

Scania is a leading provider of transport solutions. It is present in more than 100 countries and boasts a 127-year history in the industry.

“Scania Japan was established in Tokyo in 2009 as a commercial vehicle distributor, selling heavy duty trucks, buses, and industrial engines,” says Scania Japan CEO, Mikael Lindner. “With our new generation of trucks, we are offering an array of specifications and options specifically developed for our Japanese customers. Together with our partners and customers, we are driving the shift towards sustainable transport solutions.” ●



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