

EURO BIZ JAPAN

FEBRUARY 2020

Leading the revolution

Dale Carnegie Training Japan equips businesses for the changes to come

DR GREG STORY,
PRESIDENT OF
DALE CARNEGIE TRAINING JAPAN

➔ A new age of crime

Banks grapple with the growing problem of money laundering in Japan

➔ Growing ambitions

*Ambassador of Belgium to Japan
Roxane de Bilderling*

➔ Another painful hike

Government measures fail to soften the impact of the consumption tax rise



THE MAGAZINE OF THE EUROPEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL IN JAPAN / THE EUROPEAN (EU) CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN JAPAN



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



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Leading the revolution

By Toby Waters





First Focus

From 23 July to 4 August 2019, one year ahead of the start of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Mitsui Fudosan held its Super Unusual 2020 Exhibition at the Credo Muromachi Terrace.

Passersby could take part in more than a dozen activities related to the Games, such as scaling a 4m climbing wall-post box to mail an oversized postcard and posing with their heads on an Instagram-mable comic foreground of a muscle-bound weightlifter.

According to an advertisement promoting the event: "It's time for us to forget normal ... Let's use the unusual power of sports to turn Tokyo into a truly unusual place."

The Games are fast approaching. Is Tokyo really ready for unusual?

Photo by Kuremo
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Dr **David McNeill** writes for *The Economist* and *The Irish Times* and teaches political science at Hosei and Sophia universities. He lives in Tokyo with his Japanese wife and three children.

➡ *“We rarely think about the small army of bankers and technicians who keep our money safe, but we probably should — online financial fraud is growing faster than technology can keep up. This year, the cost of cybercrime could reach a whopping \$6 trillion, the “greatest transfer of economic wealth in history”.*



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.

➡ *“With the sharp contraction in Japan’s GDP now being followed by the threat of the coronavirus to the economy, could raising the consumption tax become the political poison for Prime Minister Abe it has been for previous Japanese premiers? Either way, more rises in the future look to be inevitable.”*



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.

➡ *“Once the tariffs come down, the hard work begins. That is what the EBC Materials Committee found out after duties on industrial materials were generally removed under the EU–Japan EPA. The group had scant time to celebrate a major free-trade achievement before Japan Customs required the submission and preparation of reams of paperwork.”*



Philippe de Taxis du Poët is the general manager (EU side) of the EU–Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation. A European Commission official for 20 years, he is now posted at the EU Delegation to Japan.

➡ *“The EU–Japan Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity could usher in major change in this new decade, with its pertinent mix of industrial, economic and geopolitical elements. This means, in concrete terms, EU–Japan business collaboration in third markets is set to become an important business trend, benefitting all parties, which could also have a positive impact on standards and business environments.”*

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



Cautiously optimistic

It's one year since the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) came into force, and figures for the first 10 months, released at the end of January, are a cause for optimism. They show that the EPA has given a solid boost to trade, with Japan's exports to the EU having risen by 6.3% and EU exports to Japan up 6.6%. Notably, wine exports from the EU increased by 17.3% over the same period in 2018, its butter exports saw a 47% jump and electrical machinery exports were 16.4% higher.

Belgium is one EU nation that is pleased with this positive start. In "Growing ambitions", Ambassador of Belgium to Japan Roxane de Bilderling speaks about the EPA's impact on her nation's exports, particularly its food and drinks, and the opportunities she

sees for further growth. Read the full interview on page 18.

Aside from the potential impact of Covid-19 on the economy, something that could put quite a dent in figures for the current quarter is Japan's consumption tax hike, introduced last October. It was announced this month that Japan's consumer spending had fallen and its GDP had shrunk by 6.3% over the last three months of 2019. In "Another painful hike" (page 16), Gavin Blair looks at the impact of the tax rise and how it has affected some European

companies here.

Nevertheless, there is reason to be hopeful about 2020 and beyond. The new EU Commission has revealed ambitious plans for positive, wide-ranging change across the continent. Find out more in Bjorn Kongstad's "A new direction for the EU" (page 29).

No matter what anxieties are plaguing us at the moment, let's stay optimistic that there is more good to come. ●

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EBC members can not only learn about important changes taking place in Japan, but also play a critical role in influencing change themselves.

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INVESTING IN JAPAN

TEXT BY TOBY WATERS

PHOTOS BY BENJAMIN PARKS

Leading the revolution

Dale Carnegie Training Japan equips businesses for the changes to come

People look to their leaders to guide them through challenges and changes. But as corporate Japan confronts the need to revolutionise its many outdated practices, are Japan Inc's leaders up to the task?

“After the asset bubble burst, companies cut their training budgets expecting the downturn to only be a couple of years, not three lost decades,” Story says. “That means there are a couple generations of leaders who never got any training except the training from their supervisor. Since staff are promoted based on how long

Last month, Japan's Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) recommended that companies begin to adopt performance-based approaches to promotions and to invest more in training. A shift of this magnitude, away from the traditional lifetime employment model, is certain to shake up corporate structure at every level. It also means that professional development courses, such as those offered by Dale Carnegie Training, will become more valuable to Japanese businesses than ever before.

we are at the very beginning of a revolution for training needs in Japan," says Story.

For more than 100 years globally, and 58 years in Japan, Dale Carnegie Training has not strayed from the principles laid out by its eponymous founder in his perennial best-seller *How to Win Friends and*

"I would suggest that we are at the very beginning of a revolution for training needs in Japan"

Influence People. And this has seen it become one of the biggest training solution providers in the world, outlasting innumerable fads and trends.

“Dale Carnegie’s idea was very simple,” says Story. “We need to work with others and we need to get along with others, so what can we do to make ourselves more effective in dealing with others?”

Its courses cover the spectrum of sales, presentation, communication and leadership, while emphasising where these areas interconnect. Story is proud of their usefulness.

“An MBA may have a broad sweep across various facets of business, but it’s at a very theoretical level; when you get to your desk on Monday morning, there’s nothing you can implement on the spot that day,” he explains. “With our courses, it’s immediate. That’s what differentiates us.”

"We need to work with others ... so what can we do to make ourselves more effective in dealing with others?"

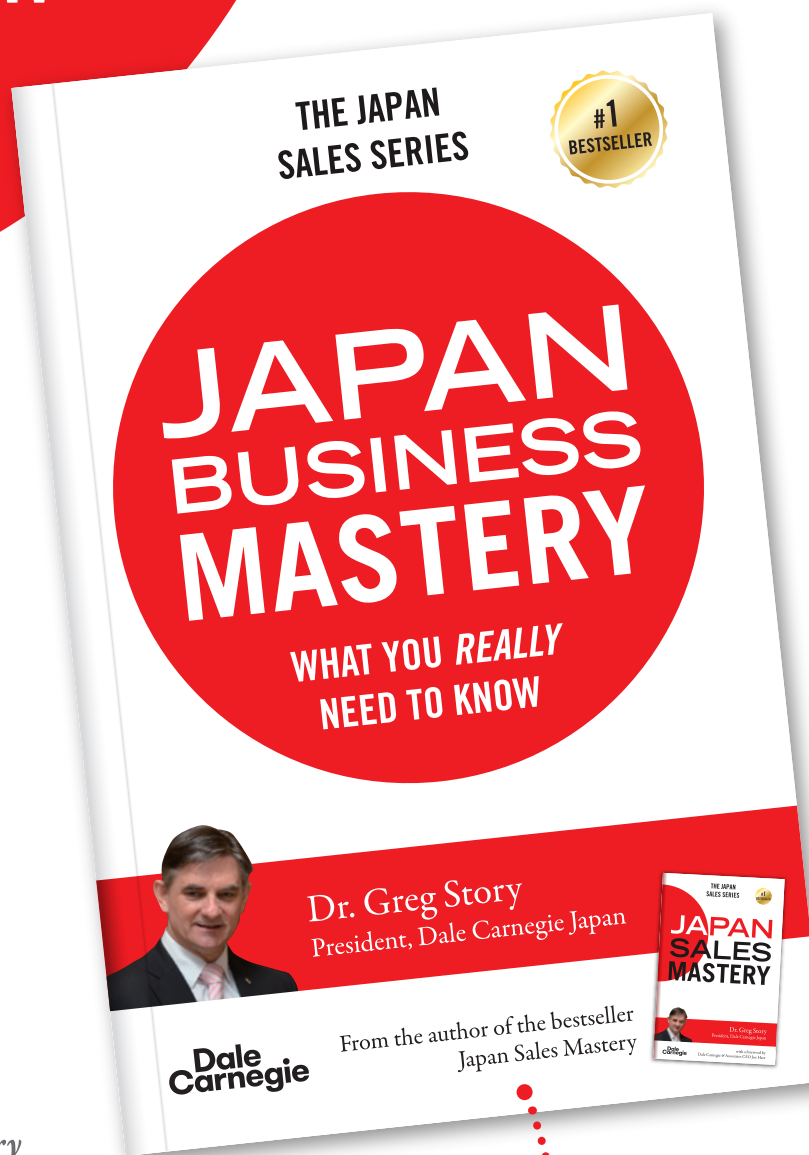
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Author of the bestseller *Japan Sales Mastery*
with 33 years of residence in Japan
pulls back the velvet curtain on how Japan *really* works

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With its long history, and a satisfaction rate in Japan of 98.3% among attendees, it might be easy to think that promotion for Dale Carnegie Training takes care of itself. Instead, Story makes extensive use of personal branding to

Japan Presentation Mastery, Story believes that businesses of any size should be making the most of today's tools — including print, video and audio — to effectively promote themselves and their brands. In the age of the internet, he notes, when managers have the opportunity to present themselves to the public in a consistently authentic and



promote its courses and to give the firm a friendly face.

"To me, personal branding is being a good person who's good at something," says Story. "If your personal brand is built around morality and good service, then you're going in the right direction. We will make good profits and build a successful business if our driver is to help other people."

Author of *Japan Sales Mastery*, *Japan Business Mastery*, and the upcoming

professional way, the good feelings they instil in their audience will be transferred to the firm they represent.

"There are three crucial steps to success in business: know, like, and trust," Story explains. "If you don't know someone, you can't do business with them. You may reluctantly work with someone you don't like, but no one ever works with someone they don't trust. Personal branding helps with knowing and liking, and as you get to know someone, trust follows."

Story came to understand the potential of personal branding after he began writing personal-development thought-leadership pieces

for a number of publications. He soon realised that, while the articles were well received, publishing them with a photograph of himself

attached was more effective in cultivating an audience — and keeping him and Dale Carnegie Training in readers' minds.

Soon after, he began producing podcasts and YouTube videos featuring interviews with some of Japan's most influential business figures. Story has learned first-hand that putting out a diverse range of content creates several touchpoints for potential customers to discover him, and therefore his business.

"None of what I put out is propaganda for Dale Carnegie," Story says. "I'm putting out free content to help people improve, and people associate that with the high-quality work we do here. When we are in the public eye, we are commanding not just our own brand, but the brand for the whole company."

Story insists that personal branding can lead to powerful results for smaller companies. By consistently creating strong content, SMEs can level the playing field with their larger competitors.

"Personal branding is how even smaller businesses can compete, and 'know, like and trust' comes with it — you can punch above your weight if you've got the goods," he says. "If what you present looks professional, and the content you produce is relevant, it doesn't matter how big you are — and viewers or readers won't care how big you are."

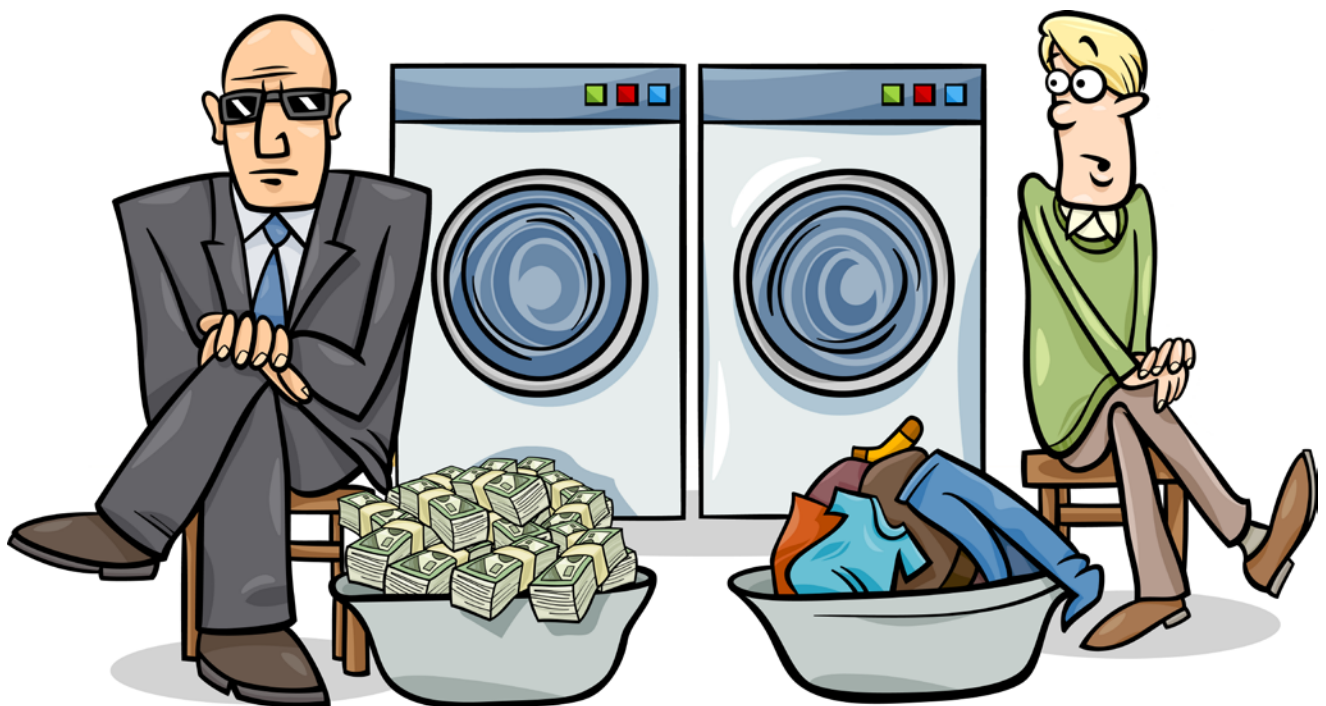
Global business has changed dramatically since Dale Carnegie gave his first training session in 1912. But the firm stands as proof that, if you stay true to your core values, you can create a brand that can endure — and become a leader that others look to during times of change. ●

"We will make good profits and build a successful business if our driver is to help other people"



A NEW AGE OF CRIME

Banks grapple with the growing problem of money laundering in Japan



Not everyone is enthused about Japan's experiment with increasing immigration.

Last April, the government tweaked its visa rules to allow more workers from abroad. Thousands of foreign students are also expected to build lives here. It's welcome news for a nation with a stagnant domestic market and a shrinking population, but a headache for financial regulators.

Foreigners leaving the country have been known to sell bank accounts to fraudsters, for example, who use them to launder money from crimes. There's a going rate for these scams: ¥50,000 per account and a Twitter buzzword: "KozaByeBye" (from the Japanese word, "*koza*", meaning "bank account").

Hiroshi Ozaki, a director at Japan's Financial Services Agency (FSA) calls these "Anakin Skywalker accounts", after the wheezing villain in the *Star Wars* series.

"He's a good guy in the beginning but becomes a bad guy," he explains. "It's the same with bank accounts. That's a severe problem for us."

"New technologies, online banking and inefficient security measures have turbocharged cybercrime"

The FSA has leapt into action, pressing financial institutions to make clients aware that keeping so-called "mule" accounts is a crime. New customers must now show photo ID and other verification documents. They are also required to tell banks about their planned length of stay in Japan (as written on their Residence Cards), which banks have to keep a record of, and then notify their financial institution when that period is up. Ozaki calls this the KYC policy: "know your customer".

Financial misdeeds keep regulators like Ozaki up at night across the planet.

"New technologies, online banking and inefficient security measures have turbocharged cybercrime," says Alain Delfosse of the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT), a Brussels-based organisation owned by 11,000 banks (including many in Japan) that manages the bulk of the world's cross-border bank payments. He is quick to point out that the SWIFT network itself has never been compromised in a cyberattack.

Money laundering crimes grew about 40% on the year last year in Japan alone, according to the latest (2019) police white paper.

"International money laundering is rampant," it warns.

The global cost of cybercrime is set to hit \$6 trillion next year. That represents "the greatest transfer of economic wealth in history", one expert noted with alarm in *Cybercrime Magazine*.

Several scandals have put the authorities on alert. In 2016, a criminal syndicate launched



The global cost of cybercrime is set to hit

\$6
trillion

next year

one of history's largest cyber-heists by trying to scoop nearly \$1 billion from an account belonging to Bangladesh Bank at the Federal Reserve Bank in New York. About \$70 million of this, transferred to the Philippines, has yet to be recovered. Westpac, an Australian bank, is still reeling from charges last year that it had unwittingly been party to a money-laundering scam involving paedophiles.

European banks have taken note. Regulators are forcing bank boards and managers to tighten controls "where operational risks are not well managed", says John McCormick, former chairman of Asia Pacific for the Royal Bank of Scotland. Many have appointed specialists in money laundering risks, and bank employees are now trained to identify suspicious actions by customers. Banks are also increasingly relying on AI technology to spot questionable payments.

"It is highly complex and very expensive for the banks to crack down on the issues involved," notes McCormick.

Like anywhere else, Japan has its own issues to deal with.



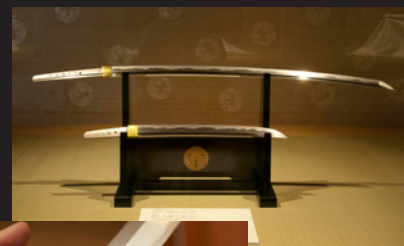
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The prevalence of small and midsize companies with frequent overseas transactions makes it attractive to cyber-criminals who want to hide illicit profits, according to the police.

"It's very easy in Japan to open a bank account that can be used to park illegal money," agrees Delfosse.

He notes that in several of the more than 500 money laundering cases exposed in Japan in 2018, Japanese mule accounts were used.

European banks work closely with local regulators and have good relations with the FSA, but there are problems, suggests Delfosse. Japanese banks often have too few people and resources dedicated to monitoring cybercrime, he notes, as well as a tendency to outsource IT to vendors, which makes them more vulnerable to cyber-scams.

"Banks here are slow — and behind," he says. "The European banks are far ahead in terms of financial crime and compliance management."



Money laundering crimes grew about

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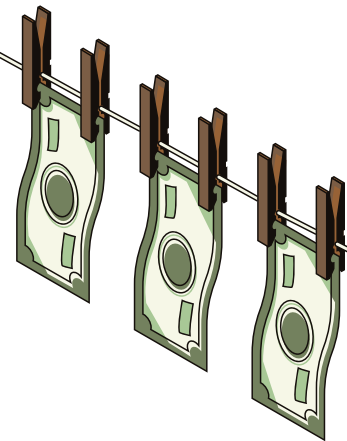
However, Japanese banks are picking up the pace. For example, last April, MUFG Bank ended overseas remittance services through tellers at branches where the money being transferred did not originate in a bank account. And, in October, Japan Post Bank began capping overseas remittances at ¥5 million a day.

"It is highly complex and very expensive for the banks to crack down on the issues involved"

Ozaki at the FSA disputes some of the bleaker assessments — "I've never heard of cybercriminals breaking into a Japanese bank," he says — but agrees that the current situation is concerning. He cites the increasing inventiveness of cybercriminals, from telephone scams to international fraud and phishing. In one incident, he notes, a fake bill was sent to an American company from a third country asking for money to be remitted to an account in Japan — a scam known as business e-mail compromise.

"The money was then resent to many Japanese accounts to launder it," he says.

Also, organised groups send e-mails inviting bank account holders to visit fake bank pages and ask them to input passwords, which are then stolen.



The key to defeating these schemes, according to Ozaki, is cooperation. Every year, European, Asian and American regulators meet in the FSA building in Kasumigaseki to put their heads together.

"A growing part of our discussion is about money laundering and cyber risk," he says.

There is expected to be even greater international cooperation, as the G20 agreed last year to request that the Financial Action Task Force, an intergovernmental organisation, create stronger measures to prevent cryptocurrencies from being used maliciously.

Regulators fret that the development of quantum computing — which will give computers the ability to do trillions of calculations *per second* — will render the encryption systems on which global banking depends obsolete. This encryption is what ensures your bank details cannot be stolen, for example. Chinese engineers are among those working hard to master quantum technology.

The battle against cybercrime has only started. ●



Another painful hike

Government measures fail to soften the impact of the consumption tax rise

On 1 October, after two postponements, the Japanese government raised the consumption tax rate from 8% to 10% on most products and services. However, taxes did not go up on food and non-alcoholic drinks bought at shops.

A stimulus package with a focus on rebates for cashless payments — designed to ameliorate the hike's impact — did not stave off a crash in consumer spending. GDP figures for the October to December quarter showed an annualised contraction of 6.3%, the biggest fall since the 7.4% drop after the last tax rise in 2014, which led to a recession. Nevertheless, further increases are probably unavoidable, and changes to the invoicing system for companies, which are linked to the rise, will have significant consequences for many businesses in Japan.

The consumption tax increase is expected to raise approximately ¥4.2 trillion annually, according to Hans-Peter Musahl, partner at Ernst & Young Tax Co.

“The government is spending more or less half of the revenue raised by the increase



In 2018, the OECD average for sales tax was

19.3%

on rebates, mostly for cashless payments,” he says.

The rebates, which are either cash discounts or points for consumers, amount to 2% for purchases made from companies with capital of more than ¥50 million and 5% at smaller companies. Between 600 and 700 companies last year reduced their capital to under ¥50 million in order to qualify for the higher rebates for customers.

These rebates apply to most forms of non-cash payment, including credit cards,

Pasmo/Suica and the myriad of mobile cashless apps, such as PayPay, LinePay and RakutenPay. The rebate programme is currently scheduled to run until June.

“It’s possible the rebates will be extended beyond June because the government is so concerned about the economy taking a dive after the Olympics,” says Musahl.

Musahl doesn’t see a significant long-term impact from the tax hike, expecting business to continue as usual after the upfront purchasing and drop-off in spending before and after the increase.

The economy did grow at a faster-than-expected annualised rate of 1.8% in the July–September quarter, partly boosted by household spending. A survey of hundreds of midsize and large companies, conducted by Nikkei Research for Reuters at the end of October, found that pre-hike buying and the subsequent fall in spending has been less pronounced than in 2014, when the consumption tax was increased from 5% to 8%.

The impact on European companies in Japan has been varied.

“To our surprise, we did not experience any rush to buy vehicles before the tax hike. In fact, the total industry in September closed at the same level as in 2018,” reports Pontus Häggström, president and CEO of

“the government is so concerned about the economy taking a dive after the Olympics”

FCA Japan Ltd, which counts among its stable of brands Fiat, Abarth, Alfa Romeo and Jeep.

“The government’s actions to mitigate the tax increase by reducing auto taxes probably helped lessen the effect,” adds Häggström, referring to the 10% to 15% cuts in annual vehicle tax rates, with the largest reductions for cars with smaller engines.

Car sales in Japan still fell in October and, though they picked up in the last two months of the year, remained below the previous year’s level in January, according to Häggström. Despite the reduced vehicle tax levels, cheaper models were harder hit. Häggström suggests that this might be because more affluent customers are less sensitive to price increases.

Andrew Bubala, representative director of cookware and small appliance specialists Groupe SEB Japan, which includes T-fal in its portfolio of brands, says it did experience “a significant rise in sales in the lead-up to the tax increase, as well as a drop-off after the increase,” but one that was less dramatic than in 2014.

Bubala adds that government measures did “soften the blow” and that “retailers learned from the previous experience and were prepared with extensive promotional activities and discounts to continue to attract customers”.

In contrast, LEGO Japan saw sales growth after the hike, but notes that this was “a different development than most other companies”, according to vice president and general manager Bo Kristensen.

“We also did not see any jump [in sales] before the tax increase,” adds Kristensen. “I think that this development is more related to our portfolio and strategy.”

The rises in consumption tax over the years have been accompanied by an increase in the number of related tax fraud cases, notes Ernst & Young’s Musahl, partly because

the system is relatively easy to game.

“When filing tax returns, unlike in the EU, where VAT is based on the actual issuance, access and content of invoices, in Japan, for the sake of simplicity, VAT is calculated based on the accounts and balances sheets. There is a lot of trust in Japan that taxpayers will not be too dishonest,” says Musahl.

Unscrupulous companies are able to create fraudulent entries in their accounts for sales that don’t take place and claim back

“further [tax hikes] are inevitable”

credits for consumption tax that was never imposed.

To combat fraud, Japan will introduce a “qualified invoicing system” in October 2023. This will require businesses to submit invoices and also to register for an ID number, similar to the My Number for individuals and VAT numbers for companies in Europe, to be able to claim consumption tax credits, explains Musahl.

Sales taxes remain relatively low in Japan. Even with the rate going up to 10% for most products, that is still around half of the OECD average of 19.3% in 2018.

“I don’t think Prime Minister Abe will raise the rate again — he has now done it twice — but I think further rises are inevitable,” says Musahl. “Still, raising the consumption tax is not popular and, prior to Abe, it had always been bad for political careers.” ●



The consumption tax increase is expected to raise approximately

¥4.2 trillion annually



Growing ambitions

Ambassador of Belgium to Japan
Roxane de Bilderling

After working as an interpreter, Roxane de Bilderling began a career in diplomacy in 2000, working first in Brussels and then as first secretary at the Embassy of Belgium in Nairobi, where she was also deputy permanent representative to the UN Environment Programme and the UN Human Settlement Programme. This was followed by a series of embassy postings around Africa, including as first secretary in Pretoria, counsellor in Kinshasa, and a return to Nairobi as ambassador. Before taking up her post as ambassador to Japan last August, de Bilderling was a director in the office of the deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs in Brussels.

Can you tell me about your time as ambassador to Kenya?

One personal priority was to support and promote women, especially young women, and to give them hope for the future. I had the great privilege to know some people who had started a school for bright, disadvantaged girls, and I took some female colleagues with me to give a talk to the 300 high school students there. They were very curious to hear about our work, and I got positive feedback from the school about how good it was for them to have exchanges with women in positions of authority. It's the

girls themselves who have accomplished something by working so hard for their future, but I've always enjoyed using my position to make a difference.

The embassy also participated in an international jazz festival, and each year we brought groups of musicians from Belgium to be part of it. There were all sorts of other events connected to the festival, and every year we became more ambitious. One year, for example, we brought a chocolatier to hold chocolate workshops on the festival grounds. The beauty of this festival was that all proceeds went to a music school in the slums. It was a wonderful and very inspiring cause.

How are Belgium–Japan relations at present?

Excellent. We celebrated the 150th anniversary of diplomatic relations three years





“When Japanese companies consider investing in research and development in Europe, they think very highly of Belgium”

ago with a state visit by Their Majesties the King and the Queen of the Belgians, and we had a year of events to celebrate those relations. His Majesty the Emperor and His Majesty the King have known each other for many years. They already met several times as crown princes. Therefore, the King felt it was very important to attend the enthronement ceremony for the Emperor in October. The fact that the Imperial and Royal families get along very well makes the ties between our countries that much closer.

We also have some sistership agreements between several cities in Belgium and Japan. For example, the one between Durbuy — known as the world’s smallest city — and Hanyu



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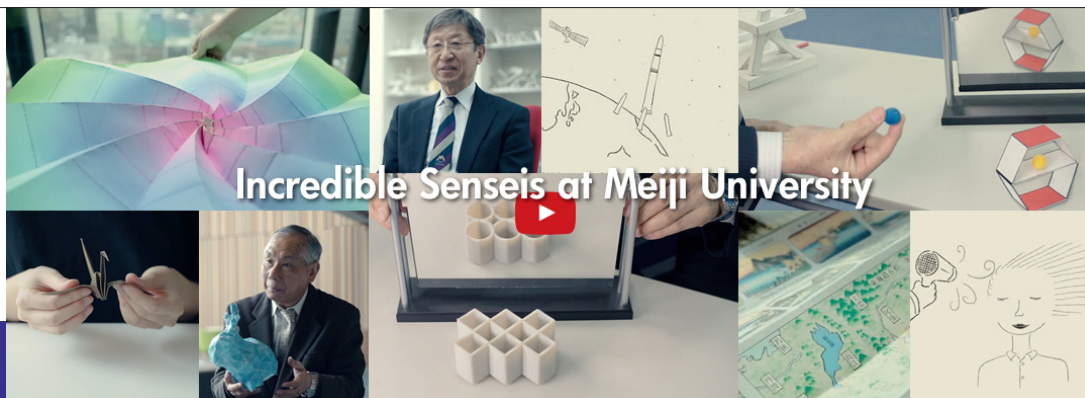
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- A wide assortment of undergraduate courses
- Intensive English language program available

As part of its community outreach, Lakeland University, Japan Campus also offers non-degree bearing courses in evening and Saturday Open College classes. Among the courses being offered are: Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Russian, Translation, Film Appreciation, Ageing, and PowerPoint.

<http://luj.lakeland.edu>



Incredible Senseis at Meiji University

ALWAYS ADVANCE

Since it was established in 1881, Meiji University has been one of the leading private universities in Japan. Located in central Tokyo, it has a student body of nearly 33,000.

We have 10 undergraduate schools in Law, Commerce, Political Science and Economics, Arts and Letters, Science and Technology, Agriculture, Business Administration, Information and Communication, Global Japanese Studies, and Interdisciplinary Mathematical Sciences. There are also 12 graduate schools, a law school and three professional graduate schools.

Incredible Senseis at Meiji University video series

Find out about some of the cutting-edge work being done by Meiji University professors:

www.meiji.ac.jp/cip/english/incredible-senseis/



1-1 Kanda-Surugadai, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-8301, Japan
www.meiji.ac.jp/cip/english/



“The fact that the Imperial and Royal families get along very well makes the ties between our countries that much closer”

in Saitama Prefecture. In Durbuy, there is a small company that makes fashionable hats, while in Hanyu there's a company that makes high-quality denim, so they have a partnership to make denim hats. These agreements are nice because they're really all about people-to-people cooperation.

What is the state of trade between Belgium and Japan?

The EPA has been in force for almost a year, and the biggest impact so far has been on food and drink exports to Japan. There are still some sectors in which we would like to see more of our regional products reach Japan, but there are sometimes phytosanitary rules that Japan pays especially close attention to, so we're still working to provide more access to more products.

There are 226 Japanese companies invested in Belgium and 83 Belgian businesses invested in Japan. In Belgium, one area where we are particularly successful is research and development. We've used tax incentives and created the right ecosystem to transform

innovations into business solutions.

In December, the company IMEC, which came out of the University of Leuven, held an innovation seminar

in Tokyo on nanotechnology that attracted 500 participants. When Japanese companies consider investing in research and development in Europe, they think very highly of Belgium.

In December, we held an Invest in Belgium event in Nagoya, and the keynote speaker was a senior tax official from the Belgian Ministry of Finance, Marc De Mil, who explained the taxation system in Belgium to potential investors. We also had representatives from the three regions — Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia — to discuss their strengths. For example, one of them spoke about the centrality of Belgium, which means that when you invest in Belgium, you're investing in the heart of the EU's single market.

How are you promoting Belgium in Japan?

There is a whole range of activities and campaigns that we use to promote the image of Belgium in Japan. For example, we invited some bloggers, influencers and journalists from Japan to come and do a tour in Belgium. Before going, they all told us that the one image in their head about the country was the Belgian waffle, but their trip allowed them to discover many other aspects of Belgium. We always have to find the right balance between the use of these stereotypes — waffles, chocolate and beer — and the need to show that Belgium is so much more than that.

Of course, we will be present at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games in the summer, with an important delegation of athletes and very high-level personalities from Belgium. Belgium is doing quite well in a few sports at the moment, and we hope to win some medals. We'll have the Belgium House in front of the embassy where we'll hold promotional events. I recently went to Mito in Ibaraki Prefecture — where the Belgian Olympians and Paralympians will be training — to visit the authorities, see the stadium and speak about Belgium in schools. The children told me they were looking forward to welcoming the Belgian teams.

On the embassy's social media account, we've been posting pictures of “Smurf-san” in various places around Japan. The former minister of foreign affairs, Didier Reynders, ordered small Smurf toys for all ambassadors to have on their desks for guests to see this image of Belgium, and several of our colleagues started taking pictures of their Smurfs in different places. This sort of campaign is very successful because it's more playful than just a photo of me somewhere, while it also communicates the key message that we are working on promoting the relationship between Belgium and Japan. ●



Belgium-Luxembourg

March 2020

Luxembourg's public transport will become free to use from the first of the month.

January 2020

The restoration of Jan and Hubert van Eyck's "Adoration of the Mystic Lamb", the centrepiece of the *Ghent Altarpiece*, trends on social media.

October 2019

Sophie Wilmès takes office as prime minister, becoming the first female head of government in Belgium's history.

October 2019

The enthronement ceremony of Japan's Emperor Naruhito is attended by both King Philippe of Belgium and Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg.

"There are emerging fields of expertise where Belgian companies are excelling and can increase trade with Japanese companies in the years to come"



Did you know?

- Belgium holds the record for the longest period a democratic nation has gone without a government — 589 days — in 2010 and 2011.
- *Fallen Astronaut*, the only piece of art on the moon, was sculpted by Belgian artist Paul Van Hoeydonck.



ABOVE: THE LIÈGE-GUILLEMINS RAILWAY STATION, BELGIUM
LEFT: THE MOSELLE RIVER NEAR WORMELDANGE, LUXEMBOURG

Insights

From the Economic Affairs Section at the Belgian Embassy

This year, the Embassy will continue its focus on bilateral trade within the context of the first anniversary of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) entering into force. The first year of the EPA has yielded 6.6% growth in EU exports, compared with the same period last year. It is clear that the EPA has benefitted the export of many Belgian products, such as dairy, beer and chocolate.

There are emerging fields of expertise where Belgian companies are excelling and can increase trade with Japanese companies in the years to come. Belgium has companies with highly specific knowledge in innovative areas such as life sciences, fintech and nanotechnology that have the potential to make their way into this tremendously important market.

Main exports to Japan

Belgium

Pharmaceutical products; vehicles other than railway; optical, photo, technical and medical apparatus; food products; organic chemicals

Luxembourg

Textiles; machinery; vehicles other than railway; articles of apparel; footwear; copper



Trade with Japan

Belgium

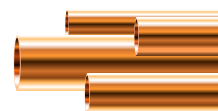
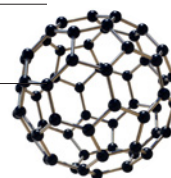
Exports to Japan: €3.21 billion
Imports from Japan: €9.28 billion

(SOURCE: EUROSTAT, 2018)

Luxembourg

Exports to Japan: €435 million
Imports from Japan: €78 million

(SOURCE: EUROSTAT, 2018)



BRENT VAN TASSEL,
HEAD OF ECONOMIC
AFFAIRS AT THE
BELGIAN EMBASSY
IN JAPAN

Of course, 2020 will be all about the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The VIIe Olympiade was held in Antwerp 100 years ago, and this will be the focus of some events organised by the Belgian Olympic Committee to emphasise the historic links between Belgium and Japan. We will also establish a Belgian House in front of the embassy to highlight Belgian cuisine, products and companies during the Games. It will be inaugurated by Their Majesties the King and Queen of the Belgians.

- Held in Antwerp in 1920, the Games of the VII Olympiad was the first Olympics where the Japan team won medals.
- Luxembourg is rated as one of the safest countries in the world. It has only 1,300 police officers and just one penitentiary, which houses around 600 prisoners.

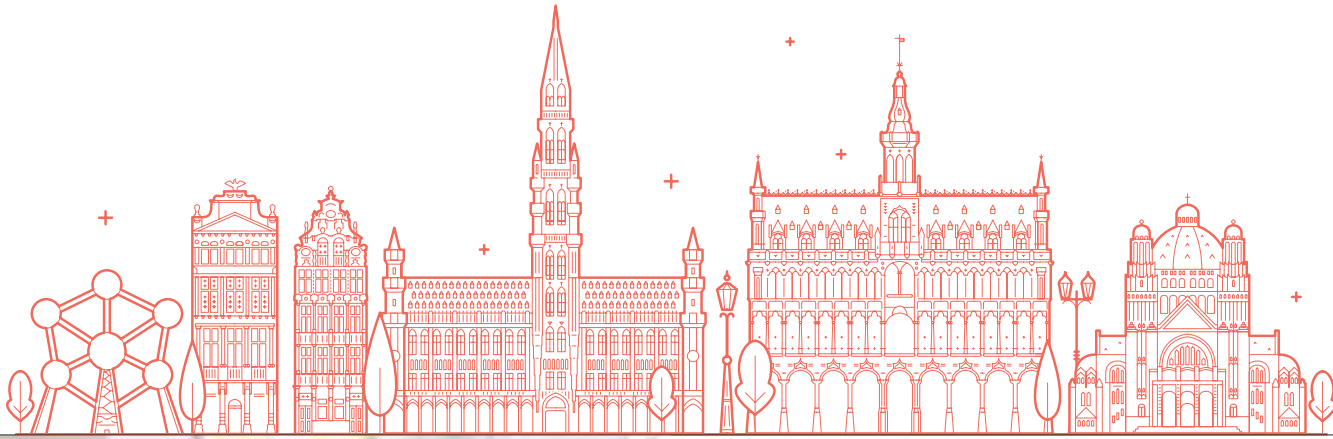




BUSINESSES FROM ...

BELGIUM AND LUXEMBOURG

A look at some companies from the region



PURATOS JAPAN

Puratos, founded in Belgium in 1919, is an international group that offers a full range of innovative products and application expertise for artisans, retailers, food service customers and related industries in bakery, patisserie and chocolate sectors. We aim to be "reliable partners in innovation" to help our customers deliver nutritious, healthy and tasty foods to their local communities.

.....

www.puratos.co.jp

service_japan@puratos.com

03-5410-2322

Puratos
Reliable partners in innovation

SOLVAY

More than 150 years of innovation

Solvay is a global leader in advanced materials and specialty chemicals. Its tailored products and ever-evolving market solutions answer unmet needs in industries as diverse as automotive, healthcare and energy. Driven by forward-thinking innovation and entrepreneurial talent, it has stretched the boundaries of science for over 150 years. With more than five decades in Japan, Solvay has established offices and R&I centres across the country.

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www.solvay.com/en/

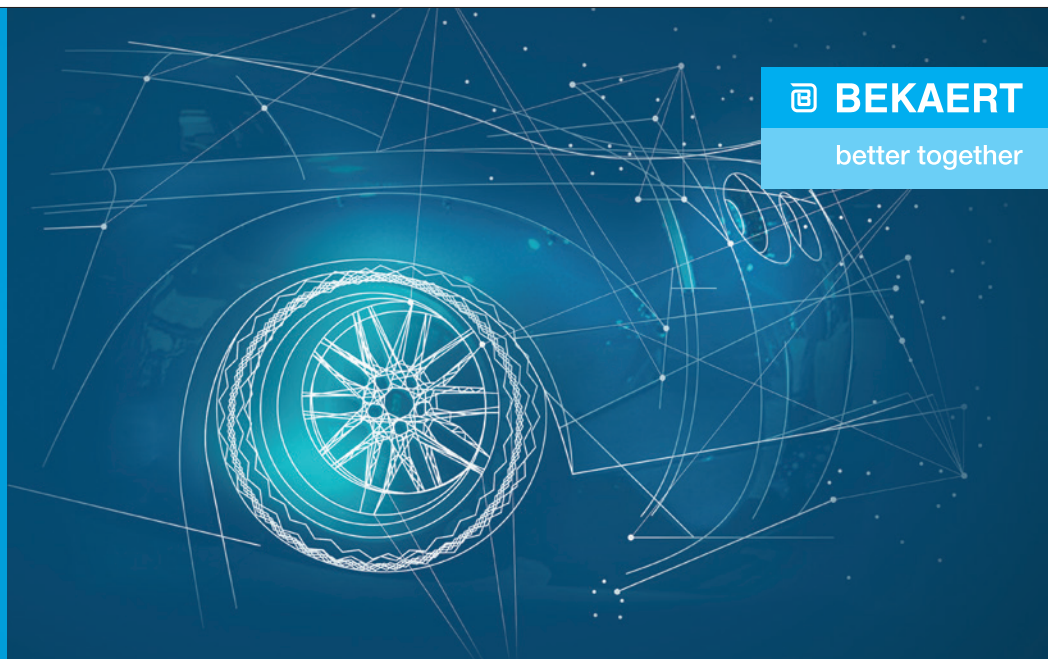
+81 (0)3 5425 4790



PROGRESS BEYOND



Bekaert (bekaert.com) is a world market and technology leader in steel wire transformation and coating technologies. We pursue to be the preferred supplier for our steel wire products and solutions by continuously delivering superior value to our customers worldwide. Bekaert was founded in 1880 and is a global company with 29 000 employees worldwide, headquarters in Belgium and € 5 billion in combined revenue.



PAUL WURTH IHI CO., LTD.

Based in Tokyo, Paul Wurth IHI is a 50-50 joint venture established in 2012 by Paul Wurth SA from Luxembourg and IHI Corporation from Japan. The company has made significant contributions to the technological modernisation of Japan's iron- and coke-making industry, aimed at improving production efficiency, resource utilisation and environmental protection for sustainable, long-term development of Japanese and South-East Asian societies.

.....
www.ihico.jp/ihipw/
 contact@ihico-pw.jp



ARCELORMITTAL

ArcelorMittal is the world's leading steel and mining company, headquartered in Luxembourg, and the leading supplier of quality steel products in all major markets, including automotive, construction, household appliances and packaging. Present in 60 countries with an industrial footprint in 19 countries, ArcelorMittal is the world's largest steel producer, with an annual crude steel production of 93.1 million tonnes (2017).

.....
corporate.arcelormittal.com



UCB

UCB, Brussels, Belgium, is a global biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery and development of innovative medicines and solutions to transform the lives of people living with severe diseases of the immune system or of the central nervous system. UCB generated revenue of €4.6 billion in 2018. Since 1988, UCB Japan has contributed to improving health in Japan by delivering medicines for treating epilepsy, rheumatoid arthritis and psoriasis.

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www.ucb.com
<https://www.ucbjapan.com>
 Twitter: @UCB_news



BARCO

Barco is a global technology leader that develops networked visualisation solutions for the entertainment, enterprise and healthcare markets. Our solutions help people to enjoy compelling entertainment experiences; foster knowledge-sharing and smart decision-making in organisations; and help hospitals provide their patients with the best possible healthcare.

.....
www.barco.com
 03-5762-8720





EBC PERSONALITY

TEXT BY TOBY WATERS

PHOTO BY BENJAMIN PARKS

Ken Moroi

Enjoying the best of both worlds



It can be exhilarating packing your bags and starting a new life in another country. As a young man, Ken Moroi's father boldly made the move, then, when Moroi himself was old enough, he decided to do the same — but in reverse.

“My father left Japan at age 21 to become an artist in Montreuil, Paris, which, at the time, was a place for artists,” he says. “We were the only Asian family in the area, so I’d say it made me tough, but the neighbourhood was also a blend of many different communities, and I really liked growing up in such a metropolitan, multicultural environment.”

At weekends, Moroi would visit his father in his atelier, where he worked every day, to see what he was painting. Since Montreuil was such an artistic town, artists would often come to visit.

“I liked to meet these new people — people with a very different vision of life,” says Moroi. “It was really something outside of most people’s common everyday life but, for me, it was my everyday. I think this helped me to develop an interest in aesthetics, art and design.”

Moroi admires his father’s work. The walls of his office are adorned with his father’s paintings, which are elegant depictions of nature and the seasons.

“It’s true that he left Japan early in life to attend art school in Paris, but you get a feeling of his Japanese sensibilities,” Moroi says. “His work is very connected to the earth and how it nurtures human beings. It makes me feel close to nature.”

Despite his lifelong exposure to art, Moroi didn’t feel called to the artist’s life himself. Rather, the call came from the country his father left. As a teenager,

Moroi sometimes felt disconnected from his Japanese heritage. He found the language difficult, for example, when he visited relatives in Yamaguchi. But as he got older, he realised the potential of his background.

“It was really something outside of most people’s common everyday life but, for me, it was my everyday”

Do you like natto?

Time spent working in Japan:
15 years.

Career regret:
No regrets, but someday I’d love to do something to promote Japanese culture abroad.

Favourite saying:
Where there’s a will, there’s a way.

Favourite book:
The Red and the Black by Stendhal. I’m a fan of 19th century writing.

Cannot live without:
Being French. I cannot live without a good baguette.

Lesson learned in Japan:
Patience, and believing in yourself.

Secret of success in business:
Having vision, finding the right strategy to implement, and continue believing in yourself — even if you temporarily fail.

Favourite place to dine:
INUA in Iidabashi was my big discovery of 2019. It’s both a gustative and spiritual experience.

Do you like natto?:
I even ate it in Paris! We had some good friends who could make natto.

“During those summer vacations, I spent hours listening to other people’s conversations, and at some point, I thought: ‘I want to understand what people are saying to me’,” Moroi recalls. “Before entering college, I realised that my gift was having this double culture and I told myself that I should definitely use it in my career, so I decided to master Japanese.”

He studied Japanese and international trade at university and, soon after, made the move to Tokyo to begin his career. He quickly found life in Japan captivating.

“What I really like about Japan is the quality of the human relationship where people respect each other and consider relationships over a long-term basis,” Moroi explains. “There is also a lot of art and aesthetic beauty in many things here: the way some older cities have been built, the temples, the gardens, the *ikebana*, the tea ceremony. I think it’s great that this is still part of the Japanese lifestyle.”

Today, he is the managing director and export director for Asia-Pacific at Vranken Pommery, a Reims-based producer of fine wines, most notably Champagne. He loves French wine, and his work promoting his firm’s products — such as its Pommery and Vranken Demoiselle Champagnes — is a perfect combination of his French and Japanese backgrounds.

“I’ve always loved hospitality,” Moroi says. “My grandparents in France lived in a very small village, but they knew a lot of people, and my grandmother would always cook for guests and sometimes had these large receptions. My grandparents in Japan actually had a liquor store that did very well, so in some ways I became the merchant my father isn’t.”

After 15 years in Japan, Moroi has set down roots here with a family of his own. Maybe the question now is, where will his sons end up? ●

Ken Moroi is managing director and export director for Asia-Pacific at Vranken Pommery. He is a member of the EBC Liquor Committee.



Materials

Material success

When it comes to tariffs, even small changes can mean big improvements. Japan has long been imposing duties, typically in the single digits, on a range of industrial materials that play an essential role in the country's manufacturing industry.

But many of those tariffs have been lowered since the EU–Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) came into effect.

“A few percent doesn't sound like much, but it is quite significant for some of our members,” says Carl-Gustav Eklund, chair of the EBC Materials Committee.

One of those members is Pierre-Antoine Guillon of Kerneos Japan.

“Our customers have been able to implement the import-tax reduction so, depending on the product, they are benefiting,” he says.

Clients who buy cement that Kerneos imports from France, for example, have seen price reductions of roughly 3%.

Eklund stresses, however, that the significance of the latest breakthrough isn't strictly about higher sales gained through lower prices. Rather, it's about the levelling of a playing field in a very competitive market.

“It's a win-win situation for us, as suppliers, and our customers,” says Eklund, who is president of Höganäs Japan.

Even so, there remain small but persistent problems that the committee needs to iron out. After the tariffs came down, a regulatory issue cropped up — Japan Customs requested that EU suppliers verify the country of origin of some of their products.

“We had to get the certificates on fairly short notice, so it was a bit unclear at first what the requirements were,” Eklund recalls.

The EBC managed to provide the paperwork, but it hit another snag when discrepancies over definitions of the products' origins arose between the EU and Japan Customs.

“So, we had to answer a lot of questions and give a lot of details for each of our products,” the chairman says.

“We couldn't wait for the EU and Japan to clear this up, so we just went ahead.”

They managed to get the products registered and approved in Europe.

“But Customs still wanted our documentation,” says Eklund. “It's a double

procedure that's not necessary, and we are trying to find a way to stop it.”

At present, the system is working “fairly well”, he says, “but we still get questions from Customs”.

With the tariff-related issues being resolved, the committee expects to spend more of its time tackling non-tariff barriers. Several regulatory and other issues were negotiated

during the EPA process, leading to “partial harmonisation” of technical standards in the two markets, according to Eklund.

“We in the committee, as well as throughout the EBC, feel that this is the start of an ongoing process to reduce regulations and harmonise, so we can have the same regulations in the EU and Japan,” he states.

The EU also needs to address its own issues in this area, he adds.

“But the momentum is there for progress.”

The chair says the EBC's distinct position among the relevant government authorities on both sides, along with

“We are working for free trade and harmonisation of regulations”

the importance of staying on top of a constant flow of communication, can be crucial for resolving trade issues facing EBC members.

“We need to follow up — from the committees to the EBC office to the European Commission — and sometimes with the EU Delegation here, which deals directly with Japanese authorities,” he explains.

“It's important for us to stand up and say, ‘We are working for free trade and harmonisation of regulations.’ But that is normal — if you want a win-win situation.” ●

Carl-Gustav Eklund is president of Höganäs Japan and chairperson of the EBC Materials Committee.

Advocacy issues

Customs

Japan's regional Customs offices need to apply tariff classification rules on a consistent basis.

Safety labelling

The Japanese government should recognise the international CAS numbers of substances not registered in Japan, to avoid having them unnecessarily labelled as dangerous.



A new direction for the EU

The EU Delegation's brief on the new European Commission

The commissioners of the new European Commission took up their posts on 1 December 2019, and with this start comes a new direction for the European Union. While President Ursula von der Leyen's Commission is still only two months old, it is already making its mark.

On 23 January, the EU Delegation offered a comprehensive presentation on the new Commission and its ambitious policies.

At this stage, there are few people who have not heard about the European Green Deal, which is highest on the list of the new Commission's priorities. If successful, this plan will set the EU on a course to become climate-neutral by 2050. It will be the policy that will have the greatest impact on the governments, businesses and citizens of the EU.

But it will not happen on its own. The EU Commission will support a fair transition with investments in green technologies, sustainable solutions and new businesses to make certain that the green deal is a strategy for growth across the EU. De-carbonisation will need to take place across many sectors – including energy, mobility, and construction – and, to achieve this, €1 trillion will be invested through the European Green Deal Investment Plan.

Furthermore, von der Leyen has said that, next month, she will formally put forward a proposal that will enshrine climate-neutrality in law. By October, the Commission will present a comprehensive plan that outlines how greenhouse gases can be cut by up to 50% by 2030.

With regard to trade, the new Commissioner for Trade Phil Hogan has said that the aim of the new Commission's trade policy is to ensure stability and predictability. It is also interesting to note that this

URSULA VON DER LEYEN,
PRESIDENT OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMISSION

will support the EU's broader policy objectives, such as free trade agreements that include the preferential treatment of green goods, references to the Paris Agreement and the adoption of International Labour Organization standards.

The new Commission has also set out to protect EU companies and workers from unfair competition and to pursue a level playing field with the EU's trading partners. To this end, it will establish a chief trade enforcement officer who will monitor bilateral trade agreements and use them to safeguard against actions that go against the spirit of these pacts.

On agricultural policies, the new Commissioner for Agriculture Janusz Wojciechowski will focus on their environmental impact. The EU's "farm to fork" strategy for sustainable food has the ambition of a zero-pollution agricultural sector. The Commission will also strengthen the geographical indication system to better protect and promote Europe's high-quality

food and food standards around the world. Moreover, the Common Agricultural Policy – often the target of complaints – will be modernised and simplified.

One other field to which the new Commission is giving greater attention, as well as an increased budget, is research and innovation. Horizon 2020, the EU's framework programme for research and innovation,

will not only continue, but a European Innovation Council will be created to act as an accelerator and help with the further commercialisation of the programme. The Commission will also work with EU member states to build "a true European research area" and ensure that research, policy and economic priorities go hand in hand.

Connected to research is the growth of the digital economy, and the new commissioner responsible for this area, Thierry Breton, intends to create a cross-border pool of non-personal data – a requirement for a competitive digital economy – that European companies and public organisations will be able to access. There will also be new regulations on AI, which will insist that development remain ethical. The European Commission is expected to publish a paper on this soon.

It is fair to say that the new European Commission will be very busy for the next five years. ●



Bjorn Kongstad is chief policy officer at the European Business Council in Japan.





Raise a glass

Eurobiz Japan's 10th anniversary celebration

Last month marked the 10th anniversary of *Eurobiz Japan* and, on 30 January, we celebrated this significant milestone in the magazine's history with a party.

"Our first issue came out 10 years ago this month," said Vickie Paradise Green, president of digital creative agency Paradigm and publisher of *Eurobiz Japan*, in her speech. "This decade of publishing the magazine has been a fascinating journey, and we are proud of each of the 120 issues we have produced."

Some 100 people attended the event, including the management of the European Business Council in Japan (EBC), members of the EBC and European chambers of commerce, journalists, photographers and

advertisers, as well as the editorial, design and sales teams at Paradigm.

"The highlight of the event was definitely the chance to meet and talk with all the people that make *Eurobiz Japan* possible — not only the publishing staff, but also the advertisers and readers," said EBC President Michael Mroczek.

The celebration was held at the Pullman Tokyo Tamachi's bar Platform 9, and the covers of all 120 issues of *Eurobiz Japan* were projected in turn on screens around the venue. Many guests spoke highly of the hotel and the excellent job it did of hosting the event.

"The space was stylish, especially the outside terrace, and the food and drinks plentiful," said Gavin Blair, a professional journalist and regular contributor to *Eurobiz Japan*. "There was a great turnout, and it was good to see some of the people I'd interviewed over the years again, and to meet others I'd only spoken to on the phone — as well as to see a few fellow writers."

Some of those who had been featured on *Eurobiz Japan's* covers were also at the event to commemorate this accomplishment.

"Congratulations on this important anniversary — 10 years is a fantastic achievement. I always look forward to reading *Eurobiz Japan* each month," said Leif Nilsson, regional general manager for Asia-Pacific at Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS), who was featured on the cover of the February 2013 issue. "Regarding the party, the atmosphere in Platform 9 was high on energy as all the guests seemed excited to celebrate this important milestone — and the cocktails were amazing."

Trevor Webster, managing partner at Taylor Brunswick Group — who appeared on both the April 2015 and March 2017 covers — was also in attendance.

"The Pullman was a great venue to celebrate a decade of *Eurobiz Japan*," he said. "Thank you to Vickie and her team for gathering those who have

been featured in the magazine, including the cover stories. And congratulations to all the team at *Eurobiz Japan* on your 10th birthday. I look forward to celebrating your 20th."

Green took the opportunity to extend her gratitude to our advertisers. She also reminded guests that the magazine depends wholly on advertising revenue.

"While the magazine industry is coming under intense pressure — with declines in advertising and increasing paper prices — we believe that niche magazines such as *Eurobiz Japan* will continue to do well, thanks to your continued support," she said.

"Congratulations on this important anniversary — 10 years is a fantastic achievement"

Nilsson, who has advertised in the magazine, noted the positive results he had seen.

"*Eurobiz Japan* helped SAS to reach the right people in Japan with some important information," he stated. "Through very good cooperation, we created a strong and clear message together."

Conversations throughout the evening turned to the years to come, with many guests expressing their confidence in the magazine's future.

"I'm certain that *Eurobiz Japan* can continue to communicate the views of European interests in Japan," noted the EBC's Mroczek, "which is something that will only become more important with the success of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement." ●



Platform 9 at the Pullman Tokyo Tamachi



The Agenda

FEB
26THE EUROPEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL
IN JAPAN

Are you ready for the Digital Economy?

TIME: 17:00 to 19:00; reception from 19:00 to 20:00

VENUE: Delegation of the European Union to Japan

FEE: Free

CONTACT: ebc@ebc-jp.com

MAR
14, 15IRELAND JAPAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

I Love Ireland Festival 2020

TIME: 10:00 to 18:00

VENUE: Yoyogi Park

FEE: Free

CONTACT: mail@iloveirelandfes.com

MAR
3EMBASSY OF SWITZERLAND IN JAPAN,
SSCIJ AND IMD BUSINESS SCHOOL

3rd Switzerland-Japan Economic Forum

VENUE: Imperial Hotel Tokyo

FEE: Invitation only

CONTACT: info@sccij.jp

MAR
16BELGIAN-LUXEMBOURG CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE IN JAPAN

Monthly Beer Gathering

TIME: 19:00 to 22:00

VENUE: Belgian beer café in Tokyo

FEE: Pay for what you drink

CONTACT: info@blccj.or.jp

MAR
3SPANISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
IN JAPAN

Challenges and Opportunities for Women in Business

TIME: 18:30 to 20:30

VENUE: Embassy of Spain

FEE: ¥1,000 (for members), ¥3,000 (for non-members)

CONTACT: info@spanishchamber.or.jp

MAR
17BELGIAN-LUXEMBOURG CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE IN JAPAN

Belgium-Japan Double Taxation Treaty

TIME: 18:30 to 19:30

VENUE: Embassy of Belgium

FEE: Free

CONTACT: info@blccj.or.jp

MAR
5

JAPAN-SWISS SOCIETY AND SCCIJ

Japan-Swiss Spring Ball 2020

TIME: 18:00 to 22:00

VENUE: Imperial Hotel Tokyo, Banquet Hall "Fuji" (3F)

FEE: ¥27,000

CONTACT: japanissw@yahoo.ne.jp

MAR
19GERMAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
AND INDUSTRY IN JAPAN

Enabling Global Business in Times of Uncertainty

Speaker: Peter Gerber, CEO of Lufthansa Cargo AG

TIME: 12:15 to 14:15

VENUE: Roppongi Hills Club

FEE: ¥6,800 (for members)

CONTACT: events@dihkj.or.jp

MAR
5ITALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN
JAPAN AND ASSOCIAZIONE DONNE
ITALIANE

Aperitivo della Camera - Women's Day

TIME: 19:00 to 21:00

VENUE: Osteria Dieci

FEE: ¥2,000 (for members and women), ¥3,000 (for male non-members)

CONTACT: projects@iccj.or.jp

MAR
19SWISS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY IN JAPAN

27th Swiss Young Professionals Gathering

TIME: 19:00 to 21:30

VENUE: Panino Giusto Kojimachi

FEE: ¥1,000 (includes one drink and snack); additional tickets: ¥500 each

CONTACT: info@sccij.jp



Better connected

EU–Japan business collaboration in third markets

The EU and Japan have opened a new door that will lead to a significant strengthening of what they can do together on the global scene. The signing of the Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure by President Jean-Claude Juncker and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in September ensures synergies and complementarity as the EU and Japan seek to increase cooperation with partner third countries (neither Japan nor the nations in the EU).

Two important aspects of this agreement are the industrial and economic dimensions of connectivity, particularly the EU–Japan business collaborations in third markets, such as South-East Asia and Africa. And the impetus for Japanese and European businesses to expand joint operations overseas is now growing.

For example, 69% of German businesses in Japan are involved in projects with Japanese companies outside Japan, especially in South-East Asia, and some 46% of them generate revenues with customers outside Japan at least to the same extent as they do within Japan itself. Japan is increasingly seen by European companies as a strategically important business hub that connects them with other countries.

On 3 December, a conference on business collaboration in third markets was organised by the EU–Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation in Tokyo. Speakers cited many reasons for this growing trend, including easier accessibility to foreign markets due to internationalisation, the saturation of the Japanese market, and an increase in the strategic importance of Japanese subsidiaries.

At the conference, EU–Japan business collaboration in third markets was examined from the point of view of third countries by members of the European Business

Organisation Worldwide Network (EBO WWN), a group of EU chambers of commerce and industry. In a panel discussion, some of the 28 representatives in attendance noted that EU–Japan business collaborations have a positive impact on the markets where they operate, such as on the local business and regulatory environment, industrial policies, norms and standards, environmental protection, education and training, and innovation. It is a win-win-win situation for the EU, Japan and the third country involved.

It was also noted that co-financing agreements are considered a key instrument for EU–Japan industry projects in third markets. The European Investment Bank currently has agreements with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, and Nippon Export and Investment Insurance.

As a result of the conference, participants now plan to take several notable concrete actions. One is to include the possibility of discussing EU–Japan business collaboration in third markets during future European business missions to Japan. Another is to put in place an EU–Japan connectivity

platform that will mobilise all relevant business and financial stakeholders to facilitate interaction and the exchange of information. This will allow European and Japanese companies to identify potential business partners that they

can work together with in a specific third market.

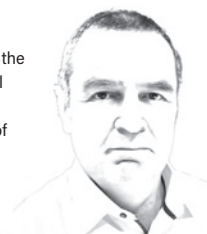
Therefore, it will also be important to provide all necessary information about opportu-

nities in third markets to European and Japanese business and financial stakeholders. This can be accomplished through numerous organisations, such as the EBO WWN; the Enterprise Europe Network; the three EU intellectual property rights SME helpdesks in Latin America, South-East Asia and China; and the Public Procurement Helpdesk of the EU–Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation.

The EU–Japan Regional Helpdesk can also encourage increased connectivity by helping to create contacts and promote interaction between European clusters and regions, Japanese clusters and prefectures, and regions and clusters in third countries.

The keyword now is operationalisation. The EU and Japan are in a position to maximise the benefits of these collaborative business partnerships — be they between large companies or SMEs. They may represent opportunities of even greater importance than the bilateral business cooperation between Europe and Japan. ●

Philippe de Taxis du Poët is general manager (EU-side) of the EU–Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation and minister counsellor at the Delegation of the European Union to Japan.





Higher learning, lower enrollment

Japan strives to raise the international profile of its higher education institutions

Japan's demographic woes vex policy-makers and businesses, but they are also creating headaches for its more than 780 public and private universities and graduate institutions, which are struggling to meet admission targets amid falling domestic student totals.

Over one million Japanese high school graduates entered university in 2019, but the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper said approximately one-third of private universities and junior colleges still did not achieve their enrollment goals, a problem set to worsen as incoming domestic numbers tumble further in the coming years.

To offset this, the education ministry launched the Top Global University Project, a 10-year plan to boost the international attractiveness of Japanese tertiary institutions. The government picked 37 of these in 2014 to add international faculty and English-based courses, as well as increase outbound Japanese students. The plan envisioned more diverse classes and institutions, as well as lifting at least 10 Japanese universities into the Times Higher Education World University Rankings by 2023.

The government recognises that Japanese firms are increasingly shifting operations overseas and expanding domestic hiring of foreigners. To continue competing on the global stage, it needs a future workforce that is more international, so it is setting ambitious growth targets.

However, the number of Japan's ranked universities has actually fallen from five in the top 200 in 2013 to only two: Tokyo

University (36) and Kyoto University (65). Some 13 criteria — such as internationally cited research, as well as international staff and foreign student ratios — factor into a school's ranking.

Japan is on track to reach its targeted 300,000 international students this year, although one-third attend language schools and are not enrolled in higher education, according to Japan Student Services Organization statistics.

In contrast, the UK — the world's second most popular nation for overseas study — has some 458,000 international students attending its universities, with EU residents making up 30% of this number and China the top national presence with over 120,000 enrolled. The number of non-EU foreign students jumped 10% last year, with Chinese student enrollment up 35% over the past five years, according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Universities and Science Minister Chris Skidmore attributed the overall rise to the quality of UK education, and noted that the country is working to attract 600,000 foreign students by 2030. Also, the UK is re-introducing a two-year post-university work visa, discontinued in 2012, which will likely boost interest.

In Japan, international undergraduate admissions rose 9.4% to 85,000 in 2018, and graduate students by 8.2% to

over 50,000. Nearly half of the inbound students were from China, followed by Vietnam at nearly 25%.

The Top Global University Project's successes include Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Kyushu, which has a majority of foreign students. And some 80,000 foreign students now attend schools outside of Japan's three largest metropolitan areas, a migration that has helped regional institutions.

However, there have been cautionary tales.

The government tightened rules on foreign enrollment after Tokyo University of Social Welfare said it had lost contact with over 1,600 students over the past three years. The school had a majority of foreign students — enrolling some 5,100 over the past three years, but

its policies were said to reflect the desperation to fill vacancies without proper oversight.

Japan's efforts, therefore, to attract the best and the brightest

must not just be focused on numbers. Instead, like the UK, Japan should consider opportunities for its overseas students after they complete their education, a situation where students and society both gain.

With its slogan calling for "a future beyond borders", Ritsumeikan University captures the international aspirations of Japan. The system it has built nurtures home-grown talent while developing the skills of those from abroad. Japan's demographic challenges won't be entirely conquered by higher education, but its universities can and should be part of the solution. ●





Building green grids

Virtual power plants could help Japan become more sustainable

At the annual World Economic Forum summit last month in Davos, Switzerland, global leaders underscored the need to increase renewable sources of energy to tackle climate change. The heating of the oceans and atmosphere is a complex problem, but a key element for the success of sustainable energy is managing many sources effectively. That's where virtual power plants (VPPs) come in.

VPPs are cloud-based networks of assets ranging from solar energy farms to wind power plants to hydrogen facilities to energy storage systems. Unlike traditional models based on a few large, remote power plants that send electricity to users through power lines, VPPs use many distributed assets to achieve a balance between supply and demand. Even though renewable sources, such as wind and solar, provide power intermittently, the electricity they produce

can be stored locally or even sent to another country to meet needs there. With a VPP, power assets can be forecast and traded on the market.

The concept of VPPs isn't new, but countries' addiction to fossil fuels has slowed adoption. In fiscal 2018, a whopping 31.2% of Japan's energy came from coal and 38.4% from natural gas, according to the Tokyo-based Renewable Energy Institute, founded by SoftBank CEO Masayoshi Son. Only 17% came from renewables such as solar and hydropower, up from 9.5% in fiscal 2010. Compare that with Germany, which has pledged to exit both nuclear and coal. In 2019, renewables accounted for 46% of the national energy mix and the country also exported 30 terawatt hours of power, according to the Fraunhofer Society's applied science organisation.

Germany seems to be doing something right, so it will be interesting to see how a new partnership between Japan and Germany might shake things up here. Toshiba Energy Systems & Solutions has an agreement with Germany's Next Kraftwerke to develop VPP services in Japan, which is set to launch by the end of next month. Next Kraftwerke is one of Europe's largest VPP companies and has a network of over 8,700 units and a capacity

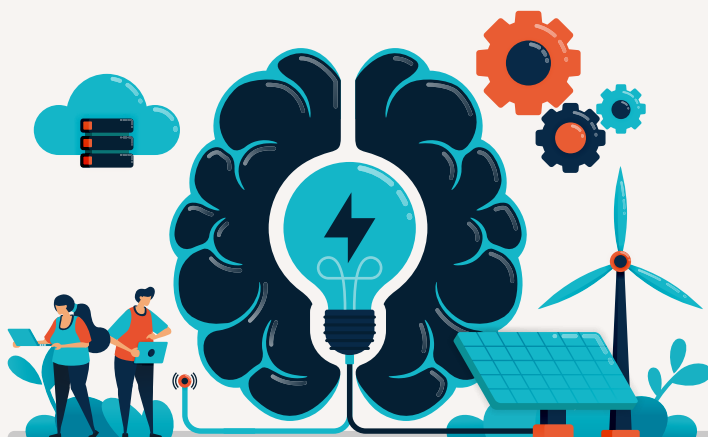
of 7,560 megawatts, which is enough to power millions of homes. It says its VPP increases grid stability for secure power supplies. The agreement followed an announcement by California-based AutoGrid, a power management software firm, that it is working with KDDI subsidiary Eneres to build, in Japan, what it claims will be the largest storage VPP in the world by asset volume. Dozens of other VPPs are currently in the works here.

These projects also come as Japan is slowly trying to make renewables its main source of energy, which will require a careful balance of supply and demand from multiple power sources. VPPs could be a natural fit for this archipelago

In fiscal 2018, a whopping 31.2% of Japan's energy came from coal ... Only 17% came from renewables

of nearly 7,000 islands, which is the only country in the world with a power grid that has two different mains frequencies — a factor that severely limits its ability to share power. Tokyo and eastern Japan are on 50Hz while Osaka and western Japan are on 60Hz, a legacy of electrification policies in the 1890s that continue to have ramifications, such as prolonged power rationing and blackouts following the 2011 Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant disaster.

VPPs are no panacea, but they might just make Japan's power grid greener and more efficient. ●





Long drives in long johns

How to enjoy a good game of winter golf

One winter morning, after a night at the historic Fujiya Hotel in Hakone (where the scenery is majestic), I awoke to find a blanket of snow on the ground. It was beautiful — except my golf buddy and I were due to play in a couple of hours. With the sun shining, we turned up at Hakone Kohan Golf Course and the staff said we could wait in the restaurant in case the snow melted. We did. It did. And we were the only two golfers on the course that day.

Winter weather in Japan is not always a cause for cancelled rounds. In fact, the New Year period, and even New Year's Day, sees many golfers teeing off around the country. This time of year is also when you can really appreciate Japan's great big baths after a game.

Playing 18 holes straight as your body fights off frostbite can be a struggle, but if you equip yourself well, it can be truly enjoyable.

The first thing on your winter list should be a mitten for your right hand (if you play right-handed). People often overlook this but having a freezing right hand while your left sits comfortably in its golf glove can seriously upset your swing.

Next, cover your head. While it's actually a myth that your head loses more heat than other parts of your body in cold conditions, it's actually true when you're playing golf because it's the only part of your body that's

exposed. So, put on a hat and, as much as possible, cover your neck. Ski hats are ideal as they're warmer and cover more exposed areas than caps.

Now let's talk about underwear. Macho males might scoff at the idea of wearing long johns, but they are a lifesaver on the golf course in winter as they're thin, stick close to your body and prevent frozen legs when blasts of cold air rush up your trousers. Good thermal underwear is available at shops such as Uniqlo and Don Quixote.

It's also important to keep your upper body warm — remembering that you want to wear as few layers as possible, and that the clothes you do wear should be light and practical. Bulky jackets and heavy sweaters can impede your swing and follow-through, so short-sleeved or no-sleeved vests help to keep your arms unobstructed.

Finally, invest in a good thermos flask and put something hot in it. And don't forget to refill it after the front nine.

So, where to play? The obvious answer is Okinawa. But for those of us stuck working on Japan's main islands,

the answer is: stay south.

The south side of Honshu is relatively mild. In the Kanto area, the Boso Peninsula in Chiba is your best bet, although beware of mountain courses where the greens might freeze. Courses such as Tokyo Bayside, Milfeuille and Ichinomiya are worth checking out. To the west of Tokyo, Izu and Hakone can be too cold, but further west — areas such as Mie, Wakayama and Shikoku — is usually more manageable. Western Honshu and northern Kyushu can also be cold. But southern Kyushu is golf friendly in winter, particularly the Kagoshima area, which

if you equip yourself well, [winter golf] can be truly enjoyable

includes Ibusuki and (if you're adventurous) Tanegashima Island.

The best part of winter golf is that courses are less crowded, the rates are cheaper and lunch is often included in the price. Just make sure you bring your long johns and a hot toddy. ●





Kick off a tremendous summer at Jinseki Summer School 2020

Building on our first three years of highly successful summer camps, we're excited to reveal the full details of Jinseki Summer School 2020. Held amongst the picturesque hills of Hiroshima Prefecture, Jinseki Summer School is a two-week overnight camp for children aged five to twelve years old. We provide opportunities for kids to indulge their curiosity, get in touch with nature, and make friends at an English-language summer camp.

We're thrilled to announce that Liverpool Football Club's International Academy has joined us as an official partner. As the current FIFA Club World Cup and UEFA Champion's League winners, Liverpool Football Club is the world's best football team, and its academy offers the very best in football coaching. Alongside the United Sports Federation, an organisation that offers lessons from Olympic athletes, Jinseki Summer School and its partners guarantee healthy, energetic and fun sports and good exercise for all of our students.

Our academic programme offers high-quality teaching in art, science, geography, history and more, as well as language instruction in English or Japanese from fully qualified Japanese and international schoolteachers. Children will also get to experience activities such as fishing, astronomy and hiking, and they can visit the

adjoining farm to tend to animals and enjoy fresh dairy produce.

Our summer camp is based at Jinseki International School, Japan's first junior boarding school, with purpose-built classrooms and bedrooms. We serve breakfast, lunch and dinner, prepared using fresh, healthy and locally sourced ingredients. A safe, low earthquake risk area, it's the perfect place for children to study, play and make friends in a nurturing and caring environment.

We will be holding Jinseki Summer School twice this year, from July 5-18 and from July 26-August 8. Due to high demand, we strongly recommend that you pre-register for the best chance of securing a place for your child at the best summer camp in Japan.

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AN ENGAGING EDUCATION

Japan offers the right environment for your child's learning

TEXT BY TOBY WATERS



For education to be effective, it's crucial to ensure that pupils stay interested in their learning. Luckily, there are a great many ways that schools in Japan keep education engaging.

FOSTERING FASCINATION

Euft van den Berg, principal of **MEES International School**, believes that the best way to keep children engaged is for them to direct their own learning.

"MEES' daily routine is based on the Montessori method. Children can choose which activity they want to join, or even initiate their own activities, as long as it involves learning," he says. "It is our strong belief that if a child takes the initiative to express their preference for an activity, they will be more engaged."

This philosophy is one shared by **Hakuba International School**.

"We have our students work on self-initiated and community-integrated real-life projects," says Tomoko Kusamoto, the school's director. "These projects allow them to experiment and learn through trial and error, while

encouraging them to focus on how to make our world more sustainable and prosperous. The village of Hakuba, and its beautiful natural surroundings, is our laboratory."

Headmaster Nicholas Gunn of **Jinseki International School** believes that indulging students' curiosity, while pushing them to excel, gets results.

"It is important to understand the mindset of each child as well as the dynamic of the group to gauge which approaches ignite, inspire and motivate curiosity," he says. "Constantly challenging pupils to overachieve is the key. This can be accomplished through a diverse range of fun and engaging activities."

Independent learning techniques are also popular at schools that cater to younger children.

"At **Gymboree International School**, children are encouraged to think and explore on their own — we follow their lead," says Nicole Yamada, school director. "We provide a learning environment where children can make their own choices, discover their talents and shape their own learning experience."

Poppins Active Learning International School (PALIS) offers a holistic, sensory-focused approach to learning.

"At PALIS, we believe in making education engaging — and for young children, that often means hands-on learning," says Betty Shimozaki, school director. "We create interactive experiences that encourage students to use all of their senses, so numbers, letters and movements come to life in their minds. We also offer stimulating lessons that incorporate the expertise of professionals."

St. Alban's Nursery alternates between a number of learning materials to keep lessons fresh.

"Keeping our students engaged is a top priority. We take full advantage of every available resource — both physical and digital — to offer engaging classes in everything from music and movement to games and worksheets," says Gilma Yamamoto-Copeland, nursery director. "We keep a flexible mindset as we build our lesson plans around our students' needs."

The Montessori School Tokyo takes a well-rounded approach to educating its students.



"We provide a wide variety of choices that educate students' hands, heads and hearts, including gardening, cooking together, running a small business, drawing, acting in plays and planning trips and outdoor adventures," says Barbara Roether, middle school teacher. "All of these different modes of engagement keep students connected to their work."

TEAM EFFORT

Working together with other children is a great way to make friends and learn how to cooperate with others. St. Alban's Nursery teaches these values from a young age.

"We assign various art and crafts projects, science experiments and exercises that require our students to think and work as a group," she says. "Each of these offer students the rewards of learning to work together while being compassionate, considerate and patient. They learn to encourage, support and lift each other up."

Group work is used at **Kohana International School** to inspire a wide range of learning.

"Project learning is not about teachers simply getting students to collect data. Instead, our teachers guide their students to investigate different topics," says Priya Pillai, the school's principal. "Annual school exhibitions, show and tell, and class presentations not only help students increase their knowledge and enhance their learning capabilities, but also arouse their curiosity and boost their innate motivation to learn."

MEES also emphasises the importance of working together in groups.

"MEES combines Montessori principles with aspects of the Reggio Emilia Approach. Twice during the day there are learning centres, when teachers with different specialities — such as music, drama or sensory development — work on projects with students," explains van den Berg. "Students choose which teacher they want to work with and break up into smaller groups."

The Montessori School Tokyo believes its students should get involved in the community.

"Students play a major role in shaping their classroom culture through weekly community meetings," Roether says. "Maria Montessori writes of the 'little community,' a microcosm of the adult

"It is important to understand ... which approaches ignite, inspire and motivate curiosity"

world, as being central to education. Here, adolescents explore their strengths and areas for growth. Peers are also an important source of information about self-identity."

MEETING EMOTIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Successful learning depends on children's mental and emotional wellbeing being looked after. Jinseki International School encourages openness among its children.

"Our school has a 'child first' culture that challenges our students to develop independence while always knowing support is at hand," Gunn says. "Open dialogue is a key part of this culture. As a small residential school, our house parents, school matron, teachers and management are all available to speak with students 24 hours a day."

A close bond between staff and students is also valued highly at Kohana International School.

"Our homeroom teachers respond to students' personal, social, emotional and academic concerns, providing a caring and non-judgmental environment to improve their wellbeing," Pillai explains. "We also provide support for a diverse range of issues relating to mental health difficulties, including stress, anxiety and low mood."

Hakuba International School believes that self-actualisation will help children become invaluable members of society.

"In order for each student to grow into a positive, caring and responsible member of the community, it is essential to create an environment where they can safely and honestly explore their authentic inner selves," Kusamoto says. "Our teachers

guide their students' journey to help them discover the power and joy of being themselves."

Gymboree International School's wide variety of classes fosters both the individuality and group spirit needed for a healthy inner life.

"In addition to English study time, we give children the opportunity to discover their unique talents through a variety of daily core programmes, such as music, art, coding and sports," explains Matt Keiser, the curriculum development manager. "Our play-based learning environment helps children develop the key social, mental and emotional skills they need to succeed."

A healthy body is the key to a healthy mind, according to PALIS' Shimozaki.

"We prioritise physical health and promote an active lifestyle through movement-based active learning programmes, such as gym, music and dance," she says. "We place equal importance on helping students to understand their own feelings, and to achieve and sustain emotional health. Trusting relationships between educators and children creates a safe learning environment."

Making education captivating can instil a lifelong love of learning.





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Bacchus's best

The top wines for 2020



With nearly 40 billion bottles of wine produced around the world last year alone, the number of choices on your local wine shop's shelves is most likely overwhelming. To help you narrow it down, here are a few hand-picked selections that are sure to please.



2017 Alphonse Mellot, La Moussière, Sancerre

Sancerre is a beautiful region of the Loire Valley that produces classic, world-class Sauvignon Blanc, and its La Moussière is one of my personal favourites. It's an excellent representation of the region, with intense citrus and minerality, and it has garnered 93 points from *Wine Spectator* magazine. The La Moussière wine got its name

from Alphonse Mellot's home vineyard, which sits atop Kimmeridgian limestone and produces an exceptionally age-worthy white that's dry and lean, yet fruity. Ready to drink now, this wine is at its brightest with a generous helping of mussels or scallops.

2013 Château de la Créée Santenay, Clos de la Confrérie, Monopole

Everything you could want from a great red Burgundy — fruit, structure, elegance, finesse — and more is wrapped up in this stunning bottle. Château de la Créée dates back to the Middle Ages (1431 to be exact), and today it is renowned for its biodynamic, environmentally friendly vineyards. The 2013 vintage enjoyed a long, slow growing season, ideal for the fickle Pinot Noir grape. This wine's bright bouquet elicits ripe strawberry and violet petals, but there's a distinct minerality that comes through as savoury. It's distinctive and intoxicating, especially paired with a succulent pork chop.

2013 Capezzana, Trefiano, Carmignano Riserva

There's nothing quite like a fine Tuscan wine. The Trefiano bursts with rose petals, black cherry and crushed herbs, as if the flavours of the region's rolling hills had been distilled

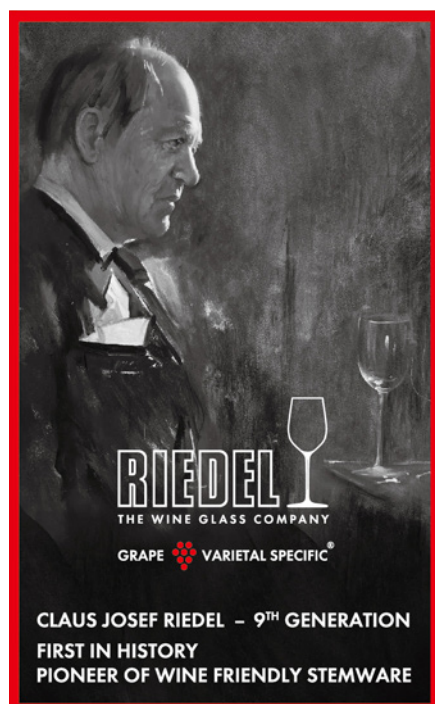
into a single bottle. It's produced from select vines that surround the Trefiano villa, built in the 16th century. Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon and Canaiolo are blended and aged for 16 months in oak and then for an additional year in bottles. With gripping tannins, yet elegant acidity, the wine remains warm, like a hug from an Italian grandmother.



2010 Beronia Gran Reserva, Rioja

This distinctive wine is truly a crowd-pleaser. Aged for more than two years in French oak and another three years in the bottle, it's had a lot of time to stew. And, aptly, stewed meat is what first gets me on the nose, like a particularly rich beef stroganoff. There's blueberry compote and almond paste layered beneath, yielding a jamminess that somehow refrains from becoming too sweet. This is a bold Rioja that could easily stand up to a hearty steak, and then rich chocolate cake for dessert.

It's a new year, and a new decade, but the wines of the 2010s are ripe and ready to drink. ●





DOWN TIME

TEXT BY ANDREW HOWITT



Elliot Milton

Company: SMBC Aviation Capital

Title: Senior Director

Originally from: Dublin, Ireland,

Time in Japan: Seven and a half years



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

I love *omakase*-style sushi, where the chef hands you their choice of superbly fresh sushi over the counter. There's actually an excellent new sushi restaurant in Tsukiji called Omakase!

What do you do to stay in shape?

In the summer, I love to cycle in the mountains — if it's not too hot. In the winter, I jog.

Name a favourite movie:

Shoplifters directed by Hirokazu Kore-eda — a great Japanese film.

Favourite band: Big Thief. They're coming to Tokyo in May.

Favourite album: *Graceland* by Paul Simon.

Favourite TV show: *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*.

Favourite book: *The Third Policeman* by Flann O'Brien.

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

I cycled across Europe in 2009 and ended up in Estonia — where I did a film course!

Cats or dogs?

Dogs.

Summer or winter?

Summer.

What's your ideal weekend?

Meeting up with friends and having a good laugh.

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

I like Stand T in Marunouchi. It's got a great, informal atmosphere.

"I cycled across Europe in 2009 and ended up in Estonia — where I did a film course!"



Shinya Tomonaga

Company: ZF Japan

Title: General Manager

Originally from: Kobe, Japan

Time spent overseas: 20 years in New Zealand

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

I love to go to a place called ROCKY2 in Shimbashi. They have great meat skewers and a good range of drinks.

What do you do to stay in shape?

I try to get off one station ahead of my destination and walk. When I have the time, I try to hit the gym.

Name a favourite movie:

The Great Escape starring Steve McQueen.

Favourite band: Green Day.

Favourite album: Green Day's *American Idiot*.

Favourite TV show: *Knight Rider*.

Favourite book: *The Power of One* by Bryce Courtenay.

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

I used to be on both the water polo team and the shooting team in high school.

Cats or dogs?

Dogs. But I don't mind cats.

Summer or winter?

Summer.

What's your ideal weekend?

Relaxing with a nice cup of coffee out on the balcony or a café terrace.

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

ROCKY2. I really love that place.

"I used to be on both the water polo team and the shooting team in high school"





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"Over our 45-year presence in Japan we have cultivated a vast network of connections in the public and private sector," says Martial Meyssignac, representative director. "Our experience is our pride."

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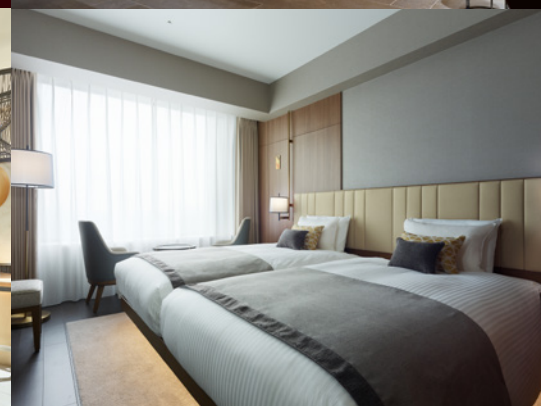
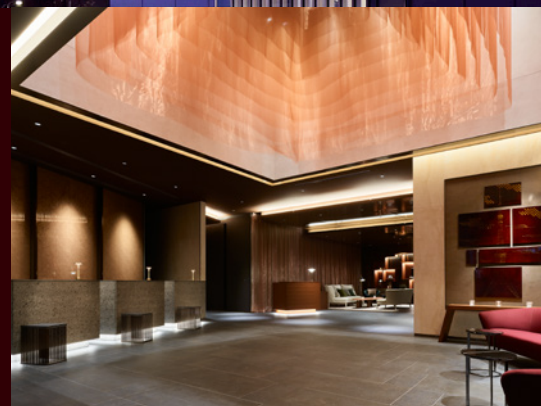
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