

# EURobiz JAPAN

## Market turmoil

China's crash shakes investors worldwide

## On the decline

Concern over falling trade between the EU and Japan

## Legal eagles

Foreign lawyers fight for reform in Japan

*Passion  
for life  
at home*

*Peter List of IKEA Japan*

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Publisher **Vickie Paradise Green**  
[paradise@paradigm.co.jp](mailto:paradise@paradigm.co.jp)

Editor-in-chief **Mike de Jong**  
[dejong@paradigm.co.jp](mailto:dejong@paradigm.co.jp)  
Senior Editor **David Umeda**

Creative Director **Paddy O'Connor**  
Art Director **Cliff Cardona**  
Illustrator **DJ**

Director of Sales **Tapo J Mandal**  
Account Executive **Delilah Romasanta**  
[advertising@paradigm.co.jp](mailto:advertising@paradigm.co.jp)

Production and distribution  
**Daisuke Inoue**  
[eurobiz@paradigm.co.jp](mailto:eurobiz@paradigm.co.jp)

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The European (EU) Chamber of Commerce in Japan

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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.

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## Contributors

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.

"Declining bilateral trade and investment between the EU and Japan should be a matter of concern not only to EBC members, but to anyone who lives and works in either of these two major economic territories. Last year's figures do not make for happy reading, and

**Gavin Blair** investigates the decline in trade and investment between Japan and the EU, page 16.



even taking into account the possibility they may have been a statistical blip, the longer-term trends still provide food for thought."

**Rob Goss** has a look at companies that are Nordic Cool, page 28.



Originally from Dartmoor, UK, Rob has lived in Japan for the last 15 years. Along with writing about travel, sustainability and other topics for publications such as *Time*

and *National Geographic Traveler*, Rob is the author of four books on Japan – with numbers five and six on the way.

"Having long ago worked in Oslo while at university, I was reminded by this story why I share a soft spot for the Nordic countries with many Japanese. And the most endearing Nordic qualities for me are often reflected in their businesses: environmental friendliness, equality, uncomplicatedness, and a natural sense of what works and what looks good."

Allison recently relocated to Tokyo from Hong Kong, where she received her degree in journalism and geography. She holds a Level 3 Award from the Wine and Spirit Education Trust.

"The guys at TokyoFit are young, vibrant, and excited about making this "the fittest city in Asia". And with a unique approach to working out, the word is certainly spreading.

**Allison Bettin** checks in on a new fitness programme in Tokyo, page 50.



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# China's crash, declining trade and Nordic cool

**The recent crash of China's stock market shook investors worldwide. Not only did it send shares plunging in Asia, Europe and the US – wiping out billions in shareholder value in the process – the meltdown also conjured up painful memories of the 2008 global financial crisis. It highlighted the fragile state of China's economy, as the world's one-time poster child for growth deals with the bumps and bruises of the free market.**

This month, Gavin Blair takes a look at the causes and effects of the bursting Chinese bubble (page 24), and tells us whether experts think the crash was a sign of more problems ahead.

Shifting from the world's second largest economy to number three, there are worrisome signs for Japan as well. The

latest trade statistics with Europe show how far the mighty has fallen.

As Gavin Blair writes (page 16), Japan's EU exports have dropped from a high of nearly €80 billion (2004) to €54 billion in ten years. Japan's once lofty trade surplus of €20 billion with the EU is now almost at par. And, where Japan once stood amongst Europe's top five trading partners, it has now fallen to 7th. Is it any wonder why this country seems more eager to embrace an EPA?

Scandinavia remains a key investor into Japan, led mainly by its green technology, seafood imports and unique design products. Rob Goss gives us the lowdown on the latest in "Nordic cool" (page 28).

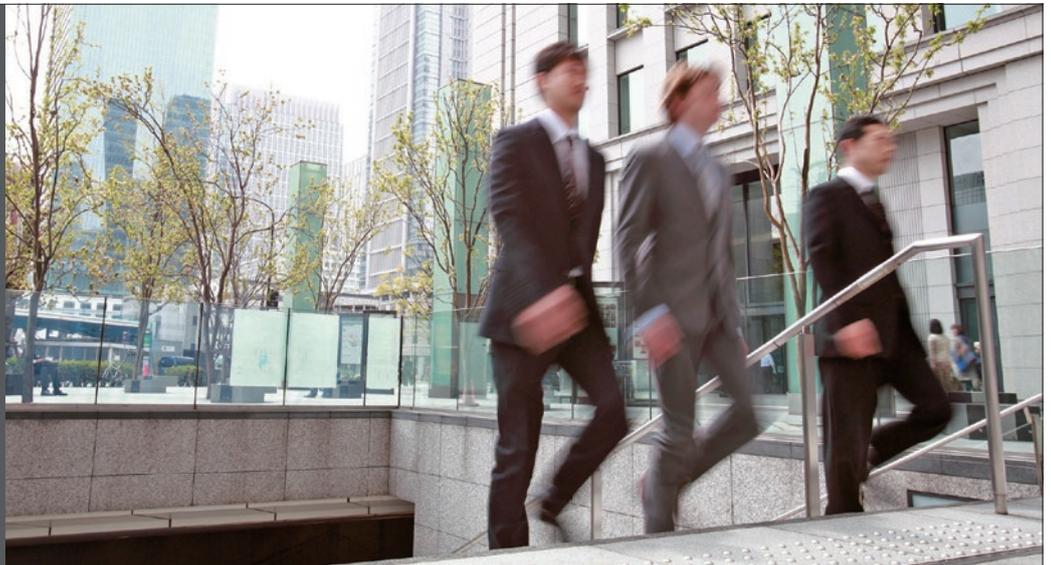
In her on-going "Cellar Notes" column, Allison Bettin takes a look at the pros

and cons of Oak ageing (page 49). She also contributes an interesting piece on the difficulties for foreign-trained lawyers to practice their craft in Japan (page 32). Bettin talks with Rika Beppu, chairman of the EBC Legal Services Committee, who is also our featured EBC Personality (page 18) this month.

Thanks for reading once again! 

**Mike de Jong**  
Editor-in-chief

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# Unique *partnership*

*Mike de Jong talks with Italian Ambassador  
Domenico Giorgi and Rita Mannella Giorgi*

Text **MIKE DE JONG**  
Photos **BENJAMIN PARKS**

## Next year, Italy and Japan will celebrate 150 years of bilateral

relations. Since 1913, the two countries have been significant trading partners, with Italian goods such as food, wine, cosmetics, cars and fashion items being extremely popular for Japanese consumers. Italy's ambassador to Japan H.E. Domenico Giorgi took up his post in November 2012, along with his wife Rita Mannella Giorgi, herself a career diplomat. They took time to talk with *EURObiZ Japan* about Italy-Japan relations and their life in the foreign service.



### As fellow diplomats, you and your wife have a unique partnership. Can you tell us a bit about that?

**Ambassador Domenico Giorgi:** We are not the first couple of diplomats having the position of ambassador abroad. We are, I believe, the third in the history of Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But it is an increasing trend because the number of women in our diplomatic service is increasing.

**Rita Mannella Giorgi:** In Italy, we are very lucky because we have these laws that protect women and couples, partners, who decide to follow their husband or wife or whatever. We are allowed to keep our job. There is a mechanism which freezes your position – you don't advance, of course, or in terms of pension move forward, and you don't get paid – but at least you keep your work. Once you go back, you can resume from where you were. Of

course, it's not very good in terms of career [advancement]; you can see all of your colleagues who are advancing while you stay where you were. But at least it's not penalising you in terms of losing your job. It would be very difficult for me to follow my husband if I had to lose my job...

**Ambassador Giorgi:** Which would be the case for private companies, for women with husbands in the private sector. So it is a good experience. And, in a few years, I will retire. Then the situation will be the reverse. If Rita becomes an ambassador somewhere, I would follow.

### Do you think that your situation is leading the way for other countries in this area, specifically Japan?

**Mannella Giorgi:** I think other countries are even more advanced, so I don't know if we are leading the way or not. I think it's quite a good system, so I'm very thankful. But in other countries, I could have worked with him as his number two. That happens in some [countries] ... i.e. in the UK it can happen. In our system, it is not forbidden, but it is not advisable that your wife is your number two. In our system, there is a very good policy for couples. When you are more or less on the same level, you are encouraged to go to big embassies



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# “IN OUR SYSTEM, THERE IS A VERY GOOD POLICY FOR COUPLES”

and work together. But when you have a hierarchical link then we don't think it's good. Frankly speaking, I wouldn't like to have my husband as my boss.

**Ambassador Giorgi, why do you think Italian products have always been close to the hearts of Japanese consumers?**

**Ambassador Giorgi:** I believe that in modern times, since the first mission of Japanese to Europe, the Japanese mission [head] wrote in his report to the emperor that Italy looked like the cradle of European civilisation. Since then, Italian heritage and Italian culture have become very close to the hearts of the Japanese. And this has constantly been the backbone of our relations. When I refer to culture, I don't only mean high culture, like Raffaello and Leonardo. But also to food and lifestyle.

**Do Italians have a similar fascination with Japan?**

**Ambassador Giorgi:** In certain periods ... not only in Italy, but also in other European countries, what was called "Japanese-ism" exists – the fascination with the culture of Japan. It has been quite strong. You have 'Madame Butterfly' by Puccini, for example. In the early 20th century, there was a strong interest in Japan. Also, it depends on fashion and style; and today, there is a revival of interest in Japan. On one side, it's connected to food: sushi bars are becoming very popular among the youth in Europe, not just in Italy. Manga, anime – many young Italians grow up watching anime on television. Sports events, too. And now, Italian tourism is again growing in Japan. This is partly due to the weak yen, but it's also connected to this new focus on Japan.

**Both Italy and Japan face challenges in dealing with ageing populations.**

**What is your country doing in this regard?**

**Ambassador Giorgi:** One important point is pension reform. I'm part of the so-called 'boom' generation, and it is evident that public finance cannot support the system of welfare we used to have. Italy, since 1995, has progressively introduced very large reforms of the pension system ... we did it, and we are quite close to a financially sustainable balance. One of the main problems is healthcare. In Italy, research is quite



advanced, but the implementation of policies is, perhaps, uneven according to cities. I cannot judge Japanese policies in this regard. But it's not only a problem for Italy and Japan. But I believe that Italy and Japan have not yet found a clear solution [to this problem].

**Italy and Japan have worked together to develop science, technology and industrial innovation. Can you tell us about some of the on-going projects?**

**Ambassador Giorgi:** The tradition of scientific and technological cooperation

used to be mainly related to physics, medicine and chemistry. But that has moved to new areas such as disaster prevention and aerospace. Relations between the aerospace agencies of Italy and Japan are quite close. Then there is industrial innovation. Investment is a key element. An example would be Hitachi, which has acquired a majority stake in a leading Italian railway company. Security and cyber security are other fields of increasing cooperation.

**Much interest is focused on the free trade negotiations between Japan and the European Union. What would you consider the benefits of free trade for Italy and the EU?**

**Ambassador Giorgi:** The level of trade relations between Japan and Europe is not equal to the dimensions of the two economies. So there is room for significant improvement. Japan is trading much more with partners in the Asia-Pacific area. So there are good prospects for the growth of trade. Within this framework, Italy should have benefits in the agricultural and agri-food sector, given the level of demand from Japanese consumers. But we still face so-called non-tariff measures in quite large quantities. So [an FTA] would be a solution to the problem.

**Can you tell us about any cultural or promotional events planned for Japan this year?**

**Ambassador Giorgi:** We celebrate 150 years next year, and we have a very interesting programme in celebration of the anniversary. It will be mainly cultural, going from important exhibitions of Botticelli and Caravaggio, and more modern painters like Morandi. La Scala ballet is coming. Maestro [Riccardo] Muti – one of the most famous music directors in the world – will be here with a youth orchestra, made up of young Italian and young Japanese musicians. So, many good events [are planned] and, given the fact that next year Japan will hold the presidency of the G7, so we will also have an intense programme of political visits. Many members of government will be visiting Japan. That will provide a very good opportunity to strengthen political relations. 

# Italy



*Diplomatic relations between Italy and Japan were established in 1913 with the signing of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. In 2012, trade between the two countries reached €8.8 billion, mainly due to an increase in Italian exports, which grew by a fifth over the previous year, making Italy Japan's third-largest supplier. There are strong cultural ties in the arts, music, theatre and opera. Italian is also ranked among the most studied languages by the Japanese.*

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# Rachele Grassi

*Events manager,  
Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan*

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Text **DAVID UMEDA**

**From the succulent aromas of meats and bread, to the velvety smooth – or sometimes tangy – taste of wine and olive oil, Italian products tantalise the senses. Anyone fortunate enough to attend an event sponsored by the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ICCJ), has likely tasted the best that the country has to offer.**

For 40 years, the ICCJ has been holding events that showcase Italian products, as part of the chamber's mandate to "promote and develop business relations between Italy and Japan".

In an online message, ICCJ President Gianluca Testa says: "In addition to promoting, [the] ICCJ is also strongly involved in organising events that have become quite regular in Japan, such as coffee speeches, seminars, business cocktails and inter-chambers meetings. To all this, we are now adding events with higher media content such as training courses, aimed to supply practical instruments to those who wish to do business in Japan, either for Italian or local operators engaged with Italian companies."

Similar to how products and services are marketed in the world's third-largest economy, ICCJ event planning takes pride in understanding its role in the marketplace.

"Organising events at ICCJ means knowing the aim, the audience, the circumstances of every single initiative," explains Rachele Grassi, events and promotion manager.

A crucial planning ingredient is "being passionate about the whole process," she continues, "from developing the idea with relation to the purpose of

the event, to creating the right network of contacts and public to make it successful."

So what is the focus of chamber events?

"Through ICCJ events, we aim to promote Italian products and lifestyle in Japan, as well as Japanese products in the Italian market," she says. "Members can join ICCJ events to widen their network, discover new opportunities, and reinforce their business."

ICCJ event staff is composed of both Italian and Japanese personnel, explains Grassi, "and that's how we manage to create events that appeal to both locals and foreigners. Our attendees love to experience the Italian lifestyle and to know more about high-quality Italian products."

And how do those attending measure an event's value?

"When our attendees greet us when leaving with a sincere 'I learnt new things', 'I had fun', and 'Nice network, we'll come again', this means the event was a real success," the ICCJ events and promotion manager points out, "and that is our goal!"

To gain better insight into how the ICCJ functions, what better way than looking at what it considers its greatest hurdles when arranging an event?

"One of the biggest challenges about organising events in Japan is, without a doubt, dealing with Japanese bureaucracy when planning things," says Grassi. "We're flexible, and our job is entirely based on personal relationships with our partners."

"Every meeting is an opportunity to bring our positions closer aligned and



THAT'S HOW  
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TO **CREATE**  
**EVENTS** THAT  
APPEAL TO  
LOCALS AND  
FOREIGNERS

find a compromise," she continues. "We simply don't accept the 'we can't do it because we never have tried before'."

Reflecting on her time as events and promotion manager, Grassi highlights some major events on the ICCJ calendar.

"Our biggest event is the annual Gala Dinner, held in December, with over 400 distinguished guests, amazing performances, multi-sector eminent brands and the highest Italian cuisine you can find in Japan," she beams. "We also put great effort into Italian products' promotions, with special events such as the Italian Olive Oil Day and Biritalia [Italian Beer Fair] and collaborations during the fashion and design weeks in Tokyo."

Looking ahead to next year, Grassi talks about a very historic point in the bilateral relations between Italy and Japan.

"The main themes regarding 2016 events will surely revolve around the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Italy and Japan," she says. 



# HOME AWAY FROM HOME

*Azabu Gardens: Peaceful and Natural Oasis*



AZABU GARDENS  
PEMBROKE

Amid the vast expanse of Tokyo, punctuated by skyscrapers, neon and busy energy, Azabu Gardens is truly an oasis of green and peace. The city's newest luxury property of 3–5 bedroom homes is set amid mature plants selected to reflect Japan's four distinct seasons.

In truth, looking across a Japanese garden that melds traditional stone lanterns with maple trees, ferns and bamboo, it is hard to believe that the property is within a few minutes' walking distance of the entertainment areas of Roppongi, the boutiques and bistros of Azabu-Juban and Hiroo, and a number of international schools and supermarkets.

It is evident that Pembroke Real Estate, the developer of the property, has spared no expense in designing these light, airy apartments to the highest standards and fitting them with top-of-the-range equipment. The result is overwhelming: Azabu Gardens feels like a home.

A total of 41 units were completed in May 2015 at the property, which is nestled on a quiet back street in Moto-Azabu, the capital's most desirable international neighborhood.

The property provides 24-hour fitness center, multi-use club lounge and landscaped roof terrace, complete with children's play area and stunning views. The homes range from 165m<sup>2</sup> to 300m<sup>2</sup> and are available for leasing from ¥1.4 million per month.

Alongside these exclusive amenities are the thoughtfully designed small touches that make such a big difference: heated floors in the kitchen and bathroom; a utility area with front-loading, side-by-side washer and dryer; vast amounts of storage space; and environmentally friendly LED lighting and double-glazed windows.

The designers have also incorporated attractive and eye-catching touches that are a feature of Japanese interiors, such as the use of elegant *shoji* (Japanese sliding) doors.

More than anything though, it's the sense of space, as indoor living areas flow into manicured terraces that draw in the first-time visitor. Residents, particularly those whose homes incorporate the stunning outdoor areas, will no doubt experience that same unique feeling every time they open their front door.

Stepping through the floor-to-ceiling glass doors, the transition from the wooden floor of the apartment to the stone courtyard garden is seamless. And this is stone that is used in the traditional Japanese way: selected and sited with care. Indeed, many stones that have been utilized in the courtyards were found on the site and date from when it was a private residence.

Reminiscent of the gardens of traditional Kyoto townhouses, the green oasis offers a complete sense of peace. Secluded and private, natural light floods in and the nearby maple trees promise a vision of spectacular reds and oranges in the fall.

It is here that the developer has been smart. While other property firms may invest virtually all their efforts into creating an attractive interior living space, they inevitably relegate the surrounding environment and the greenery to an afterthought. At Azabu Gardens, as the name implies, just as much attention is paid to outdoor areas — which cocoon and insulate the property — as indoor ones, resulting in one of the most attractive residences in Tokyo, both inside and out.

*Leasing contact:*

**Pacific Development  
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Last year, overall trade between the EU and Japan declined for the second year in succession, to €107.9 billion, the lowest level since the 2008-9 global financial crisis. Meanwhile, investment both ways fell sharply in 2014.

Exports to Japan had been growing steadily, though falling back slightly from 2012. EU imports, on the other hand, have dropped 27% over the last decade. The weakening yen continues to make EU products more expensive in Japan, but has yet to boost Japan's exports. To the contrary, a trend of falling imports from Japan continued last year, recording a total of just €54.6 billion, compared to almost €80 billion in 2007. The continued offshoring of manufacturing by Japanese companies and the weak economies in parts of Europe have accounted for some of the decline in goods shipped from Japan to the EU. But there are other trends at play, evidenced by Japan no longer being one of the EU's top five trading partners, coming in seventh at €22 billion, now behind Turkey in terms of bilateral business activity.

In 2004, Japan's share of EU imports was 4.6%, but fell to 3.1% last year; meanwhile, its share of EU exports more than halved over the same period, from 7.3% to 3.2%. Bilateral trade is still dominated by manufactured goods, with Japan's surplus of €76 billion in the sector largely cancelled out by its deficit with the EU in foodstuffs. It is, though, the

# On the decline

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## *Concern over falling trade between Japan and the EU*

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Text **GAVIN BLAIR**

**Trade between the EU and Japan was almost in balance in 2014,** with a deficit of just €1.3 billion. Although this is a far cry from the €30 billion-plus deficits that the EU was recording in the mid-to-late 2000s, the apparent improvement suggested by the figures also masks some negative trends in trade and investment between the two economic heavyweights.

overall fall in economic activity between Japan and the EU that is of greater concern.

"It's good that there's balance, but it's bad that it's not in a growth mode – it means there isn't that much going on," says EBC chairman Danny Risberg. "If you look at the data, there are certain sectors [where] you see a lot of activity, but others that have fallen away. If you don't get growth, the trade balance could fluctuate up or down 2% annually, but it won't be that important."

Although there are high hopes in some quarters that the establishment of an EU-Japan free trade agreement (FTA) will boost bilateral economic activity, the ongoing process towards that goal has yet to bear fruit, according to Risberg.

"I don't think the negotiations over the FTA have done anything to influence trade. It's driven interest and focus on Japan, and there is now a desire to get a deal done. But it hasn't done enough to push the needle in the right direction yet," says the EBC chairman.

According to a source on the European side of the negotiations who asked not to be identified, "the only trade effects of the negotiations so far are indirect and affect mostly our agri exports, as we have got several food additives approved and the BSE ban that was applied to a number of EU countries lifted."

Nevertheless, the source is somewhat bullish on EU exports in certain sectors, citing a longer-term positive trend,

particularly in "transport equipment – and the opposite for Japan – and less marked positive trends also for our exports of animal products and oils, footwear and optical equipment".

Globally, foreign direct investment (FDI) fell 16% last year to \$1.2 trillion, against a backdrop of political and economic uncertainty. FDI into mature economies declined even more sharply, by 28%, to \$499 billion. Even allowing for the overall fall in FDI, the fact that developing countries attracted more than half (and that a few large deals can skew one-year figures), the drop in investment between the EU and Japan was steep.

After hovering around the €2-3 billion mark for the last few years, there was EU disinvestment of €18.9 billion from Japan in 2014. Meanwhile, investment in Japan from the EU, which had fluctuated between €5-10 billion in recent years, fell to just €22 million in 2014.

FDI in Japan is "the worst situation in the G20, for sure", according to Risberg, who cites excessive bureaucracy, opaque regulations and a lack of reciprocity on standards as persistent problems that hinder investment. Combined with the long time it takes to establish trust with local partners and customers, Risberg is not surprised that many foreign companies are putting their investment resources to work in other markets.

"It's stable, it's a great economy, it's big; but for new investment, it takes five years to get started. A lot of people start to think it would be better to go elsewhere [with their investment capital]," he says.

Risberg acknowledges that progress is being pushed forward by the government, though his optimism doesn't reach the level of Yuichiro Nakajima, managing director of boutique cross-border transaction consultant Crimson Phoenix, which specialises in UK-Japan deals.

"If anything, among people I talk to, which tend to be at small to medium-sized companies, there is growing interest in Japanese acquisitions," says Nakajima, who suggests the weak yen is a factor. "People who know what they are talking about realise that it's much more open, though old stereotypes do persist. Successive Japanese governments have made efforts to improve the situation.

"Interest in strategically based European investment among Japanese companies also remains strong, and the weaker yen hasn't dampened that," adds Nakajima, who was commenting before the Nikkei's acquisition of the *Financial Times* in July. 

“[IT'S] THE **WORST SITUATION** IN THE G20, FOR SURE”

**Danny Risberg**





*Rika Beppu's  
path to the top of  
corporate law*

# Breaking barriers

Text and photo **MIKE DE JONG**

**F**aced with the prospect of being a “nail that gets hammered down” in Japan, Rika Beppu chose a different path. Now a corporate M&A partner at the Tokyo office of the international law firm Hogan Lovells, Beppu was born and raised in this country. But early on, she decided to avoid the traditional route to corporate Japan.

“I graduated from Sophia [University] exactly 25 years ago,” she says. “The reason why I did not choose the path of going through the whole interview process for Japanese companies is that I said to myself, ‘I won’t make it in a Japanese firm, because it’s a rat race from day one. And no matter what I do, I will never make it as *shacho* (president and CEO).”

Having lived in the US for seven years

as a child, Beppu already had international experience. And, during a third-year study exchange at an American university, she had a roommate who was a first-year law school student. Beppu says this sparked her interest in the legal profession. So, after graduating from Sophia, it was off to law school in the UK.

“My strong desire was to go study abroad because I felt that my [first]



degree gave me the skill set to study a specialised topic," she says.

Currently leading her firm's corporate M&A team in Tokyo, Beppu spent several years working in London and Hong Kong before returning to Japan in 2001. Since that time, she has spent countless hours advising clients on transactions, public and private mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures and private equity transactions.

Recognised as a leader in her field, Beppu works with both international and Japanese corporations on a wide range of projects.

But she also finds time to mentor and support female in-house counsel. Last year, she launched Breaking Barriers Tokyo, a networking and training programme designed specifically for Hogan Lovells' female clients. Beppu says programmes like Breaking Barriers are important in providing role models and mentors for professional women, and in reaching the country's goals of gender diversity.

"The programme has elements of diversity promotion and pro bono efforts for the social good in it," she says. "But for a firm like ours, our clients are our business. So having this sort of programme with networking opportunities targeted to our female clients is something that naturally evolved".

"It started [with only] our clients. But it should actually be across the legal services profession. I have ambition to do something but haven't quite got there yet. I am still strategising how to do it.

"In 25 years ... the situation, mentality-wise, has not changed," she adds. "That's one of the main drivers why I launched this network. If I don't do something now, I'll sit out the next 25 years, it will still be the same. There will be a female student out there, graduating from a Japanese university, and she'll say, 'Why should I join a Japanese company? I won't make it to the top.'"

Beppu, who also recently took over as chairman of the EBC Legal Services Committee, says changing traditional patriarchal thinking in Japan's corporate boardrooms won't happen over night. In fact, she admits that some consider a mentoring programme strictly for women an "overly radical" experience. And even some female lawyers fail to see the benefits.

"Five years ago, I myself would have said 'Why should I go and attend a women only networking opportunity,"

## Do you like natto?

**Time spent working in Japan:** 15 years in Japan, which is 65% of my working life to date.

**Career regret (if any):** My many years as an unrelenting workaholic chained to my desk.

**Favourite saying:** Laugh at your mistakes, but learn from them.

**Favourite book:** *Beyond Measure (The Big Impact of Small Changes)* by Margaret Heffernan – I had the pleasure of hearing her speak at TEDWomen 2015.

**Cannot live without:** My family (animation producer husband, two young boys and our nannies).

**Lesson learned in Japan:** Never think that you "get it" and understand how things work. I am still learning and re-learning things about the business world and society every day.

**Secret of success in business:** Believe what you know, but know what you don't know. Love your work, no matter what it is.

**Favourite place to dine out:** Sushi Iwase, Shinjuku.

**Do you like natto?** I absolutely adore it!

Beppu says. "The world is run by men and full of [male] decision-makers; it won't do anything for me."

While Japanese officials highlight gender diversity and globalisation as keys to the country's economic future, Beppu could be considered a living example of both concepts. She's reached the top of her field by taking a different path, leaving Japan to gain global experience, then returning to work and raise a family. She believes it's a path that made her the success she is today.

"It's gotten a lot better," she says of the current landscape for working women in Japan. "There are more prospects, definitely more [women] in senior positions at Japanese companies.

"But, if I was a student graduating this year, I'd think the same. Why should I slog it out and pour my heart into working for a Japanese company when it's very unlikely that I would get the top job? There's nobody out there who has done it yet, so why should I think I can do it? I am determined to see change happen in Japan. I will be that change!" 

# Passion for life at home

*Peter List, President & CEO, IKEA Japan*

Text **BRUCE DAVIDSON** Photos **BENJAMIN PARKS**

..... **KEA celebrates a decade in Japan next year with various special events and promotions. Since opening its first store .....** in Chiba in 2006, the iconic Swedish home-furnishings provider has expanded to eight locations across the country. **IKEA Japan's president and CEO Peter List has worked for the firm for 25 years. He talks to *EURObiz* about the opportunities for IKEA in this market.**

**Please tell us the purpose and goal behind launching IKEA in Japan.**

Being a global company, we looked at all the countries and their potential. And with such a high GDP and the third-biggest home furnishings market in the world but IKEA not being present, then, of course, there was an opportunity for IKEA to enter Japan. The home furnishings market here is really segmented. There is not really one brand that owns the market. You know, our vision is "to

create a better everyday life for the many people". So with that in mind, we saw a massive opportunity to enter Japan.

**What do you feel makes IKEA unique in this market; and, when compared to other firms, what is your strength?**

We are absolutely passionate about life at home, so we visit people's homes all over the world, from Paris, New York, London and Tokyo, to see how people live. What are their needs and frustrations in the home, and then find solutions for that. And what is unique about IKEA is all those ideas, thoughts and needs are basically how we start to develop our products. And, of course, every product needs to be able to meet something we call Democratic Design, which is about form, function, price, sustainability and quality. Only when a







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product meets those things can they be developed for IKEA. The other advantage that we have is that we form long-term partnerships with suppliers and, together, design our products – often on the factory floor – always striving to do things in a better way.

**Can you tell us more about this Democratic Design concept?**

We think that design should be for everybody, not for the few. Often, when you talk about design, people say that comes at a very high price. We say not so. Yes, we want to have the lowest price; we want the customer to be able to afford and have good design. But there is more than just form and design; it needs to be a quality product. It needs to be able to last in somebody's home for many years. So the quality aspect is very important. Then it comes to price. We need to have a low price, and [the product] needs to be sustainable. When we talk about sustainable, it's about a sustainable life at home – that we have sustainable forestry with the wood that we use. All those elements are Democratic Design.

**IKEA is transforming into a multi-channel retailer. Can you tell us what that means?**

Our customers today are changing; and people are much more digital, as well as physical, in the way that they shop. They want to shop when they want and how they want. IKEA needs to change with that. So we are doing that. We are very much looking at how can we then be available; when somebody wants a sofa or a phone, they then start their shopping experience. It doesn't literally mean going to visit a physical store.

The physical store will always be our competitive advantage. A 40,000-square-metre store, being a fun day out with a food offer and a store to wander around in – with furniture and accessories, and areas for the kids to

play – will always attract people. But we want to be more than that. So we will have a new web platform – and e-commerce that we will introduce – to make it so you can shop once you see things on the web as well. And we need to become closer to our customers, so we're going to try new formats – even smaller IKEA locations – to order [products], have them delivered and picked up closer to the customers.

**Does IKEA have plans to expand in Japan? If so, where and when?**

Today, we have eight stores in four regions of Japan. We have a distribution centre in the Tokai region as well. We will soon open a new store in Nagakute City; we will have the land handed over to us next March. That's a store we're really excited about, because it will be the first store in the Tokai region. Actually, 9% of the customers in our Osaka store come from the Tokai region. So we know that Tokai wants IKEA, and we want to be there, too. We've developed a very good relationship with the city and will open a 35,000-square-metre store there in a couple of years.

**Can you talk about IKEA Japan's philosophy on people?**

It starts from the concept: without people, we can't grow our business. So when we grow our people, our business grows. And that's very much our philosophy about linking it back to creating a better everyday life for the many people, which includes

our coworkers as well as our customers. So, really, it's about developing our coworkers and their competence within the company. If you want to do something, it's not about your education or qualifications; it's about your passion and your interest in life at home, and your interest to grow and develop. That is what we believe in for all our coworkers.

**How does this commitment involve people who work at IKEA?**

Last September, we decided that we would do something called "We Believe in People". Again, this was to create a better everyday life for the many people, and to tackle some of the many challenges in Japan. We believe in a 50/50 diversity and think gender intelligence is very important to the way we meet our customers. Our customers come from all walks of life and different age groups, so we wanted to meet them in that way. But we also saw the challenges, like part-time co-workers are being paid less than full-time co-workers. And if you think that most of those part-timers are women, then there was a real difference in pay. We wanted to say that we would be fair and equal, so we introduced the same pay range, benefits and expectations for jobs for all co-workers. We also offer diverse benefits and opportunities that meet the needs of the many with social insurance and pensions. Then we improved job security with permanent contracts. Ultimately, we want a long-term relationship with our co-workers; it doesn't matter how many hours you work, or [what] your life situation [is], you can grow in IKEA. 





# Market turmoil

*China's crash shakes investors worldwide*

Text **GAVIN BLAIR**

**T**he bursting of the Chinese stock bubble this summer has shaken investors' nerves worldwide, wiping out hundreds of billions of dollars in shareholder value and resurrecting painful memories of the global financial crisis of 2007-08. Structural shifts underway in the Chinese economy mean this was no freak market blip, and painful corrections are likely to occur again. Nevertheless, even a slowdown in the golden child of the globalised economy looks unlikely

**to tip the world into another major recession, or knock Japan's still fragile recovery too far off course.**

Hindsight is a privileged viewing platform, but the Chinese stock markets, dominated by Shanghai and Shenzhen, had all the classic warning signs of bubbles. A huge influx of unsophisticated investors, many using borrowed money, placed big bets on overvalued companies, believing that share prices would just keep rising. Cheered on by state-controlled media lauding the glory of the Chinese markets, the average p/e

(price-to-earnings) ratio exceeded 70 before the crash; by comparison, the average for markets in London, New York and Tokyo were between 19 and 22.

In the previous 12 months ending in June, approximately \$6.5 trillion was added to the total capitalisation of China's exchanges, considerably more than the entire GDP of Japan. Between the beginning of the fall on June 12 and the events of Monday, August 24, around 40% of that was lost.

Although the 8.5% drop on the Shanghai bourse on 24 August – which

“  
THERE IS **NO MANUAL** FOR THIS,  
NO CLEAR-CUT SOLUTION  
”

**Dr Martin Schulz**

also impacted stock markets world-wide – was precipitated by a devaluing of the RMB, the underlying cause was a shift in the Chinese economy itself, according to Dr Martin Schulz, senior research fellow at the Fujitsu Research Institute.

"This is a major shift from a structural focus on investment to boost GDP growth and the gradual ending of government support that was begun after the global financial crisis," says Schulz. "Over the longer term, this is also a structural shift from a fast-growing, input-driven, emerging Asian market with a lot of infrastructure investment, to a more services- and consumer-driven mature economy.

"As investment comes down from 40 to 50% of GDP, which is unsustainable, to the 20% levels seen in mature economies, there will be some major corrections in the stock market," adds Schulz, who notes that, in Japan in the 1980s, investment rates peaked at 35%.

The Chinese government's plan now is to bring down investment and growth rates gradually, rather than follow the postponement strategy that had been adopted by the Japanese authorities in the 1980s.

"The [Japanese] government panicked when it [investment] started to drop, and allowed [the] bubbles in the real estate and stock markets. The result was that there were [subsequently] two lost decades, not one.

"The big question is: Are we, in Japan, in the '80s; or are we in the '90s?" poses Schulz, adding, "It looks like the overall growth model is still intact."

The Chinese leadership and the country's central bank will learn from Japan's mistakes in past decades, predicts Takashi Shiono, an economist at Credit Suisse, who notes other similarities between the two countries, including rapidly ageing populations.

Shiono doesn't believe the problems in China's markets will lead to a repeat of the global slowdown that began in 2008.

"This is not a crisis like the sub-prime mortgages in the US, where it was very connected to the rest of the world. This is largely limited to China," says Shiono.

"I calculated what the effect would be on Japanese GDP if Chinese industrial production growth fell to zero – it was about 9% last year. [Now] it would cause a fall of 0.5% in Japanese GDP. It's not so big, but then the potential growth rate in Japan is about 0.5%, so it's not small either," adds Shiono.

Although China is Japan's biggest trading partner, economist Takuji Aida of Société Générale also sees limited impact.

"Exports to China had already slowed down in the first half of this year, but nominal GDP expanded quite rapidly in Japan. The China story has little to do with Abenomics," says Aida.

And as China gradually shifts to a more consumer-driven economy,

this should create a larger market for Japanese firms, according to most analysts.

"Japan can export high-end, high-quality products to China. And the Chinese are getting rich enough to buy these," says Aida.

The biggest risk for Japan, and other global economies, is of a more severe crash on the Chinese stock markets and in the economy that the government would be unable to manage.

"If it becomes much worse, this would impact the Japanese equity market, which would lead to corporations in Japan avoiding risk-taking, and stop investing in the innovation, productivity and efficiency that has been boosting profitability," adds Aida of Société Générale.

While China can potentially learn from the missteps made in Japan when its rapid growth era came to an end, China's economy is bigger, has expanded more quickly, and has its own quirks.

"I'm optimistic that the Chinese government will be able to ride out the current bubble; the bigger question is the long-term effects of the reduction in government investment," says Fujitsu's Schulz. "Overall, management of the economy has become much more difficult, and the government is only realising that now.

"There is no manual for this, no clear-cut solution," he emphasises. "This will keep them occupied for a long time." 

## Specialist Profile

# Joshua Bryan



**T**he Financial Services, HR & Legal division

at Robert Walters Japan has grown significantly this year.

“We are thrilled to see an increasing sense of confidence in Japan. Demand for our services has never been stronger, and competition for the best bilingual talent is increasingly intense,” says Joshua Bryan, the director of the division. “This year, our 15th year of operating in Japan, we have grown our existing experienced teams,” adds Bryan, who joined the Tokyo business in 2007.

The division now includes two distinct areas. There are the Financial Services specialist recruiters, and also the HR & Legal coverage teams that support the full spectrum of businesses in Japan in search of talented, bilingual employees.

Robert Walters has been working with major finance-industry clients in Japan since the opening of our Tokyo office in 2000, quickly establishing a reputation

as the go-to specialists in bilingual recruitment. Placements range in seniority from Analyst to Managing Director, and span functions including accounting, audit, operations, sales, trading, compliance and more.

The HR & Legal recruiting teams support client organisations across the full range of industries, including healthcare, consumer, industrial, professional services, and finance companies. Robert Walters Japan was named “Human Resources Recruitment Company of the Year”

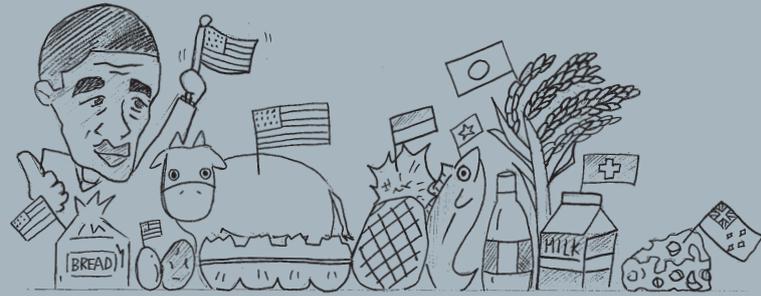
in the Recruitment International Asia Awards 2014.

“We have a sincere passion for talent,” explains Bryan, who believes the company’s strength lies in its commitment to long-term client and candidate relationships. “We enjoy a vibrant and fun work culture, which extends deeply into all of our interactions with clients and candidates. Nothing feels better than making the right placement for a client, where you know the candidate will have a meaningful and positive impact.”

*“We have  
a sincere  
passion for  
talent”*

# Examining the TPP and TTIP

*Two out of three cheers*



**US President Barack Obama is pushing for two big trade deals, which he hopes to sign before he leaves office. Despite being an unabashed supporter of free trade and globalisation, I can only give the deals two out of a possible three cheers. Nonetheless, they deserve to succeed.**

Trade negotiations are usually done in secret, before a package of many mini-deals is presented by governments to their respective legislative bodies. This is not in itself sinister, but reflects the political difficulty of opening up markets to greater competition, given that lobby groups will at once try to defend their patch.

So it is against a background of limited information – much of it coming from leaks – that we must evaluate the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The two agreements will cover an estimated 60% of world trade. And from what we know already, there is cause for disquiet.

The TPP includes 12 countries in the Americas, Asia and Australasia – the most important members by far being the US and Japan. It was, perhaps, originally intended to create a regional trade bloc before China did so, but this year Beijing has put out feelers to join the TPP.

The aim of the TPP is to reduce trade tariffs and open long-protected markets to competition.

Of particular relevance to Japan is the push for greater trade in agriculture; and, as a result, passing a finished TPP through the Diet will require all of Shinzo Abe's political skill. The prime minister's decision to enter into TPP talks, which he did in July 2013, is considered part of a broader strategy of stimulating structural reforms.

For poorer Asian countries, a push by the US for tighter copyright controls,

“THE AGREEMENTS WOULD PROMOTE THE SUM OF HUMAN WEALTH AND ALLEVIATE POVERTY”

and the enforcement of labour laws and environmental standards in each other's countries, could prove equally problematic.

Supporters of free trade might wonder whether attempts by US labour unions to impose their working practices on poorer economic competitors are in the spirit of free trade. But, perhaps, an objection of greater weight is to the US proposal to extend the length of time during which a pharmaceutical drug is protected by copyright. There is a fine line between the need for copyright law to protect intellectual property and so stimulate innovation, and the use of copyright law to prevent competition and to establish an indefinite monopoly in a product area.

Critics argue that this provision will harm the development of cheaper generic drugs that are needed to reduce healthcare costs, as well as the innovation of new drugs and the development of the global pharmaceutical industry in general.

The TTIP between the US and the EU is less about reducing tariffs – which are already nearly zero – and more about harmonising regulatory standards. This will mean, for instance, that

foods and medicines approved in one jurisdiction would be able to be sold in another. This raises questions as to whether Europe's much tougher precautionary principle approach to food and drug regulation will be undermined by the approach taken by the US.

Critics of the TTIP fear that, if the agreement passes, Europe will be forced to accept so-called Frankenstein foods, made from genetically modified crops.

Furthermore, both the TPP and the TTIP have proposals whereby corporations will be able to sue governments. The TPP proposal is through a supranational court, while the TTIP is through the courts of the country whose government is the defendant, in what is called the Investor-State Dispute Settlement. Supporters of this process argue that private sector investment needs better legal protection against governments confiscating assets.

The counter argument is that these provisions will undermine sovereignty, force competition onto state-run bodies, and – in the UK, for example – lead to effective privatisation of the National Health Service by a government fearful of being sued by US multinationals.

Despite the aforementioned criticisms, I give the agreements two out of three cheers. For all their weaknesses, by promoting trade across borders, the agreements would promote the sum of human wealth and help to alleviate poverty. This point needs amplifying in the media, which, instead, tends to focus on objections raised by lobby groups to the TPP and the TTIP. ☺

**TOM ELLIOTT**  
is an international investment strategist with the deVere Group in London.



# Nordic cool

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## *Cutting-edge Scandinavian products*

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Text **ROB GOSS**

**T**hink of Nordic business in Japan and you could be forgiven for thinking design, design, and more design. However, while cool, functional interiors and household goods are certainly major Nordic offerings, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden are delivering much more.

Take a look at healthcare and medical equipment. Pharmaceutical and biotech firm Novo Nordisk, which has been in Japan since the 1950s, is a notable example of a company enjoying long-term success here. But more recent entrants are also thriving. Vitrolife KK is a Swedish medical-device company whose specialist field is in vitro fertilisation (IVF). The company's main business is IVF media, the nutrient solutions used to help cultivate eggs. However, its range of products also includes such devices as sterile disposable utensils and time lapse systems to continuously monitor the development of embryos inside an incubator.

Japan is the world's second-largest IVF market, with approximately 30,000 births each year from some 200,000 IVF treatments. Leading global IVF-related manufacturer Vitrolife has enjoyed steady growth here since setting up its own offices in 2009. While success, especially in Japan, ultimately comes down to the quality of the product and after-sales service, there are advantages to being a Scandinavian company in the healthcare field here, according to Vitrolife representative director Marcus Hedenskog.

"There is still a perception that Scandinavia produces high-quality, reliable products. In healthcare, in Sweden, that stems from a strong research base

“THERE IS STILL A PERCEPTION THAT **SCANDINAVIA PRODUCES** HIGH-QUALITY, RELIABLE PRODUCTS”

**Marcus Hedenskog**



and hospital structure, where there are close ties to universities, so development is strong," he says.

And there are other strengths, according to Stefan Linde Jakobsen, president and representative director of Coloplast Japan, whose products include those for ostomy, urology and continence care.

"I believe one strength [of Nordic countries] is an ability to create innovative healthcare products and services by designing [for] the total experience. For instance, at Coloplast, we grow extremely close to the end-consumers of our products in order to make real breakthrough innovations that will make a clear difference in their lives," says Jakobsen.

"And we use design in this process, not just to create cool-looking, highly functional products, but just as importantly as a way to remove social stigma – by designing medical devices that don't look medical at all, but resemble cosmetics or tech gadgets. For this work, we have won several Red Dot Design awards."

As Sonny Soderberg, president of Tomra Japan, explains: Nordic countries, between them, have a great diversity of specialties – differences that sometimes get overlooked when Nordic nations are lumped together.

"Norway is traditionally strong in fishing, oil and energy; Denmark is known for its trade, shipping, pharma and design. People might think of Finland as [related to] telecoms because of Nokia, but its great strengths are forestry and machinery. And Sweden is much more than IKEA; it does a little bit of everything, but is strong in industrials," says Soderberg.

Some traits, nonetheless, are shared. Tomra Japan, a subsidiary of Norwegian company Tomra Systems ASA, is a good example of how the strong Nordic

tradition of environmental friendliness can be of benefit to Japan.

The company sells reverse vending machines (RVMs), which are typically placed in retail outlets (Seven & i Holdings is a major client), and can collect and process items such as used PET bottles and cans. A common fixture in Scandinavia, where a deposit system is an incentive for people to use the machines, RVMs offer environmental benefits such as reduced emissions, thanks to less transportation required for disposal of waste (as it is compacted inside the machine) and for conversion into clean materials for recycling (through in-machine sorting and processing). Other Nordic firms in Japan are involved in fields such as wind power, solar energy and passive housing (energy-efficient, comfortable, affordable and ecological).

And, of course, there's design, with companies like Swedish giant IKEA, Danish furniture and interior accessory firm BoConcept, Finnish tableware and cookware company Iittala, and many more Nordic brands well-known to Japanese consumers. Linde Jakobsen, who also serves as head of the Danish Chamber of Commerce in Japan, believes the success of Nordic design in Japan comes, in part, from shared sensibilities.

"There is an aesthetic simplicity in both the Japanese and Scandinavian design expressions that fit well together, and the admiration for Japanese design is also strong in Scandinavia. I believe the strength in Scandinavian design is an inherent user-centricity. The functional experience with the design is important, as is the quality of the materials and craftsmanship. This simply resonates well with Japanese consumers."

Among high-end furniture makers, few names resonate as much as the Danish company Republic of Fritz Hansen, which is famous for pieces such as the Egg Chair designed by Arne Jacobsen in 1958, which is still part of the company's line-up.

"Both Danes and Japanese like simplicity in design, and appreciate attention to detail and craftsmanship. There is a shared appreciation of the

beauty and timelessness of design," says Martin Gordian, Fritz Hansen's country manager here.

One particular advantage Nordic design firms have in Japan, Gordian adds, is that, while Japanese know "how to live well outside the home and have mastered fashion, there isn't a strong sense of living culture at home in modern Japan, so Japanese interested in modern design have had to look overseas for something that appeals to them."

## “THERE IS AN AESTHETIC SIMPLICITY IN BOTH THE JAPANESE AND SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN EXPRESSIONS THAT FIT WELL TOGETHER”

**Stefan Linde Jakobsen**

Then there is the Nordic reputation for taking good care of employees, something that can provide an advantage when it comes to competing for, and retaining, talent in Japan. Hedenskog says that at Vitrolife, for example, overtime is limited and employees are encouraged to take time off or to use flexitime. At Fritz Hansen, as is common in Nordic countries, being off sick doesn't mean staff have to use up vacation days; and equal opportunity is the norm. Simple things all add up to a better work environment.

"A key strength is the particular Scandinavian management style, which values work-life balance, gender equality, and practices an open and transparent dialogue between managers and employees," says Jakobsen. "At Coloplast, we talk a lot about sustainable performance. We hire people for a career, and we don't want them to burn out after a few years of high performance."

Combine that way of doing business with the diversity and quality offered by Nordic companies, and it's no wonder they continue to go from strength to strength in Japan. 



# Get up,

*Scandinavian Modern's Sit & Stand*®

Text **BRUCE DAVIDSON**  
Photo **BENJAMIN PARKS**

# stand up!

# “ONCE YOU GET ONE, YOU **NEVER GO BACK** TO A CONVENTIONAL DESK”

[www.scandinavianmodern.jp](http://www.scandinavianmodern.jp)

If you spend your day at the office seated at a desk, you may be doing your body harm. Studies have linked extended sitting to obesity, Type-2 diabetes, heart disease and even cancer. Scandinavian Modern is a Japanese company that offers unique, Swedish designed and manufactured Sit & Stand® desks. These motorised workstations allow office workers to adjust their desk positions from seated to standing. Scandinavian Modern's Managing Director Tokiko Okabe talks to *EURObiZ Japan* about the Sit & Stand® concept.

## First of all... how's business?

Well, I'm Japanese. I'm supposed to be modest. But I'm happy you asked ... it's fantastic! Last year, sales of our height-adjustable workstations grew by close to 150%. And by August this year, we had already passed last year's result.

## You read more and more about the dangers of sitting long hours, but you still don't really see many of these desks in Japanese offices.

It's true, but I strongly believe it's coming. I have been promoting and selling Sit & Stand desks [that's the name we trademarked here in Japan] since 2003. When I started, there was no market at all. Mine was the lone voice in the desert. This year, I estimate the market will be around 12,000 desks.

## I suppose there are more voices in the desert now then ...

And that has happened very quickly, only during the past 3-4 years. Before that, we had a tiny market and no competitors. Today, the market is significant and most major Japanese office furniture manufacturers offer height-adjustable desks, or

have them under development. But, of course, we have a head start of some 30 years – that's how long these desks have been standard in Swedish offices. We still have an edge in both functionality and design.

## Why is this happening now? Is it because of the health issues?

Partly. People notice newspaper headlines like "Sitting is the new smoking", and the like. But I think what really mattered was when hot companies in Silicon Valley started to use Sit & Stand desks. Look at pictures from Facebook and Google offices, and you see people stand up working. That's when the Japanese started to take notice. It mattered very little that the same desks had been standard in Swedish offices since at least the 1980s.

## Which brings us to Sweden ... why Sweden?

The short answer is the powerful Swedish white-colour labour unions. Swedish employers were required to provide employees with ergonomically sound workstations. That meant, for example, not the same desk height for 160cm- or 180cm-tall employees. After a while, companies found that it was cheaper to build the function into the desks, rather than have janitors go around doing the adjustments.

Today, more than 80% of all new offices in Sweden are fully equipped with Sit & Stand desks.

## Is ergonomics still the main reason for the widespread use in the Scandinavian countries?

Yes, plus the wider health aspect. But companies also found that office productivity tended to increase with Sit &

Stand. Being able to alternate between sitting and standing made employees less tired. And it tended to make the office a more dynamic workspace. Raise your desk, and it instantly becomes a place for a 2-to3-person, short, improvised meeting. Communication increased.

Finally, Swedish companies and organisations go to great length to create attractive, innovative, often stunning offices. It's part of building their brand and unique identity. Sit & Stand is part of it. I try to go to Sweden once a year to visit some 10 to 15 offices – it's a major source of inspiration for me.

## You are an architect and interior designer, and I understand that Sit & Stand is just part of your business.

When I started Scandinavian Modern 13 years ago, the idea was to sell Swedish office furniture. At that time, I worked for a Swedish company here in Tokyo. I visited some offices in Sweden, and just fell in love with what I saw and wanted to introduce the Scandinavian-style office to Japan.

But our main business today is Scandinavian-style office design and office relocation projects. However, I still love these desks, and we keep some stock here in Japan and can usually deliver in a few days.

## I suppose that you use Sit & Stand yourself?

Of course. I have been standing three to four hours a day for more than 10 years and could never go back. Interestingly, I just learnt from a BBC report that standing three to four hours per workday during a year – compared to sitting – equals running 10 marathons! Amazing! But you really feel it's good for you. 



# Legal eagles

*Foreign lawyers fight for reform in Japan*

Text **ALLISON BETTIN**

In 2009, the Japanese Ministry of Justice (MoJ) was set to pass legal reforms that would help foreign law firms expand their businesses in Japan. It was an exciting moment for people like James Lawden, a partner at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, who had been fighting for years for such liberalisation. But before the law was passed, things went sour. A group of *benrishi* (patent attorneys) went to the Diet to lobby for the elimination of the bill. "I don't know why they were upset," says Lawden, "but I think they had some problems in America trying to get registered as patent attorneys in California." Whatever the cause, the law passed – but with massive restrictions that rendered it almost entirely useless.

Such are the setbacks of the foreign law community in Japan, whose members argue that rules and restrictions here are discriminatory and outdated. Take, for example, the legislation that effectively bans foreign legal firms from forming corporations. Rika Beppu, partner at Hogan Lovells and chairman of the EBC Legal Services Committee, explains that, in Japan, one must form a *hojin*, or corporation, to establish branches across the country. "At the moment, a firm is a gathering of foreign-qualified lawyers on their own, [and] we have to all be in one location. There's no branch. So if you have ambitions to have an office in Osaka, Fukuoka, etc. we're prohibited," she says.

# “THIS WHOLE THING HAS THE AURA OF THE **LATE 1980S**, WHEN PEOPLE WERE PLAYING THESE GAMES”

James Lawden

The restriction, in Lawden's opinion, has “no grounds in reason at all”. For years, Japanese law firms have been able to incorporate and, therefore, open branches throughout the country, a fact both Lawden and Beppu find discriminatory. “Our point is that there is a difference, and we should be treated in the same way as Japanese lawyers,” adds Beppu.

In 2008, the MoJ formed a committee to discuss the *hojin* issue, which Lawden says “was always on our shopping list of things to beat the MoJ over the head with”. Progress was made; and, as mentioned, the reform was about to pass until the *benrishi* got involved. The resulting legislation, finally passed in 2013, was substantially compromised: only law firms exclusively comprising foreign lawyers were allowed to form *hojin*. Foreign law firms composed of a mixture of Japanese and non-Japanese lawyers, were still excluded from incorporating. In reality, the reform made little to no difference. Beppu and Lawden can only name a few foreign law firms in Tokyo that are covered; all others include Japanese lawyers.

“In Tokyo, amongst all the big international law firms, I think only two do not have Japanese law as an in-house practice,” says Beppu. “Which means that everybody is in joint business with Japanese lawyers. So [with] the change in law, everybody was like okay, but who's going to use the law? It was half-baked.”

The *hojin* issue, argue Beppu and Lawden, is not the only one on the

foreign lawyers' shopping lists. More pressing is the issue of becoming a *gaiben* (licensed foreign lawyer) in Japan.

To become a *gaiben*, the MoJ requires foreign lawyers to satisfy two requirements: they must be registered as a lawyer in another country, and they must have practiced law for at least three years. That sounds simple enough, but there's a catch. Only one of those three years can take place in Japan, while the other two must be completed abroad. There are no such restrictions for *bengoshi* (Japanese lawyers). What this means is that no lawyers who have been in Japan since their qualification are able to practice law here, a fact that Beppu says throws off the hierarchy of a typical law firm.

“In my practice area, which is corporate M&A, we work in teams,” she explains. “I need a range of people's experiences in order to take a client through buying a company, setting up a joint venture or selling a business. So in Tokyo, potentially because of the three-year experience rule, the business reality is that it is difficult to have an evenly balanced team.” It also means that the client is absorbing the costs of a team composed of more expensive, senior legal experts.

While the ministry claims that this requirement protects Japanese people from malpractice, foreign lawyers argue that a firm would never allow junior lawyers to give legal advice to clients in the first place. “In England, no junior lawyers are ever let out on their own,”

says Lawden, meaning that all legal advice would be run past senior lawyers before being passed onto the client. In this way, law firms are self-regulatory, grooming junior lawyers in their first and second years to steadily climb the company ladder, and eventually become partners.

Because of Japan's *gaiben* requirement, this structure fails. Foreign law firms can hire fresh overseas graduates, but junior lawyers would be prohibited from getting a *gaiben* licence, and could not give law advice directly to clients.

Currently, there is a consultation committee hosted by the MoJ where foreign lawyers are advocating for *hojin* and *gaiben* reform. The biggest problem, Lawden says, is reciprocity. While England doesn't have a law regarding minimum experience for foreign lawyers, America does, something Japan also begrudges. This tit-for-tat mentality plays into the hands of those who want to maintain current restrictions.

“They point out reciprocity,” says Simon Collins, partner at White & Case. “They point to California where it is difficult for Japanese lawyers to practice Japanese law. And I think there is recognition that California is a very unhelpful example to our cause. But it is frequently held up.”

“The *gaiben* system was put into place in 1987,” adds Lawden, “and this whole thing has the aura of the late 1980s when people were playing these games. You would have thought basically that the world would have moved on a bit.” 

# Cosmetics and Quasi-drugs//

*Closer to a level playing field*

Text **GEOFF BOTTING**

**E**BC committees have spent many years trying to promote market reforms. Fairly often, their lobbying is rewarded with incremental or partial improvements. But every now and then, they score a breakthrough.

Which is why the Cosmetics and Quasi-Drugs Committee has reason to celebrate. Japanese officials have recently given the green light to a reform that promises to make life a lot easier for importers. They intend to abolish the current import notification system for importers of cosmetics and quasi-drugs (substances that provide mild treatment and contain active ingredients), as well as drugs and medical devices.

Committee chairman Nobuyuki Hagiwara says the change came after several years of lobbying. "This case shows that consistent external communication can be very important."

The committee worked with counterparts at the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan and the Cosmetic Importers Association in Japan, in an effort spanning several years.

## Cosmetics and Quasi-Drugs

### Key advocacy points

- **Harmonise quasi-drug and cosmetic ingredients** — Japan should work towards having positive and negative lists for ingredients aligned with those in the EU.
- **Efficacy claims** — The government should expand its scope of allowed efficacy claims.
- **Self-medication** — Japan should promote self-medication, so that people can deal with minor health problems on their own, through the use of such products as over-the-counter and quasi-drugs.

An additional part of the reform, which is expected to take effect next year, would streamline the application process. "We have been required to submit additional papers to the

government and the local prefectures, but from next year we don't need to," says a committee member requesting anonymity.

Much of that required paperwork contained duplicate information. So the move is sure to speed up and simplify the process of importing products to Japan.

"This is a big achievement for us," the member says.

Before the Japanese government decided to go ahead with the reform plan, the EU Delegation in Japan contacted the committee in February, asking members to explain the mechanisms and other details for the importation of cosmetics into Japan. The two sides sat down a couple of times. "I would like to emphasise that our committee was part of the process to have the current system abolished," says Hagiwara.



## “ JAPAN IS MOVING IN THAT DIRECTION, BUT **WE FEEL** IT'S A BIT SLOW ”

**Nobuyuki Hagiwara**

The issue of notification is one of seven the committee put in the EBC 2014 white paper. The issues cover the common refrain heard among other committees about a “lack of regulatory transparency, and a gap between [Japan’s] product standards and those used in other parts of the world”.

As for harmonisation, the committee is calling for an alignment of standards over fluoride content in quasi-drugs.

Extensive scientific testing has found fluoride to be safe and effective for preventing tooth decay. Yet, Japan restricts the amount of the mineral in toothpaste (as a quasi-drug) to no more than 1,000 parts per million (ppm). Europe allows up to 1,500 ppm. What’s more, Japan does not allow fluoride in mouthwash (as a quasi-drug), although

such products are common in Europe, the United States and elsewhere.

The committee wants Japan to raise its permitted fluoride levels to bring them in line with those in Europe.

“Fluoride has already been proven to be effective for tooth decay prevention, and fluoride mouthwash has been proven to add value to oral health. That’s why we are requesting to put fluoride in mouthwash,” says the committee chairman.

He adds that the government needs to move “step by step” in order to create a consensus over fluoride. “Japan is moving in that direction, but we want the government to move faster,” continues Hagiwara.

Fluoride is part of a broader issue over harmonisation. The committee would like Japan and the EU to share the same standards over positive and negative lists of ingredients.

Take sunscreen, for example. The EU and Japan have “positive lists” for the products, which indicate permitted maximum quantities. But the lists are not 100% aligned. “So sometimes when we want to bring in a sunscreen that is commonly used in the EU, we can’t, due to differences in the positive list,” says Hagiwara.

Additionally, there are “negative lists”, which show combinations that are banned or restricted.

Ultimately, committee members would like the lists to be harmonised, not just between Japan and the EU, but internationally as well.

Hagiwara says, “The EU government, the Japanese government and other governments are fully aware of the situations, but there are still many barriers,” he says.

But as seen with the issue over import notification, barriers need not be permanent, especially after all parties involved start to appreciate the common benefits. 





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# Beyond the classroom

*Competition, cooperation, community and commitment*

Text **DAVID UMEDA**

**I**nternational schools in Japan have strong ties to the community and among each other. Through well-organised programmes and investment in quality facilities, global institutions create an environment that extends learning beyond the classroom. Students, as well as local and international communities, benefit from this critical dimension to education.

"JCIS schools are diverse: large and small, secular and religious, boarding and day, co-ed and single sex," points out Matthew Parr, President of the Japan Council of International Schools. "However, one thing that binds us is a commitment to the ideals of internationalism through the development of the whole child."

At all member schools, "it is only by inquiring into their world and taking action that students can truly come to understand their potential in shaping their future," Parr continues. "At JCIS schools, we are honoured to inspire our students in this way."

Aoba-Japan International School believes schools must identify, create and utilise opportunities for young people to develop into holistic learners. "And this can only truly be achieved by engaging with the outside world," explains Robert Thorn, Secondary Principal. "What's the use of learning without application? Why squander youthful energy on 'schoolwork' when there's a world of issues in need of the entrepreneurial spirit, and local/global leadership learners can provide now through school?"



"Considering their unique perspectives, international schools should lead the way," adds Thorn.

**Young ones**

Maki Sugamata, Head Teacher at Children's House Montessori School, explains that their focus "is not on how to memorise, recite, or even how to solve a problem, but instead how to think through, understand, and ultimately invent new questions, for tasks yet to be determined.

"In a very real way," Sugamata adds, "we believe that Montessori is the only system of education adequately prepared to address the unique challenges of the 21st century."

Nicole Yamada is Master Franchisee for Gymboree Play & Music in Japan, which has been fostering creativity and confidence in children ages 0-5 for 39 years.

"Our programming experts have teamed up with the US research organisation, 'Zero to Three®', to develop our age-appropriate mommy & me and drop-off programmes that incorporate the latest research in early child development," explains Yamada, "Currently enrolled families also can participate in daily play gyms." She extends the following invitation: "Join us for a free trial, and come see why parents and kids around the world love Gymboree!"

St. Alban's Nursery takes its motto from the words of a parent describing the school: "Learning. Love. Laughter".

"Our aim is for each child to be happy, confident, and develop a love of learning," says Gilma Yamamoto-Copeland, Director. "Our approach is very personalised, and we offer a choice of activities

– not everyone does the same thing.

"We are always available to discuss your child's progress," she continues. "The nursery is small, but enrolments can be accepted at any time, numbers permitting."

**Making the connection**

"ASIJ's newly opened Creative Arts Design Center was developed specifically to encourage creativity, innovation, discovery and, of course, design," explains Ed Ladd, Head of School at The American School in Japan.

This state-of-the-art facility features five design labs equipped with 3D printers and fabrication tools, providing places where a child's idea can become something real and tangible.

"A dedicated robotics lab expands our growing robotics programme's ability to innovate and develop world-class machines," continues Ladd. "Our creative arts programmes also benefit from dedicated music, art, strings and performance spaces."

NewIS has created a highly interactive and multilingual learning environment.

"Children learn all subjects in both English and Japanese, and may use other languages as well, as we favour a Vygotskian and translanguaging approach to learning," says Steven Parr, Founding Director/Head of School, at New International School of Japan.

The classes are all multiage by design with two classroom teachers for about 20 students. "We connect to the local community through fieldtrips and

activities, and to the global community through community service projects and the Internet," Parr adds.

"Over the last Century of Inspiration, Canadian Academy has developed as a diverse yet close-knit International Baccalaureate World School," explains Stephen Taylor, Director of Learning and IB MYP Coordinator.

"With families and faculty from around the world, we are globally connected through meaningful inquiry and action, while remaining rooted in the rich host culture of Japan," Taylor continues. "These local and global collaborations invigorate our experiences as internationally minded learners, inspiring creative exploration of questions and ideas, built upon sound foundational knowledge and our tradition of excellence."

The Student-Teacher profile at Seisen International School, Tokyo, is "a living testament to what we are trying to achieve at Seisen, explains Colette Rogers, School Head. "Our guiding principles give our students, at each level of the school, a sense of their own amazing self-worth, a sense of personal dignity, and a sense of respect for others and the environment.

"Service and leadership opportunities available to our students enable them to become, from a young age, agents of positive change in the world," Rogers concludes.

International schools in Japan connect students not only to the world, but to a promising future. 





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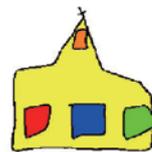
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# Japan Council of International Schools

The first school in Japan to include the word “international” in its name was founded in 1924. However, there has been a long history of international education here, offering classes in English and serving the expatriate community since 1872.

Four current JCIS member schools can trace their origins to before the First World War. Many more were founded in the 1950s and 1960s, and it was in October 1965 when representatives from various facilities met for the first time to discuss matters of administration and curriculum. The value of the meetings was immediately apparent; by collaborating with each other, individual member schools found a forum to discuss teaching, learning and other matters of national and international importance. This network has been invaluable in supporting all of our members as we strive to offer a standard of excellence in international education.

On January 12, 1972, this collaborative relationship was formalised when representatives met under the banner of the ‘Japan Council of Overseas Schools’ (JCOS). It was originally decided that membership would be based on being in the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools (EARCOS), and that school heads would meet regularly to exchange information and discuss matters of mutual interest. In 1982 a constitution was adopted that opened membership to those offering an English-based curriculum, irrespective of membership in EARCOS. In 1987, the name of the organisation was changed to the Japan Council of International Schools (JCIS), following the lead of the European Council of International Schools (ECIS).

Learning institutions applying for membership to JCIS must meet a number of important criteria including authority, stability, continuity, professionalism, and an explicit

commitment to internationalism. Underpinning this is that the education must be offered in English. Beyond that, however, there are no requirements concerning curriculum, ethos or ownership.

JCIS member schools are diverse in their backgrounds and services. Some offer programmes of the International Baccalaureate. Others offer an education rooted to a greater or lesser degree in a national curriculum. Some schools offer a full “pre-kindergarten to grade 12” education, while others specialise in certain age groups. Some are faith-based institutions while others are strictly secular. The smallest JCIS members have fewer than 100 students and the largest has more than 1,500. However, all JCIS affiliates meet rigorous membership requirements and all offer an education of quality.

Collectively, our schools currently enrol just short of 10,000 students from 109 countries. About half of the campuses are located in Tokyo or Yokohama. The others are spread throughout the country from Fukuoka in the west to Sapporo in the north.

JCIS exists to create a forum for the continued development and improvement of international education in Japan and the enhancement of the school experience for all families seeking an international education. We encourage all expatriate, international and internationally minded families to consider what JCIS members might be able to offer as they seek an excellent international education for their child.

**For information about our programmes please contact each member school directly, or, for general information about the JCIS organisation itself, contact [president@jcis.jp](mailto:president@jcis.jp) or browse our website: [www.jcis.jp](http://www.jcis.jp)**



## Japan Council of International Schools

Links to the member schools may be found at [www.jcis.jp](http://www.jcis.jp)

American School in Japan

Aoba-Japan International School

British School in Tokyo

The Canadian Academy

Canadian International School

Christian Academy in Japan

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Hiroshima International School

Hokkaido International School

International School of the Sacred Heart

Kyoto International School

Marist Brothers International School

Montessori School of Tokyo

Nagoya International School

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# The Value of Higher Education

*Studying for life and career*

Text **DAVID UMEDA**

**"If you are a seasoned manager who wants to expand your horizons, you should consider the Executive MBA Program at Temple University, Japan Campus," says Mikiya Mori, Director.**

The weekend curriculum allows you to learn while working full-time.

"Expert US faculties come to Tokyo from the Fox School of Business at Temple University in Philadelphia," Mori adds. "Assignments are team-based, and you have the option to take courses in Paris, Singapore and Philadelphia. Our next programme starts in January, with an application deadline of October 1st."

The McGill MBA Japan Program is a weekend MBA offered by McGill University's Desautels Faculty of Management.

"The classes are taught in English by professors who fly in from the home campus," explains Philip O'Neill, Director. "It is the only programme offered in Japan by a university listed in the top 25 of the QS World University Rankings: #21 in 2013.

"The programme brings together the best students from Japan and abroad," O'Neill continues, "to study the latest in management theory and practice."

## **Adding up**

Approximately 40% of Lakeland College Japan's students are from countries other than Japan, representing over 35 nations from five continents.

"This internationalisation has resulted in animated classrooms, unique social opportunities and expanded perspectives," points out Dr Alan Brender, Associate Dean. "Aside from high-quality instruction, LCJ's greatest strength is its small size, at approximately 300 students."

Many classes are limited to 15 or 16 students at Lakeland College Japan, and none exceeding 25.

"The intimacy creates a family-like atmosphere in which students can make friends," says Brender.

The Concordia University Chicago (Japan) Blended-learning MBA Program is partly live and partly online so it is very time- and cost-efficient.

"The completion rates for online programmes globally are only 10%, but this goes up over 90% for well-run blended-learning programmes," explains Alistair Platt, Program Director. "Employers are able to motivate their employees if they financially support participation in this MBA programme, and it leads to greater employee production, loyalty and retention at a very reasonable cost, and can be done while you work."

Language Resources, specialists in English Language Training for Business and Technology, is a group of British-led language trainers, teacher-trainers and translators with advanced qualifications and professional expertise.

"Nominees in the BCCJ's 2013 British Business Awards in the Global Talent category, we design and implement client-specific training programmes to develop your staff's business communication skills," says Geoff Rupp, Founder & Chairman. "For clients needing results-oriented training, wherever they're located in Japan, we offer a more personalised, highly professional choice, backed by over 30 years of experience."

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The Saturday lecture and workshop series engages experienced business owners, executives and entrepreneurs as instructors.

"JMEC helps mid-career managers gain practical business skills and hands-on experience, including writing a complete professional business plan for an actual client," continues Varlid. "Participation has been evenly split between Japanese and foreign nationals, and men and women." 



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“Excellent customer service is also an LR value that is evident in their ability to customize programming and scheduling. Few vendors are so willing and able to adapt to changing conditions.”

## JEFF CRAIG, M.Ed.

Manager, Fab Central Team Training  
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Geoff’s interests lie in psycholinguistics, teaching methodology, language testing. He also has a special interest in English for medical professionals

**CRAIG JENNINGS**  
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Cambridge DELTA  
Cambridge CELTA Teacher Trainer  
—British-Australian



Craig’s interests lie in language consulting, course design and evaluation, teacher training and development

**BRIAN RODGER**  
Director of Studies  
M. Ed. (Appl. Ling.),  
Cambridge CELTA  
—British



Brian’s interests lie in curriculum development, teacher development, learner autonomy.

**RYAN SOBOLIK**  
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Studies (Kobe)  
B.A. Computational  
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Cambridge DELTA (Candidate)  
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## Philip O'Neill

Director,  
McGill MBA Japan Program

reads

eURObiZ JAPAN

# All about oak

*How it adds to wine's taste and potential*



**Oak ageing is a relatively new fad in the wine industry, despite the fact that oak barrels have been used for the storage of beverages since around 2700 BC in Egypt. By the first century BC, the modern configuration of a barrel – two circular bases with rounded, protruding sides – became the most popular way of storing not only wine and beer, but also milk, olive oil and water.**

Today, the cooperage industry is big business. Each barrel costs between \$600 and \$1,500, accounting for up to half of the total production cost of wine. Of course, this cost is inevitably passed along to the consumer; but don't fret, oak-ageing adds complexity to wines, resulting in a richer, more palatable drink. (Not all wines benefit from oak; most whites, except Chardonnay, would be overwhelmed by its woody flavours.)

Ageing wine in oak does two things: it physically changes the wine and imparts a spectrum of varying flavours. Because wood is slightly porous, oak barrels allow for slow oxidation of the wine, which softens the tannins, and

stabilise the wine's colour, adding to the ageing potential of great vintages. (Think red Bordeaux and white Burgundy.)

A winemaker has two options for ageing wine in barrels: should they go French, or American? French oak is dominant throughout the world's wine regions, especially in Europe. It imparts smoky, toasty and spicy flavours into wines that are generally perceived as a bit more refined and silkier than what American oak produces. American oak, used mostly in the New World and in Spain, lends wines a slightly sweeter spice, topped with vanilla and coconut. The wines usually have a stronger oak flavour with a creamier texture, generally producing "bigger" wines.

Neither method is better than the other; it's up to the wine drinkers to decide which they prefer. Indeed, many would argue a mix of both American and French oak produces the tastiest wines.

If you really like oaky wines, be sure to check the label before purchase. Because oak-aged wines are considered

of higher quality, most producers (especially those in the New World) will explicitly state the kind of barrels used – and for how long.

Labels that don't do this probably added oak chips to the wine to quickly impart some flavour; but these wines have none of the complexity or structure of those that have been oak-aged for real. ☹️

Presented by



Every month, **ALLISON BETTIN** takes *EURObiZ Japan* readers on a trip through the world of wine.



# Barbells and breeze >

*Expats run outdoor fitness  
programme in Tokyo*

Text **ALLISON BETTIN**

“IF YOU ALWAYS WORK [TO]  
**YOUR CAPACITY**, THAT'S WHERE  
YOU WILL STAY”

**Allan Wooding**

**E**very few years, it appears, there's a new fitness craze – Zumba, CrossFit, MMA fighting, and the list goes on. Here in Tokyo, the latest workout trend involves a group of adults lifting barbells and throwing battle ropes in the glow of the city's streetlamps.

Called TokyoFit, it is the brainchild of two young expats who believe that cross-training in the fresh air makes fitness fun.

Located beneath an overpass in a public playground near Ebisu, TokyoFit involves hour-long classes that combine cardio, stretching and strength-training.

"I hated going to the gym," admits Chris Colucci, TokyoFit co-founder. "I hated being inside ... watching people watch themselves in mirrors," he adds. "It's kind of depressing." So when one of his fellow teachers at the office invited him to work out at a communal playground, Colucci wasn't just happy





to be outside, he was amazed at how challenging a workout can be with simple equipment.

"It was absolutely brutal ... [but] pointed out weaknesses that I never knew I had," he says.

After moving to an apartment 40 metres from the current workout spot, Colucci spent the next year convincing fellow teacher and sports coach Allan Wooding to join him in running TokyoFit.

It's a very simple operation: Colucci and/or Wooding pick up their supplies each evening around 6:15, choosing specific equipment for clients based on individual needs. Using giant carts, they roll dumbbells and bars to a quiet public playground, setting up their "gym" for a 7:00 start. A typical workout includes a hefty cardio warm-up "to get you ready to work", says Wooding, followed by stretching. Next comes the meat of the workout, focused either on movements between partners, teaching a skill, or strength training.

Finally, there's the challenge of the day, which the partners call the "hidden workout". This involves pushing clients beyond their limits, something Colucci and Wooding believe is integral in achieving fitness. "If you always work [to] your capacity, that's where you will stay," says Wooding.

What's great about this kind of training, they say, is that it's practical in the real world. Based on the principles of CrossFit, TokyoFit encourages a dynamic combination of cardio, strength and flexibility training, which makes everyday activities – such as walking up the stairs or picking up heavy boxes – easier. It's a practical workout for a wide range of people, a fact reflected by TokyoFit's 70-plus client list.

This doesn't mean that 70 people could ever take the class at once, though. TokyoFit keeps a 6:1 client-to-coach ratio, which Colucci believes is important for sustaining a thriving fitness community, encouraging

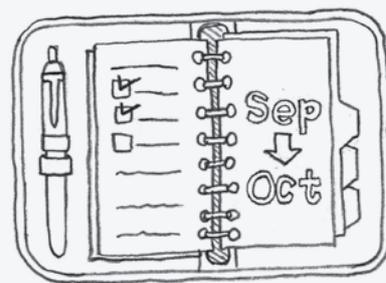
relationships between coaches and clients, and also among the clients. "This creates positive associations which help in the habit-forming process," he says. It also keeps people coming back and, therefore, reaching their fitness goals.

Small class sizes allow Chris and Allan to accurately assess the progress of individual clients. Collecting info about times, weights and so on – a tip they borrowed from CrossFit training – allows clients to track their own progress, and have some friendly competition with their peers.

In the future, the TokyoFit partners are setting their sights on their own workout space, but only if it's in the fresh air. The pair would ideally like to find a multi-purpose location for cross-training, sports, and food.

With their shared passion for good cooking, a restaurant seems inevitable, they say. "Really, food is at the base of everything we do," points out Colucci. "No one ever won a medal at the Olympics by eating Twinkies." 

# Upcoming events



» **Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in Japan**  
[www.blccj.or.jp](http://www.blccj.or.jp)

## Belgian shop @ Belgian Beer Weekend Tokyo

**19-23 September, 11:00-22:00**

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**Fee:** Pay for what you buy  
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» **British Chamber of Commerce in Japan**  
[www.bccjapan.com](http://www.bccjapan.com)

## Luncheon

**15 September, Tuesday, 12:00-14:00**

**Speaker:** Robert Walters, founder and CEO, Robert Walters plc  
**Venue:** Grand Hyatt Tokyo, 2F, Residence Basil Room  
**Fee:** ¥5,600 (members), ¥7,600 (non-members)  
**Contact:** [info@bccjapan.com](mailto:info@bccjapan.com)

» **Finnish Chamber of Commerce in Japan**  
[www.fcc.or.jp](http://www.fcc.or.jp)

## FCCJ Luncheon Meeting

**15 September, Tuesday, 12:00-14:00**

**Speaker:** Hiroshi Kishino, president, Amer Sports Japan  
**Venue:** Grand Hyatt Tokyo, 2F, Drawing Room  
**Fee:** ¥6,000 (members), ¥8,000 (non-members)  
**Contact:** [fccj@gol.com](mailto:fccj@gol.com)

» **French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan**  
[www.ccifj.or.jp](http://www.ccifj.or.jp)

## CCIFJ Conference

**18 September, Friday, 12:30-14:00**

**Speaker:** Patrick Artus, chief economist, NATIXIS  
**Venue:** CCIFJ, Yotsuya/Kojimachi stations  
**Fee:** ¥3,000  
**Contact:** [c.queval@ccifj.or.jp](mailto:c.queval@ccifj.or.jp)

Compiled by **DAVID UMEDA**

## CCIFJ Marketing – Social media

**28 September, Monday, 12:30-14:00**

**Speaker:** Stanislas de Nervo, managing director & co-founder, Datawords  
**Venue:** CCIFJ, Yotsuya/Kojimachi stations  
**Fee:** ¥3,000  
**Contact:** [c.queval@ccifj.or.jp](mailto:c.queval@ccifj.or.jp)

## CCIFJ Tax and Regulations – BEPS and the tax on digital content

**30 September, Wednesday, 12:30-14:00**

**Speaker:** Ms Ryann Thomas, partner in the Transfer Pricing Consulting Group, PricewaterhouseCoopers  
**Venue:** CCIFJ, Yotsuya/Kojimachi stations  
**Fee:** ¥3,000  
**Contact:** [c.queval@ccifj.or.jp](mailto:c.queval@ccifj.or.jp)

» **Ireland Japan Chamber of Commerce**  
[www.ijcc.jp](http://www.ijcc.jp)

## IJCC 3rd Thursday Networking Event

**17 September & 15 October, from 19:00**

**Venue:** to be confirmed  
**Fee:** Free (members and non-members)  
**Contact:** [secretariat@ijcc.jp](mailto:secretariat@ijcc.jp)

» **Netherlands Chamber of Commerce in Japan**  
[www.nccj.jp](http://www.nccj.jp)

## Aperitif – Welcome back drinks

**17 September, Thursday, 19:30-21:30**

**Venue:** Restaurant bar Amusement, Shibuya  
**Fee:** ¥4,000 (members), ¥5,500 (non-members)  
**Contact:** [nccj@nccj.jp](mailto:nccj@nccj.jp)

## Briefing & Drinks

**6 October, Tuesday, 17:00-18:00**

**Speaker:** Jens Moesker, general manager, Shangri-La Hotel, Tokyo  
**Venue:** Shangri-La Hotel, Tokyo  
**Fee:** Free  
**Contact:** [nccj@nccj.jp](mailto:nccj@nccj.jp)

## SEPTEMBER

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## OCTOBER

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» **Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan**  
[www.sccij.jp](http://www.sccij.jp)

## SCCIJ September Luncheon

**16 September, Wednesday, 12:00-14:00**

**Speaker:** Dr Jochen Legewie, managing director, CNC Japan  
**Venue:** ANA InterContinental Tokyo, Galaxy Room  
**Fee:** ¥6,500 (members)  
**Contact:** [info@sccij.jp](mailto:info@sccij.jp)

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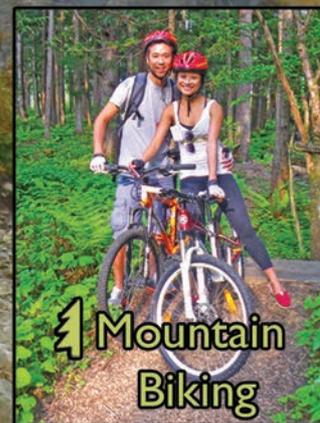
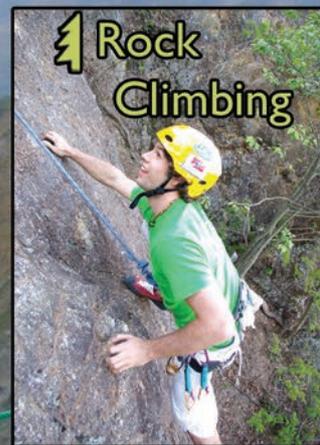
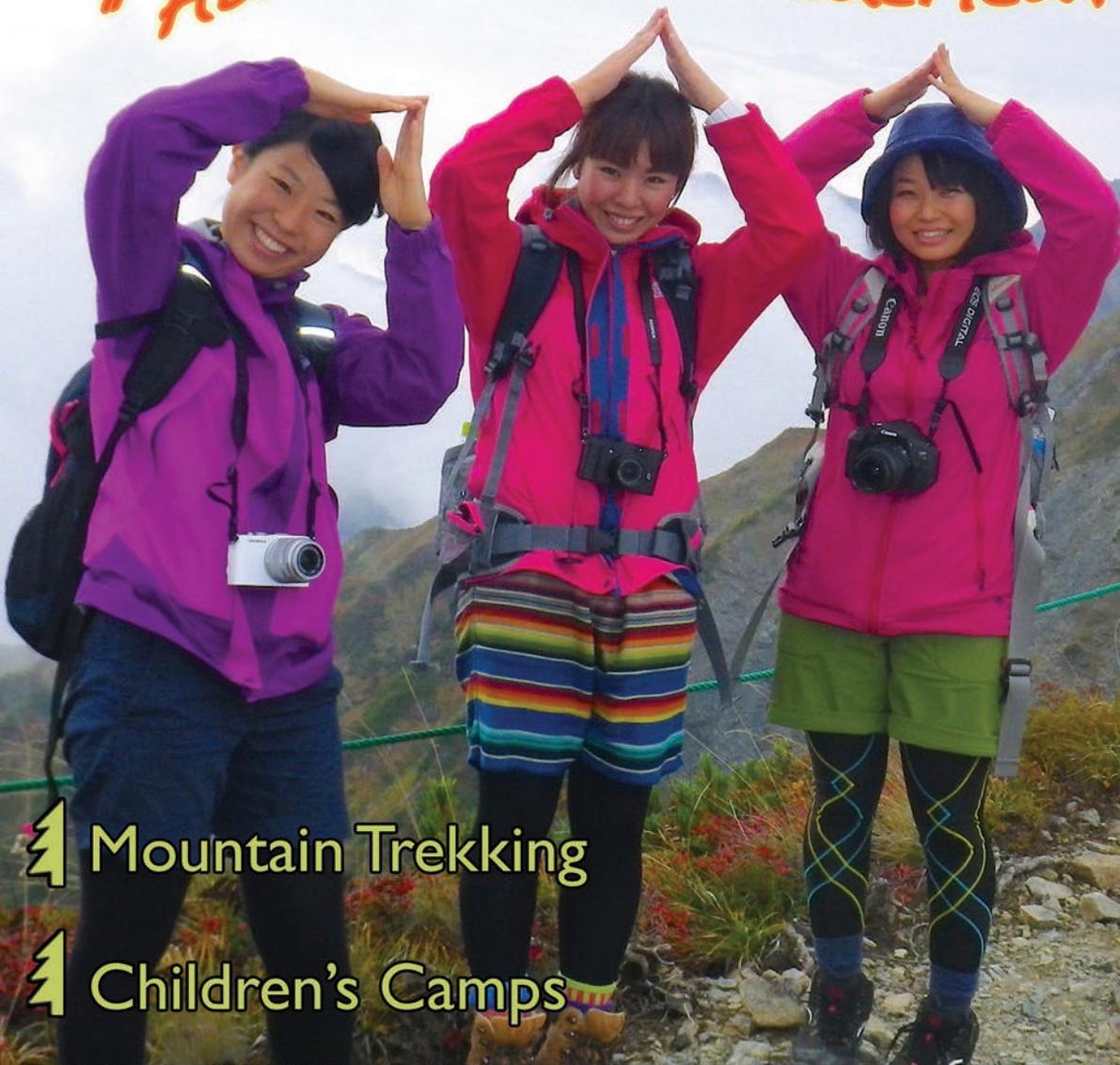
**9 October, Friday, 08:30 (tee-off)**

**Venue:** Atsugi Kokusai Country Club, Kanagawa Pref.  
**Fee:** ¥24,700 (incl. free bus service)  
**Contact:** [www.dccgolf-japan.com](http://www.dccgolf-japan.com)

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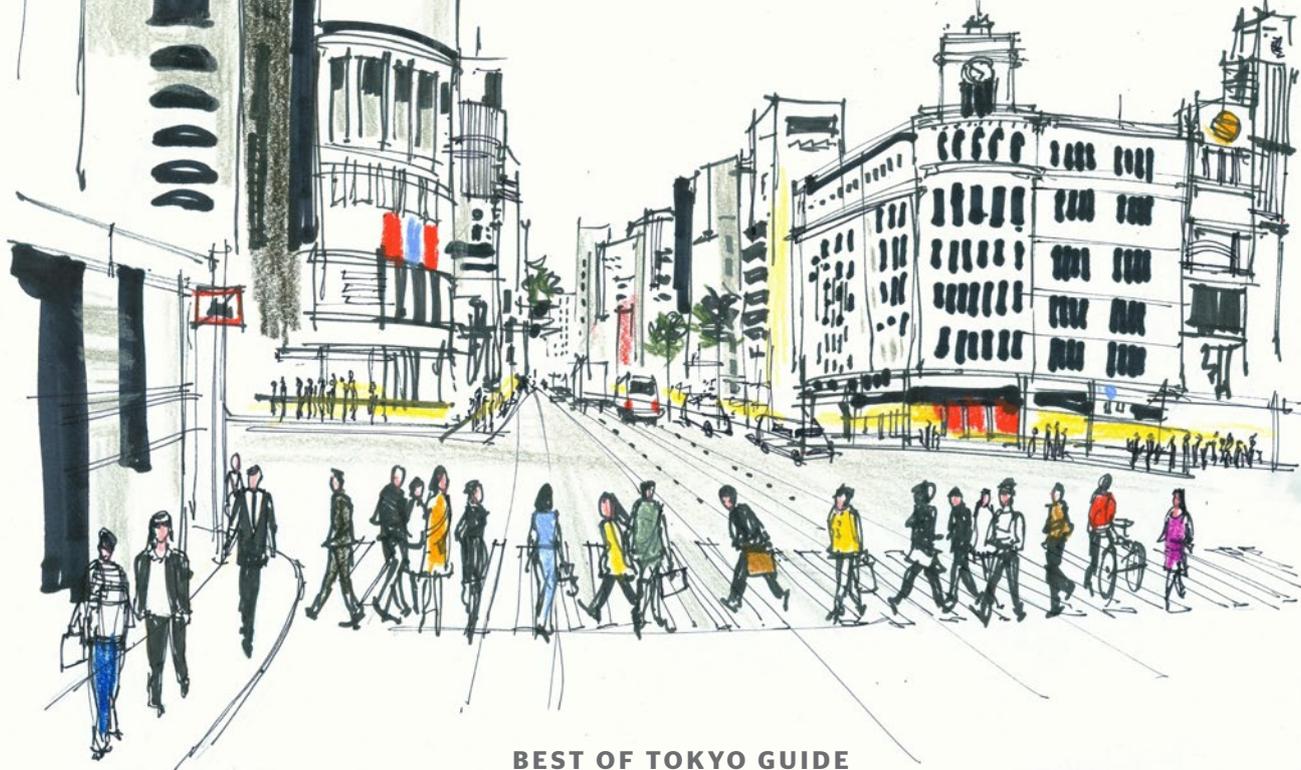
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BEST OF TOKYO GUIDE

# Part of the community

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Text **DAVID UMEDA**

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long term, and keep move-in procedures easy and simple. Their reliable, personalised hospitality support services enable newcomers to feel right at "home", offering opportunities to meet and socialise with other guests, making any stay pleasant and productive. Staff also are never short of a good tip or two – ready to help guests find their way around Tokyo.

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Entertainment centres include Odaiba along Tokyo Bay, in the vicinity of the world's busiest train station in Shinjuku, and Marunouchi and Nihonbashi near the Imperial Palace and Tokyo Station. Trendsetting consumers descend on Ginza, Shibuya, Harajuku and Omotesando.

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allows customers to feel at home away from home.

## Staying healthy

**MagaGYM** ([www.magagym.com/en/](http://www.magagym.com/en/)) in Roppongi offers classes in Krav Maga suitable to your ability, from beginners with no martial arts experience up to the advanced levels in the official defensive tactics system of the Israeli Defence Force. Staff includes some of the highest-ranked instructors in Japan, and the gym has been teaching for 10 years. The techniques are based on instinctive movements so easy to learn; and the training has a tremendous workout effect to get in shape.

**Swimfriends** ([www.swimfriends.org](http://www.swimfriends.org)) offers swim lessons and training sessions in English in Tokyo to both kids and adults, to encourage anyone, whatever their goal may be. The youngest children can start as soon as they are 100% toilet-trained (about 3 years old). Swimfriends welcomes all levels, including those who want to overcome a fear of swimming or need to "learn differently". They operate on a ticket system, so start or come for a trial any date.

That is why residing in Tokyo offers something for every member of the family. 🍷

good  
to know  
you

ランスタッド  
randstad

# Paul Dupuis

*Managing Director, Professionals & Client Solutions, Randstad Japan*

Randstad, one of the world's leading HR solution providers celebrates an impressive milestone in September with its 55th anniversary. With 117 offices across Japan and a global presence spanning 39 countries, the industry pioneer continues to grow.

"We're pleased to be recognized in the staffing industry and by our multinational and Japanese clients as a leader in providing HR solutions ranging from temporary staff, outsourcing, outplacement to permanent recruitment and professionals search & selection", says Paul Dupuis, Board Member of Randstad Japan. We have a long-term commitment to Japan and look forward to continuing to deepen our partnerships with our clients and candidates. 



Photo **BENJAMIN PARKS**

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# CELEBRATING

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