



TAKE YOUR BUSINESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL: EXHIBIT AT THE TOKYO DECARBONISATION EXPO WITH THE EU-JAPAN CENTRE!

The EU-Japan Centre is reconducting the Green Business Mission to Tokyo, offering EU SMEs a 4-day programme at and around a leading technology fair in the business heart of Japan.

From 18 until 21 February 2025, the EU-Japan Centre will welcome up to 12 companies in Tokyo. This time, the EU-Japan Centre's representation will be part of a larger EU initiative consisting of a 1-day dedicated matchmaking event and a large EU Pavilion at the 3-day Decarbonisation Expo. (For more information about the trade fair: <https://www.decarbonization-expo.jp/hub/en-gb/about/dcm.html>) With its 37-year experience in facilitating business opportunities for EU SMEs in Japan, the EU-Japan Centre reaffirms its continued focus on the Green Transition. The EU-Japan Centre is your partner to engage Japanese businesses



and corporate investors, to present your innovative technologies and services at the next Decarbonisation Expo. As a global leader in Green Technologies, EU SMEs attract the interest of many actors present in Japan.

Exhibiting with the EU-Japan Centre is more than a free space at a booth: it comes with a string of benefits, such as

on-site professional interpreters, translation and printing of promotional material, exclusive B2B opportunities via a dedicated online-matchmaking platform and a pre-departure webinar with an expert of the Japanese market. Selected candidates will also have access to our continuous dedicated and personalized support before, during and after the event.

Would you like to be a part of this mission, or do you have relevant SMEs in your network? The call for participants is now open at the following address: ➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/green-mission>

The application deadline is 6 December 2024. Selection results will be communicated by 12 December.

We look forward to serving you on the path to successful business partnerships in Japan!



Do not forget our other ongoing calls (see also on page 4):
Smart Factory and Robotics Business Mission

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/smartfactory-robotics-mission>

Space Business Mission ➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/space-business-mission-japan>

World Class Manufacturing training Mission

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/world-class-manufacturing-mission>



EU-Japan Centre
for Industrial Cooperation
一般財団法人日欧産業協力センター

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VULCANUS IN JAPAN ALUMNI GET-TOGETHER IN BRUSSELS

On 5 July 2024, the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation hosted the 4th Vulcanus in Japan Alumni Get-Together in Brussels, welcoming 130 attendees.



The event was a great success, bringing together participants from Vulcanus in Japan sessions spanning from 1997, the very first edition of the program, to 2022, the last completed session back in July. Since its inception, Vulcanus in Japan has provided over 700 European students in engineering and science with the opportunity to spend a year in Japan, where they studied the language and interned at leading industrial companies, such as NTT, Canon, Hitachi, Asial, Mitsubishi Chemical, and many other.

The evening started with welcome speeches from Mr. Manuel Hubert, General Manager at the EU-Japan Centre, and representatives from EU institutions, including Mr. Marco Iacutto, Project Adviser at EISMEA, and Mr. Fabrice Terrac, Deputy Head of Unit at DG GROW - International Value Chains.

Throughout the event, alumni shared their inspiring success stories and ongoing work related to Japan. Among the speakers were Ms. Sarah Cosentino (Vulcanus in Japan 2006), a specialist in Robotics and Neuroscience at the University of Tokyo; Mr. Peter Buist (Vulcanus in Japan 1998), Manager for the Galileo Reference Centre at EUSPA - EU Agency for the Space Programme; and Mr. Jorge Pinho (Vulcanus in Japan 2007), Senior Research Engineer at the von Karman Institute for Fluid Dynamics and ex supervisor of Japanese students participating to the sister programme "Vulcanus in Europe" (*). These alumni highlighted how their experiences with the Vulcanus program served as a gateway to successful careers across various scientific sectors.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/vulcanus-japan>

() Vulcanus in Japan created very interesting synergies over the years. Fully aware of the potential of the Vulcanus Project for a host company, several alumni decided to take part in Vulcanus as mentors. Some moved to Japan after the programme and offered traineeships to Vulcanus in Japan participants of the new generations. Other alumni who returned to Europe, welcomed at their companies Japanese trainees taking part in the sister programme "Vulcanus in Europe".*

VULCANUS IN EUROPE ALUMNI GET-TOGETHER IN TOKYO

On 6 September, the EU-Japan Centre had the great pleasure of hosting the "Vulcanus in Europe" alumni get-together in Tokyo.



The Vulcanus in Europe is a one-of-a-kind programme with a long history. Established in 1996, the programme now has more than 520 alumni. The get-together, which was attended by 160 alumni, was a wonderful opportunity for networking for alumni from different generations working in various fields. H.E. Ambassador Jean-Eric Paquet and Mr. Koji Hachiyama, Deputy

Director-General for Trade Policy of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), opened the event with warm and inspiring words of welcome for the participants. The event was then followed by a lively panel discussion with six alumni sharing their Vulcanus stories and how the programme impacted their career paths. During the networking reception, participants enjoyed meeting new and old faces.

The Vulcanus alumni form an exciting, innovative and multi-generational group of people with unique skills and experiences. One of the great values of the programme lies in this network of alumni itself. The EU-Japan Centre will expand our support for the alumni activities and hope to bring as many alumni together as possible.

Thank you to all the Vulcanucians who joined the event!

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME VULCANUS IN EUROPE - ONE YEAR LATER INTERVIEW

Following up on the interview with two Vulcanus in Europe* participants, published in June 2023, we are glad to share some updates from Yudai Morita, a student at Tohoku University - Graduate School of Engineering, Department of Management Science and Technology, who carried out an internship at the Spanish company Vector Renewables under the scope of Vulcanus in Europe 2023, now back in Japan.



By **YUDAI MORITA**,
Vulcanus in Europe participant, April 2023 - March 2024

When looking back at your Vulcanus experience: did it fulfill your expectations?

-> Yes, it fulfilled my expectations. I was able to have a real life in a foreign country. Working in a company and earning money gave me a realistic view of life abroad. I came in thinking that working in a foreign country was better than working in Japan. Indeed, I learned about a different way of working through this internship, especially how to balance work and private life. However, I realized that there is no easy way to live. For example, one of my bosses had a baby and he often did remote work or left the office early to take care of the baby, but he was always working until late. I cannot forget his smile while looking at photos of his baby in the office. I also took advantage of the work flexibility and traveled a lot around Europe. These were indispensable moments but at the same time, I had to accomplish my tasks by the set deadlines. I would like to highlight that the company was willing to communicate about how I wanted to work, but also required me to contribute to the company according to our contract. My Vulcanus experience gave me a reasonable answer to work-life balance and what it is like to live in a foreign country. Therefore, it fulfilled my expectations.

Please describe your personal evolution.

-> I would say that my biggest evolution is having the courage to communicate directly. Especially, to say "No". As one can probably assume, the Spanish tend to say things more directly compared to many Japanese people. To presume and communicate indirectly is a great skill and I am honored to have that way of thinking. However, I was sometimes required to state things directly, to avoid misunderstandings. I needed to state clearly what I would like to do, and especially what I would not have been able to do.



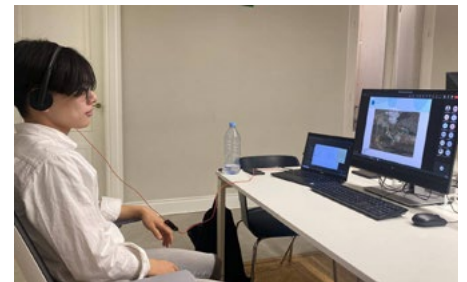
Tasks were otherwise assigned to me until I said no. Another example is when I lived in a shared house and one of my roommates doubted me taking his stuff. I directly told him that I did not do that. Later, he found it in his basket. It is important to say "No" directly. Now I have a switch to communicate in the "Japanese way" and "European way". It is not a question of which is better, but I think it is good to have both options.

Please describe your professional evolution.

-> First of all, I acquired the skill to speak Spanish for work. Furthermore, I mostly dedicated myself to assessments of solar power plants. There, I learned the process of constructing a new solar power plant and what are the obstacles. I also got to know more about Microsoft Office software.

What are your current goals and ambitions?

-> My current ambition is to get involved in renewable power plant development in Japan. Thanks to Vulcanus, I was able to have the experience of conducting an assessment of land in Spain for the purpose of constructing a power plant. I realized that many skills can be imported but there are also many features specific to Japan that require a different approach. I would like to become a bridge between global and local renewable energy development.



Any advice for other Japanese students willing to attend this programme?

-> You will face many difficulties. However, you will also face many pleasures. You will meet many people who might be your soulmate. Be optimistic and somehow manage difficulties. You can ask the Vulcanus staff at the EU-Japan Centre, teachers at the language school, supervisors in the company, or friends for help. You don't have to hesitate to ask for help.

Any funny or curious cultural shock anecdotes during your stay or after returning to Japan?

-> It mentioned that you don't have to hesitate to ask for help. Yes, people will listen to you and sympathize with you. But most will not help you. You must clearly state what you want from a person to do for your problem. Lastly, be careful with toilets. There is no toilet at train stations, if there is, you have to pay to use it. I was looking for a toilet at each place I went to. The first photo I shared with my friends after returning to Japan was a photo of a guide sign to a toilet.

VULCANUS IN EUROPE IN A NUTSHELL:

The Vulcanus in Europe programme offers EU companies an opportunity to host Japanese S&T university students as interns in R&D for a 6-month period.

Vulcanus in Europe is a 1-year programme, taking place in Japan and Europe and is divided into two main parts:

- Language Training (3-4 months): Japanese students will pre-study the language and attend a language course, with the aim of gaining a working knowledge of the EU language spoken in their future host company,
- Internship (6 months): From 15 September 2025 to 13 March 2026, students will join a company to work as interns.

Benefits for the Host Company

By taking part in the Vulcanus in Europe programme, the host company will have a valuable addition to its R&D team who can bring in a Japanese perspective and make contribution to the company's R&D projects and needs. Vulcanus interns could also assist the company in the development of its business and contact with Japan.

To know more about the "Vulcanus in Europe" and "Vulcanus in Japan" programmes please visit below links:

- ➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/vulcanus-europe> (For potential host companies based in the EU)
- ➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/ja/training-young-scientists-engineers-vine> (For Japanese students)
- ➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/vulcanus-japan> (For European students)
- ➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/ja/training-young-scientists-engineers-vinj> (For potential host companies based in Japan)

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3 OPEN CALLS FOR APPLICANTS SMART FACTORY & ROBOTICS BUSINESS MISSION IN JAPAN

The Smart Factory & Robotics Business Mission in Japan is an exclusive opportunity to immerse your business in the heart of innovation.

Scheduled on 21-24 January 2025, this mission seamlessly integrates with the 3-day Factory Innovation Week. The EU-Japan Centre is committed to providing unwavering support for its 12 selected participants, ensuring a transformative experience. Join this journey to ignite your business with the spark of innovation!



Application deadline: 30 October 2024

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/smartfactory-robotics-mission>

LIFTOFF FOR THE SPACE BUSINESS MISSION TO JAPAN, EXHIBIT AT ISIEX!

3, 2, 1... liftoff for our new Space Business Mission in Japan!



Are you a European SMEs active in the space industry? Exhibit at ISIEX with the support of the EU-Japan Centre and showcase your company to industry leaders in Tokyo.

The Centre offers 12 EU space-related SMEs and clusters the opportunity to exhibit in person at ISIEX 2025. Selected participants will have the opportunity to connect with Japanese business partners and showcase their solutions during the 3-day exhibition.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/space-business-mission-japan>

At the Centre's joint booth, mission participants will have their promotion material translated in Japanese-language posters, ensuring their products and technologies are effectively communicated to the Japanese visitors.

Moreover, the mission will include professional interpreters to ensure that participants feel confident and well-supported throughout the event.

Application deadline: 24 November 2024

WORLD CLASS MANUFACTURING TRAINING



Immerse yourself in the principles of Lean Thinking, Total Quality Management (TQM), and Total Productive Maintenance (TPM) during an exclusive visit to Japan's leading factories. This opportunity is specifically tailored for EU decision-makers with an engineering background. Limited spots are available, so act fast and apply now!

Application deadline: 14 November 2024

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/world-class-manufacturing-mission>



GET READY FOR JAPAN JUNE-JULY 2024 – 7TH EDITION

The 7th Get Ready For Japan (GRFJ) programme was organized by the EU-Japan Centre on 17-21 June for the online session and 8-12 July 2024 for the onsite session in Tokyo. In total, 17 SMEs companies from 10 EU member states benefitted from this June-July summer session.



The 2-week Get Ready for Japan scheme offers EU management and managers the unique opportunity to experience and understand both the cultural and economic elements that define and explain Japan's business achievements. The programme provides EU businesspersons with professional Japan-related expertise. It is focused on business management and consists of a combination of



lectures, case studies, role plays and company visits. This is designed to help participants become thoroughly informed about the actual conditions of Japanese business through practical analysis and research.

During the programme, EU-Japan Centre organized 9 lectures on Japanese culture, economy and marketing in Japan, 1 company visit, 2 joint seminars on

“cross-cultural communication and international business management and negotiation for international business operations” and a marketing discovery. The most important part is that within the frame of the mission, participants could also benefit from individual in-person company meetings with potential Japanese partners.

The second training of this year, GRFJ 8th, will be held in October and November. If you wish to be kept informed about the 2025 training, contact: Follow-up_CSM@eu-japan.eu ➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/get-ready-for-japan>

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

This enthralling collection of testimonials showcases the impact that the Get Ready for Japan programme had on participants. Through their testimonials, participants reveal the profound shifts in perspectives that took place as they navigated the Japanese business landscape. Assimilating invaluable lessons on adaptability, respect, and harmonious collaboration, they witnessed the efficacy of the art of Japanese business etiquette in establishing enduring connections and effective communication strategies.

“The training course provided me with a profound understanding of Japanese business relationship building, which proved invaluable during our company meetings. It offered practical insights into the cultural nuances and communication styles essential for fostering strong business connections in Japan. A significant added value was the opportunity for individual business meetings, allowing us to engage directly with companies of interest. I highly recommend this training

to anyone with ambitions in the Japanese market. It equips participants with essential skills and direct networking opportunities, making it a great resource for achieving business goals in Japan.”

By **GUNA RUBENE**, Head of Business Development, Talava SIA, <https://www.talava.lv/en>

“Attending the “Get Ready for Japan” programme was an invaluable experience for our company. The training provided deep insights into Japanese business culture, market expectations, and strategies for successful market entry. One of the most significant learnings was understanding the importance of building strong, trust-based relationships with Japanese partners, which is crucial for long-term success. We also gained practical knowledge on optimizing our supply chain to accommodate Japan's hot and humid summer climate, ensuring our products maintain their quality. Moving forward, we plan to implement these insights by refining our storage conditions and



strengthening our partnership strategies. For future participants, we recommend focusing on cultural nuances and logistical planning to effectively meet the high standards of the Japanese market. The knowledge and connections gained from this programme will undoubtedly help us grow and succeed in Japan and beyond.”

By **GRZEGORZ SIENKIEWICZ**, CEO, 4szpaki sp. z o.o. sp. K, <https://4szpaki.pl>

“The training gave me an opportunity to better understand the dynamics of business relations in Japan and showcased many useful perspectives. The assistance provided by the Centre to put me in touch with relevant parties was very welcome and created new business opportunities.”
By **JALAL VAKILI**, CEO, Ovizio SA, <https://ovizio.com>

INTERVIEW SERIES: THE PEOPLE BEHIND EU-JAPAN COOPERATION

The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation is happy to introduce the 6th instalment in a series of articles introducing the individuals and organisations making EU-Japan collaboration a reality – an interview with H.E. **ANDRE J. SPITERI**, the Ambassador of the Republic of Malta to Japan.

➔ https://missionsforeign.gov.mt/en/Embassies/me_tokyo/Pages/ME_Tokyo.aspx



Q: What is your professional background? How did you first get in contact with Japan and its culture?

André: My professional background is deeply rooted in diplomacy and international relations. I first came into contact with Japan and its culture as a student. My academic journey began as an exchange student back in 2002, when I had the privilege of studying at Kansai Gaidai University in Osaka. I returned to Malta still wanting to keep in contact with Japan, so I worked in the only Japanese restaurant in Malta at that time. A few years later I won a MEXT scholarship and started studying the Japanese language at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, and then for my post-graduate, I enrolled in Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto with my major in International Relations. Of course, these experiences when I was a student helped me immerse myself in Japanese culture, language, work ethic and also society, which naturally led to my professional engagement with Japan later in my career.

Q: Until 2020, you have been the Non-Resident Ambassador of the Republic of Malta to Japan. Could you tell us a little about the shift in Maltese policy to establish the Embassy of the Republic of Malta in Japan? What prompted the change and were there any difficulties in the process?

André: Before me, the Ambassador of Malta in China and Beijing was also accredited to Japan. The new government policy was that now there would be a Non-Resident Ambassador only to Japan and I was the first person in this position. One of my first plans and ambitions as an ambassador was

to tell the Foreign Minister that we needed to open an Embassy in Japan since it is very important to be physically present in Japan. Vice versa, Japan didn't have an embassy in Malta - it was the Japanese Ambassador in Rome that was accredited to Malta. It is very important for bilateral relations to develop, to have an embassy in each other's countries. Of course, the decision to open a resident embassy was driven also by the growing importance of Japan as a strategic partner for Malta. Suffice to say, there was the increase of bilateral trade and tourism, which helped put Japan higher on the agenda of Malta economically speaking. There was an increasing number of collaborations between our countries also in education. Malta has a very active sector of learning English as a foreign language, and Japanese students go to Malta with this aim.

One of the important milestones for this development of policy was the first official visit of a Japanese Prime Minister to Malta. The late Shinzo Abe was the first Prime Minister to officially visit Malta in May 2017, and this was the first Malta-Japan Summit. Next year there was the follow-up visit of our former Prime Minister together with a trade mission to Japan. Two Malta-Japan Summits in two years, which was unprecedented. This brought our bilateral relations to new heights, and we kickstarted the process of opening the Embassy in Japan. Of course, this was challenging because we had to open during a global pandemic in 2020. That time, as we all remember, was not very easy. There were administrative challenges, for example, opening a bank account, which wasn't simple at the time, but we managed it and are very pleased with the progress. Plus, we are very honoured that likewise, Japan opened an embassy in Malta this year. We are living history!



Q: You have received the Higashi-Kuninomiya International Culture Award (東久邇宮国際文化褒賞) in 2021 for promoting cultural ties between Malta and Japan. What do you consider as some of the biggest successes in your position as the Ambassador of the Republic of Malta to Japan?

André: First of all, I have to thank the Ambassador of Georgia for nominating me for this prestigious award. He said that he was impressed with the will and drive to open an embassy in Japan. Even when I was in Malta with limited capacity, not present in Japan, I was involved in organizing cultural events that bring both Maltese and Japanese people together, for example, exhibitions, music performances, film screenings, culinary events, academic exchanges... to name a few. I am also a firm believer when it comes to academic exchanges and partnerships between universities – besides experiencing it myself, I always believed in opening up the doors of opportunities to the people who come after me, especially the younger generation. For me, people relations are the grassroots of bilateral relations between Malta and Japan. I was also involved with the Malta Chamber of Commerce to organize the 1st EU-Japan EPA event in Malta. This was groundbreaking, back in 2016. There was another *Japanese Business Etiquette Seminar organized by the EU-Japan Centre* at a later date - they sent an expert to Malta to teach companies the way to do business with Japan and the etiquette. It was very widely attended.



Q: What are the benefits for Maltese companies to do business in Japan, and what are the differences in approach between SMEs and big companies?

André: *Japan, being the third largest economy, can offer advantages to Maltese companies as it is a very developed economy and has a very large internal market. Additionally, many companies set up offices in Japan as the country can serve as a gateway to Asia and East-Asia. They say if you make it big in Japan, you can also replicate the success in other parts of Asia as well. Furthermore, as an EU Member State, Malta and its companies are able to benefit from the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement which has removed many existing tariffs and trade barriers while also improving collaboration between the two sides in preventing future obstacles to trade. We do our best to educate and inform the Maltese businesses about such opportunities, including various **cluster missions that the EU-Japan Centre organizes** – and then do follow-up with companies that go to Japan.*

Both SMEs and large companies offer significant potential for collaboration. Due to Malta's size, it is usually easier for Maltese companies to establish contact with small and medium-sized Japanese companies, rather than the large companies. We also assist in these endeavours.

Overall, I believe that, although the Japanese market may be challenging to access initially, it is worth the effort as business relationships can last a long time and be highly rewarding. Being a small country, we do have our challenges of visibility and brand recognition. While all companies know about Germany, France, Italy, and Spain, small and especially micro-states like us have a challenge to promote our country and our history, culture and past successes. This is what we are doing, we are laying the foundation for the businesses.



Q: For almost 2 years now, you have also been acting in your role as the Malta Commissioner General to EXPO 2025 in Osaka. What were the biggest challenges you experienced during your preparation, be it administrative, legal, practical, etc.?

André: *The preparation for such a big event is very exciting, but also challenging. One of the biggest challenges has been ensuring that the Malta Pavilion effectively represents our country's heritage, values, and aspirations on the global stage. It is to make a small Malta. For the people that visit the Pavilion, we have to ensure that they get the image of what we offer as a country. From an administrative perspective, one of the biggest challenges for me as the Commissioner General was to coordinate between multiple stakeholders in both Malta and Japan, including government bodies, businesses, technical committees and cultural institutions, to make sure that we are in harmony. This requires careful planning and negotiation. The Embassy of Malta gives input on the ground, and we help connect the Malta side with that of their Japanese counterparts. We have had a few delegations coming, and more are planning to arrive. It is also a logistical challenge to start the construction. There were reports that it was not easy to find a construction company and we are having our pavilion, which is Type A, self-built. This is for us an unprecedented challenge because we have never done it before. It will be Malta's most ambitious pavilion in an expo so far. Thankfully, due to a very good concentrated and collective effort, we are navigating quite well and are on our way to have the pavilion up and running before the opening in April of 2025. We are also working on a program to make sure that these six months have a steady and exciting programme for the visitors to the pavilion.*

Q: What is the Malta Pavilion focused on and what do you expect to gain from the participation in the Osaka Expo?

André: *In a nutshell, the Pavilion will focus on Malta's rich cultural heritage, innovative spirit, and commitment to sustainability. We aim to highlight Malta as a hub of creativity and innovation, with a particular emphasis on education, IT, gastronomy, AI and Blue economy. Through our participation in the Osaka Expo, we hope to strengthen Malta's brand on the global stage and in Japan – the name recognition. It is a golden chance to have these six months, a window to Japan, to do so.*

Q: For the Japanese companies that do want to do business in Malta, do you have any advice on how to approach Maltese companies or how to approach Malta? What about Maltese companies wanting to approach Japan?

André: *One of the main important qualities of doing business in Japan is having a direct face-to-face encounter. For example, the EXPO can create opportunities for our businesses to visit Japan and likewise to host Japanese companies to Malta. This can be the start. Our main recommendation if you want to do business with Japan – you must be there for the long run, and it is important to be prepared. After you have been well equipped with knowledge, you can embark on starting a relationship with a Japanese company. There needs to be that first part, the preparation and the market research, to learn more about business partners and Japan as a whole. Having the embassy on the ground was one of our main targets and objectives – to be a window (madoguchi) to Malta. Japanese companies can also approach the embassy if they want to learn more about Malta. We can connect them with the right connections, and with the right agencies and authorities. Vice versa, sometimes Maltese companies come to us wanting to meet or get introduced, or they ask for some information about Japanese companies. We try our best to assist. That is one of the main roles of the embassy, to be a bridge or madoguchi between Malta and Japan.*

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Q: Would you like to highlight or promote any projects, either past or upcoming, that might be interesting for our subscribers?

André: I think the most ambitious projects were the establishment of the Embassy and the Malta pavilion for the EXPO. Personally, I prefer tangible projects that have a legacy rather than one-off events. For example, I am passionate about books and history, so I would like to delve more into the historical links between Malta and Japan. We have completed a book, first in English and then translated into Japanese language, about the Maltese sisters of the Order of the Sacred Heart in Nagasaki in WWII, and this proved to be quite an unknown piece of history between the two countries. We are also on

our way to publish a book on the Japanese navy during World War I in Malta and about the 1862 Mission from Japan to Europe that also stopped in Malta. Even though we will celebrate 60 years of diplomatic relations next year, in 2025, our history goes beyond that. Of course, there are other projects that are quite interesting and exciting, but we will announce them next year during the EXPO and the 60th year celebration, so please stay tuned!

Q: How do you see the relations between Malta and Japan evolving in the forthcoming years?

André: I am very optimistic. I see that Malta and Japan not only developed a strong bilateral relation, but also work together in a

multilateral way. For example, both Malta and Japan served as non-permanent members to the United Nations Security Council in 2023 and 2024. We are also aiming to increase the collaboration between our countries in fields like technology, education, sustainable development, people-to-people relations...

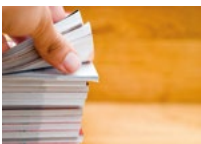
We see great potential for growth in a few areas. Tourism: we would like to make Malta a more attractive destination for Japanese tourists, and we are seeing many Japanese tourists coming to Malta. Renewable energy: which is very important for UNDG goals. Both Malta and Japan are surrounded by the sea, an important resource. Digital innovation and fintech: we are very passionate about and we look to collaborate on with Japan.

There are lots of opportunities and potential for increased relations between Malta and Japan: between the people, companies, and government institutions, and we will make sure that our embassy will back and support these initiatives.

Thank you very much Ambassador Spiteri, for your availability and enthusiasm in this interview, it has been a pleasure.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/publications/highlighting-contributors-to-eu-japan-cooperation-ambassador-andre-spiteri>

NEW REPORTING PROJECTS BY THE EU-JAPAN CENTRE



In an effort to enhance understanding and analysis of the Japanese market and its policy background, the EU-Japan Centre has launched three new reporting projects. These initiatives will provide comprehensive insights into current market trends, policy developments, regulatory changes, and economic policies that impact both domestic and international stakeholders.

Minerva Policy Reports

The Minerva Policy Reports present thorough research on the dynamic political, economic, and industrial relations between the European Union and Japan, in order to provide policymakers, academics, and business leaders with in-depth analysis and strategic perspectives on the most important policy issues facing the EU and Japan. New reports are expected to be published in early 2025.

Previous Minerva reports have covered a plethora of topics including Industrial Sectors in Japan such as Aerospace, Cosmetics, and Nanotechnology; Digital Economy; Energy such as Hydrogen, Clean Energy, and Photovoltaics; Industrial Revitalization and Circularity, and EU-Japan Business Cooperation in Third Markets.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/minerva-policy-reports>

Monthly Japanese Policy and Regulatory Developments

In order to provide European companies, business organisations and policy makers with condensed and updated information about policy and regulatory developments impacting trade and

business with and in Japan, the EU-Japan Centre has launched the new periodic publication "Japanese Policy and Regulatory Developments".

The latter will provide a review of latest policy and regulatory developments by the Japanese government and agencies that impact business and trade. This includes developments in the following policy areas: industry, energy, environment/climate, digital, economic security, and international cooperation.

Quarterly Japanese Technology and Innovation Monitoring Watch

To stay informed of the latest industrial technological and innovation developments taking place in Japan or by Japanese-affiliated companies and research organizations outside Japan, this quarterly report will offer a regular overview of those new developments, including a first analysis and assessment of their importance and expected impact. The areas covered will primarily be digital, green technologies, environmental and renewable energies, life science, machinery, robotics, materials, chemicals, aerospace, and transport.

CASE STUDY - XLAB

XLAB is an IT company founded in 2001 at the Ljubljana Technology Park in Slovenia. XLAB has since expanded into a global enterprise. It actively contributes to the European research sphere and provides services to users in more than 100 countries.



Approaching the Japanese market

XLAB's journey in Japan began in 2005, when the company was selected as one of the 30 participants in the "EU Gateway to Japan" delegation. This initiative aimed to help European IT companies with strong export potential enter the Japanese market, marking a significant milestone for XLAB. During this visit, XLAB had the opportunity to connect with OceanBridge, a Tokyo-based distributor that supports EU and US software solution providers in navigating the Japanese market.

From 2005 to 2007, intensive preparations were undertaken, including translating software user interfaces and documentation into Japanese, technically validating the systems, and establishing promotional and sales processes. Additionally, servers and other essential infrastructure were set up during this period.

After two years of preparation, the business partnership was officially launched in 2007. Since then, the business volume between XLAB and OceanBridge has been steadily increasing. Today, Japan is XLAB's top market in terms of sales. Together with OceanBridge they provide secure remote desktop solutions to prominent firms, including Nippon Life Insurance - Japan's largest insurance company, Mitsubishi Chemicals, Santec Corporation, Fujitsu, Canon, Rakuten, and more than 2,500 other Japanese companies.

Driving for Success

Entering the Japanese market is far from easy. Language and cultural differences deter many European IT companies from entering Japan. Achieving success in the Japanese market requires a multi-faceted



approach that combines in-depth market research, cultural adaptation, relationship building, regulatory compliance, and technological innovation. By understanding and respecting the unique aspects of the Japanese business environment, companies can navigate challenges and capitalize on opportunities to establish a strong presence in this dynamic market. According to XLAB, one of the most crucial aspects of conducting business in Japan is maintaining close relationships with partners and key customers: *"While many business operations can be conducted online, face-to-face meetings and relationship building are essential components of Japanese business culture. As an overseas company, you must prove that entering the Japanese market is the company's long-term strategy, not just an adventure. Demonstrating your commitment and dedication to Japanese partners and customers is vital. Trust is the foundation of doing business in Japan."*

Support from the EU-Japan Centre

EU-funded programs that assist European companies in entering the Japanese market are crucial for developing a success story in Japan, especially for SMEs, as breaking into the Japanese market requires considerable time and effort. Success is not achieved overnight, and

patience is essential. Since 2005, XLAB has participated in several EU business missions to Japan, including those managed by the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation. In 2018 the Slovenian company was selected as a participant for the Digital Business Mission.

Future Expectations

In 2023, XLAB signed a long-term agreement with Nippon Life Insurance, also known as Nissay, the largest Japanese life insurance company by revenue [...] and employing more than 70,000 people. By implementing XLAB's screen-sharing technology, Nissay is enhancing its digital transformation strategy and pioneering the shift to remote sales, enabling secure, efficient, and customer-centric online interactions. Partnering with this leader in the Japanese financial market will help XLAB further expand its business operations in the future.

In addition to achieving excellent business results in the Japanese market, the impact of Japan on XLAB's organizational culture is equally important. The company has evolved under the influence of Japanese culture, which is characterized by extraordinary diligence, discipline, precision, and mutual respect.



Text based on an interview with **JURE POMPE**, Managing Director, XLAB ➔ <https://xlab.si>

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/library/publication/case-study-xlab>

More case studies and success stories from former beneficiaries of the EU-Japan Centre's training programmes or business support missions to Japan are available on our website:

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/procedures/import-export/case-studies-and-success-stories>



LATEST MARKET ACCESS WORKSHOPS BY THE CENTRE

In its ongoing efforts to help European SMEs access the Japanese market, the EU-Japan Centre has organized on regular bases since 2015 various market access workshops to explain about the specificities of doing business in Japan, focusing on the cultural aspects or some industrial sectors.

The EU-Japan Centre is happy to announce the conclusion of five online workshops since April. Three sector-focused ones co-organized with the Polish Trade and Investment Agency, covering the renewables sector; with Manresa Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Spain) on the food sector; with the Stowarzyszenie Wolna Przedsiębiorczość (Poland) on ICT, and two on Japanese business culture co-organized with the German Foundry Association and with Arhipelago (Romania). In total, the workshops attracted 184 participants.

Interested in organizing an on-site or online workshop?

Please contact Ms Ana Horvatin at: workshops@eu-japan.eu

Please find below a testimonial from our partner in Romania, about the workshop organized this September:

"The workshop was designed to support companies preparing for the upcoming Afaceri.ro Trade Mission to Expo Osaka 2025, but also attracted participants who are generally interested in doing business in Japan. This event was one of many initiatives aimed at helping EU companies succeed in the Japanese market, especially through providing knowledge of local culture, which plays a key role in fostering successful business partnerships. The workshop was highly interactive, with a Q&A session that allowed participants to address their specific concerns and gain tailored advice on their market strategies. The session provided insights into the nuances

of Japanese business communication and how to build long-lasting, successful relationships with Japanese partners. Topics covered included the high-context communication style prevalent in Japan, as well as practical strategies for avoiding common cultural misunderstandings. Participants gained an understanding of how to approach Japanese business meetings, networking, and negotiation, ensuring they are well-prepared for future engagements in Japan.

This online event reflects the ongoing commitment of Arhipelago and the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation to facilitating business cooperation between the EU and Japan, with a strong focus on cultural understanding and practical tools for market entry."

By Mr. **NICOLA DUDANU**, Management Consultant at Afaceri.ro & Arhipelago

"ABOUT JAPAN" REPORTS AND WEBINARS

The upcoming webinars and reports below are scheduled as part of the Centre's EU Business in Japan support. For firms in the EU who require clear guidelines to trade, invest, or collaborate with Japanese partners our website offers helpful information. Over 400 reports and webinars available.

FORTHCOMING WEBINARS:

- Market Situation and Potentials for Eco-Housing Materials and Technologies in Japan, 15 October
- Mastering B2B Tech in Japan - Strategies to Reach Key Decision Makers, 05 November
- How to conduct a successful meeting with Japanese? 19 November

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events>

LATEST PUBLISHED REPORTS:

- Spirits Market in Japan



The spirits industry is highly regulated from food safety to labelling to recycling and in order to import and sell liquor in Japan, licences are required. Thus, entering the Japanese market can seem daunting and it is

often a sensible choice to work with a local partner or a locally established distributor or importer.

➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/library/publications-reports>

- Cheese Market in Japan



The cheese market is facing some challenges, such as the declining and ageing population. This affects not only the consumer base but the manufacturers as well. Indeed, the majority of farmers and cheese

manufacturers are small companies, whose main employees are mostly already over the retirement age. The current inflationary context is an additional burden to consumers and manufacturers alike.



EU-JAPAN COOPERATION CONTINUES TO STRENGTHEN UNDER ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

On 16 July 2024, the fifth meeting of the Joint Committee established under the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) heard that bilateral trade and investment relations continue to expand and deepen.

The meeting, co-chaired by European Commission Executive Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis (the EU commissioner for trade), and Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Yoko Kamikawa, reiterated the increasing strategic importance of the EPA, particularly at a time when challenges to rules-based trade are increasing globally.

The EU and Japan acknowledged progress achieved in implementing the EPA since the last Joint Committee meeting, including the entry into force of new provisions on the free flow of data, and the addition of 48 new Geographical Indications (GIs) to the agreement, which now covers a total of 423 GIs. Both sides discussed further market access improvement, and EVP Dombrovskis praised growing cooperation on offshore wind power, an area where EU businesses can meaningfully contribute to Japan's achievement of its climate goals.

The EU and Japan also exchanged views on economic security issues; they recalled the close cooperation established under the EU-Japan High Level Economic Dialogue and the Working Group on transparent, resilient and sustainable supply chains, and reiterated the importance of the G7 and WTO in strengthening the international rules-based order and ensuring a global level-playing field. Both sides welcomed the progress achieved on the WTO E-commerce Joint Statement Initiative.

Source: European Commission

➔ https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/news/eu-japan-cooperation-continues-strengthen-under-economic-partnership-agreement-2024-07-16_en

EU-JAPAN DEAL ON DATA FLOWS ENTERS INTO FORCE

On 1 July 2024, the landmark deal on cross-border data flows between the EU and Japan entered into force.

This deal is a milestone in our joint efforts to advance the digitalisation of European and Japanese societies and economies. Its provisions will facilitate business on both sides, sending a strong signal against digital protectionism.

With its inclusion in the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the agreement will deliver real benefits to companies active across most sectors, such as financial services, transport, machinery, and e-commerce. Businesses can now handle data more efficiently, without cumbersome administrative or storage requirements, in a predictable legal environment.

Source: European Commission

➔ https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/news/eu-japan-deal-data-flows-enters-force-2024-07-01_en

EU HOSTS NEW RESIDENCY FOR ART AND CULTURE CRITICS IN JAPAN

Eight selected art critics from EU Member States have been invited to Kyoto Experiment 2024 to engage in dialogue with Japanese critics and consider the future of criticism.

The Delegation of the European Union (EU) to Japan has launched "Critics in Residence @ Kyoto Experiment 2024" to explore the possibilities of criticism in culture and the arts during the international performing arts festival Kyoto Experiment 2024 (held 5-27 October). This initiative is organised by the Delegation of the European Union to Japan, operated by the Goethe-Institut Tokyo, and supported by Kyoto Experiment and the Saison Foundation.

Eight critics of culture and the arts, selected from over 100 applicants from across the EU's Member States, will be invited to Kyoto for an interactive residency together with Japanese critics. The residency aims to provide a place for the critics to share their expertise and experiences, and to reflect together on the critiques that foster an environment of art and cultural policy, and on the role of culture and art in contemporary society. Various events, including symposiums, panel discussions, workshops, and feedback sessions, will be held

during the duration of Kyoto Experiment 2024. There will also be opportunities for dialogue and exchange between the critics from the EU and Japanese critics selected by the Saison Foundation, which is a partner of this program.

In recent years, the environment surrounding criticism and discourse has changed considerably, especially due to the profound impact of social media. In many parts of the world, print media such as newspapers and magazines, which used to serve as a central platform for criticism, are now facing a crisis of existence. Meanwhile, activities that take advantage of the expressive possibilities of digital spaces are on the rise. In this context, it is important to discuss the context in which culture and art criticism is situated and what possibilities it can open up.

Details of the residency program will be continually updated on the Kyoto Experiment website:

➔ <https://kyoto-ex.jp/en>

Source: Delegation of the European Union to Japan

➔ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/japan/eu-hosts-new-residency-art-and-culture-critics-japan_en

KOBE TAKES A GROWING INTEREST IN EUROPEAN COMPANIES AND ESTABLISHES A REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE IN PARIS



Kobe City, which has developed as a business gateway for European companies, has opened a European office last year in Paris to make a further leap forward. This organization strongly supports companies that aim at establishing their Japan branch offices in Kobe, whose strengths lie in industries that specialize in the bio-medical field, aerospace and hydrogen-related technologies.

This division specifically provides support services such as company registration, bank account opening, office search, and human resource search, and reduces the financial burden at the time of starting a company by providing registration assistance and office rent subsidies. In addition, the organization endeavors to introduce companies located in Kobe to companies that may collaborate in the Kansai region and support their business expansion.

The City of Kobe is supporting the expansion of the hydrogen industry into the European market for companies that are based in the city. In line with this attempt, representatives of the local government will exhibit with companies from Kobe at the Hydrogen technology EXPO2024 to be held in Germany on 23-24 October. The point of this event will be for Kobe City to reassert its support of business matching activities with European companies. Feel free to visit Invest in Kobe's official website for more information about their activities. Source: Business Kobe Europe

➔ <https://investkobe.com>

EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES INTO OSAKA FOR FINTECH FIRMS AND INVESTORS FROM FINANCE SECTOR

Osaka, Japan's bustling metropolis, effortlessly combines ancient traditions with modern advancements. From the famous street food in Dotonbori to historic sites like Osaka Castle, the city enchants visitors with its rich cultural heritage and vibrant energy.

For European companies looking to expand, Osaka serves as a strategic gateway to the Asian market. The city's economy boasts a diverse range of thriving industries, including life sciences, chemicals, food, renewable energy, electrical equipment, and tourism. With strong infrastructure, a 24-hour international airport, a skilled workforce, and a business-friendly environment, Osaka offers abundant opportunities for growth and success.

In addition, Osaka is aiming to become a global financial city by attracting and facilitating the entry of Fintech firms and investors from the finance sector into its financial market. Various incentives are being provided, including a subsidy for base establishment, local tax reduction, and a one-stop consulting service for financial licenses, business matching, English-friendly office location, recruitment of financial professionals, and other related matters.

Investing in Osaka not only opens the door to Japan's prosperous economy but also provides a gateway for expanding into the broader Asian market. Osaka invites European financial companies to flourish in its dynamic market. Seize the chance to benefit from Japan's strong economy, explore diverse investment opportunities, and harness Osaka's vibrant business ecosystem for sustained growth and success in the heart of Asia.

For more information, please contact Osaka Global Finance One-Stop Support Center via:

f-onestop@global-financial-city-osaka.jp

Source: Pasona Group Inc.

➔ <https://global-financial-city-osaka.jp/en/onestop>

JOIN “TECH TOUR KYOTO” AND DISCOVER KYOTO’S BUSINESS STRENGTHS

Kyoto City introduces “Tech Tour KYOTO” to facilitate business networking through curated visits and startup interactions. This tour helps you understand tech and business landscape in Kyoto.

Tour Concept:

Kyoto City is arranging tailored tours, which include various opportunities to visit and interact with the local ecosystem.

- Tours can be arranged to fit a variety of needs from general business interests (i.e., “To learn about Kyoto Tech companies” or “To learn about cutting-edge technologies”) to specific business needs (i.e., “To find joint research partners” or “To find specific product suppliers”)
- Tours are generally for 10-20 participants per group, and last anywhere from a half-day to a full day.
- The tech tour office does not handle inquiries to provide arrangements for meals or sightseeing facilities, overnight lodging, etc.



Tech Tour **KYOTO**

Technical tours for experiencing the strengths of Kyoto

Tour Course:

Based on the following five courses, the tech tour office crafts custom-designed tours to address individual business needs.

1. Company Tour Courses
2. Startup Exchange Courses
3. Advanced Research Courses
4. Field-Specific Courses
5. Business Environment Tour Courses

Target Audience:

These tours are designed for companies, groups, government officials, and others from outside Japan who are considering business exchanges and network building with companies, universities, and other entities in Kyoto City.

How to Contact:

When applying, please include the following information:

- Possible dates, number of people, affiliation of participants, and desired tour content.
- Transportation method up to Kyoto City and if interpreting services are needed.



Contact: Tech Tour Kyoto Office, tec-tour-kyoto@hellokcb.or.jp TEL: +81-(0)75-708-3239

Source: Kyoto City - Industry and Tourism Bureau Business Attraction Promotion Office

➔ https://www.city.kyoto.lg.jp/sankan/cmsfiles/contents/0000329/329144/chirashi_en.pdf

➔ https://kyoto-tech-companies.com/kyoto_pavilion/top



SPOTTED PUBLICATION

The monthly magazine “Highlighting Japan” is published by the Japanese Government to help readers better understand Japan today. Latest issues: June - summer fun in Japan seaside festivals and events; July - Japanese small and medium enterprises leading the world; August - Explore the Unique Charm of Manga in Japan; September - Japan’s Enjoyable Public Aquariums.

Source: Cabinet Office, Government of Japan

➔ <https://www.gov-online.go.jp/hlj/en/>

EU-JAPAN AVIATION PARTNERSHIP PROJECT: BUILDING COOPERATION TO ENHANCE SAFETY AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE SKIES



The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the Japan Civil Aviation Bureau (JCAB) are joining hands under the EU-Japan Aviation Partnership Project (APP), a technical cooperation platform established in June 2023, to advance partnership between the two regions in civil aviation. The two aviation authorities organise activities together to share knowledge, expertise, and best practices, aiming to strengthen the European and Japanese aviation industries' resilience and high standards.



Since its launch, multiple events have been organised, bringing together authorities and industry players from the EU and Japan to keep abreast of policy trends and introduce cutting-edge technologies and safety solutions. Exchanging expert insights in rapidly advancing technology fields is essential for authorities to develop policies and regulations that facilitate their deployment.

Taking the future use of autonomy in the industry as an example, JCAB and EASA recently visited Oslo Gardermoen Airport, Tokyo Haneda Airport and Tokyo Narita Airport to evaluate progress and discuss approaches to introducing autonomous vehicles in airports. Other similar initiatives are also taking place in other fast evolving aviation domains such as Urban Air Mobility (UAM), Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) and more.



The EU-Japan APP is funded by the European Union and this first phase is meant to run until 31 December 2024. Beyond this date, a new project phase is being discussed between the respective authorities and will facilitate many more activities to continue inspiring new collaborations between the European and Japanese aviation communities. Industry stakeholders are also encouraged to submit ideas for topics to be discussed in future project activities.

Source: European Union Aviation Safety Agency

➔ <https://www.eu-japan-app.org>

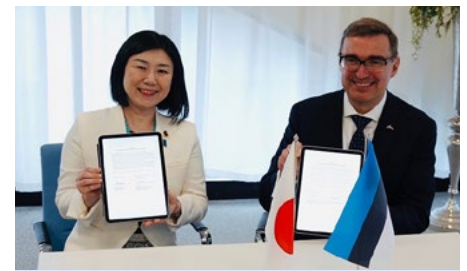
SHARING THE BEST PRACTICES BETWEEN THE DIGITAL AGENCY OF JAPAN AND ESTONIA

On 6 May 2022, during an official visit to Estonia, Dr. Karen Makishima, then Minister for Digital, signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) in the digital field with Mr. Andres Sutt, Minister for Entrepreneurship and Information Technology of the Republic of Estonia, in Tallinn.

Minister Makishima expressed her desire to leverage this MoC to establish more specific cooperation with Estonia, a digitally advanced nation that shares common values. She emphasized the importance of enhancing mutual understanding of innovative digital government practices, sharing expertise to address social challenges, promoting joint events, and advancing collaboration in the Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT) initiative.

The objective of the Memorandum of Cooperation was to promote

collaboration and enhance mutual understanding between Japan's Digital Agency and the Estonian Ministry of Economy and Communications. Key areas of cooperation include exchanging best practices, experiences, and expertise in innovative and effective digital government solutions, policies, and regulations, as well as exploring innovative public procurement and governance models. The MoC also aims to explore the possibility of formalizing an arrangement for the exchange of experts or officials to deepen potential areas of cooperation.



At the time of the MoU signature in 2022

From May to July 2024, the Digital Agency of Japan dispatched an expert to Estonia to analyze the i-voting system more closely. The current Minister for Digital Transformation, Mr. Taro Kono, is considering introducing online voting in Japan, starting with Japanese nationals living overseas, utilizing the My Number card. This cooperation between Japan's Digital Agency and Estonia serves as a strong example of how best practices and experiences can be shared across borders between countries with similar needs.

Source: Embassy of Estonia in Tokyo

GREEN NET FINLAND AND TEHNOPOL STARTS THE FINESTJAP PROJECT WITH A **FINNISH-ESTONIAN EXPORT MISSION TO JAPAN**

The FINESTJAP Project invites Finnish and Estonian Green Tech SMEs with export-ready products and services to join a new export collaboration. FINESTJAP started in June 2024 and continues until May 2027. It is run by two experienced project organizations Green Net Finland (FI) and Tehnopol Science Park (EST). Green Net Finland is a Finnish cleantech network and project organization based in Helsinki and Tehnopol is the largest Science and Business Park in the Baltics. FINESTJAP project is co-funded by the Interreg Central Baltic program of the European Union.



The committed companies will get skills training and external market expert services from the project. Joint business missions to Japan will be arranged with the main goal of the companies reaching deals in Japan. The missions will take place between spring 2025 and spring 2027.

Business support organisations, interested green technology developers, and green technology trade and export experts in Japan and the Central Baltic region (Finland, Estonia, East Sweden) are warmly welcomed to collaborate with FINESTJAP.

How an organisation can benefit from FINESTJAP:

1. Adding to their network qualified Finnish and Estonian Green-tech SMEs with the competence to start action in the Japanese market.
2. Allowing Finnish and Estonian Green Tech to obtain increased attention and recognition in Japan.

3. Forming new company-organisation mini clusters with green tech players in specific fields (e.g. energy).

4. Bringing European and Japanese Green-tech organisations and companies closer together and strengthens their collaboration.

Relations between Japan and Finland

In 2019 Japan and Finland celebrated 100 years of diplomatic relations and the two countries have a mutual understanding based on democracy, peace, and scientific and cultural values. Leaders of Japan and Finland have in 2016 signed a shared Strategic Partnership Statement, which expresses the will to stimulate mutual trade and investment, among other goals. In 2019 the EU-Japan Economic partnership agreement entered into force. Direct flights between the countries have existed since 1983.

Contact in Finland: ilkka.aaltio@gnf.fi
Mr. Ilkka Aaltio, Project manager,
Green Net Finland <https://gnf.fi/en>

Relations between Japan and Estonia

The relationship between Japan and Estonia is warm and friendly, based on shared values such as openness to innovation, democracy, and a market economy. Both countries have expressed interest in cooperation in technology and digitalization, including e-governance and cybersecurity. Estonia's reputation as an e-state and digital society is well known in Japan, offering Estonian tech companies a potential market in Japan. Cooperation with Japan may include areas such as digital technology, green technology, renewable energy solutions, and smart cities, where Estonia's innovative solutions can resonate in the Japanese market.

Source: Green Net Finland and Tehnopol

Contact in Estonia:
ragmar.saksing@tehnopol.ee
Mr. Ragmar Saksing, GreenTech Sector
Manager, Tehnopol,
<https://www.tehnopol.ee/en/about>

INVITATION TO THE 2ND DIGITAL AUTOMOTIVE SUMMIT

17 OCTOBER 2024, TOKYO, JAPAN



The 2nd EBC Digital Automotive Summit will bring together industry, policy and advocacy leaders of the Japanese and European Automotive Industry.

Expanding and building on speakers' keynotes, the event will discuss the industry's future against the backdrop of an accelerated pace of digitalization and increasingly feeble markets. Viewed through a Japanese-European prism, the event will be focusing on the disruptive forces of innovation generally, and Gen AI, specifically. AI, data policies and cybersecurity are important cooperation topics in the EU-Japan Digital Partnership – a partnership for innovation & industry and digital future.

Expected speakers: Jean-Eric Paquet, Ambassador of the European Union to Japan; Ludger Trockel, CSO, TDK Corp; Ko Miyoshi, CMO, Tier IV; Peter Fatelnig, Minister-Counsellor, EU Delegation to Japan; Kai Bartlmae, CFO, Daimler Financial Services; Takuya Kuda, Partner Quantum Black, McKinsey & Company; Koichiro Takahara, CEO, NearMe. Source: European Business Council in Japan

➔ <https://japan.ahk.de/en/events/coming-events/event-details-en/2nd-digital-automotive-summit>

ROMANIA IS ORGANIZING A **TRADE MISSION TO ENHANCE ROMANIAN-JAPANESE RELATIONS AT EXPO 2025 OSAKA**

In April 2025, a group of Romanian businesses will participate in a trade mission to Japan, organized by the company Arhipelago, through the program Afaceri.ro, in collaboration with local partners and the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation.

This mission, which coincides with Expo Osaka 2025, aims to foster stronger business relations between EU and Japanese companies, providing opportunities for networking, knowledge exchange, and exploring potential partnerships.

In addition to the expo itself, the mission's agenda includes B2B meetings, study visits, and cultural experiences. These activities are designed to enhance understanding of the Japanese market and the cultural nuances of doing business in Japan, a crucial factor for companies looking to establish long-term collaborations.

During the trade mission, participants will have the opportunity to engage with local businesses and key stakeholders across multiple sectors, including technology, manufacturing, and innovation.



This mission is part of the larger Afaceri.ro initiative to support EU companies in expanding their presence in Japan, backed by the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), which offers ongoing support throughout the mission.

This trade mission is an important step toward fostering deeper collaboration between EU companies and Japanese

partners, and represents an opportunity for EU-based SMEs to explore new business avenues in the Japanese market, a sector known for its high standards, innovation, and demand for quality products and services. Afaceri.ro is inviting delegates from different countries to participate in the Trade Mission.

Source: Afaceri.ro

➔ <https://www.afaceri.ro/misiunea-economica-afaceri-ro-expo-osaka-2025>

FRENCH AGRI-FOOD INNOVATION CLUSTER CONTINUES TO NURTURE **FRENCH AND JAPANESE COLLABORATION**

Located in the Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region in Eastern France, the agri-food innovation cluster Vitagora has tied strong relationships with its Japanese partners for more than 15 years. Since the covid-19 crisis, Vitagora has opened a subsidiary office in Kumamoto, Japan, to deepen these relationships and find out new opportunities that could lead to a better world through food and health.

2023 has been a fruitful year as Vitagora organized the French & Japanese symposium on fermentation and innovation. This September, another symposium took place in Dijon, the theme being "soil microorganisms interactions". Whilst Vitagora's efforts mainly concentrate on academic and industrial activities, its links with Japan has also led local institutions to collaborate. In 2023, Dijon metropole and Kumamoto prefecture have agreed to a collaboration regarding several aspects, such as industrial collaboration, but also culture and tourism.

Vitagora will celebrate its 20 years in 2025 at its annual networking event "Vitaconnect" that will take place on 8 April 2025, but also as a partner for the France pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka. The cluster will participate at the "Land and food : striving for sustainable production and consumption practices" fortnight, on 13-30 April 2025, and will also hold an "agricultural and agrifood innovation day" with conferences and workshops highlighting goals and challenges of sustainable food. Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region's gourmet products will also be showcased with tasting sessions. This mission will gather diverse Vitagora network members, from regional SMEs to national big companies, all involved in food excellence and innovative initiatives to lead to a more sustainable world. It will also be the opportunity for B2B meetings to be held and to develop international partnerships.

Source: Vitagora ➔ <https://www.vitagora.com/en>





EUREKA GLOBALSTARS JAPAN 2024 CALL FOR COLLABORATIVE R&D PROJECTS

The Eureka Network has announced the GlobalStars Japan Call for Projects 2024, a significant opportunity for companies in Japan to engage in collaborative research and development (R&D) with others worldwide.

Companies from Japan, Austria, Canada, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Singapore and UK, are eligible to submit proposals that address various industry challenges, from technology advancements to new product development – excluding technologies associated with nuclear power and drug discovery.

In addition to the funding opportunity, the call is supported by a dedicated matchmaking platform, designed to help companies find suitable partners for their projects. This platform, available at Eureka GlobalStars Japan Round 3 Matchmaking (<https://eureka-globalstars-japan-round-3.b2match.io>), provides a space for interested participants to connect, discuss project ideas, and establish partnerships. The deadline for proposal submissions is 4/12/2024. The national application submission deadline may differ between the participating national funding agencies!

Source: Austrian Research Promotion Agency GmbH

➔ <https://eukanetwork.org/opencalls/globalstars-japan-call-for-projects-2024>



EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION JOINS TOURISM EXPO JAPAN 2024 WITH LARGEST-EVER BOOTH

The European Travel Commission (ETC) is excited to participate in Tourism EXPO Japan, which took place on 26-29 September 2024, at Tokyo Big Sight, Japan. This year, ETC showcased the largest booth ever, highlighting the richness of European travel opportunities.



The Japanese market has long been an important source of international travellers to Europe. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan ranked as the fifth-largest outbound travel market to European destinations. However, the impact of the pandemic and the ongoing conflict in Ukraine have made Japanese consumers more cautious about resuming overseas travel.

Despite these challenges, European destinations remain committed to the Japanese market and are eagerly preparing for the return of Japanese tourists. This year's EUROPE pavilion at Tourism Expo Japan was the largest ever, featuring representatives from 18 members and partners of the European Travel Commission.

Mr. Eduardo Santander, Executive Director of the European Travel Commission, attended the event and participated in the Ministerial Roundtable hosted by the fair organisers on September 26. During the expo, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between ETC and the Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA). This agreement aims to foster collaboration on projects that promote sustainable development of the tourism sector, ensure the protection of cultural heritage,

enhance the overall visitor experience, while maintaining the quality of life of local communities and environment and contribute to the local economy.

"This agreement focuses on sharing best practices and strengthening our joint efforts in promoting sustainable and responsible tourism," stated Santander. *"Together, we aim to cultivate environmentally and socially conscious travel habits in both Europe and Japan, ensuring a sustainable future for the tourism industry."*

Visitors to the exhibition also had the chance to engage with Europe in an entertaining manner participating in quizzes about Europe and joining a stamp rally that further enriched their experience. The European Travel Commission represents the national tourism organisations of Europe. Established in 1948, ETC's mission is to strengthen the sustainable development of Europe as a tourist destination and to promote Europe in third markets. Its 36-member tourism boards work together to build the value of tourism for all the diverse European destinations through cooperation in sharing best practices, market intelligence and promotion.



Source: European Travel Commission

➔ www.etc-corporate.org

A GLOBAL STAGE FOR ITALIAN VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY

The Tokyo Game Show 2024, a premier event in the global video game industry, was held at the Makuhari Messe exhibition center in Chiba from September 26 to 29. Attracting nearly 800 exhibitors, the event showcased a wide array of innovations, from console and PC games to virtual reality, the metaverse, and artificial intelligence.

For the first time, the Trade Promotion Section of the Italian Embassy organized an Italian national pavilion, with 14 Italian companies to highlight Italy's growing expertise in video game development and interactive technology. This initiative was bolstered by a range of promotional activities, including advertising on the event's website, social media campaigns and a dedicated web page. Thanks to the Official Exhibitor Program, the companies also gained global visibility through streaming platforms like Twitch and YouTube.

The video game market in Italy continues to grow, becoming an increasingly important sector in the national economy. In 2023, the sector's turnover exceeded EUR 2 billion, a 10% increase over the previous year. This growth is fueled by several factors, including the rise of video game enthusiasts, the development of independent games and the expansion of virtual and augmented reality technology.



TOKYO GAME SHOW 2024

According to the annual report of IIDEA (Italian Interactive Digital Entertainment Association), which provides data on the Italian video game market, including the number of active gamers and their demographics, Italy currently ranks fourth in Europe in terms of number of gamers, with more than 15 million active users, a large proportion of whom are young people between the ages of 15 and 34. Italians spend an average of eight hours a

week gaming, mainly using consoles and PCs, but with a growing interest in mobile games. This latest edition of the Tokyo Game Show reaffirmed its role as a pivotal event in the industry, fostering connections among developers, publishers, and fans worldwide, while also providing Italy with a valuable opportunity to showcase its growing potential.

Source: Trade Promotion Section, Embassy of Italy - Tokyo

➔ <https://www.ice-tokyo.or.jp/event-category4/tokyo-game-show-2024>

JAPANESE JOURNALISTS VISITED POLAND BEFORE EXPO 2025

Picturesque Gdańsk, the majestic Malbork Castle, and the historic Kraków. These are just some of the many places visited by eight Japanese journalists during the press trip organized as part of promotional activities preceding Poland's participation in Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai.

During the visit, the journalists discovered the richness of Polish heritage and experienced how important a role it still plays today. The mission was also an opportunity for many inspiring meetings with representatives of regions and cultural institutions, which allowed foreign guests to better understand Poland – both its past and present.

The journalists met with representatives of the Polish Investment and Trade Agency, the Marshal's Office of the Pomeranian Region, the Museum of Japanese Art and Technology Manggha, the Tourism Organization of the Małopolska Region

and the Fryderyk Chopin Institute.

"During the visit, I had the opportunity to immerse myself in Polish culture, interact with people, and experience the cuisine. I saw a side of Poland that I hadn't imagined before. I would like to share this image, pass it to people in Japan using my own words also using the Expo context" – Gaku Watanabe, Fuji TV.

Every element of the press trip's program was connected to the main theme of Poland's participation in Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai – "Poland. Heritage that drives the future", as well as what Poland will showcase at the Expo within the



national pavilion, internal exhibition, and economic and cultural events.

Business and journalistic missions are one of the initiatives of Poland's economic programme at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai. As part of the promotional activities preceding the Expo, Japanese entrepreneurs and journalists – a total of 74 people – will be invited to Poland to participate in 7 inbound missions.

Source: Polish Investment and Trade Agency
<https://expo.gov.pl/news/japanese-journalists-visited-poland/?lang=en>

A JAPANESE CHERRY BLOSSOM IS PLANTED IN JOENSUU, FINLAND

On 31 August 2024, His Excellency Mr. Takashi Okada, the Japanese Ambassador to Finland, and Mr. Markus Hirvonen, North Karelia Region Mayor, planted an Ezo-Yama Sakura cherry blossom seedling at Kirkkopuisto (Church Park) in Joensuu, the capital of North Karelia, as well as Forest Capital of Europe.



The Sakura tree is Hokkaido Finland Association's gift to the BIOSYS North Karelia International Growth Ecosystem as a public, growing symbol of the collaborations between Nagano Prefecture, Ina City, Hokkaido Prefecture of Japan and North Karelia.

Ambassador Okada remarked, "I would like to congratulate all those involved in this BIOSYS project for the excellent cooperation they have established between Finland and Japan. I also like to thank the Hokkaido-Finland Society for donating the cherry tree." And he continued, "I hope the Sakura tree we have just planted will put down roots, grow tall to carry many cherry blossoms every year here in Joensuu, as a sign of the friendship between Finland and Japan."

The Ecosystem is run by Natural Resources Institute Finland (LUKE) as a project lead, Regional Council of North Karelia, University of Eastern Finland and



ProAgria Eastern Finland / MKN Eastern Finland. BIOSYS Ecosystem is grateful for the precious gift of a living tree – a visual reminder of the region-to-region cooperations among public/governmental organizations, commercial endeavors, and research development and innovation institutions.

Representatives from the strategic partners and Joensuu City Council members planted three Sakura seedlings near the Ezo-yama Sakura to keep company.

Mr. Hirvonen said: *"The planting of the Sakura tree is a very important sign of cooperation between Finland and Japan. In the Province of Wood, wood represents a good future and continuity of life for us. Now we have a concrete place in Joensuu to demonstrate good cooperation with Japan".* Many residents of Joensuu and taskforce members of the BIOSYS Ecosystem attended the event and celebrated the very special occasion.

Source: Regional Council of North Karelia

10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF GERMAN-JAPANESE PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S NETWORK

The "German-Japanese Professional Women's Network (GJPWN)" has been dedicated to connecting Japanese and German working women and offering a space for mutual learning. To commemorate its 10th anniversary on 16 June 2024, a special event was organised. Twenty professionals from both countries attended, enjoying drinks and crêpes in a warm, friendly atmosphere.



Ms. Terumi Ezuka, Representative of GJPWN, opened the event by sharing the community's background and expressing heartfelt gratitude. Following this, the attendees were treated to insightful lectures from distinguished guest speakers.

"Germany and Japan share structural similarities. How have women fought for and won their rights?"

Dr. Dr. h.c. Michiko Mae, professor in the Department of Modern Japanese Studies at Heinrich-Heine University Düsseldorf, discussed the history of Japan's women's movement, also covered in

her book. She highlighted structural similarities between Germany and Japan in terms of working conditions and women's issues, emphasising the importance of understanding the historical context of women's societal advancements in both countries, a key theme for the community. *"Through various encounters and a series of fortunate coincidences, we are where we are today. And the times have changed."* Dr. Michiko Nakagawa Fehlberg, a gynaecologist, then shared her personal journey. Speaking candidly as a woman rather than a physician, she recounted her challenges and the serendipitous encounters that influenced her career and life, providing concrete and relatable anecdotes. The event concluded with a networking session, where participants, speakers, and organisers engaged in enthusiastic discussions, transcending cultural and professional boundaries. Source: GJPWN

PARTNERING OPPORTUNITIES



JAPANESE COMPANIES LOOKING FOR PARTNERS IN THE EU ➔ <https://www.eu-japan.eu/een/opportunities>

REQUEST FOR DISTRIBUTORS

Sector: Sector: optical instruments
100 years old Japanese SMEs is offering its high-tech optical instruments and microscopes
Profile ID: [BOJP20240618015](#)



REQUEST FOR DISTRIBUTOR

Sector: Sector: machinery
A Japanese company is offering lathe chucks and Electrical Discharge Machining tables
Profile ID: [BOJP20240702019](#)

REQUEST FOR DISTRIBUTOR

Sector: household equipment
Japanese manufacturer of tubes and spare parts for air-conditioning systems is looking for EU distributors
Profile ID: [BOJP20240711003](#)

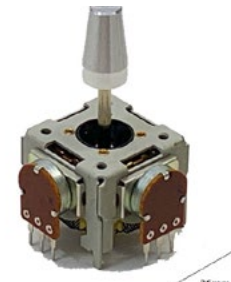


REQUEST FOR PARTNERS

Sector: services
A Japanese SME is looking for EU partners to localise a methodology for human resources engagement and team building improvements
Profile ID: [BOJP20240702016](#)

SERVICES OFFERED

Sector: space
A Japanese company offers project opportunities to EU companies in space operations and ground segment infrastructure
Profile ID: [BOJP20240730001](#)



REQUEST FOR SALES AGENT

Sector: electronics
Japanese electronic components manufacturer offers its miniaturised potentiometers, joysticks and slip rings
Profile ID: [BOJP20240827009](#)

EEN EVENTS

B2B OPPORTUNITIES FOR EU AND JAPANESE SMES

➔ <https://een.ec.europa.eu/events>

MEDICA 2024

11-14 November 2024, Online, Dusseldorf, Germany

Sector: healthcare

Registration deadline: 13 November 2024

On the occasion of MEDICA (<https://www.medica-tradefair.com>), the global No. 1 meeting place for the medical sector, EEN partner ZENIT GmbH will organise an international Brokerage Event. The aim is to assist enterprises, universities and research institutions in finding partners in Europe for product development, manufacturing and licensing agreements, joint ventures or other types of partnership.

➔ <https://medica-b2b-2024.b2match.io>



DEICY 2024

25-29 November 2024,

Warsaw, Poland

Sector: digital, ICT

Registration deadline: 29

November 2024



The EEN partner University of Warsaw is organizing a physical B2B event with workshops sessions within the frame of DEICY 2024 Digital Economy, Internet of Things, Cybersecurity. The goal of this international brokerage event is to create a strong network of research and development institutions, business and industry partners, European and national institutions, non-government organizations in close relation for better knowledge and understanding of the digital transformation in areas: digital economy & society, artificial intelligence, machine learning, deep learning, data science, industry 4.0, cybersecurity, internet of things...

➔ <https://deicy2024.b2match.io>



DATE/LOCATION	DETAILS	CONTACTS
15 October 2024	WEBINAR About Japan webinar series 238: Market Situation and Potentials for Eco-Housing Materials and Technologies in Japan	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events
1 November 2024 Tokyo, Japan + online	CONFERENCE Journée Francophone de la Recherche 2024	Sciencescope, Embassy of France in Japan https://www.sciencescope.org/jfr-2024/
5 November 2024	WEBINAR About Japan webinar series 239: Mastering B2B Tech in Japan - Strategies to Reach Key Decision Makers	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events
21-25 Oct. 2024 Online 11-15 Nov. 2024 Tokyo, Japan	TRAINING MISSION Get Ready for Japan - new format	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation https://www.eu-japan.eu/get-ready-for-japan
19 November 2024	WEBINAR About Japan webinar series 240: How to conduct a successful meeting with Japanese?	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation https://www.eu-japan.eu/eubusinessinjapan/events
29-30 November 2024 Tokyo, Japan	NETWORKING ACE Japon 5th Meeting and 10th Anniversary	Association of Spanish Scientists of Japan https://en.acejapon.jp/actividades2024/v-encuentro-y-x-aniversario
2-5 December 2024 Tokyo, Japan	BUSINESS MISSION Innovation Business Mission	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/innovation-mission
21-24 January 2025 Tokyo, Japan	BUSINESS MISSION Smart Factory / Robotics Business Mission Application deadline: 30 October 2024	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/smartfactory-robotics-mission
17-21 February 2025 Nagoya, Japan	TRAINING MISSION World Class Manufacturing Application deadline: 14 November 2024	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation https://www.eu-japan.eu/world-class-manufacturing
19-21 Feb 2025 Tokyo, Japan	BUSINESS MISSION Green Business Mission Application deadline: 6 December 2024	EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation https://www.eu-japan.eu/events/green-mission



EU-Japan Centre
for Industrial Cooperation
一般財団法人 日欧産業協力センター

The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation was established in 1987 as a core organization to implement industrial cooperation between the EU and Japan. It aims at promoting all forms of industrial, trade and investment cooperation between the EU and Japan and at improving EU and Japanese companies' competitiveness and cooperation by facilitating exchanges of experience and know-how between EU and Japanese businesses.

This quarterly newsletter is produced by the EU-based office of the EU-Japan Centre, and is intended to provide EU/Japan-related news.

ANY EU-JAPAN-RELATED NEWS?

Feel free to contact us if you would like your EU-Japan-related news/event to be announced in our forthcoming newsletter : newsletter@eu-japan.eu

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The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation is co-funded by the European Union and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union, the METI or the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA). Neither the European Union nor METI, nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

