



The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation

Mission

- To promote all forms of industrial, trade and investment cooperation between the EU and Japan (Statutes and rules of procedures of the Centre, 2004);
- To contribute to industrial cooperation between EU and Japanese companies (Council decision of 18 May 1992, confirming the consolidation of the Centre);
- To strengthen the technological capabilities and the competitiveness of the European industrial system (Council decision of 18 May 1992, confirming the consolidation of the Centre).

Organisation

A unique venture between the European Commission and the Japanese Government, the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation has become an effective bridge between European and Japanese business people. It is a non-profit organisation aimed at improving EU and Japanese companies' competitiveness and cooperation by facilitating exchanges of experience and know-how between EU and Japanese businesses. The EU-Japan Centre has its head office in Tokyo and an office in Brussels. It is headed by two General Managers, Mr. Julien Guerrier and Mr. Hiroshi Tsukamoto, and has a total staff of 27 persons.

Budget

620 million yens for fiscal year 2008 (+/- 4 million €), funded by:

- the Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission;
- the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan;
- contributions from EU and Japanese business.

History

- 15 May **1987**: The Centre is established jointly by the EU and Japan as an instrument mainly aimed at helping the EU redress its trade and investment balance with Japan.
- 18 May **1992**: Council decision confirming the permanent establishment of the Centre
- **1995-1996**: EU-Japan relations are not characterized by trade frictions anymore, but rather by industrial and economic cooperation. A major rethink of the Centre's purpose and structure led to a rebalancing of the Centre's activities, with the establishment of an office in Brussels, with the launch of the Vulcanus programme, which is symmetrical, and with the Secretariat of the EU-Japan Business Round Table being given to the Centre (see section below on the Round Table).
- **2008**: The Centre is entering its third decade of operation. The three above-mentioned missions

of the Centre remain valid. The various programmes run by the Centre (Vulcanus Programme, management training programmes for senior EU executives) have gradually built up a reservoir of some 2000 engineers and executives that take today an active part in EU-Japan trade and investment in their respective companies. The World Class Manufacturing Programme for production engineers is more successful than ever, underlining that Japan remains the world leader for industrial competitiveness, and that learning from them contributes to the improvement of EU competitiveness. However, the EU and Japan are increasingly facing same or similar challenges, such as global warming, the need for new environmental regulations, concerns regarding access to energy and raw materials, competition from emerging countries. The European Commission and METI have therefore required the Centre to develop new activities closer to the immediate priorities of the EU and the Japanese authorities and to the needs of industry, as expressed in the annual conclusions of the EU-Japan Industrial Policy Dialogue and in the annual recommendations of the EU-Japan Business Round Table.

Activities

- **New activities as of 2008:** the Centre has started to organise events where EU and Japanese policies in specific areas of joint interest are presented and confronted, so that EU and Japan business people, academics and policy-makers can share best practices and identify areas for future cooperation, with a view to providing feedback to the European Commission and METI. Such issues include:
 - **Energy, environment and climate change;**
 - **Foreign Direct Investments:** wake-up call conference by Commissioner Mandelson and METI Vice-Minister Toyoda; investment promotion seminars for specific regions and industrial sectors; training programmes for EU investors; CSR Dialogue; managerial workshop for Japanese companies in Europe, etc.;
 - **Industrial Policy:** competition law; development of converging standards; IPR issues; SME policies, etc;
 - **Asian perspective:** cooperation between EU and Japanese companies in Asia.
- **SME-related services:**
 - H RTP (training programme in Japan for senior executives from EU SMEs)
Together with Vulcanus (for graduate and post-graduate students, see below) and ETP (Executive Training Programme for junior executives), H RTP completes the range of training programmes addressing the needs of EU business, by targeting senior executives. These "Human Resources Training Programmes (H RTP)" are shorter programmes (one month) which provide an in-depth approach to examine Japanese industrial structure, business practices and management through lectures, field trips and individual company visits.
 - Topical trainings on "Distribution and Ubiquitous Networks": a 5/8-day mission in Japan

helping European companies to gain a practical understanding of the Japanese distribution system, of how existing distribution chains (from manufacturers to retailers) successfully adjust their strategy to develop segmentation and product differentiation in the Japanese market, of the Japanese way of achieving customer satisfaction, and thus to acquire practical tools useful for building an effective marketing strategy for the Japanese / Asian markets.

- **Information service:** the Centre answers EU and Japanese business inquiries about Japan or the EU respectively, is an EU Information Centre (EUi) and intends to develop the European Enterprise Network in Japan. It offers support to SME missions to Japan and launches seminars targeted at European SMEs.

- **Innovation:**

- topical missions on World Class Manufacturing for European executives: an intensive 5/8-day mission in Japan about improvement of productivity, assisting managers and executives from EU companies to acquire a better understanding of key Japanese business practices & manufacturing methods: 'KAIZEN' (incremental improvement), 'JIT' (Just in Time), 'TQC' (Total Quality Control) and 'TQM' (Total Quality Management). Includes visits to some of the world's most advanced factories.

- support to Research programmes.

- **In-company traineeship for students:** “Vulcanus in Japan” is a one-year programme including a 4-month intensive Japanese language training (+ lectures on Japanese economy, industry, culture and company visits) and an 8-month traineeship in a Japanese company, for engineering and scientific graduate and post-graduate students. “Vulcanus in Europe” is the reverse programme to the EU for Japanese students.

- **EU-Japan Business Round Table (BRT).**

The EU-Japan Business Round Table was created in **1995**. Since then, the chief executives of about 50 leading EU and Japanese enterprises meet every year for 'roundtable' discussions.

Objective: review the factors affecting all aspects of business cooperation between the EU and Japan and handover policy recommendations to the President of the European Council, the President of the Commission and the Japanese Prime Minister.

- **Immediate action items** recommended at the last BRT meeting (**July 2008**):

- The BRT adopted a report presented by the **taskforce** established the previous year by the BRT to explore the feasibility of an EU-Japan **Economic Integration Agreement**.

- “Take realistic and concentrated measures to **promote foreign direct investment**” (FDI) (Open investment regimes; Protect intellectual property rights (IPR), etc)

- “Promote **harmonisation of accounting standards**”

- Information & Communication Technologies (ICT):** “Support industry initiatives to

utilize ICT's potential to develop a low-carbon society"; "Review copyright levy system"; "Support the development of Next Generation Networks for a dynamic society", etc.

-World Trade Organisation: "Continue efforts for a successful outcome of the Doha Round"; "The opening of the OECD markets has to be matched by significant trade liberalization efforts from emerging countries", etc.

-Life Sciences and Biotechnology: "Re-evaluate biotechnology strategy and implement prioritised action plans without delay"; "Develop GM plants and improve the environment that supports their utilization by cooperation between the EU and Japan".

-Sustainable development: "Appropriate policies are necessary for the accelerated diffusion and expanded use of energy-efficient equipment and facilities, as well as nuclear energy and renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power in order to prevent global warming"; "All carbon-emitting countries must participate, share reasonable and feasible GHG emission reduction targets and agree on carefully assessed methods to achieve them".