



European Union and Japan

Partnership towards a common future

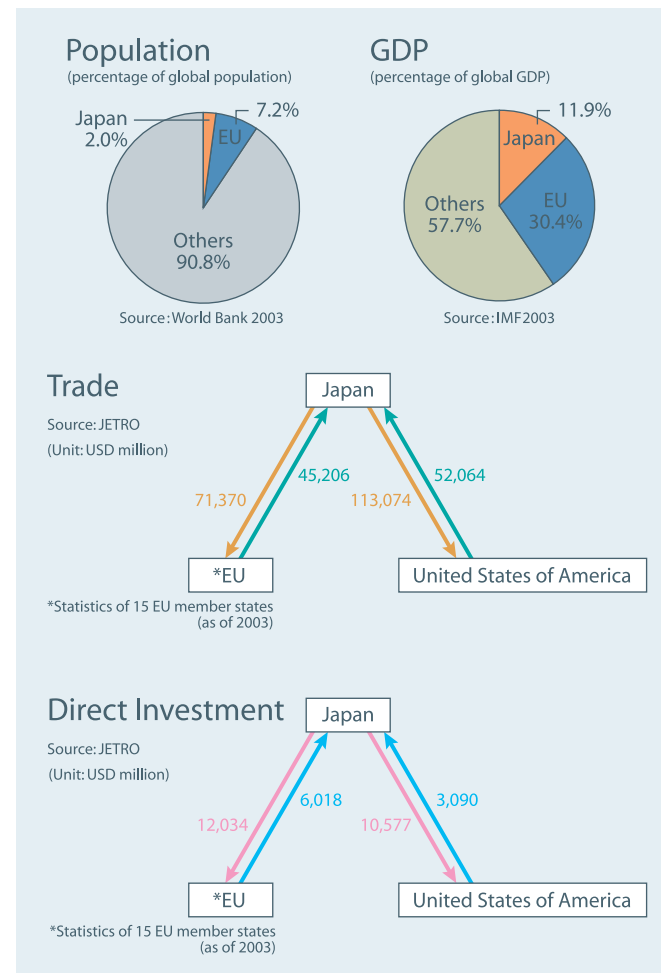


Seeking stronger relations between the European Union and Japan. 2005 is the “EU-Japan Year of People-to-People Exchanges.”

The European Union and Japan have a long history of exchanges: close cooperative relations that have been built based on the common values of freedom, democracy and the market economy.

The “Decade of EU-Japan Cooperation” launched in 2001 and, on the basis of the “Action Plan for EU-Japan Cooperation,” various cooperative initiatives are being undertaken with a view to promoting global peace and prosperity. At the 11th EU-Japan Summit Meeting that was held in July 2002, the European Union and Japan agreed to designate 2005 – the middle year in the “Decade of EU-Japan Cooperation” – as the “EU-Japan Year of People-to-People Exchanges,” with the aim of giving a further boost to exchanges at the people’s level, which forms the cornerstone of the cooperation between the EU and Japan.

We hope that the Year will be an opportunity to develop political, cultural and economic cooperation between the enlarged European Union of twenty-five Member States and Japan and to build a stronger partnership towards a common future.



Politics

The European Union and Japan are global partners that share the fundamental values of democracy, human rights and the market economy. Based on this recognition and since the July 1991 adoption of the “EC-Japan Joint Declaration,” the EU and Japan have been cooperating, inter alia, in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and Sri Lanka and the democratization of the Balkan Region with a view to promoting international peace and security. The EU and Japan are also exchanging opinions and cooperating on common challenges such as the ageing of society and the environment.



Ministerial Conference on Peace Consolidation and Economic Development of the Western Balkans

In April 2004, Ireland (then EU presidency) and Japan co-hosted a meeting to discuss measures to consolidate peace and promote economic development in the Western Balkans.

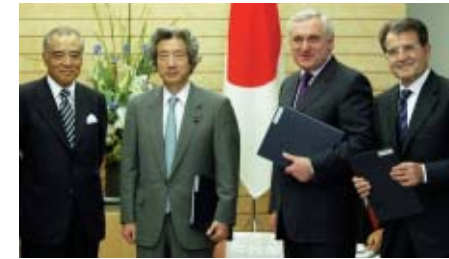
▲ Friendship football match between the Western Balkans Ministerial team and the Japanese Diet Members’ team



The logo for the “EU-Japan Year of People-to-People Exchanges” was unveiled at the EU-Japan Summit Meeting press conference held in June 2004 (from the right: Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi, Irish Prime Minister Ahern, President Prodi [then President of the European Commission]).

Economics

As of 2003, the European Union accounted for 30.4 percent of global GDP and Japan for 11.9 percent, making for a total of 42.3 percent of the world economy. In addition, the EU is the biggest investor in Japan and there is growing interdependence in bilateral trade.



▲ The EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table (BDRT) has been held every year since 1999. Policy recommendations made by BDRT are presented to leaders of EU and Japan.

EU-Japan Investment Relations

Various Japanese industries such as auto and electronic goods manufacturers have been investing in the EU market. At the same time, there is a huge potential for the generation of great values by EU investment, as Japan has high-tech industries, namely, the nanotechnology, environmental technology, advanced materials, robotics, communications, as well as sophisticated design, demand for high quality, a safe environment, advanced quality control and infrastructure. For example, the “Sendai-Finland Wellbeing Center” in the City of Sendai, which is the joint project between the city and the

government of Finland, is expected to conduct research and development jointly by Finnish and Japanese companies and universities, and to provide services to the elderly.



▲ Sendai-Finland Wellbeing Center: R&D Unit (Left), Care Unit (Right)

Culture

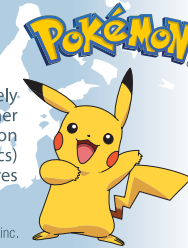
The people of the EU and Japan enjoy various aspects of each other’s cultures in their daily lives. The EU and Japan will continue to deepen their cultural exchanges and strive for greater mutual understanding.

In the EU...

Manga and animation

Japanese animation has been widely acclaimed at film festivals and other similar events. It is also popular on television. Japanese manga (comics) are also readily available at bookstores and it is familiar to many people.

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In both the EU and Japan...

Music and the arts

Classical concerts and exhibitions of European art are held throughout Japan and familiar to many Japanese. On the other hand, Many Japanese musicians and artists are active in Europe.



Cultural Exchanges

Japanese food

Sushi and tempura, for example... Japanese food is creating a boom throughout the EU. Japanese dishes are esteemed for their healthiness.



Sports

In the EU, many people have become familiar with traditional Japanese martial arts such as judo and karate. And in Japan, football and tennis are favourite sports of many people. Japanese and European football teams feature players from both the EU and Japan, who are very popular among the fans.



In Japan...

Wine, cheese, etc.

Wine, beer, pasta, cheese...the gastronomic culture of the EU has become part of the regular Japanese diet.



Fashion

There has been a conspicuous influx of European brands in recent years. European aesthetics and sensibilities are highly sought-after in Japan.

People-to-people exchanges / sister-city exchanges

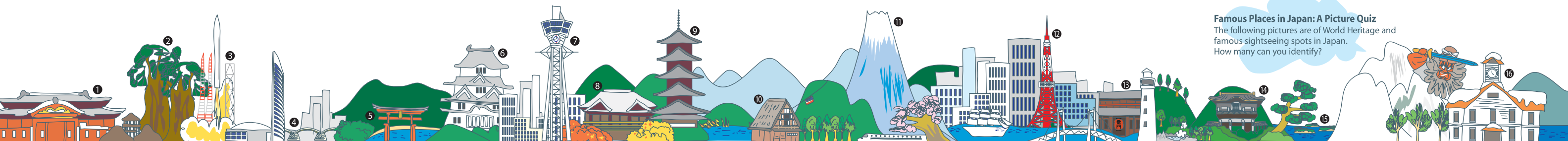
People-to-people exchanges are flourishing. During the past eighteen years, some 9,300 young people from EU Member States have visited Japan on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. They have helped to build cultural bridges by acting as assistant language teachers (ALTs) in schools, coordinators for international relations (CIRs) or sports exchange advisors (SEAs) in local communities throughout Japan. In addition, to date, 4,218 Japanese people have utilized the working holiday visa system in order to spend time in Europe. There are 242 sister-city partnerships between the EU Member States and Japan. Exchanges between the European Union and Japan may be found in your neighborhood.



Council of Local Authorities for International Relations

Famous Places in Japan: A Picture Quiz

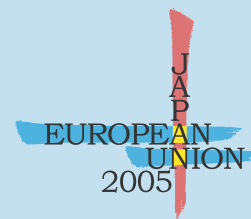
The following pictures are of World Heritage and famous sightseeing spots in Japan. How many can you identify?



Communication, discovery, inspiration!

"EU-Japan Year of People-to-People Exchanges" Event Calendar

The EU and Japan will launch the "EU-Japan Year of People-to-People Exchanges" in January 2005 with the aim of deepening mutual understanding through exchanges and communication between people. EU Member States and Japan will host a variety of events spanning a wide range of fields, including politics, economics, education, science and technology, culture and sports. The Year will be the perfect chance to deepen understanding and exchanges between the European Union and Japan. We welcome your participation!



Tokyo Millenario (Venue: Japan)

Tokyo Millenario, a new festival in Tokyo, which will be held from December 24, 2004 onwards as a pre-promotion event for the Year of People-to-People Exchanges. Theme of the event will be the exchanges between Japan and Europe.



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Hiromitsu Agatsuma Band and Za Ondekoza

To mark the opening of the Japan-EU Year of People-to-People Exchanges, Hiromitsu Agatsuma (a famous tsugaru shamisen player) and Za Ondekoza (a famous group of taiko players) will stage joint concerts in January 2005 Brussels (Belgium), the seat of the EU and in Luxembourg, which will hold the EU presidency during the first half of 2005.



EU-Japan Friendship Week (venue: Japan)

A EU-Japan Friendship Week will be held in Japan centering around Europe Day (May 9)



▲ Picture contest during EU-Japan Friendship Week 2004
◆ EU-Japan Friendship Football match
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Tradition

Kabuki Dance Lectures and Demonstrations



Contemporary Art

Exhibition of Art from a New Generation



Music, Art and Technology

Creative Tradition 2005



© The Japan-EU Friendship Performance Executive Committee

Sister City Exchanges

Both in Japan and EU Member States, various events related to sister city exchanges will be held, including reciprocal visits by young people.



▲ Exchange between residents of Chantilly (France) and Himeji through their sister castle affiliation

For information on the events access : <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/eu/exchange2004.html>

Answers to the quiz

1. **Shuri Castle** (Okinawa Prefecture) (World Heritage); 2. **Yakushima / Yakusugi** (Japanese cedar; World Heritage) (Kagoshima Prefecture); 3. **Tanegashima Space Center** (Kagoshima Prefecture); 4. **Brocade Sash Bridge** (Yamaguchi Prefecture); 5. **Itsukushima Shinto Shrine** (Hiroshima Prefecture) (World Heritage); 6. **Himeji Castle** (Hyogo Prefecture) (World Heritage); 7. **Tsutenkaku** (Osaka Prefecture); 8. **Kiyomizu Temple** (Kyoto) (World Heritage); 9. **Horyu-ji Temple / Five-storied Pagoda** (Nara Prefecture) (World Heritage); 10. **Shirakawa-go / Gassho-zukuri thatched houses** (Gifu Prefecture) (World Heritage); 11. **Mount Fuji** (Shizuoka Prefecture / Yamanashi Prefecture); 12. **Tokyo Tower** (Tokyo); 13. **Senso-ji Temple** (Tokyo); 14. **Nikko Toshogu Shrine** (Tochigi Prefecture) (World Heritage); 15. **Matsushima** (Miyagi Prefecture); 16. **Sapporo Clock Tower** (Hokkaido)

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