

PRESS RELEASE

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“Japan wears Europe”: 31 European designers enter the Japanese Fashion market

The Japanese fashion market offers large opportunities for EU Designers. This is the overall message delivered by the participants of a Trade Mission organised in the context of the EU Gateway to Japan programme during the Tokyo Fashion Week in April.

Amongst the 31 European SMEs from 18 countries* which travelled to Tokyo was NJ Studija, a Latvian Fashion design company. For Ms. Natalija Jansone, Director-Designer, *“the Japanese fashion market is a dream for any fashion designer. The EU Gateway to Japan programme offered 2 main possibilities: First it provided us with useful information on how to do business in Japan and secondly it offered the possibility to show ourselves to Japanese customers. We have signed first contracts with both smaller and bigger buyers. However, this is just the beginning, now we have to work hard to follow up.”*

Japan is the world’s second largest market for apparel after the US. The total value of the retail apparel market in 2003 was 10,138 billion yen (72 billion EUR). More than 60% of apparel retail is women’s clothing, which is why the trade mission focused on women’s clothing. In 2000 Japan was the third largest export market for EU clothing companies.

According to a market study on the Japanese Fashion Design market compiled by the European Business Council in Japan, Europe is considered the centre of high fashion by Japanese consumers. The study says that fashion in Japan is highly competitive and consumers are extremely demanding. This, however, offers excellent opportunities for European designers and fashion companies who produce well designed, high quality collections and enjoy an outstanding reputation in Japan. Especially the creative combination of colours exerts a strong influence on the Japanese market.

EU Gateway to Japan and EUROCHAMBRES

The EU Gateway to Japan is a programme funded and managed by the European Commission. EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, co-ordinates the promotion of this unique export support programme in Europe, as well as the recruitment and education of European SMEs through its European Chamber network of National Coordinators.

For more information on the campaign: www.gatewaytojapan.org

(* from Austria (2), Belgium (1), Cyprus (1), Denmark (2), Finland (1), France (2), Germany (1), Greece (1), Hungary (1), Ireland (3), Italy (3), Latvia (2), Lithuania (3), The Netherlands (1), Slovenia (1), Spain (2), Sweden (1) and the United Kingdom (3)

Your contacts at EUROCHAMBRES:

Project Director: Mr. Dirk Vantghem, vantghem@eurochambres.be, tel +32 2 282 08 78, fax +32 2 280 01 91

Press Contact: Mrs. Tosca Purr, purr@eurochambres.be, tel +32 2 282 08 53, fax +32 2 280 01 91



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