

PRESS RELEASE

EU-Japan Summit: EUROCHAMBRES highlights success of EU export promotion

Ahead of the EU-Japan Summit in Luxembourg on 2 May, EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, highlighted the importance of EU trade promotion and suggested to the EU to use the successful export promotion programme "EU Gateway to Japan" as a role model.

Christoph Leitl, President of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *"The EU should continue its strong commitment towards export promotion in Asia. The opportunities for European SMEs in this region are enormous – as the 'Gateway-programme' has clearly proved. An increase of European exports is needed to encourage economic growth!"*

Asia is one of the main trading partners for the EU - with China as the EU's second biggest trading partner and Japan its fifth largest export market.

10 years "EU Gateway to Japan" – a success story

For 10 years the European Commission programme "EU Gateway to Japan" – implemented in Europe by EUROCHAMBRES - has been helping European SMEs to enter the Japanese market with trade missions and trade fair participations. The programme will end in 2006.

Since its launch, 68 events have been organised with a total of nearly 1750 participants:

- 99% of the participating companies have developed contacts and generated business leads, on average 10 per company;
- 93% are optimistic on prospects for new contracts;
- companies estimate € 503 million of increased business;
- companies estimate an impact on investment of more than € 94 million.

"The impact of a continuation of the programme after 2006 would be very positive for EU SMEs wanting to export to Japan. The success of the programme and its concept should be implemented in other Asian countries" said Mr Leitl.

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