

## PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 28 April 2006

### **EU Gateway to Japan 3 Plus: EU-Japan cooperation continues!**

The European Commission and EUROCHAMBRES announced today the launch of EU Gateway to Japan 3 Plus, a 16-months extension of the successful export support programme for European companies to Japan.

Florika Fink-Hooijer, Head of Unit Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand of DG External Relations, said: *“As the recent EU-Japan Summit has shown, Europe and Japan are eager to take their political and economic cooperation ‘to the next level’. EU Gateway to Japan 3 Plus is a concrete example of how we can enhance business links between our two regions, despite cultural and geographical distances.”*

Thanks to this extension, 210 companies from the 25 Member States will have the opportunity to travel to Japan and present their products to Japanese business people of 6 different sectors: Interior Lifestyle, Fashion Design, Construction Materials, Information & Communication Technologies, Environmental Technologies and Healthcare.

Aleksandra Paszkowska, Director of the Belgian fashion company “Y-dress?”, and former participant in several EU Gateway to Japan events, said: *“Gaining a foothold in the Japanese market represents a big opportunity but at the same time a huge challenge for any SME. I wouldn’t have been able to do so without the support of EU Gateway to Japan. I welcome the extension of the programme and look forward to further tightening business links with such a profitable market like Japan!”*

EU Gateway 3 Plus will take place from April 2006 to June 2007, with a first event in the Interior Lifestyle sector in November 2006. Overall, the extension will benefit from a total € 4.2 million budget. The global budget of the EU Gateway to Japan campaign since 1994 was of € 34.9 million.

#### **EU Gateway to Japan – a decade-long history of success**

For more than 10 years, EU Gateway to Japan has been helping SMEs to reap the benefits of the Japanese market. Since the launch of the programme in 1994, 83 matchmaking events (trade missions and trade fairs) were organised, with nearly 2200 participating companies.

93% of participants expressed satisfaction with the programme, estimating some € 630 million of increased business. Additionally, companies estimated an impact on investment of more than € 113 million and planned to create 1100 jobs to sustain the increased level of their activities in Japan.

EU Gateway to Japan is funded and managed by the European Commission, and implemented in Europe by EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

For more information on the campaign: [www.gatewaytojapan.org](http://www.gatewaytojapan.org)

#### **Your contacts at EUROCHAMBRES:**

**Project Director:** Mr. Dirk Vantghem, [vantghem@eurochambres.be](mailto:vantghem@eurochambres.be), tel +32 2 282 08 78, fax +32 2 280 01 91  
**Press Contact:** Ms. Guendalina Cominotti, [cominotti@eurochambres.be](mailto:cominotti@eurochambres.be), tel +32 2 282 08 66, fax +32 2 280 01 91



EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents 44 national associations of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, a European network of 2,000 regional and local Chambers with over 18 million member enterprises in Europe.