

BELGIUM

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Belgium and Japan: Bursting with potential



Roxanne de Bilderling, Ambassador of Belgium to Japan

In an exclusive interview, Belgian Ambassador to Japan Roxanne de Bilderling emphasized the strong and friendly relations between Belgium and Japan, which have been nurtured by reciprocal royal and imperial visits.

Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid's recent economic mission further solidified the partnership, facilitating collaborations in renewable energy, biotechnology and digital technology.

For the full report, including the ambassador's interview, insights from the Japan External Trade Organization and more, click here: <https://bit.ly/BEJP23>

Get a head start in Brussels

Brussels, the capital of Belgium and the heart of Europe's major institutions, consumer markets and logistics networks, welcomes Japanese companies seeking to do business in the region. With its favorable and expat-friendly location blessed with competitive costs, this urban economy serves as an ideal base for Japanese companies venturing into Europe.

William Delseemme, representative of hub.brussels in Japan, highlighted the newly launched My Welcome Package, a landing kit funded by the Brussels government that comes at no cost to the recipient. This initiative is specifically designed to provide Japanese entrepreneurs and businesses with a head start as they enter the European market.

"Applicants of hub.brussels' My Welcome Package are provided with personal guidance from industry experts," Delseemme explained. "We provide regulatory support, facilitate matchmaking events, and offer insights into trade fairs and funding opportunities. With our extensive network and expertise, we help



Brussels, the capital of Belgium, lies at the heart of Europe's major institutions, consumer markets and logistic networks.

navigate the European business landscape with ease."

One of the key advantages of the package is access to a vast partner network. Through the platform, Japanese companies can connect with trusted local partners in areas such

as accounting, legal services, human resources, financial services and more.

Furthermore, hub.brussels offers three months of office space and access to its workspace facilities for free, ensuring every business a strong start. They also help companies establish suitable permanent office locations.

"We assist businesses in identifying and applying for relevant funding opportunities, grants and financial incentives available in Brussels to support their growth and development," Delseemme added.

In specific sectors — like life sciences, "cleantech" and digital — additional financial grants are available to cover initial operational expenses, such as company registration, hiring, searching for accommodations or coaching for sustainability.

Registration only takes two minutes and can be done through: <https://why.brussels/packages/my-welcome-package/> ♦

www.hub.brussels/en/



The essence of European craftsmanship: Scabal's heritage in fine fabrics

Scabal, an esteemed name in the world of luxury fabrics, boasts a remarkable history.

Founded by Otto Hertz in Brussels in 1938, the company initially sourced premium fabrics from the U.K. for Belgian tailors. After the war, Hertz established Societe Commerciale Anglo Belgo Allemande Luxembourgeoise (SCABAL), a pan-European venture focused on collaboration and unwavering quality. In 1971, J.P. Thissen, a trusted associate, assumed leadership, driving global expansion and establishing Scabal's presence in over 80 markets.

An important milestone in the 1970s was the acquisition

of a weaving mill in Yorkshire, England, a traditional home of cloth weaving, enabling Scabal to exert greater control over production and deepen its fabrics expertise.

Gregor Thissen, current executive chairman and son of J.P. Thissen, explained how the company has grown.

"Today, our fabric collections are one of the largest on offer with over 5,000 articles available. In diverse qualities as wool, linen, silk, cashmere and vicuna, we are able to cater for all occasions and tastes. Our same-day delivery from our Brussels warehouse makes us an ideal partner for our global customers, whether they are



Gregor Thissen, Executive Chairman of Scabal

bespoke tailors or luxury clothing brands."

Scabal's international success is attributed to strong partnerships and adaptability.

Its collaboration with Japanese trading house Itochu exemplifies this approach, leveraging local expertise and networks.

Another remarkable collaboration is with surrealist master Salvador Dali, who created 12 exclusive paintings envisioning the future of tailored clothing. These artworks, preserved in Scabal's vaults, will be showcased in the company's forthcoming book on the future of fashion and have themselves been the inspiration for limited-edition cloth collections.

"Digitalization, sustainability and attracting a younger customer group are all important themes for us today," Thissen explained.

With a heritage rooted in European craftsmanship, Scabal embodies resilience, visionary thinking and a commitment to excellence. Its decades of dedication to exceptional products and services have solidified the company's reputation in the luxury fabrics industry. As Scabal forges ahead, it will continue to redefine fine fabrics, shaping the landscape of European craftsmanship for generations to come. ♦

www.scabal.com



Vincotte: Driving excellence in vehicle homologation

Automotive type approval is the essential process of certifying vehicles and their components to ensure compliance with regulatory standards. Vincotte, Belgium's leading inspection, auditing and certification company, takes pride in its expertise and commitment to delivering comprehensive solutions in the field of vehicle homologation.

Geeraard Collijs, Vincotte's business unit manager for homologation, emphasized the company's dedication to this key process.

"Our aim is to showcase our expertise, capabilities and commitment to providing comprehensive solutions in the field of vehicle homologation." With over 50 years of experience and successful collaborations with major Japanese original equipment manufacturers, Vincotte stands out as a reliable partner for manufacturers.

Vincotte ensures compliance with regulatory standards such as those set by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the European Community. The company's extensive

scope of certification and homologation services covers multiple regions, including Europe, North America and Asia.

Vincotte's decision to join forces with global testing, inspection and certification company Kiwa in 2022 has provided access to advanced laboratories and extended expertise. This collaboration also strengthens the company's focus on emerging markets such as hydrogen storage systems and battery regulations. Together, Vincotte and Kiwa assist manufacturers in interpreting regulations, verifying carbon footprints and recycled content, ensuring supply chain due diligence, and conducting product carbon footprint assessments.

Hydrogen plays a crucial role in realizing energy transition, contributing to zero-emission transportation and cleaner industrial processes. Vincotte harnesses Kiwa's expertise to drive the hydrogen revolution and provide comprehensive hydrogen solutions globally.

Kentaro Kuno, country head for Vincotte in Japan,



With over 50 years of expertise, Vincotte leads in vehicle homologation solutions.

explained the significance of the Vincotte-Kiwa consortium: "By joining forces and leveraging our shared DNA, we synergize our expertise to deliver even better and broader services to existing and new clients in Japan, the Benelux region and beyond."

As the automotive industry continues to evolve, Vincotte remains at the forefront, providing com-

prehensive solutions and expert support to manufacturers. The company's commitment to excellence, expertise in vehicle homologation, and global partnerships makes them a trusted partner for manufacturers seeking to deliver safe, compliant and sustainable vehicles and components to markets around the world. ♦

www.vincotte.jp



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