



2025 marks 425 years of Japanese-Dutch relations. This significant milestone celebrates a partnership based on cooperation and trust. At Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, the Netherlands is showcasing its commitment to working with worldwide partners to solve global challenges through the theme “Common Ground.”



日・蘭交流425周年記念
Japan-Netherlands exchange in 2025



Read the full report at:
sms-bridges.com/NL25

or visit:
sms-bridges.com

Flevoland: A strategic hub for innovation, sustainability and investment

Flevoland, located east of Amsterdam and Schiphol Airport, has emerged as a promising destination for foreign investment with its mastermind culture, strategic location and focus on sustainable development. From agricultural technology to smart mobility and green manufacturing, Flevoland provides fertile ground for international businesses to expand, innovate and link to Europe.

With the complete backing of the province's leadership and regional development agency Horizon Flevoland, the newly arriving companies enjoy smooth landings, extensive networks and tailored assistance.

Flevoland is an attractive place for Japanese companies to set up their business because of its great location right next to Amsterdam, the amount of space for businesses to grow, and the pioneering mindset of limitless opportunities that comes with our new reclaimed land," said Arjen Gerritsen, the King's commissioner in Flevoland.

Flevoland is increasingly becoming a key destination for Japanese businesses. Prominent names such as Yakult, Yanmar and Kobelco have already established a significant presence in the province. These businesses are adding to the region's growth while enjoying the assistance and facilities provided by Flevoland.



Arjen Gerritsen, the King's Commissioner in Flevoland PROVINCE OF FLEVOLAND

Behind such success stories is a concerted effort on the part of Flevoland's dedicated mission to provide a secure, nurturing setting in

which international businesses can succeed. Gerritsen views this mission as one of cooperation and service.

Top priorities for the province are sustainable economic development, better infrastructure and greater international partnerships. Initiatives such as the High-Tech Campus at Almere are intended to lure global innovation in smart mobility, semiconductors and energy solutions.

"Horizon will continue to ensure that growth is sustainable, inclusive and locally rooted. We are proud of what we've accomplished so far, and we're just getting started," Gerritsen said.

Flevoland is in an excellent position to further its connections with Japan and the wider international community. Its holistic strategy in which public institutions, companies and citizens come together, makes the province a destination as well as a long-term partner for sustainable development.

Together with our partners and stakeholders, we look forward to shaping a vibrant future for Flevoland and everyone who calls it home," Gerritsen concluded. ■

www.horizonflevoland.com



Invest in Flevoland

Inspiring business, building Global Bridges

"The relationship between Japan and the Netherlands holds great potential for growth and collaboration," said Radboud Molijn, managing director of Global Bridges.

"That has been true 425 years ago, but it also promises successful forms of cooperation in the future. Both countries share a rich history of trade, and our cultural exchanges make this partnership unique. The Netherlands is a good base for Japanese newcomers in the European market, both from a tax and logistics perspective, and everybody speaks English!

Global Bridges focuses on supporting Japanese companies with their business development in Europe. Regularly working with Japanese banks to identify suitable 'target companies' for their Japanese clients in The Netherlands and northwest Europe, the team understands the Dutch and European markets and the nuances of Japanese business culture, supporting companies by advising on company valuation, coordinating the due diligence process and above all — managing expectations.

"Japanese firms often have specific expectations when entering into business with a Dutch or European company," said Molijn, who also serves as a supervisory director at European holdings of Japanese companies.

"This can easily result in misunderstandings, so we also assist our Japanese clients with their postmerger integration process once they have acquired a European company."



Radboud Molijn, Managing Director of Global Bridges BRIDGES

Balancing stability, agility

Contrasts in business styles add to the complementary nature of Dutch and Japanese ties. While Japanese firms tend to have a long-term strategic vision, Dutch companies often operate with a more immediate, pragmatic approach, providing the perfect balance between stability and agility.

Global Bridges has experience in a wide range of industrial sectors, including renew-

able energy (in which they cooperate with a well-known Dutch venture capital company), water treatment, energy conservation and carbon dioxide reduction, as well as in information technology and semiconductor technology.

"We even supported a Japanese mushroom company to acquire a mushroom-growing company in the Netherlands. One of our strong points is our network, which enables us to approach targets in Europe that are not yet on the market," Molijn said.

The Netherlands, known for its horticultural expertise, is addressing food security challenges, especially relevant for resource-constrained Japan. By sharing knowledge and technologies, both nations can enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability.

"Celebrating 425 years of relations, it is vital that we continue to leverage our strengths by enhancing our understanding, embracing our differences, fostering innovation and building robust relationships that will sustain and strengthen partnerships for many years to come. Viva Dutch and Japanese relations. ■

www.global-bridges.eu



BRIDGING INSIGHTS

Akasec: Securing the global digital future



Jan Willem Veldhuis, CEO and hacker AKASEC

Dutch cybersecurity firm Akasec, led by CEO Jan Willem Veldhuis, specializes in simulated state-level cyberthreats through advanced red-teaming. Based in The Hague, Akasec supports Japan's critical infrastructure resilience as part of a growing Dutch-Japanese partnership focused on proactive defense, strategic consulting and securing the global digital future.

www.akasec.com



Htel Serviced Apartments: The comfort of home, the convenience of a hotel

For Japanese professionals and families relocating to the Netherlands, finding a place that feels both comfortable and reliable is essential. Htel Serviced Apartments offers the perfect balance between the privacy of home and the full service of a hotel, in the vicinity of Amsterdam.



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Celebrating 425 years, Japan and the Netherlands share ‘Common Ground’ at the Osaka Expo

Deloitte: Strengthening the Netherlands-Japan partnership

Deloitte is reinforcing the Netherlands-Japan partnership with innovation, collaboration and transformation.

Stefan Verrips, leader of Deloitte Netherlands Japanese Services Group, describes how the firm is empowering Japanese and Dutch businesses as they face new challenges and opportunities.

The alliance of the two countries, which is 425 years strong, has always been founded on mutual values.

"A relationship can only endure with mutual respect and a shared commitment to establishing, maintaining, strengthening and deepening the bond. It involves a delicate balance of giving and receiving," Verrips said.

For Deloitte, the relationship is a key factor in guiding companies to adapt and prepare for the future. The company supports clients in priority areas such as innovation (artificial intelligence and smart factories), digital transformation (cyber, data and technology) and sustainability (hydrogen and low-carbon solutions and energy-saving).

The Netherlands is an important location for Japanese businesses in Europe, particularly in sustainability and digitalization. Numerous projects are serviced from Dutch offices, with experiences and insights actively shared across the wider Deloitte network, further enhancing teamwork between Dutch and Japanese teams.

This collaboration is key to tackling the many challenges both nations face, from responding to regulatory changes and fighting climate change to driving technology innovation.

"We aim to make a meaningful impact through the work our people do every day for Deloitte clients around the world, including Japanese multinationals," Verrips said.

Sectors like machinery, agriculture, food, energy transition, cybersecurity, high-tech and finance are the characteristic features of the present Dutch-Japanese business relations.

Looking ahead, Verrips sees the Osaka Expo as a real opportunity to strengthen business ties.



Stefan Verrips, leader of Deloitte Netherlands Japanese Services Group DELOITTE

"I expect successful business delegations visiting the expo in Osaka. I am confident that many will be pleasantly surprised by the rich aspects of Japanese (business) culture, innovation and collaboration," he said.

Deloitte is proud to support this growing spirit of connection and progress. Reflecting on his journey, Verrips said, "Relationships are key, and while it is certainly possible to build these from the Netherlands, establishing a strong, trustful and long-term relationship in person is invaluable and requires time."

With true collaboration, innovation and mutual respect, Deloitte is helping shape and strengthen the future of the Netherlands-Japan partnership. ■

www.deloitte.com/nl



Kobelco: Built for perfectionists

With transparent governance, excellent infrastructure, a highly educated population and a strategic location, the Netherlands is an attractive investment destination for Japanese companies. Collaboration, particularly in the construction industry, has evolved significantly since the establishment of Kobelco Construction Machinery Europe in 2013.

A leading global supplier of cranes, excavators and construction machinery, KCME delivers advanced products, services and technologies to customers.

In recognition of the company's early contributions to the economy and society, KCME was awarded the Deshima Netherlands Award in 2013 by the Dutch-Japanese Trade Federation, and the Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency.

The synergy between the Netherlands and Japan goes beyond mere commerce; it's about building lasting relationships and driving mutual growth," said Makoto Kato, managing director of KCME.

"I promised to contribute to building a strong bridge between Japan and the

Netherlands and I believe we have succeeded in creating a close bond between our two countries," Kato said.

"Our own hiring practices prioritize local Dutch companies, ensuring that our operations contribute to the local economy through job creation and partnerships. We are focused on people, products and promoting the European 'Built for Perfectionists' tagline, which reflects the values we bring to our customers."

With the future in mind, KCME's new state-of-the-art facility in Lelystad, Flevoland, is designed as a hub for innovation and collaboration.

"With our new facility, we aim to enhance everyone's knowledge and skills and strengthen our brand and business position by in-housing not only machine sales and product development, but also after-sales support and the training of our distributors, sales representatives and mechanics," Kato said.

By raising the overall level of expertise within the team, KCME's new facility is a key investment, providing customers



Makoto Kato, Managing Director of KCME BRIDGES

with efficient and effective support, new products and eventually a European research and development center focused on customization for specific European market needs.

"Making KCME more robust and stable, this facility will serve as a European and international base for years to come," he said.

"We intend to gain a stronger foothold in Europe, positioning us as a global center for KCME's business from where we can engage with European and global customers. By creating a learning environment for our employees and partners, we will ultimately enhance our service capabilities. We remain dedicated to delivering high-quality products while contributing positively to the communities we serve." ■

www.kobelco-europe.com



MM Metal Recycling: Leading the charge in the circular economy

As sustainable, circular economies continue to gain attention, industries and governments are urging greater accountability for waste management. MM Metal Recycling, a subsidiary of Japan's Mitsubishi Materials Corp., is at the forefront of this movement.

Specializing in the collection, inspection, sampling and recycling of electronic waste, or 'e-scrap,' MMR transforms discarded electronics into reusable materials, reducing landfill waste and bringing valuable resources back into production cycles.

"MMMR is in a prime position to grow," said Chief Operating Officer Harald Wagemaker. "With policies driving circular economies and Europe emerging as a dynamic market for e-scrap recycling, advanced facilities are essential for efficient material processing. MMC has been recovering copper and precious metals from e-scrap since the last century and today, two of our three smelters produce metals from both primary feedstock and e-scrap materials."

In Japan, MMC's Naoshima Smelter and Refinery utilizes Mitsubishi's continuous copper smelting technology, a unique approach to precious metals that



Harald Wagemaker, Chief Operating Officer of MM Metal Recycling MM METAL RECYCLING

minimizes environmental impact.

Naoshima's e-scrap processing capacity has reached 160,000 tons per year, the highest in the world, while group company Onahama Smelting and Refining has steadily increased its e-scrap processing volume since 2013.

"Our processing capabilities, coupled with MMC's strategic vision, align perfectly with anticipated market growth," Wagemaker said.

"While we are thrilled about the direction we are heading, we continuously seek innovative methods to enhance our e-scrap recycling processes while remaining attuned to industry trends and technologies. My prior experience with a Japanese firm has instilled in me a strong emphasis on collaboration, precision and long-term strategies, and by embracing continuous improvement principles like *kaizen*, I prioritize process optimization and team alignment to ensure every step is executed with care and a collective buy-in."

Adapting this structured approach to Europe's business environment requires balancing rigidity with the flexibility necessary to navigate Europe's diverse regulatory landscape and evolving circular economy objectives.

While driving operational excellence at MMR, in April this year Wagemaker became COO of Mitsubishi Materials Europe, MMC's European headquarters.

"This role allows me to forge cross-border industry partnerships and col-

laborate with producers under extended producer responsibility frameworks," Wagemaker explained.

"My experiences working with Japan enable me to anticipate challenges, plan strategically and lead with a global perspective rooted in Japanese efficiency, all the while adopting European innovations," he said.

Mirroring MMC's ecological commitments in Japan (the company is the largest owner of forest land), MMR has initiated small-scale biodiversity efforts that include tree-planting and collaborative projects with local partners to reduce nitrogen levels.

"We remain dedicated to refining our processes to enhance our broader strategy of creating value through sustainable practices," Wagemaker said. ■

www.mm-metal-recycling.com



Reaktor Japan builds leaders in a digital world

Reaktor, a global technology and design company known for working with leading organizations worldwide, enhances digital strength and crafts user-centric solutions.

Having established a presence in Japan over the past decade through its office in Tokyo, the company has strengthened its reputation in Japan through strong partnerships with Japanese businesses and by delivering results through lean practices, collaboration and meticulous engineering and design capabilities.

Fragmented systems, lengthy innovation cycles and outdated user experiences are key impediments to change. Reaktor addresses these issues by bringing multidisciplinary teams within client organizations together to develop customized solutions and facilitate internal transformation.

"At Reaktor, we want to help our customers become digital leaders of tomorrow. By partnering with Reaktor, our clients work with the best bilingual industry experts on strategy, design and engineering," said Reaktor Japan Chief Executive Officer Jun Inoue.

Reaktor is currently focused on the aeronautical, retail, health, gaming, industrial machinery sectors, as well as Finland's public and defense and security sectors.



Reaktor Japan's CEO Jun Inoue and Director of Operations Thom Hos REAKTOR JAPAN

This multisector expertise enables Reaktor Japan to offer practical, scalable solutions to customers undergoing digital transformation.

In Japan's high-stakes tech landscape, Reaktor is a partner, not a typical vendor. It builds on trust, customizes client needs and focuses on long-term value. This flexible, co-creative collaboration model has

helped Reaktor earn the trust of companies seeking long-term innovation.

"Our approach is all about understanding the unique needs of each client and their users to co-create digital solutions that are both practical and impactful," Inoue said.

"Our way of working is collaborative and pragmatic, and we are able to move

“At Reaktor, we want to help our customers become digital leaders of tomorrow.”

quickly, adapt to new information and deliver results that make a real difference," added Director of Operations Thom Hos.

As Reaktor Japan continues to invest in its people, capacity and partnerships, the company is committed to helping Japanese organizations embrace digital transformation with speed, simplicity and confidence. By doing so, it ensures that technology is not just an instrument but rather a primary driver of significant business growth.

"We want to be a catalyst for helping our clients not just keep up with change, but actually lead it, both here in Japan and globally," Inoue shared.

"We want Reaktor to be known not just for the products we build, but for the way we help organizations and their people to continuously grow and develop." ■

www.reaktor.com



Schipper & Paul brings local expertise to Japanese entrepreneurs

The Netherlands is an increasingly attractive base for Japanese small and midsize enterprises. Schipper & Paul, headquartered in The Hague, has emerged as a key partner.

Since 2015, the company has offered customized accounting, tax and advisory services that enable internationally focused companies to enter the Dutch market with confidence.

Highlighting the growing role of SMEs in the broader Dutch-Japanese economic relationship, Joost Schipper, managing director of Schipper & Paul, said: "A growing number of Japanese SMEs are choosing the Netherlands as their European base. This dynamic layer of smaller, often founder-led companies deserves more visibility as it adds depth and agility to this important relationship."

The firm works closely with the



Joost Schipper, Managing Director of Schipper & Paul SCHIPPER & PAUL

Japanese business community in the Netherlands, particularly with SMEs, by integrating a deep cultural understanding with expertise in Dutch tax, administrative and advisory matters.

The firm's bespoke, hands-on approach has allowed Schipper & Paul to grow alongside their clients' successes, creating trusted, respectful and long-term relationships.

"For Japanese SMEs entering the Dutch market, success often depends on finding the right local partner," Schipper said. "Our role is to be that trusted point of contact, practical, personal and focused on helping our clients build a sustainable presence in the Netherlands."

With over 400 Japanese clients, Schipper & Paul is recognized for its ability to deliver reliable solutions and strategic insights built on real-world entrepreneurial expertise.

Services include tax planning, payroll, financial advisory and business support, all tailored to the entrepreneur and instilling confidence in their expertise.

The firm intends to enhance its services in line with changing client requirements while remaining committed to its original values: proximity to clients, responsiveness and continuing to always think one step ahead. ■

www.schipperpaul.nl



Bemac enhances green capabilities with European partnerships

Bemac Corp. is growing its business in the European maritime sector by offering advanced digital tools and supporting greener, low-emission shipping technologies.

Since entering the European market, Bemac has significantly expanded its repair and maintenance operations, tripling its service volume in fiscal 2024. The company attributes this growth to its high-quality engineering, rapid response times and strong client relationships.

"We're not just maintaining systems. We're building trust with European clients through reliability and quick support," said Hiro Yoshida, executive managing director of Bemac Europe.

Bemac's core products, such as marine switchboards and engine control consoles, are used in close to 60% of Japan's shipbuilding industry, according to Yoshida. As global demand shifts, the company is expanding internationally with a focus on innovation and sustainability.

To meet rising demand for digital

integration, Bemac launched the Maintenance System for Soundness Sailing Ability, a smart maintenance and data platform designed for shipowners seeking more reliable and efficient system monitoring. While many operators already use European systems, MaSSA offers a high-quality Japanese alternative solution.

In 2024, Bemac, in partnership with a major Japanese trading and investment company, acquired The Switch, a Finnish specialist in electric power systems.

The Switch holds a leading position in the marine sector, having received over 400 orders for permanent magnet shaft generators. With experience and knowledge in wind turbines, The Switch's main product, PMSGs, are a game-changer in the marine industry, reducing operational costs and carbon dioxide emissions.

Benefiting both European and Asian markets, The Switch delivers advanced technologies to support the development of next-generation vessels.



Hiro Yoshida, Executive Managing Director of Bemac Europe BEMAC EUROPE

"This isn't just a merger, it's a transformation," Yoshida said. "We're equipping Japan's maritime industry with proven

green technologies developed in Europe."

These initiatives coincide with the 425th anniversary of Japan-Netherlands trade. According to Yoshida, the company is committed to advancing the maritime industry through technology and collaboration.

"We honor the legacy of early Dutch-Japanese trade by helping move today's maritime sector forward with better technology and international cooperation," he said.

"Exploration defines who we are," Yoshida said. Guided by its core policy, "Be an Explorer," Bemac Europe continues to position itself as a leader in sustainable, technology-driven growth in the competitive global shipping industry. ■

www.bemac-jp.com

