



*Promoting and supporting the
Development of cooperation on ICT research between Europe and Japan*

THE COJAK FP7 PROJECT IN A NUTSHELL

The COJAK project, coordinated by Sigma Orionis (see <http://www.sigma-orionis.com>) has been launched in January 2008 with the support of the European Commission through its FP7 funding programme (see <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7>). It is one of the “support actions” in the portfolio of the International relations Unit of the Directorate General Information Society and Media.



One of the main objectives of the COJAK project is, under the aegis of the European Commission and of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan, to promote and support the development of cooperation on ICT research between Europe and Japan, particularly under FP7.



COJAK activities include the organisation of cooperation events open to universities, research institutes, large companies and SMEs, etc. from both regions:

- The “EU-Japan cooperation event” held on June 18, 2009 at the Europa House in Tokyo,
- The 2nd “EU-Japan cooperation Forum on ICT research” of July 2, 2009 (Radisson Royal Hotel, Brussels).



All project activities are presented in detail on the <http://www.eurojapan-ict.org> web portal that offers European and Japanese organisations interested in developing joint R&D projects substantial background information, news related to major developments of the EU-Japan cooperation framework, and access to an online community of researchers from both regions (free membership).

For further information, please contact info@eurojapan-ict.org.

<http://www.eurojapan-ict.org>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

EU-JAPAN RELATIONS



The European Union and Japan are both advanced industrialised democracies, sharing important core values, with economies accounting together for 40% of global GDP.

EU-Japan relations have logically broadened in the last decades, far beyond the trade-related focus which prevailed in the 70s. Two key documents have indeed anchored today's bilateral relationship between the EU and Japan: the Joint Declaration of 1991, establishing common principles and shared objectives, and the Action Plan of 2001, establishing a strong partnership over a 10 year period.

To support the development of bilateral relations, a number of agreements have been concluded and various institutional mechanisms have been agreed on, including an annual EU-Japan Summit, at the level of the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Japanese Prime Minister.

BILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS

Japan is the world's second largest economy (12,5% of world GDP, 2% of world population) with imports and exports of goods amounting (in 2004) to €352,3 and €421,1 billion respectively (6,20% and 7,91 % of the world flows).

With a share of 4,1% (2005) of the EU exports, Japan is the fifth largest export market, while with a share of 6,2% (2005) of the EU import market, Japan is the fourth largest source of imports into the EU. At the end of 2003, 5,03% of the stock of EU inward Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) came from Japan, while 1,82% of the stock of EU outward FDI was in Japan.

Both partners recognise the strategic interest of strengthening their trade and investment links, and have created various instruments to support it, including a two-way Regulatory Reform Dialogue. They also actively cooperate in multilateral fora.

ICT IN JAPAN

Japan is a well-known leading country worldwide in ICT, when considering the development status of ICT in the Japanese society (mobile telephony, broadband Internet, terrestrial digital television, intelligent homes, RFID, etc.) and the strength of its ICT industry as well (the market value of the Japanese ICT industry amounts to around 120 trillion yen).

In January 2001, the Japanese government formulated the e-Japan strategy, which aimed at "making Japan the world's most advanced IT nation within five years", while in July 2003 the vision of a "new, Japan-inspired IT society" was launched centered on three use axes: the ubiquitous network society, the age of high-quality images, and the interconnection of the Internet and digital television.

R&D spending in ICT is of approximately 7 trillion yen (70% from the Japanese industry and 30% from universities, public bodies, NGOs, etc.). Between January and September 2003, over 13 000 ICT related patents have been registered in Japan, representing 2,1 times the number registered in Europe.

EU-JAPAN S&T COOPERATION IN THE ICT AREA

A number of Japanese ICT companies (namely large corporations) have established quite important research teams in Europe, since a long time for most of them. These teams have been, year after year, increasingly involved in collaborative projects funded through European Union's research programmes, including the FP6 IST Programme, which ended in 2006.

However, the participation of Japanese organisations based in Japan (large corporations but also smaller companies, universities, research institutes, etc.) in EU-funded projects in the ICT area has remained quite low over the years, particularly when compared to the level of participation of organisations from other leading industrialized or emerging countries.



This situation should improve in the next years: the ICT theme of the FP7 EU research programme (launched in 2007) opens new perspectives for the development of EU-Japan S&T cooperation in the ICT area.

Moreover, the S&T Agreement that should soon be signed between the EU and Japan will improve the overall cooperation framework and boost the emergence of cooperation projects.