

Japanese week in Brussels 2013

-In commemoration of the 2nd anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake-

Kobe University Symposium

in collaboration with European Economic and Social Committee

Date: 13 March 2013 10:00 - 17:30

Venue: European Economic and Social Committee

JDE 63 (6th floor, Jacques Delors Building)

99, rue Belliard, 1040 Brussels





European Economic and Social Committee

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Organised by: Kobe University
Co-organised by: European Economic and Social Committee
Supported by: Tohoku University

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-In commemoration of the 2nd anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake-

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PROGRAMME

Opening: 10:00 - 10:20

HE Mr Kojiro Shiojiri, Ambassador of Japan to the European Union

Mr Henri Malosse, President of Employers' Group, European Economic and Social Committee

Professor Noriyuki Inoue, President of EU Institute in Japan, Kansai

Part I: 10:20 - 12:30

EU-Japan economies: issues and perspectives

Part II: 14:15 - 17:20

Disaster recovery support from scientific/academic perspectives

Closing: 17:20 - 17:30

Professor Hiromasa Kubo, Executive Director of Kobe University Brussels European Centre

Photo exhibition by Mr Katsumi Hirabayashi

Dawn in Tohoku

HE Mr Kojiro Shiojiri

Ambassador of Japan to the European Union



Good morning ladies and gentlemen. It is a great pleasure, privilege for me to be here with you at the Kobe University Symposium during “Japanese week in Brussels 2013.”

It has been two years since the Great East Japan Earthquake.

For those who lost loved ones, life goes on and they had to adapt to a totally changed and harsher reality. Even if their sorrow will not disappear, many of them have chosen to live with their heads up and shoulders back. Their minds begin to turn to the future as they look to move forward.

Today’s symposium is unique. It offers a forum to look beyond current thinking and discover new platforms and new paradigms from which we can realize a better tomorrow.

Our discussions today focus on disaster prevention and Japan-EU economies, areas where we can actively demonstrate the benefit of sharing experiences and finding new platforms.

Here I would like to share one of our experiences in the Great East Japan Earthquake. In Kamaishi City, which was badly hit by the tsunami, over one thousand people lost their lives or are missing. On the other hand, of around three thousand elementary and high-school students in the city, 5 students lost their lives. It means 99.8% of the students survived. These students on their own initiative and without waiting for instructions, climbed to higher ground, owing this to the disaster prevention education they had received. With this education, students learned first and foremost to safeguard their own lives by themselves.

Now I would like to remind you of the home city of today’s hosts, Kobe. After the Great Hanshin Earthquake in 1995, the Kobe Framework was established, offering a new paradigm in disaster prevention. It shifted the paradigm for disaster risk management from post disaster response to a more comprehensive approach that would also include

prevention and preparedness measures. The following new Kobe Framework will be implemented for the post 2015 period. It serves as an important example of our past experiences shaping our future responses.

Japan and the EU are facing serious economic and financial challenges. Now the EU is struggling to overcome the EU debt crisis and Japan is struggling to get out from the deflation which has lasted almost 20 years. And we face the challenge of competitiveness. How do we make our economies and societies more competitive under the circumstances we both face, such as declining population and the rise of emerging economies? It is through sharing views and experiences that we can find a new paradigm, a new way of thinking to overcome our challenges.

And it is on this point we see the worth of today’s symposium. We have a lot of room to work together in and this symposium will bring forward new opportunities for collaboration. Each day of work, each new discussion and each new collaboration, can unlock a new paradigm. For this perspective, I am very much looking forward to the discussion of this symposium. Thank you.

Henri Malosse

President of Employers' Group
European Economic and Social Committee



Excellency, president, professors, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, it is very important for us, for the European Economic and Social Committee, which is a unique assembly here in Brussels representing civil society. We are not politi-

cians, we are not technocrats, nothing against politicians, nothing against technocrats, we are useful but we are different.

We represent employers. I am now chairing the Employers' Group. Some of our colleagues here represent the workers. But in Europe it is values that are the most important.

Last Sunday when I was still in Brussels, I participated in a rally for the 54th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising. That took place on the 10 of March 1959. I was there to express our support for the Tibetan nation in their quest for more freedom, solidarity and freedom of expression.

Although today is a totally different occasion, when I was asked by my dear colleague, Vice-President of Employers' Group - Eve Päärendson to participate in and host this symposium on the second anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake I thought it was something the European Economic and Social Committee should do. The values we want to promote, in the European Union were founded on values after the Second World War, values of peace, values of solidarity, values of democracy. This is why we have to support our friend Japan in her time of need. Moreover, what happened to Japan could have happened to us.

First, the value of preservation of nature. I'm not so-called green; I have not made my career as an environmentalist, but it is a very important value for all of us including both entrepreneurs and employers. What happened 2 years ago in Japan with the Earthquake and Tsunami showed us how important the concept of prevention is. We all know the extent

to which Japan is prepared for earthquakes, but even as probably the most prepared society, the most prepared country, you experienced so much devastation, mainly due to the tsunami. So prevention is the key, thus we should devote more funds and more effort, to prevention. This is for me the main lesson we can gain from what happened. Concerning the protection of nature is the importance of prevention, what we call in French "Principe de Précaution", we should always take care whatever we do and make impact assessment in advance!

Second, we just mentioned one other very important value, which is social responsibility. What happened in Fukushima after the earthquake and after the tsunami showed us how important it is for both government and the private sector to share responsibility in times of trouble. The reaction of some private companies, namely the one who rules the Fukushima nuclear plant, seemed from Europe, not to have been transparent enough.

To be socially responsible is to recognize the obligation of transparency. The dissemination of information is an obligation for everybody, but mainly companies and public sector in very sensitive sectors such as energy. Social responsibility is a value we share together.

The third value we share together is solidarity. Of course solidarity can be seen in our being here with you and hosting this event. Solidarity was also seen in the marvellous reaction of the Japanese people after the earthquake and the tsunami.

The news we see on French TV is of people living in and around the region of earthquake and how feelings of solidarity have grown between them. How young people help old people, old people help young children, it is also true that some European and Japanese companies have displayed an awareness of their social responsibility having been active in showing solidarity with the affected areas.

So, the values of taking care of nature, social responsibility and solidarity are ones we share together. This is why we feel that this commemoration is very important issue for both, for the Japanese nation, and also very important for us. Thank you.

Noriyuki Inoue

President of EU Institute in Japan, Kansai



Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, first it is a great pleasure for me to hold this symposium as one event of Japan week in Brussels and welcome you today. On behalf of Kobe University, I would like to express my sincere gratitude

to his Excellency Ambassador Mr Shiojiri, Mission of Japan to the European, Union for his support of today's symposium, and Mr Henri Malosse and his colleagues of the European Economic and Social Committee for co-organizing this event. Moreover, we have in attendance a prominent researcher from Tohoku University, who was affected a great deal by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

I would like to say thank you for coming to Brussels today. But regrettably I have to inform you that Professor Hormoz Modaresi, the French researcher, could not participate in this symposium because of yesterday's bad weather.

As a university which experienced a mega disaster 18 years ago, Kobe University has constantly been thinking of the people in the affected and devastated region and collaborating with Tohoku University in the recovery process.

The day before yesterday was the second anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. On this occasion Kobe University reaffirmed its commitment to contribute to the reconstruction of the area and also the establishment of the resilient, sustainable and safe society against mega disasters. So, together let's consider this theme through this symposium today.

Enjoy yourself and thank you very much.

Part I: 10:20 – 12:30

EU-Japan economies : issues and perspectives

Moderator:

Professor Hiromasa Kubo, Executive Director of Kobe University Brussels European Centre

Presentations: 10:20 - 11:40

10:20 Professor Yoichi Matsubayashi, Kobe University

“External Imbalances in Japan: Past, Present and Future”

10:40 Associate Professor Kazufumi Yugami, Kobe University

*“The transition from school to stable employment:
A comparative perspective”*

11:00 Senior Assistant Professor Miki Kobayashi, Kobe University

“Income Inequality and Poverty in Japan”

11:20 Mr Pierre Jean Coulon, European Economic and Social Committee

“Nuclear Energy and Industry Have to Be Transparent”

Panel discussion: 11:40 - 12:30

Ms Eve Päärendson, European Economic and Social Committee

Professor Taiji Hagiwara, Kobe University

Mr Pater Krzysztof, European Economic and Social Committee

In the morning session there were four presentations which addressed issues concerning the economies in Japan and the EU. There followed a panel discussion in which three speakers reflected on certain points raised in the preceding presentations. Ms Päärendson discussed two issues: the proposed EU-Japan FTA/EPA and youth unemployment in the EU. She insisted that the EPA/FTA would have a positive impact on the EU, due to a possible increase in EU exports to Japan. However, in order to exploit the benefits of the FTA/EPA, the EU should strengthen its competitiveness by promoting R&D activities, especially in their SMEs. Furthermore, the EU should reform their labour market, to reduce the skill mismatches between young people and employers. Prof Hagiwara agreed with the rather pessimistic views of Prof Matsubayashi. He also pointed out that the views of the three Japanese speakers are interrelated. He noted that although Prof Matsubayashi emphasised Japan's growing budgetary deficit, he did not explicitly state that one of the main sources of the deficit comes from social security spending. He thus observed that if the Japanese government tries to reduce spending, this means that it should also cut its spending on social security and education, which would, in turn, aggravate youth unemployment. Prof Hagiwara also agreed with Mr Coulon's view on the transparent nuclear energy policy. Prof Hagiwara insisted that the Japanese government should release more information on its nuclear policy to the public. In addition, he noted that anti-nuclear groups should not overreact with respect to the risks posed by nuclear power. He emphasised the importance of constructive dialogue. Mr Krzysztof argued that judging from recent demographic changes, in order to avoid the negative impact of a possible collapse of the pension system on the European economy, reforms would seem to be necessary. However, as it is a very sensitive issue among people, politicians seem to put off making any concrete decisions. He insisted that the EU should take care of the elderly seriously. There followed a lively discussion between the speakers and the floor.

Yoichi Matsubayashi

Professor
Graduate School of Economics
Kobe University

“External Imbalances in Japan: Past, Present and Future”



Japan’s current accounts have been in surplus for a long time. However, a surplus has been decreasing lately, and such surplus is forecasted to turn to deficit as early as the second half of 2010s.

Current accounts reflect not only transactions in goods and services, but also the status of lending to and borrowing from other nations. In other words, continuous current accounts deficit means that Japan will require greater funding from other countries. With concerns over Japan’s aging society and fewer children, as well as the thwart expansion of public debt, we will examine current accounts trends, and their impact on the Japanese economy, from a long-term perspective.

Kazufumi Yugami

Associate Professor
Graduate School of Economics
Kobe University

“The transition from school to stable employment: A comparative perspective”



The transition from school to work has been an issue with vital interest in Japan during “lost two decades”. I examine the transition situations by educational background and its relation to labour market institutions using survey of

Japan, Germany, France, and the UK. Specifically, I focus on national school-to-work institutions and employment-protection legislation (EPL), both of which affect inflows of youth into and outflows from temporary jobs. As for first job after graduation, country-specific factor indicates that regardless of their educational background, British school-leavers are least likely to be temporary employees. Among the other three countries, with more stringent EPL for permanent jobs, only French non-college youth are more likely to be temporary workers than their Japanese and German counterparts, suggesting that country-specific transition institutions for the less educated group foster direct transition from school to permanent jobs in these countries. Furthermore, from the results for the transition from first temporary jobs, I found that Japanese youth are least likely to move into permanent jobs. Among the other three countries, the outflow to permanent employment is highest in the UK and less for Germany and France, suggesting that temporary jobs serve as a stepping-stone towards permanent jobs in the absence of school-to-work institutions.

Miki Kobayashi

Senior Assistant Professor
Graduate School of Economics
Kobe University

“Income Inequality and Poverty in Japan”



Japan’s income inequality has been moderately increasing in the long term. Income inequality in terms of the Gini coefficient based on initial income is confirmed to have risen moderately from the 1980s until recently.

In addition, Japan’s relative poverty rate has been on an upward trend. Especially, most single parent households with children are found to be in severe poverty situations. The children from poor families tend to have lower educational attainment, to face higher poverty risks. They are more likely to consider themselves to be unhappy and to be poorer health.

In Japan, the never-married proportion increased rapidly from 2.1% for males and 4.3% for females in 1975 to 16% and 7.3% in 2005, respectively. One of the reasons for this high level never-married proportion is the childhood poverty. Especially, the male never-married proportion is significantly high among these less educated and non-regular workers.

And income inequality has substantial influence on people’s health. Individuals who live in the area of high income inequality tend to be unhealthy.

Pierre Jean Coulon

EESC member
former President INGO “Right to Energy SOS Future”
former member of Local Information Commission of three nuclear plants
European Economic and Social Committee

“Nuclear Energy and Industry Have to Be Transparent”



The road to greater nuclear safety goes via greater (total) transparency.

We need international guidelines clear and widely endorsed on the transparency clauses in texts on nuclear waste and safety, notably with regard to

the right of the public to participate in the process. In fact, the issue of public involvement in the inherently complex debate about nuclear energy, need for building up the expertise of citizens, by making information available that is understandable (don’t believe citizens are stupid!) to the public, thus leading increased awareness of the issue: By example creation in all the nuclear countries of Local Information Committee and Commissions as existing in France, with more power and independence, would be necessary.

By other hand, such an organisation as -Aarhus Convention- is a real challenge, its role in improving, governance, and strictly holding authorities to account.

I also believe the need of a progressive way out nuclear energy, with the same transparency, safety rules and involving the public in decision making.

Part II: 14:15 – 17:20

Disaster recovery support from scientific/academic perspectives

1. Disaster Safety and Human Health

14:15 Professor Satoru Oishi, Kobe University

“Research and Education for Developing Resilient Society against Mega Disaster in Kobe University”

14:40 Professor Satoshi Takada, Kobe University

“Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders and Mental Health Care (Lessons Learned from The Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, Kobe, 1995)”

2. Regional sustainability and industrial recovery

15:05 Professor Masahiko Fujimoto, Tohoku University

“What should we do in order to reconstruct regional economy from great disaster as a university located at the center of the affected area?”

15:30 Mr Katsumi Hirabayashi, photographer

“what I have witnessed in Tohoku as a photographer”

- Coffee Break - 15:45 - 16:00

3. Panel discussion: 16:00 - 17:20

Speakers from 1 & 2

Professor Hormoz Modaresi, BRGM

Mr Pierre Jean Coulon, European Economic and Social Committee

In the afternoon session, we had four presentations. The first presentation, made by Prof Oishi, introduced the activity of the Research Center for Urban Safety and Security in Kobe University. He introduced a class, volunteer activities, and research regarding Tohoku. The second presentation, made by Prof Takada, introduced the research results of a study into children's PTSD and the difficulties faced by handicapped children and their parents. The third presentation was made by Prof Fujimoto, who talked about regional industry, especially medium- and small-sized companies. It was argued that their lack of innovation made it difficult for these companies to get out of structural recession. Finally, the photographer Mr Hirabayashi related his thoughts through his photographs. He stressed that despite there being many ideas for regeneration for Tohoku's devastated areas, none have been implemented. In the discussion session which followed we shared our ideas concerning the structural problems preventing substantive progress from being made, like the shortage of administrative personnel, gap between victims, too many different sources of support being arranged and accepted by devastated areas. The audience was asked to consider the definition of "resilience"; it was eventually defined as the society of self-recovery. Finally, we talked about the missing people and how their families are still having difficulty accepting the inevitable. We concluded that a common administrative procedure is fundamental to the recovery of such individuals.

Satoru Oishi

Professor
Research Center for Urban Safety and Security
Kobe University

“Research and Education for Developing Resilient Society against Mega Disaster in Kobe University”



The Research Center for Urban Safety and Security (RCUSS) was established on May 11, 1996, almost one year after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. RCUSS contributes to ensure safe and secure urban society by conducting research

and education based on scientific methodologies and academic frameworks that has a vision towards the resilient society. Great Eastern Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (GEJET) happened in March 2011 reminded us of our original mission and we have conducted a lot of surveys and supporting activities not only for people suffered by the GEJET but also for citizens all over Japan.

Generally, Japan is very disaster prone country. We have many kinds of natural disaster in our history. However, the most important source of disaster is the fact that people tend to forget disaster. Forgetting is very natural healing system for each person. But we have to prevent the society from forgetting disasters for making resilient society against Mega disaster.

In the symposium, the educational activities in Kobe University including lectures of Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, volunteer activity in conjunction with the disaster, international risk management program are talked. It is followed by recent research activities related with natural disasters by using cutting edge science and technology. Finally, academic activities connected with municipal governments and citizens are introduced. Though introducing topics, we can share the idea to develop resilient society against Mega disaster.

Satoshi Takada

Professor
Graduate School of Health Sciences
Kobe University

“Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders and Mental Health Care (Lessons Learned from The Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, Kobe, 1995)”



The Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake occurred in 1995. After the earthquake we conducted two surveys consisting of approximately 8,000 families with pre-school aged children and 466 families with disabled children. Symptoms related to PTSD

were found more frequently in the small children whose houses had been severely damaged one year after the earthquake. Although the symptoms decreased, they were still present more frequently in the children and their mothers with severely damaged homes in 1998. Children with intellectual or emotional disabilities displayed many behavioral problems, while the physically disabled children required medical resources. Both groups voiced concern for the need to set up specialized facilities to cater for the people disability. Specialized support in a structured environment is necessary for disabled children. Since the Central Java Earthquake occurred in 2006, we have engaged in “children house” activity in the disaster stricken area in collaboration with Gadjah Mada University. Through this activity, we have been able to share what works in helping children with disabilities and their families. The Great East Japan Earthquake has moved into the recovery phase. This exchange of information among the disaster stricken areas reduces the psychological damage of the children and aids in the recovery process.

KEY WORDS

Hanshin Awaji Earthquake, Great East Japan Earthquake, Central Java Earthquake, PTSD, Pre-school aged children, Children with disabilities

Masahiko Fujimoto

Director
Regional Innovation Research Center
Tohoku University

“What should we do in order to reconstruct regional economy from great disaster as a university located at the center of the affected area?”



Two years has passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake. The incident was a complex of high intensity ground shaking, a massive tsunami and a serious nuclear power plant accident and the scale of the disaster was unprecedented in the history of Japan.

The toll of dead and missing stands at 18,579 today, of which over 90% is estimated to have drowned by the tsunami. Many people evacuated from Fukushima prefecture and nearly 60,000 people still live outside the prefecture.

The Tohoku district, including areas most severely affected by the tsunami and nuclear power accident, was facing structural problems such as aging of population, depopulation and decrease in number of jobs and the Great East Japan Earthquake made matters worse. We have to tackle these difficult problems in order to reconstruct regional social and economic situation.

This time, we intend to introduce what and how we are doing in the Tohoku district as a university located at the center of the affected area.

Katsumi Hirabayashi

photographer

“what I have witnessed in Tohoku as a photographer”



Katsumi HIRABAYASHI is a commercial photographer based in Tokyo, Japan. Following the Great East Japan earthquake, Katsumi personally witnessed the damage caused to the Tohoku region and began to help as a volunteer. Since then he has visited the affected region more than 30 times to capture the reconstruction efforts in Japan. He has successfully held the photo exposition “Dawn in Japan” in Tokyo(Ginza), Kobe and Okayama.

Photo exhibition by Mr Katsumi Hirabayashi
Dawn in Tohoku

Katsumi Hirabayashi Photo Exhibition was held within the celebration of Japanese week in Brussels 2013 organized by the Mission of Japan to the EU and the Embassy of Japan to Belgium.

The exhibition was showcased at:

- 'Japan after the tsunami: Tackling the challenge of resilience' by Friends of Europe at Bibliotheque Solvay (Mar 11)
- Kobe University Symposium in collaboration with European Economic and Social Committee at EESC(Mar 13)
- GMF Brussels Forum at Steigenberger Grand Hotel (Mar 15-17)
- Yuzuko Horigome & Jean-Marc Luisada Conservatory at Bozar (Mar 18)



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