

Global Health Governance Issues to be Addressed Jointly by Japan and Germany

Professor KATSUMA Yasushi, Waseda University, Tōkyō

The Japan-Germany partnership, which enjoys long-standing exchange in the fields of medicine and public health, is important for achieving Goal 3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages” – by 2030. The advent of Covid-19 has made it difficult to achieve Goal 3, however, while at the same time structural challenges have arisen for global health. With no clear end to the Covid pandemic in sight, the cooperation between Japan and Germany is becoming more important than ever. Five challenges in particular are discussed below.

1. Global equitable access to vaccines

In preventing infection and the spread of Covid-19, the focus was initially on non-pharmaceutical interventions such as changing personal hygiene behavior, improving the spaces where people gather, and restricting human interaction. Non-pharmaceutical measures remain essential in 2021, but pharmaceutical inventions such as vaccines and therapeutic drugs have become indispensable. It is anticipated, in particular, that vaccines will prevent exacerbation of the disease.

But not all have fair access to vaccines. Attempts by high-income countries to secure as many vaccines as possible for their own citizens have been censured as “vaccine nationalism”. Meanwhile, a lack of funds has meant that low-income countries are unable to negotiate directly with pharmaceutical companies, making it difficult for them to secure vaccines independently. However, top earners in low-income countries can partake in “vaccine tourism”, whereby

they travel abroad (to the United States or the United Arab Emirates, for example) to be vaccinated. This gives rise to concerns that many people, including healthcare professionals, are being left behind in low-income countries.

The COVAX Facility is an international framework for the co-purchase of vaccines. High- and middle-income countries can self-fund vaccines for 20% of their populations, while low-income countries are provided with vaccines for 30% of their populations free of charge. The Government of Japan held a vaccine summit on June 2, 2021 to raise the funds required for this.

It is hoped that Japan and Germany will collaborate more than ever to achieve global equitable access to medicines, including vaccines.

2. Intellectual property rights

Access to medicines, including vaccines, is essential in the fight against Covid-19, but high prices and short supply have become issues in the oligopolistic market. 62 countries jointly proposed a temporary waiver from Covid-19-related intellectual property rights protection obligations under the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). The proposal is endorsed by more than 100 countries; many high-income countries were opposed, but the United States and France were in favor.

The protection of intellectual property rights is an important mechanism for research and development organizations to recover their investments and is an essential premise for publishing the results of research and development. On the other hand, public money from



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governments, international bodies and research grants from foundations fund R&D by the various organizations, promotes the purchase of pharmaceutical products and also positions them as international public goods.

Japan and Germany must consider temporarily waiving intellectual property rights obligations while also encouraging voluntary licensing by pharmaceutical companies. Discussions on how public and private sectors should

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cooperate in the pandemic must also be deepened.

3. Vaccine “passport”

The movement of people between Japan and Germany has stagnated in all areas of diplomacy, business, scientific and academic exchange, and tourism. How can we promote the movement of people between the two countries while preventing the spread of infection? Also known as a vaccine “passport”, vaccination certificates can exempt the holder from quarantine or shorten the period required. The World Health Organization (WHO) has internationally standardized inoculation certificates for yellow fever, etc., but has not yet responded to Covid-19. On the other hand, the EU has introduced regional inoculation certificates.

There are many issues to be solved to facilitate the movement of people between Europe and Asia. How would it be to begin by scrutinizing travel between Japan and Germany? That could be a very meaningful social experiment for the EU to promote the movement of people outside the region, including Asia.

4. International shipping

In February 2020, the outbreak of Covid-19 on the Diamond Princess attracted widespread attention not only in Japan but also internationally. The flag state of the Diamond Princess was the United Kingdom, and the cruise ship operating company was based in the United States. The ship was permitted to dock at the port of Yokohama in Japan. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the International Labour Organization’s Maritime Labour Convention of 2006 set out the responsibilities of flag states. The WHO’s International Health Regulations set out the responsibilities of the country in which the vessel is located. Further, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea provides for the rights and obligations of coastal states vis-à-vis foreign vessels. Although the case involved several internationals, the division of roles between the UK, the United States, and Japan was not clear.

Moreover, although Japan permitted the Diamond Princess to dock, it refused the same permission to the Westerdam (flag state is the Netherlands; operating company is in the United States). After being turned away by various countries, the Westerdam ended up docking in Cambodia.

With a lack of clarity regarding the roles of the various nations involved, the burden on the countries in which such ships actually dock is increasing, and it is no wonder that many countries are reluctant to respond. How about Japan and Germany jointly envisioning a mechanism for international cooperation for the event that an infectious disease occurs on an international vessel?

5. Pandemic treaty

Calls for a pandemic treaty to be drafted in preparation for future infectious disease contagions are being discussed by the WHO. I personally am not in favor of a WHO-centric treaty, such as the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, the reason being that issues such as how to deal with the intellectual property rights of many publicly funded “international public goods” and how to respond to infectious diseases on international vessels, as mentioned above, go beyond the areas for which the WHO has a mandate. Looking back at the response to the Ebola virus outbreak in Guinea and its neighboring countries in 2014, the WHO alone had difficulty responding, so the United Nations was forced to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) through a Security Council resolution.

Japan and Germany should deepen discussions on what kind of global health governance should be established in preparation for future infectious diseases and, from a medium- to long-term perspective, what a pandemic treaty should look like.

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Dear Readers!

The Tōkyō 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games have almost come to an end. Unfortunately, COVID-19 still has us “in its grip”, and Professor KATSUMA Yasushi from Waseda-University has provided a report on the challenges of global health governance, which Japan and Germany should jointly tackle.

Fortunately, under the new “3G rule” (geimpft, genesen, getestet / vaccinated, recovered, tested) it is once again possible to welcome visitors back to the JDZB. Nevertheless, we will continue to focus on digital and hybrid events too. Currently we are working hard on our events portfolio for 2022. We are experimenting with new formats and media, and networking with (new) partners – including partners from business and industry. One of our particular goals is to raise interest for Japan and Germany among the young people of these countries who previously may have not been interested in the other country. Therefore, I am pleased to announce that Mr Stefan ZIERKE, Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, has recently taken over the patronage for the German-Japanese Exchange Programs for Youth and Youth Work Specialists.

We are interested in hearing from you, dear readers. What topics do you think are relevant and interest you? We would be pleased to hear them and discuss further! I wish you a golden autumn.

With kind regards

Dr. Julia MÜNCH
JDZB Secretary General

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A virtual university leadership meeting of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), the Japan Committee of Universities for International Exchange (JACUIE) and the French Conférence des Présidents d'Université (CPU) is planned for 20 October 2021. The JDZB has a long-standing cooperation with HRK and JACUIE. Below is an interview with the HRK Vice President for International Affairs, Prof. Bernd SCHOLZ-REITER, on German-Japanese relations in higher education.

Please give us a brief overview of German-Japanese cooperation in higher education. What role does the HRK play, and how does cooperation with the Japanese counterparts and other institutions such as the JDZB work?

International cooperation in higher education is of central importance for both Germany and Japan, and the beginnings of German-Japanese cooperation in higher education go back a long way. The intensity of cooperation between our universities has increased significantly in recent years. Currently, the HRK's "International Cooperation" portal lists around 830 cooperation agreements between Japanese and German universities. Nevertheless, there is untapped potential, both in terms of the range of universities involved in cooperation and in terms of the range of subjects covered.

Stable, long-standing relationships exist between the HRK and its Japanese partner organizations. In order to strengthen student exchange, the HRK signed a framework agreement on higher education cooperation with its Japanese partner organizations in 2015. The framework agreement contains recommendations on cooperation and academic mobility between higher education institutions in both countries in teaching, studies, research and development. It also includes recommendations on the recognition of academic degrees and qualifications and on the admission of German and Japanese students and doctoral candidates. We have also been organizing joint symposia on selected higher education policy topics since 2006. These take place every two years in Tōkyō and Berlin. It has become a solid tradition that we hold these events together with the JDZB. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the event planned for June 2020 had to be cancelled. In order to continue the exchange even in these difficult times, a virtual trilateral university leadership meeting is now planned for October. We are pleased that this time our

French partner organization, which also maintains a lively exchange with Japan, will be on board, too.

What are the current problems in higher education in both countries? And what role does the pandemic play here in bilateral relations and in the respective societies?

Of course, dealing with the direct and indirect consequences of the pandemic for universities has been and continues to be the focus of attention at present. This concerns not only the formats, organization and content adaptation of teaching, but also the implementation of research projects and the management of all university fields of activity under rapidly changing conditions. Communication within the university as well as the exchange with societal actors on scientific and societal issues have thereby experienced a considerable increase in importance. It could be assumed that the deficits in state budgets, which have increased further as a result of the pandemic, will have an impact on the future financing of universities – both in Germany and in Japan. Under no circumstances should the current cohorts of students, who have had difficult study conditions as a result of the lockdown, be further disadvantaged by having their study conditions fall short of high standards for years to come as a result of possible declining funding for universities. It is therefore our collective responsibility to clearly communicate the extraordinary achievements of higher education. Science is making a significant contribution to overcoming the pandemic and also other challenges and their consequences. It can only achieve this performance in the long term if it can act in a science-driven and autonomous manner. We agree with our Japanese partners that, in view of the increasing pressure on universities to economize, we need to make even clearer the importance of higher education and research for the future viability of societies.



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What do you generally expect from German-Japanese cooperation in the field of higher education in the future, and especially with regard to possible new challenges in both countries' post-pandemic societies?

Against the backdrop of global developments, the strategic partnership between Germany and Japan is becoming increasingly important. This also applies to scientific cooperation: Japan will remain an important partner for German universities in the future. It will be important to future-proof German-Japanese cooperation in all areas. This means that in research we should jointly develop topics such as hydrogen technology, artificial intelligence, battery technology, nanomaterials, or even climate change and biodiversity. In addition, cooperation in the humanities and social sciences is also of great importance. We should focus more on these in the future; German universities are excellently positioned in this area. At the same time, we should make progress in joint teaching. The number of joint study programs between German and Japanese universities is still quite low. The many opportunities for collaboration in the digital space, the development of which accelerated during the pandemic, can help overcome existing hurdles. At the same time, we need to make greater efforts on both sides to appropriately communicate our own system and its strengths, as well as further strengthen our focus on multilingual teaching. Formats such as the university leadership meeting in October will help to further strengthen cooperation.

Symposium “Managing the Crisis. Psychosocial Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic” 10 June 2021.

Lewis ERCKENBRECHT, B.A., Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg

In the more than eighteen months since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the fear of becoming ill and the consequences of the measures to contain the virus presented massive challenges to many people and led to numerous personal and psychological crises.

This virtual symposium therefore focused on the social and psychological impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in Germany and Japan. The collaborative event between the JDZB and the German House of Science and Innovation (DWH) Tōkyō on 10 June 2021 combined the perspectives of practice and science to create an overall picture.

Experiences from practice

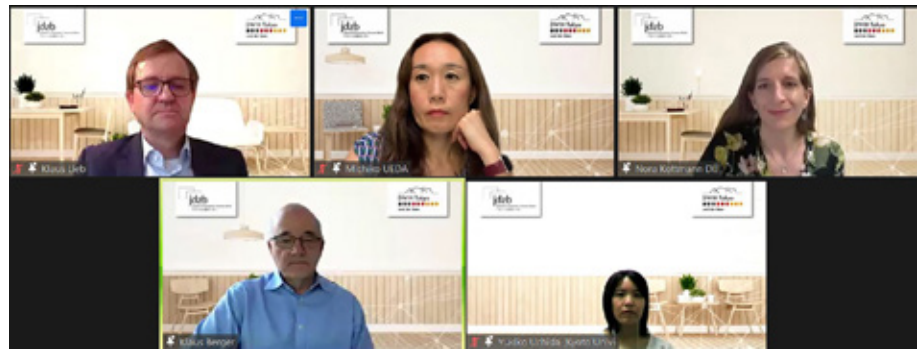
At the beginning of the symposium, Ōzora Kōki, founder of the 24h counseling center “A Place for You” in Tōkyō, and Jens GRÄBENER, head of the Berlin Crisis Service in the Western Region, shared their personal experiences of working with people in distress in an interview conducted by Ulf KIRSE from Bielefeld University.

Both noted an increase in the number of people seeking help, the majority of whom also saw the pandemic as the reason for their illness or emergency situation. Both the fear of the disease itself and the psychological stress caused by lockdowns played a decisive role. In addition, many organizations had to limit the help they offered – especially those with personal contact.

This situation also increasingly affected the employees and volunteers in assistance-service organizations, who were concerned about their own health and were themselves affected by the pandemic and its consequences. However, at “A Place for You,” the pandemic also had positive effects. The organization, which offers its help primarily online, was able to expand its services as a result. The increasing number of people working from home also means that more people were flexible in terms of time and were willing to provide support.

Scientific perspective

The field reports were followed by a panel discussion moderated by Dr. Nora KOTTMAN from the German Institute for Japanese Studies in Tōkyō, in which Prof. Klaus BERGER, representative of the NAKO Health Study (a long-term population study by a network of German research institutions), Prof. Klaus LIEB, Leibniz Institute for Resilience Research, Prof. UEDA Michiko, Waseda University, and Prof. UCHIDA Yukiko, Kyōto University, presented their research findings and discussed the psychosocial consequences of the pandemic from a scientific perspective.



Focusing on vulnerable groups

The discussion focused particularly on evaluating the consequences of the pandemic in more affected vulnerable groups. Scientific studies on participants revealed that stress and mental illness increased as a result of the pandemic in both Japan and Germany, but this increase was unevenly distributed in the population.

While stress, depression, anxiety, and suicide were more prevalent among young people aged under 30, women, single parents, precarious workers, and the economically disadvantaged, older people and those with high incomes or education levels were hardly affected.

The pandemic thus further exposed already existing disadvantages in the societies of both countries. According to the participants, future political measures should pay more attention to vulnerable groups.

Evidence-based policy needs reliable data

The pandemic has brought into focus an

evidence-based, science-driven form of policymaking. However, such decisions would also need reliable data, which, according to the experts, are often not available.

For example, an evidence-based statement about mental illness in children in the Covid-19 pandemic is currently not possible in Germany, they said. In Japan, the rising suicide figures among children and adolescents as well as young women are alarming, but a study examining the connection with the consequences of the pandemic is lacking. If policymakers were to aim for evidence-based decision-making in the psychosocial field in the future as well, more and reliable data would have to be made available for the next crisis.

Harnessing the energy of the crisis

The participants emphasized that the Covid-19 pandemic not only had negative effects on the mental health of people in Germany and Japan. The shift of work to the home office especially reduces the mental pressure for many people, they said. The fact that they no longer have to travel to work and have fewer social obligations means they have more time for their own interests and their families. In addition, moments of crisis always release energy for change. In this context, adapted therapies alone are not sufficient. The reasons why vulnerable groups are particularly affected must also be researched and their situation improved in the long term through far-reaching reforms.

In view of the opportunities presented by the crisis, the symposium ended on a cautiously optimistic note. Although there were fears that the learning effects might evaporate and change might fail to materialize, if the momentum that has been created were to be used for change, this and future crises could be better dealt with.

Filling German-Japanese friendship with life: Kai WINTER – From bridge walker to bridge builder.

MAKINO Hitomi, German-Japanese Youth Exchange Department

Kai WINTER was in his early 20s when a friend told him about an exchange program to Japan. An opportunity to learn more about Japan and its people with other young volunteers? A host family weekend? That sounded like a special program. As a volunteer with the Hamburg Youth Fire Department, Kai also hoped to learn something about disaster management in Japan. In 2008, Kai successfully applied for the German-Japanese Exchange Program for Young Volunteers, one of three exchange programs run by the JDZB on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. This is how Kai becomes a bridge walker!

September 2008: JAPAN! Kai is thrilled. His host family in Nara even organizes a visit to a professional fire department for him! One day before the return trip, the German delegation is scheduled to be in Ōsaka and they can explore the city. This is perfect for Kai, because there has been a twinning agreement between his hometown of Hamburg and Ōsaka since 1989, and he wants to visit a fire department in Ōsaka. So before the trip, he did some research: “I found a Japanese page on the Internet with a fire truck on it, translated some Japanese text with Google Translator, and then emailed them in English, kind of like, ‘Hi, here’s Kai, I want to visit you!’ And they replied to me!” So Kai is able to visit the marine harbor fire station.

He has Kuniko, who is a Japanese alumna of the exchange program helping out during the stay in Ōsaka, explain the way in English. Kuniko is worried whether Kai will really manage to find his way there. Kai,

however, goes off cheerfully. At the harbor fire station, he is greeted by firefighter Kōichi and given a tour of the station; the conversation in English is lively. Back at the station, Kuniko asks Kai about his experiences and the two strike up a conversation again. They get along so well that they continue to exchange ideas regularly even after Kai returns to Germany. He also keeps in touch with Kōichi.

In 2009, Kai flies to Japan alone with Ōsaka as his destination. “I had with me the German-Japanese language primer from the German Sports Youth, which we received at the preparatory seminar in 2008, and I had your tips in my head about what to look out for in everyday Japanese life. With that, I felt well prepared for the trip.” In Ōsaka, he visits Kōichi. He also meets Kuniko again to talk to her about an exchange between young people from Ōsaka and the Hamburg Youth Fire Department on the topic of disaster prevention, an idea that has been on his mind since his stay in Japan in 2008.

Kuniko is enthusiastic about the idea! Both of them immediately start planning. Kai and his fellow youth firefighter, Marion, form the Hamburg organization team. For Ōsaka, Kuniko and the Ōsaka Youth International Exchange Federation take over the organization. Kai the bridge-walker now becomes Kai the bridge-builder!

In 2010 the time has come: Kuniko and a group of 11 young people from Ōsaka visit Hamburg! They are welcomed at Hamburg City Hall, they visit the Neuengamme concentration camp memorial, they participated in youth fire department activities

and stayed with host families, among other activities: “We were inspired by the JDZB’s program when designing our program.”

In 2011 the JDZB nominated Kai for the “German-Japanese Friendship Award” for his commitment, which was awarded in the anniversary year “150 Years of German-Japanese Friendship”, and he was one of the 61 German award winners! The return visit to Japan planned for 2011 had to be postponed due to the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake on March 11. However, in 2012, Kai, Marion and eight young volunteers finally flew to Ōsaka!

For 11 years, the youth exchange between Hamburg and Ōsaka has been an integral part of the city partnership and has been continuing digitally during the COVID-19 pandemic: “It was lucky that I participated in the exchange program for young volunteers in 2008 and met Kuniko! Despite the distance, we have such a great friendship. Since the start of this year, we have been discussing once a month via Zoom. The joint program planning is so much fun, and Kuniko and her team are very passionate about it as well!!!”

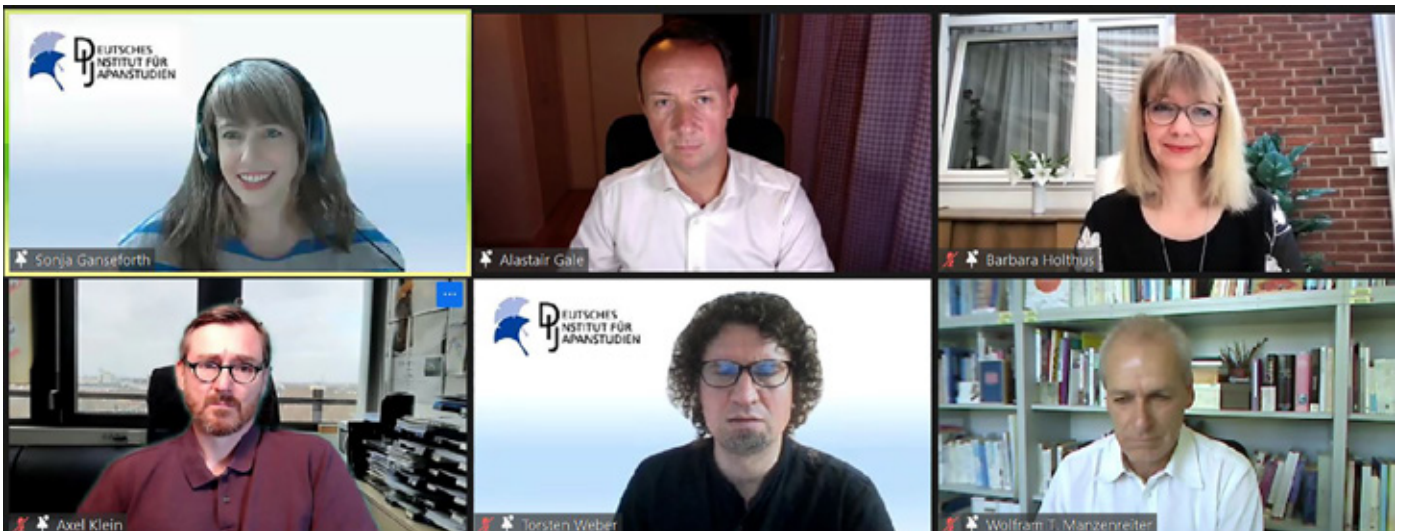
Friendships have also developed between the young people from Hamburg and Ōsaka, which Kai is particularly happy about: “When I see the lasting German-Japanese friendships that develop through the exchange, my heart swells! The exchange makes unique friendships possible! And I hope that these friendships contribute to making our world a little more peaceful.”

This article is the abridged version of a post that was published on the JDZB website in our blog ECHO+ on 14 June 2021.





Virtual Symposium “Security Dynamics in the Indo-Pacific” held on 23 June dealt with the implications for shaping the international rules-based order and the role of Japan and Germany. This event was held in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the German Federal Foreign Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, and The Japan Institute of International Affairs, as part of the Japan-Germany Security Dialogue Track 1.5 2021.



Virtual Book Launch and Panel Discussion “Recovery Games under the Mask. The Tokyo Olympics through the Lens of Japan Scholars” on social, political, economic, and historical aspects of the Tōkyō Olympic and Paralympic Games held on 17 June. In cooperation with the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ, Tōkyō).



Concert “AUTUMN SONG 秋の歌 Japanese-German Encounters” held on 9 June at the JDZB. For the first time since the beginning of the pandemic, artists performed in the hall which was also available livestream on the JDZB’s YouTube channel. Concerts by various ensembles of the Junge Deutsche Philharmonie for German-Japanese exchange have been held at the JDZB since 2017.

CONFERENCES BY FOCAL AREAS

SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

11th Meeting of the German-Japanese Expert Council on Energy Transition

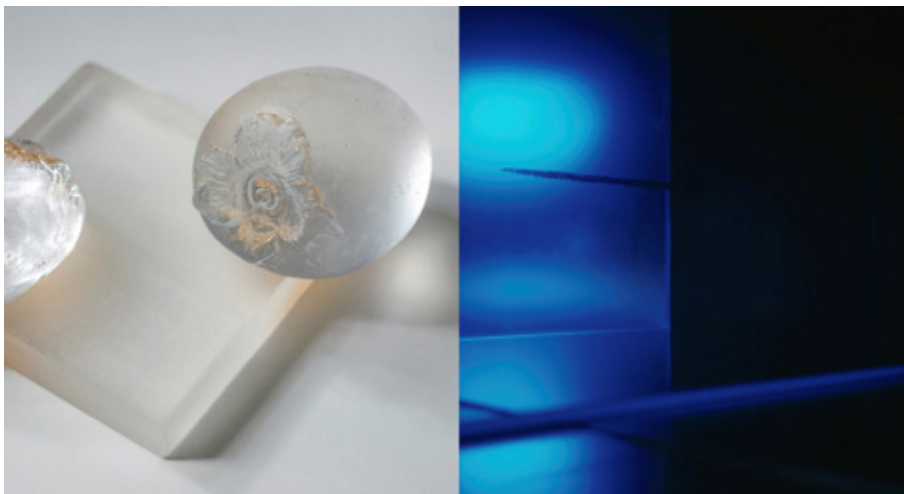
C: Hennicke Consult, Wuppertal; ECOS Japan Consult GmbH, Osnabrück; Institute for Energy Economics Japan (IEEJ), Tōkyō; Federal Ministry of Economics and Energy (BMW), Berlin; Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Tōkyō (by invitation only)
Date: 13-14 September 2021

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

Symposium: Demographic Change in Germany and Japan

C: Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), Berlin; Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare (MHLW), Tōkyō
Date: October/November 2021

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



Left: „Still Life with Two Kakis II“ by HIROHATA Masami 2020 © HIROHATA Masami
Right: „Light and Space Refraction #4“ by Nicole AHLAND 2021 © N. AHLAND & VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2021

Based on the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic, this is only a preliminary plan of JDZB programs as reflected from August 2021.
Please confirm the dates and format for each event on the JDZB homepage!

French-German Dialog on Japan II: Artificial Intelligence and Health care

C: France-Japan Foundation of the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris; Duisburg-Essen University
Date: 16-17 September 2021, online

STATE, ECONOMY, GOVERNANCE

Virtual Symposium: The Future of Democracy I: Post-Pandemic Democracy in Japan and Germany

C: Seinan Gakuin University, Fukuoka; Duisburg-Essen University; Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Berlin)
Date: 29 September 2021

CULTURAL EVENTS

EXHIBITION

“Good Morning My Moon”

Photographs by Nicole AHLAND and glass sculptures by HIROHATA Masami
Opening on 19 August
Duration: 28 August until 26 November 2021
(Photo below)

CONCERT

Ensemble Horizonte “Dialog on Nature” Contemporary Compositions from Germany and Japan (by HOSOKAWA Toshio, Dr. Jörg-Peter MITTMANN und ITO Miyuki, among others; Conductor: J.-P. MITTMANN)
Date: 2 September 2021, 7 pm

READING

“Convenience Store Women” (Konbini Ningen) Reading and Discussion with MURATA Sayaka

C: The Japan Foundation / Japan Cultural Institute Cologne; German-Japanese Society Berlin
Date: 9 September 2021, 7 pm

“The Silkworm Room” Reading and discussion with MURATA Sayaka and the audience at the Berlin International Literature Festival

C: Japan Cultural Institute Cologne
Date: 11 September 2021
Venue: “Silent Green” in Berlin-Wedding

JAPANESE + CALLIGRAPHY COURSES

Calligraphy courses are once again being held in person at the JDZB, information on the website. All Japanese language courses will continue to be held online until the end of the year.

EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

- Junior Experts Exchange Program
- German-Japanese Young Leaders Forum
- Youth Group Leaders Exchange Program
- Study Program for Youth Work Specialists
- Exchange Program for Young Employees
- JDZB SCIENCEYOUTH PROGRAM

For details of the programs, please refer to: <https://jdz.de> --> Exchange Programs

Opening hours of exhibitions

Mon - Thursday 10 am - 0.30 pm and 1 pm to 5 pm, Fri 10 am - 0.30 pm and 1 pm to 3.30 pm
Free admittance, but subject to restrictions due to the pandemic

C: = in cooperation with

Venue: JDZB, if not stated otherwise (also digital)

For more information please refer to: <https://jdz.de>



Events in the Pandemic – Hybrid, Digital, Live?!

The JDZB was also forced to reorganize its activities due to the pandemic. Japanese language courses were the first to go online in March 2020 – and they're still online today, pictured are the teachers at the virtual farewell party for the courses in December 2020 (1). The next challenge was Open House in June: cancelled to the public, a four-hour virtual program was created with pre-produced videos, which could be watched in Japan as well (2). The first hybrid meeting in August 2020 succeeded with relatively simple means and a large screen in the main hall (3). After that, all meetings were held virtually using the Zoom digital platform, some with simultaneous interpretation (4). Exchange programs – here the virtual introductory session for participants of the Young Leaders' Forum that was postponed to 2022 (5) – and cultural events also went online, here the interactive word and movement game "Wall Game" (6). In May 2021, we went hybrid again: At the German-Japanese Forum, the large hall resembled a professional TV studio (7), and at the concert "Herbstlied" (Autumn Song) in June, musicians were able to play live in front of an audience again for the first time, pictured here setting up an additional livestream (8). Some events can still be watched on the JDZB's YouTube channel.

Conclusion: in the 18 months of Pandemic, we have tried out many new ideas and formats and learned a lot in the process – we are confident that we will be able to continue many new hybrid and digital events and thus make ourselves fit for the post-pandemic future. (Photos 1-8 clockwise from top left)

