



The Current State and Prospects for the EU-Japan Strategic Partnership

Dr Patricia FLOR, Ambassador of the European Union to Japan

Japan, East Asia's oldest democracy, has always been for the European Union a like-minded partner that shares common values and interests including democracy, an open market economy, human rights, human dignity, freedom, equality, and the rule of law. In recent years, the EU and Japan have embarked on an unambiguous path toward further broadening and elevating that relationship to a new and strategic level that now goes far beyond the earlier trade-focused ties.

Since my arrival as the EU's ambassador to Japan in the autumn of 2018, I have seen this trend first hand. Notable milestones include the entry into force of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement and provisional application of the EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement in February 2019, and the bilateral Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure of September that same year. At the 2021 EU-Japan Summit, EU leaders and then Prime Minister SUGA Yoshihide agreed on a Green Alliance to jointly combat climate change and environmental degradation.

To buttress these key pacts, the EU and Japan hold regular dialogue meetings on a variety of policy areas such as climate and the environment, information society, cyberspace, science and technology, trade, financial services and industrial policy. In addition to our bilateral ties, we cooperate closely in international and multilateral fora such

as the United Nations, the World Trade Organisation and the G7 and G20.

This multi-layered cooperation across a variety of policy fields is of strategic value because it not only helps the two sides identify and act on areas of interest and potential challenges in their bilateral relations, but also contributes to establishing global norms and standards that could benefit the international community.

The COVID-19 pandemic has wrought havoc on societies and economies around the world; Europe and Japan have certainly not been immune. Our citizens and businesses suffered as medical and social systems came under strain, various economic restrictions were imposed and limits on international travel were introduced.

However, the EU sprung back from the initial shock and initiated an efficient COVID-19 response, most notably in the area of supporting the rapid development of vaccines through generous investment and spearheading efforts to ensure their equitable access and distribution through such international schemes as the COVAX Facility. Japan has been a key beneficiary of European efforts on this front, being the destination of more than 30% of all vaccine doses authorised for export from the EU. Japan is also a major contributor to COVAX, and donates domestically produced doses to countries in Asia.



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Notwithstanding the pandemic and the impediments it has created, the EU and Japan have continued their efforts to expand our collaboration into new fields of strategic importance amid rising geopolitical tensions centred around the Indo-Pacific region. Of particular note in this regard is the increasing focus on security cooperation. While bilateral consultations on security policy issues began after the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, exchanges in this

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policy area have accelerated over the past few years in particular.

Both the EU and Japan have dispatched naval vessels to engage in anti-piracy missions in the Gulf of Aden from 2008 and 2009, respectively, and repeatedly joined forces. Of particular note was the joint exercise conducted in October 2020, which for the first time included a joint port call to Djibouti in the Horn of Africa.

In September 2021, the EU released its 'Joint Communication on the EU strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific'. Japan's then Foreign Minister MOTEGI Toshimitsu issued a statement welcoming 'the EU's announcement of their specific measures, together with their strong will, for their engagement in the Indo-Pacific'. The strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region – which in the context of this strategy is defined as the vast region spanning from the east coast of Africa to the Pacific Island States – for the EU is increasing because of its growing economic, demographic, and political weight and the strong economic and political interdependence between Europe and Indo-Pacific nations, especially Japan.

Europe and the Indo-Pacific have deep historical ties. Today, the EU is the top investor, the leading development co-operation partner and one of the biggest trading partners in the Indo-Pacific region. Together, the Indo-Pacific and Europe hold over 70% of the global trade in goods and services, as well as over 60% of foreign direct investment flows.

Because current dynamics in the region have given rise to intense geopolitical competition, adding to increasing tensions on trade and supply chains as well as in technological, political and security areas, the EU and its Member States are united in their determination to step up EU strategic engagement.

The EU's main objective is to contribute to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific, building strong and lasting partnerships. Its inclusive approach is designed to foster a rules-based international order, including respect for the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), a level playing field, an open and fair environment for trade and investment and supporting connectivity regionally and with the EU.

The strategy's potential in the area of security and defence has drawn the most attention. In this regard, the EU is seeking to promote a stable and rules-based regional security architecture, including secure sea lines of communication, capacity-building and enhanced naval presence by EU Member States.

The EU strategy, released amid the COVID-19 pandemic, also presents Europe's vision for a green, resilient and digital recovery. While we all strive to 'Build Back Better', the pure scale of the pandemic's socioeconomic impact means that partnerships among the like-minded are crucial if we are to make such designs a reality, and Japan plays a key role as the EU's closest ally in the region. Both sides acknowledge this, and the next logical step in buttressing our bilateral relations should be in the digital sphere. Discussions about a future Digital Partnership are ongoing.

The EU and Japan entered into their strategic partnership in 2019. It is now time to see it bear fruit in jointly facing and mastering the daunting tasks of our time: safeguarding peace and stability, maintaining an open and fair world economy, protecting our planet from global warming and environmental degradation and achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals so that no one is left behind.

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers!

The year is drawing to a close, and unfortunately there is still no end in sight to the pandemic. Even though travel and in-person contact restrictions are quite a challenge for exchange platforms such as the JDZB, new virtual formats in many areas are a good alternative (or supplement) to traditional analog events and are even expanding our sphere of influence. Please visit our YouTube channel to get an impression of the diversity and variety of our projects!

In addition, we are using the time to prepare our house as best as possible for the "New Normal". For example, our library is undergoing a transformation into a contemporary information lounge with space for encounters and meetings, and in the meantime, we have created a permanent stage for events as well as comfortable seat cushions – not least thanks to donations from the Metzler Bank and the MUJI Company. We also welcome the German branch of Mitsubishi Electric as a new sponsor. In October, the company opened a representative office in the JDZB and is visibly investing in the future of the center as part of its corporate citizenship. Synergies are expected from both sides. This time we would like to thank Dr. Patricia FLOR, Ambassador of the European Union in Japan, for the interesting editorial.

We wish you happy holidays! Please stay in touch with us in the New Year as well.

With warm regards

Dr. Julia MÜNCH
JDZB Secretary General

jdzb echo

Published quarterly in March – June – Sept. – Dec.

Publisher:
Japanese-German Center Berlin (JDZB)
Editor: Michael NIEMANN
Tel.: +49-30-839 07 186, E-Mail: niemann@jdzb.de

Opinions expressed reflect the author's opinion and not necessarily the opinion of the publisher.

JDZB, Saargemünder Str. 2, 14195 Berlin, Germany
Tel.: +49-30-839 07 0 Fax: +49-30-839 07 220
E-Mail: jdzb@jdzb.de URL: <https://jdzb.de>

Library open with 2G rule (vaccinated or recovered)!

Open: Tuesday + Thursday 10 am until 5 pm

In cooperation with the Embassy of Japan in Germany, the Japanese-German Center Berlin will hold a symposium on the topic “Future Communication Technologies: Beyond 5G and 6G – Opportunities for Japanese-German Collaboration” on 17 February 2022. Below is an interview with the keynote speaker at the symposium Mr. TOKUDA Hideyuki, President of the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT).

Can you please explain briefly what research is being conducted into next-generation ICT and how this technology is progressing?

With a view to being able to respond flexibly to global social issues such as natural disasters, global warming, pandemics, and adapt to the “new normal” society in the post-corona era, as well as transform Japan into a sustainable and resilient society, we aim to accelerate digital transformation (DX) and implement a human-centered Society 5.0 through the fusion of the physical and cyberspace.

In line with the 5th mid-to-long term plan that began in April 2021 and aiming at early implementation, we are strongly promoting the acceleration of R&D and open innovation in five priority areas (advanced electromagnetic wave technology, innovative networks, cybersecurity, universal communication, frontier science) and in four strategic research areas: Beyond 5G, AI, quantum ICT and cybersecurity.

We are also accelerating the social evolution of R&D results through the improvement of testbed environments aimed at open utilization of data from research and the activities of corporations that employ advanced technologies developed by NICT.

The corona crisis has accelerated digital transformation. What innovative technologies are Japan and Germany planning and how long before they are launched? Please tell us about any new technology that has already been put into practical use.

NICT is actively applying cutting-edge ICT as new coronavirus countermeasures. For example, we are using the high-output DUV-LED technology under development to build a light-sterilization system that is clean, portable, and can instantly inactivate a wide range of viruses. In hospitals, we are aiding the autonomous operation of robots through highly secure HD video and UWB technology, allowing ER/ICU specialists to help seriously ill patients remotely.

NICT’s thin client type VPN telework system, based on a comprehensive testbed, is aiding SMEs and organizations in urgently setting up work-at-home environments. Multilingual translation technology is being used to improve translation efficiency in clinical trials and drug approval application procedures in the pharmaceutical and medical fields. We are also testing the practical application of dialogue technology to prevent decline in the health and cognitive function of elderly people living alone. In the future (around 2030), we expect remote work and customer service to be easy and secure using cybernetic avatars (alter-ego robots) by employing neural communication engineering and BMI technology. We believe various fields of industry will benefit from solutions to the distancing restrictions caused by the corona crisis.

What does the introduction of core technologies and innovations, including the 6G standard, mean in terms of achieving sustainability and climate policy goals? Also, how is the resilience of the communications network infrastructure, and the protection of personal information protection in it, safeguarded?

B5G/6G is expected to be more than ten times as fast as 5G, have ultra-low latency, and be capable of ten times as many simultaneous connections. Two aspects speak to sustainability and counteracting global warming: the greening of industry by ICT and the greening of ICT itself. B5G and 6G is hotly anticipated in these two respects, because it will also allow ultra-low power consumption, ultra-security and reliability, autonomy, scalability, and other features, thus contributing to the greening of all industries. Moreover, green ICT will contribute significantly through technology for ultra-low power consumption and photoelectric fusion.

It is hoped that, with B5G/6G, a communication environment for drones, ships, aircraft, etc. can be provided – both in normal times and in times of natural disaster



– based on the seamless coordination of satellite communication systems through both terrestrial mobile communications and non-terrestrial networks.

As far as protecting personal information goes, secure computing technology using homomorphic encryption alone is insufficient, and it is essential to establish legal regulations such as the Amended Personal Information Protection Act in Japan and the EU’s General Data Protection Regulation.

Please tell us about existing R&D cooperation between Japan and Germany in the field of ICT. In which fields do you think the two countries should cooperate in the future?

We have the Hannover Declaration of March 2017, and a community of ICT researchers has been established. At NICT, the Flexible Factory Project (FFPJ) for realizing smart factories that use Industry 4.0 and IoT technology was implemented based on the 2017 MoU between DFKI and NICT, and social implementation and international standardization activities based on public-private partnerships put into practice.

Also important is the acceleration of Japan/EU R&D collaboration in the coordination of HAPS/satellite non-terrestrial and terrestrial systems for the implementation of an air-space-ground communications infrastructure made possible by next generation B5G/6G.

AI (multilingual speech translation, simultaneous interpretation, interactive technology, neural communications), cybersecurity, cybernetic avatars, XR/MR, etc. are also pivotal fields. Moreover, R&D into bilateral quantum cryptography networks is a key issue since it is closely related to the security of countries sharing the same value system. I also believe that R&D and proof-of-concept for quantum internet will be crucial in the long term.

Panel Discussion “Postpandemic Democracy in Japan and Germany”, 29 September 2021

Dr. Momoyo HÜSTEBECK, Institute for East Asian Studies IN-EAST, University of Duisburg-Essen.

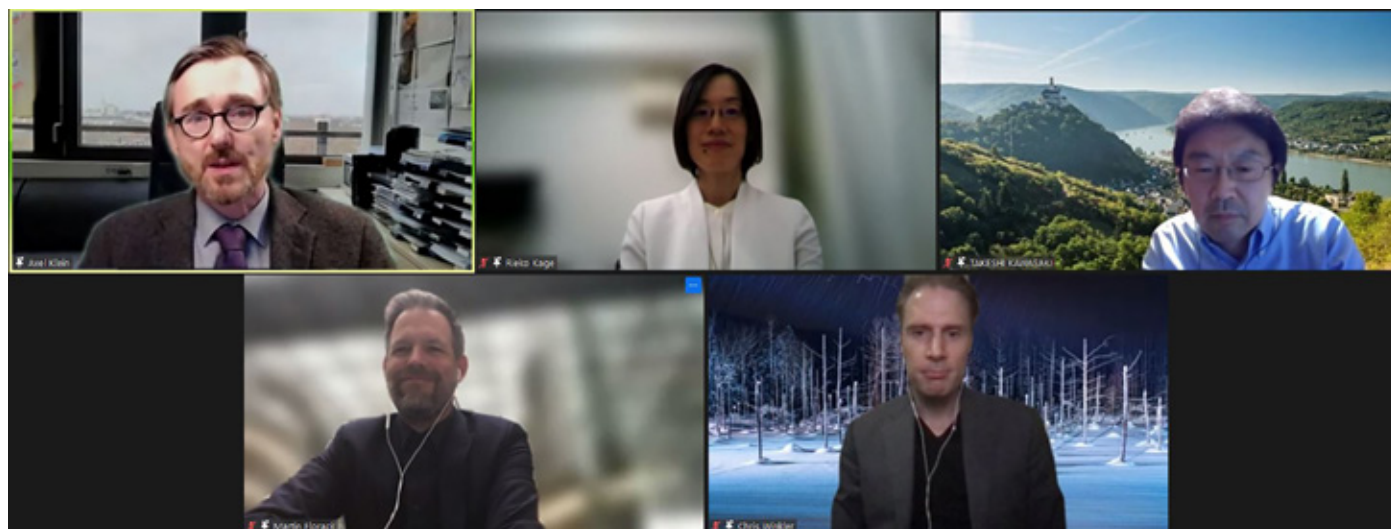
To kick off the “Future of Democracy” series, the JDZB hosted a virtual panel discussion. Following the German federal elections and the upcoming Japanese parliamentary elections, German and Japanese political scientists came together to discuss the impact of both governments’ Covid-related measures on democracy. Dr. Martin FLORACK (University of Duisburg-Essen), Prof. KAGE Rieko (Tokyo University), Prof. KAWASAKI Takeshi (Sophia University) and Prof. Chris WINKLER (Seinan Gakuin University) participated in the expert panel, which was innovatively moderated by Prof. Axel KLEIN (University of Duisburg-Essen).

In the first wave, the German government took a large leap of faith in its crisis management, but it squandered this trust as the crisis progressed. The pandemic revealed, as if through a burning glass, the problems and social conflicts that had not been solved by politicians. The crisis also highlighted the complexity of political decisions, which are incomprehensible to parts of the electorate and thus foster distrust. Nevertheless, Covid measures played only a minor role in the federal election campaign. However, the clear gains for the Liberals and the Greens indicate a desire for political change.

“Querdenker” (lateral thinkers) will establish themselves as a new political party in the Bundestag, given the heterogeneity of the protest movement. However, the extraparlimentary radicalization of the violent right-wing extremist forces within the movement endangers democracy. In Japan, no comparable protest movements have emerged against the government’s Covid measures. New parties are founded primarily through intra-party splits from the LDP. The Japanese Greens show how difficult it is to enter the lower house as a grassroots movement.

Quo vadis democracy?

The nature of political science analysis makes it difficult to look into a crystal ball and predict the health of democracy after Covid. It should be noted that the pandemic has tested democracies around the world. FLO-



Stocktake

Policy measures to curb COVID-19 varied widely between Japan and Germany. The German government restricted personal liberties more extensively than the Japanese government, which relied on voluntary self-directed commitments. Despite the different approaches to government crisis management, dissatisfaction among large segments of the population with the performance of their executive branch grew in both countries as the pandemic progressed.

Since the LDP-led government presented the interests of the economy and those of health protection as incompatible, it lost trust, especially among the elderly, the liberal democratic core voters. The rigid adherence to the Olympic Games and insufficient hospital capacities also increased voter distrust despite low rates of infection incidences by international standards.

Political participation

Free and equal elections are a minimum criterion for a representative democracy type of government. Accordingly, the panelists used voting behavior to diagnose the state of German and Japanese democracy. Young voters in particular support the FDP and the Greens in the Bundestag elections. Due to the aging society, however, their share of the vote is too small for a fundamental renewal of party politics. Even though voter turnout is lowest among Japanese male youth, KAWASAKI and KAGE contradicted the impression that they are politically disinterested. The lack of political education in secondary schools and the experience with the violent student protests in the 1960/70s explain, among other things, the low level of party political interest and commitment among many Japanese students.

The Green Party and the AFD emerged as new parties from the crises in the history of the Federal Republic. It is unlikely that the

RACK, however, refused to speak of a crisis of democracy. He considered the debate in Germany to be “partly overdone”. Especially under the challenges of the crisis, democracy means enduring conflicts and negotiating decisions that are acceptable to the majority. WINKLER concluded by rightly pointing out the resilience of representative democracies compared to other forms of government in their long-term view.

It was not possible to answer conclusively the question of who can contribute significantly to the resilience of democracy: given the dissatisfaction with the performance of the established political elites, do civil society actors and new forms of co-determination lead the way to a more resilient post-covid democracy? As this panel marked the start of the JDZB series of events on the future of democracy, there will be further opportunities to explore possible answers - thanks to simultaneous translations.

Reflections on the digital German-Japanese Exchange Program for Young Volunteers 2021 on the topic of “Social Participation of Young people”.

Wencke TRUMPOLD, Program Partner and Managing Director of Kinder- und Jugendring Sachsen e. V.

Normally, once we’ve finished a Japanese-German exchange program, preparations for the coming year are well under way. Dates are arranged, hotels selected, host families requested or project partners are approached who can provide the upcoming Japanese delegation of the German-Japanese Exchange Program for Young Volunteers insights into the voluntary work of young people in Germany. This was the plan for 2021, however, the 24 Japanese young volunteers did not arrive. Rather, the pandemic simply continued and everything had to change. Just like everywhere else in the world, the usual processes within families, offices, factories, airports and international exchanges once again came to a standstill, and solutions were found and new paths were forged.

Digital execution is not an ideal format for international exchange. At least not when it comes to meeting people and cultures, being on site and empathizing with what is still foreign, or when the experience of others in dealing with challenges is supposed to provide inspiration and thought-provoking approaches for one’s own activities. Nevertheless, the ministries responsible for the exchange program, the program sponsors and their regional partners from both nations quickly agreed that postponing or even completely canceling the program was out of the question. A digital alternative was needed! Fortunately, at this point in time, a little naivety obscured what this would mean for everyone involved, because no routine, no experience, no matter how long, in carrying out real exchanges was of any use anywhere. Even the time difference between Japan and Germany took on a relevance to the program than it had otherwise, if at all, where formerly it was only in the form of jet lag for one or two participants.

And so it began, the “adventure of digital youth exchange” with all its unknowns. Suddenly it was no longer a “city tour, meeting in the lobby or streetcar ride from one project to the other”, but “test call, breakout session or spot and highlight”. The Japanese delegation was asked to join with 24 screens in the early evening after work and follow three hours of digital presentations, facility visits or exchange rounds. It was clear that appealing formats were required.

Previous experiences using all kinds of digital platforms suitable for young people quickly became irrelevant in view of the technical requirements for simultaneous translations. In the end, our choice was reduced to the one large platform that met our complex requirements, precisely because it could be used for the straightforward-pragmatic format. So no more nice landscapes at Gather.town or Wonder, we had to make it pretty in Zoom.

Our solutions included short films about people, places, or sites of volunteerism. And so drones hovered over a youth center, interviews were conducted, people were observed and moods were captured to give participants an idea of daily life on the other side of the world and thus facilitate the start of an unusual exchange.

Perhaps we succeeded, because the discussions were lively, the questions flew back and forth, and not infrequently a glance at the clock triggered a more or less frantic “unfortunately, we have to come to the end.” Time was short, but the format did not allow for more as a compromise. Nevertheless, and this is where the conclusion of the exchange in two parts begins, it became clear, even in the short time available, that young people want to shape things, to get involved and to take charge. And even if one or the other is still looking for the right place or the right kind of commitment, our societies are well advised to support, recognize and appreciate them, even and especially if they fail, because

through their work they show an interest in our togetherness. We heard reports about young people being accused of wasting time through their voluntary work, or in some cases not even letting their volunteer work be known, must frighten and shake us up in both societies. These young women and men are the shapers and bearers, but in the future also the protectors of our democracy. They deserve every possible form of recognition and appreciation.

Digital exchange formats, and this is where part 2 of the summary begins, are both a curse and a blessing. The Deputy Secretary General of the JDZB, KIYOTA Tokiko, accurately described it as good fortune that people are able to exchange information despite a global pandemic. The call for greater digitality is becoming louder and louder. However, we should all take a close look at where it makes sense to take advantage of a video call and make arrangements from our own office with colleagues who are sitting in front of a screen hundreds of kilometers away. But we should also not be afraid to travel, sometimes over very long distances, in order to really meet each other, to perceive and experience each other and the respective country with all our senses. It will be the task of those responsible to consider whether and how both formats can be sensibly and intelligently combined in future exchange programs. There should be no more purely digital exchanges, if the pandemic permits, even if we now have an idea of how it could work.

The exchange program is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.



German participants from the Interim Program of the Young Leaders Forum 2020-22 at the Tea House of the Museum of Asian Art, National Museums in Berlin (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin), in the Humboldt Forum on 2 October 2021. Due to the pandemic, only the group in Germany could meet so far, the group in Japan will meet soon.



Symposium 2021 “Strategies for Coping with Demographic Change in Germany and Japan” on 4 and 5 November online.

Since 2016, the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare have been exchanging ideas at the JDZB in symposia on strategies for coping with demographic change. Here they discuss approaches to solutions and ways of shaping social coexistence in their aging populations.

Photo right: Webinar “Future University Development beyond Pandemic Times” online on 20 October 2021.

In collaboration with the project partners Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK), Conférence des Présidents d’Université (CPU), and Japan Committee of Universities for International Exchange (JACUIE), the JDZB hosted this trilateral meeting of university leaders from Japan, France and Germany. The event provided the participating university presidents and rectorates an opportunity to exchange ideas with colleagues from all three countries on current perspectives in teaching, research and internationalization, as well as on the challenges posed by the pandemic.

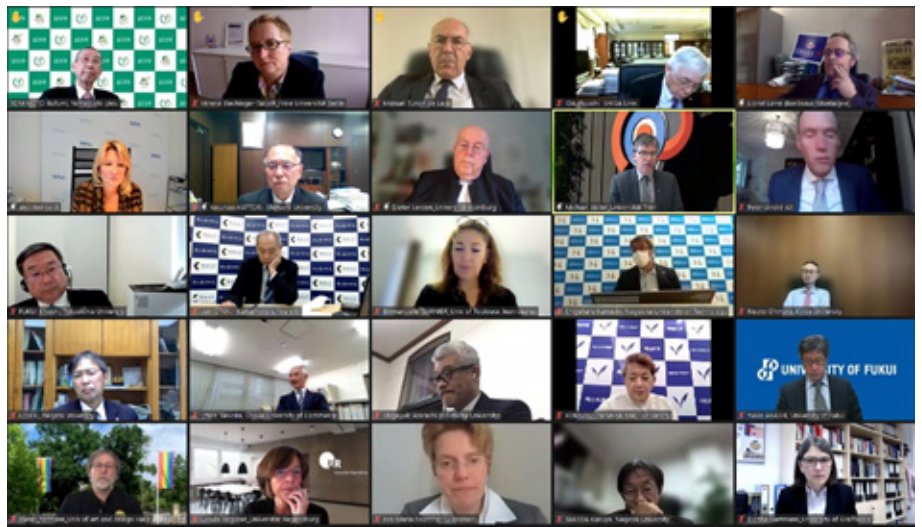


Photo left:

Online symposium “Artificial Intelligence and Health Care” French-German Dialog on Japan II on 16 and 17 September 2021.

In collaboration with the Fondation France-Japon of the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris.



“Dialogs on Nature: Japan – Germany” Concert with the Ensemble Horizonte conducted by Jörg-Peter MITTMANN on 2 September 2021 at the JDZB. A recording of this concert is still available on the JDZB YouTube channel.



Reading and author talk with the Akutagawa Prize winner MURATA Sayaka: “The Shopkeeper” (original Japanese title: *Konbini Ningen*) on 9 September at the JDZB. Moderation: Prof. Ronald SALADIN (Japanology, University of Trier), German text read by Stella STICHER.

CONFERENCES AND CULTURE PROJECTS

Symposium: Connectivity, Future Communication, and the Role of the Humanities.

C: The Japan Foundation, Tōkyō.

Date: 4 February 2022, online

Exhibition: Der Satz / The Sentence / 文

Sound and installations by Nico and Kyoco TANIYAMA.

Opening: 10 February 2022, 7 pm

Duration: 11 February until 28 May 2022

Free admittance, opening hours:

Mon - Thursday 10 am to 0.30 pm and 1 pm to 5 pm, Fri 10 am to 0.30 pm and 1 pm to 3.30 pm

Future Communication Technologies: Beyond 5G and 6G – Opportunities for Japanese-German Collaboration

C: Embassy of Japan in Germany, Berlin

Date: 17 February 2022, hybrid

Symposium: The Future of Democracy II

C: Duisburg-Essen Univ., Friedrich Ebert Foundation

Date: 3 March 2022, online

Diversity as an Innovative Force – Innovative Promotion of Diversity.

C: German House of Science and Innovation (DWHI), Tōkyō

Date: 24 March 2022, online

COURSES

All Japanese language courses will continue to be held online. In case of new registration, the registration form can be ordered at fsekikawa@jdz.de. Calligraphy courses are being held in person at the JDZB as well as online.

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

C: in cooperation with. Events in chronological order, preliminary planning as of December 2021, please verify each on the website. Venue is JDZB, if not stated otherwise. More information on the website: <https://jdz.de>



Photo left:

Exhibition: „Der Satz / The Sentence/ 文“ (Sound and Installations)

The German-Japanese Berlin artist duo Nico and Kyoco TANIYAMA deal with the theme of language as a means of communication and as a possible cause of misguided communication.



Exhibition „Theory of Everything“ Installations, Prints and Collages – Opening on 16 June 2022, Duration 17 June until 7 October 2022.

Bremen-based artists Kornelia HOFFMANN and YAMAMOTO Noriko explore the relationship between the inner and outer worlds in their spatial and installation works.

Picture left: Weltformel 01 © Noriko Yamamoto; Picture right: scent rubbing © Kornelia Hoffmann / Photo © Lukas Klose



During the first week of October, the future of the JDZB was reimagined within the framework of an "Open Week" with experimental formats - an expression of a new strategic orientation with increased opening of the building as a place of encounter and exchange.

The first highlight was the opening of the "Sake Week Berlin" (1); this was followed by a "pretotyping" event for future networking salons (2)+(3), and concluded with a matinee during which a collaboration with our new partner Mitsubishi Electric was announced: The German subsidiary opened a capital city representative office as a collaboration space on the premises of the JDZB (4)+(5). In addition, a Sushi Cooking Class for the participants of the Young Leaders Forum, an international Spoken Word Night with young Berlin authors and an internal networking event took place. A symposium of the German-Japanese Business Network and the hybrid Japan-related startup event as part of the AsiaBerlin Summit were broadcast live in the redesigned library (6); there is a new stage that will be used in the future for various formats such as readings, karaoke, films, and event streaming.

Open Week was an experiment at an early stage of planning to gather feedback and engage in dialogue with (potential) partners to better understand expectations and needs, identify potential, and explore opportunities for collaboration. We invite you to join our discussions and actively participate in shaping the future of the JDZB and the future of Japanese-German relations!

(see also article by Secretary General Julia MÜNCH in the blog ECHO+ on the JDZB website).

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