

OCCI E-MAIL MAGAZINE

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CONTENTS

1. DISPATCHING THE TOP PROMOTION MISSION TO EUROPE IN OCTOBER

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF A PROJECT TO SUPPORT THE OVERSEAS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES BY USING ODA

3. REPORT ON KANSAI CONSULAR CORPS' STUDY TOUR TO THE AQUA METROPOLIS

4. THE 54TH BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC TREND SURVEY (REGARDING THE INFLUENCE OF THE CONSUMPTION TAX INCREASE)

5. OCCI INTERNATIONAL DIVISION REPORT ON VIP VISITORS

1. DISPATCHING THE TOP PROMOTION MISSION TO EUROPE IN OCTOBER

The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry will dispatch the “OCCI Top Promotion Mission” to two countries—the UK and Romania—from October 5 to 12. This Mission is dispatched annually by the OCCI, led by



chairman- or vice chairman-level members, in order to create business opportunities and for the promotion of Osaka/Kansai. Led by Vice Chairman Minoru Furukawa, this Mission is scheduled to work actively by deepening interactions with local government officials and corporate officers in the two countries, including holding seminars to directly appeal the attractiveness of Osaka/Kansai to local companies.

In the UK, the first destination, the Mission will visit the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Group. This visit is in response to an invitation from this chamber of commerce group, which comprises eight chambers of commerce and industry located in the Thames basin, a place where the environmental & energy and life science fields, and ICT clusters have developed in the UK. The group requested interactions with the Osaka/Kansai region, which has a similar industrial cluster structure to this UK region. The Mission will also go on a study tour of the University of Oxford located in the Thames basin, and visit Isis Innovation, an organization that makes ideas and technologies from the university marketable, in order to learn about



up-to-date technologies. Also scheduled is an exchange meeting with UK companies, Japanese companies in the UK, and the Embassy of Japan in the UK.

Meanwhile, in Romania, an East European country to which entry of more than 100 Japanese companies and the introduction of a huge amount of funds for the development of infrastructure of the European Union (EU) have been decided, the Mission will visit the JETRO Bucharest Office and the Romanian Ministry of Environment in order to exchange opinions on environmental and energy measures in the country. Also, in addition to study tours at Japanese companies that have entered the country, the Mission will explore business opportunities for other Japanese companies in East European countries through exchange meetings with members of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Romania.

This is the first dispatch to Europe of a business mission led by the chairman or a vice chairman since 2006, when the “European Economic Mission (leader: then Vice Chairman Makoto Kato)” visited the UK and Belgium.



2. IMPLEMENTATION OF A PROJECT TO SUPPORT THE OVERSEAS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES BY USING ODA

The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry held the “Briefing Session & Business Matching with consultants for small and medium-size enterprises” on July 18 in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

This is the first ever event held to assist even companies not involved in overseas business smoothly provide support for developing countries based on Official Development Assistance (ODA) through cooperative efforts with consultants. It aims to strike a balance between the development of developing countries and the revitalization of small and medium-size enterprises by utilizing the excellent products and technologies of those enterprises for the development of developing countries.

Introduced in the Briefing Session were systems to support the overseas development of small and medium-size enterprises based on ODA, and cases of companies actually adopted as suitable projects by those systems. In the Business Matching, consultants from 21 companies gave advice to small and medium-size enterprises regarding the possibility of using the ODA budget when those enterprises develop technologies and products

overseas. A total of 61 companies attended the Briefing Session & Business Matching, and eagerly listened to the explanations and advice.

3. REPORT ON KANSAI CONSULAR CORPS' STUDY TOUR TO THE AQUA METROPOLIS

The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry conducted a study tour to Aqua Metropolis Osaka as part of the regular monthly meeting of the Kansai Consular Corps on July 17 (Thu). 13 people from 6 countries participated in the tour.



Osaka has made public-private efforts to regenerate Aqua Metropolis Osaka over the past 10 years, and is attracting attention as Japan's most advanced Aqua Metropolis. With more than 10 landing sites established in the inner city, the Dotombori and Nakanoshima areas are equipped with waterside promenades and parks. Also, the number of cruising services using these landing sites and restaurants in which visitors can enjoy the waterside has increased. Since fiscal 2013, aiming to realize “Osaka, a capital of river-water and night lights,” Osaka has accelerated its efforts to invite further private investment in waterside spaces and to tell the world about the festivity and attractiveness of these spaces.

During the study tour, Representative Director Hideo Takanashi of Aqua Metropolis Osaka Partners, an organization led by the private sector to promote the aqua metropolis, outlined the efforts made so far for Aqua Metropolis Osaka, and Associate Professor Kouichi Kana of Graduate School, Osaka City University, then explained that such efforts had been gathering attention in other major cities of the world as well, introducing examples of waterside utilization of other countries. After that, the Kansai Consular Corps went on a cruise around the Nakanoshima area, to observe the night view with illuminated bridges and Osaka Castle, and also enjoyed the “Cool off at aqua metropolis Osaka,” an event currently being held in the Nakanoshima Park.

4. THE 54TH BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC TREND SURVEY (REGARDING THE INFLUENCE OF THE CONSUMPTION TAX INCREASE)

The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Kansai Economic Federation announced the results of the “Business and Economic Trend Survey” (Survey period: May 19 to June 3, targets: 1,636 companies, No. of responding companies: 451, valid response rate: 27.6%), which is jointly conducted once a quarter.

According to the survey, although the BSI (Business Survey Index: Increased response rate – decreased response rate) in the immediate April to June term indicates a significant downturn from the previous term (January to March) with values for the “domestic business conditions” and “own company’s business situation” showing -27.6 and -18.4, respectively, regarding the prospects for the July to September term, both those values have turned positive. This indicates that many business operators consider that the damage to the economy caused by the consumption tax increase will last a relatively short period of time.

At the same time, according to the responses for the question about sales increases/decreases during the three months before and after the consumption tax increase (the January to March term and the April to June term), if the response rates for “Significant positive effect thanks to last-minute demand” (16.2%) and “Nearly counterbalanced with the demand increase and reactionary fall” (31.3%) are added to that for “Hardly any effect” (37.9%), more than 80% (85.4%) of the respondent companies consider that the tax hike will have no significant negative effect.

With regard to prospects for the business situation during the July to September term (based on a comparison with the values for the same term in the previous year), if the response rate for “Nearly same level” (56.8%) is added to that of “Higher level than the same term in the previous year” (22.2%), the survey result shows that nearly 80% (78.9%) of the respondent companies expect a level higher than that of the previous year.

5. OCCI INTERNATIONAL DIVISION REPORT ON VIP VISITORS

- 6/27 Mr. Mackenzie CLUGSTON, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Canada in Japan
- 7/2 Ms. Assuncao Cristas, Minister of Agriculture and Sea, Portuguese Republic
Mr. JOSE Joaquim Esteves dos Santos de FREITAS FERRAZ, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Portugal in Japan
- 7/10 Ms. Caroline Bouvier KENNEDY, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of the United States of America in Japan
- 7/11 Mr. Radu Petru SERBAN, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Romania in Japan
- 7/16 Mr. Vichit CHITVIMARN, Consul General, Royal Thai Consulate-General in Osaka

- 7/18 Mr. Bouna Semou DIOUF, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Senegal
Mr. Francois OUBIDA, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Burkina Faso
Ms. Youngor Sevelee TELEWODA, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Liberia
Mr. BODJONA Alewabia Delali Aklesso, Charge d’Affaires ad interim, Embassy of the Republic of Togo

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