

Newsletter No. 16 (final edition)

It's time to say goodbye. What a journey this Jean Monnet Module has been. It has been a great honour that so many of you have followed our activities over the past three years. When we received the email in July 2019 stating that we were selected as Jean Monnet Module beneficiaries, no one could imagine what the next three years would bring. And of course, no one, not even in his/her wildest dreams, could have imagined that a global pandemic would interfere with so many of our plans. We are very happy (and relieved) that despite the long-term border closures (such as to Japan for non-resident foreigners, but also to Finland for non-essential travel), which greatly reduced the possibilities for fieldwork and meant that we had to scrap our plans to take students on two EU field studies, we were able to offer 10 exciting JMM teaching modules and got engaged in the latest international research.

All this would not have been possible without your continuous support and your interest in our activities. Whether you took part in our JMM classes (some of them offered as COIL or VE subjects), attended one of the many stimulating (guest) lectures, took part in the high school debate or supported our research through valuable input and feedback: this JMM wouldn't have been that successful without you. Thank you very much for being part of it! The past three years have just flown by thanks to your support and interest!

Before I address you for a final 'goodbye' with a big 'thank you', I would like to use this opportunity to quickly recap what we have done in the past two months.

Past activities:

Lecture by the Consul General of Germany, Mr. Martin Eberts

On June 28th, we had the great honour of welcoming the Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany (Osaka/Kobe) at KGU. Mr. Martin Eberts provided deep insight into how Germany was dealing with populating ageing and a declining population in Germany. The audience really enjoyed the lecture and Mr. Eberts received many questions after his presentation.

Europe-Japan Rural Entrepreneurship Conference

On July 8th, our last JMM event took place: the Europe-Japan Rural Entrepreneurship Conference, jointly organised with The Silitan Valley Consortium in Tamba. Jointly held

as Jean Monnet Module conference and the 1st Silitan Valley Promotion Seminar, it brought together a variety of speakers from academia and the rural entrepreneurship community.

The keynote speaker, Prof. Masatoshi Kato, Professor, School of Economics and Director of the Research Center for Entrepreneurship at KGU started off the conference with an insightful lecture on "Entrepreneurship and Regional Revitalization –Findings from Academic Studies". He showed which environments foster entrepreneurship, highlighting that also rural areas can be great breeding ground for startups. Prof. Kato's speech was followed by a presentation by Dr. Anna Schrade, Associate Professor at KGU's Institute for Industrial Research, on Social Innovation in Rural Southern Germany. Dr. Schrade presented several case studies of social entrepreneurs in the countryside in Germany's state of Baden-Württemberg and analysed why rural entrepreneurship is so widespread in southern Germany.

Following the two academic lectures, the audience had a chance to listen directly to the stories of three successful rural entrepreneurs from Tamba. The three panelists – all young 'in-migrants' from other areas of Japan – highlighted the potential entrepreneurship in the countryside posed and shared the background for their decision to start a business in Tamba.

Since this September is the last month that we're part of the active Jean Monnet network, there won't be any future events (and no future newsletters). Thanks for supporting us all the way!

For those who want to continue studying about the EU: some of the findings from this JMM will be published in as a book, titled *A journey through Europe: Societies, politics and contemporary issues in the EU*. In about 200 pages, Dr. Schrade takes the interested readers on a fictional journey through six European countries (Italy, Germany, Greece, Sweden, Romania, and the UK) and introduces them to some of the most pressing issues these societies are coping with. Published by Kwansei Gakuin University Press, the book will be available from September 2022 at a price of 3,000 yen (+tax).

Another way of learning more about the EU would be to follow the activities by KGU's Jean Monnet Chair, Prof. Holger Bungsche, which runs until September 2023.

Thanks for your support, and let's stay in touch. Even once this JMM is over, you can reach. Just send me an email to schrade@kwansei.ac.jp

Have a nice summer break,
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