

**Publication**

Xinhua News

**Date**

November 13, 2003

**Title***European Business Community calls for more deregulation in Japan*

BC-Japan-Regulation

European Business Community calls for more deregulation in Japan

TOKYO, Nov. 13 (Xinhua) — The European Business Community (EBC) in Japan on Thursday called on the Japanese government to improve the investment climate through drastic deregulation in a bid to double the foreign direct investment in five years.

In releasing an EBC report on the Japanese business environment for 2003, EBC Vice Chairman Duco Delgorge said that Japan risks falling considerably behind its Asian neighbors if it fails to take decisive action to lure foreign investment into the country.

Delgorge said that Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's structural reform programs, such as the creation of special deregulation zones, have done little to address many of the outstanding issues foreign firms face in doing business in Japan.

The report calls on Japan to allow private companies to own or operate hospitals, or do both, anywhere in the country, although the government launched deregulatory measures this year that allow joint stock firms to own and operate medical facilities in special deregulation zones.

Such facilities will only be allowed to provide medical services for a limited range of procedures, it says. The EBC feels that allowing stock companies to own medical facilities will lead to an increase in management efficiency and help the Japanese government control medical expenditures.

The report, the fourth of its kind, details current situations, problems and recommendations for outstanding issues in 29 sectors, including legal services, tax, insurance, airlines, food and environmental technology.

The EBC is the trade policy arm of the 13 European national chambers of commerce and business groups in Japan, representing more than 3,000 European companies and individuals in the country.

Enditem

13/11/2003 04:34 GMT

NNNN