

## MIRAI Report

### How was MIRAI 2023/2024 program for me?

Initially unaware of the **MIRAI** program, my interest in visiting Japan for studies or work led me to the Japanese Embassy's website. It was there that I discovered the MIRAI program and, recognizing the unique opportunity it presented, I promptly decided to apply.

**MIRAI** is a programme initiated by the **Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs**. It aims to invite promising young leaders, such as graduate students, young professionals, and academics, to promote mutual understanding and intellectual exchange between Japan and European countries.

### Academic Experience

We had a number of courses, including one at **Hitotsubashi University** where the economics professor introduced us to many elements of *Game Theory* in a fun and competitive way. The course was brilliantly structured, blending theoretical knowledge with practical exercises that illustrated the strategic interactions in real-life scenarios, making the learning process both engaging and informative.



## Personal and Professional Development

When I got back from the trip, I kept in touch with people on the ground who have a direct connection with my studies and work. This makes it much easier for me to include **Japan** in my research. The network I built during this programme has become an invaluable asset, providing me with unique insights and opportunities to collaborate on international projects.

The subject of *stock exchanges* wasn't something I knew a lot about, but visiting the **Tokyo Stock Exchange** made me want to take a much greater interest. I made a lot of good discoveries, particularly about **Japan's economic history**. This visit demystified the complexities of financial markets for me and sparked a newfound interest in financial systems and their impact on global economies.

## Cultural immersion



The cultural immersion in Japan began as soon as we arrived at **Narita** airport where, along with my Swiss counterpart **Sezer**, we were interviewed for Japanese television channel **TV TOKYO**. It was quite funny, fun, and so unexpected! This moment was just the beginning of an incredible journey into the heart of Japanese culture, offering a unique glimpse into the local way of life.



On the way to the hotel, there were lots of cars but everything looked so harmonious, and the roads looked so complex! Not to mention driving on the left which confused me not only when taking the taxi, but especially in the streets where you have to lean left when walking on the escalators. Observing and adapting to these nuances in daily life was both challenging and rewarding, enhancing my cultural awareness and flexibility.

### **Recommendations for Future Participants**



I strongly recommend that you research the places you are going to visit. This allows you to concentrate completely on the **experience** on the ground, and to discover things more effectively. Preparing beforehand enriches your understanding and appreciation of each site, allowing you to engage more deeply with the **culture** and **history**.

The time on site is very short, and the visits are very interesting and intense. If you want to do things outside the official programme, be aware that there is a curfew! Please bear this in mind. If you don't speak Japanese, learn a few phrases and words, as this will help you in the event of a solo adventure. Even basic language skills can greatly enhance your experience, making daily interactions smoother and more meaningful.

To conclude, **MIRAI** was a truly **enriching experience, both**

**professionally and personally.** The programme not only broadened my academic and professional horizons but also **deepened my cultural understanding** and personal growth. I left Japan with a wealth of knowledge, unforgettable memories, and lasting friendships. To future participants: embrace every moment, be open to learning, and immerse yourself fully in this extraordinary opportunity.