

Report on the Overseas Internship Program
(McDermott Will & Emery, Brussels Office)

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Term: July 4th – 29th, 2016

Area of work: competition law

What I have learned:

I think I learned a lot of things by going to Brussels and working at McDermott. In the following, I'm going to write the several things which are particularly important.

1. About competition law

Through working at McDermott, I had the opportunity to deal with the competition law of European Union. Though I had learned about the Japanese and American competition law before at law school, I had not had much chance to learn about the law of EU. Therefore, it was valuable for me to finally get a glimpse of how the laws/regulations are different between Japan and EU, and get to know some concepts that do not exist in Japan. Although I have not decided which specific area of legal practice that I would engage in, the experience at McDermott motivated me to learn more about competition law and consider it as one of the areas of practice which I might engage in.

2. About language and communication

Before I went to Brussels, I was fully aware that English is an important language in Europe. It was in fact a very important language, as everyone in my office spoke English to communicate with one another, and most people I met in Brussels were able to speak English. However, during the course of internship, I learned how French is also a very important language in Europe. I felt its importance when I couldn't read the document I wanted to read because it was not published in English but it was published in French, and when many people in my office were French speakers. I also realized that it is much more common for people to speak multiple languages in Europe. I think if I get a chance to go to Europe in the future, I need to prepare by learning other languages than English.

3. About Brussels and people in Brussels

It was the first time for me to go to Brussels, and I was struck by how international the city is. I met people from all over Europe during my stay, and also I fortunately had chances to see Japanese lawyers who work in Brussels. What was particularly striking was the fact that the lawyers in my office came from so many countries across Europe and even beyond. Since most of the lawyers in Japan are Japanese and I took that for granted, it was refreshing to see people from different countries work together, and it

was great to get myself involved in that environment.

4. About my future career

While I was in Brussels, I found some differences of culture, style of work, and legal system between Japan and Brussels (or possibly Europe in general). Those things were very interesting for me, because I want to engage in international legal practice as a lawyer, and I was interested in how people work and what sort of legal practice they engage in at foreign law firms. Through working at McDermott, I thought that working at a foreign law firm for some time is a very effective way of learning things that I need to understand as I work on international legal practice. It was good to be immersed in the environment where I need to speak English all the time, but more than that, it was great to learn some things which I could not have learned in Japan.

I think I'm going to work in Japan as a lawyer, because I have a strong interest in the Japanese society where I have grown up and led my life, and also because I want to do something that has an impact on the Japanese society. At the same time, I hope to do something international, because interacting with people from different backgrounds and understanding international issues has also been my primary interest. Therefore, I first need to work hard to gain the skills that are necessary for a Japanese lawyer, and after that, I hope to study abroad at a foreign law school and work at a foreign law firm for more than just a month (a year, for example). Then I hope to come back with a greater level of understanding about international legal practice, and utilize that as I work in Japan. By the time I go to a foreign law firm again, I want to have more knowledge about laws of that country, so that I could be given more responsibility in my work there.

Brussels Office of McDermott was a great environment for me, as people I met there were respectable professionals, and also they were open to newcomers. I was able to feel comfortable by having lunch or playing sports with people in office. It was good that I always had some work to do while in office, since many people gave me work, and it was great that they took time to discuss with me or give me some instruction on how I should work on those assignments.

I would like to thank all the people who made it possible for me to work at McDermott in Brussels. I will work hard to be a respectable professional like people I met in this program.