

## **Ambassador Hugh Richardson s speech at Hitotsubashi University**

Mr Hugh Richardson, the EU Ambassador to Japan, visited Hitotsubashi University on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2007 and made a lecture, entitled 'The EU: what is it and where is it going?'. This event was made as part of 'Introduction to EU', a class of Hitotsubashi University but this lecture was open to all EUIJ-Tokyo Consortium university students. The lecture room was filled with as many as 450 undergraduate and postgraduate students. This lecture commenced under the chair of Prof Eiji Ogawa, Hitotsubashi University, and at first Prof Takehiko Sugiyama, President of Hitotsubashi University, made a welcome speech. The Ambassador spoke in English for one hour and then a question and answer session followed in which students' questions in Japanese were translated into English.

Mr Richardson s lecture was clear and comprehensive, and covered all aspects of the EU whose integration is in progress, including its enlargement, currency, migration and institutions, etc. The students were very interested, most of whom have just started studying the EU. Many and wide-range questions were raised and the Ambassador answered them politely and carefully. Particularly impressive was that he mentioned that he behaves not as a British national and as an EU bureaucrat when those interests were in conflict with each other, showing that the European Commission represents the interest of EU as a whole but not simply that of the government of each member state. After the lecture, several students came to talk with Mr Richardson and enjoyed conversations with him. In addition, a questionnaire was distributed among students, who showed very high interest in this lecture and the EU itself and wanted other opportunities for a lecture or a seminar of this kind. This lecture spectacularly demonstrated that a great number of students are eager to know more about the EU. The EUIJ has so far tried to promote interests in the EU among both students and citizens, and would like to continue its own activities to achieve this aim.