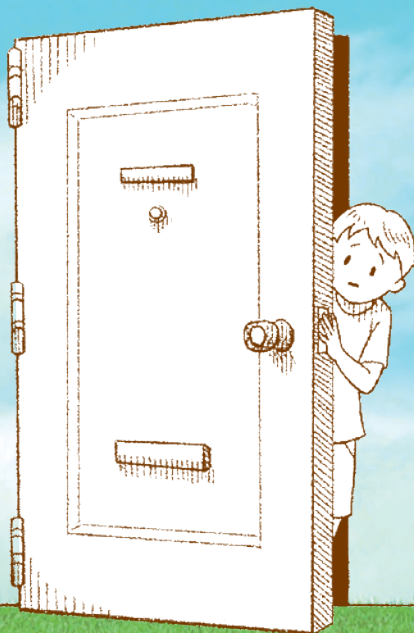


FY2023

The Protection of Human Rights

Summary of the White Paper
on Human Rights Education and Awareness Raising



Scan the Two-dimensional
code for more detailed
information.

(MOJ website:

[https://www.moj.go.jp/
ENGLISH/HB/hb.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/ENGLISH/HB/hb.html))



Human Rights Bureau
Ministry of Justice, Japan

Introduction

Under the Constitution of Japan, which guarantees fundamental human rights for all people, the government of Japan has taken various initiatives concerning human rights, which include the development of related systems and accession to international human rights conventions.

However, there are still cases of unjust discrimination and human rights violations based on social status, family origin, race, ethnic group, creed, gender, disabilities, or other grounds.

In order to achieve a peaceful and affluent society in which all people can coexist while respecting each other's human rights, it is vital to develop a spirit of respect for human rights in each and every individual in the country, and it is human rights education and awareness-raising activities that play significant roles in that process.

The Ministry of Justice has been carrying out diverse human rights awareness-raising activities with human rights volunteers in the private sector and in cooperation with other ministries and agencies, local governments and private companies, etc. so that all people can gain a sensible awareness of the significance of respecting human rights and can act properly with due consideration to other people's human rights based on that awareness.

This booklet outlines the mechanism and activities of the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, and explains the human rights issues that are currently attracting people's attention in particular, as part of the human rights awareness-raising activities of the Ministry of Justice broadly targeting the general public.

January, 2024
Human Rights Bureau
Ministry of Justice

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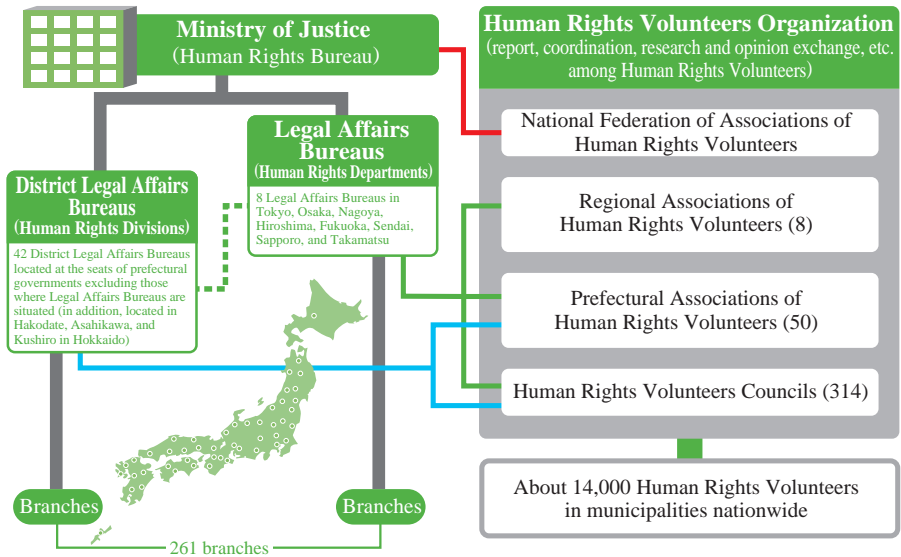
* In this booklet, Two-dimensional codes linking to booklets prepared by the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice or to related websites are included. Link destinations are all in Japanese but the Two-dimensional codes are for broadly introducing the bodies' initiatives.

1. The Human Rights Bodies of the Ministry of Justice

A variety of problems concerning human rights occur around us. This particular Chapter introduces the structure of the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice established to address such problems.



Structure: The Human Rights Bodies of the Ministry of Justice (as of June 1, 2023)



1- The Human Rights Bureau of the Ministry of Justice and Local Offices

The Human Rights Bureau of the Ministry of Justice is a national administrative organ centrally taking charge of human rights promotion and protection. It has local subordinate offices: the Human Rights Departments of the Legal Affairs Bureaus and the Human Rights Divisions of the District Legal Affairs Bureaus. They, in collaboration with their further branches, carry out the function of promotion and protection of human right.

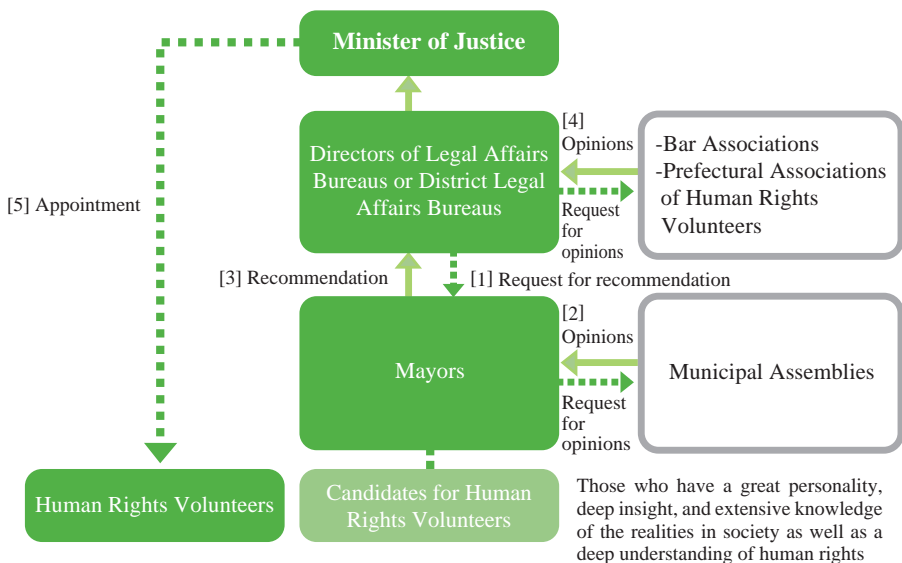
2- Human Rights Volunteers

Human Rights Volunteers are counseling partners available in your town. They provide counseling free of charge and will keep your case confidential. Feel free to consult them if you have any problems.

Human Rights Volunteers are private citizens appointed by the Minister of Justice. The Human Rights Volunteers System was established based on the concept that it would be effective for people in various fields to encourage respect for human rights in the local community, to make efforts to avoid violation of the human rights of the residents, and to promote and protect human rights. Such initiative in public-private collaboration is unparalleled in any other country.

At present, there are approximately 14,000 Volunteers in all of the municipalities of cities, towns, and villages across the country (including special wards in Tokyo), and experience in they are proceeding with proactive activities taking advantage of their own careers and their individual specialized fields.

Appointment Process of Human Rights Volunteer



This symbol mark has been used since December 1992 with the aim of ensuring the uniformity and originality of awareness-raising activities by the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice and building a sense of affinity concerning human rights promotion and protection activities among people to increase the effect of the activities.

■ Activities of Human Rights Volunteers



Activities in disaster areas
(visiting temporary evacuation homes)



Human Rights Flower Campaign



Lecture at a local company



Human rights awareness-raising activities using
local FM broadcasting

Human Rights Volunteers provide human rights counseling services not only at Legal Affairs Bureaus and District Legal Affairs Bureaus but also at ad-hoc centers set up at public offices, social welfare facilities and commercial facilities.

Once a complaint is raised by a potential victim at a human rights counseling session or through other route to the effect that his/her human right has been violated, Human Rights Volunteers conduct an investigation and strive to amicably settle the case by mediating between the parties in cooperation with officials from the Legal Affairs Bureaus or the District Legal Affairs Bureaus.

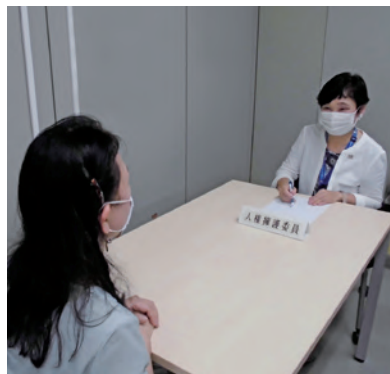
Moreover, Human Rights Volunteers carry out human rights awareness-raising activities aimed at gaining local residents' awareness on human rights (such as holding "Human Rights Lectures" (refer to p.16) and the "Human Rights Flower Campaigns" (refer to p.17) for elementary school students and kindergarten children, with the aim of teaching them the importance of caring for other people, and giving lectures on human rights at local companies) and introduce their activities through local FM broadcasts. In this manner, they are carrying out activities deeply rooted in individual local communities.

June 1 is "Human Rights Volunteers' Day"

The National Federation of Associations of Human Rights Volunteers has set June 1 as Human Rights Volunteers' Day to commemorate the day on which the "Human Rights Volunteers Act" entered into effect (June 1, 1949). Around every anniversary day, ad-hoc counseling centers are set up and various human rights awareness-raising activities are undertaken across the country aiming for deeper understanding of human rights.



Poster "Human Rights Volunteers System"



Face-to-face human rights counseling

Emblem of Human Rights Volunteers



The design of wood sorrel on the exterior frame and a chrysanthemum inside, shaping the kanji character "人" ('hito' meaning "human") within. Wood sorrel is a strong plant which spreads by sticking close to the ground and it symbolizes the hope that the concept of respect for human rights will spread.

2. Activities of the Human Rights Bodies of the Ministry of Justice

How the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice protect your human rights? Their activities can be divided into the following areas: investigation and remedy procedures for human rights violation cases, human rights counseling, and awareness-raising for human rights. This Chapter describes such activities of the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice.

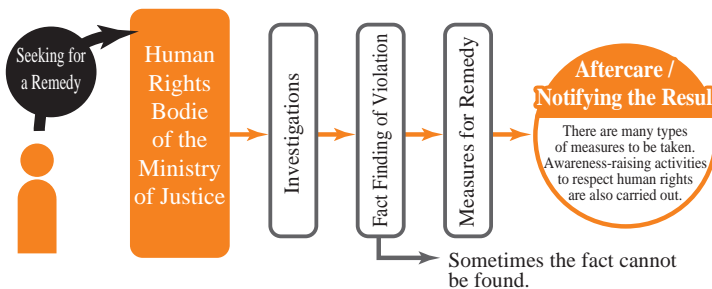
1- Investigation and Remedy Procedures for Human Rights Violation Cases

Investigation and Remedy Procedures for Human Rights Violation Cases

A suspected case where human rights may be violated is called a "human rights violation case." If a victim of human rights violation seeks a remedy, the bodies promptly initiate remedy procedures. The bodies may also initiate the procedures when they become aware of a suspected case of human rights violation from other sources including newspapers or magazines.

During the remedy procedures, the bodies undertake investigation to confirm whether or not human rights violation has occurred. However, the bodies do not have the power for compulsory investigation like the police or public prosecutors, so their investigation is based on the voluntary cooperation of the people concerned.

■ Investigation and Remedy Procedures

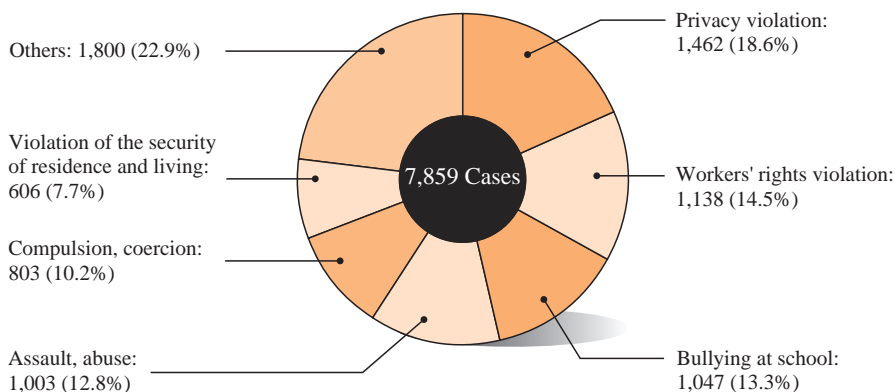




As a result of the investigation, the bodies will take appropriate measures depending on the case. There are seven kinds of measures including "assistance" to provide legal advice or non-legal advice, "conciliation" to mediate talks between the parties concerned, "instructions" or "recommendation" to make a human rights violator improve the situation, and "request" to a third party for effective responses. Of these measures, the measures of "assistance" and "conciliation" may be taken at effective times even during the investigation. The bodies will also take action to raise awareness of the people concerned about human rights, as the case may be.

After closing the case, the results are notified to the victim and, where necessary, aftercare is provided for the victim through cooperation with the relevant administrative organs or by contacting the people concerned.

■ Breakdown of the Number of Human Rights Violation Cases in 2022



Examples of Remedied Human Rights Violation Cases

The following cases are examples of the cases the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice dealt with in 2022.

1 Bullying

Bullying at an elementary school

This is a case in which a parent of an elementary school child consulted with the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, alleging that his/her child had been bullied by classmates, such as being teased for his/her stuttering, but the school had failed to take sufficient measures and the child had been forced to miss school.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that the class teacher had received consultations from the child multiple times but did not make a report to the school principal and that the school failed to take appropriate measures and left the bullying to continue.

The bodies requested the school principal to make further efforts to prevent damage due to bullying (a case of "request").

2 Abuse

Abuse against a junior high school student

This is a case in which a junior high school student made a consultation with the "Human Rights Counseling Service on social media" alleging that he/she had been hit or otherwise assaulted by his/her parent and that he/she would like to go to the police to ask for protection by a child guidance center.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice promptly provided the information to the police office and child guidance center closest to the relevant student's residence and asked them to deal with the case.

As a result, the student was taken into custody by the police, and thereafter, the student was moved into a facility of a child guidance center. Thus, the safety of the student was secured promptly (a case of "assistance").

3 Guidance at school

Insufficient guidance at an elementary school

This is a case in which a guardian of an elementary school child consulted with the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, alleging that the elementary school to which his/her child is attending had failed to take measures sufficiently against violent acts committed by the child's classmate.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that the school was taking measures for the classmate and had an intention to provide the relevant guardian with explanations on the measures being taken.

The bodies informed the school of the guardian's request for proper measures against bullying, and also provided the guardian with explanations on the school's responses. The guardian understood this and a relationship of trust could be built between the parties (a case of "conciliation").



4 Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment targeting a trainee by a lecturer

This is a case in which a trainee consulted with the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, alleging that a lecturer made sexual remarks to him/her during a training session.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that the lecturer made sexual remarks to the trainee during the training session.

The bodies told the lecturer that the relevant remarks are sexual ones against the will of the trainee and fall under sexual harassment, and explained the concept of respecting human rights. The lecturer expressed his/her apologies (a case of "awareness raising").

5 Power harassment

Power harassment against a subordinate by his/her boss at work

This is a case in which an employee consulted with the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, alleging that he/she had requested talks with the company regarding an internal transfer order given by his/her boss ordering him/her to work alone in a place that was provided for a purpose other than office work, but that his/her desk was removed and he/she was forced to change his/her workplace.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that the order was given to the employee without reasonable grounds, and that such act inflicted emotional distress on him/her through separation from personal relationships in the office and falls under power harassment.

The bodies explained that the relevant act of the boss, who was in the position to maintain a good working environment, cannot be overlooked from the perspective of protecting human rights, and instructed the boss to admit the unfairness of the act, deepen the understanding of power harassment, and refrain from committing similar acts in the future (a case of "instruction").

6 Domestic violence

Violence and verbal abuse targeting a wife by a husband

This is a case in which a Human Rights Volunteer consulted with the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, alleging that the Volunteer had been temporarily protecting a wife victimized by her husband's violence.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that the wife had a strong fear of her husband. Accordingly, the bodies promptly provided the information to a women's consulting office and asked it to take required measures.

As a result, the wife and her children were taken into custody by the women's consulting office and their safety was secured. At the same time, relevant organizations shared the information and a support system for them was built (a case of "assistance").

7 Stalking

Harassment against a junior high school student

This is a case in which a parent of a junior high school student consulted with the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, alleging that the student was being harassed by a classmate and his/her family members.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that the police had issued a warning to them and had put in place a system to move in quickly to assist him/her upon a report by the student, etc.

The bodies informed the student's parent of the aforementioned status of responses by the police and gave advice on such matters as how to have talks with the classmate and his/her family members. The student's parent understood this (a case of "assistance").

8 Discriminatory treatment

Refusal of lending of a rental motorcycle to a foreign national

This is a case in which a foreign national consulted with the "Human Rights Counseling Services on the Internet," alleging that his/her request for renting a motorcycle was rejected on the grounds that he/she is a foreign national.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that the rental shop had adopted a policy to uniformly refuse to lend motorcycles to foreign nationals, but the shop came to understand during the investigation that such policy may fall under undue discrimination against foreign nationals and reviewed the relevant policy.

The bodies informed the foreign national of the review of the shop's policy, and he/she showed understanding regarding this (a case of "conciliation").

9 Discriminatory treatment

Refusal of a patient's use of a public bathhouse

This is a case in which a user of a public bathhouse consulted with the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, alleging that an employee of the public bathhouse told the user, who had rashes due to a (non-infectious) skin disease, not to come as other users were displeased.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that the employee made the relevant statement and that there are no legal grounds for the public bathhouse to refuse the user's use thereof.

The bodies explained that a public bathhouse has public nature and that the public bathhouse's act of refusing the user only based on the circumstances where other users were displeased with his/her appearance constitutes unreasonable prejudice and discrimination against the user beyond the freedom to conduct business and cannot be overlooked from the perspective of protecting human rights, and instructed the public bathhouse to refrain from committing similar acts in the future (a case of "instruction").

**10 Discriminatory treatment** Discriminatory comments concerning the *Dowa* issue

This is a case in which a person consulted with the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, alleging that his/her neighbor had continuously made discriminatory comments in relation to the *Dowa* issue, pointing out that he/she is from a *Buraku* or urging him/her to return to the relevant *Buraku*.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that the neighbor made the relevant comments, but during the investigation, the neighbor promised not to behave like that anymore.

The bodies explained that such comments made without understanding and awareness of the *Dowa* issue harm other people's human rights and dignity and cannot be overlooked from the perspective of protecting human rights, and instructed the neighbor to deepen correct understanding and awareness regarding respect for fundamental human rights and the *Dowa* issue, and to refrain from committing similar acts in the future (a case of "instruction").

11 Human rights violation information on the internet Infringement of a sense of honor on the internet

This is a case in which a victim consulted with the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, alleging that messages stating that he/she is a foreigner residing in Japan or insulting him/her using a derogatory name, etc. on the grounds of his/her attributes as a foreigner residing in Japan had been posted on an electronic bulletin board multiple times.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that messages insulting the victim, such as likening him/her to a worm or denying his/her existence, were posted multiple times and that those messages infringe the victim's sense of honor.

The bodies requested the site administrator to delete those posts and they were all deleted (a case of "request").

12 Human rights violation information on the internet Privacy violation on the internet

This is a case in which a victim consulted with the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, alleging that his/her telephone number is posted together with his/her name on an electronic bulletin board.

As a result of an investigation by the bodies, it was found that the victim's telephone number, which had not been published, was posted on the electronic bulletin board and that this violated the victim's privacy right.

The bodies requested the site administrator to delete the post and it was deleted (a case of "request").

2- Human Rights Counseling

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice provide human rights counseling services by officials of Legal Affairs Bureaus and Human Rights Volunteers. The counseling service is free of charge, with no difficult procedures, and is strictly confidential.

The bodies have established the "Human Rights Hotline" (0570-003-110 [from anywhere in Japan]), the "Women's Rights Hotline" (0570-070-810) and the "Children's Rights Hotline" (0120-007-110). Furthermore, Human Rights Counseling Services on the internet and LINE are also available.

Additionally, efforts have been made to develop a system for facilitating children's use of counseling services, such as through the use of letters by distributing the "Children's Rights SOS Mini-Letters" (letter paper with a pre-stamped envelope for human rights counseling) to elementary and junior high school students throughout the country (refer to p.27).

For foreigners who are unable to speak Japanese fluently, the bodies have established the "Foreign-language Human Rights Hotline" and "Human Rights Counseling Centers for Foreigners" (refer to p.41).



Leaflets for disseminating systems for counseling and remedy procedures for human rights violations

3- Human Rights Awareness-Raising

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice have been carrying out various activities to improve each citizen's awareness and understanding of human rights.

Some examples of the activities are the holding of symposiums and lectures; conducting various forms of training such as Human Rights Lectures; publishing awareness-raising materials on websites and video distribution sites; displaying banner ads on the internet; utilizing publicity using broadcasts such as TV and radio, etc.; and running articles in newspapers and public relations magazines. These activities are collectively called "human rights awareness-raising activities."

Human rights awareness-raising activities are indispensable in preventing human rights violations in advance.

The Priority Goal of Awareness-Raising Activities

Ever since FY1966, the bodies have set a priority goal for the year and have conducted awareness-raising activities based on the goal.

The slogan representing the priority goal for FY2023 was decided as "It's not someone else's problem." This slogan incorporates the wish that everyone will consider various human rights issues not as matters for someone else but as matter for themselves and think about the importance of respect for human rights.

The bodies set the 17 human rights issues as priority targets with the aim of achieving an inclusive society where diversity is respected and all people mutually cherish individuals' human rights and dignity and can live a vibrant life.



Poster "The Priority Goal for Awareness-Raising Activities for 2023"

Priority Targets of Awareness-Raising Activities

- ① Protect Women's Human Rights
- ② Protect Children's Human Rights
- ③ Protect Elderly People's Human Rights
- ④ Eliminate Prejudice and Discrimination on the Grounds of Disabilities
- ⑤ Resolve the *Buraku* Discrimination(*Dowa* Issue)
- ⑥ Eliminate Prejudice and Discrimination against Ainu People
- ⑦ Respect the Human Rights of Foreigners
- ⑧ Eliminate Prejudice and Discrimination Related to Infectious Diseases
- ⑨ Eliminate Prejudice and Discrimination against Present and Former Hansen's Disease Patients and Their Families
- ⑩ Eliminate Prejudice and Discrimination against People Released from Prison after Serving Their Sentences
- ⑪ Consider the Human Rights of Crime Victims and their Families
- ⑫ Eliminate Human Rights Violations on the Internet
- ⑬ Deepen Understanding of the Issue of Human Rights Violations by North Korean Authorities
- ⑭ Eliminate Prejudice and Discrimination against Homeless People
- ⑮ Eliminate Prejudice and Discrimination regarding "Sexual Minorities"
- ⑯ Stop Trafficking in Persons
- ⑰ Eliminate Prejudice and Discrimination Arising from Disasters such as Earthquakes

Human Rights Week



Poster "75rd Human Rights Week"

The United Nations designated December 10 as Human Rights Day at its 5th General Assembly on December 4, 1950 in commemoration of December 10, 1948, the day that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted at its 3rd General Assembly, and recommended that member states further promote the development of human right.

In Japan, the week ending on December 10 each year (December 4 to December 10) was designated as Human Rights Week in 1949, the year following the adoption of the Declaration, and human rights awareness-raising activities have been carried out throughout the country since then.



The Networks of Human Rights Awareness-Raising Activities

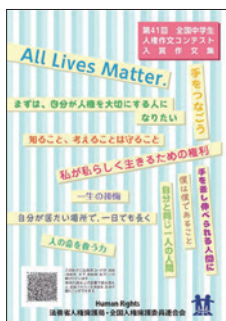
The Prefectural Network Associations of Human Rights Awareness-Raising Activities was established at a prefectural level and the Regional Network Associations of Human Rights Awareness-Raising Activities was established at a municipal level as an interlinking network among the bodies implementing human rights awareness-raising activities, such as the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice, the prefectural governments, municipal governments, and public interest corporations.

Members have been cooperating through this network in conducting human rights awareness-raising activities and providing relevant information, etc.

National Essay Contest on Human Rights for Junior High School Students

The National Essay Contest on Human Rights for Junior High School Students has been held since FY1981 for the purpose of enabling junior high school students, who will lead the next generation, to deepen their understanding of the importance and necessity of human rights and to foster awareness of human rights through writing essays on human rights issues.

In FY2022 (the 41st contest), 768,623 essays were applied from 6,582 schools. Collections of award-winning essays, awareness-raising videos based on essays that were awarded in the past, and English translations of award-winning essays are available on the website of the Ministry of Justice (for the essay that received the Prime Minister's Award in the 41st contest, refer to p.18).



Collection of award-winning essays for the 41st National Essay Contest on Human Rights for Junior High School Students



Human Rights Lectures

Human Rights Lectures are one of the human rights awareness-raising activities carried out under the initiative of Human Rights Volunteers nationwide, with the aim of nurturing compassion in children and having them learn about the preciousness of life by providing them with an opportunity to think about bullying and other topics.

Lectures are held, targeting elementary and junior high school students, on such occasions as school visits for the Human Rights Flower Campaigns (refer to p.17) or moral education classes.

In recent years, backed by growing domestic and international interest in business and human rights (refer to p.20), Human Rights Lectures for Adults targeting company managers and employees (awareness-raising activities for companies) have also come to be held increasingly.

Additionally, Human Rights Lectures with Sports have been held by inviting athletes as lecturers to have children learn the spirit of fair play based on mutual support through enjoying games and hearing those lecturers' experiences. Furthermore, Experience-based Human Rights Lectures, such as using wheelchairs or enjoying sports for persons with disabilities, like Boccia, are held to have participants learn "barrier-free mind" so as to understand the diversity and become aware of the importance of realizing an inclusive society where people live together regardless of differences.

As measures against human rights violations on the internet, which are becoming more and more serious mainly among young people, Human Rights Lectures in collaboration with Smartphone and Mobile Phone Safety Lectures held by mobile phone companies are also being provided actively.

In FY2022, these Human Rights Lectures were provided for a total of 831,383 people.



Various contents targeting companies are being introduced on the website of the Ministry of Justice.



Human Rights Lecture



Human Rights Flower Campaigns

The Human Rights Flower Campaigns have been held since 1982 as a human rights awareness-raising activity carried out mainly for elementary school students. During the Campaigns, children are given flower seeds or bulbs and grow flowers by cooperating with one another. Through this experience, children are anticipated to understand the preciousness of life, nurture a warm-hearted spirit and learn about tenderness and compassion.

Flowers grown by children are sent to social welfare facilities, etc. and sketching and viewing events are held to deepen communication with local people. In this manner, the Campaigns are also providing opportunities for those local people to deepen their understanding of human rights.

In FY2022, the Campaigns were conducted for 421,376 students at 3,764 schools, etc.



Human Rights Flower Campaigns

1. The Human Rights Bodies
of the Ministry of Justice

2. Activities of the Human Rights
Bodies of the Ministry of Justice

3. Major Human Rights
Issues

4. Topic : Opinion Poll on
Human Rights Protection

Material : 41st National Essay Contest on Human Rights
for Junior High School Students

"Toward the World where People can Deeply Take a Breath"

MATSUBA Haruno, Ninth Grade (third year of three grades)
Eishin Junior High School, Eishin Gakuen, Hiroshima Prefecture

I did not understand what people were talking about. I was scared of all people around me. I once had such experience.

I stayed in America for three years from when I was six years old. I was filled with fear as everything was new to me in a country where the lifestyle and language are completely different. I could not understand English, could not make friends, and was alone.

The more I worried that people might be talking about me as I am an Asian, the more I lost courage to talk to them. However, the situation changed drastically immediately after I started to go to a local elementary school. There was a white girl who talked to me although I could not speak English and was passive. She learned Japanese herself and smiled at me while talking in halting Japanese to cheer me up. I was happy regarding her kindness. I enjoyed being with her, and the differences in skin colors and languages bothered me less and less. I gradually became able to talk to people around me positively and my English improved.

Around that time, I went to Las Vegas with my family, and happened to see a shocking scene. A white man suddenly hurled abuse at and spat on a man wearing a hood just in front of me. The man wearing a hood made no resistance and walked away as if nothing had happened. The man wearing a hood was a black. I wondered why the man did not argue back against such an awful act, but I was merely a second-grade girl and was just shaking with fear. However, I am in the ninth grade now and understand that at that instance, I witnessed racial discrimination, unforgivable discrimination as a behavior of a human being. I consider how I would approach that black man who was spit on by a passerby, if I, as a ninth grader, were on that scene. Could I make any resistance against that white man?

In May 2020 in America, Mr. George Floyd, a black man, was killed due to excessive restraint by a white police officer. This reminded me of the scene I witnessed in Las Vegas and my heart ached whenever I came across media coverage about protest demonstrations or the like. While being seized by the neck for 9 minutes and 29 seconds, Mr. Floyd complained to the police officer, saying "I can't breathe." as many as 27 times. "George Floyd slowly faded away like a fish in a bag. With his eyes rolling back into his head, he became limp and eventually died." This is the testimony of a witness on the public prosecutor's side. What did Mr. Floyd think during these nine minutes? "I can't breathe." His phrase refrained in my brain and I felt uneasy.



I was almost overwhelmed by such uneasiness and I poured out my feelings to my senior at school. She is a Filipino-Japanese and is slightly dark-skinned by nature. When she was an elementary school child, she was teased by her friends by saying her skin was dirty, and was deeply hurt. After graduating high school, she went to Ireland for study but COVID-19 broke out globally immediately after that. COVID-19 was said to be originated from China and Chinese people were subjected to discrimination in Ireland.

One day, she was slandered as "COVID-19!" and was spit on or stoned by white people. She is usually very communicative and has friends with diverse nationalities. She herself thought that "she is free from discrimination or bias on the basis of race," but she said that those incidents made her notice her own sense of discrimination. She reflected that she noticed that she was displeased with the fact that she was mistaken as a Chinese, rather than resenting having been discriminated against by white people, and that she was ashamed as a human being when she recognized herself having such feelings. Hearing her story, I thought as follows: by believing that "I am free from discrimination," I may have turned a blind eye to discrimination. What my senior told me is not just other people's problem. Discrimination generates within oneself and this also applies to me. Unless I always try to look into myself, I cannot detect discrimination. Otherwise, my heart will never stop complaining that "I can't breathe."

In America, the population of black people is around one-fifth of that of white people. Nevertheless, the mortality rate for COVID-19 is higher among black people. There should never be any difference in the value of human life, but actually, some hospitals in America are said to have refused to even conduct tests for black patients, not to mention providing treatment. I wonder how my old friend, the girl who kindly talked to me at the age of 6, is considering this reality?

"Black Lives Matter." This is of course true, but I would like to rephrase it into "All Lives Matter," keeping the cry of the soul, "I can't breathe," which Mr. Floyd repeated in his last struggle, in my mind. For realizing the world where all people face all others equally as a human being without making distinctions and can speak in their own words with self-esteem, like the girl who smiled and talked to me at the age of six. I deeply take a breath and continue shouting my words to the world: "All people are equal and all have rights to live!"

Material : Japan's Efforts Concerning Business and Human Rights

Amid the further globalization of corporate activities, investors, civil society and consumers have come to have the awareness to expect companies to respect human rights in corporate activities.

At the 17th session of the UN Human Rights Council in 2011, the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights for Implementing the UN "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework (the UNGPs) were endorsed by consensus. The UNGPs present principles on national governments' obligations to protect human rights, companies' responsibilities to respect human rights, and access to remedies for human rights infringement in connection with business. In achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), companies are required to act based on respect for human rights.

With an interest in business and human rights growing domestically and internationally, the government of Japan formulated the Japan's National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights in October 2020 after grasping the current legal systems and measures relating to corporate activities in Japan, having discussions with economic and labor circles, and undergoing public comment.

The Action Plan describes future measures to be taken by the national government in order to promote respect for human rights in corporate activities, and presents expectations for companies to introduce human rights due diligence (to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their impacts on human rights).

Efforts for disseminating the Action Plan and raising awareness on human rights due diligence are to be made cooperatively by the Cabinet Office and all ministries and agencies.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice are also endeavoring to make companies understand that corporate activities based on the Action Plan will contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights in society as a whole, including international society, and will result in the enhancement of corporate value, and are taking various measures to encourage corporate activities from the viewpoint of human rights. In FY2022, the bodies prepared a video for companies' human rights awareness-raising training, titled "Measures Currently Required for Companies Regarding 'Business and Human Rights'." With regard to a dedicated website, "My Declaration of Human Rights," which was launched in FY2021, the bodies posted video advertisements on the internet for dissemination, calling for companies' participation. (This is a posting - type website where companies, organizations and individuals declare their will to take actions based on respect for human rights. The website posts declarations of people of over 500 companies regarding their commitments to respecting human rights.) Additionally, the bodies published an awareness-raising material, titled "Measures Currently Required for Companies Regarding 'Business and Human Rights'," for companies to conduct training by themselves. Furthermore, in response to requests from companies, Legal Affairs Bureaus and District Legal

Affairs Bureaus nationwide dispatch their staff and Human Rights Volunteers to provide human rights training, and deliver awareness-raising leaflets and videos titled "Companies and Human Rights - Society Respecting Human Rights Starting from Initiatives at Workplaces." In this manner, the bodies are endeavoring to support companies that are making efforts regarding business and human rights. For details, make inquiries with nearby Legal Affairs Bureaus, District Legal Affairs Bureaus or their branches.



Dedicated website, "My Declaration of Human Rights"



"Measures Currently Required for Companies Regarding 'Business and Human Rights'" (Booklet and video)

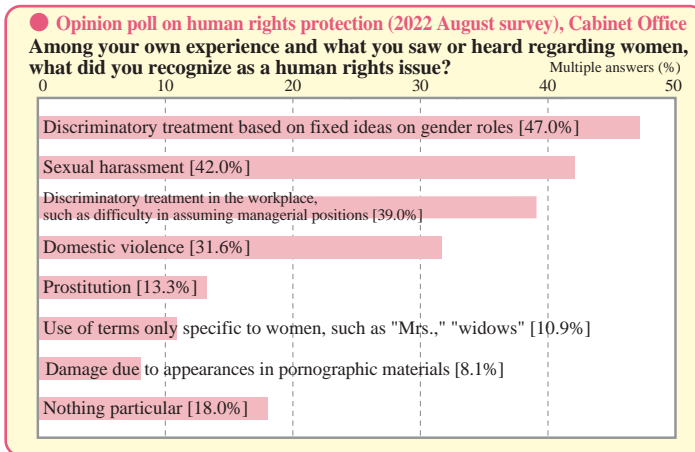


3. Major Human Rights Issues

This Chapter focuses on the major human rights issues and efforts for addressing them.

1- Women – Sex Crimes and Sexual Violence, Domestic Violence, Harassment –

The ideal of gender equality is stipulated in the Constitution of Japan and the principle of gender equality has been established through specific legislation concerning creation of equal opportunity for and equal treatment of men and women in employment. In reality, however, fixed ideas on gender roles, such as that men should work outside and women should remain at home, are deeply-rooted in society even today and cause various kinds of gender discrimination at home and in the workplace.



In addition, violence against women such as sexual crimes and violence, abuse by a spouse or partner (domestic violence), and sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as disadvantageous treatment due to pregnancy and childbirth have been frequently occurring in recent years.

With regard to women's human rights issues such as those mentioned above, the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace, which was enacted in April 2016, requires the national government and local governments, and employers that regularly employ a certain number of workers to ascertain the status of female employees' participation in the workplaces, analyze problems, establish a plan of action with numerical goals, and publicize the established plan and the information on the status of female employees' participation. In this manner, efforts have been made to develop an environment to enable women to fully exercise their abilities in their vocational lives. All employers have come to be



obliged to take measures to prevent power harassment, and the prohibition of any disadvantageous treatment on grounds such as workers having sought consultations on various types of harassment is now clearly prescribed in law. Companies are thus required to strengthen their measures to prevent harassment at workplaces.

As one of the initiatives regarding violence against women, a two-week period from November 12 to November 25 every year is designated as a period for the Campaign to Eliminate Violence against Women, during which efforts to raise awareness of the general public on this issue are made and counseling services and support are offered at Spousal Violence Counseling and Support Centers established nationwide and at One-Stop Support Centers for Victims of Sexual Crimes and Violence, etc. Furthermore, every April is designated as a Period for Preventing Sexual Violence Victimization among Young People, and awareness-raising activities targeting young people are carried out using SNS. As measures against damage due to appearances in pornographic materials, dissemination of the need to incorporate special provisions, etc. in performance agreements, enhancement of counseling support, implementation of awareness-raising PR activities, and strict control, etc. are being promoted based on the Act on Prevention of and Relief from Damage from Forced Appearances in Pornographic Materials.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice established the "Women's Rights Hotline" (0570-070-810 [from anywhere in Japan]), a special telephone service for human rights counseling for women. Officials of the Legal Affairs Bureaus and Human Rights Volunteers provide counseling for various human rights problems affecting women, such as abuse by a spouse or partner (domestic violence), sexual harassment in the workplace, victimization by stalking behavior, and damage due to appearances in pornographic materials. The bodies also undertake investigation and human rights remedy activities as human rights violation cases when they have found any suspected human rights violation and carry out human rights awareness-raising activities such as distributing awareness-raising videos.



Poster "Women's Right Hotline"



Awareness-raising video "It's not someone else's problem."

■ The number of human rights violation cases (violence and abuse against women)^(Note) for which remedy procedures were commenced

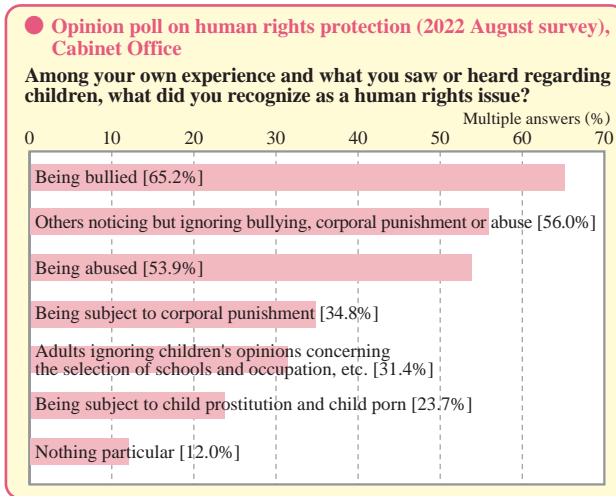
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Violence and abuse against women	1,182	947	629	435	430

(Note) Refer to pp.6-11 for human rights violations cases.

2- Children – Bullying, Corporal Punishment, Child Abuse, Sexual Exploitation –

According to the FY2021 Survey on Undesirable Behavior and School Non-attendance of Students, which the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology conducted, the number of incidents of violence at elementary schools, junior high schools, and high schools was 76,441 cases and the number of recognized bullying cases was 615,351 cases. The situation is still alarming. The number of people arrested or taken into custody by the police for incidents caused by bullying in 2022 was 223.

Among human rights violations for which the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice conduct investigations and resolution, cases involving children have remained at a high level, with 1,047 cases of bullying at school, 75 cases of corporal punishment by school teachers, and 216 cases of violence and abuse against children in 2022.



Bullying

In response to the enactment of the Act for the Promotion of Measures to Prevent Bullying in June 2013, the Basic Policies to Prevent Bullying was formulated (and revised in March 2017) and measures to prevent bullying and to early detect and early deal with bullying have been promoted based thereon.

Recent bullying among children is often committed via the social network service or is otherwise becoming less and less visible, and it is often the case that a trivial incident triggers escalation to serious bullying behavior.



The causes and backgrounds of children who commit bullying or who turn a blind eye to bullying are diversified, but it can be considered that the root of the problem is a lack of consciousness of respect for human rights, or in other words, a lack of compassion and kindness towards others. It is important to cultivate a sense of human rights such as accepting differences in others and to respect them as individual character.

■ **The number of human rights violation cases (bullying) for which remedy procedures were commenced**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Bullying at school	2,955	2,944	1,126	1,169	1,047

Corporal punishment

Corporal punishment is clearly prohibited in the proviso to Article 11 of the School Education Act and should never be permitted in any situation, because corporal punishment exerts serious harmful effect on children's minds and bodies, and may foment the idea of seeking settlement by force and create an environment for bullying and violence.

■ **The number of human rights violation cases (corporal punishment by school teachers) for which remedy procedures were commenced**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Corporal punishment by school teachers	201	141	83	51	75

Child abuse

In recent years, the number of consultations concerning child abuse received at child guidance centers nationwide has increased constantly and reached 207,660 cases in FY2021. Serious child abuse cases resulting in children's deaths occur frequently, and the prevention of child abuse is a problem to be tackled by society as a whole.

In June 2022, the Act Partially Amending the Child Welfare Act, etc. was enacted and relevant measures have been strengthened, such as the establishment of the Children and Families Centers, which offer comprehensive counseling support, etc. to children and their families, and the creation of businesses for supporting children and their families, such as housekeeping support services conducted by visiting personnel. Additionally, in December 2022, the Act Partially Amending the Civil Code, etc. was enacted and the provisions concerning the disciplinary right of persons with parental authority were deleted and the provisions to prohibit corporal punishment or other behavior that exerts harmful effects on children's healthy mental and physical development were introduced.

■ **The number of human rights violation cases (child abuse) for which remedy procedures were commenced**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Violence and abuse against children	453	413	341	253	216

Child sexual exploitation

Commercialized sexual exploitation, such as child prostitution and child pornography flooding the internet, and child sexual abuse have become a serious concern all around the world.

The Act on Regulation and Punishment of Acts Relating to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and the Protection of Children, which was enacted in July 2014, newly provides for punishment for acts of possessing or retaining child pornography for the purpose of satisfying one's sexual curiosity and the act of producing child pornography by secretly depicting poses of a child. In April 2022, the Act on Prevention of Sexual Violence against School Children and Students by Education Personnel, which provides for measures for protecting children from sexual violence by teachers, was enforced.

Various measures are being taken to prevent children's victimization by sexual crimes, including those for preventing damage due to appearances in pornographic materials (refer to p.23).

Furthermore, in June 2023, the Act Partially Amending the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, etc. was enacted. The relevant Codes and Acts were amended in consideration of the actual status of victimization by sex crimes and sexual violence and according changes in social awareness, such as raising the age of consent from 13 to 16 and newly introducing punishment for the act of meeting a child under the age of 16 with the intent of molestation and the act of photographing children's sexual parts or underwear without justifiable grounds (for the details of the amendments, see the website of the Ministry of Justice).



Website of the Ministry of Justice,
"Outline of the legal amendments"

Efforts of the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice have been carrying out various human rights awareness-raising activities for developing children's awareness of human rights, such as holding the National Essay Contest on Human Rights for Junior High School Students, Human Rights Lectures, and Human Rights Flower Campaigns (refer to pp.15-17) in collaboration with schools, etc., and distributing awareness-raising leaflets and videos.



Awareness-raising booklet
"All are Friends; Learn and Consider Human Rights through a Comic"



Awareness-raising booklet
"Bullying - Never Permit or Overlook"





1. The Human Rights Bodies of the Ministry of Justice

2. Activities of the Human Rights Bodies of the Ministry of Justice

3. Major Human Rights Issues

4. Topic : Opinion Poll on Human Rights Protection



Awareness-raising video "It's not someone else's problem."

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice have been distributing "Children's Rights SOS Mini-Letters" (letter paper with a pre-stamped envelope for human rights counseling) to elementary and junior high school students throughout the country since 2006. Through them, the bodies aim to understand the concerns and problems of children who are not able or willing to consult teachers or guardians, and to resolve various human rights problems concerning children in cooperation with the schools and relevant organs.

Through counseling by the use of the "Children's Rights Hotline" (0120-007-110 [from anywhere in Japan]), the "Human Rights Counseling Service on the Internet (SOS-e mail)" (<https://www.jinken.go.jp/kodomo>), and social network service, which is often used by young people, officials of the Legal Affairs Bureaus and Human Rights Volunteers are endeavoring to detect children's human rights violations at an early stage.

When any suspected case of human rights violation is found through human rights counseling, etc., the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice investigate the case as a human rights violation case and take appropriate measures depending on the circumstances.



Poster "Children's Rights Hotline"

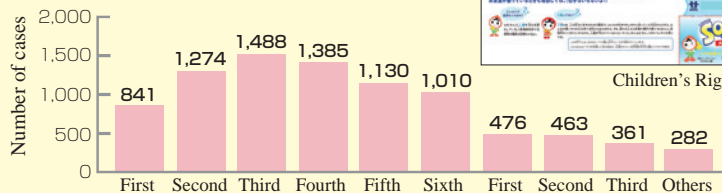
Results of the Children's Rights SOS Mini-Letters Project

Collection period: April 1, 2020–March 31, 2021

Collected data:

Children's Rights SOS Mini-Letters from students in elementary and junior high schools throughout the country

- Number of counseling cases via the Mini-Letter: approximately 8,710
- Number of counseling cases by students' grade



Children's Rights SOS Mini-Letter

● **Contents**

[Breakdown]

Bullying: 2,125 (24.4%)
Abuse: 311 (3.6%)

Corporal punishment: 35 (0.4%)
Others: 6,239 (71.6%)

Material : Basic Act on Children

The number of cases of dealing with consultations on child abuse, non-attendance at school, suicides of elementary, junior high school, and high school students, and the number of bullying on the internet have reached the highest-ever level. Additionally, with the influence exerted by the spread of COVID-19, the environment surrounding children and parents raising children is thus becoming increasingly harsh.

Against a background of such harsh environment surrounding children, the Cabinet decided the Basic Principles on New Promotion System for Policies on Children in December 2021. In the Principles, it is clearly stated that the Children and Families Agency will be newly established as the control tower for achieving a society centered on children, wherein initiatives and policies concerning children are given the highest priority in consideration of the best interest of children always undertaken from the viewpoint of children. In response, the Act for Establishment of the Children and Families Agency was enacted in June 2022, and the Agency was established in April 2023. The Agency's mission is to protect children's rights and interests.

Together with the Act for Establishment of the Children and Families Agency, the Basic Act on Children was enacted as a comprehensive basic Act for carrying out measures for children comprehensively and aggressively as a society-wide initiative. The Basic Act on Children, which was enforced in April 2023, aims to promote policies for children in a comprehensive manner for achieving a society in which all children, who will play the central role in the next generation, can build the foundation of their lifetime personality formation, grow in a healthy manner as independent individuals, and live a happy life toward the future, with their rights being surely protected, irrespective of their mental and physical status and their environment. Based on the purport of the Constitution and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the following six basic ideas common to all measures for children are specified.

- (i) It should be ensured that all children are respected as individuals, that their fundamental human rights are guaranteed, and that all children are free from any discriminatory treatment.
- (ii) Children's rights pertaining to welfare, such as being raised appropriately, being guaranteed the necessities of daily living, and being loved and protected, should be equally guaranteed, and all children should be given equal opportunities to receive education based on the spirit of the Basic Act on Education.
- (iii) All children should be given opportunities to present their opinions on all matters directly relating to themselves and opportunities to participate in various social activities, in accordance with their age and development level.
- (iv) For all children, their opinions should be respected and due consideration should be given to their best interest above all, in accordance with their age and development level.
- (v) With the awareness that children should basically be raised at home and that parents and other guardians assume the primary responsibility for their children, a favorable environment for growth should be secured for children for whom sufficient support and rearing at home are difficult.
- (vi) A social environment should be developed so that people can have dreams regarding their family life and child rearing and can enjoy raising children.

With these basic ideas in mind, the Children and Families Agency, which serves as the control tower for ensuring children's best interest while always taking the viewpoint of children, is endeavoring to protect children's rights and interests, while further aggressively promoting measures for children being taken by the government as a whole, based on the Basic Act on Children.



Material : Efforts for Solving Children's Troubles Caused by Their Guardians' Religious Faith

Triggered by the revelation of problems of the former Unification Church, children and young people called the second or third generation of religious groups have come to be recognized as a social issue. Their damage is apt to be latent and their troubles are often composite, involving legal issues, psychological difficulties, poverty, etc. Accordingly, in order to give relief to damage suffered by these children and young people, relevant organizations are taking measures appropriately in close mutual collaboration. Q&As that will give hints for problem solution are available on the website of the Ministry of Justice.



Website of the Ministry of Justice, "Q&As giving hints for problem solution"

It is generally difficult for children to ask for help by themselves. Therefore, it is important to detect abuse, bullying or other concrete incidents at an early stage and give relief. In order to find out latent troubles for early relief, the role of education is also important.

When the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice receive consultations regarding cases where children's rights and interests are threatened due to their guardians' religious faith via the Children's Rights Hotline, Children's Rights SOS Mini-Letters, or human rights counseling using SNS, they accurately grasp each case, and make effective responses positively, while collaborating with relevant organizations in some cases. From an educational perspective, they promote awareness-raising activities targeting children, such as Human Rights Lectures. In Human Rights Lectures, in particular, the information concerning the rights to life, survival and development, required consideration of the best interest of children, respect for children's opinions, and prohibition of discrimination, which are prescribed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child is explained and disseminated so that children can be aware that they are entitled with various rights. Additionally, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the bodies introduce various counseling services that respond to children's consultations on latent troubles due to their guardians' religious faith.

The Houterasu, Japan Legal Support Center, has set up the Hotline for Channeling Business (0120-005931 (toll-free)) for responding to consultations regarding cases concerning the former Unification Church and other similar cases, and introduces appropriate counseling services depending on the details of the troubles of individuals requesting consultation, including children. For this Hotline, certified psychologists with experience as school counselors, etc. are stationed to respond to consultations as necessary in order to carefully listen to children's troubles, while providing them with psychological care.

At the Inter-Ministerial Meeting on Issues of the Former Unification Church as well, as measures for providing relief to relevant children and young people, it was decided to offer multi-layered support for each case by utilizing the Regional Council for Children in Need of Protection, which serves as regional networks for protecting children.

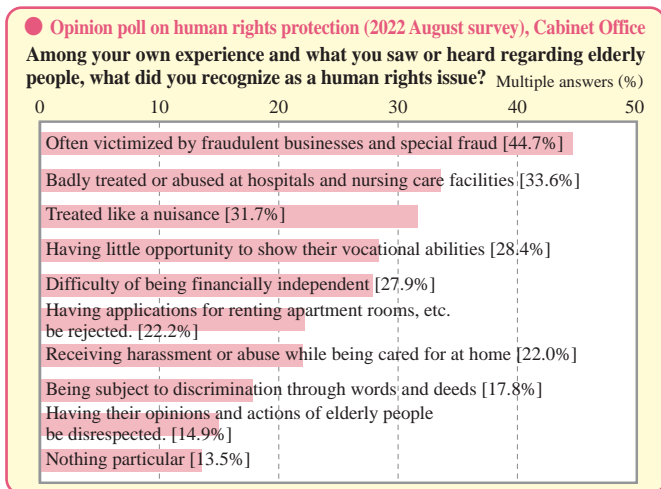
The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice will continuously endeavor to enhance education and awareness-raising activities and the counseling systems in order to detect children's unheard voices without fail to provide relief to them.

3- Elderly People

Due to the increased extension of the average life expectancy and the declining birth rate, one-quarter of the population in Japan is composed of elderly people aged 65 or over. In such a situation, the human rights problems of elderly people, such as physical or psychological abuse by caretakers, etc., are now becoming social problems.

In December 1995, the Basic Act on Measures for the Aging Society entered into force, aiming to achieve a society in which each citizen can live worthwhile lives with a sense of security throughout their lives. In July 1996, the General Principles Concerning Measures for the Aging Society were compiled based on this Basic Act (the current General Principles were decided at a Cabinet meeting in February 2018).

Furthermore, based on the Act on the Prevention of Elder Abuse, Support for Caregivers of Elderly Persons and Other Related Matters, which was enforced in April 2006, measures are being implemented for prevention and early detection and dealing with abuse of elderly people in order to protect their dignity.



In December 2018, the Act on Comprehensive and Integrated Promotion of Measures for Achieving a Universal Society was enforced with the aim of realizing a society in which each citizen is recognized as a member of society standing on an equal footing, irrespective of having disabilities or not or being young or old, with their dignity being fully respected, and can freely exercise their abilities with a guaranteed opportunity to participate in activities in any field of society, and all citizens thereby coexist while mutually respecting others' personality and characteristics and offering support. Based on this Act, efforts for achieving a universal society are being promoted cooperatively by relevant administrative organs.



Additionally, based on the General Principles Concerning Measures for Dementia Patients, which were compiled in June 2019, measures focused both on coexistence and disease prevention are being taken while prioritizing viewpoints of dementia patients and their families, aiming to achieve a society where people can enjoy daily lives with hope even after developing dementia.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice distribute booklets, deliver videos or are otherwise carrying out human rights awareness-raising activities with the aim of achieving a society where the human rights of all people, including the elderly, are respected.

The bodies set up ad-hoc human rights counseling centers at social welfare facilities such as welfare facilities for the elderly so that facility users and their family members, who usually have difficulty in visiting a Legal Affairs Bureau or District Legal Affairs Bureau, can receive counseling services easily in these facilities.

The bodies also strive to make human rights counseling activities widely known to social welfare workers, who work closely with elderly people, and call on them to help with strengthening cooperation in such forms as providing information when they recognize a human rights violation case.



Awareness raising booklet "Toward the Age of Coexistence; Aged Society and Human Rights"



Awareness-raising video "It's not someone else's problem. – For achieving an inclusive society where people mutually support with each other"



■ The number of human rights violation cases against elderly people for which remedy procedures were commenced

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Violence and abuse against elderly people	319	251	185	131	81
Human rights violations at welfare facilities for the elderly	42	31	23	16	23

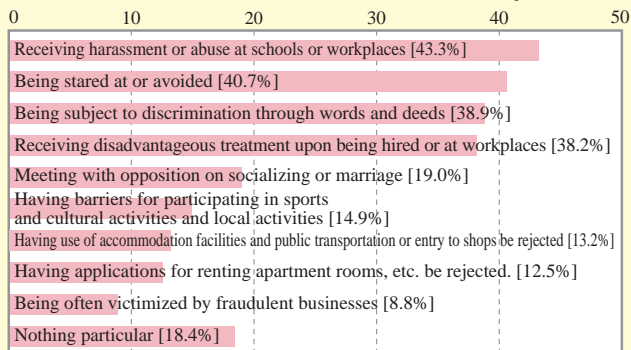
4- Persons with Disabilities

In order to create a comfortable society equal for everyone, including persons with disabilities, it is necessary for all people in society to strive to fully understand and give due consideration to persons with disabilities, while various measures are being taken by the national government and local governments.

The Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities designates the week from December 3 to December 9 every year as the Week of Persons with Disabilities. During this week, various events are held intensively in collaboration among the national government, local governments and private entities, etc. in order to disseminate the principle of an "inclusive society."

● Opinion poll on human rights protection (2022 August survey), Cabinet Office

Among your own experience and what you saw or heard regarding persons with disabilities, what did you recognize as a human rights issue? Multiple answers (%)



Additionally, based on the Act on Prevention of Abuse of Persons with Disabilities and Support for Caregivers, which was enforced in October 2012, measures are being implemented for prevention and early detection and resolution of abuse cases of persons with disabilities in order to protect their dignity.

Furthermore, under the Act for Eliminating Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, which was enforced in April 2016, administrative organs and private companies had made efforts to prohibit unfair discriminatory treatment and give due consideration to persons with disabilities for eliminating discrimination on the basis of disability. In May 2021, an amendment of the Act was enacted to make the giving of due consideration to persons with disabilities mandatory, regarding which there was merely a duty to make an effort to do so before the amendment (the amended Act will be put into effect on April 1, 2024).

In February 2017, ahead of the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics Games, the Universal Design



2020 Action Plan, which provides for the promotion of "barrier-free mind" and creation of communities with universal design, was determined. Based on this plan, efforts have been made to implement and improve measures based on evaluations by the persons with disabilities and support organizations. Additionally, under the Act on Comprehensive and Integrated Promotion of Measures for Achieving a Universal Society, which was enforced in December 2018, initiatives for achieving a universal society have been promoted.

In May 2022, the Act on Promotion of Measures Relating to Information Acquisition and Use and Communication of Persons with Disabilities was enforced to enable all persons with disabilities to participate in activities in all fields.

The government of Japan is promoting measures to assist persons with disabilities to support their independence and social participation in line with the Basic Plan for Persons with Disabilities (the fifth plan), which was established under the Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities, with the aim of achieving an "inclusive society" where persons with and without disabilities are able to respect each other's personality and individuality without distinction.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice conduct various human rights awareness-raising activities, such as providing opportunities to experience wheelchairs or sports for persons with disabilities and holding Human Rights Lectures combining talks and lectures by Paralympians.

The bodies have set up ad-hoc human rights counseling centers at support facilities for persons with disabilities so that facility users and their family members, who usually have difficulty in visiting a Legal Affairs Bureau or District Legal Affairs Bureau, can receive counseling services easily in these facilities. The bodies also commit to having human rights counseling activities widely known to social welfare workers, who work closely with persons with disabilities, and request them to cooperate in such forms as providing information when they recognize a human rights violation case.



Awareness-raising booklet "Persons with Disabilities and Human Rights"



Awareness-raising video "It's not someone else's problem."



■ The number of human rights violation cases against persons with disabilities for which remedy procedures were commenced

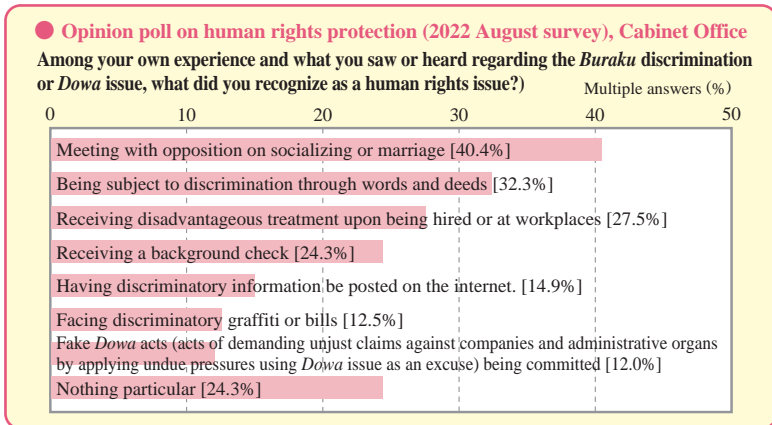
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Discriminatory treatment against persons with disabilities	235	163	125	112	107
Human rights violations at welfare facilities for persons with disabilities	40	38	28	22	27

5- *Buraku* Discrimination (*Dowa* Issue)

Buraku discrimination (*Dowa* issue)

Due to discrimination based on the structure of social statuses which was formed in the course of the historical development of Japanese society, some Japanese people had been forced to endure a deprived status economically, socially and culturally over years, and they are still subject to various kinds of discrimination in their daily lives even today, such as meeting opposition to marriage or being subject to disadvantageous treatment upon employment on the grounds of being from a district called a *Dowa* district. This is the *Dowa* issue, which is a human rights issue unique to Japan.

In order to solve this issue, the national government, together with local governments, had worked for 33 years since 1969 on measures for regional improvements based on Acts on Special Measures. As a result, developments in infrastructure in order to improve the impoverished environment of the *Dowa* districts have achieved steady results, and the regional disparity with other districts has become considerably smaller.



However, there still remain cases of posting where discriminatory comments on the internet. The survey on the status of *Buraku* discrimination was conducted based on the Act on the Promotion of Elimination of *Buraku* Discrimination enforced in December 2016, (https://www.moj.go.jp/JINKEN/jinken04_00127.html) and the results, which were published in June 2020, revealed that although a correct understanding on the *Buraku* discrimination (*Dowa* issue) has been increasing: discriminatory false accusations targeting specific individuals or unspecified people are posted on the internet; cases of discriminatory treatment occur upon individuals' marriage or socializing; some people still have prejudice and discriminatory points of view; some of the viewers of



information related to the *Buraku* discrimination on the internet have a certain discriminatory motivation. It is necessary to properly deal with the *Buraku* discrimination (*Dowa* issue) based on the purport of the same Act, the incidental resolutions, and the results of the aforementioned survey.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice carry out various human rights awareness-raising activities, such as distribution of awareness-raising videos, and endeavor to disseminate knowledge of the enforcement of the Act on the Promotion of Elimination of *Buraku* Discrimination in order to eliminate the public prejudice relating to the *Buraku* discrimination (*Dowa* issue). Additionally, the bodies endeavor to provide a remedy for damage and prevent occurrence of human rights violations concerning the *Buraku* discrimination (*Dowa* issue) through human rights counseling and investigation and resolution of human rights violation cases. When the bodies find, through reports by relevant administrative organs, etc., any information on the internet citing a certain area as a *Dowa* district or the like, they make judgements on the illegality thereof and demand the relevant provider, etc. to delete the information or otherwise take appropriate measures.



Awareness-raising video
"It's not someone else's problem."

■ The number of human rights violation cases regarding the *Buraku* discrimination (*Dowa* issue) for which remedy procedures were commenced

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Human rights violations regarding the <i>Buraku</i> discrimination (<i>Dowa</i> issue)	92	221	244	308	433

Elimination of pseudo-actions purportedly on behalf of *Dowa* problems

One of the major factors hampering the resolution of *Buraku* discrimination (*Dowa* issue) is the widespread occurrence of pseudo-actions purportedly on behalf of *Dowa* problems. These pseudo-actions refer to acts of demanding unjust profits or claims against companies and administrative organs (such as forcing them to purchase expensive books) by applying undue pressures using *Dowa* issue as an excuse.

In order to tackle pseudo-actions, it is necessary for administrative organs and companies to take a firm attitude towards unfair claims in close cooperation.

In 1987, the national government established the Central Liaison Conference for Measures against Pseudo-Actions with the participation of all of the ministries and agencies. Efforts to eliminate pseudo-actions have also been made at the regional level through the establishment of the Liaison Conference among Relevant Organizations for Measures against Pseudo-Actions, with Legal Affairs Bureaus and District Legal Affairs Bureaus across the country acting as secretariats.

The Ministry of Justice prepared a guide compiling concrete responses to be made against pseudo-actions and has made it available on its website (<https://www.moj.go.jp/content/001361670.pdf>). The Ministry has conducted questionnaire surveys eleven times since 1987 with the aim of ascertaining the actual status of pseudo-actions (the results of the latest survey conducted for FY2018 are available at: <https://www.moj.go.jp/content/001290375.pdf>).



6- The Ainu People

The Ainu people have an original and rich culture such as a unique language, traditional ceremonies and rituals, Yukar and other oral literature, but due to integration policies which were implemented in modern times, efforts for the preservation and the handing down of traditions have not been sufficiently made in the present day. In particular, people who understand the Ainu language and can uphold the traditions are aging and important foundations needed to pass on the culture show signs of diminishing. On the basis of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2007, and the report by the Advisory Council for Future Ainu Policy published in July 2009, the national government has been promoting comprehensive and effective Ainu policies.

The Act on Promotion of Measures for the Achievement of Society with Respect for the Ethnic Pride of the Ainu People, which was enforced in May 2019, provides for the basic idea concerning the prohibition of discrimination, etc. on the grounds of being an Ainu person and for support measures to carry out Ainu policies comprehensively on an ongoing basis, with the aim of achieving a society in which the Ainu people can live with their ethnic pride and in which their pride is sufficiently respected. Under this Act, measures including promotion of regional developments, industry and tourism, in addition to conventional measures for promoting culture and welfare, are being implemented comprehensively and effectively.

In July 2020, Upopoy (National Ainu Museum and Park) was opened in Shiraoi Town in Hokkaido as a base for reconstruction and creation of Ainu culture. Upopoy offers visitors opportunities to experience the lives and traditional performing arts of the Ainu people from diverse perspectives.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice carry out various human rights awareness-raising activities, such as distribution of awareness-raising videos, in order to improve understanding and recognition about the Ainu people and eliminate prejudice and discrimination against them. Furthermore, the bodies commenced collaboration with the Counseling Services for Ainu People in May 2022, thereby positively carrying out human rights counseling, investigation and resolution of human rights violation cases.

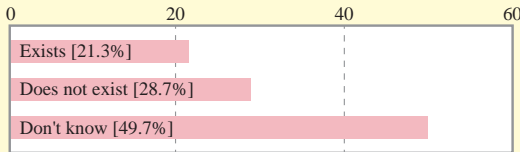


Awareness-raising video,
"A=kor Youth"
(a=kor is an Ainu word meaning "our.")



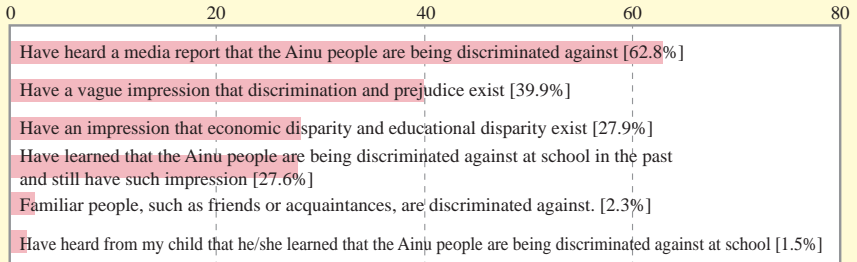
● **Survey on the public understanding about the Ainu people (2022 November survey),
Cabinet Secretariat and Cabinet Office**

Discrimination and prejudice against the Ainu people



Reasons for discrimination and prejudice against the Ainu people

(Question for respondents who consider that discrimination and prejudice exist; Multiple answers (%))



■ **Act Promoting Measures to Achieve a Society in which the Pride of Ainu People is Respected
(Act No. 16 of 2019)**

Article 4 It is prohibited for any person to discriminate against Ainu people or commit, on the grounds that a person is Ainu, any other act that infringes upon the rights or interests of that person

■ **The number of human rights violation cases (discriminatory treatment against the Ainu people) for which remedy procedures were commenced**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Discriminatory treatment against the Ainu people	0	0	0	0	1



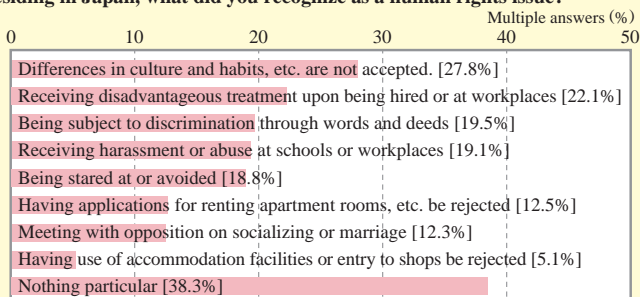
7- Foreigners

The number of foreigners residing in Japan was approx. 3.08 million people as of the end of 2022, hitting a record high. Under such circumstances, various human rights problems regarding foreigners have taken place due to differences in language, religion, customs and other factors.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice established the "Foreign-language Human Rights Hotline" and the "Foreign-Language Human Rights Counseling Service on the Internet," as well as "Human Rights Counseling Centers for Foreigners" to provide human rights counseling services in multiple languages to foreign nationals who cannot speak Japanese fluently. Furthermore, the bodies carry out human rights awareness-raising activities, and conduct remedy activities in order to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against foreign nationals.

● Opinion poll on human rights protection (2022 August survey), Cabinet Office

Among your own experience and what you saw or heard regarding foreigners residing in Japan, what did you recognize as a human rights issue?



Recently, discriminatory speech and behavior intended to exclude people of certain ethnic groups or nationalities has become a public concern as so-called "hate speech." In June 2016, the Act on the Promotion of Efforts to Eliminate Unfair Discriminatory Speech and Behavior against Persons with Countries of Origin Other than Japan was enforced. However, hate speech has yet to be eliminated. Such discriminatory speech and behavior not only cause a feeling of anxiety or repugnance but could also violate human dignity or generate a discriminatory environment and cannot be tolerated. As indicated in the incidental resolutions of the Diet in the process of deliberating the relevant Act, hostile speech and behavior on the ground of nationality, race or ethnic group, etc. with the intention to encourage or induce discrimination are not forgivable, irrespective of whether they target people from overseas or not.

While sharing information with relevant ministries and agencies, as well as with local governments, the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice are carrying out various human rights awareness-raising activities under the catch phrase "STOP! HATE SPEECH," and are conducting human rights counseling investigation and resolution of human rights violation cases for human rights violations, including damage due to hate speech.



Awareness-raising video
"It's not someone else's problem."



Awareness-raising video
"Stop Hate Speech (Hate Speech on the Internet)"

Awareness-raising
booklet (comic)
"Hate Speech around Us"



■ The number of human rights violation cases (discriminatory treatment against foreigners) for which remedy procedures were commenced

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Discriminatory treatment against foreigners	62	72	60	59	47


You can get the Human Rights Counseling Leaflet for Foreigners from the Ministry of Justice website at: <https://www.moj.go.jp/JINKEN/jinken21.html>



Material Human Rights Counseling in Foreign Languages

English, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Nepali, Spanish, Indonesian, and Thai

Foreign-language Human Rights Hotline (from anywhere in Japan)

 **0570-090911**

Service hours: 9:00 - 17:00 on weekdays (excluding the year-end and New Year holidays)

*A call to this number is connected to the competent Legal Affairs Bureau or District Legal Affairs Bureau via a private multilingual call center.

Foreign-language Human Rights Counseling Service on the Internet

https://www.jinken.go.jp/soudan/PC_AD/O101_en.html



Human Rights Counseling Centers for Foreigners

Legal Affairs Bureaus and District Legal Affairs Bureaus nationwide provide human rights counseling services to foreign nationals who cannot speak Japanese fluently with an interview through a translator.

Service hours: 9:00 - 17:00 on weekdays (excluding the year-end and New Year holidays)

Human rights counseling offices are periodically opened at the following locations other than Legal Affairs Bureaus and District Legal Affairs Bureaus.

City	Location	Service hours	Language	Contact information
Fukuoka	KOKUSAI HIROBA ACROS Fukuoka 3rd Floor 1-1-1, Tenjin, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-shi * Scheduled to be closed as of the end of FY2023	13:00 - 16:00 on 2nd Saturday every month	English	Human Rights Department, Fukuoka Legal Affairs Bureau 092 (739) 4151
Takamatsu	Kagawa International Exchange Center (I-pal Kagawa) 1-11-63, Ban-cho, Takamatsu-shi	13:00 - 15:00 on 3rd Friday every month (Reservation required)	English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Portuguese	Human Rights Department, Takamatsu Legal Affairs Bureau 087 (821) 7850
Matsuyama	Ehime Prefecural International Center (EPIC) 1-1, Dougoichiman, Matsuyama-shi	13:30 - 15:30 on 4th Thursday every month	English	Human Rights Division, Matsuyama District Legal Affairs Bureau 089 (932) 0888

8- Patients of Infections

With regard to HIV, outside of sexual contact, there is almost no possibility of being infected in daily life. Additionally, thanks to the progress made in treatment, even if a person is infected with HIV, early detection and treatment can prevent the onset of AIDS and can significantly reduce the risk of infecting others.

Hepatitis is mostly caused by the hepatitis B virus or hepatitis C virus, and these viruses are transmitted mainly via blood and body fluids. Therefore, in order to prevent transmission of the hepatitis virus, it is important not to share tools with blood or body fluids with others and to avoid a wound or mucous membrane from directly touching any blood or body fluid. If such precautions are taken, there is no possibility to be infected with the hepatitis B virus or hepatitis C virus in ordinary everyday life.

However, such accurate information is not broadly understood, and not a few patients and their families suffer from prejudice and discrimination.

With regard to vaccination against COVID-19, there are some who cannot receive vaccination due to various reasons or who require special attention when receiving vaccination, and therefore, infection control measures with due consideration to individuals' circumstances are required. It is necessary to prevent discriminatory treatment for people who have not received vaccination (such as giving an instruction that reveals the fact that the relevant person has not received vaccination, terminating a contract with a person who refused to receive vaccination, or refusing the relevant person's participation in training, etc.). Whether or not to wear a mask is to be basically left to individuals' autonomous decisions, and it is necessary to respect their decisions and pay attention not to force any person to wear or take off a mask against his/her will.

The national government is endeavoring to disseminate accurate knowledge on these infectious diseases and raise awareness of the general public in order to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against infectious diseases.



Awareness-raising video
"It's not someone else's problem."



The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice have also been conducting various human rights awareness-raising activities, investigation and resolution of human rights violation cases.



■ The number of human rights violation cases (discriminatory treatment against infectious disease patients) for which remedy procedures were commenced

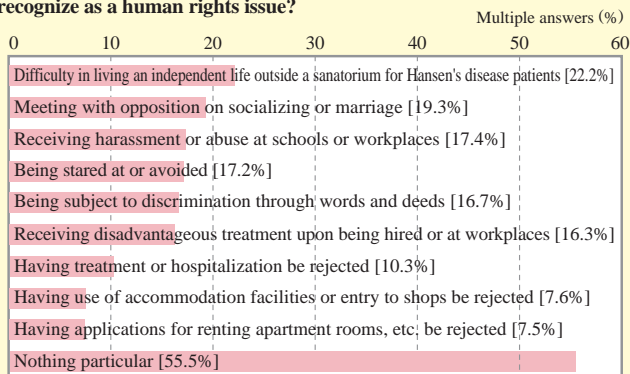
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Discriminatory treatment against infectious disease patients (excl. patients of Hansen's Disease)	26	15	44	68	49

9- Present and Former Hansen's Disease (also known internationally as leprosy) Patients and Their Families

Although the bacteria, *Mycobacterium leper*, found in Hansen's disease is contagious, it is extremely rare to contract the disease even if the bacteria have been acquired due to low infectivity. In the rare event of coming down with the disease, as effective treatment has been established and there are no aftereffects as long as the disease is detected early and treatment is administered appropriately. However, the policy adopted in the past to isolate Hansen's disease patients at care facilities created awareness that Hansen's disease is a dreadful disease, and this has caused unreasonable discrimination and prejudice against present and former Hansen's disease patients and their families.

● **Opinion poll on human rights protection (2022 August survey), Cabinet Office**

Among your own experience and what you saw or heard regarding present and former Hansen's disease patients and their families, what did you recognize as a human rights issue?



In the lawsuit to seek compensation for the violation of the Leprosy Prevention Act, questioning the national government's responsibility for the delay in a shift of its policies on Hansen's disease, the Kumamoto District Court rendered a judgment to hold the national government liable in May 2001. Thereafter, the national government has endeavored to disseminate correct knowledge on Hansen's disease, also in light of the purport of the Act on Promotion of Resolution of Issues Related to Hansen's Disease, which was enacted in June 2008.

However, prejudice and discrimination were not eradicated. In June 2019, in the lawsuit filed against the national government by the families of Hansen's disease patients to seek compensation for damage due to prejudice and discrimination, the Kumamoto District Court rendered a judgment to hold the national government liable. In response, the then Prime Minister issued a statement to accept the judgment in July 2019 and expressed deep remorse and an apology as the national government for the suffering and difficulties faced by present and former patients and their families over the years due to extreme prejudice and discrimination in society originated from the national government's wrong policies to isolate patients at care facilities. The statement also contains the national government's commitment to taking new compensatory measures for patients' families and strengthening human rights education and awareness-raising activities in consideration of their hardships, in close collaboration and cooperation among relevant ministries and agencies.

The Committee Discussing Measures for Eliminating Discrimination and Prejudice against Hansen's Disease consisting of experts and related parties, which was established under the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, compiled a report in March 2023. In this report as well, relevant ministries and agencies are required to collaborate with each other and take measures for raising awareness and providing counseling services.



Internet banner advertisement

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice are carrying out human rights awareness-raising activities in light of harsh experiences faced by present and former Hansen's disease patients and their families.

For example, the bodies have held symposiums on Hansen's disease issues, wherein lectures by patients or their families, etc., were provided and panel discussions were held with the participation of students, and have posted the content of those symposiums in national newspapers for elementary school students and junior high school students, thereby disseminating feelings of former patients and their families. Additionally, the bodies have held panel exhibitions on Hansen's disease, placed internet banner advertisements, and prepared and delivered awareness-raising videos. In this manner, the bodies have been carrying out various human rights awareness-raising activities in collaboration with relevant ministries and agencies for the purpose of disseminating an accurate understanding of Hansen's disease and eliminating prejudice and discrimination against Hansen's disease patients. The bodies also conduct human rights counseling, investigation and resolution of human rights violation regarding cases of discrimination against Hansen's disease patients, etc.

In March 2023, the secondary Plan on Promotion of Prevention of Repeat Offenses was decided based on the Act on Promotion of Prevention of Repeat Offenses, and various measures to prevent repeat offenses are being promoted, while positioning "securing employment and housing," "promoting activities of cooperators in the private sector," "promoting inclusion in local communities," etc. as priority issues.

In order to promote understanding and cooperation of citizens with regard to improvement and rehabilitation of persons who committed crimes and delinquent juveniles and to create local communities free from crimes and delinquency, the Ministry of Justice has been carrying out the "Brighter Society Campaign" with the understanding and participation of local residents, while adopting "Yellow Feather of Happiness" as a symbol mark of the activities.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice carry out various human rights awareness-raising activities, and conduct human rights counseling and human rights remedy activities in order to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against people released from prison after serving their sentence and their families, and contribute to their rehabilitation into society.

■ The number of human rights violation cases (discriminatory treatment against people released from prison after serving their sentence) for which remedy procedures were commenced

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Discriminatory treatment against people released from prison after serving their sentence	10	11	5	4	4

11- Crime Victims and Their Families

It has been pointed out that the crime victims and their family members have not only been damaged psychologically and economically by the crime itself and its aftereffects, but they may also suffer other injuries such as defamation through rumors and mindless slander or disturbance of peace in their private lives.

In order to achieve a society where the rights and benefits of crime victims, etc. are protected, the Basic Act on Crime Victims was enacted in December 2004. Based on this Act, the Basic Plan for Crime Victims was formulated in December 2005 (the Fourth Basic Plan was established in March 2021), and measures set up in this Basic Plan are being taken.

Furthermore, the week from November 25 to December 1 is designated as Crime Victims' Week, during which activities are carried out every year to improve people's understanding of the situation of crime victims and the importance of giving consideration to the honor and peaceful lives of crime victims.



The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice carry out human rights awareness-raising activities, and conduct human rights counseling, investigation and resolution of human rights violation cases in order to ensure consideration for the human rights of crime victims and their families and protection of their rights.

■ **The number of human rights violation cases against crime victims, etc. for which remedy procedures were commenced**

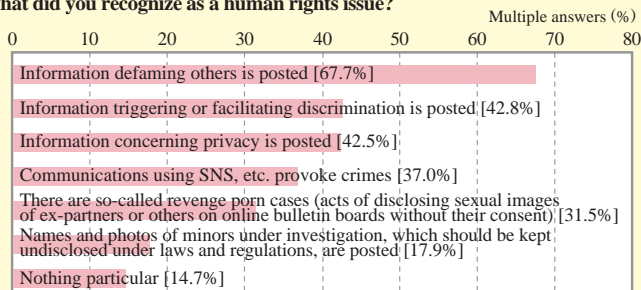
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Human rights violations against crime victims, etc.	8	6	4	0	2

12- Human Rights Violations on the Internet

Following increased use of the internet and owing to its anonymity and capacity to send out information with ease, various human rights problems have arisen, such as violation of individual reputations and privacy and publication of expressions that promote discrimination. These acts hurt the targets and those who have made such posting may be accused of a crime. As defamation on the internet has become a social problem, in particular, defamation as a whole has come to be strictly criticized and public awareness of the need to deter defamatory postings is increasing. Accordingly, as measures against recent cases of defamation, the statutory penalty for insult was raised in July 2022. It is necessary to continuously carry out human rights awareness-raising activities for general internet users in order to promote their correct understanding concerning human rights.

● **Opinion poll on human rights protection (2022 August survey), Cabinet Office**

Among your own experience and what you saw or heard regarding the internet, what did you recognize as a human rights issue?



The number of young internet users such as elementary and junior high school students has been increasing every year and, there are cases such as slandering through social network service,

illegal download, etc. in which both the assailants and the victims of the human rights violations are children. In light of such circumstances, the Act on Establishment of Enhanced Environment for Youth's Safe and Secure Internet Use, which was enforced in April 2009, was amended and mobile phone companies have been obliged to take measures to activate filtering for harmful information for young users under 18 years of age since February 2018.

From February to May every year, awareness-raising activities are carried out intensively as the "Spring Unified Campaign for Safe Internet Use" to call on young people to use smartphones and SNSs safely.

Furthermore, in order to prevent the occurrence and expansion of damage due to so-called revenge porn, the national government enforced the Act on Prevention of Damage due to the Provision of Personal Sexual Records in December 2014. Controls are being conducted under the Act, which prescribes penal provisions concerning acts of disclosing sexual images shot personally or providing such images for disclosure and also provides for the development of a support system for victims of such acts.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice hold Human Rights Lectures nationwide, in collaboration with Smartphone and Mobile Phone Safety Lectures that are held by mobile phone companies mainly targeting junior high school students, as countermeasures against human rights violations by abuse of the internet, which are becoming increasingly serious among young people. The bodies are also distributing an awareness-raising booklet and video and have held a symposium targeting junior high and senior high school students and their guardians in order to raise their awareness of human rights. Additionally, jointly with an social network service business association, the bodies launched a website for raising awareness concerning the use of social network services, under the slogan "#No Heart No SNS," and published a flow chart introducing online counseling services concerning human rights violations on the website of the Ministry of Justice, thereby endeavoring to improve young people's information morals, disseminate information on human rights counseling services, or otherwise strengthen countermeasures.

When receiving a consultation, the bodies give advice on how to demand the disclosure of identification information of the sender or deletion of the relevant information based on consulters' intentions, and if that information is found to constitute defamation or privacy infringement as a result of an investigation, the bodies undertake appropriate measures, such as requesting that the relevant provider or other parties to delete that information.



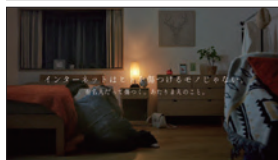
1. The Human Rights Bodies of the Ministry of Justice

2. Activities of the Human Rights Bodies of the Ministry of Justice

3. Major Human Rights Issues

4. Topic : Opinion Poll on Human Rights Protection

Awareness-raising video
"The internet is not a tool to hurt others."



Awareness-raising booklet
"Are you OK?
Let's consider the internet and human rights."



Human Rights Awareness-raising Website "#No Heart No SNS"



■ The number of human rights violation cases on the internet for which remedy procedures were commenced

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Human rights violations on the internet	1,910	1,985	1,693	1,736	1,721

13- Victims Abducted by North Korean Authorities

In June 2006, the Law to Address the Abduction Issue and Other North Korean Human Rights Violations was enforced with the aim of improving public understanding of the issue of human rights violations by North Korean authorities and disclosing and preventing human rights violations by North Korean authorities in cooperation with the international community. The Law provided for the responsibilities of the national government and local governments and designated the week from December 10 to 16 every year as the North Korean Human Rights Abuse Awareness Week.

During the Week, various activities are conducted, including an international symposium held by the national government and PR activities using various media, such as advertisements in train cars and in newspapers as well as internet advertisements.



Poster "North Korean Human Rights Abuse Awareness Week"



International symposium held by the national government

14- Homeless People

The Act on Special Measures for Self-Sufficiency Support for the Homeless, which was enacted in 2002, provides that due consideration should be given to human rights of homeless people when offering self-sufficiency support to them.

Based on this Act and in light of the results of the nationwide survey on the status of homeless people that was conducted in July 2018, the Basic Policy to Support Self-Sufficiency of the Homeless was formulated. The Basic Policy states that it is necessary to promote protection of the human rights of homeless people through carrying out awareness-raising and PR activities and offering human rights counseling services, while giving due consideration to the human rights of both homeless people and neighboring residents.

Given these circumstances, the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice carry out human rights awareness-raising activities, and conduct human rights counseling and human rights remedy activities to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against homeless people.

■ The number of human rights violation cases against homeless people for which remedy procedures were commenced

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Human rights violations against homeless people	1	3	1	1	0



15- Sexual Minorities

With the awareness that undue discrimination and prejudice against sexual minorities are unacceptable, the government aims to achieve an inclusive society where the diversity is respected and all people can live a vibrant life. Relevant ministries and agencies are cooperatively making efforts for dealing with various problems relating to sexual minorities that have been arising in various scenes, such as at public facilities and schools, etc., or upon employment, or in receiving medical treatment or social welfare services.

Under such circumstances, the Act on the Promotion of People's Understanding on the Diversity in Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity was enacted and enforced in June 2023. In compliance with the basic idea that "all people are to be respected as irreplaceable individuals equally enjoying fundamental human rights, irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity," as prescribed in this Act, relevant ministries and agencies will collaboratively promote various measures.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice carry out various human rights awareness-raising activities, such as holding lectures and distributing awareness-raising leaflets, and conduct counseling and human rights remedy activities, while emphasizing the elimination of prejudice and discrimination in relation to sexual minorities as priority issues. In March 2023, the bodies launched a dedicated website "My Declaration of Human Rights: Sexual Minorities Edition" which introduces related initiatives by companies and organizations, with the aim of promoting efforts regarding sexual minorities by companies and organizations and increasing understanding on sexual minorities broadly among society as a whole.



Dedicated website "My Declaration of Human Rights: Sexual Minorities Edition"

■ The number of human rights violation cases against sexual minorities for which remedy procedures were commenced

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Human rights violations against sexual minorities	19	17	17	9	9

16- Trafficking in Persons (Coercive Sexual Services and Labor)

Based on the 2022 Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which was formulated in December 2022, the national government has been responding with appropriate measures to the situation against trafficking in persons and carrying out integral and comprehensive countermeasures as a government-wide initiative. Additionally, under this Action Plan, the national government has held the Council for the Promotion of Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons as necessary to ascertain the current situation of trafficking in persons in Japan, and to promote prevention and elimination of trafficking in persons and proper protection of victims. At the same time, it has been carrying out PR activities concerning these efforts and seeking cooperation of the general public to make a report when finding any suspected victimized person. In this manner, measures have been taken cooperatively by relevant ministries and agencies.

The human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice carry out various human rights awareness-raising activities, and conduct human rights counseling, investigation and resolution of human rights violation cases, thereby endeavoring to deepen people's interest and understanding regarding the issue of trafficking in persons.



Poster "Measures against Trafficking in Persons"



Leaflet "Measures against Trafficking in Persons"



17- Human Rights Problems Arising after an Earthquake or Other Disaster

The Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred on March 11, 2011, was an unprecedented disaster, causing catastrophic damage across the entire East Japan. In addition, the accidents at Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station caused by the earthquake and tsunami made the situation even worse. In such a situation, prejudice and discrimination based on rumors concerning the nuclear accident still remain as a matter of concern.

In order to respond to various human rights issues arising from a disaster, such as discriminatory treatment based on rumors, and to prevent occurrence of new human rights violations, the human rights bodies of the Ministry of Justice respond to human rights counseling, including provision of psychological care to disaster victims. The bodies carry out various human rights awareness-raising activities, such as holding symposiums and distributing human rights awareness-raising videos.

Material : The Core Human Rights Conventions Japan Signed

	Convention	Adopted on Enforced on	Signatory nations, regions and organizations
1	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Dec. 16, 1966 Jan. 3, 1976	172 (as of August 2021)
2	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Dec. 16, 1966 Mar. 23, 1976	173 (as of October 2020)
3	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	Dec.21, 1965 Jan. 4, 1969	182 (as of October 2020)
4	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	Dec. 18, 1979 Sep. 3, 1981	189 (as of October 2020)
5	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Dec. 10, 1984 Jun. 26, 1987	171 (as of October 2020)
6	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Nov. 20, 1989 Sep. 2, 1990	196 (as of November 2021)
7	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance	Dec. 20, 2006 Dec. 23, 2010	71 (as of July 2023)
8	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Dec. 13, 2006 May. 3, 2008	188 (as of June 2022)

4. Topic : Opinion Poll on Human Rights Protection

◎ Opinion Poll on Human Rights Protection

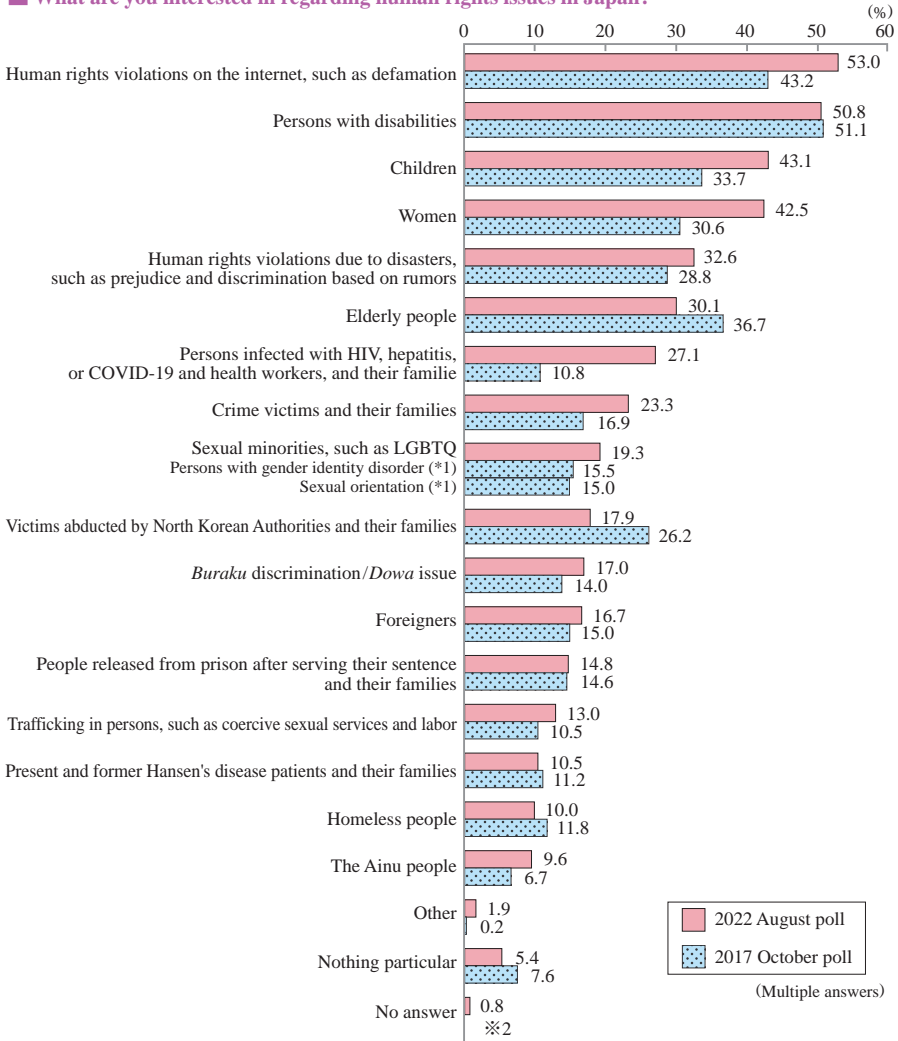
The Opinion Poll on Human Rights Protection has been conducted almost every five years since 1958 with the aim of grasping people's awareness regarding human rights protection and using the results as a reference for making future policies. The latest 13th opinion poll was conducted from August 4 to September 11, 2022, targeting 3,000 Japanese nationals nationwide aged 18 or older (valid responses from 1,556 people; valid response rate: 51.9%).

Here, based on the results published by the Cabinet Office in November 2022, people's awareness on human rights education and awareness-raising activities are outlined.

◎ Awareness concerning individual human rights issues

To a question asking about human rights issues in Japan that respondents are interested in, the percentage was the highest for respondents who selected "Human rights violations on the internet, such as defamation" at 53.0%, followed by percentages for those who selected "Persons with disabilities" (50.8%) and those who selected "Children" (43.1%).

What are you interested in regarding human rights issues in Japan?



*1 In the 2017 October poll, persons with gender identity disorder and sexual orientation were separate questionnaire items.

*2 This was not included in the 2017 October poll.

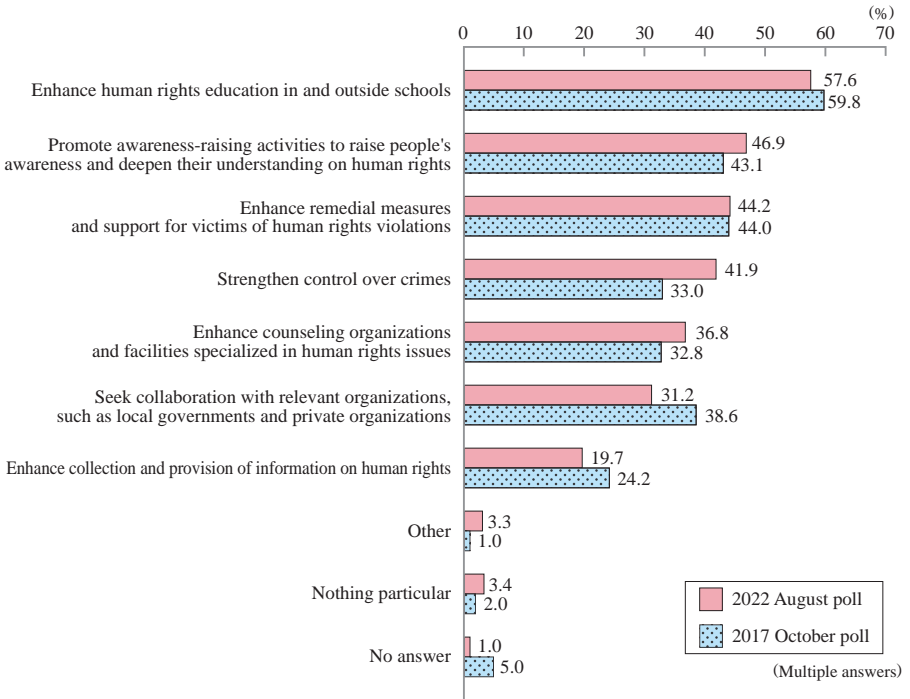
At the time of the previous poll, the percentage of respondents who selected "Human rights violations on the internet" was also high at 43.2%. As the problem of defamation has become increasingly serious in recent years, various human rights issues on the internet are attracting further more attention.

The results of responses to questions asking about what respondents recognized as human rights issues based on their own experience are respectively shown on pages of individual categories of issues.

Measures for solving human rights issues

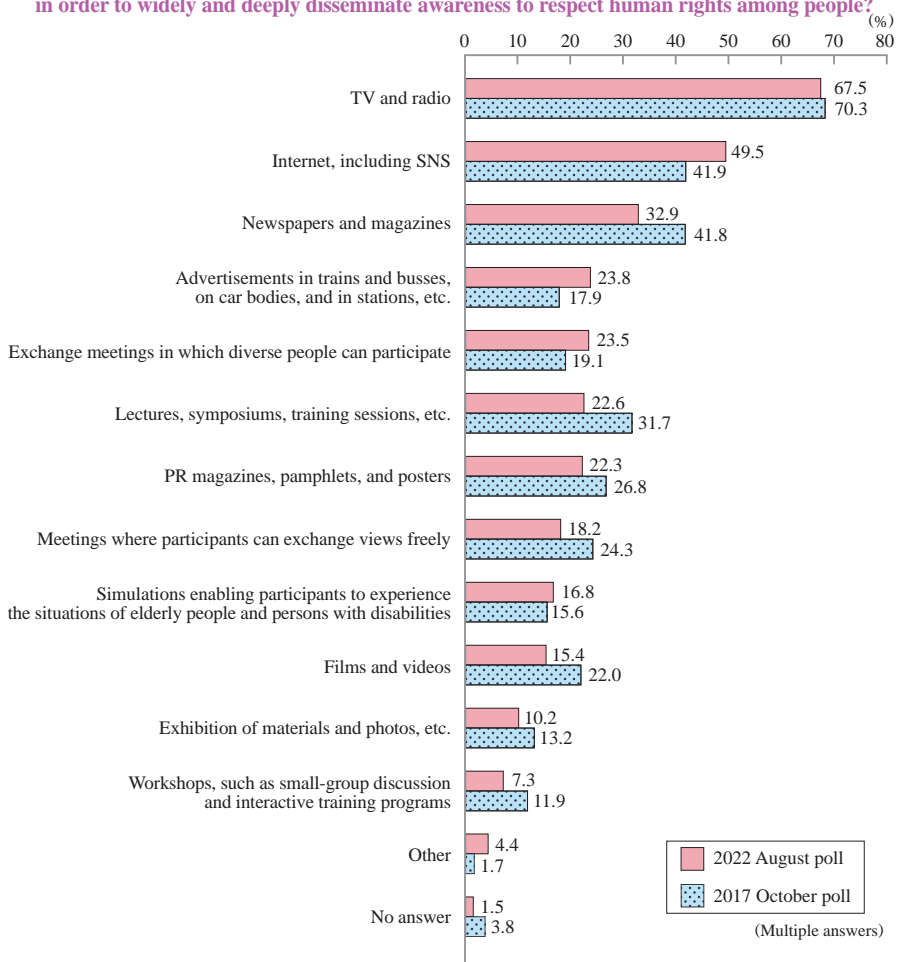
To a question asking about what the government should prioritize in solving human rights issues, the percentage was the highest for respondents who selected "Enhance human rights education in and outside schools" at 57.6%, followed by percentages for those who selected "Promote awareness-raising activities to raise people's awareness and deepen their understanding on human rights" (46.9%) and those who selected "Enhance remedial measures and support for victims of human rights violations" (44.2%).

What should the government prioritize in solving human rights issues?



To a question asking about the methods that government should employ for the purpose of widely and deeply disseminating awareness to respect human rights among people, the percentage was the highest for respondents who selected "TV and radio" at 67.5%, followed by percentages for those who selected "Internet, including SNS" (49.5%) and those who selected "Newspapers and magazines" (32.9%).

■ What methods should the government employ to effectively carry out awareness-raising activities in order to widely and deeply disseminate awareness to respect human rights among people?





We can provide a consultation about human rights issues in your language.

— Information on Human Rights Counseling in Foreign Languages —

The troubles you encounter may be an infringement of your human rights.

A hairdresser refused to cut your hair.



You were not allowed to rent an apartment.



Your child is bullied at school.



Feeling excluded due to cultural differences.



Don't worry alone. Consult with us first.

[Face-to-face counseling]



For those who are not comfortable speaking Japanese, Legal Affairs Bureaus and District Legal Affairs Bureaus throughout Japan provide human rights counseling services.

[Telephone counseling]



We offer telephone counseling through the Foreign-language Human Rights Hotline (Navi Dial).

[Counseling on the Internet]



We accept human rights inquiries on the Internet Human Rights Counseling Service.

English, Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Nepali, Spanish, Indonesian, and Thai.

We will find the best solution to your problem.

Conciliation

We mediate in discussions.



Instructions and recommendation to violators

We will demand the violator to improve the situation.



Advice and referrals

We make referrals to specialized agencies that can provide legal advice.



See page 41 for details