

Part II

Major Policies Related to Immigration Control and Residency Management Administration

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Chapter 1

Measures to Deal with COVID-19 in the Immigration Services Agency

Section 1 Countermeasures at the border

Regarding COVID-19 that has spread globally since December 2019, border measures need to be enhanced in order to prevent infected persons from entering Japan and the virus from spreading in Japan.

Based on the multiple Cabinet approvals and announcements by the Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters since January 31, 2020, the Immigration Services Agency has implemented stringent border measures such as refusing, landing of foreign nationals who have stayed in the regions where numerous cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed within 14 days before landing or who have boarded passenger ships in which cases of COVID-19 may have occurred, pursuant to Article 5, paragraph (1), item (xiv) of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act unless in exceptional circumstances for the time being.

The Immigration Services Agency has cooperated in quarantine procedures since before the pandemic by encouraging travelers arriving in Japan to go back to the quarantine procedures if such travelers claim that they do not feel well at the immigration examination booth regardless of nationality. In addition to this cooperation, the Immigration Services Agency has enhanced its cooperative relationship with quarantine stations to develop a system in which the Quarantine Information Office, Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, and the Immigration Services Agency double-check whether travelers have traveled to regions from which entry is denied and works in close cooperation with the relevant organizations in order to ensure border control.

Moreover, the Immigration Services Agency installs acrylic plates and other equipment to prevent droplet infection in the examination spaces, etc., and provides disinfectant near devices used to obtain personal identification information (including Bio Carts and Automated Gates) and guides travelers to disinfect their hands after using the devices. In addition, staff members are required to wear personal protective equipment such as face masks, gloves and goggles at all times and taught how to wear and remove personal protective equipment and instructed to take measure for installing disposal boxes for used personal protective equipment in an effort to prevent infection.



Countermeasures against COVID-19

Section 2 Residence Procedures

1 Foreign Nationals staying in Japan

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Japan, as measures to alleviate congestions at residence application windows, we have taken initiatives to stagger the visitors to facilities by extending the period for accepting applications, for residence-related applications by some foreign nationals.

Also, the COVID-19 pandemic has decreased the number of flights to and from Japan, making it difficult for some foreign nationals to return to their home countries because they cannot arrange return flights. We have taken measures to allow foreign nationals in these circumstances to change their status of residence to “Designated Activities”, allowing them to work. We have also taken measures that grant permission to engage in activity other than that permitted under the status of residence previously granted to foreign nationals who have the resident status of “Temporary Visitor”, which normally does not allow them to work, but for those who have difficulty returning to their home countries and difficulty maintaining their livelihood in Japan.

2 Foreign Nationals Planning to Enter Japan

With the COVID-19 pandemic, in consideration of foreign nationals whose timing to enter Japan has been delayed due to the decreased number of flights to Japan, we are taking measures to extend the valid period for certificate of eligibility required for entry procedures.

For former permanent resident foreign nationals who could not re-enter Japan within the valid period of their re-entry permits (including special re-entry permits), with consideration for the circumstances they are in, their status of residence of “Permanent Resident” will be acknowledged when they re-enter Japan in order to enable prompt immigration procedures. In the future, when immigration restrictions are relaxed for the countries/regions where they are staying, former permanent residents who have returned to Japan will be able to stay in Japan as permanent residents.

Section 3 Support for foreign residents

1 Employment maintenance support for foreign nationals who have been dismissed or suspended

Since April 20, 2020, in order to maintain employment in Japan of technical intern trainees, specified skilled workers, and other such foreign professionals who were no longer able to continue technical intern trainings or dismissed due to COVID-19, we have supported re-employment in specified industrial fields while granting the status of residence of “Designated Activities” under certain requirements for providing support for foreign nationals to maintain employment in Japan. Since September 7, 2020, we have extended eligibility for these measures to those technical intern trainees who have completed their scheduled technical intern training but have difficulty getting a return flight to their home country or returning to their residence in their home country due to closure of airports and restrictions on movement caused by COVID-19.

Currently, the COVID-19 pandemic is causing continued suspension of regular flights and drastic reduction of flights. In light of this situation, since March 26, 2021, it was decided that when a foreign national whose period of stay on the status of residence of “Designated Activities” has reached 1 year applies to extend their period of stay, their continued residence will be allowed, only when it is deemed difficult for them to return to their home country due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2 Strengthening our information provision / consultation system

(1) Providing information through Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals

We have created webpages in 14 languages^(*) on the “Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals” on the Immigration Services Agency website, in order to provide information on daily life support offered by various ministries and agencies to foreign residents, as well as important warnings to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Information is aggregated and posted on these webpages, to better provide information to foreign residents.

(2) Extraordinary measures when making a special response to provide information on COVID-19 at one-stop consulting counters

When making a special response to provide information and offer consultation about COVID-19 at one-stop consulting counters established and operated by local governments, extraordinary measures have been taken to allow the maximum amount of subsidies for preparations for an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals to be set twice as much as the subsidy limit along with operating costs (see Chapter 3, Section 3 for details on the one-stop consulting counters and subsidies for preparations for an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals).

(3) Consultation at the FRESC help desk

In September 2020, the Foreign Residents Support Center (FRESC) started a free multi-

(*) Japanese (including plain Japanese), English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Indonesian, Vietnamese, Filipino, Thai, Nepali, Khmer (Cambodia), Burmese, and Mongolian

lingual telephone consultation service, the FRESC Help Desk, for foreign nationals who are facing difficulties with daily life due to COVID-19, such as losing their jobs.

It offers consultations to foreign nationals by cooperating with organizations at FRESC, as necessary.

Section 4

COVID-19 Countermeasures at Immigration Facilities

1 Immigration Facilities Task Force for COVID-19 Countermeasures

Using the expertise of the Ministry of Justice Crisis Management Expert Meeting, we have taken measures regarding crisis management in the Immigration Services Agency, which faces concerns about outbreaks of infectious diseases. On April 17, 2020, we also established the Immigration Facilities Task Force for COVID-19 Countermeasures (hereinafter, “TF”) under the direction of said Committee, in order to prepare new guidelines for COVID-19 countermeasures accounting for the characteristics of the Immigration Services Agency.

TF members include 5 experts and 6 staff members (officer level, section chief level), and it is chaired by the Parliamentary Secretary of Justice, with three meetings held in 2020.

The 4th meeting of the TF was held on June 24, 2021.

2 Manual for measures against COVID-19 infection at Immigration Facilities

Immigration Services Agency facilities include detention facilities, which are closed spaces, as well as immigration offices and residence application counters, where applicants and staff come into direct contact. Once there is a case of COVID-19, it can have a serious impact on the health of not only the infected person, but many other people as well, and even the performance of immigration services administration work.

In order for staff working at immigration facilities to share these goals...

- Prevent infection of staff, as well as infection of all people involved in facilities, including detainees and applicants.
- Minimize the spread of COVID-19 in the unlikely event there is a case.

...and work together to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Immigration Services Agency prepared a manual for measures against COVID-19 infection at immigration facilities (hereinafter referred to as “the Manual”). The first edition of the Manual was published on May 1, 2020, and the second edition of the manual was published on July 16, 2020.

As mentioned above, the Immigration Services Agency has worked to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 according to the Manual. However, there were cases of COVID-19 at some agency offices, and there were also outbreaks in November 2020 and February 2021. Based on the lessons learned from these outbreaks, the third edition of the Manual was published on February 24, 2021.

In addition, since the initial outbreak of the alpha strain of COVID-19, it has been widely reported that variant strains are replacing the alpha strain. The Immigration Services Agency has recognized the urgent need to establish more effective countermeasures, and so published the 4th edition of the Manual on July 20, 2021.

Chapter 2 The System of “Specified Skilled Worker”

The statuses of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)” were established following the promulgation of Act for Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Justice on December 8, 2018, in the 197th Diet, and operation started on April 1, 2019.

Below is an overview of the “Specified Skilled Worker” system.

Section 1 Outline of The System

The system of specified skilled workers is a system that was established for the acceptance of work-ready foreign nationals who have a certain degree of expertise and skills in the industrial fields where it is still difficult to secure human resources even if efforts have been made to improve productivity and secure domestic human resources in order to cope with the worsening labor shortages being experienced by small to medium-size business enterprises.

Section 2 Operation Policy of the “Specified Skilled Worker” System

1 The government’s basic policy

Based on the “Basic Policy for Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2018” (Cabinet decision of June 15, 2018), the government’s basic policy was established pursuant to Article 2-3, paragraph (1) of the Amended Immigration Control Act, which entered into force on April 1, 2019 in order to ensure proper operation of the system pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker”.

As well as matters relating to the significance of the system pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker”, the government’s basic policy stipulates the basic matters relating to the industrial fields where labor shortages need to be supplemented by foreign nationals since it is difficult to secure human resources (hereinafter referred to as “specified industrial field”), the basic matters relating to human resources required in a specified industrial field, the basic matters relating to coordination of the clerical affairs of the relevant administrative agencies concerning operation of the system pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker”, and other important matters related to operation of the system related to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” ([Reference 75](#)).

Reference 75 Outline of the Basic Policy on Operation of the System of Specified Skilled Worker (Status of Residence)

Basic Policy on the Operation of the Specified Skilled Worker Status of Residence System for the Establishment of a Proper System for the Specified Skilled Worker Status of Residence (Revision of Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act Article 2-3)

1 Matters related to System Significance

In order to respond to a growing labor shortage, including within medium and small enterprises, and in conditions in which it is difficult to secure human resources even after national efforts to improve productivity and to secure domestic human resources, this system has been developed to accept foreign nationals that have a certain level of expertise and skill in industrial fields and that are immediately ready to work

2 Matters related to Securing Human Resources with foreign nationals due to Shortages in Industrial Fields

➤ Fields Accepting Foreign Specified Skilled Workers

Given the difficulty in securing human resources even after national efforts to improve productivity and to secure domestic human resources, industrial fields (specified industrial fields) can secure these lacking human resources with foreign nationals

➤ Consideration of Local Circumstances concerning Lack of Human Resources

Strive to take necessary measures so that employment is no excessively focused in metropolitan areas and other specific areas

➤ Estimated Number Accepted Describes the expected number of acceptances over 5 years based on field-specific management policies

4 Basic Matters related to the Coordination of related Administrative Agency Work

➤ Domestic Initiatives Thoroughly eliminate malicious brokers by strengthening cooperative relationships with the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare etc.

➤ Overseas Initiatives Take necessary measures such as the development of intergovernmental documents such as bilateral arrangements etc. to prevent intervention by malicious brokers such as the collection of deposits etc.

➤ Responding to Changes in Labour Shortages

○ The heads of relevant administrative agencies should continuously understand the condition of labor shortages in specified industrial fields. Where a change to labor shortage circumstances is deemed to have occurred, future acceptance policies etc. shall be discussed by organizations related to the system and administrative authorities in the field. As necessary, relevant administrative authorities shall meet to review the operation policies for each field and shall consider measures such as the suspension of the issue of Certificates of Eligibility or the removal of a field from Ministerial Ordinances specifying specified industrial fields

○ In the absence of significant changes to economic circumstances, the expected number of acceptances over the next 5 years shall be the upper limit for the acceptance of foreign nationals under this system

➤ Handling of Security Issues

In order to avoid people going missing and security issues in the acceptance of foreign Specified Skilled Workers, organizations related to the system and administrative authorities in the field should take necessary measures to grasp and link information

5 Important Matters related to System Operation

➤ Support for foreign Specified Skilled Worker (i)

Support life orientation and learning Japanese for daily life, handle consultations and complaints from foreign nationals, and support the promotion of exchanges between Japanese people and foreign nationals

When using Hello Work when changing jobs, conduct vocational consultations and introductions as appropriate, understanding the desired conditions at Hello Work and skill and Japanese language levels etc.

➤ Employment Status In principle direct employment on a full-time basis. Temporary employees can also be allowed in exceptional circumstances as specified in field-specific operating policies

➤ Review of Basic Policy Consider two years after the enforcement of the revision of the Act and review if necessary

3 Matters related to Required Human Resources

(*) Confirmed by tests prescribed by the competent administrative agency

| Specified Skilled Worker (i) | | Specified Skilled Worker (ii) |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Skill Standards | Requiring considerable expertise and skill (*) | Experienced skills (*) |
| Japanese language ability | Basically, a level of some daily conversation and no obstacles to daily life, with Japanese language ability necessary for work (*) | — |
| Period of stay | Up to a total of 5 years | Period of stay must be renewed |
| Accompaniment by Family Members | Basically not permitted | Possible |

2 Field-Specific Operation Policy

The field-specific operational policy is a policy on the operation of the system related to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” in a specified industrial field. In accordance with the government’s basic policy, it is specified by the Minister of Justice together with the head of the administrative agency with jurisdiction over the field, the National Public Safety Commission, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare in order to ensure proper operation of the system pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” in the specified industrial fields.

In response to the enactment and promulgation of the Amended Act, the government’s basic policy and the field-specific operational policies for each of the 14 specified industrial fields were approved on December 25, 2018 by the Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Human Resources.

The field-specific operational policies stipulated the matters related to the situation of the shortage of human resources in the specified industrial fields as well as matters relating to the criteria for the human resources required in the specified industrial fields and other important matters related to operation of the system pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” ([Reference 76](#)).

Reference 76 Field-Specific Operation Policy (14 fields)

| | Field | Labor shortage | Human resource criteria | | Other important matters | |
|------------------|--|---|---|---|---|--------------------|
| | | Expected no. of foreign nationals to be accepted (maximum no. over 5 years) | Skill test | Japanese language test | Jobs to Engage in | Employment form |
| M H L W | Nursing care | 60,000 | Nursing care skills evaluation test | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher (In addition to the above) Nursing care Japanese language evaluation test | As well as physical care (such as bathing, meals, assistance for excretion, etc., adjusted to the mental and physical state of the user), supplemental support services (recreation, assistance with functional exercise, etc.) (Note) Home visit services are excluded [1 test category] | Direct |
| | Building cleaning management | 37,000 | Building cleaning field specified skills (i) evaluation test | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | Interior building cleaning [1 test category] | Direct |
| M E T I | Machine parts & tooling industries | 21,500 | Manufacturing field specified skills (i) evaluation test | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | - Casting - Forging - Die casting - Machining - Metal press - Metal press - Factory sheet metal work - Electroplating - Aluminium anodizing - Finishing - Finishing - Machine inspection - Machine maintenance [13 test categories] | Direct |
| | Industrial Machinery industries | 5,250 | Manufacturing field specified skills (i) evaluation test | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | - Casting - Forging - Die casting - Machining - Painting - Iron Work - Electroplating - Factory assembling - Electroplating - Finishing - Electric equipment assembling - Print wiring board manufacturing - Metal press - Welding - Plastic molding [18 test categories] | Direct |
| | Electric, electronics and information industries | 4,700 | Manufacturing field specified skills (i) evaluation test | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | - Machining - Metal press - Factory sheet metal work - Electroplating - Finishing - Machine maintenance - Electric equipment assembling - Print wiring board manufacturing - Plastic molding - Painting - Welding - Industrial packaging [13 test categories] | Direct |
| M L I T | Construction industry | 40,000 | Construction field specified skills (i) evaluation test etc. | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | - Framework construction - Plastering - Concrete pumping - Tunnel and propulsion - Construction machinery and construction - Earthwork - Roofing - Telecommunications - Reinforcement construction - Reinforcing bar joints - Interior finishing/ Material mounting [11 test categories] | Direct |
| | Shipbuilding & ship machinery industry | 13,000 | Shipbuilding/ship machinery field specified skills (i) evaluation test etc. | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | - Welding - Painting - Iron Work - Finishing - Machining - Electrical equipment [6 test categories] | Direct |
| | Automobile repair & maintenance | 7,000 | Automobile repair and maintenance field specified skills evaluation test etc. | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | Automobile daily checks and maintenance, periodical checks and maintenance, disassembly repair [1 test category] | Direct |
| | Aviation industry | 2,200 | Aviation field specified skills evaluation test (airport ground handling or aircraft maintenance) | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | - Airport ground handling (handling of an aircraft on the ground, handling of baggage / cargo, etc.) - Aircraft maintenance (maintenance work, etc. for an aircraft, equipment, etc.) [2 test categories] | Direct |
| | Accommodation industry | 22,000 | Accommodation industry skills proficiency test | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | Providing accommodation services such as working at the front desk, planning / public relations, hospitality and restaurant services [1 test category] | Direct |
| M A F F | Agriculture | 36,500 | Agriculture skills proficiency test (cultivation agriculture or livestock agriculture) | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | - Cultivation agriculture (cultivation management, harvesting and shipping / sorting of agricultural products, etc.) - Livestock agriculture (management of rising, harvesting and shipping / sorting of livestock products, etc.) [2 test categories] | Direct Dispatch |
| | Fishery & aquaculture | 9,000 | Fishing industry skills proficiency test (fishery or aquaculture industry) | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | - Fishery (Production and repair of fishing gear, aquatic animals and plant exploration, operation of fishing gear and fishing machinery, aquatic animal and plant harvesting, treatment and storage of Fishery products, securing of safety and health, etc.) - Aquaculture industry (Production, repair and management of aquacultural materials, cultivation and management of aquatic animal and plant farming, harvesting and processing, securing of safety and health, etc.) [2 test categories] | Direct Dispatch |
| | Manufacture of food and beverages | 34,000 | Food and beverage manufacturing industry skills proficiency test | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | General food and beverage manufacturing (manufacture and processing of food and beverages (excluding alcoholic beverages), health and safety) [1 test category] | Direct |
| | Food service industry | 53,000 | Food service industry skills proficiency test | Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test N4 or higher | General restaurant work (food preparation, customer service, restaurant management) [1 test category] | Direct |

3 Memorandum of Cooperation

In accordance with the government’s basic policy, efforts are being made to enter into Memorandums of Cooperation such as for construction of an information sharing framework between the Japanese government and the governments of sending countries for Specified Skilled Workers, in order to eliminate malicious intermediary organizations (brokers) such as those collecting a deposit from foreign nationals who wish to work in Japan or their families.

Section 3 Situation of Operation of The “Specified Skilled Worker” System

1 Situation of Acceptance of Foreign Nationals with the Status of Residence of Specified Skilled Worker

According to the preliminary figures as of end of June, 2021, the number of foreign nationals with the status of residence of Specified Skilled Worker was 29,144. As for the top five fields, the manufacture of food and beverages accounted for the largest number at 10,450, followed by agriculture at 4,008, construction industry at 2,781, nursing care at 2,703 and industrial machinery industry at 2,432.

According to the preliminary figures as of end of June, 2021, there were 12,007 cases of issuance of Certificates of Eligibility pertaining to Specified Skilled Worker, 26,039 cases of permission granted for change of status of residence, and 6,156 cases of registration to registered support organizations.

The number of foreign nationals with the status of residence of Specified Skilled Worker increased by 29.1% from the end of March 2021 (22,567) to the end of June 2021 (29,144), and is like to continue increasing in the future.

2 Situation of Implementation of Specified Skilled Worker Exams

The Immigration Services Agency, in cooperation with the relevant ministries and agencies, has promoted the implementation of exams in Japan and abroad. Due to these efforts, as of end of June 2021, exams in all the 14 fields (nursing care, building cleaning management, machine parts and tooling industries, industrial machinery industry, electric, electronics and information industries, construction industry, shipbuilding and ship machinery industry, automobile repair and maintenance, aviation industry, accommodation industry, agriculture, fishery and aquaculture, manufacture of food and beverages, food service industry) have been implemented in Japan and eight foreign countries (the Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Mongolia, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam).

The number of foreign nationals who have passed the skill exam has increased favorably, totaling 47,270 as of end of June, 2021.

In the future, while this depends on the containment of COVID-19, we will promote the expansion of test sites and number of tests conducted both in Japan and overseas, the implementation of efforts to improve sending procedures, and matching support based on the actual situation in various fields, in order to encourage the smooth acceptance of foreign

nationals with the status of residence of specified skilled worker.

3 Status of Memorandum of Cooperation

As of June 30, 2021, Memorandums of Cooperation have been entered into with 13 countries; the Philippines, Cambodia, Nepal, Myanmar, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Thailand, and India.

In accordance with these Memorandums of Cooperation, we share information and exchange opinions with the respective governments as necessary, and strive to address any issues that are considered to require action in order to achieve the appropriate operation of the Specified Skilled Worker system.

Section 4 Efforts for the Smooth Operation of the Specified Skilled Worker System

1 Revision of the Field-Specific Operation Policy

The Field-Specific Operation Policy was partially revised (Cabinet decision of February 28, 2020), including addition of the seven work categories of “Scaffolding”, “Carpentry”, “Plumbing”, “Building Sheet Metal Work”, “Heat-Retention and Cool-Retention”, “Spray Urethane Heat Insulation”, and “Offshore Civil Engineering” to the construction field.

2 Revision of the Field-Specific Operation Manual

The Field-Specific Operation Manual was revised regarding the nursing care field (May 10, 2019). Under the new provisions, EPA certified care worker candidates who have appropriately engaged in work and training for four years are deemed to have attained the skill level and Japanese language proficiency level required for switching to a “Specified Skilled Worker (i)”, and are thus exempt from taking exams.

The Field-Specific Operation Manual was revised regarding persons who have completed technical intern training (ii) with favorable results (November 29, 2019). Under the new provisions, such persons are, as a rule, considered to not require certification of their Japanese language proficiency level by exams or any other evaluation method, regardless of the occupation type or work type of the technical intern training they completed.

3 Revision of the Exam Policy

The “Policy regarding Exams for Specified Skilled Workers” (February 2019, Immigration Services Agency of Japan, Ministry of Justice) (hereinafter referred to as the “Exam Policy”) was adopted for exams pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker”. In accordance to this policy, exams are held by the ministry, agency, or organization responsible for each field.

The Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals was revised on December 20, 2019. The scope of persons eligible to take the exams was revised, in response to the decision in the Comprehensive Measures to extend the scope in order to

promote the seamless and appropriate acceptance of foreign nationals as Specified Skilled Workers.

Previously, those eligible to take the exams in Japan were limited to “mid to long-term residents and persons who have lived in Japan as a mid to long-term resident in the past”, for example. Eligibility to take the domestic exams was revised to include “persons with a status of residence”, thereby granting all persons with a status of residence the eligibility to take the exams. The exam policy was revised on January 30, 2020, taking effect on April 1.

4 Specified Skilled Worker System Promotion Business

In order to promote the utilization of the Specified Skilled Worker system, we established the Specified Skilled Worker Comprehensive Support Call Center in September 2020 (closed in March 2021). From October 2020 to March 2021, we also held job matching events for foreign nationals who want to work as specified skilled worker and companies who want to hire foreign nationals as specified skilled workers, as well information seminars about the Specified Skilled Workers system in general, in all 47 prefectures of Japan.

In 2021, we plan to hold not only online job fairs for foreign nationals residing in Japan, but also online information sessions about Specified Skilled Worker system and company for foreign nationals living in abroad.

Starting in September 2020, we opened the “Support Website for the Specified Skilled Worker” to transmit information to business operators and foreign nationals, including an outline of the Specified Skilled Worker system and test information in each field. In addition to plain Japanese, this site provides information in 12 foreign languages (English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Thai, Indonesian, Myanmar, Nepali, Mongolian, Khmer, Sinhala, and Urdu).



Scene of information seminars

Chapter 3 Efforts for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals

Section 1 Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals

1 Background

The “Basic Policy for Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2018” (Cabinet decision of June 15, 2018) stipulated the establishment of a new status of residence in order to expand the acceptance of foreign human resources with a certain degree of expertise and skills, and at the same time, the Ministry of Justice came to serve as the command center with general coordination functions in order to develop the environment for acceptance of foreign nationals, and strengthen cooperation with the related ministries and agencies and local governments.

Based on this, it was decided at the Cabinet meeting held on July 24, 2018 that the Ministry of Justice would be authorized to carry out the general coordination functions to develop the environment for acceptance of foreign nationals, and moreover, the “Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals” (hereinafter referred to as “Ministerial Conference”) was established in order to conduct a government-wide comprehensive study with regard to the acceptance of new foreign nationals and preparation of the environment for acceptance with the close collaboration of the relevant administrative agencies.

Then on December 25, 2018, the “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals” (hereinafter referred to as “Comprehensive Measures”) were adopted at the third Ministerial Conference.

On June 18, 2019, the “Enhancement of Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals” (hereinafter referred to as “Enhancement Measures”) was compiled in order to enhance the Comprehensive Measures, focusing especially on the urgent issues involving development of the environment for acceptance of foreign nationals. The Comprehensive Measures were revised on December 20, 2019, in line with the direction of the Enhancement Measures, under which the government has worked together to steadily promote the relevant measures.

Furthermore, on July 14, 2020, in consideration of the situation of implementation of related measures, the Comprehensive Measures were revised from the perspective of further enhancing and encouraging the environment for acceptance of foreign nationals (FY2020 revised).

On June 15, 2021, Ministerial Conference made the Comprehensive Measures (FY2021 revised), from the standpoint of further enhancing the environment of accepting foreign nationals, also based on the issues identified due to e.g. the spread of COVID-19, in implementing the existing relevant measures.

2 Outline

The Comprehensive Measures indicate the direction to be aimed for in relation to the acceptance and harmonious coexistence of foreign nationals, in order to achieve the purpose of contributing to the realization of a society where Japanese nationals and foreign nationals are able to live safely and comfortably together through the proper acceptance of foreign nationals and to realize a society of harmonious coexistence.

The Comprehensive Measures (FY2021 revised) includes a total of 197 measures (**Reference 77**). The main new measures are as shown below.

- Formulation of work schedule for medium to long-term challenges and measures which should be addressed to realize a society of harmonious coexistence.
- Implementation of screening by utilizing simple antigen kits, etc. in Japanese language education institutions, professional training colleges, etc., and workplaces, and implementation of prompt and flexible PCR testing, etc. of broad contact persons when a coronavirus-positive person is found.
- Dissemination and publicity of vaccination to foreign residents, ensured delivery of vaccination notice, and securing consultation and response systems in multiple languages.
- Organization of information on the places of residence of foreign residents in cooperation between the relevant ministries, agencies, and local governments.
- Preferential treatment of implementing organizations that secure living environments for the technical intern trainees in consideration of their privacy and prevention of infection.

Reference 77 Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals (FY2021 revised) Outline

- As of the end of 2020, the number of foreign nationals residing in Japan was 2.89 million. The number of foreign workers as of the end of October 2020 was 1.72 million (a record high).
 □Formulated from the point of view of further enhancing the environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals also based on the issues identified due to the spread of COVID-19, etc. (197 policies)
 □The government will work together to continue to steadily implement the relevant measures and enhance the Comprehensive Measures.

Listening to opinions and awareness-raising activities, etc. to realize a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals

- (1) Building a framework to listen to opinions of Japanese and foreign nationals
 - Formulation of work schedule for medium to long-term issues and measures, etc. to be addressed to realize a society of harmonious coexistence <Policy 1>
 - Listening to the opinions that contribute to the planning and drafting of harmonious coexistence measures through the "Meeting to Listen to Voices of Our People" and "opinion box", etc. <Policy 2>
- (2) Implementation of awareness-raising and other activities
 - Implementation of human rights awareness-raising activities in order to realize an inclusive society where all people support mutually and value each other's human rights <Policy 7>
 - Implementation of publicity of human rights counseling, and investigation and remedy procedures available in multiple languages <Policy 8>

Support for smooth communication and information collection

- (1) Provision of administrative and living information in multiple languages and plain Japanese, and development of counseling systems
 - Consideration of measures to promote the establishment of one-stop consulting counters by the local governments <Policy 9>
 - Taking effective and efficient supporting measures for creating an environment for acceptance of foreign nationals to Japanese society, and providing relevant information to the local organizations by FRESC <Policy 10>
- (2) Enhancement of Japanese language education (realization of smooth communication)
 - Creation of guidebooks for the utilization of the "framework of reference for the Japanese language education", and creation of the "Can do for foreign nationals as residents" indicating the content of education in the fields of life <Policy 21>
 - Promotion of the utilization of the "framework of reference for the Japanese language education" and the creation of systems to fortify the Japanese language education environment to be carried out by prefectures, etc. in cooperation with relevant organizations <Policy 22>
 - Enhancement of life situations based on the "framework of reference for the Japanese language education" on the Japanese language education site "Connect and Enhance Your Life in Japanese" <Policy 23>
 - Enhancement and dissemination of training programs for Japanese language teachers to workers, and development and dissemination of ICT teaching materials for smooth implementation of "essential educational contents" required for the development of Japanese language teachers <Policy 27>
 - Consideration of the legislation of qualifications of Japanese language teachers and mechanisms to maintain and improve the level of Japanese language education by Japanese language education institutions <Policy 28>
 - Dissemination and promotion of utilization of bi-directional educational video training materials and guidebooks in workplaces for Japanese employees and foreign national employees <Policy 32>

Support according to life stages and life situations

- (1) Promotion and support of measures for multicultural coexistence in local communities
 - Identification of the current status and issues of activities of foreign national supporters, etc. and establishment of a network of foreign national supporters <Policy 34>
 - Promotion of efforts of local governments and NPOs, etc. to build a society of harmonious coexistence through cooperation with JICA <Policy 39>
- (2) Improvement of the environment on life services
 - Placement of staff members capable of responding in foreign languages in the police and promotion of responses concerning various procedures in foreign languages <Policy 50>
 - Promotion of dissemination and publicity of the "Guide for foreigners looking to rent", etc. that can be utilized when looking for apartments <Policy 56>
 - Support for smooth account opening by foreign nationals at financial institutions (distribution of leaflets for foreign nationals in 14 languages, dissemination for the prevention of involvement in financial crimes, etc.) <Policy 58>
- (3) Measures for foreign national children
 - Establishment of Japanese language teaching system, etc. in schools for foreign pupils and students, etc. <Policy 66>
 - Collaboration between the school-age children registration system and the Basic Resident Registration system, and integrated management and identification of the school enrollment status of foreign children <Policy 69>
- (4) Supporting employment for international students, etc.
 - Support for online education for foreign international students in their home countries in preparation for prolonged COVID-19 and new risks <Policy 79>
 - Deployment of the "Handbook for the Employment of International Students and Empowerment After Hiring" to local governments and support organizations, etc. <Policy 82>
 - Consistent employment support through reinforced cooperation between universities and Hello Work, and sharing of information on good practices, etc. with universities and relevant organizations across the country <Policy 95>
- (5) Ensuring an appropriate work environment
 - Multilingualization of audiovisual materials for foreign workers (14 languages) <Policy 98>
 - Provision of training aimed at improving communication skills in Japanese workplaces, etc., and creation of model training curriculum, etc. <Policy 104>
- (6) Promotion of enrollment in social insurance, etc.
 - Implementation of personal identification and insurance qualification check by utilizing the Individual Number Cards in medical institutions, etc. <Policy 110>

Safety net and support, etc. for foreign nationals in time of emergency

- (1) Information dissemination and support in time of emergency such as a disaster, etc.
 - Dissemination of "Safety tips", etc. and development of an environment for accurate information transmission by the revision of the multilingual dictionary <Policy 114>
- (2) Support for prevention COVID-19 and smooth vaccination, etc.
 - Provision of information, etc. to higher education institutions and Japanese language education institutions that contributes to the prevention of COVID-19 <Policy 118>
 - Promotion of efforts to enhance and strengthen information dissemination, including aggregation and sharing of information on influencers, etc. identified by each ministry and agency <Policy 119>
 - Request for strict implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in workplaces to the labor and management organizations <Policy 120>
 - Implementation of screening by utilizing simple antigen kits, etc. in Japanese language education institutions with a large number of international students, professional training colleges, etc., and workplaces employing foreign nationals, and implementation of prompt and flexible PCR testing, etc. of broad contact persons when a coronavirus-positive person is found <Policy 121>
 - Dissemination and publicity of vaccination to foreign residents, ensured delivery of vaccination notice, and securing consultation and response systems in multiple languages <Policy 122>
 - Offering information and holding of events on COVID-19 on the "Open for Professionals" Platform <Policy 125>
 - Employment support in cooperation between the relevant organizations supporting needy international students and Hello Work, and dissemination of support content <Policy 126>
 - Dissemination of information in plain Japanese and multiple languages and implementation of the measures based on the content of the discussions at the Advisory Committee on the Health and Hygiene Environment as the COVID-19 measures in schools for foreign students <Policy 128>

Smooth and appropriate acceptance of foreign nationals

- (1) Employment support for specified skilled workers and other measures
 - Promotion of utilization of the Specified Skilled Worker System by holding job fair in Japan and overseas information sessions, etc. <Policy 123 (reposted)>
- (2) Smooth implementation of skill exams and Japanese language tests of the Specified Skilled Worker, and dissemination and smooth utilization of the Specified Skilled Worker System, etc.
 - Implementation and promotion of skill exams and Japanese language tests, and consideration of utilization of new Japanese language tests by the relevant ministries and agencies in the fields <Policy 134>
 - Furthering implementation of the Specified Skilled Worker (ii) skill exams, and consideration of the addition of fields covered in the Specified Skilled Worker (ii) and the organization of business categories <Policy 141>
- (3) Elimination of malicious intermediary organizations, etc.
 - Indirect support for efforts in Japan by utilizing expertise, etc. gained through technical cooperation for developing countries <Policy 156>
- (4) Expansion of the Japanese language education base abroad
 - Promotion of efforts to reinforce the foundation for Japanese language education through the Japan Foundation and to disseminate attractiveness of Japanese culture and society, etc. <Policy 161>

Construction of the residency management system as a foundation for a society of harmonious coexistence

- (1) Implementation of smooth and expedited procedures for the status of residence
 - Consideration of measures to improve the convenience of electronic payment, etc. of fees for residence procedures, etc. <Policy 163>
 - Realization of online application by foreign nationals themselves and consideration of expansion of procedures to be made online <Policy 164>
 - Consideration of integration of the residence cards and the Individual Number Cards toward the commencement of issuance within FY2025 <Policy 166>
- (2) Strengthening residency management network
 - Organization of information on the places of residence of foreign residents in cooperation between the relevant ministries and agencies and local governments, etc. <Policy 170>
- (3) Accurate management of international student enrollment
 - Stricter status of residence examinations, such as not permitting the acceptance of international students, for universities, etc. that do not appropriately manage international student enrollment <Policy 179>
- (4) Further optimization of Technical Intern Training Program
 - Optimization of Technical Intern Training Program by strengthening investigations conducted in cooperation between the Immigration Services Agency and the Organization for Technical Intern Training, etc. <Policy 97 (reposted)>
 - Strengthening of onsite inspections as measures against disappearance of the technical intern trainees and termination of new acceptance from the sending organizations with a large number of missing technical intern trainees <Policy 184>
 - Confirmation of equal remuneration between the technical intern trainees and Japanese nationals, etc., and thorough dissemination of work-style reform related laws <Policy 186>
 - Steady implementation of employment transfer support for the dismissed technical intern trainees by the supervising organizations, and appropriate employment support through continual identification of status of the technical intern trainees <Policy 187>
 - Preferential treatment of implementing organizations that secure living environments for the technical intern trainees in consideration of their privacy and prevention of infection <Policy 188>
- (5) Strengthening of measures against illegal foreign residents
 - Effective implementation of detection by strengthening the functions to collect and analyze the information on the Notified Foreign National Employment Status, etc. <Policy 189>

Notes 1: Underlines indicate changes from the Comprehensive Measures (FY2020 revised). 2: The Policy Nos. in red indicate new policies

Section 2

Advisory Panel of Experts for the Realization of Society of Harmonious Coexisting with Foreign Nationals

In light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, for the purpose of accepting foreign nationals who are legal residents of Japan as members of society without isolated, it is more necessary than ever to promote measures to realize a society of harmonious coexistence.

Therefore, at the 9th Ministerial Conference, held on January 29, 2021, with the purpose of investigating the ideal state of a society of harmonious coexistence, as well as medium and long-term challenges that should be addressed in order to realize the society, and reporting opinions to the Ministerial Conference, “Advisory Panel of Experts for the Realization of Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals” (hereinafter referred to as “Advisory Panel”) was decided to be convened. The Advisory Panel was held 6 times from February to July 2021, and they discussed 4 important issues about the ideal form of a society of harmonious coexistence and medium to long-term challenges that should be addressed in order to realize a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals. These challenges are: (1) “Initiatives such as Japanese language education for smooth communication and participation in society”, (2) “Disseminating information to foreign nationals/strengthening consultation systems for foreign nationals”, (3) “Supports for each life stage and life cycle”, and (4) “Initiatives to establish the foundation of a society of harmonious coexistence”. Currently, the Opinion of the Advisory Panel is being formulated.

The government will formulate a work schedules based on the content of the Opinion of the Advisory Panel, showing Japanese nationals and foreign nationals the ideal state of a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals in Japan, as well as medium to long-term challenges and measures that should be taken in order to realize the society.

Section 3

Major Efforts in which the Immigration Services Agency is Involved

1

Support for the establishment and operation of a one-stop consulting counters through subsidies for preparations for an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals

Financial assistance through the “subsidies for preparations for an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals” (referred to below as “subsidies”) is provided for the measures for establishment and operation of the one-stop consulting counters through which the local governments provide information and advices so that when a foreign national has some questions or concerns about various matters related to life such as the residence procedures, employment, medical care, welfare, childbirth, child care or child education, he or she will be able to receive appropriate information or will be able to quickly reach a place that offers advices and consultations. The subsidies were granted to 197 local governments in FY 2020, and to 214 local governments in FY 2021 as of April 1, 2021. It is expected that the one-stop consulting counters that have received a subsidy will provide appropriate information to the persons seeking advices through consultations offered in numerous languages and through coordination with the relevant organizations.

Extraordinary measures have been taken to allow the maximum amount of subsidies for preparations for an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals to be set twice as much as the subsidy limit along with operating costs for cases in which special responses were made for the purpose of providing information related to COVID-19 from March 10, 2020 to March 31, 2022.



Scene of a one-stop consultation service counter

2 Cooperation with local governments, etc. through Accepting Environmental Coordinators

In April 2019, “Accepting Environmental Coordinators” were assigned to the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus, and officers of the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus are sent to some one-stop consulting counters based on a request from the local government, while information and trainings are provided to the officers of the local governments engaging in consultation services.

It will lead to the promotion of multicultural coexistence policies in each region that collaboration and cooperation with local governments, enhancing and strengthening information gathering in regional areas and so on by improving the system for Accepting Environmental Coordinators. In addition, useful information, such as good practices obtained through efforts by Accepting Environmental Coordinators is given to the local governments.

3 Providing information to foreign residents through the “Guidebook on Living and Working”, etc.

The Immigration Services Agency has a prepared cross-government “Guidebook on Living and Working” compiling basic information necessary for safe and secure living and working in Japan (residence procedures, labor-related laws and regulations, social insurance, crime prevention, traffic safety, etc.), and has published this guidebook in 14 languages^(*) on the “Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals” website.

(*) Japanese (Including Plain Japanese), English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Nepali, Thai, Indonesian, Myanmar, Khmer (Cambodian), Filipino, Mongolian.



Guidebook on Living and Working



https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/guidebook_all.html

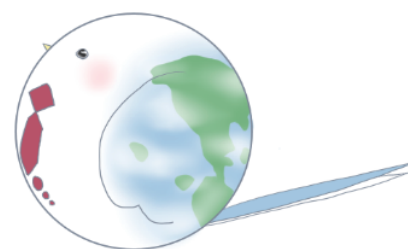
4 Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support

In order to promote the use of plain Japanese by the national government, local governments, and other entities, expert meetings on the “Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support” have been held since February 2020, and the “Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support” were prepared in August 2020.

These guidelines are available on the “Daily Life Support Portal Site for Foreign Nationals” on the Immigration Services Agency website. Efforts will be made to promote the use of plain Japanese, such as providing information to local governments and the relevant ministries and agencies, and holding training for local government staff members.



Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support



やさしい日本語のイメージキャラクター「ことりん」です。



https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/portal/plainjapanese_guideline.html

5 Support at the Foreign Residents Support Center (FRESC)

Following the decision in “the Basic Policy on Operations for the Development of an Environment for Acceptance of Foreign Nationals (Cabinet decision of July 24, 2018)” to strengthen cooperation between the relevant ministries and agencies, cooperate with local governments, and develop an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals in an effective and efficient manner, the Foreign Residents Support Center was opened on July 2020. FRESC has one floor with representatives from 4 ministries and agencies, as well as 8 other organizations involved in residence support for foreign nationals (Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau; Tokyo Legal Affairs Bureau, Human Rights Department; Japan Legal Support Center (Houterasu)).

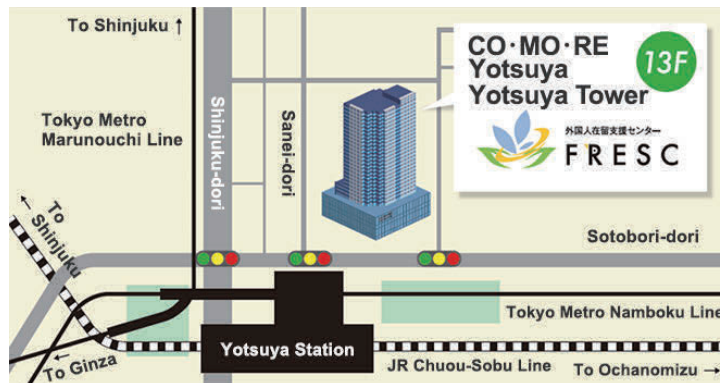
At FRESC, the organizations collaborate to provide consultation on extending and changing status of residence, as well as legal troubles. They also answer inquiries from one-stop consulting counters established by local governments. They support holding training sessions

and giving information to local government staff. In addition, the Tokyo Employment Service Center for Foreigners (Hello Work) and Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) hold informational seminars for foreign students and small to medium enterprises, in order to promote the employment of highly skilled foreign professionals.

By establishing a hub for supporting foreign residents, the development of an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals will be promoted in a much more comprehensive and effective manner.



The consulting counter at the Foreign Residents Support Center



<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/fresh/fresh01.html>

Article: At the Front Line of Immigration Control Administration

**(Voice of an immigration officer in charge of residency support)
(Residency Support Division, Immigration Services Agency: Ushijima Hisato)**

I work in the Residency Support Division, which was newly established when the Immigration Services Agency was established in April 2019. Currently, the Residency Support Division is located in the Foreign Residents Support Center (FRESC) opened in Yotsuya, Shinjuku-ku in July 2020, and we are working to provide residence support services for foreign residents in collaboration with other organizations.

The Residency Support Division provides support for foreign residents, by producing the Guidebook on Living and Working, providing easily understood information by disseminating plain Japanese literature, and collaborating with local governments and private support organizations through support for one-stop consulting counters operated by local governments through subsidies for preparations for an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals. I am in charge of subsidies for preparations for an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals and the FRESC Help Desk.

The FRESC Help Desk is a telephone consultation service that started operation in September 2020. It provides free multilingual consultation to foreign residents suffering difficulties in their daily life, because they have lost their jobs due to COVID-19 or other such issues. For example, we have provided consultation to people who have come to us asking “I lost my job due to COVID-19. What will happen to my status of residence?” or “I can’t pay for my living expenses. Are there any systems I can use?”. Offering consultation to “foreign residents suffering difficulties in their daily life” means offering consultation that spans multiple administrative fields, not limited to immigration services administration. In order to offer such consultation, our consultants study laws and systems related to the content of their consultations on a daily basis, while collaborating with Houterasu, the Tokyo Labor Bureau, and other tenant organizations of FRESC to give inquirers information about systems they use and who they should consult with next.

When working at the Immigration Services Agency, one tends to look at foreign residents through the lens of immigration law. By providing consultation at the FRESC Help Desk, I was able to learn through experience the circumstances of foreign residents living in Japan, and what kind of troubles they experience.

COVID-19 affects the daily life of all sorts of people, regardless of their nationality. I intend to keep working to improve the environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals, so that foreign residents in Japan can get proper support.



an immigration officer in charge of residency support

Chapter 4 Report on the 7th Immigration Control Policy Roundtable “Ideal Form of Future Immigration Services Administration”

Section 1 The 7th Immigration Control Policy Roundtable

1 Overview of the 7th Immigration Control Policy Roundtable

The Immigration Control Policy Roundtable is a private roundtable conference established by the Minister of Justice to hear opinions from a wide range of experts in various fields regarding immigration control administration. Starting with the 1st Policy Roundtable in 1990, a total of 7 roundtables have been held so far.

The 7th Policy Roundtable was launched in September 2016, and after a total of 24 meetings, it submitted two reports to the Minister of Justice: “Proposals to Solve the Issues of Deportation Evasion and Long-Term Detention” and “The Future Ideal State of Immigration Control Administration”.

2 Report “Proposals to Solve the Issues of Deportation Evasion and Long-Term Detention”

In October 2019, the “Special Subcommittee on Detention and Deportation”, setup under the 7th Immigration Control Policy Roundtable, a private roundtable established by the Minister of Justice, discussed and considered measures to prevent the increase of deportation evaders and lengthening of detention.

The results of consideration were compiled in a report titled “Proposals to Solve the Issues of Deportation Evasion and Long-Term Detention”, which was submitted to the Minister of Justice on July 14, 2020.

3 Response based on the report

Based on this report, with the purposes of making deportation procedures more appropriate and effective, and resolving the problems such as deportation evasion and long-term detention, and on February 19, 2021, we submitted the Bill for the Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Special Act on the Immigration Control of, inter alia, those who have lost Japanese Nationality pursuant to the Treaty of Peace with Japan to the 204th Diet. This bill was based on three basic principles: (1) Promptly and properly judge whether or not foreign nationals are allowed to stay in Japan, (2) Promptly deport from Japan those foreign nationals who are not allowed to stay in Japan, and (3) Do as much as possible to avoid prolonging detention in Immigration Services

Agency detention facilities, and ensure more proper treatment in detention facilities. However, after prolonged deliberation, the bill was abandoned following dissolution of the House of Representatives on October 14, 2021.

Section 2

Report “Ideal Form of Future Immigration Services Administration”

The 7th Policy Roundtable discussed various themes, and based on these discussions, they compiled a report for submission to the Minister of Justice on December 10, 2020. This report covered (1) Efforts for co-existence with foreign nationals, (2) Smooth acceptance of foreign professionals in Japan, (3) Efforts to optimize the system of technical intern training, (4) Efforts to develop Japan’s tourism industry, (5) Promotion of countermeasures at the port of entry and measures against illegal residents aimed at realizing a safe and secure society, (6) Promotion of proper protection of refugees, (7) Countermeasures against COVID-19 in immigration control.

Chapter 5 Acceptance of Foreign Nationals and Immigration Control and Residency Management Administration

Section 1 Promotion of the Acceptance of Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals

1 Outline of Points-Based Preferential Treatment for Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals

Japan introduced preferential immigration control and residency management treatment based on the points-based system for highly-skilled foreign professionals (hereinafter referred to as “points-based system for highly-skilled professionals”) in May 2012, and has since been promoting the acceptance of highly-skilled foreign professionals. The points-based system for highly-skilled professionals aims at foreign nationals who have advanced capabilities and qualities and are expected to contribute to Japan’s economic growth and divides the contents of the activities of the highly-skilled foreign professionals into the three categories of “advanced academic research activities”, “advanced specialized/technical activities” and “advanced business management activities”. According to the characteristic features of each category, points are awarded for each item such as “academic background”, “professional career” and “annual salary”, and if the total number reaches 70 points, such a foreign national is recognized as a “highly-skilled foreign professional” and becomes eligible for preferential immigration control and residency management treatment.

Following the introduction of the system, a recommendation was made by the 6th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel to the Minister of Justice to revise the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals in May 2013. In the “Japan Revitalization Strategy” approved by the Cabinet on June 14 of the same year, a goal was set out to revise the system and to start the new system within the same year. Based on these, the Immigration Bureau (at that time) amended the Ministry of Justice public notice on December 17 of the same year with the aim of revising the criteria for recognition pertaining to highly-skilled foreign professionals and revising the preferential treatment.

In order to further promote the acceptance of foreign human resources who possess a high degree of professional competence, the statuses of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)” and “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” were newly established by an amendment of the Immigration Control Act in 2014 for highly-skilled foreign professionals who had previously been granted the status of residence of “Designated Activities”.

2 “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)” and “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)”

The new statuses of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)” and “Highly-Skilled

Professional (ii)” established by the 2014 Amendment Act are both limited to foreign nationals who meet the criteria prescribed in the Ordinance of the Ministry of Justice, and in response, the Ordinance to Provide for the Criteria in the Right-Hand Column Corresponding to “Highly-Skilled Professionals as Specified in the Appended Table I (2) of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act” (Ministerial Ordinance No. 37 of 2014) was enacted and the criteria were set. With regard to “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)”, the criteria for the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals followed those previously the status of residence of “Designated Activities”. And the total number of points set for each of the categories of “academic background”, “professional career” and “annual salary” needs to reach 70 points or more. In addition, with regard to “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)”, the total number of points needs to be 70 points or more as with “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)”, and moreover, foreign nationals are required to reside in Japan for three years or more with the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)”, to engage in the activities for the status, to demonstrate good behavior and to be deemed to suit Japan’s interests (effective from the 28th of the same month).

(1) Preferential Treatment for “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)”

- A. Grant of period of stay for five years
- B. Permission to engage in activities covering multiple statuses of residence
- C. Permission for the spouse of the highly-skilled foreign professional to work^{(*)1}
- D. Permission for the parent(s) to accompany the highly-skilled foreign professional to Japan under certain conditions^{(*)2}
- E. Relaxation of requirements for permanent residence
- F. Permission for a domestic worker to accompany the highly-skilled foreign professional to Japan under certain conditions^{(*)3}
- G. Preferential processing of entry and residence procedures

(2) Preferential Treatment for “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)”

- A. Engaging in almost all of the statuses of residence based on employment, in conjunction with the activities is permitted.
- B. An indefinite period of stay is granted.
- C. The preferential treatment of the abovementioned from C to F of (1) is provided.

Although the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” has no restrictions on the period of stay and cannot be granted at the time of landing similar to the status of residence of “Permanent Resident”, it differs from the status of residence of “Permanent Resident”, which has no restrictions on activities, because the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” requires engaging in activities as a highly-skilled foreign professional. As a result, if a foreign national with the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” does not engage in the activities as a highly-skilled foreign professional for an ongoing period

(*)1 In cases of activities coming under the statuses of residence of “Instructor”, “Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services” etc. it is possible to work with the status of residence of a spouse of a highly-skilled foreign professionals even without meeting certain criteria relating to academic background or professional career.

(*)2 In cases where there is a child under seven years old or where the highly-skilled foreign professionals or his spouse is pregnant.

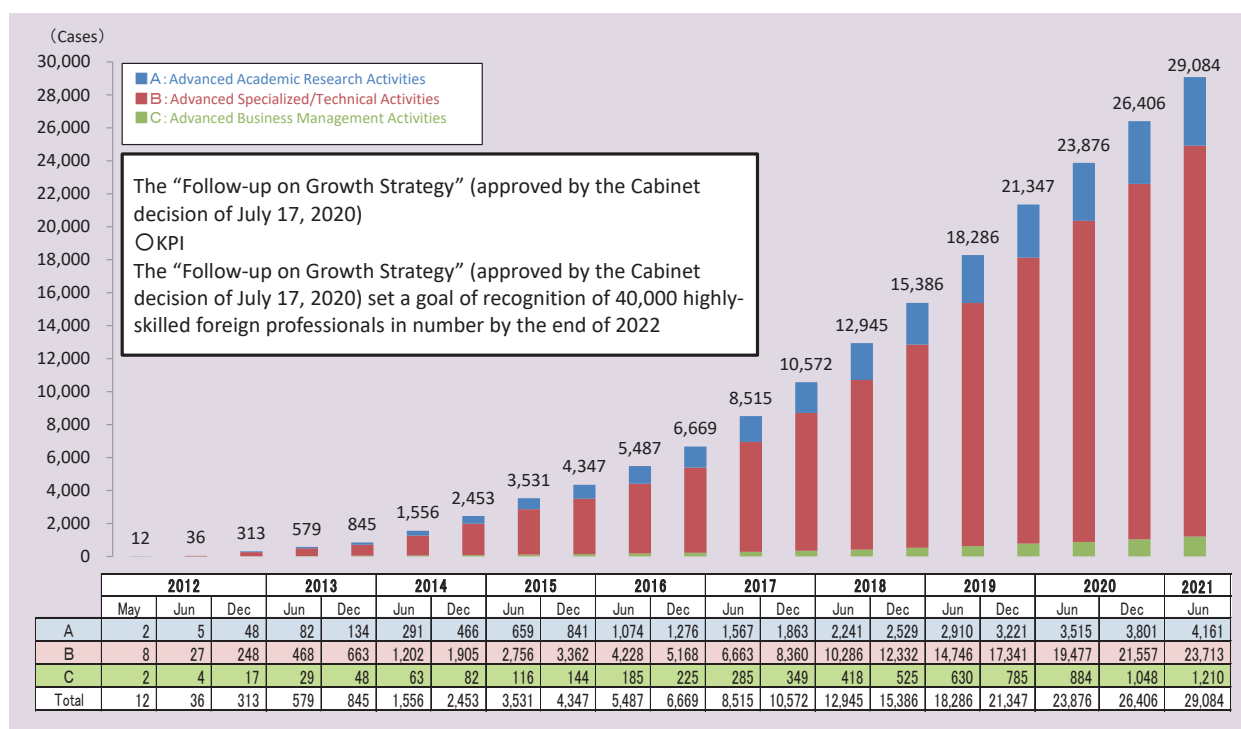
(*)3 In cases where there is a child under 13 years old or where spouse is unable to engage in the day-to-day household chores owing to an illness or other reasons. However, for the financial professionals mentioned in 5 below, there is no requirement to have a child under 13 years old and the annual household income is 30 million yen or more, up to two domestic workers can be hired.

of six months or more, this may become grounds for revocation of the status of residence, and there are certain requirements which are not imposed on the status of residence of “Permanent Resident” such as the requirement to notice the organization of affiliation (workplace, etc.) to the Minister of Justice. On the other hand, foreign nationals with the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” are given preferential immigration control and residency management treatment which is not accorded to “Permanent Resident” such as allowing parents or a domestic worker to accompany the highly-skilled foreign professional.

3 Situation of Acceptance

After the start of the system in May 2012, the cumulative number of cases of recognition up until the end of 2013 was a low number of 845, but the number of new cases of recognition has significantly increased following the policy reform made in December of the same year, from the inception of the system to June 30, 2021, 29,084 foreign nationals have been recognized as high-skilled professionals. The “Follow-up on the Growth Strategy” approved by the Cabinet on July 17, 2020, set the goal to achieve 40,000 cases of recognition by the end of 2022 ([Reference 78](#)).

Reference 78 Changes in the number of cases of recognition (cumulative) through the points-based system for high-skilled professionals



4 Situation of operations following review of the period of stay required for the applications for permanent residence

The “Japan Revitalization Strategy 2016” (approved by the Cabinet decision of June 2, 2016) proposed the establishment of the world’s fastest “Japanese Green Card for Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals” greatly reducing the current five-year period of stay required for the application for permanent residence for highly-skilled foreign professionals as one

of the “considering immigration and residence control systems that further attract highly skilled foreign professionals”, and the requirements were also reviewed and further promotion of publicity for the system conducted from the perspective of making the points-based system for highly-skilled foreign professionals more accessible.

Based on this, the residence period required in the applications for permanent residence of highly-skilled foreign professionals was reduced from the previous five years to three years (to one year for professionals with particularly high skills (where the total number of points is 80 points or more)), additional points categories were added, and the operations for these commenced in April 2017, the number of cases of permission for permanent residence through the operations granted up until end of March 2021 was 8,339 cases.

5 Expanding incentives to realize an international financial center open to the world

In the “Comprehensive Economic Measures to Secure People’s Lives and Livelihoods Toward Relief and Hope” (Cabinet decision of December 8, 2020), it was decided to strategically promote reforms to create more attractive financial and capital markets comparable to other countries, and to build an environment that attracts foreign corporations and highly-skilled foreign professionals, in order to realize an international financial center open to the world. Based on this policy, in July 2021 measures were taken such as relaxing employment requirements for foreign domestic workers and adding standards for special addition of highly-skilled foreign professionals (financial professionals) engaged in Type 2 Financial Instruments Business, Investment Advisory and Agency business, or Investment Management Business stipulated in the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act (Law No. 25 of 1948).

Section 2 Acceptance of Foreign Nationals in the National Strategic Special Zones

1 Entrepreneurs

The “Project for Facilitation of Acceptance of Foreign Entrepreneurs in National Strategic Special Zones” was stipulated in the “Act for Partial Amendment of the Act on National Strategic Special Zones and the Act on Special Zones for Structural Reform” (Act No. 56 of 2015) as a special measure in order to strengthen the international competitiveness of industries and to form an international economic activities hub in such zones by promoting the acceptance of foreign entrepreneurs in national strategic special zones.

In this project, the Council on National Strategic Special Zones specifies the project in the special zone plan, and once the plan has been approved by the Prime Minister, the local government pertaining to national strategic special zone examines the feasibility of the business start-up plan for foreign nationals who intend to enter Japan with the status of residence of “Business Manager”, and if it confirms that the requirements pertaining to the stability and sustainability of the business have been fulfilled, the entry is permitted on condition that the requirements pertaining to the status of residence of “Business Manager” which are normally required at the time of landing examination are to be met within six months of landing, and the activities to start up a business in national strategic special zone are specially permitted.

In March 2020, guidelines for a change of the status of residence and an extension of the

period of stay pertaining to the Project for Facilitation of Acceptance of Foreign Entrepreneurs in National Strategic Special Zones were created, and it was decided that foreign nationals residing in Japan with the status of residence of “Student” will be allowed to change their status of residence to “Business Manager” in cases where the foreign national plans to engage in the activities to start up a business utilizing the project and where certain requirements are met. Under these guidelines, foreign nationals engaging in the activities to start up a business utilizing the project who apply for the extension of their period of stay to continue the activities will be granted the extension of up to one year even if they use a co-working space, shared office, or a similar facility as their business office, since the facility will be considered their business office if certain requirements are met.

As of July 2021, operations for the project have commenced in the Tokyo Area National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: all of Tokyo metropolitan area and all of Kanagawa prefecture), the Fukuoka-Kitakyushu National Strategic Special Zone (all of Fukuoka city and all of Kitakyushu city), the Niigata National Strategic Special Zone (all of Niigata city), the Hiroshima prefecture-Imabari National Strategic Special Zone (all of Hiroshima Prefecture and all of Imabari city), the Sendai National Strategic Special Zone (all of Sendai city) and the Aichi Prefecture National Strategic Special Zone (all of Aichi Prefecture).

2 Foreign nationals Conducting Housekeeping Services

The “Project to Accept Foreigners Conducting Housekeeping Services in National Strategic Special Zones” that the activities of domestic workers in national strategic special zones are deemed to come under the public notice on the status of residence of “Designated Activities” was stipulated as a special measure in the “Act for Partial Amendment of the Act on National Strategic Special Zones and the Act on Special Zones for Structural Reform” (Act No. 56 of 2015).

This project is a special measure where the Council on National Strategic Special Zones establishes the project as a special zone plan, and the special zone plan is approved by the Prime Minister, domestic workers (Foreign nationals conducting housekeeping services) who have entered into an employment contract with a specified organization are able to engage in the activities of conducting housekeeping services (cooking, washing, cleaning and shopping) in the household using the domestic services, under a framework where a third party management council composed of the local government of the zone implementing the project and the relevant ministries (Cabinet Office, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry) is involved in ensuring appropriate acceptance (confirmation that the specified organizations are complying with the criteria, implementation of audits, etc.).

The period in which foreign nationals were permitted to conduct housekeeping services under the project used to be three years in total. However, in March 2020, the period was extended to five years in total, following a change in the guidelines based on the Act on National Strategic Special Zones (Act No.107 of 2013).

As of July 2021, operations for the project have commenced in the Tokyo Area National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: all of Tokyo metropolitan area and all of Kanagawa prefecture and all of Chiba city), the Kansai Area National Strategic Special Zone (all of Osaka city, all of Toyonaka city, all of Ikeda city, all of Minoh city, all of Moriguchi

city, all of Hirakata city, all of Neyagawa city, all of Kadoma city and all of Hyogo prefecture) and the Aichi Prefecture National Strategic Special Zone (all of Aichi prefecture).

3 Foreign nationals Conducting Agricultural Works

In order to realize “strong agriculture” through promoting the production of various kinds of crops in the production areas and expanding the scale of the business by utilizing foreign workers in the field of agriculture, the “Project to Accept Foreigners Conducting Agricultural Works in National Strategic Special Zones” that the activities of agricultural support workers in national strategic special zones are deemed to come under the public notice on the status of residence of “Designated Activities” was stipulated as a special measure in the “Act for Partial Amendment of the Act on National Strategic Special Zones and the Act on Special Zones for Structural Reform” (Act No. 71 of 2017) (effective from September 22, 2017).

This project is a special measure where the Council on National Strategic Special Zones establishes the project as a special zone plan, and the special zone plan is approved by the Prime Minister, foreign agricultural support workers who have entered into an employment contract with a specified organization are able to engage in agricultural support works (production, manufacturing, processing, etc.) in the agricultural management body, etc., which is the agency that has entered into a worker dispatch contract with a specified organization, under a framework where an appropriate acceptance management council composed of the local government of the zone implementing the project and the relevant ministries (Cabinet Office, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) is involved in ensuring appropriate acceptance (confirmation that the specified organizations are complying with the criteria, implementation of audits/patrol guidance, etc.).

As of July 2021, operations for the project have commenced in the Kansai Area National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: all of Kyoto), the Niigata National Strategic Special Zone (all of Niigata city), the Aichi Prefecture National Strategic Special Zone (all of Aichi prefecture), and the Okinawa National Strategic Special Zone (all of Okinawa prefecture).

4 Foreign nationals Supporting Overseas Demand Development

In order to flexibly respond to the needs for acceptance of foreign nationals who have expertise related to “cool Japan and inbound responses” and to maximize use of the specialized knowledge and skills acquired by foreign nationals in companies and other enterprises, the “Project to Promote Activities Supporting Foreigners Overseas Demand Development in National Strategic Special Zones” was stipulated as a special measure in the “Act for Partial Amendment of the Act on National Strategic Special Zones and the Act on Special Zones for Structural Reform” (Act No. 71 of 2017) (effective from September 22, 2017).

The project enables a foreign national to enter Japan with the status of residence of “Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services” or “Skilled Worker” in cases where: the intended activities supporting foreign nationals overseas demand development is applicable to the status of residence of “Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services” or “Skilled Worker”; it is recognized that a level of knowledge and skills equivalent

to the academic history and practical experience required under the current landing permission criteria can be substituted by domestic or foreign qualifications or examinations, awards received, or the like; the Council on National Strategic Special Zones specifies the project in the special zone plan, and the plan has been approved by the Prime Minister; and the foreign national meets the landing examination criteria for foreign nationals pertaining to activities supporting foreign nationals overseas demand development, the criteria being provided as a special government ordinance of the Landing Criteria Ministerial Ordinance and being considered criteria provided pursuant to the Landing Criteria Ministerial Ordinance.

5 Special Additions Pertaining to the Points-based System for Highly-skilled Professionals

In order to promote the acceptance of highly-skilled foreign nationals and thereby enhance industrial international competitiveness and develop a hub for international economic activity, the “Project to Promote the Acceptance of Highly-skilled Foreign Nationals in National Strategic Special Zones” was adopted as a special measure (taking effect on March 15, 2019), in response to the Order to Partially Revise the Order on Measures Related to the Special Provisions of Ministry of Justice Related Ministerial Ordinances Pertaining to Projects Regulated by Government Ordinances, etc. Specified in Article 26 of the Act on National Strategic Special Zones (Cabinet Office, Ministerial Ordinance No. 1, 2019).

This project enables foreign nationals working at public or private organizations in Japan which receive support through subsidies and the like from local governments located within the project implementation area to gain an additional 10 points when applying for the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional”.

As of July 2021, operations for the project have commenced in the Tokyo Area National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: all of Tokyo metropolitan area), the Hiroshima Prefecture - Imabari City National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: all of Hiroshima Prefecture), the Kansai Area National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: All of Kyoto Prefecture), the Fukuoka City - Kitakyushu City National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: All of Fukuoka City), and the Sendai City National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: All of Sendai City).

6 Graduates, etc. of Japanese Language Education Institutions

In order to encourage foreign students who have graduated from foreign university or graduate school to seek employment at Japanese companies and thereby enhance industrial international competitiveness and develop a hub for international economic activity, the Project for Supporting Job Hunting Activities of Foreign Students Graduated from Overseas Universities in National Strategic Special Zones was launched in February 2020 as a special measure.

This project enables a foreign student who satisfies certain requirements and who has graduated from a Japanese language education institution that has obtained confirmation from a local government located within the project implementation area to apply for a special grant of the status of residence of “Designated Activities” for up to one year after graduation in order to continue job hunting activities, in cases where the Council on National Strategic Special Zones specifies the project in the special zone plan and the plan has been approved by the Prime Minister.

As of July 2021, operations for the project have commenced in the Fukuoka City - Kitakyushu City National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: All of Kitakyushu City), the Tokyo Area National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: all of Chiba City and all of Narita City), the Aichi Prefecture National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: All of Aichi Prefecture), and the Hiroshima Prefecture - Imabari City National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: All of Hiroshima Prefecture).

In the National Strategic Special Zone Basic Policy (Cabinet decision of February 25, 2014, partially amended on October 30, 2020), from the position as a breakthrough in regulatory reforms, it was decided to accelerate the nationwide rollout of regulatory reforms first implemented in the National Strategic Special Zones. Discussions were also held in the National Strategic Special Zones Working Group, and based on these matters, this project was expanded nationwide in September 2021.

Section 3 Other Measures

1 Time-Limited Emergency Measures in the Fields of Construction and Shipbuilding

In order to deal with the further acceleration of the reconstruction projects and temporarily increased demand for construction owing to the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, a decision was made to permit as an emergency measure for a limited time, foreign nationals who have completed their technical intern training in the construction and shipbuilding work fields to engage in construction and shipbuilding work in Japan with the status of residence of “Designated Activities” under a special supervision framework, in principle, for a maximum of two years (three years in the case of a person who has returned to their home country for a period of one year or more following the completion of their technical intern training), on condition that utmost efforts have been made to secure domestic human resources in Japan. However, as of March 31, 2021, acceptance of new candidates was ended.

2 Promotion of the acceptance of foreign nationals to Cool Japan

(1) Work from a fashion design educational institution

In order to promote the acceptance of foreign nationals to Cool Japan, it was decided that from March 2018, foreign students, who have graduated from a specialized course of a fashion design educational institution which is permitted to accept foreign students where it is deemed possible for the foreign student to acquire specialized knowledge and skills would be eligible for permission to change of status of residence for the purpose of finding employment with a Japanese company or other enterprise.

(2) Acceptance of Foreign Licensed Cooks · Confectionery Hygiene Masters

Since February 2014, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, in cooperation with the Immigration Services Agency, has implemented the “Program to Train Foreign Nationals in Japanese Cuisine. Under the program, foreign students who have graduated from a licensed cook training facility and obtained a cook license are allowed to engage in ac-

tivities relating to cooking Japanese cuisine for up to five years with the status of residence of “Designated Activities”. In November 2019, the name of the project was changed to the “Program for Training Foreign Nationals in Japanese Food Culture”, foreign students who have majored in confectionary production and completed a specialized program at a special training school were made eligible to the project, and restaurants including those serving non-Japanese cuisine, confectionary stores including bakeries, and hotels and Japanese inns, among other facilities, were added to the list of accepting organizations, which led to the extension of the project to non-Japanese cuisine cooking and confectionary production and the further promotion of acceptance of foreign nationals to Cool Japan.

3 Further acceptance of fourth-generation foreign nationals of Japanese descent

With regard to the fourth-generation foreign nationals of Japanese descent, only unmarried minors who are natural children supported by a third-generation foreign national of Japanese descent residing in Japan with the status of residence of “Long-Term Resident” were used to be permitted to enter Japan, but a system was established and became effective from July 2018 for the purpose of promoting understanding of and interest in Japan through the acceptance of young fourth-generation foreign nationals of Japanese descent and activities to have them learn about Japanese culture, and thereby, to develop human resources acting as a bridge to strengthen the connections between Japan and Japanese societies abroad.

Under this system, basically the same entry requirements as for the working holiday system are required, but as a unique requirement of this system, a certain level of Japanese language proficiency is required at the time of entry into Japan or at the time of renewing the period of stay, as well as the guarantee of a “supporter to accept the fourth-generation foreign national of Japanese descent” to provide support pertaining to the entry and residence of the fourth-generation foreign national of Japanese descent being required. Fourth-generation foreign nationals of Japanese descent who are accepted under this system are able to engage in activities to understand Japanese culture, including the Japanese language, for a total of a maximum of five years, and to engage in activities to receive remuneration within the necessary limit to supplement necessary funds in order to engage in the activities (except for activities to engage in amusement-business work).

With regard to this system, in order to further promote acceptance of fourth-generation foreign nationals of Japanese descent, some Japanese language requirements imposed at the time of entry to Japan and during residence were relaxed in March 2021.

4 Online residence procedures

The “Future Investment Strategy 2018” decided by the Cabinet in June 2018 set out that in order to facilitate and expedite the status of residence procedures, online applications for the status of residence would commence from FY 2018, which would allow organizations of affiliation that properly employ foreign nationals and submit notifications on the situation of employment of foreign nationals to carry out the procedures on behalf of the foreign national.

In response to this, starting in July 2019, staff of organizations of affiliation that meet certain requirements, as well as attorneys and administrative scriveners hired by affiliated institutions, can make applications to extend period of stay, and simultaneously make applications for re-entry permits and applications for permission to engage in activity other than

that permitted under the status of residence previously granted, based on requests from applicants. In March 2020, measures were taken such as expanding procedures and statuses of residence that are eligible for online applications, in order to further improve convenience.

In April 2020, we made it possible for foreign nationals affiliated with small and medium sized enterprises (Category 3 organizations) for some work statuses of residence, and in July 2020, we made it possible for foreign students enrolled in vocational schools and Japanese language schools to apply online as well.

5 Promotion of the acceptance of foreign entrepreneurs

The “Growth Strategy 2018” decided by the Cabinet in June 2018 outlined a program to support entrepreneurial activities to commence in 2018 such as measures to further expand the acceptance of entrepreneurs, and implementation of management and support measures by checking the situation of implementation of entrepreneurial activities and building a consultation system.

In response to this, as a system permitting entry and residence for the purpose of entrepreneurial activities for up to one year under the proper management and support of the national and local governments, the “Public Notice Relating to the Project to Promote Foreign National Entrepreneurial Activities”, which is a public notice of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, stipulated the procedures for local governments to promote foreign national entrepreneurship activities and specific contents such as the scope of the foreign national entrepreneurs who are eligible for acceptance, and based on this, amendments were made to the public notice of the Ministry of Justice, which were promulgated and enforced on December 28, 2018.

In accordance with the revised public notice of the Ministry of Justice, foreign residents who receive support for entrepreneurship from local governments in accordance with the public notice of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry will be allowed to enter and reside in Japan with the status of residence of “Designated Activities” for a period not exceeding one year in terms of the immigration and residence management procedures.

The “Follow-up on Growth Strategy” and “City, People, Work Creation Basic Policy 2020” decided by the Cabinet in July 2020 set forth measures for entrepreneurial activities in Japan by the end of 2020, for foreign nationals who have graduated from Japanese universities and meet certain requirements.

In response to this, it was decided to allow a maximum of 2 years of residence with the status of “Designated Activities” for foreign students who have been engaged in entrepreneurial activities since they were enrolled in Japanese universities considered to be enthusiastic about accepting outstanding foreign students, and who wish to continue their entrepreneurial activities even after graduation.

It was also decided to allow the transition to new measures after using this project, and to allow residence for up to 2 years following residence based on this project, for foreign nationals who have stayed in Japan after graduating from a Japanese university and used the Project to Promote Foreign National Entrepreneurial Activities or the Project for Facilitation of Acceptance of Foreign Entrepreneurs in National Strategic Special Zones, but did not start a business within the allotted period.

6 Promotion of the appropriate acceptance of Foreign Students

(1) Employment Support for Foreign Students

According to the “Japan Revitalization Strategy 2016” approved by the Cabinet in June 2016, the aim is to increase the share of foreign students who find employment within Japan from the current 30% to 50%, and in addition, to expand the range of fields in which foreign students are able to find employment has been decided in the “Comprehensive Measures” decided at the relevant ministerial meeting in December 2018.

Therefore, in order to promote the settlement of excellent foreign human resources and expand opportunities for employment in Japan for the foreign students who are expected to contribute to revitalize the Japanese economy and society, the public notice on the status of residence of “Designated Activities” was amended, promulgated and enforced on May 30, 2019.

Accordingly, foreign students who have graduated from a Japanese university or graduate school are permitted to work in a wide range when they engage in the work that anticipated to make use of the knowledge and applied skills that they acquired at a Japanese university or graduate school, and Japanese language skills under certain conditions such as requiring a high level of Japanese language skill such as the Japanese Language Proficiency Test N1 level, being a full-time employee, and receiving remuneration equivalent to or more than that a Japanese national would receive for the same work. At the end of December 2020, the number of the foreign nationals granted their status of residence by this system was 322. In order to promote further utilization, we are announcing this system on the Immigration Services Agency website and consultation counters.

(2) Optimization of the Japanese Language Education Institutions

Since Japanese language education institutions that accept foreign students need to be optimized as education institutions which steadily provide an appropriate learning environment. Related to this point, in consideration of the “Comprehensive Measures” decided at the relevant ministerial meeting in December 2018, the public notice criteria for the Japanese language education institutions were partially amended in 2018, introducing stricter criteria such as for the attendance rate of all students or for the proportion of foreign nationals staying illegally beyond their authorized period of stay to all of the students, etc. pertaining to deletion from the public notice, as well as making it obligation to report the results of periodic self-inspections in terms of conformity with the public notice criteria and the results of the exams pertaining to Japanese language proficiency. We are properly implementing the revised public notice criteria, and are continuing to optimize and improve the quality of Japanese language schools, and carefully manage enrollment of foreign students.

7 Online notifications regarding specified skilled workers

Notifications regarding the status of residence “Specified Skilled Worker”, which was newly established in April 2019, are submitted by the specified skilled worker’s affiliate organization and registered support organization (hereinafter, “specified skilled worker affiliate organization, etc.”) to the Commission of the Immigration Services Agency. They include quarterly notifications about the implementation status for specified skilled worker and activities of specified skilled worker Revision of the (regular notifications), as well as notifications

made each time there is a change related to the employment contracts or support plans of specified skilled workers (irregular notifications). In the Digital Government Execution Plan (Cabinet decision made on December 25, 2020), it was decided that online notifications would be made possible by the end of March 2021.

In response to this, we have made it possible for the staff of specified skilled workers affiliated organizations that have registered in advance as users of the Immigration Services Agency electronic notification system to submit all notifications related to the specified skilled work system online, and the system began accepting notifications in April 2021.

Article: At the Front Line of Immigration Control Administration**(Voice of an immigration inspector in charge of online inspections)****(Registration Department, the Tokyo Regional Services Bureau:
Ikeshima Naoki)**

I work at Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau, Registration Department, where I am in charge of inspecting applications to use the online residence application system, and inspection residence applications received on the online residence application system.

We started operation of online residence application procedures in July 2019 for organizations of affiliation that properly employ foreign professionals and perform notifications on the employment status of foreign professionals, in order to ensure the smooth and swift processing of status of residency procedures. At the start of operation, this system was limited to applications for extension of period of stay, but today, with the exception of certain statuses of residence, it can be used to make various applications online. This of course includes applications for extension of period of stay, as well as applications for certificate of eligibility, and applications for change of status of residence.

As a general rule, foreign nationals must come in person to their local immigration services office when making residence applications. As the number of mid to long term residents living in Japan has increased, so has the number of residence applications, so the application counters at local immigration services offices have become crowded, and waiting time for residence applications has grown longer. For this reason, it can take several hours to complete procedures when counters are crowded, and during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there has been concern about the risk of infection in this crowded environment. In this sense, the online residence application procedures, which allow one to apply 24 hours a day, 365 days a year without going to the counter, are effective in reducing the risk of infection with COVID-19, and more applicants are choosing to use the online residence application system.

However, at present, the ratio of online applications to all residence applications is still low, so we must further promote use of the online residence application system in the future.

In Registration Department, there are many opportunities to directly hear opinions and requests regarding the functional aspects of the online residence application system from the users. I believe it is an important role for us to reflect such opinions, so that we can improve convenience by improving the system. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for online administrative procedures has risen higher than ever. I will keep doing my best get more people to utilize the online residence application system and conduct administrative procedures smoothly.



**an immigration inspector in
charge of online inspections**

Chapter 6 The Status of Operation of the Technical Intern Training Program

Technical Intern Training Act was established at the 192nd session of the Diet on November 18, 2016, promulgated on the 28th of the same month, and entered into force on November 1, 2017.

The status of operation of the technical intern training program pursuant to the enforcement of the Technical Intern Training Act is as follows.

Section 1 Status of Expansion of the Program

1 Extension of the technical intern training period for excellent supervising organizations and implementing organizations

Under the technical intern training program, technical intern trainees are able to proceed to technical intern training (iii), the third stage of training (two years), following on from technical intern training (i) and technical intern training (ii) provided they will engage in technical intern training under an excellent supervising organization and implementing organization, and ever since the start of this program, the program is being utilized in such manner as having former technical intern trainees first return to their home country after completion of technical intern training (ii) and then newly enter Japan once again as a technical intern trainee (iii) (see [Reference 4](#)).

2 Expansion of the job categories

Under the program, a number of skills-transfer job categories such as the category of nursing care (nursing care work) have been added when needed (85 job categories, 156 selective works as of March 16, 2021). In addition, airport ground handling (aircraft ground support work) was added to the skills-transfer job categories / selective work as an enterprise-specific job category utilizing internal testing in the individual-enterprise-type technical intern training in July, 2017.

Section 2 New Initiatives for Proper Technical Intern Training and Protection of the Technical Intern Trainees

1 Business councils

The minister with jurisdiction over the business may form a business council consisting of the related organizations for each industry for the purpose of connecting to optimization of the technical intern training in the relevant business field through sharing information

on problematic cases and reviewing the voluntary standards. Therefore the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries established and convened the Fisheries Technical Intern Training Business Council on December 13, 2017 and the Agricultural Training Intern Training Business Council on June 5, 2018, and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism established and convened the Automobile Maintenance Business Council for the Foreign National Technical Intern Training Program on February 19 of the same year, the Business Council on Construction Field Technical Intern Training on March 26 of the same year, and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry established and convened the Textile Industry Technical Intern Training Business Council on March 23 of the same year, and since then, the various councils have been meeting from time to time to share information and create voluntary guidelines for optimization of the technical intern training in each business field.

2 Regional councils

The issues and concerns of the technical intern training program differ depending on the region where technical intern trainees are being accepted, and the organizations of the national government and prefectural governments, and the Organization for Technical Intern Training collaborate with each other and hold regional councils divided into eight blocks (Hokkaido, Tohoku, Kanto, Chubu, Kansai, Chugoku, Shikoku, and Kyushu) in order to promote information-sharing at a regional level of the measures aimed at securing proper technical intern training, and during June and July, 2018, the regional council was established and held at least once a month in each block where information-sharing and discussions on efforts towards the securing of proper technical intern training were conducted in each region. During June and September, 2020, the 2nd regional council was held in each block and information-sharing was conducted in each region. Since then, councils in each region have convened every year to share information and discuss their efforts to optimize technical intern training.



Scene of a regional council

3 Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC)

Memorandum of Cooperation with the government of the sending country have been

entered into with 14 countries (Viet Nam, Cambodia, India, the Philippines, Laos, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bhutan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Thailand and Indonesia) at the end of 2020 with the aim of securing proper sending organizations. In addition, the Ministry of Justice, based on the same agreements has been striving to give out thorough information on the purpose of the programme of technical intern training and to foster understanding, and has made requests for the securing of proper sending organizations by holding opinion exchanges with the government of the sending countries and has also been attending seminars on explanations on the programme in the partner country together with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Organization for Technical Intern Training.



Scene of opinion exchange based on a bilateral agreement

4 Protection of the technical intern trainees

In order to protect the technical intern trainees, the Ministry of Justice, along with the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare which has joint jurisdiction over the technical intern training program, give instructions on the protection measures for technical intern trainees to be implemented by the Organization for Technical Intern Training. The Organization for Technical Intern Training now has a reporting and consultation desk (telephone, emails and correspondence) in Chinese, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Tagalog, English, Thai, khmer (Cambodian) and Myanmar, which are the principal mother tongues of the technical intern trainees, and as well as providing counseling and support for the technical intern trainees, they strive to protect the technical intern trainees by accepting reports from the technical intern trainees pursuant to Article 49, paragraph (1) of the Technical Intern Training Act.

In addition, in cases where it has become difficult to continue with the technical intern training at the training site due to the business problems of the accepting enterprise or vari-

ous circumstances such as acts of violation of human rights, but where the technical intern trainee wishes to continue with the technical intern training, it is possible for the technical intern trainee to change the training site, and in relation to this, the Organization for Technical Intern Training provides various kinds of support such as giving advice and counseling in response to consultations from the technical intern trainees, introducing training sites to which the trainee will be able to transfer through the establishment of a website to provide support to change the training site for supervising organizations, and also providing temporary housing facilities for those technical intern trainees for whom it has become difficult to stay in the housing facilities secured by the supervising organization, etc.

Immigration inspectors distribute technical intern trainee notebooks, compilations of the above consultation and support counters and other useful information for living in Japan, to technical intern trainees newly entering Japan. In July 2021, this technical intern trainee notebook was released as a smartphone app (both physical and digital versions are available in 9 languages, including Vietnamese and Chinese).

5 Measures to Reduce Cases of Disappearance of Technical Intern Trainees

Ministerial ordinances were amended in line with the measures for improvement compiled by the “Project Team on Operation of the Technical Intern Training Program”, and measures such as suspending the acceptance of new technical intern trainees for a certain period when supervising organizations, etc. have been responsible for causing disappearances, and requiring remuneration payments to be made to technical intern trainees by wire transfer to a bank account, for example, were introduced in April 2020.

In addition to the above, in November 2019, measures to further enhance the measures for improvement were compiled in order to reduce cases of disappearance of technical intern trainees. Below is an overview of the main measures.

- Suspension of acceptance of new technical intern trainees by sending organizations, supervising organizations, and implementing organizations who have caused disappearances, in consideration of factors such as the degree of responsibility.

On the basis of disappearance rates and investigation results, measures such as the following will be taken: issuance of orders for suspension of projects involving the acceptance of new technical intern trainees, revocation of permission granted to supervising organizations, revocation of certification of training and withholding of authorization for plans pertaining to the acceptance of new technical intern trainees.

- Criminal charging and disclosure of companies that hired technical intern trainees who disappeared.

Through the uncovering of illegal foreign workers, etc., companies that hired technical intern trainees who disappeared will be subject to criminal charges, and the factual content of the charges will be disclosed.

- Provision of information to supervising organizations and the like.

On December 24, 2019, a notice regarding the tightening of measures was sent directly to supervising organizations and group supervising-type implementing organizations, along with a request to inform technical intern trainees of the consulting counter. In addition, information was provided to technical intern trainees regarding the consulting counter at the Organization for Technical Intern Training.

- Promoting the support system for technical intern trainees.

In March 2021, with the purpose of contributing to proper implementation of technical intern training such as preventing trainee disappearances and protecting the safety of technical intern trainees, we have created public relations videos giving an outline of the system and places to seek consultation for technical intern trainees, in 10 languages including Japanese, and published these on the Immigration Services Agency website.

Chapter 7 Smooth and Strict Implementation of Immigration Examination at the Port of Entry

In order to contribute to the realization of a tourism-oriented country, it is important on the one hand to strive to implement smooth landing examinations for the majority of foreign nationals, who come to Japan without causing any problems, but in order to realize a society where Japanese nationals and foreign nationals can live together harmoniously, it is also necessary to implement strict landing examinations and reliably prevent the entry of foreign nationals whose objective is terrorism, illegal work or other illegal activities.

The number of foreign visitors to Japan in 2019 reached approximately 31.88 million, which was a record high number. However, the number of foreign visitors to Japan significantly decreased due to the impact of COVID-19. In 2020, the number of foreign nationals visiting Japan as travelers dropped sharply, by 4.11 million.

Section 1 Efforts to Promote a Tourism-Oriented Country

1 Introduction of Bio Carts

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In order to simplify procedures at landing examination booths and enable foreign visitors to enter Japan more speedily, devices for obtaining personal identification information (fingerprints and a facial photograph) beforehand by utilizing the landing examination waiting time, commonly known as “Bio Carts”, were introduced at Kansai Airport, Takamatsu Airport and Naha Airport, places where these devices were expected to lead to significant reduction in examination waiting time, in October 2016. Subsequently, the devices were introduced at 14 airports, including Narita Airport, from April 2017 to May 2018, at Haneda Airport in December 2019 and at Hakata Port and Hitakatsu Port in January 2020, for further promoting smooth examinations.

In the “Tourism Vision Realization Program 2020” (Action Program for Realization of Tourism Vision 2020) (adopted by the Ministerial Council on the Promotion of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country of June 2020), Bio Carts are being utilized to reduce examination waiting time, with the aim of reaching waiting time 20 minutes or less, as a measure to keep working toward promotion of inbound travel in adaptation to the circumstances of COVID-19.



Use of Bio Carts

## 2 Automated Gates

### (1) Promotion of Use of the Automated Gates

Japanese nationals and foreign nationals satisfying certain requirements (in possession of re-entry permission, etc.), who have registered in advance as users of the automated gates, are able to undergo the immigration procedures using the automated gates and do not have to undergo the usual examination by an immigration inspector at an immigration examination booth, and in this way, smooth and strict examinations are being further promoted. Following the installation of the Automated Gates at Narita Airport in November 2007, Automated Gates were installed at Chubu Airport and Kansai Airport in September 2009 and were additionally installed at Haneda Airport in October 2010. As of the end of FY 2020, 70 Automated Gates had been installed throughout the country.

User registration of Automated Gates was started at the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau and the Narita Airport District Immigration Services Office in November 2007, followed by the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau, the Chubu Airport District Immigration Services Office, the Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau and the Kansai Airport District Immigration Services Office in September 2009 and the Haneda Airport District Immigration Services Office of the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau in October 2010.

Moreover, in order to promote user registration of the Automated Gates in 2013, as well as increasing the number of devices for user registration and posting information in airport facilities and in-flight magazines through the cooperation of the airport operating companies and airline companies, the Immigration Services Agency has been working to improve its administrative services with regard to those wishing to register for use of the Automated Gates through such means as sending immigration officers to the prefectural passport offices in order to enable mobile on-the-spot user registration.





Automated Gates



On-site registration using a mobile device to register as a user of the automated gates

## (2) Trusted Traveler Program

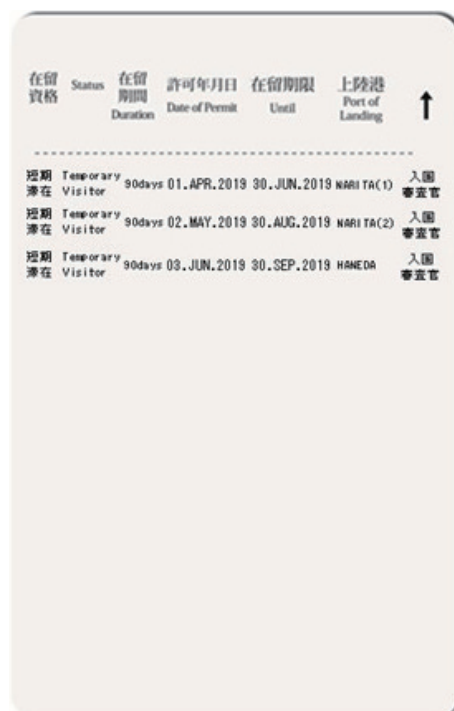
The Trusted Traveler Program (TTP) commenced its operations on November 1, 2016 expanding the scope of eligible users of the Automated Gates into certain foreign nationals intending to engage in activities under the status of residence of “Temporary Visitor”, who have visited Japan certain times in the past and have registered as a low risk traveler in terms of immigration control such as business persons working for a listed company in and outside Japan. Those who are registered in this program are exempted from receiving a seal of verification for landing, and issued a “Registered User Card” as a proof of landing permission in lieu of the seal of verification for landing.

In addition, in order to contribute to expediting the immigration examinations between Japan and the United States, the immigration authorities of Japan and the United States discussed specific operations of TTP and commenced the operations that US citizens who have applied for TTP will not be required to meet some of the requirements on the premise that they are already enrolled in the U.S. Global Entry Program (GEP).

On March 16, 2020, the existing registration requirements for business persons were relaxed, and the scope of applicants for registrations of this program was extended to tourists who satisfy certain requirements and family members of TTP registrants (spouse and unmarried minors).



Front of Registered User Card



Back of Registered User Card

### (3) Introduction of Facial Recognition Automated Gates in the Departure and Return Procedures for Japanese Nationals

The Immigration Services Agency intends to further expedite the examination procedures, while maintaining strictness of the examination, by streamlining the departure and return for Japanese nationals through the use of facial recognition technology and assigning more immigration inspectors to the examination of foreign nationals.

The Immigration Services Agency conducted a trial test of examinations utilizing facial recognition technology in 2014, and the evaluation of the “Committee for Evaluation of Facial Recognition Technology in the Immigration Examinations” composed of outside experts was that from the perspective of technology “there is sufficient possibility of utilizing facial recognition technology in the departure and return examinations of Japanese nationals”. After necessary reviews facial recognition Automated Gates were developed in the two years of FY 2016 and FY 2017, and advance operations of the facial recognition Automated Gates in the return confirmation procedures for Japanese nationals commenced at Haneda Airport on October 18, 2017. In addition, from FY 2018 to FY 2019, the facial recognition Automated Gates were introduced in the landing and departure examination areas of New Chitose Airport, Narita Airport, Haneda Airport, Chubu Airport, Kansai Airport and Fukuoka Airport, and are being operated in the departure and return procedures for Japanese nationals. It was also newly installed in Naha Airport in 2020.



Using the facial recognition automated gates

#### (4) Expanded Use of the Automated Gates in the Departure Procedures for Foreign Nationals

The “Tourism Vision Realization Program, 2016” (Tourism Vision Realization Action Program 2016) (decision of the Ministerial Council on the Promotion of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country of May 2016) outlined a plan to expand the use of the Automated Gates in the departure procedures for foreign nationals in order to reduce the time required for the departure procedures at airports in Japan. Based on this, surveys were conducted related to expanding use of the Automated Gates in the departure procedures for foreign nationals in FY 2016, and a study was also conducted on the scope of foreign nationals who should be eligible to use the Automated Gates in the departure procedures, necessary matters for system renovation, and methods of arranging the Automated Gates in the departure examination areas. Based on the results of the surveys and study, a decision was made that the facial recognition Automated Gates that have been used in the departure and return procedures for Japanese nationals would be used in the departure procedures for foreign nationals who had entered Japan for such purposes as sightseeing, and on July 24, 2019, its operation commenced in Haneda Airport, followed by the other seven airports listed in (3).

### 3 Response to Cruise Ship Passengers

In recent years, there have been a remarkable increase in the number and size of cruise ships calling at ports in Japan, and since requests have been received from the local governments inviting cruise ships for accelerated procedures after the arrival so that passengers can fully enjoy sightseeing within the limited time they have at the port of call, the Immigration Services Agency has been striving to implement smooth examinations through such means as implementing an examination method using permission for landing at a port of call, the use of examination equipment with the upgraded system, and support from other examination staffs from all over the country.

Also, from January 1, 2015, operation of the system of landing permission for cruise ship tourists that allows foreign passengers on cruise ships designated by the Commissioner of the Immigration Services Agency to undergo simplified procedures commenced and guidance for cruise ship companies has been strengthened, and in addition, strict yet smooth

examinations are being conducted through implementing on-board examinations on cruise ships on the open seas with the consent of the country of registration. In 2016, the number of applications for landing permission for cruise ship tourists was approximately 1.94 million. In 2017, the number was approximately 2.45 million and trending upward, but has since trended downward at approximately 2.34 million in 2018 and approximately 2.03 million in 2019.

In 2020, the number of cruise ships calling at port in Japan decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so only approximately 120,000 landing permits for cruise ship tourists were issued in 2020.

#### 4 Other Measures to Reduce the Waiting Time for Examinations

Measures are being implemented to reduce the waiting time for landing examinations such as simplifying a disembarkation card for foreign nationals (omission of some of previously required details), which is submitted by the foreign nationals to an immigration inspector at the time of landing examination (enforced from April 1, 2016), and increasing the number of booths through the installment of a newly-arranged examination booth in which two immigration inspectors are located front and back to conduct a landing examination respectively at the same time.



Newly-arranged examination booth

#### 5 Revision of the method of measuring the time spent waiting in line for an examination, and announcement of the waiting times for the examination

The time spent waiting in line for an immigration examination is measured at each airport (by terminal and examination areas), by distributing a survey form to the last foreign tourist in the immigration waiting queue every 30 minutes, and when this person reaches the immigration examination booth, the survey form is collected and the time measured. Through these measurements, the longest time spent waiting in line for an examination in that day

(\*) Due to COVID-19, the number of people monitored to measure immigration inspection waiting time has decreased significantly, so measurement of immigration inspection waiting time has been on hold since April 2020.

We will consider when to restart measurement and publication based on the recovery situation of the number of foreign nationals entering Japan.



was set as the longest examination waiting time at the airport, and then the average time per month was calculated, but in the past, there were no proactive or regular announcements of the maximum amount of time spent waiting for an immigration examination.

However, considering the fact that the amount of time spent waiting in line for an immigration examination is a matter of great concern for foreign travelers visiting Japan as it affects the time they spend in Japan, a decision was made to revise the method of measurement from January 2017 so as to utilize the electronic data held by the Immigration Services Agency. As a result, it became possible to measure the “rate of achievement of the goal of an immigration examination waiting time of 20 minutes” and the “longest immigration examination waiting time / time of occurrence” for each airport (terminal and examination areas), and this data is now compiled on a monthly basis and published once a month on the Immigration Services Agency website.

([https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyuukokukanri07\\_00117.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyuukokukanri07_00117.html))

## Section 2 Strengthened Countermeasures at the Port of Entry

### 1 Immigration Examinations Utilizing Information

#### (1) Implementation of Immigration Examinations Utilizing Biometric Information

Since November 2007, foreign nationals who intend to enter Japan have been required to submit their Biometric information (fingerprints and a facial photograph). This enables the Immigration Services Agency to accurately and promptly confirm that the applicant for the verification for landing is the same as the passport holder, and to check the applicant against the blacklist maintained by the Immigration Services Agency. In addition, it has become possible to stringently detect those who have previously been deported and again try to enter Japan illegally using a forged passport or another person's passport by checking their information against the data on fingerprints and facial photographs of those who were deported in the past retained by the Immigration Services Agency. In addition, since October 2016, in order to rigorously detect terrorists etc. at the time of the landing examination, we have been cross-checking the facial photographs provided by foreign nationals at the time of the landing examination against the facial images of terrorists and other suspect persons. The total number of foreign nationals ordered to depart through a departure order and deported through a deportation order based on the utilization of Biometric information was 11,465 from the start of utilization of this information in the immigration examinations by the end of December, 2020.

On the other hand, there have been an increasing number of cases where in order to avoid their past history of deportation being discovered, foreign nationals have attempted to disguise their fingerprints by scarring their fingers or undergoing surgery and have illegally entered Japan using a forged or altered passport obtained through such means. In order to respond more appropriately to cases of disguised fingerprints, we have been striving to uncover these disguised fingerprints by modifying the fingerprint acquisition devices, and in addition to executing the deportation procedures, the Immigration Services Agency has been strictly enforcing criminal dispositions through accusations and notifications to the police and



other law enforcement agencies.

In addition, since March 26, 2021, facial images of people who receive departure confirmation when departing Japan have been collated with facial images of people who are subject to departure confirmation deferment, which are held by the Immigration Services Agency.



**Immigration examination through the use of Biometric information**

## **(2) Utilizing of ICPO's Database of Stolen and Lost Travel Documents**

The introduction and operation of a system to enable the utilization of ICPO's database of stolen and lost travel documents at the time of the landing examinations as a measure to prevent terrorism was decided in the "Action Plan for the Prevention of Terrorism" (decision of the Headquarters for the Promotion of Measures against Transnational Organized Crime and Other Relative Issues and International Terrorism on December 10, 2004), and examinations have been conducted since August 2009 utilizing ICPO's stolen and lost travel documents database search system.

The Immigration Services Agency strives to detect and prevent cases of illegal entry by terrorists and individuals who plan to commit illegal acts in Japan using lost or stolen passports by utilizing the database, and moreover, through passport forensics using high-performance forged and altered document forensics equipment deployed at the major airports and seaports throughout the country.

## **(3) Immigration Examinations Utilizing API and PNR**

From February 2007, the Immigration Services Agency has made it mandatory for the captain of all vessels and aircraft entering Japan to submit advance passenger information (API), and from February 2010, the advance passenger information system (APIS) is being operated making it possible for the API, etc. of aircraft arriving at the airports to be received electronically via the Nippon Automated Cargo and Port Consolidated System (NACCS) operated by Nippon Automated Cargo and Port Consolidated System, Inc. From

June 2017, the reporting time of the information, which, in principle, used to be set at “90 minutes before arrival” was revised to, in principle, “30 minutes from the time of departing the area outside of Japan”, making it possible to detect the arrival of suspect persons much sooner and to realize stricter and more prompt immigration examinations. Furthermore, the APIS started operation in July 2020 for the API of vessels entering the ports, leading to the realization of stricter and more prompt immigration examinations.

In addition, as the number of foreign nationals entering Japan has increased significantly, in order to stringently prevent the entry of suspect persons through immigration control at the border, the airline companies have been requested since January 2015 to provide passenger name records (PNR), and from January 2016, we have commenced electronic receipt of PNRs via NACCS and have been using them in the immigration examinations.

With regard to API and PNR reports, it has been made obligatory to submit electronic reports via NACCS since June 2021, in order to promote efficient analysis and utilization of information by promoting digitization.

## 2 Reinforcement of Information Collection and Analysis

In recent years, terrorist attacks have occurred all over the world, and the Immigration Services Agency must take even stricter countermeasures at the port of entry in order to reliably prevent terrorists from entering Japan.

Meanwhile, it is necessary to achieve the intricate balance of strict immigration control, including measures to prevent terrorism, and also smooth entry examinations to realize Japan as a tourism-oriented country.

Therefore, in October 2015, as the core organization for information gathering and analysis in immigration control, the Center of Collection and Analysis of Intelligence was established in the Immigration Services Agency, and this Center promotes information sharing with domestic and overseas related organizations, collects information on international terrorists and other information, implements an advanced analysis of the information together with other information held by the authorities including API and PNRs, and uses the results at the Regional Immigration Services Offices of the airports and other places, thereby, implementing smooth and strict countermeasures at the border.

## 3 Patrol Activities at Airports and Seaports

In fact, there have been some cases of illegal entry into a third country misusing the transit areas (special areas made available in international airports, consisting of areas through which those who enter the country by airplane move until they reach the landing examination site, and places where those who are making airplane connections can stay before they go onboard) in Japanese major airports.

Accordingly, the immigration control officers monitor and detect suspicious individuals by reinforced organizational patrols, in the transit areas of Narita Airport and other major airports.

In addition, there is a concern that illegal entry cases using vessels to smuggle those who have been deported from Japan in order to avoid landing examination utilizing Biometric information, would increase.

Owing to the possibility that terrorists or other related persons, etc. may be hidden among

the foreign nationals who have illegally entered Japan, in order to deal appropriately with these cases, mobile teams composed of immigration control officers (mobile teams for Kita-Nihon (northern Japan), Tokyo Bay Chiba, Tokyo Bay Yokohama, Naka-Nihon (central Japan), Kobe and Nishi-Nihon (West Japan)) have been assigned to the regional immigration services bureaus in Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Fukuoka, and the border measures have been strengthened. These mobile teams gather, analyze and share information on illegal foreign nationals entering and departing from Japan and conduct various joint drills, while reinforcing their cooperation with the related ministries and agencies. These mobile teams conduct patrols at the seaports and coastal areas under their jurisdictions and search onboard ships in port, as well as conducting investigations and detection of suspects, related suspects and brokers in connection with illegal immigration issues.



Patrol activity



Detection on a smuggling boat

# Chapter 8 Measures against Illegal and Imposter Foreign Residents, etc.

## Section 1 Implementation of Measures against Illegal Foreign Residents

### 1 Past Efforts to Reduce the Number of Illegal Foreign Residents

Based on the “Five-Year Plan to Halve the Number of Illegal Foreign Residents” launched in 2004, each Regional Immigration Bureau (at that time) has actively promoted various measures, including strict implementation of landing/residence examinations, proactive public relations activities regarding illegal employment, strengthened detection by the Special Detection Officer Units (see subsection 2 (1) below), etc. wider application of custody transfer in accordance with Article 65 of the Immigration Control Act and the encouragement of the appearances of illegal foreign residents under the departure order system. As a result, the number of illegal foreign residents, which was approximately 250,000 at the start of the plan, decreased to approximately 130,000 as of January 2009, and its goal was almost accomplished.

Based on the “Action Plan 2008 for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime” aiming to “create a society that generates no illegal foreign residents under the new residency management system”, as the Immigration Bureau (at that time) has continued efforts to further reduce the number of foreign nationals illegally staying, consequently the number of foreign nationals overstaying their authorized period of stay was decreased to approximately 59,000 as of January 1, 2014.

However, after the number of foreign nationals overstaying their authorized period of stay increased for the first time in 22 years to reach approximately 60,000 as of the time of January 1, 2015, the number as of January 1 of each previous year had increased for six consecutive years, but as of January 1, 2021, this number has decreased slightly from the previous year to about 83,000.

### 2 Efforts to Further Reduce the Number of Illegal Foreign Residents

As a result of the above efforts, the number of illegal foreign residents has seen a steady

(\*1) In order to ensure further improvement of the transparency and equity of the special permission to stay, the Immigration Services Agency formulated and published the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan”. The guideline articulates what elements are considered positive elements and what are considered negative elements in determining whether special permission to stay should be granted or not and presents what points are considered in determining whether special permission to stay should be granted or not ([https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyuukokukanri01\\_00008.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyuukokukanri01_00008.html)).

(\*2) Examples of public relations activities:

- (i) During the “Campaign for Measures against Illegal Foreign Workers” held in June, every year public relations for the prevention of illegal employment are conducted.
- (ii) A page for “Procedures for Voluntary Appearance at the Immigration Office” was created on the website of the Immigration Services Agency in order to give clear explanations of the benefits of a voluntary appearance at the immigration office and the procedures after the appearance both to those wishing to return to their home country and to those wishing to continue staying in Japan ([https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyukan\\_nyukan87.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyukan_nyukan87.html)).



decline, but due to the rapid increase in the number of foreign nationals entering Japan through the various measures being taken by the government aimed at making Japan a tourism-oriented country, in recent years, there was an increasing trend, and while the number of new foreign nationals entering Japan decreased significantly in 2020 due to COVID-19, the number illegally overstaying may increase, so and therefore efforts will be made to maintain a corresponding structure to crack down on these illegal foreign residents, and moreover, to strengthen the following measures and further reduce the number of illegal foreign residents.

### **(1) Strengthened Detection**

The Immigration Services Agency has established the “Special Detection Officer Units” that are to engage full-time in detecting offenders in violation of the Immigration Act and locate the unit in large city areas where there are many illegal foreign residents, by which the Regional Immigration Services Bureau has reinforced the ability to detect illegal foreign residents, has strengthened cooperation with the local police authorities and has promoted joint detection.

In addition, since it has come to our attention that illegal foreign residents tend to be concentrated in smaller groups and are scattered throughout the country, these day the Immigration Services Agency is making efforts to improve collection and analysis of various kinds of information pertaining to illegal foreign residents and to promote efficient and effective exposure through assembling immigration control officers who engage in detection tailored to the target of the detection.

### **(2) Preparation of an Environment Facilitating Voluntary Appearance**

The Immigration Services Agency has introduced the departure order system as a measure to encourage illegal foreign residents existing in various parts of the country to voluntarily appear at the immigration office, and also took other measures, including a revision of the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan”<sup>(\*)</sup> and publication of such cases, as well as public relations activities to encourage voluntary appearance at an immigration office.

The departure order system is a system where, unlike with the deportation procedures, foreign nationals staying illegally beyond their authorized period of stay, who meet certain criteria such as appearing in person to make a declaration in order to depart from Japan, are able to depart through simple procedures without being detained (see Part 1, Section 5, Subsection 5 below). 6,898 foreign nationals were issued with a departure order based on this system in 2020.

Meanwhile, the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan”, which was approved and announced in 2006 was revised in July 2009 in order to increase the transparency of the operations. The revised guideline shows that if an illegal foreign resident voluntarily appears at the immigration office, this is considered a positive factor in the judgment on adjustment of their legal status.

The Immigration Services Agency is also taking measures to further publicize the departure order system and the revised guideline on special permission to stay in Japan by conducting active public relations activities, improving the environment for voluntary appearances and aiming to encourage illegal foreign residents to voluntarily appear at the immigration office<sup>(\*)</sup>.



## Section 2 Implementation of Measures against Imposter Foreign Residents

### 1 Countermeasures against Imposter Foreign Residents, etc.

“Imposter residents” are foreign nationals residing in Japan having illegally received entry or landing permission as though they came under one of the statuses of residence having disguised their identity or activities such as by using forged or altered documents or false documents under the cover of a fake marriage, fake studies or fake employment, etc., or they may not necessarily have concealed the purpose of their activities from the onset but are currently engaged in illegal work which is far removed from their actual status of residence, and therefore, taking measures against imposter residents is also an important task in terms of immigration control and residency management administration along with measures against illegal residents. “Imposter residents” appear on the surface to be legal residents, which makes it difficult to accurately ascertain their situation, but their increase in number is a cause for concern since they substantively orchestrate illegal entry and residence in Japan.

Since the existence of imposter residents abusing the system of status of residence is related to the foundation of immigration control and residency management in Japan, it cannot be overlooked, and therefore the Immigration Services Agency has been striving to respond strictly to clarify the realities of these kinds of cases through detailed investigations and has been enforcing deportation procedures against persons coming under the grounds for deportation and enforcing the procedures for revocation of the status of residence of persons coming under the grounds for revocation of the status of residence.

In addition, in recent years, there has been a significant number of cases where foreign nationals use forged or altered residence cards or abuse the refugee recognition system. Since these methods are becoming more malicious and sophisticated, the Immigration Services Agency closely collaborate with the police and other related organizations, and in malicious cases, the Immigration Services Agency proactively seeks criminal punishment and deal strictly with such persons, and also strives to work on measures to uncover the situation of these cases.

### 2 Crackdown on Imposter Foreign Residents, etc.

#### (1) Reinforcement of the Collection and Analysis of Information

In order to promote measures against imposter foreign residents, it is very important to carry out further effective crackdowns by uncovering such residents based on the collection and analysis of information.

For this reason, the Immigration Services Agency accurately grasps the residence status and work status of foreign nationals by conducting advanced analysis of various kinds of information such as a wide range of information provided by the public, information provided by the organizations to which foreign nationals belong, information on the employment status of foreign nationals provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and information shared from the relevant organizations. Regional Immigration Services Bureau utilize the analysis results to effectively uncover and crack down on imposter foreign residents and deal strictly with such persons.

## (2) Handling Through Reinforced Exposure and Proactive Application of Law

In order to work on proactive exposure of imposter residents, when as a result of an investigation, a foreign national who resides in Japan with a status of residence which has restrictions on the contents of the activities is discovered engaging solely in a work activity which is not permitted with his/her status of residence previously granted, deportation procedures will be executed against such a foreign national as a violator engaging in an unauthorized activity.

In addition, even if a foreign national does not fall under the grounds for deportation, the Immigration Services Agency has been making efforts to reinforce crackdowns through such means as having immigration control officers and immigration inspectors coordinate to uncover the actual situation of the foreign national, and if a foreign national is found to fall under the grounds for revocation of the status of residence, the procedure for revocation of the status of residence will be instituted.

### 3 Strict Handling of Brokers Involved in Aiding Illegal Residence and Imposter Residence

Article 24 of the Immigration Control Act provides that anyone coming under any of the following grounds for deportation will be deported: a person who has prepared or otherwise provided forged or false documents for the purpose of having another foreign national illegally acquire permission; a person who has had another foreign national engage in illegal work; a person who possesses forged residence cards for the purpose of using them; and a person who has forged or otherwise provided residence cards. In close cooperation with the police and other agencies, the Immigration Services Agency proactively exposes brokers and other offenders involved in aiding foreign nationals overstaying their authorized period of stay and imposter foreign residents pursuant to the provisions of this Article, and moreover, takes stringent actions against those unlawful employers who are involved in the crime of aiding with illegal employment.

### 4 Countermeasures against the Forging of Residence Cards

Under the new residency management system launched in July 2012, mid to long-term residents are issued with residence cards, and special permanent residents are issued with special permanent resident certificates. Since these serve as certificates, and it is necessary to protect their social credibility, various forgery prevention measures are provided on the faces of them. However, forgery techniques have become more elaborate and the cases have occurred where forged residence cards were created by illegally taking advantage of inquiries on expiration information in recent year; therefore it is urgent to enhance countermeasures against forgery.

An IC chip data reading application providing a function for reading the content of the IC chip such as residence cards by smartphone or the like and confirming that the information has not been forged or altered was introduced and is distributed free of charge on the Immigration Services Agency website from December 2020.



Residence  
card reading  
application  
2D code

## **Article:** At the Front Line of Immigration Control Administration

(Voice of an immigration control officer in charge of immigration security in general)  
(Kobe District Immigration Services Office, Osaka regional Immigration  
Services Bureau: Makino Sho)

I work at the Enforcement Department, Kobe District Immigration Services Office, Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau, as an immigration control officer being mainly engaged in investigation into violations.

When most people hear “investigation into violation”, they wonder what that means.

Immigration control officers conduct deportation procedures for foreign nationals who fall under the grounds for deportation, and work done by immigration officers can be broadly divided into three categories: “investigation into violation”, “treatment of detainees”, and “execution”. In large regional immigration services bureaus such as Tokyo and Osaka, each of these types of work is subdivided into individual divisions. However, at the Kobe District Immigration Services Bureau, the Enforcement Department divides responsibility for all of this work, and when there is not enough staff in charge of each type of work, we work to help each other, engaging in multiple types of work.

Foreign nationals are subjected to deportation procedures for various reasons; some have been caught violating immigration laws, others who turn themselves in wishing to return to their home country, and others subjected to criminal punishment. In violation investigations, we mainly collect evidence and prepare statements to support accusations of violations.

Deportation procedures sometimes involve compulsory enforcement of procedures and restriction of freedoms, and the results of these procedures can greatly affect the lives of foreign nationals, so I always conduct violation



an immigration control officer in  
charge of investigation

investigations fairly and with a sense of responsibility, with concern for each individual undergoing deportation procedures.

Another important task for immigration control officers is to deport foreign nationals who have been issued with a deportation order as a result of deportation procedures.

In 2020, there were many immigration law violators who were unable to continue their daily lives in Japan and wished to return to their home countries, but still cannot return to their home countries because so many flights were cancelled. When we find a special flight or rescue flight, we would often spend half a day or more escorting violators to Narita Airport for deportation. We spare no efforts if we can reduce the number of immigration law violators by even one.

Currently, Japan is accepting many foreign nationals and aims to realize a symbiotic society co-existing with foreign nationals, but simultaneously there are also concerns about worsening public safety. I will keep doing my best to maintain public safety in Japan and properly conduct immigration control management, so that Japanese nationals and foreign nationals alike can live in Japan with a sense of safety and security.

## Section 3 Efforts for Further Appropriate Treatment

### 1 Efforts for Further Appropriate Treatment of Detainees

Based on an agreement reached with the Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA) in September 2010, the Immigration Services Agency started discussions with the JFBA on better measures about treatment of foreign nationals held in the detention centers, and will continue to hold such discussions in the future. To date, the Immigration Services Agency has already implemented measures together with the JFBA such as having attorneys provide legal consultations to detainees, while some members of JFBA have been providing regular consultations over the phone or in person to detainees in the detention centers.

In addition, when a foreign national has been issued a deportation order, but there is no prospect for deportation owing to such circumstances preventing the deportation that the detainee suffers from a disease, that it is difficult for such person to acquire a passport or that the case is pending in court. In these situations, the Immigration Services Agency, as far as possible, proactively grants provisional release to ensure that such foreign nationals are not detained for a long period of time.

Furthermore, while taking into consideration actual conditions at detention facilities, we are striving to enhance the daily lives of detainees within a scope that does not interfere with security, such as extending time for treatment open space, exercise outdoors, or bathing. In addition, we are striving to provide treatment with greater consideration for the human rights of detainees, such as providing access to medical care and counseling by clinical psychologists.

## 2 Activities and Duties of the Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee

The Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee was established for the purpose of securing transparency in security treatment and of improving the management of the immigration detention facilities. There are two committees; one is in the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau, and the other is in the Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau. Each committee takes charge of immigration centers and departure waiting facilities in 24 locations (as at the end of March 2021) spread across Japan according to the jurisdiction. Each committee inspects the facilities, meets with and interviews detainees, checks the opinions and proposals posted by detainees in the proposal boxes, and holds meetings. Based on the result of these activities, the committee expresses opinions to the Director of the Immigration Detention Center or the Director of the Regional Immigration Services Bureau (hereinafter referred to collectively as “Directors”).

Over the course of the year from April 2020 to March 2021, a total of 10 inspections and 68 interviews took place in the facilities throughout Japan, and 44 opinions were given to the directors of the facilities. On receiving the opinions from the committee, the directors promptly review them and endeavor to take measures where possible.

Committee members, who are selected from people who have a reputable character, possess deep insight and are committed to improving the operations of the immigration detention centers, are appointed as part-time government officials by the Minister of Justice. A maximum of no more than ten members may be appointed for each committee from experts from diverse fields, such as academic experts, legal experts, medical experts, NGO workers, the staff of international organizations and local residents.

In addition, a summary of the opinions given by the committees and the measures taken by the Directors based on those opinions is published each year pursuant to the provisions of the Immigration Control Act.

## Section 4 Promotion of the Deportation of Deportees

### 1 Implementation of Safe and Reliable Deportation of Deportation Evaders

Recently, there has been the problem of an increasing number of foreign nationals who have been issued with a deportation order but who attempt to evade deportation (deportation evaders) because of aspiration to work in Japan or other reasons.

The Immigration Services Agency tries to convince these deportation evaders to return to their country of their own volition, but if they still attempt to evade deportation, they will ultimately be deported on a regular flight accompanied by escort officers based on the provisions of law, or mass deportation may be implemented using chartered flights for the purpose of safer and more secure deportation.

In addition, some foreign nationals who attempt to evade deportation are often anxious about their lives after return, and with regard to foreign nationals who are deemed to require humanitarian considerations, we are striving to promote the use of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programs, with the cooperation of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Japan.



## 2 Implementation of Mass Deportation Using Chartered Flights

Although we endeavor to repeatedly convince deportation evaders to return to their country of their own volition, if they still attempt to evade deportation, they will ultimately be deported on a regular flight accompanied by escort officers based on the provisions of law.

However, deportation using a regular flight can cause a disturbance, for example, deportees might start shouting in the cabin, and there are cases where the deportation cannot be implemented owing to the decision of the captain to deny boarding, or alternatively, even if detainees are able to board the aircraft, there remained the fact that this imposes a heavy burden on private airlines, as it causes anxiety for other passengers.

For this reason, since 2013, we have been implementing the mass deportation using chartered flights, which allows for safe and reliable deportation without boarding being refused by the captain of the aircraft, and by the end of FY 2020, a total of 339 foreign nationals were deported over a total of eight flights (five destinations).

## 3 Promotion of the Use of IOM Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programs

On the other hand, there are some foreign nationals, being issued deportation orders, evade deportation despite wanting to return to their home country because of fears about life after return.

Of these persons, with regard to foreign nationals who are deemed to require humanitarian considerations, Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programs have been implemented since FY 2013 with the cooperation of the IOM Japan office. This AVRR program aims to dispel the anxiety deportees feel about returning home and to encourage the voluntary return of the deportees through the provision of reintegration support after return such as job placement and medical support.

So far, a number of families and individuals have returned home such as Asia, Africa and South America through this program and are receiving living, employment and enrollment support after returning home from the respective local IOM office.

The Immigration Services Agency intends to continue with implementation of these programs with the cooperation of the IOM and to facilitate the voluntary return of deportees and reintegration in their home country.

**Article: At the Front Line of Immigration Control Administration**

(Voice of an immigration control officer in charge of the treatment of detainees)  
(Omura Immigration Center: Shibata Koki)

Omura Immigration Center is one of two immigration detention centers in Japan, mainly used for the detention and deportation of foreign nationals who have been issued deportation orders. As an immigration control officer working in the Detention Department, I am in charge of the treatment of detainees.

In the course of treatment work, we take special care of the health condition of detainees, and give them as much freedom as possible within the scope that does not interfere with security, so we must respond to various requests made by detainees. Some detainees occasionally make unreasonable demands or use violence, and in such cases we sometimes respond with the minimum necessary force, so treatment work has an element of danger.

My primary responsibilities are to work with medical staff stationed at Omura Immigration Center, including nurses and immigration security officers licensed as assistant nurses, to respond promptly and properly to detainees who complain of ill health, and to send detainees to external hospitals for outpatient or inpatient care as necessary, taking all possible measures to ensure the health of detainees.

There are some detainees who choose not to receive medical treatment in hopes of being released from detention, and our medical care is done in a special environment unlike typical hospitals. I find it to be very rewarding work, because I can use the English language skills I developed when studying abroad in university to assist in medical care by communicating with detainees being not good at Japanese language.

Currently, Omura Immigration Center is also busy implementing COVID-19 preventive measures. I work with medical staff to measure the body temperature and check the physical condition of staff and detainees daily, and take measures such as disinfecting surfaces touched by multiple people every day.

Detention facilities are closed spaces, so once there is a single case of COVID-19, the risk of it spreading is extremely high. As such, all staff members strive to maintain their own physical health, and diligently prevent viruses from entering the facility. In the unlikely event that a staff member or detainee becomes infected, we do our utmost to prevent secondary infections and minimize the impact of the virus.



an immigration control officer in  
Detention Department

**Chapter 9****Promotion of Appropriate and Prompt Refugee Protection****Section 1****Revision of the Operation of the Refugee Recognition System, etc.****1 Revision of the Operation of the Refugee Recognition System****(1) Outline**

With regard to the refugee recognition system, the time required for the examination of the cases is becoming more prolonged, and problems have been occurring which hinder the provision of prompt protection of refugees owing to the proliferation of applications for recognition of refugee status in recent years and applications which attempt to abuse/misuse the system for the purpose of employment or residence in Japan. Moreover, problems have also arisen concerning the difficulty of clarifying the decisions on whether or not an applicant is a refugee.

Therefore, based on the purport of the recommendations in the reports submitted in December 2014 by the “6th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel”, which is the private advisory council of the Minister of Justice, and the “Expert Committee on the Refugee Recognition System”, a study was conducted on reviewing the operation of the refugee recognition system, which was published in the form of the “Summary of the Revision of the Operation of the Refugee Recognition System” on September 15, 2015.

**(2) Proper Operation of the System**

The contents of the review were (i) clarifying the persons eligible for protection, the decisions on recognition and the procedures, (ii) strengthening the system and infrastructure pertaining to refugee recognition administration, (iii) appropriate handling of applications attempting to abuse or misuse the refugee recognition system and the measures implemented so far are as given below.

**(i) Clarifying the persons eligible for protection, the decisions on recognition and the procedures**

The points of the decisions in cases where the applicant was recognized as a refugee and cases where the applicant was not recognized as a refugee have always been clearly shown in press releases pertaining to the number of refugees recognized, but from 2016, cases where applicants were granted permission to stay for humanitarian consideration are also being published and the same measures are being taken.

In addition, since March 2017, it has been started to allow having interviews with a doctor, a counselor, or a lawyer, etc. for minors unaccompanied by their parents, individuals with severe physical disabilities, individuals with mental disabilities or individuals with serious illnesses.

**(ii) Strengthening the system and infrastructure pertaining to refugee recognition administration**

Since 2015, as well as implementing refugee recognition administrative staff training for management-level officers with the cooperation of the UNHCR, the Immigration Services Agency has been working on the development and capacity-building of refugee inquirers through enhancing the content of the regular training relating to information on the countries of origin of the applicants for refugee recognition and practical training using case studies. In 2020, training was conducted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, in May 2017, the position of officers to engage in the collection and analysis of country of origin information (COI officer) was created, and later, a structure, consisting of multiple officers in charge, was formed while the collecting and sharing of the COI and other information was strengthened with the cooperation of the UNHCR. Furthermore, we actively collect information on country of origin, which is necessary for determining refugee status, in cooperation with related organization, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNHCR.

(iii) Appropriate handling of applications attempting to abuse or misuse the refugee recognition system

Since September 2015, applications that attempt to abuse or misuse the refugee recognition system, such as cases claiming a situation that clearly does not come under the 1951 Refugee Convention which is for the purpose of prompt and reliable protection of refugees, are pre-sorted before they reach the stage of a full-scale investigation and while ensuring that an opportunity is given to the applicant to make a sufficient case such as the setting of a hearing into the circumstances by a refugee inquirer, with prompt processing, as measures for status of residence, we have started measures to not allow work (hereinafter, “work restrictions”) and measures to not allow residence (hereinafter, “residence restrictions”) for those re-applicants who repeatedly abuse or misuse the application process.

Moreover, with regard to the sorting of applications, from the perspective of case processing optimization, a verification was conducted by an expert panel for verification of the situation of revisions for operation of the refugee recognition system (hereinafter referred to as “expert panel”) composed of outside experts.

## 2 Revision of the System by Amendment of the Regulation for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act

In June 2017, due to the enforcement of a ministerial order to amend part of the Regulation for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act, the authority to recognize refugees, which was previously only permitted to the Minister of Justice, was delegated to the Director of the Regional Immigration Bureau (at that time) . In addition, through the establishment of a new refugee recognition application form for repeat applications, efforts are being made to make efficient decisions regarding the sorting of cases and restrictions on employment and stay, and to streamline the processing of the cases.

## 3 Further Revision of the Operations to Optimize the Refugee Recognition System

### (1) Background

As described above, since September 2015, applications that attempt to abuse or misuse the system of refugee recognition are processed promptly, and restrictions on employment

or restrictions on stay depending on the content of the application, are imposed on those applicants who repeatedly submit refugee recognition applications for such purposes as working in Japan. These measures are intended for repeat applicants who re-submit applications for recognition of refugee status, and although these measures have had a certain degree of effect in curbing the re-submission of applications, the number of first-time applicants who attempt to abuse or misuse the system is still increasing rapidly, and the number of refugee recognition applicants, which was 5,000 in 2014, reached a record high of 19,629 in 2017, about four times the number, and this situation is interfering with the provision of prompt protection of refugees.

Therefore, in order to improve such situation, as described in (2), a further revision of the operations of the refugee recognition system including operation related to the status of residence of “Designated Activities” for those who applied while staying as a regular resident in Japan (hereinafter referred to as “further revision of the operations”) was carried out, and has been in force since January 2018.

## (2) Outline

The contents of the further revision of the operations are as follows.

### (i) Setting of a pre-sorting period

Measures have been taken to set a time limit for pre-sorting the contents of the cases following receipt of a first-time application (time limit not exceeding two months), and based on the results of pre-sorting the contents, to promptly take measures on the status of residence (permission to stay, restrictions on stay, work permission, restrictions on employment).

### (ii) Further consideration for applicants whose applicability as a refugee is deemed to be high

Applicants whose applicability as a refugee under the Refugee Convention is deemed to be high or applicants who are considered highly likely to need humanitarian consideration due to the situation in their home country, were previously granted the status of residence of “Designated Activities” (six months) permitting work after the passing of six months from the time of submission of the application for recognition of refugee status, but through a further revision of the operations, these applicants will be quickly granted the status of residence of “Designated Activities” (six months) permitting work after the sorting of the application, thereby promoting quicker protection.

### (iii) Further strict responses to abuse or misuse of applications

#### A. First-time applications

(A) Restrictions on stay will be imposed on applicants claiming circumstances that clearly do not correspond to the requests of the Refugee Convention’s grounds for persecution.

(B) Even in cases where restrictions on stay are not imposed, applicants who applied for recognition of refugee status after abandoning to engage in the activities falling under the original status of residence, such as technical intern trainees who have absconded or international students who have left their educational institution, or applicants who filed an application for recognition of refugee status during the departure preparing period will have restrictions imposed on their work. In addition, the period of stay in this case will be reduced from the previous six months to three months.



## B. Re-submission of applications

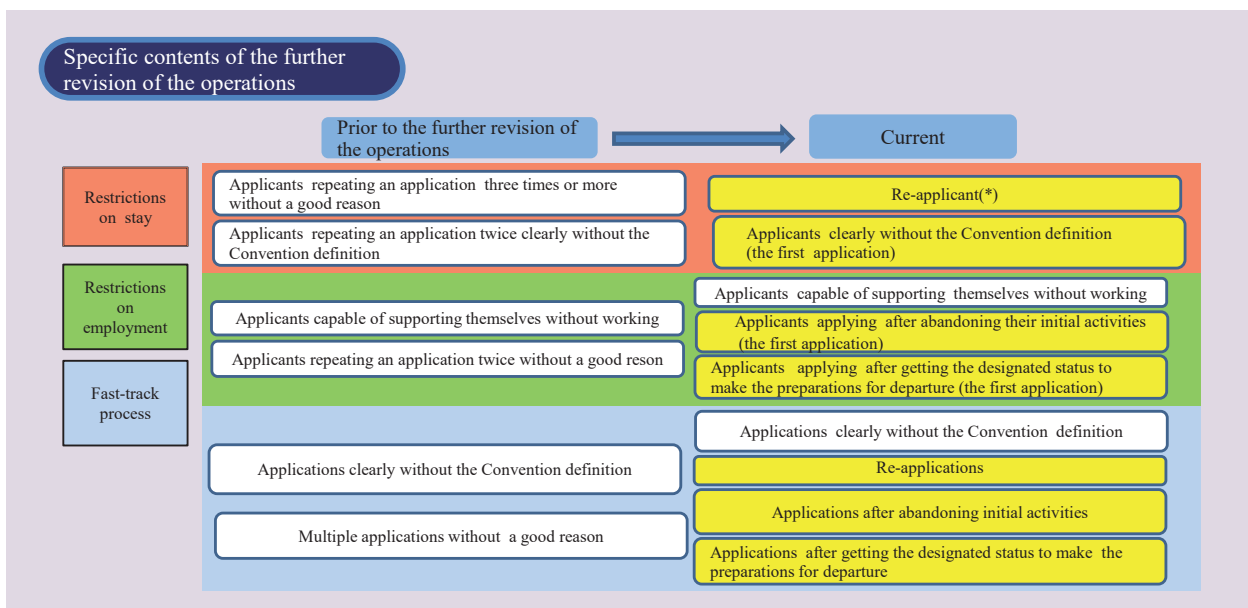
In principle, restrictions will be placed on stay in Japan.

However, even with repeat applicants, applicants whose applicability as a refugee under the Refugee Convention is deemed to be high, or applicants who are considered highly likely to need humanitarian consideration due to the the situation in their home country will be given the protection in the abovementioned (ii).

## C. Fast-track process

Cases of applicants for recognition of refugee status who come under the above-mentioned A and B will be promptly examined, and processed as quickly as possible ([Reference 79](#)).

### Reference 79 Summary of further revision of the operations of the refugee recognition system



(\*) Excludes applicants whose applicability as a refugee under the Refugee Convention is deemed to be high, or applicants who are considered likely to require humanitarian consideration due to the situation in their home country.

## 4 Situation after Revision of the Operations of the Refugee Recognition System

As a result of these efforts, the number of applicants for refugee recognition mainly from neighboring countries in Asia such as the Philippines and Viet Nam, which had been increasing rapidly in recent years, after decreasing significantly in 2018, continued to decrease slightly in 2019 to 10,375 (an approximately 47% decrease compared with 2017). In 2020, the number of new entrants to Japan decreased drastically due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, so there were only 3,936 applicants for refugee recognition.

Meanwhile, the number of applicants recognized as refugees has increased (20 in 2017, 42 in 2018, and 44 in 2019), and there has been a certain degree of effect in meeting the objective in that applications that attempt to abuse or misuse the system have been curbed and refugees are being offered prompt protection.

However, since there are still a number of applications that attempt to abuse or misuse the system, a consideration will be conducted from the aspects of both the legal system and operations with regard to measures to further curb applications that attempt to abuse or

misuse the system while taking into account the effects of previous efforts towards fundamental resolution of the problem.

## Section 2 Acceptance of Refugees through Resettlement

### 1 Acceptance in FY 2020 or before

Resettlement is intended to transfer and resettle refugees, who have been evacuated from their countries of origins and who are temporarily taking shelter in a refugee camp in a neighboring country or another place, to another country which agrees to accept such refugees from the countries where they were originally offered protection. Resettlement is deemed to be one of the permanent solutions of refugee problems, as well as “voluntary repatriation” and “resettlement in the first countries of asylum”.

The UNHCR encourages each country to accept refugees through the resettlement program from the standpoint of having the international community properly share its duties in relation to refugee problems.

In the past, Japan took measures to support the resettlement of Indochinese refugees and those recognized as refugees, but in order to deal with the various problems relating to refugees in the Asian region, in December 2008, the Cabinet approval was given to the introduction of a system of resettlement<sup>(\*)1</sup>. The Cabinet approval<sup>(\*)2</sup> prescribed that the relevant ministries and agencies would accept approximately 30 Myanmarse refugees every year from refugee camps in Thailand, as a pilot project starting from FY 2010 and would support their resettlement through interministry and agency cooperation. It was also stated that the pilot project would, in the future, be reviewed from various angles, and that based on the review, further consideration would be given to a future system of acceptance.

Based on the contents of the report (January 2014) compiled by the Advisory Council on Resettlement held under the auspices of the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues<sup>(\*)3</sup>, the future policy was approved by the Cabinet<sup>(\*)4</sup> in January 2014 and in accordance with the contents of this Cabinet approval<sup>(\*)5</sup>, the acceptance of resettlement refugees came to be fully implemented from 2015 to accept Myanmarse refugees temporarily staying in Malaysia.

The Immigration Services Agency is mainly in charge of the selection process for resettlement refugees to be accepted, and dispatches staff to conduct local interviews. From FY 2010 to FY 2014, Myanmarse refugees comprising 18 families composed of 86 family members were accepted from Thailand (in FY 2012 all of the families who had decided to come to Japan declined before coming to Japan). In FY 2015, Myanmarse refugees comprising six

(\*)1 Cabinet approval on December 16, 2008: “Implementation of a Pilot Project for the Admission of Refugees through Resettlement”.

(\*)2 Abovementioned Cabinet approval and “Specific Measures for Implementation of a Pilot Project for the Admission of Refugees through Resettlement” decision of the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues on December 19, 2008.

(\*)3 Established in the Cabinet to ensure the close cooperation of the relevant administrative agencies and to consider necessary measures for the government regarding various issues concerning refugees. The chair is the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary. The Deputy Commissioner of the Immigration Services Agency is a member.

(\*)4 Cabinet approval on January 24, 2014: “Implementation of the Admission of Refugee through Resettlement”

(\*)5 Abovementioned Cabinet approval and “Specific Measures for Implementation of the Admission of the Refugee through Resettlement” decision of the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues on January 24, 2014.

families composed of 19 family members, in FY 2016 seven families composed of 18 family members, in FY 2017 eight families composed of 29 family members, in FY 2018 five families composed of 22 family members and in FY 2019 six families composed of 20 family members were accepted from Malaysia totaling 50 families composed of 194 family members over the ten years from FY 2010 to FY 2019. However, in FY 2020, refugees through resettlement were not accepted due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2 Acceptance in FY 2021 and thereafter

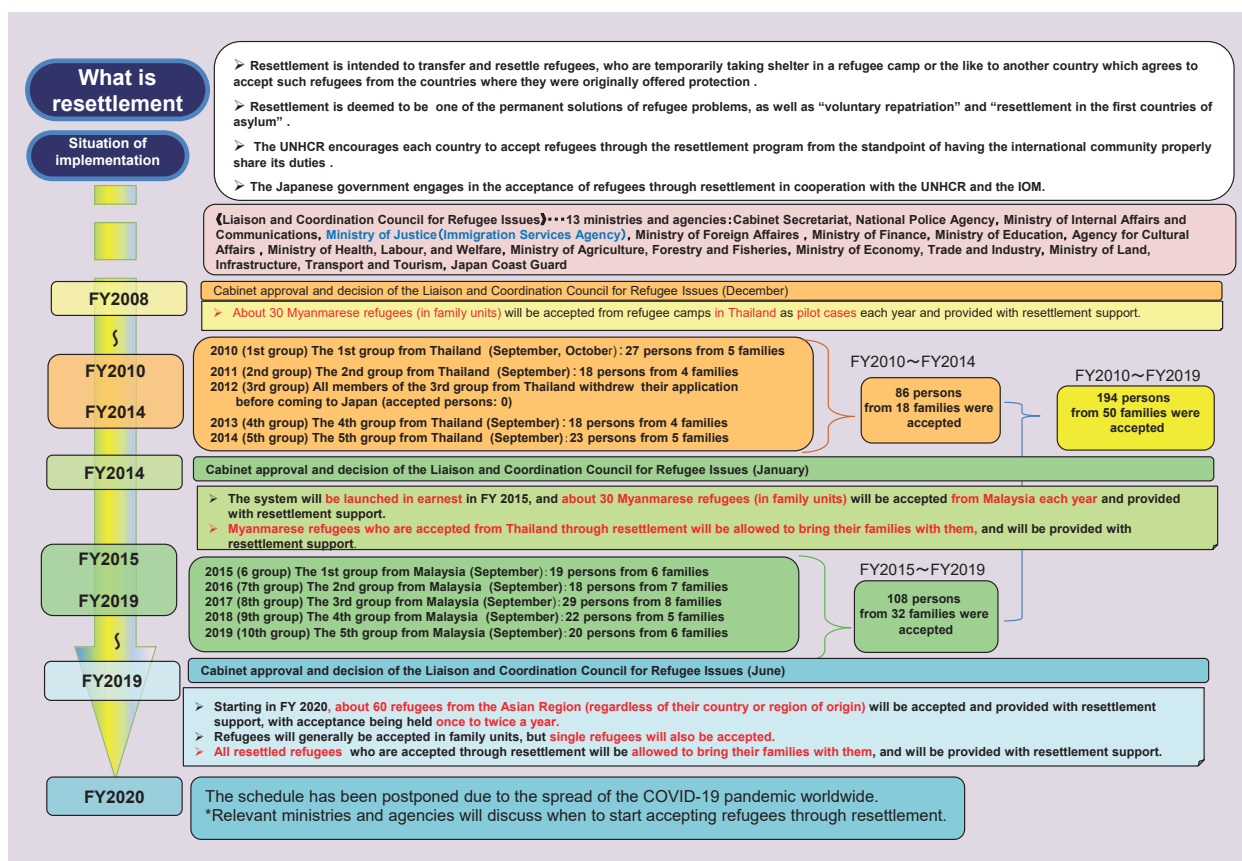
Then in October 2018, in order to continue accepting resettlement refugees, a study group consisting of the relevant ministries and agencies and experts was established to examine the necessity of expanding the scope of acceptance and the scope when expanding acceptance<sup>(\*)1)</sup>, and based on the results of the review by the study group, Cabinet approval<sup>(\*)2)</sup> was given on June 28, 2019 that partially amended the Cabinet approval of January 2014. Due to this change<sup>(\*)3)</sup>, it was decided that from FY 2020 onwards the scope of acceptance through resettlement would be expanded to include refugees (regardless of their country or region of origin) temporarily staying in Asia, single refugees would be accepted in addition to refugees in family units, the maximum number of accepted refugees would be increased to about 60 per year (with acceptance being increased from once to twice a year), and refugees accepted through resettlement would be able to bring their relatives with them as family members. In consideration of the government's policy, the Immigration Services Agency will continue to appropriately fulfill its role and strive to accept these refugees in a seamless manner, while working together with the relevant ministries and agencies.

(\*)1) "Study Group on Expansion of the Project for the Acceptance of Refugees through Resettlement" decided by the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues on October 22, 2018.

(\*)2) "Partial amendment to 'Implementation of the Acceptance of Refugees through Resettlement'" decided by the Cabinet on June 28, 2019.

(\*)3) In response to the partial amendment of the abovementioned Cabinet approval, partial amendment of the "Specific Measures Relating to the Acceptance of Refugees through Resettlement" decided as abovementioned by the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues on June 28, 2019.

## Reference 80 Situation of implementation and cases of acceptance through resettlement



## Section 3 Promotion of Collaboration with NGOs

With regard to refugee-related administration, it is necessary to identify specific points which need to be improved through discussions with individuals involved in the promotion of refugee protection incorporating the standpoint of the private sector and legal experts and to work to achieve better measures in collaboration with and cooperation from citizens' groups.

Therefore, on February 10, 2012, the Immigration Bureau (at that time) concluded a three-party agreement and exchanged a memorandum on cooperation with the Forum for Refugees Japan, which is a network of NGOs and groups supporting refugees and the JFBA, agreeing to hold discussions to identify the refugee-related administrative matters that the Immigration Bureau is responsible for and that need improving, including procedures for recognizing refugee status, and to exchange information on the provision of housing, with the assistance of refugee support groups, for refugees awaiting the results of their application for recognition of refugee status.

In accordance with the three-party discussions based on this memorandum, during the period of April 2012 and March 2014, the Immigration Bureau implemented a “pilot project”, which the Immigration Bureau requested the Forum for Refugees Japan to secure a residence for foreign nationals claiming asylum at Narita Airport for whom it is difficult to secure a residence, and Landing Permission for Temporary Refuge or Permission for Provisional Stay was granted to foreign nationals who were accepted by the Forum.

Subsequently, following discussions by the three parties, the same measures under this

project are currently being taken at Narita Airport, Haneda Airport, Chubu Airport and Kansai Airport. Since March 2017, foreign nationals from these airport branches have been sent to Higashi-Nihon Immigration Center, Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau, Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau, or Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau, and when one of the immigration Services offices to which the person was sent makes a decision on permission for provisional stay or permission for provisional release, the measures apply to such cases as well, and the measures have been applied to 42 foreign nationals (including those eligible for the pilot project and those to whom similar measures were applied before the project's launching) as of 2020.

## Section 4 Acceptance Status of Syrian International Students

The Japanese government has started an initiative to accept a maximum of 150 Syrian international students over the course of 5 years, with technical cooperation from JICA. It is intended to provide educational opportunities to Syrian youth who have been deprived of the opportunity to attend school due to the Syrian crisis and develop human resources who will be responsible for the future rebuilding of Syria, as part of comprehensive support for stabilizing the Middle East Region, a goal stated at the 1<sup>st</sup> “Meeting of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Promotion Headquarters” held on May 20, 2016. A total of 95 Syrian international students were accepted from 2017 to 2020.

**Reference 81** Acceptance status of Syrian international students

(People)

| Year                 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | Total |
|----------------------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Number of acceptance | 28   | 29   | 22   | 16   | 95    |

(\*) The number of Syrian international students accepted is the number of (1) Syrian students accepted as international students in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the “Japanese Initiative for the future of Syrian Refugees” (JISR), a human resources development project for Syrian refugees conducted by JICA, and (2) Students who are accepted as government-sponsored international students under the government-sponsored international student system implemented by MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology). The government-sponsored international student system does not require applicants to be Syrian refugees.



**Chapter 10****Responses to International Society and International Situations****Section 1 Treaties and International Conventions****1 Major Actions for Negotiations for the Conclusion of EPAs with Other Countries**

The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are agreements which aim to promote liberalization and facilitation of trade between signatory nations, as well as the coordination of policies, relaxation of regulations, and cooperation in various economic areas, including tariffs, trade in services, investment, intellectual property and personal exchanges. The Immigration Services Agency has been actively involved in negotiations for the conclusion of EPAs with various countries: Singapore (effective date: November 2002), Mexico (April 2005), Malaysia (July 2006), Chile (September 2007), Thailand (November 2007), Indonesia (July 2008), Brunei (July 2008), the Philippines (December 2008), Switzerland (September 2009), Viet Nam (October 2009), India (August 2011), Peru (March 2012), Australia (January 2015), Mongolia (June 2016), TPP (December 2018), EU (February 2019) and UK (January 2021); and has been responsible for the part in the negotiations in relation to the “movement of natural persons”.

As of April 1, 2021, the Immigration Services Agency has primarily been involved in negotiations for the Japan-China-Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

**2 Support for other bilateral and multilateral frameworks**

The Immigration Services Agency, in light of the deep relationship to the work under its jurisdiction, actively supports frameworks aimed at exchanging information and opinions and improving cooperative relationships among multiple countries, including the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), and ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization).

In order to strengthen cooperation on security between Japan and Australia, the Immigration Services Agency is actively explaining its position regarding immigration procedures, even within bilateral frameworks such as the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement, which concerns joint training of the Japan Self-Defense Forces and the Australian Army.

For the purpose of simplifying port procedures, necessary adjustments have been made in order to maintain consistency between Japan's immigration and residency management system and the “1965 Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic” (FAL Convention), which includes the adoption of relevant document formats and simplification of procedures, as well as the “Convention on International Civil Aviation” (Chicago Convention), which aims to simplify immigration, customs, quarantine, and facility management procedures at airports.

### 3 Reports and Examinations in Accordance with Human Rights Treaties

Japan is a signatory to various treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPAPED). With regard to government reports on the status of the implementation of those treaties, the Immigration Services Agency is involved in the drafting of reports, review of the government reports and follow-up thereof from the perspective of immigration control and residency management administration.

## Section 2 International Conferences/ International Exchange

### 1 Responding to International Conferences

The Migration Experts Sub-Group (MESG) Meeting, one of the sub groups of the G7 Rome-Lyon Group which is a working experts' group to discuss measures against international terrorism and transnational organized crime, is discussing measures that the G7 members should take cooperatively in the area of illegal immigration and forgery or alteration of documents.

MESG Meeting was held online in October 2020, and officials from the Immigration Services Agency attended the meeting to exchange information and opinions with the counterparts of other countries.

In addition to the international meetings mentioned above, the Immigration Services Agency sends delegates to the Government Delegation on Anti-Human Trafficking Measures to exchange information on recent efforts to counter trafficking in persons, as well as to the Consular Consultation etc. to express Japan's position actively and build cooperative relationships with other countries. The Immigration Services Agency also sends officials to participate in multinational meetings, such as the International Air Transport Association (IATA)/Control Authorities Working multinational Group (CAWG) for the purpose of information sharing and exchanging opinions.

### 2 International Exchange

The Immigration Services Agency has been striving to strengthen cooperative relations with other countries and regions such as by actively exchanging views with the immigration authorities of other countries at different levels and accepting visits from related organizations.

In FY 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Immigration Services Agency strengthened cooperative relationships while exploring new ways of doing international exchange.

This included exchanging opinions online with Australian immigration authority, and participating in an online exchange of opinions held by the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association and the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association.

The Immigration Services Agency is also actively working to build new frameworks for cooperative relationships, such as by holding discussions with immigration authorities at the U.S. Embassy in Japan.

In addition, officials from the Republic of Korea, Brazil, and Indonesia visited the Immigration Services Agency, where we exchanged opinions, and also held informational seminars on Japan's immigration control and residency management system for diplomatic corps of Arab countries.

**Chapter 11**

# Improvement of Public Relations Activities and Public Services

## Section 1 Promotion of Public Relations Activities

Recognizing that public relations and enlightenment activities both in Japan and abroad play a major role in the smooth implementation of immigration control and residency management administration, the Immigration Services Agency has been further promoting more active public relations activities than ever before. As the main public relations activities, we provide information including the current circumstances concerning immigration control and residency management administration, new systems and changes of procedures.

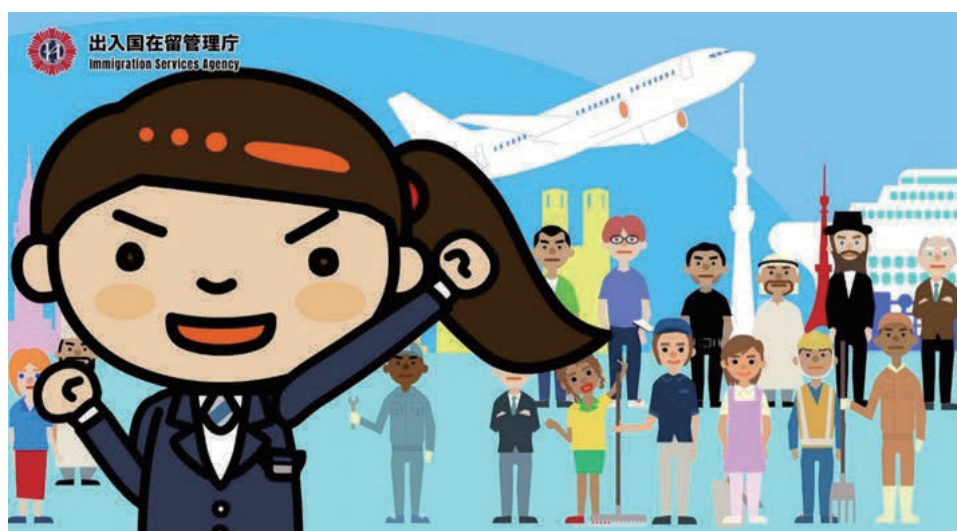
In order to explain the current circumstances of immigration control and residency management administration, statistics such as the number of those entering or departing from Japan, the number of foreign residents, the number of foreign nationals overstaying and the number of applications for refugee recognition are released on the website of the Immigration Services Agency. In addition, we also disclose information on cases of special permission to stay in Japan, examination of statuses of residence, the average processing time for refugee recognition examinations, the immigration examination waiting time at airports and endeavor to widely spread understanding of the current situation of immigration control and residency management administration.

In addition, we proactively explain the immigration control and residency management systems and procedural guidelines, and raise awareness by distributing posters and leaflets, not only by posting information about various systems on the Immigration Services Agency website. Also, we have created and published various public relations videos.

For the purpose of preventing illegal work through the appropriate employment of foreign nationals, the Immigration Services Agency holds an “Illegal Work Prevention Campaign” annually as part of the larger campaign for “Foreign Labor Problems Awareness Month” conducted by the government, so that the general public, companies hiring foreign nationals and relevant organizations will be able to better understand the issues and offer cooperation to the Immigration Services Agency.



Illegal Work Prevention Campaign



The video clip “The Organization and Work of the Immigration Services Agency”



The video clip “Initiatives to Accept Foreign Nationals and for a Society of Harmonious Coexistence”



## Section 2 Improvement of Public Services

### 1 Information Services for Foreign Nationals

The Immigration Services Agency has established the “Immigration Information Centers”, with a single telephone number usable nationwide. It provides guidance in multiple languages to foreign nationals and relevant persons in Japan, covering immigration-related procedures, residence-related procedures, and procedures filling out various documents related to immigration and residence.

In addition, regional immigration bureaus and district offices (except for the airport district offices) have been assigned counselors who provide consultation to visitors.



Immigration Information Center

### 2 Issuance of special permanent resident certificates by post

Solicitation of proposals for decentralization reform in 2020 attracted a proposal to make it possible to issue special permanent resident certificates by post. In response to the “Policy for Proposals from Local Governments in 2020” (Cabinet decision made December 18, 2020), in order to reduce the burden on special permanent residents with regard to special permanent resident certificates issued following notification of changes to card details other than address based on the Immigration Control Act, the Immigration Control Act Enforcement Regulations were amended in March 2021 to allow issuance of such residence cards by post, only when receipt by the card owner is secured (enforced on May 1, 2021).

### **3 Immigration Services Agency Website**

Since opening the Immigration Services Agency website (<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/index.html>) in March 2002, we have offered Q&A on immigration and residence procedures, as well as addresses, contact information, counter open hours, and other information about the regional immigration services bureaus. In October 2020, we renewed the website, centralizing content previously posted on the Ministry of Justice website to the Immigration Services Agency website, and striving to enhance content and improve usability and accessibility.

Also, in order to enhance information provision to foreign nationals, we opened a new multilingual website in February 2021. By expanding the number of languages supported on the website from the original 5 all the way to 14, and gradually enhancing the content provided, we are making consideration to ensure that the website will be especially convenient for foreign nationals.

### **4 Immigration Services Agency SNS, etc.**

#### **(1) Immigration Services Agency Twitter, Facebook**

In order for the Immigration Services Agency to be able to further enhance its public relations activities, in March 2016, we opened the Twitter accounts of the Immigration Services Agency and the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus, then in July 2020 we opened the Facebook account of the Immigration Services Agency.

The Immigration Services Agency uses its Twitter and Facebook accounts to provide information on new systems and useful information for foreign residents.

In addition to this, the Twitter accounts of the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus are used to send out real-time information on waiting time so that visitors coming to the residence examination desks will have an idea of the waiting time, and also to give information out on various events and campaigns to be held at the airports and other places.

#### **(2) Immigration Services Agency Email Distribution Service**

In addition to the website and social media accounts mentioned above, the Immigration Services Agency started the email distribution service in March 2021 in order to further strengthen dissemination of information. This service distributes information on immigration and residence procedures, and residence support, etc. in Japanese, plain Japanese, and English.

This email distribution service enables users to select what information they want to receive, and sends information according to the needs of individual users.

## ○ List of Immigration Services Agency Twitter accounts

| Operating entity                                                                                | Account         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Immigration Services Agency                                                                     | MOJ_IMMI        |
| Sapporo Regional Immigration Services Bureau                                                    | IMMI_SAPPORO    |
| Sendai Regional Immigration Services Bureau                                                     | IMMI_SENDAI     |
| Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau                                                      | IMMI_TOKYO      |
| Narita Airport District Immigration Services Office, Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau | IMMI_NARITA     |
| Haneda Airport District Immigration Services Office, Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau | IMMI_HANEDA     |
| Yokohama District Immigration Services Office, Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau       | IMMI_YOKOHAMA   |
| Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau                                                     | IMMI_NAGOYA     |
| Chubu Airport District Immigration Services Office, Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau | IMMI_CHUBU      |
| Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau                                                      | IMMI_OSAKA      |
| Kansai Airport District Immigration Services Office, Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau | IMMI_KANSAI     |
| Kobe District Immigration Services Office, Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau           | IMMI_KOBE       |
| Hiroshima Regional Immigration Services Bureau                                                  | IMMI_HIROSHIMA2 |
| Takamatsu Regional Immigration Services Bureau                                                  | IMMI_TAKAMATSU  |
| Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services Bureau                                                    | IMMI_FUKUOKA    |
| Naha District Immigration Services Office, Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services Bureau         | IMMI_NAHA       |
| Higashi-Nihon Immigration Center                                                                | IMMI_HIGASHI    |
| Omura Immigration Center                                                                        | IMMI_OMURA2     |

## ○ Immigration Services Agency Facebook account

| Operating entity                                                                                                                                             | Account                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Immigration Services Agency                                                                                                                                  | ImmigrationServicesAgency. MOJ |
| Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau Inspection Coordination Department, Accepting Environmental Management Division                                  | nagoya.nyukan.support          |
| Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services Bureau, Business, Employment, and Permanent Residence Inspection Department, Accepting Environment Management Division | fukuoka.nyukan.support         |



2D barcode of  
Immigration  
Services Agency  
Official Twitter



Immigration Services Agency Official  
Twitter

出入国在留管理庁からのお知らせ  
Notification from Immigration Services Agency

**Please register**   
**Email Distribution Service !!**

We send useful information  
by e-mail to foreign residents in Japan  
from the Immigration Services Agency !

Anyone with an email address can register.  
You can choose the information to be delivered by yourself.  
We deliver the latest information about immigration procedures and  
residency supports including special measures regarding COVID-19.  
※ You can check back numbers delivered from the URL below.  
[https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/about/pr/mail-service\\_backnumber.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/about/pr/mail-service_backnumber.html)

▼Please check below for details▼  
Information Page: <https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/about/pr/mail-service.html>  
Registration Page:     
Japanese Plain Japanese English

We are delivering information on Twitter and Facebook!

Immigration Services Agency Email Distribution Services

English Version

【Japan Immigration Service News】(20210326)

※ Email example

Thank you for your registration!

This is the first issue of Japan Immigration Service News (Part 1)!

The first issue will be divided into two times and sent to all registered users.

From the distribution after the first issue, we will send you information according to the information you want to get, which you selected at the time of registration!

○The Immigration Services Agency accepts opinions regarding the harmonious coexistence policy in 15 languages through "Immigration Services Agency Feedback Form".

For more information, please refer to the link below.

[http://www.moj.go.jp/isa/policies/coexistence/04\\_00016.html](http://www.moj.go.jp/isa/policies/coexistence/04_00016.html)

○This website, "A Daily Life Support Portal For Foreign Nationals", provides useful information for foreign nationals residing in Japan and their supporters.

"A Daily Life Support Portal For Foreign Nationals"

<http://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/portal/index.html>

○Feel free to consult with Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau at FRESC.

Click here for consultation with Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau

<http://www.moj.go.jp/isa/content/930006274.pdf>

Click here for FRESC