

Part II

Major Policies Related to Immigration Control and Residency Management Administration

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Chapter 1 Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, etc.

Section 1 Revision of the Technical Intern Training Program and the Specified Skilled Worker System

1 Course of passing the Act

At the 213th session of the Diet on June 14, 2024, the Amendment Act of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Act on Proper Technical Intern Training and Protection of Technical Intern Trainees (Act No. 60 of 2024; hereinafter referred to as the “Amendment Act”) was passed, and promulgated on June 21, 2024.

To verify the status of enforcement of the Technical Intern Training Program and the Specified Skilled Worker System, and examine measures for properly accepting foreign human resources, Advisory Panel of Experts on Ideal Form of the Technical Intern Training Program and Specified Skilled Worker System, established under the Ministerial Council on Acceptance and Inclusion of Foreign Human Resources, had held discussions on the ideal form of the program and system since December 2022, and submitted the final report to the Ministerial Council on November 30, 2023.

Based on the government’s consideration of the final report, the government’s response was decided by the Ministerial Council on February 9, 2024, and on March 15, 2024, the Amendment Bill for Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Act on Proper Technical Intern Training and Protection of Technical Intern Trainees was decided by the Cabinet.

This bill was submitted to the 213th Diet and, after the partial modification by the Committee on judicial Affairs of the House of Representatives of some supplementary provisions, was passed and promulgated as the Amendment Act as mentioned above.

Final report

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/policies/conference/03_00033.html)

Government’s response based on the final report of the Advisory Panel of Experts on the Ideal Form of the Technical Intern Training Program and Specified Skilled Worker System

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/others/03_00086.html)

2 Issues in the Current Act

The purpose of the Technical Intern Training Program (TITP) is to promote international cooperation by transferring skills and the like to developing regions and elsewhere through human resource development. However, systematic and structural problems are pointed out. For example, technical intern trainees have been accepted as a means to eliminate labor shortages which deviates from the program’s original purpose. Additionally, the pathways to career advancement are unclear because the job categories available to foreign nationals un-

der the TITP are not necessarily same as those under the Specified Skilled Worker System (SSWS). Furthermore, technical intern trainees are not sufficiently protected as workers because employment transfer is not allowed unless there are unavoidable circumstances. Moreover, human rights violations, including improper treatment by employers, have occurred.

On the other hand, among approximately 3,410,000 foreign nationals residing in Japan as of the end of December 2023, there are approximately 400,000 technical intern trainees and 210,000 specified skilled workers, and they have become integral pillars in Japan's economy and society. It is estimated that the working-age population in Japan will fall by 12 million by 2040 due to the impact of a declining birthrate and aging population. Consequently, the labor shortage will continue to grow even if efforts are made to improve productivity and secure domestic human resources in each industrial field, so securing domestic labor force through acceptance of foreign human resources will become increasingly important.

In addition, due to the recent expanding acceptance of unskilled workers even in Asian neighboring countries and regions, international competition to acquire human resources is intensifying. Japan must therefore optimize its programs and systems without delay to ensure it becomes a workplace designation for foreign nationals, and it needs to take measures to solve such systemic and structural problems.

3 Outline of the Amendment Act

(1) Outline

Based on the above issues, the Amendment Act is enforced to amend the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Act on Proper Technical Intern Training and Protection of Technical Intern Trainees, and thereby to establish the Employment-for-Skill-Development (ESD) Program to replace the TITP, aimed at developing and securing human resources, as well as to develop relevant provisions.

Under the ESD Program, the path to career advancement is made clear by ensuring continuity between the work which foreign nationals can engage in under the ESD Program and that under the SSWS and developing human resources who have skills at the same level as those required for the status of residence of Specified Skilled Worker (i) through employment. In addition, to implement ESD properly and protect Skill Development Employees, an accreditation system for the ESD plans prepared for each foreign national and a license system for supervising and support organizations involved in the supervision and support business will be established, and the Organization for Technical Intern Training will be reorganized to establish the Employment-for-Skill-Development Organization (ESDO). Furthermore, employment transfer based on the foreign national's will which are not allowed under the TITP, will be permitted when certain requirements are met as well as in cases of unavoidable circumstances.

(2) Amendment of the Immigration Control Act

According to the Amendment Act of the Immigration Control Act, the status of "Employment Skill Development" is established to replace the status of "Technical Intern Training", and measures such as clarification of requirements for permission for permanent residence are taken, as stated below.

a. The status of "ESD" contains activities for Skill Development Employees to receive train-

ing based on an ESD plan accredited as conforming to certain criteria, and to engage in work requiring skills that belong to the ESD industrial fields.

“ESD industrial fields” referred to the specified industrial fields with labor shortages that accept specified skilled workers, which are appropriate for foreign nationals to learn skills that belong to those fields through employment in Japan, and continuity is ensured between the work which the foreign nationals can engage in under the ESD Program and that under the SSWS.

- b. Requirements for permission for permanent residence granted by the Minister of Justice are clarified, and some grounds, including an intentional non-payment of taxes and other public dues, for revocation of status of “Permanent Residence” are added in order to take measures when those requirements are no longer met. The Amendment Act, then, provides that if the Minister of Justice intends to revoke such status due to falling under any of these grounds for revocation, the Minister of Justice shall grant permission for changes to any status of residence other than the status of “Permanent Residence” ex officio, in principle.
- c. Other measures, such as those to optimize systems related to support for specified skilled workers (i) are taken by limiting the outsourcing providers of support for foreign nationals with the status of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” to Registered Support Organizations etc., and those to toughen penalties for charge of encouraging illegal work, are done as well.

(3) Amendment of the Technical Intern Training Act

Due to the amendment of the Technical Intern Training Act, the basic policy and field-specific operation policy shall be established, and in addition, an accreditation system for the ESD plan prepared for each Skill Development Employee and a license system for supervising and support organizations carrying on the supervising and support business will be established, and Organization for Technical Intern Training will be reorganized to establish ESDO. Furthermore, under the new program, employer change at employee’s will, which were not allowed under the TITP, will be permitted and other measures will be taken in the case where certain requirements are met, as well as in the case of unavoidable circumstances, as stated below.

The title of the Technical Intern Training Act will be amended to the “Act on Proper Implementation of Employment for Skill Development and Protection of Skill Development Employees”.

- a. The government shall establish a basic policy on proper implementation of the ESD and protection of Skill Development Employees. Furthermore, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, as the competent ministers, shall establish operation policies for the program in collaboration with the head of the relevant administrative agency with jurisdiction over the industrial fields in line with the basic policy.
- b. Under the newly established accreditation system for the ESD plan, employers who intend to have foreign nationals engage in ESD must prepare an ESD plan and have them engage in ESD based on such ESD plan accredited as conforming to certain criteria. Furthermore, based on the fact that malicious sending organizations that collect unreasonably expensive fees from foreign nationals under the TITP has become an issue, the appropriate amount of expenses paid to foreign sending organization by foreign nationals is specified as one of the criteria for accrediting the ESD plan.

- c. A license system will be established for supervising and support organizations that mediate the employment relationship between foreign nationals and employers who intend to have them engage in ESD and supervise whether the employers properly implement the ESD. Furthermore, measures will be taken to ensure the independence and neutrality of supervising and support organizations, and that the supervising and support business is properly carried on by those organizations. The measures include license requirements such as the appointment of an external auditor who meets certain criteria and possesses sufficient knowledge or experience to conduct audits fairly and properly, etc.
- d. The Organization for Technical Intern Training under the Technical Intern Training Program will be reorganized to establish ESDO, and the ESDO shall give necessary guidance to relevant parties such as implementing organization for ESD that have foreign nationals engage in ESD and supervising and support organizations, as well as support for foreign nationals subject to ESD, and carry out accreditation affairs for ESD plans. Furthermore, to allow ESDO to provide support such as employment placement related to ESD in cooperation with organizations including public employment security offices, ESD-related employment placement business will be added to services provided by ESDO. In addition, support services for foreign nationals staying with the status of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” will also be added.
- e. While under the TITP provides that employment transfer may be allowed only in cases where unavoidable circumstances are found, under the ESD program, even if unavoidable circumstances are not found, employment transfer at employee's will may be permitted under certain requirements. To ensure that the transfer process is conducted smoothly and appropriately, foreign nationals who are subject to employment training and wish to transfer will be allowed to make such a request. Upon such a request, the supervising and support organization or ESDO will take measures such as those for providing support in liaison and coordination with relevant parties and support related to employment placement.
- f. Other measures, such as those to allow ESD in the form of dispatching employment only in industrial fields requiring engagement in seasonal works, will be taken.

(4) Effective date

The Amendment Act comes into effect as of the date within a period not exceeding three years from the date of promulgation, excluding some provisions.

Section 2

Integration of Residence Cards, etc. and Individual Number Cards

1 Course of passing the Act

At the 213th session of the Diet on June 14, 2024, the Amendment Act of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act (Act No. 59 of 2024; hereinafter referred to as the “Amendment Act”) was passed, and promulgated on June 21, 2024.

Based on the fact that Article 18, paragraph 1 of the Supplementary Provisions of the Amendment Act of the Immigration Control Act enacted in December 2018 provides that “to review the ideal use of numbers that allow the identification of a specific individual in

residency management, employment management and social insurance systems related to foreign nationals staying in Japan (omitted), and when it finds it necessary, take necessary measures based on the results of the review,” the integration of residence cards and special permanent resident certificates (hereinafter referred to as “residence cards, etc.”) with individual number cards has been considered since then. The “Priority Policy Program for Realizing Digital Society” decided by Cabinet in June 2023, stated that “with respect to the integration of individual number cards and residence cards, the necessary relevant bill will be promptly submitted to the Diet in the future (omitted) to realize the integration,” and on March 15, 2024, the Amendment Bill of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, etc. was decided by Cabinet and submitted to the Diet.

2 Issues in the Current Act

Under the residency management system in Japan, all mid to long-term residents (see Section 4, Subsection 1 of Data Section below) are issued with residence cards, and those who are 16 years of age or older must carry their residence cards at all times.

For foreign residents such as mid to long-term residents, residence certificates are prepared in the municipalities in which their domiciles are located in the same manner as Japanese residents, and they are allowed to obtain individual number cards. Currently, many foreign residents have individual number cards in addition to residence cards, etc.^(※)

However, at present, it is required that procedures related to residence cards be carried out at regional immigration services bureaus, and those related to individual number cards be undertaken at municipalities. Therefore, mid to long-term residents who have individual number cards are required to visit the respective locations of procedures when changing their names, extending their period of stay or going through other procedures. Those residents are in a situation where they are forced to go through complicated procedures.

3 Outline of the Amendment Act

(1) Outline

Based on the above situation, the Amendment Act is to allow the integration of residence cards, etc. and individual number cards, and one-stop procedures at regional immigration services bureaus or municipalities for the integrated cards, to revise information to be stated on residence cards, etc. and to take measures such as those to prescribe necessary provisions related to handling of electronic records for fair immigration control and residency management.

(2) Creation of integrated cards

Mid to long-term residents or special permanent residents recorded in basic resident registers will be allowed to file, together with any of the following notifications or applications provided for in the Immigration Control Act or the Special Act on the Immigration Control, an application requesting that the Commissioner of the Immigration Services Agency (ISA)

(※) The ratio of individual number card holders among foreign residents as of the end of July 2024 is approximately 52.4% (source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications). Such ratio is the percentage of the number of cards held by foreign residents as of July 31, 2024 to the population of foreign residents in basic resident registers as of January 1, 2024)

(or the Commissioner of the ISA through the head of the municipality where the basic resident register into which the relevant mid to long-term resident or the like is recorded is held, with respect to (iii)) issue specified residence cards or specified special permanent resident certificates (meaning residence cards or special permanent resident certificates for which measures are taken to add functions as individual number cards; hereinafter collectively referred to as “specified residence cards, etc.”).

- (i) Notification or application related to residence cards, etc.: Notification of changes of an entry on residence cards, etc. other than the place of residence (Article 19-10, paragraph 1 of the Immigration Control Act, or Article 11, paragraph 1 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control), application for extension of the validity period of residence cards, etc. (Article 19-11, paragraph 1 of the Immigration Control Act, or Article 12, paragraph 1 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control), or application for reissuance of residence cards, etc. due to defacement (Article 19-13, paragraph 1 or 3 of the Immigration Control Act, or Article 13, paragraph 1 or Article 14, paragraph 1 or 3 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control)
- (ii) Application for residence, etc.: Application for permission for change of the status of residence (Article 20, paragraph 2 of the Immigration Control Act), application for permission for extension of the period of stay (Article 21, paragraph 2 of the Immigration Control Act), application for permission for permanent residence (Article 22, paragraph 1 of the Immigration Control Act), or application for special permission for permanent residence by a long-term resident, etc. (Article 5, paragraph 2 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control).
- (iii) Notification of the place of residence: Notification of the place of residence following a new landing (Article 19-7, paragraph 3 of the Immigration Control Act), notification of the place of residence due to changes of the status of residence (Article 19-8, paragraph 3 of the Immigration Control Act), or notification of change of the place of residence (Article 19-9, paragraph 3 of the Immigration Control Act, or Article 10, paragraph 4 or 5 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control)

When such application is filed, the Commissioner of the ISA will notify the Japan Agency for Local Authority Information Systems (hereinafter referred to as the “Agency”), and once the specified residence cards, etc. prepared by the agency that has received such notice and which are residence cards, etc. with functions added as individual number cards, are ready, the commissioner will have immigration inspectors issue the specified residence cards or issue the specified residence cards through the heads of the municipalities in which their domiciles are located, to those residents.

Specified residence cards, etc. shall cease to be valid due to grounds for invalidation of residence cards, etc., not due to grounds for invalidation of individual number cards.

Applications for issuance of individual number cards may be filed voluntarily, and the same shall apply to specified residence cards, etc.

(3) Provision of one-stop procedures

Following procedures under (2) above, mid to long-term residents who have specified residence cards may, once they file an application for issuance of specified residence cards at the regional immigration services bureau together with a notification of changes in information to be stated (name, etc.) other than the place of residence or an application for permission for extension of the period of stay, receive specified residence cards issued to them, in which

the new information or period of stay is stated, so they are thus not required to visit the municipal office for procedures related to individual number cards.

(4) Information to be stated on residence cards, etc. and specified residence cards, etc. and the validity period

Based on the fact that the residence card reading application has been generally distributed free of charge since December 2020 and the environment for reading residence cards, etc. has been developed, the opportunity has been taken to create specified residence cards, etc. This has resulted in only items that require immediate visual confirmation, from among information to be stated on residence cards, etc. being left on the faces of those cards for improved readability. Other information will be recorded on IC chips in residence cards, etc.

Specifically, the Period of Stay, the Type and Date of Permission, and the Date of Issuance of a residence card will not be stated on the face of the card but will be recorded on the IC chip in the card, and the Date of Issuance of a special permanent resident certificate will not be stated on the face of the certificate but will be recorded on the IC chip in the certificate.

The validity period of residence cards, etc. for the status of residence with an indefinite period of stay, “Permanent Resident” or “Highly Skilled Professional (ii),” or the legal standing “Special Permanent Resident” will be extended “until the 10th birthday following the date of issuance” for those who are 18 years of age or older in the same manner as individual number cards, or “until the 5th birthday following the date of issuance” for those who are under 18 years of age, and it is arranged that a photograph be displayed on the face of a residence card, etc.

As a result of the above, those who have specified residence cards, etc. will be allowed to simultaneously undergo procedures for extending the validity period of residence cards, etc. and the validity period of individual number cards.

(5) Handling of electronic records

Recently, the number of procedures in which electronic records are handled in addition to documents during general immigration control and residency management procedures has been growing. Accordingly, the provisions on the handling of electronic records in grounds for denial of landing, deportation, etc, inquiry into facts, and revocation of the status of residence are being developed to clarify those procedures.

Chapter 2 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 objectives are 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, but it decreased significantly from 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19. The number, however, has been increasing again since 2022.

Section 1 Efforts to Promote a Tourism-Oriented Country

1 KIOSKS

To improve passenger convenience and further increase efficiency in border controls, “KIOSKS” that make it possible to provide necessary information for immigration and customs procedures at the same time have been installed jointly with the Japan Customs, Ministry of Finance, as new initiatives that go beyond the framework of ministries and agencies. A pilot program has been operating at Haneda Airport Terminal 2 since January 31, 2024.

The KIOSKS make it possible to simultaneously provide passport information, a facial photograph (and fingerprints in the case of immigration procedures for foreign nationals) and declaration information to both immigration and customs. This eliminates the duplication of immigration and customs procedures, and improves efficiency throughout the entire immigration process.



KIOSKS

Introduction page for the KIOSKS pilot project
(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/press/06_00013.html)

2 Pre-clearance Trial

“Pre-clearance” is a system for accelerating the immigration procedure for tourists, etc., at the arrival airport by carrying out part of the entry procedures at the departure airport using the waiting time there. In Taiwan, trials had been carried out periodically since April 2005. However, they were suspended in November 2009 because people were obliged to provide personal identification information (fingerprints and a facial photograph) in Japan from November 2007.

Following more than ten years in suspension, a pre-clearance trial was carried out at Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport during the period from January 18 to 31, 2023 through close coordination with many relevant parties, such as related authorities and private companies. It was carried out during the first Lunar New Year after the relaxation of restrictions due to COVID-19 in Taiwan, and the pre-clearance was much appreciated because people could go through immigration procedures while waiting to board flights at the airport in Taiwan without waiting for such procedures after arriving in Japan, and it was used by many tourists.

The results of the pre-clearance trial were an accelerated procedure for immigration examinations at the arrival airport and less time spent waiting in line for an immigration examination. Another pre-clearance exercise was therefore carried out at Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport during the period from February 1 to 29, 2024 in light of the 2023 trial results.

3 Bio Carts

To simplify procedures at landing examination booths and enable foreign visitors to enter Japan more quickly and smoothly, devices for receiving personal identification information (fingerprints and a facial photograph) provided by those visitors beforehand by utilizing the landing examination waiting time, commonly known as “Bio Carts,” were introduced at Kansai Airport, Takamatsu Airport, and Naha Airport, in October 2016. These are places where such devices were expected to lead to significantly shorter examination waiting times. Subsequently, the devices were introduced at 21 airports and seaports including Narita Airport, from April 2017 to July 2024, 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 July 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.

**Bio Carts**

Introduction page for Bio Carts

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/immigration/resources/nyuukokukanri07_00110.html)

4 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.

**Automated Gates**

Introduction page for Automated Gates

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/immigration/resources/nyuukokukanri01_00111.html)

(2) Trusted Traveler Program

The Trusted Traveler Program (TTP) is the system to issue “Registered User Card” that enable the use of the Automated Gates to those people who intend to carry out activities in the status of residence of “Temporary Visitor,” who meet certain requirements as “trusted travelers” such as businessmen. Operation of this program began on November 1, 2016.

On March 16, 2020, the registration requirements for TTP were relaxed, and the scope of applicants for registrations of this program was extended to tourists who possess sufficient funds and credit and family members of TTP registrants (spouse and unmarried minors).

In addition, based on the Japan-U.S. Bilateral Cooperation on Travel Facilitation, assuming registration with the Global Entry Program (GEP) of the United States, some of the requirements will be waived for US citizens applying for TTP registration.

The number of registration applications has been increasing since the removal of immigration restrictions, in part because the pandemic occurred immediately after the scope of applicants for TTP was extended.



Front of the Registered User Card



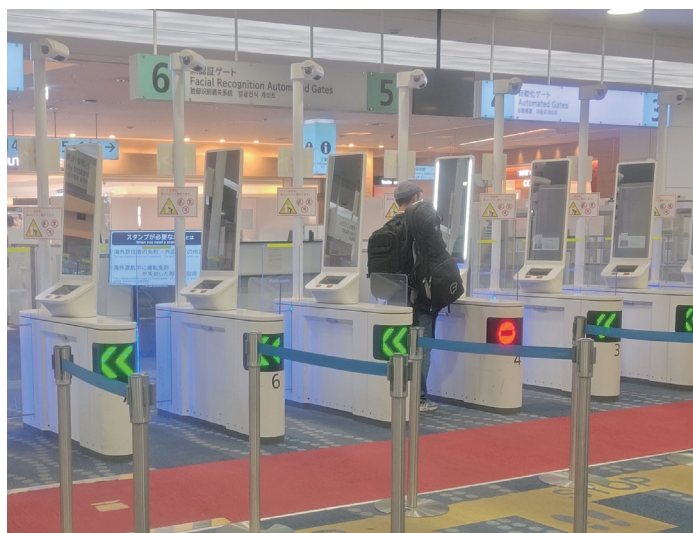
Back of the Registered User Card

5 Facial Recognition Automated Gates

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

Due to the demand for further acceleration of immigration examinations in order to promote tourism in Japan, the ISA 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.

After the ISA conducted a trial test of examinations utilizing facial recognition technology and necessary reviews, advance operations of the facial recognition automated gates in the return procedures for Japanese nationals commenced at Haneda Airport on October 18, 2017. In addition, from FY 2018 to FY 2020, the facial recognition automated gates were introduced in the landing and departure examination areas of New Chitose Airport, Narita Airport, Chubu Airport, Kansai Airport, Fukuoka Airport and Naha Airport, and are being operated in the departure and return procedures for Japanese nationals.



Facial Recognition Automated Gates

Introduction page for facial recognition automated gates

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/immigration/resources/nyuukokukanri07_00168.html)

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

The “Tourism Vision Realization Program 2016” (Action Program for Realization of Tourism Vision 2016) (adopted by 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. A decision was made to take the facial recognition automated gates utilized in the departure and return procedures for Japanese nationals and use them in the departure procedures for foreign nationals who enter Japan for sightseeing and other purposes. On July 24, 2019, this operation commenced in Haneda Airport, followed by the other seven airports listed in (1) above.

6 Digitalization of Disembarkation Cards (ED cards)

While foreign nationals entering Japan used to submit disembarkation cards (ED cards) to immigration inspectors at immigration counters, it became possible to submit ED cards electronically at six major airports, including Narita Airport, as of December 20, 2021 from the perspective of improving convenience for foreign nationals. In and after 2022, the number of supported airports is being expanded gradually in line with the resumption of international flights that have been suspended due to COVID-19.

Introduction page for ED cards

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/immigration/procedures/translation.html>)

7 Response to Cruise Ship Passengers

Recent years have seen a remarkable increase in the number and size of cruise ships calling at ports in Japan. As a result, requests have been received from the local governments inviting cruise ships for accelerated procedures upon arrival so that passengers can fully enjoy sightseeing within the limited time they have at the port of call. The ISA has been operating the system of granting landing permission to cruise ship tourists, which enables foreign passengers on cruise ships designated by the Commissioner of the ISA to undergo simplified procedures. On April 22, 2024, the ISA abolished the system of submitting the Disembarkation Card for Foreigner pertaining to landing permission for cruise ship tourists. The ISA strives to implement smooth and strict examinations by means such as strengthening guidance for cruise ship companies. In 2017, the number of applications for landing permission for cruise ship tourists was approximately 2.45 million. In 2020, there was a decrease in the number of cruise ships calling in Japan due to the spread of COVID-19, and the number of landing permission for cruise ship tourists in the same year was only about 120,000. International cruise ship operations have been suspended since March of the same year, so no one received a landing permission for cruise ship tourists in 2021 and 2022. International cruise ship operations have resumed in earnest from March 2023.



Scene of a landing examination on a cruise ship

8 Revision of the Method of Measuring the Time Spent Waiting in Line for an Examination, and Announcement of the Waiting Times for the Examination ^(※)

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 ISA. 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 ISA website.

Page for publishing the time spent waiting in line for an examination at the airport
(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/immigration/resources/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 ISA 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 watchlists maintained by the ISA. 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 ISA.

In addition, since October 2016, in order to rigorously detect terrorists, etc. at the time of the landing examination, the ISA has 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 12,151 from the start of utilization of this information in the immigration examinations by the end of December, 2023.

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, the ISA has been striving to uncover these disguised fingerprints by modifying the fingerprint acquisition devices, and in addition to executing the deportation procedures, the ISA has been strictly enforcing crimi-

(※) Although the measurement of immigration waiting time has been on hold since April 2020 due to COVID-19, it was resumed in June 2023 at seven major airports.

nal 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 ISA.



Immigration examination through the use of Biometric information

(2) Immigration Examinations Utilizing API and PNR

To prevent the entry of people requiring special attention such as terrorists, the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) that automatically compares the information on identification and other matters (Advance Passenger Information (API)) from airline companies, which is provided as electronic data, against the database of people requiring special attention has been introduced since January 2005.

In February 2007, the ISA has made it mandatory for the captains of all vessels and aircraft entering Japan to submit the API. Captains submitting API through the APIS dramatically increased, particularly for aircraft, due to the convenience of submission and other reasons. As a result, it has become possible to grasp in advance the information related to the arrival of people requiring special attention for immigration control, and to implement more effective and efficient countermeasures at ports of entry. Furthermore, the APIS started operation in July 2020 for API from vessels entering the ports, leading to the realization of stricter immigration examinations.

The Advance Passenger Information System was renamed the “Advance Passenger Inspection System” when it was renewed in June 2021.

In addition, the number of foreign nationals entering Japan has increased significantly, so in order to stringently prevent the entry of people requiring special attention through immigration control at the border, the airline companies have been requested to provide passenger name records (PNR) from January 2015. Furthermore, the ISA has commenced the electronic receipt of PNRs via the Nippon Automated Cargo and Port Consolidated System (NACCS) from January 2016 and has been using them in 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 ISA 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.

The ISA promotes information sharing with related domestic and overseas organizations, by having a department specializing in information gathering and analysis as the core organization. Specifically, the ISA collects various types of information, such as information on international terrorists, and performs advanced analysis of such information using artificial intelligence (AI) and other tools, together with the information held by the ISA, including API and PNRs. The results are then used by the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus at airports in order to implement smooth and strict countermeasures at the port of entry.

Chapter 3 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 foreign national is recognized as a “highly-skilled foreign professional” and granted the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional.” They also become eligible for preferential immigration control and residency management treatment.

The status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional” consists of “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)” and “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii),” and “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” is treated more preferentially than “Highly-Skilled Professional (i).” 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.

Introduction page for the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals
(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/newimmiact_3_index.html)

(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 to employ a domestic worker under certain conditions^(※3)
- G. Preferential processing of entry and residence procedures

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

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

2 Japan System for Special Highly-Skilled Professional (J-Skip)

The Japan System for Special Highly-Skilled Professional (J-Skip) was introduced in April 2023. The status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional” will be granted to foreign nationals separately from the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals if their academic background or professional career and promised annual salary are at or above a certain level. As a “special highly-skilled professional,” they will be treated in a more preferential manner than highly-skilled professionals under the points-based system in terms of finding employment of their spouses, employing domestic workers, etc.

Specifically, requirements for people in the category of “advanced academic research activities” or “advanced specialized/technical activities” are “master’s degree or above and promised annual salary of 20 million yen or more” or “experience in the relevant business for 10 years or more and promised annual salary of 20 million yen or more,” while those for people in the category of “advanced business management activities” are “experience in business management or operation for five years or more and annual salary of 40 million yen or more.”

Introduction page for the Japan System for Special Highly-Skilled Professional

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/resources/nyuukokukanri01_00009.html)

(※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 professional even without meeting certain criteria relating to academic background or professional career.

(※2) In cases where there is a child under 7 years old or where the highly-skilled foreign professionals or his spouse is pregnant or other reasons.

(※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.

3 Japan System for Future Creation Individual Visa (J-Find)

The Japan System for Future Creation Individual Visa (J-Find) was introduced in April 2023. When foreign nationals who have graduated or completed a program from outstanding overseas universities, etc. start job hunting or prepare to start a business in Japan, the status of residence of “Designated Activities” (Future Creation Individual Visa) will be granted and they will be allowed to stay for up to two years. They can also be accompanied by their spouses and children during that period.

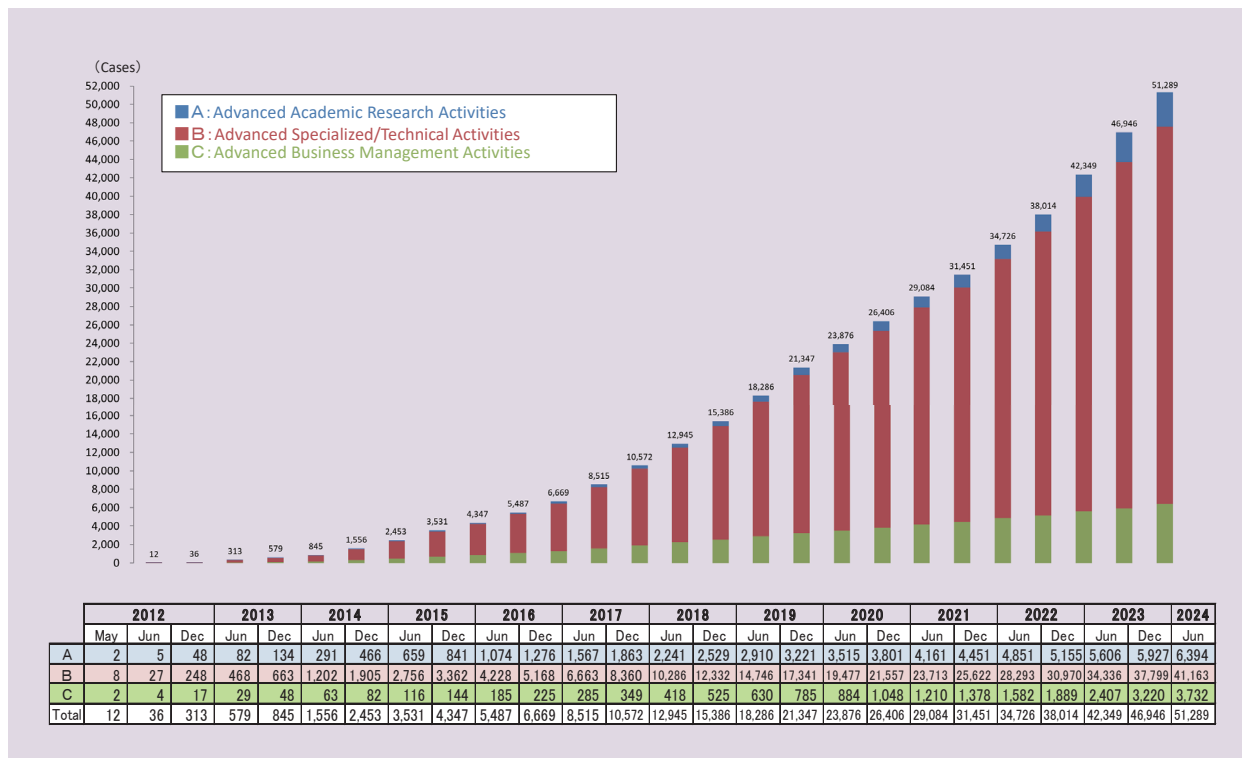
The specific requirements include graduating from a university or graduate school ranked in the top 100 in two or more of the major three world university rankings^(※) within five years, and possession 200,000 yen for living expenses at the beginning of stay.

Introduction page for the Japan System for Future Creation Individual Visa
(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/status/designatedactivities51.html>)

4 Situation of Acceptance

As of the end of June 2024, 51,289 foreign nationals have been recognized as highly-skilled foreign nationals through the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals (Reference 81).

Reference 81 Changes in the number of cases of recognition (cumulative) through the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals (as of the end of June 2024)



(※) (i) The QS World University Rankings published by Quacquarelli Symonds; (ii) the Times Higher Education World University Rankings published by The Times; and (iii) the Academic Ranking of World Universities published by the Shanghai Ranking Consultancy

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.

Foreign nationals engaging in activities to start a business utilizing the project can apply to extend their period of stay for up to one year in order to continue their activities after six months have elapsed since their landing even if they use a co-working space, shared office, or a similar facility as their business office, because the facility will be considered their business office if certain requirements are met.

In addition, in December 2022 the 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 revised, and it was decided that foreign nationals who wish to continue engaging in activities to start a business after utilizing the Project to Promote Foreign National Entrepreneurial Activities (refer to 3. of Sections 3 in Chapter 3) will be allowed to do so for a maximum of six months by utilizing this project.

2 Foreign Engineers

The “Project to Promote Employment of Foreign Engineer in National Strategic Special Zones” was created in October 2023. This was set up to secure outstanding IT engineers from overseas who are responsible for the growth of innovative domestic companies, including startups, in order to strengthen Japan’s international competitiveness and form a base for international economic activities by industry in Japan. Under this project, an examination of applications by foreign engineers for a Certificate of Eligibility for the Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services status of residence in the special zone were expedited, and the examination period was clarified.

3 Foreign Students Graduating from Overseas Universities

The “Job-seeking Promotion Project for Foreign Students Graduating from Overseas Universities in National Strategic Special Zones” was created in March 2024. Under the involvement of local governments in the special zones and Japanese-language institutes, if a student graduating from any university or other school overseas wishes to continue job-seeking activities in Japan after graduating from a Japanese-language institute that has properly managed student enrollment over the most recent one-year period, the Designated Activities status of residence will be recognized for a maximum period of one year to enable the student to continue job-seeking activities.

Section 3 Other Measures

1 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 children supported by the 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 and reside in Japan, but a program was established and enforced 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 program, basically the same entry requirements as for the working holiday program are required, but as a unique requirement of this program, a certain level of Japanese language proficiency is required at the time of entry into Japan and at the time of extending the period of stay, as well as the guarantee of a “Supporters Accepting Fourth-Generation Foreign Nationals 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 Japanese who are accepted under this program 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 program, 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.

In December 2023, age restrictions on entry and requirements for Supporters Accepting Fourth-Generation Foreign Nationals of Japanese Descent were relaxed. In addition, for fourth-generation foreign nationals of Japanese descent who have appropriately completed a total of five years of activities and come to meet certain requirements, measures were taken to permit the change of their status of residence to Long-Term Resident, as an option after the utilization of this program.

2 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.

Furthermore, in March 2022, revisions were made to enable online applications by foreign nationals themselves and others using the electronic certificate and personal authentication function of the Individual Number Card (My Number Card), and to add the status of residence in the Appended Table II of the Immigration Control Act, such as “Spouse or Child of Japanese National,” to the scope of online application.

Introduction page for online residence procedures

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/guide/onlineshinsei.html>)

3 Promotion of the Acceptance of Foreign Entrepreneurs

Foreign entrepreneurs who receive support for entrepreneurship from local governments, etc. in accordance with the “Public Notice Relating to the Project to Promote Foreign National Entrepreneurial Activities” as a public notice of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry are 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 control and residency management procedures.

Foreign students who have been engaged in entrepreneurial activities since they were enrolled in Japanese universities that are enthusiastic about accepting outstanding foreign students, and who wish to continue their entrepreneurial activities even after graduation are allowed to stay with the status of residence of “Designated Activities” for up to two years. Foreign nationals who have stayed in Japan after graduating from a Japanese university and who have 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 failed to start a business within the allotted period are also allowed to do the same after using the applicable project under certain requirements, and to stay for up to two years, including the period of residence based on the project.

4 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 in 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 completed a 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.

In response to the Regulatory Reform Implementation Plan decided by the Cabinet in June 2023, the public notice on the status of residence of “Designated Activities” was amended as of February 29, 2024 to include those who have completed a post-secondary course at a Specialized Training College accredited by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology with the title of Advanced Diploma granted, as those recognized to be equivalent to university graduates. As of the end of 2023, the number of foreign nationals who were granted a status of residence by this system was 958. In order to promote further utilization, we are announcing this system on the ISA website and consultation counters.

(2) Optimization of Student Enrollment Management by Educational Institutions

Educational institutions that accept foreign students need to be optimized as such institutions by means such as steadily providing appropriate settings for learning. Related to this point, the Ministerial Order to Provide for Criteria Pursuant of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act was partially amended in April 2024 to include the express provision that educational institutions which accept foreign students be required to appropriately manage student enrollment. Under such provision on the management system necessary for acceptance as a requirement, if an educational institution does not have a proper system, the institution will not be allowed to accept foreign students. This is to ensure that educational institutions properly manage foreign student enrollment.

(3) Enforcement of the Act on the Accrediting of Japanese-Language Institutes to Ensure Appropriate and Reliable Implementation of Japanese-Language Education

The number of foreign nationals residing in Japan is expected to continue increasing, so it is essential to develop an environment in which foreign nationals living in Japan can acquire the ability to understand and use the necessary Japanese. Given such background, the Act on the Accrediting of Japanese-Language Institutes to Ensure Appropriate and Reliable

Implementation of Japanese-Language Education (Act No. 41 of 2023) was promulgated on June 2, 2023, and came into force in April 2024. The purpose of this Act is to create a system for the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology to accredit Japanese-language institutes that meet certain requirements, and make arrangements concerning the qualifications of teachers providing Japanese language education at those accredited institutes. This will help to ensure the appropriate and reliable implementation of Japanese language education, and contribute to the development of an environment in which foreign nationals residing in Japan can live in harmony with its people in their public and private lives. Japanese-language institutes are required to obtain accreditation under this Act in order to accept foreign students with the status of residence of “Student.” Furthermore, from the perspective of managing the residency of students, the Act stipulates that the ISA shall be consulted on the accreditation criteria for Japanese-language institutes, and collaborate and cooperate with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology to ensure that accredited Japanese-language institutes will appropriately and reliably provide Japanese language education.

5 Acceptance of Digital Nomads

To attract international remote workers, called “digital nomads”, a new system was established in March 2024. Specifically, the system allows an individual applicant to be engaged in remote work in Japan based on contracts with foreign companies, etc. for a maximum of six months under the conditions that the applicant is a national or citizen of a country or region which are under the scope of the visa exemption arrangements (Temporary Visitor) and also subjected to Japan's Tax Conventions, and that the applicant's annual income is at least ten million yen, etc.

Chapter 4 Technical Intern Training Program and Specified Skilled Worker System

Section 1 New Initiatives for Implementing Proper Technical Intern Training and Protecting Technical Intern Trainees

1 Measures to Reduce Cases of Disappearance of Technical Intern Trainees

Initiatives for reducing the cases of disappearance of technical intern trainees were implemented in line with the measures for improvement compiled by the “Project Team on Operation of the Technical Intern Training Program” in March 2019. In addition, measures to further enhance improvement measures were compiled in order to reduce the cases of disappearance of technical intern trainees in November 2019. The main initiatives and measures implemented by the ISA are as stated below.

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

Based on disappearance rates and investigation results, measures such as the following will be taken: issue of orders to supervising organizations to suspend projects involving the acceptance of new technical intern trainees, revoke the license of relevant supervising organizations, revoke the accreditation of relevant training plans, and withhold the accreditation of 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 supervising-organization-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

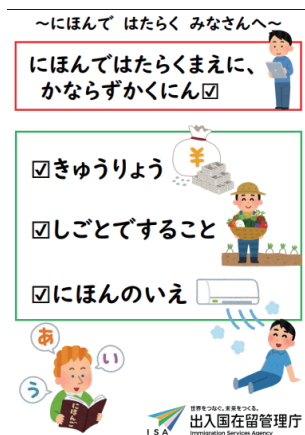
In March 2021, with the purpose of contributing to proper implementation of technical intern training such as preventing trainee disappearances and protecting the safety of technical intern trainees, the ISA created public relations videos giving an outline of the system and places to seek consultation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

- Dissemination, etc. of disappearance prevention measures

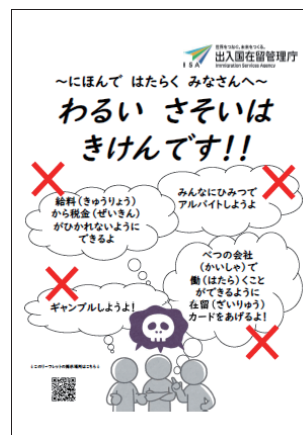
In April 2024, to eliminate factors that may motivate technical intern trainees to disappear,

and properly implement technical intern training, leaflets that help to disseminate information and improve awareness of disappearance prevention measures were prepared and published on the ISA website.

Introduction page for leaflets related to disappearance prevention measures
(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/10_00204.html)



Checkpoints
before coming to
Japan



Leaflet on “dangerous invitations”
[for technical intern trainees]



Leaflet on “violence prevention”



Shared journal
leaflet [for accepting organizations]

2 Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC)

As of the end of May 2024, Memorandums of Cooperation with the governments of the sending countries have been entered into with 15 countries (Viet Nam, Cambodia, India, the Philippines, Laos, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bhutan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Thailand, Indonesia, and Nepal), with the aim of securing proper sending organizations. In addition, the MOJ, based on the agreements, has been striving to thoroughly give out information on the purpose of the Technical Intern Training Program 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 program in the partner country together with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Organization for Technical Intern Training.

As part of the reason for their disappearance, it had been pointed out that sending organizations, etc., had been unjustly collecting money as expenses from technical intern trainees, so fact-finding surveys targeting approximately 2,000 technical intern trainees were conducted from December 2021 to April 2022 by taking opportunities such as on-site inspections by the Organization for Technical Intern Training and Regional Immigration Services Bureaus. As a result, it was discovered that many technical intern trainees had paid a large sum of money to their sending or intermediary organizations in their home countries and consequently, had significant debts.

For improper cases found through these surveys, investigations into implementing or supervising organizations were conducted and administrative dispositions or other penalties were considered depending on the case. Action is also taken towards the government of the sending country, such as sending a notification to that government under the above Memorandum of Cooperation.



Scene of opinion exchange based on MOC

3 Other Initiatives

With respect to pregnancy, childbirth, and other relevant issues, it had been pointed out that some technical intern trainees were improperly treated by supervising or other organizations, so fact-finding surveys targeting 650 technical intern trainees were conducted from August 2022 to November 2022 by taking opportunities of on-site inspections by the Organization for Technical Intern Training. As a result, a certain number of technical intern trainees answered that they had been improperly treated, and it was revealed that technical intern trainees were not fully aware of systems related to pregnancy and childbirth and various support measures.

Together with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the Organization for Technical Intern Training, the ISA had worked to familiarize technical intern trainees with systems and other matters related to pregnancy and childbirth, and warned supervising organizations, etc. about the prohibition on disadvantageous treatment repeatedly in the past. However, based on those survey results, the ISA issued another message in December 2022 and decided to request supervising organizations, etc., to give explanations to technical intern trainees, during regular audits. The ISA continues to implement initiatives to ensure proper treatment related to pregnancy and childbirth.

In April 2023, to allow technical intern trainees who are pregnant or have given birth to properly continue technical intern training, some initiatives were implemented. These include simplifying recurrence procedures in the case of suspension of technical intern training for unavoidable reasons, and creating a declaration form to confirm whether a relevant trainee intends to resume technical intern training in Japan in the future if the trainee suspends or discontinues technical intern training and goes home due to her pregnancy or childbirth. The ISA disseminated those initiatives to supervising and other organizations all over Japan, and warned them again about the prohibition on disadvantageous treatment for reasons including pregnancy and childbirth.

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

1 Operation Policy of the Specified Skilled Worker System

(1) The Government’s Basic Policy

Based on the “Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2018” (Cabinet decision of June 15, 2018), Basic Policy for the operation of the System of Specified Skilled Worker Status of Residence (hereinafter referred to as “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 82**).

Reference 82 Outline of the Basic Policy on Operation of the System of Specified Skilled Worker (Status of Residence)

Basic Policy on Operation of the System of the Status of Residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” Established to Ensure Proper Operation of the System of the Status of Residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” (Article 2-3 of the newly amended Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act)

1. Matters concerning the significance of the system

To build a framework for the acceptance of work-ready foreign nationals, who possess certain expertise and skills in industrial fields where it is difficult to secure workforces even after efforts to improve productivity and secure domestic human resources have been made so as to respond to the serious shortage in labor of small and medium-sized enterprises and other businesses.

2. Matters concerning the industrial fields where labor shortage needs to be supplemented by foreign workers

- Fields where specified skilled workers will be accepted
Industrial fields where foreign workers are needed to supplement the labor shortage, which is still difficult to secure human resources even after efforts have been made to improve productivity and secure domestic human resources (hereinafter referred to as “specified industrial fields”).
- Consideration to regions facing labor shortage
Efforts to take necessary measures will be made so as not to have an excessive concentration of specified skilled workers in metropolitan areas or other particular areas
- Expected number of acceptance
The number of specified skilled workers to be accepted over the next five years will be stated in the operation policy of each field

4. Basic matters concerning adjustment of the administrative affairs of the relevant administrative organizations

- Measures taken in Japan: Malicious intermediary organizations (brokers), etc. will be eliminated completely through enhancing collaboration between the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare and other related organizations.
- Measures taken outside Japan: In order to prevent the intervention by malicious intermediary organizations such as those that collect deposits, intergovernmental documents such as bilateral arrangements will be made as well as necessary measures will be taken.
- Responses to changes in the situation of labor shortages

The head of the administrative organizations which are in charge of the specified industrial fields will continuously monitor the situation of labor shortage in the fields. When a change was observed in the situation, the relevant administrative organizations of the system and those which are in charge of the specified industrial fields will discuss future policies of acceptance. If necessary, revision of operation policy of each specified industrial field, suspension of the issuance of certificate of eligibility or deletion of fields from the ministerial ordinance stipulating the specified industrial fields will be discussed at the relevant ministerial meetings.

The expected number of foreign workers to be accepted over the next five years will be considered as the upper limit of acceptance under this system, unless there is a major change in the economic situation.

- Responses in the event of public security problems

The relevant administrative organizations of the system and those which are in charge of the specified industrial fields will make efforts to cooperate by sharing and monitoring the related information, and to take necessary measures so as to ensure such problems as foreign workers got missing and other public security problems will not occur through the acceptance of specified skilled workers.

5. Important matters concerning operation of the system

- Supports for “Specified Skilled Worker (I)”

Orientation of daily life, support to learn daily Japanese language, consultations and complaints handling for foreign workers, promotion of exchanges between foreign workers and Japanese are included in the supports.

When foreign workers use Hello Work(public employment agency) to change their jobs, it will make efforts to understand the work conditions foreign workers desire, their skill level, and Japanese language proficiency level, and provide proper services for employment counseling and job placement.

➤ Employment type: Full-time and, in principle, direct hire. Under special circumstances, specified skilled workers may, as an exception, be dispatched by staffing services agencies, but this will be clearly stated in the operation policy of each field.

- Review of the Basic Policy: The system will be reviewed 2 years after enforcement of the amended Act, and modified if necessary.

3. Matters concerning necessary human resources			* Confirmed through the exams or other methods specified by the ministries in charge of each field
Specified Skilled Worker (i)		Specified Skilled Worker (ii)	
Skill level	Skills that require considerable knowledge or experience *	Proficient skills *	
Japanese proficiency level	The workers should be basically able to deal with daily conversation to a certain extent, which is enough to survive daily life, as well as to have Japanese language proficiency required for their work *	-	
Period of stay	Upper limit of a total of 5 years	Extension of the period of stay is possible	
Accompanying family members	In principle, not permitted	Permitted	

Introduction page for the system of specified skilled worker
(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/ssw/index.html>)

(2) Field-Specific Operation Policy

The field-specific operation 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 operation 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 Nationals.

The field-specific operation 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 83**).

(※) In the Cabinet decision of April 26, 2022, the fields of Machine parts and tooling industry, Industrial machinery industry, and Electric, electronics and information industry were integrated to form "Machine parts and tooling / Industrial machinery/Electric, electronics and information industries." Furthermore, on March 29, 2024, Cabinet decided to change this field's name from "Machine parts and tooling/Industrial machinery/Electric, electronics and information industries" to "Industrial product manufacturing," and also to add the following four fields: "Automobile transportation business," "Railway," "Forestry," and "Wood industry." As of October, 2024, there are 16 fields.

Reference 83 Field-Specific Operation Policy (16 fields)

	Field	Labour Shortage Conditions Expected No. Accepted (Max. value over 5 years)	HR Standards		Other Important Matters Jobs to Engage in
			Skill Test	Japanese Language Test	
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare	Nursing care	135,000 people	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to Nursing care (assistance with bathing, eating and excretion responding to the physical and mental condition of the user), other related support services (assistance with recreation and functional training, etc.) <p>Note: Care service provided by home visits is not included</p> <p>(1 test category)</p>
	Building cleaning management	37,000 people	Building cleaning Management skills evaluation test	Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test (N4 or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interior building cleaning <p>(1 test category)</p>
Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry	Industrial product manufacturing (formerly Machine parts and tooling/Industrial machinery/Electric, electronics and information industries)	173,300 people	Examination Evaluation Category 1 Specified Technical Skills for Manufacturing Sectors (Machine parts and tooling/Industrial machinery/Electric, electronics and information industries)	Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test (N4 or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Machining and metal processing Electric and electronic equipment assembly Metal surface treatment Carton box and corrugated card board box making Precast concrete manufacturing Refuse derived paper & plastics densified fuel making Tableware and ornaments pottery manufacturing Printing / Book binding Fabricated textiles manufacturing Sewing <p>(10 test categories)</p>

	Field	Labour Shortage Conditions Expected No. Accepted (Max. value over 5 years)	HR Standards		Other Important Matters Jobs to Engage in
			Skill Test	Japanese Language Test	
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism	Construction industry	80,000 people	Construction field Specified Skilled Worker (i) test, etc.	Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test (N4 or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil engineering Building Infrastructure facilities & equipment <p>(3 test categories)</p>
	Shipbuilding and ship machinery industries	36,000 people	Shipbuilding and ship machinery industry Specified Skilled Worker (i) test, etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shipbuilding Ship machinery Ship electrical and electronic equipment <p>(3 test categories)</p>
	Automobile repair and maintenance	10,000 people	Automobile repair and maintenance field Specified Skilled Worker (i) test, etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automobile daily maintenance, Regular maintenance, Certified maintenance, The work in incidentally in certified maintenance <p>(1 test category)</p>
	Aviation industry	4,400 people	Aviation field Specified Skilled Worker (i) test		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airport ground handling (ground driving support services, baggage and freight handling services) Aircraft maintenance (maintenance of aircraft and equipment, etc.) <p>(2 test categories)</p>
	Accommodation industry	23,000 people	Accommodation industry field Specified Skilled Worker (i) test		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing accommodation services, such as working at the front desk, planning/public relations, hospitality, restaurant services <p>(1 test category)</p>

	Field	Labour Shortage Conditions	HR Standards		Other Important Matters
		Expected No. Accepted (Max. value over 5 years)	Skill Test	Japanese Language Test	Jobs to Engage in
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism	Automobile transportation business	24,500 people	Automobile transportation business field Specified Skilled Worker (i) test, etc.	Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test (N4 or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motor truck drivers Taxi drivers Bus drivers (3 test categories)
	Railway	3,800 people	Railway field Specified Skilled Worker (i) test, etc.	*For "Jobs to Engage in" which are marked in blue, Japanese Language Proficiency Test (N3 or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track construction and maintenance Electric facilities construction and maintenance Rolling stock maintenance and overhaul Rolling stock manufacturing Train operation works (drivers conductors and workers who are directly engaged in train / car operation) (5 test categories)
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	Agriculture	78,000 People	Agriculture Skill Assessment Test Level 1	Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test (N4 or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General crop farming (cultivation management, collection/shipping/sorting of agricultural products, etc.) General livestock farming (breed management, collection/shipping/sorting of livestock products, etc.) (2 test categories)
	Fishery & aquaculture	17,000 people	No. 1 Fishing industry skills proficiency Test		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fishery (production and repair of fishing gear, search for marine animals and plants, operation of fishing gear and machinery, capture of marine animals and plants, processing and storage of catch, ensuring health and safety, etc.) Aquaculture industry (production, repair and management of aquaculture materials, breed management, collection (harvesting) and processing of aquaculture animals and plants, ensuring health and safety, etc.) (2 test categories)

	Field	Labour Shortage Conditions	HR Standards		Other Important Matters
		Expected No. Accepted (Max. value over 5 years)	Skill Test	Japanese Language Test	Jobs to Engage in
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	Manufacture of food and beverages	139,000 people	Manufacture of Food and Beverage Skills Proficiency test (Manufacture of food and beverage field)	Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese or Japanese Language Proficiency Test (N4 or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General food and beverage manufacturing (manufacturing/processing and health and safety of food and beverages (excluding liquor)) (1 test category)
	Food service industry	53,000 people	Food service Industry Skills Proficiency test (Food service Industry field)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General restaurant industry (food and beverage processing, customer service, store management) (1 test category)
	Forestry	1,000 people	Forestry field Specified Skilled Worker test		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Silviculture, Production of logs, etc. (1 test category)
	Wood industry	5,000 people	Wood industry field Specified Skilled Worker (i) test		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wood processing in sawmilling industry and plywood industry, etc. (1 test category)

(3) Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC)

In accordance with the government's basic policy, Memorandums of Cooperation, such as for the construction of an information sharing framework, are entered into 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 deposits from foreign nationals who wish to work in Japan or their families.

(4) Status of Memorandum of Cooperation

As of the end of May 2024, Memorandums of Cooperation have been entered into with 16 countries (the Philippines, Cambodia, Nepal, Myanmar, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Thailand, India, Malaysia, Laos, and Kyrgyz).

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.

2 Efforts for the Smooth Operation of the Specified Skilled Worker System

(1) Revision of the Industrial Fields

Based on the actual situation after operating the system for three years, some changes were made to the government's basic policy (Cabinet decision of April 26, 2022), which integrated the three manufacturing fields (Machine parts and tooling industry, Industrial machinery industry, and Electric, electronics and information industry) into Machine parts and tooling/Industrial machinery/Electric, electronics and information industries.

In addition, with respect to Specified Skilled Worker (ii) requiring professional skills, only two fields (Construction industry, and Shipbuilding and ship machinery industry) had been covered by that status in the past. However, for various reasons, including a labor shortage in each field, the scope of the status was expanded to 11 specified industrial fields, excluding the Nursing care field (Cabinet decision of June 9, 2023).

Based on requests from the competent ministries and agencies for addition to the industrial fields for Specified Skilled Worker on the grounds that it was difficult to secure human resources, related ministries and agencies reviewed the possibility of addition. As a result, the government's basic policy was partially amended to add the following four new fields: "Automobile transportation business," "Railway," "Forestry," and "Wood industry" (Cabinet decision of March 29, 2024).

Furthermore, it was decided that new jobs would be added to the following three existing fields: "industrial product manufacturing (renamed from "Machine parts and tooling/Industrial machinery/Electric, electronics and information industries"), "Shipbuilding and ship machinery industry," and "Manufacture of food and beverages" (Cabinet decision of March 29, 2024).

(2) Revision of the Field-Specific Operation Policy

Under the Specified Skilled Worker System, the government's basic policy provides that the expected number of foreign nationals to be accepted in each specified industrial field over the next five years be indicated in the field-specific operation policy. When the system began in April 2019, the expected number of Specified Skilled Workers (i) to be accepted for

five years until the end of March 2024 was set, with the total number of those to be accepted in the respective industrial fields being 345,150.

In 2022, it's likely that the pandemic affected the acceptance of Specified Skilled Workers in all specified industrial fields, so the expected numbers in all fields were reviewed and revised in line with such consideration (Cabinet decision of August 30, 2022).

In March 2024, since the deadline for setting the expected number of Specified Skilled Workers to be accepted has passed, the expected number of those to be accepted in each industrial field over the next five years from April 2024 was reset, and the total number of those to be accepted in the respective industrial fields was decided to be 820,000 (Cabinet decision of March 29, 2024).

(3) Specified Skilled Worker System Promotion Projects

For the purpose of promoting the utilization of the Specified Skilled Worker System, we have held job matching events for foreign nationals who want to work with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” and companies that want to hire such foreign nationals since FY 2020. We have also held information seminars overseas since FY 2021 to promote the system to foreign nationals living overseas or provide them with explanations of Japanese companies. Matching events and information seminars overseas were also held in FY 2022 and FY 2023.

Starting in September 2020, we launched the “Support Website for the Specified Skilled Worker System” to transmit information to foreign nationals, including an outline of the Specified Skilled Worker System and exam information in each field. In addition to plain Japanese, this website provides information in 12 foreign languages (English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Philipino, Thai, Indonesian, Burmese, Nepali, Mongolian, Khmer, Sinhala, and Urdu).

The page for business operators describing the hiring process, etc. was closed in May 2024 to focus on information provision for foreign nationals. Information for business operators is published on the ISA website.

Support website for the Specified Skilled Worker System

(<https://www.ssw.go.jp/>)

Information for business operators

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/ssw/nyuukokukanri06_00103.html)

Chapter 5

Efforts for Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals

Section 1**Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals****1 Background**

As described in Section 2-1 below, at the “Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals” (hereinafter referred to as “Ministerial Conference”) held on December 25, 2018, “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals” (hereinafter referred to as “Comprehensive Measures”) were decided. Since then, the Comprehensive Measures have been revised and enhanced every year, and are established in Japan as a direction for the realization of a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals. However, they were to publish how only short-term issues should be dealt with. It was necessary to promote measures to realize a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals more than ever, considering the impact of the spread of the new coronavirus infection, so as not to isolate foreign nationals who are legally residing in Japan, but accept them as members of society.

Therefore, on January 29, 2021, with the purpose of not only responding to the short-term issue of revising the Comprehensive Measures, but investigating the ideal state of a society of harmonious coexistence and medium- to long-term challenges that should be addressed in order to realize the society, as well as reporting opinions to the Ministerial Conference, “Advisory Panel of Experts for the Realization of Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals” was decided to be convened and the opinion compiled by the Advisory Panel was submitted to the Minister of Justice, co-chair of the Ministerial Conference, on November 29 of the same year. On June 14, 2022, based on the opinion, the Ministerial Conference decided the “Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals” (hereinafter referred to as “Roadmap”), which shows the visions of a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals for Japan and the medium- to long-term issues that should be addressed to realize these visions. The government decided to work together to further promote establishing an environment aimed to realize a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals ([Reference 84](#)).

Most recently, the Ministerial Conference held on June 21, 2024 added new measures and updated the work schedule based on the opinions of experts and the like.

2 Outline

The Roadmap indicates the four key points and specific measures for the four key points as medium- to long-term issues to be addressed to realize three visions of a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals, as well as a work schedule for each measure.

The planning period for this Roadmap is for five years until FY 2026. To ensure that the measures are put into place at a steady rate, the Roadmap's implementation status is to be assessed annually to check its progress and review the measures as needed, while taking expert opinions in to account. Regarding decisions about the Roadmap (FY 2024 partly changed), the "Hearing Concerning the Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals" was held to hear the opinions of experts again after the one held in FY 2023.

[Visions on the society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals we aim for and medium- to long-term issues that should be addressed to realize these visions]

[Three Visions]

- (i) A society where foreign nationals are included as members of Japanese society of the future, and where all people can live safely and comfortably
- (ii) A diverse and vibrant society where all people, including foreign nationals, from various backgrounds can participate and demonstrate their abilities to their fullest
- (iii) A society where all people, including foreign nationals, respect each other's individual dignity and human rights and can live without discrimination or prejudice

[Four Key Points]

- (i) Initiatives such as Japanese language education for smooth communication and participation in society
- (ii) Disseminating information to foreign nationals/strengthening consultation systems for foreign nationals
- (iii) Support for each life stage and life cycle
- (iv) Initiatives to establish the foundation of a society of harmonious coexistence

Reference 84 Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals (FY 2024 partly changed) (Outline)

In June 2022, we formulated a Roadmap that shows Japan's visions for a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals, as well as the medium- to long-term issues to be addressed and the specific measures to be taken to achieve these visions. Following the FY2023 partly changed, to ensure the steady implementation of these measures, we conducted a review by seeking advice from experts on the progress of the measures, and updated the measures as needed. (104 measures)

1 Ideal Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals (Three visions)

Safe and Comfortable Society

A society where foreign nationals are included as members of Japanese society of the future, and where all people can live safely and comfortably.

Diverse and Vibrant Society

A diverse and vibrant society where all people, including foreign nationals, from various backgrounds can participate and demonstrate their abilities to their fullest.

Society that Respects Individual Dignity and Human Rights

A society where all people, including foreign nationals, respect each other's individual dignity and human rights and can live without discrimination or prejudice.

2 Medium- to Long-term Issues to be Addressed (Four Key Points)

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 Support for each life stage and life cycle

4 Initiatives to establish the foundation of a society of harmonious coexistence

3 Major measures Related to the Key Points

1 Initiatives such as Japanese language education for smooth communication and participation in society

- The government promotes initiatives for the creation of a comprehensive system for enhancing the Japanese language education provided by prefectures and other entities. The government supports Japanese language educational programs run jointly by municipalities and prefectures. [MEXT] (1)
- The government develops and promotes educational models by discipline based on the teaching content and level scale specified in the "Framework of Reference for Japanese Language Education". [MEXT] (3)
- The government establishes an environment for learning knowledge about Japanese social systems and other knowledge (open to those who are planning to come to Japan in the future) by creating and using daily life orientation videos (provide basic information necessary for living in Japan, basic Japanese language education, etc.). [MOJ] (6)
- The government develops and provides ICT lesson materials for Japanese language for different daily occasions, etc. [MEXT] (8)
- The government promotes the environment of Japanese language education abroad for foreign nationals to learn how to communicate smoothly in Japanese before coming to Japan. [MOFA] (9)
- The government starts accreditation of Japanese language educational institutions. The government operates a certification system for registered Japanese language teachers smoothly. [MEXT] (11)

3 Support for each life stage and life cycle

- The government promotes to implement community-based programs that provide opportunities for parents and their children to meet up and consult about their concerns and problems encountered when parenting. [CFA] (33)
- The government promotes integrated management and identifies the school enrollment status of foreign children by collaborating the Basic Resident Registration system with the school-age children registration system. [MEXT] (36)
- The government creates models of educational environment for children that is attractive for foreign nationals and roll out to local governments and schools across the country. [MEXT] (46)
- The government promotes efforts to set special admission quotas for foreign students for public high school entrances examinations. The government promotes efforts to make necessary adjustments for foreign examinees. [MEXT] (48)
- The government promotes the utilization of the Japanese language tutoring system for the high school curriculum. [MEXT] (50)
- The government dispatches expert consultants and interpreters to the career service sections for foreign nationals at public employment security offices ("Hello Work") to provide suitable career consultation services. The government familiarizes and educates staff on how to handle the employment of foreign nationals. [MHLW] (58)
- The government provides job training for settled foreign residents with special consideration for their Japanese proficiency levels. [MHLW] (62)
- The government continues and enhances publicity and public relations concerning the pension system. [MHLW] (64)
- The government grasps actual conditions by using the "Basic Survey on Foreign Residents," etc. [MOJ] (67)

2 Disseminating information to foreign nationals/ Strengthening consultation systems for foreign nationals

- The government formulates and publishes guidelines for the "Guidebook on Living and Working" and "A Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals". [MOJ] (17)
- The government considers the prompt acquisition of information through the Mynportal, etc. The government considers the customized or push-type dissemination of information. [MOJ] (18)
- The government promotes the establishment of one-stop consulting counters by reviewing the subsidies to prepare an environment that is accepting of foreign nationals. [MOJ] (20)
- The government takes initiatives for multilingual translation/interpreting technologies focused on developing practical simultaneous interpreting technologies. The government expands the priority languages of the technologies to include 21 languages. [MIC] (23)
- The government holds joint consultation sessions by relevant organizations providing support to foreign nationals in local communities. [MOJ] (27)
- The government conducts training programs to promote plain Japanese, etc. [MOJ] [MEXT] (31) (32)

4 Initiatives to establish the foundation of a society of harmonious coexistence

- The government establishes a month for raising public awareness of the harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals. The government implements various events to raise public awareness, etc. [MOJ] (68) (69)
- The government promotes and enhances education based on cross-cultural understanding and multicultural coexistence through school programs. [MEXT] (72)
- The government creates and publishes new statistical tables to analyze the living conditions of foreign residents by nationality, status of residence, industry, etc. by utilizing the statistics on foreign residents in Japan, etc. [MOJ] (75)
- The government conducts statistical surveys for the management of labor conditions and other labor aspects of foreign nationals. The government keeps track of labor transitions, etc. [MHLW] (76)
- The government supports the efforts of private support groups to provide outreach support to foreign residents. [MOJ] (81)
- The government takes initiatives for information sharing between relevant organizations with the aim of improving convenience in the procedures for residence status. The government takes initiatives for information sharing between relevant organizations with the aim of ensuring appropriate residence management through the implementation of smooth examinations based on accurate information. [MOJ] (83)
- The government switches completely to online applications for status of residence, etc., and improves convenience. [MOJ] (84)
- The government integrates Individual Number Cards ("My Number Card") and residence cards to improve convenience. [MOJ] (86)
- The government provides training support staff for foreign nationals. The government considers a certification system for highly specialized support staff, etc. [MOJ] (87)
- The government improves an environment for accepting foreign human resources with establishment of the Employment-for-Skill-Development Program and other measures. [MOJ, MHLW] (92)
- The government promotes deportation and voluntary departure by further enhancing the forms of deportation in a case-by-case manner. [MOJ] (103)

Note: Items with measure numbers in red are new measures that accompany the FY2024 partly changed.

4 Promotional Framework

- ◆ The planning period is until FY2026.
- ◆ The government tracks progress through annual assessments while interviewing experts, and updates the measures as needed.
- ◆ The government clearly indicates measures in the Comprehensive Measures that are to be implemented within the applicable fiscal year.

5 FY2024 Updates

Major points indicated by experts

- Regarding the Roadmap in general, we would like KPI indicators to be set with an awareness of how each KPI indicator is connected.
- Although output indicators are clearer than they were in the previous fiscal year, it is difficult to evaluate fiscal years with unclear output indicators, so we would like KPI indicators to be set more definitively.
- It is necessary to set outcome indicators and show what kind of changes have been made through the measures.
- There are many government surveys that can be used as KPI indicators, so we would like to see the government continue to use figures as an important tool for monitoring the Roadmap.
- It is necessary to maintain data and statistics from the perspectives of understanding the actual situation and verifying the effects of policies in order to implement measures, so we would like you to put even more effort into the maintenance of statistics and other information.
- The points raised other than those listed above were concerning individual measures.

Major updates

Work schedule updates	22 items
KPIs updates	30 items
New measures and updates of the current measures	15 items

Introduction page for the Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals
(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/coexistence/04_00033.html)

Section 2

Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals

1 Background

The “Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2018” (approved in the Cabinet on 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 MOJ 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, etc.

Based on this, it was decided at the Cabinet meeting held on July 24, 2018 that the MOJ 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 the realization of a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals with the close collaboration of the relevant administrative agencies.

At the Third Ministerial Conference held on December 25, 2018, the Comprehensive Measures were decided, and since then, they have been revised every year.

Most recently, on June 21, 2024, along with the decision of the Roadmap (FY 2024 partly changed), we revised the Comprehensive Measures (FY 2024 revised) based on the Roadmap (FY 2024 partly changed), with the perspective of further enhancing the environment for accepting foreign nationals.

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 (FY 2024 revised) include a total of 218 measures (**Reference 85**).

In the FY 2024 revised, the Comprehensive Measures indicate the measures that should be implemented in FY 2024 in the Roadmap and the measures that are not included in the Roadmap itself because they are not necessarily measures that should be implemented over the medium- to long-term, but should be addressed by the government to realize a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals. The government will continue to make across-the-board efforts to realize a society of harmonious coexistence by working together to continue to annually assess the situation of implementation of the Roadmap and periodically following up on the Comprehensive Measures.

Reference 85

Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals (FY 2024 revised)(Outline)

June 21, FY2024
Ministerial Conference on Acceptance
and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals

- The government aims to realize a society of harmonious coexistence where Japanese and foreign nationals mutually respect and can live safely and comfortably. The government will improve an environment that will make Japan an attractive country to work by, for example, enabling foreign nationals to work actively in Japan while advancing their careers.
- In order to improve this, it is important that not only should the Japanese nationals on the receiving side strive to understand and cooperate for the realization of a society of harmonious coexistence, but also the foreign nationals on the received side should also endeavor to understand the principle of harmonious coexistence, and strive to understand Japanese culture, customs and language.

Initiatives such as Japanese language education for smooth communication and participation in society

- Provision of an environment that allows foreign nationals to develop Japanese language and other skills necessary for living in Japan
- The government promotes initiatives for the creation of a comprehensive system for enhancing the Japanese language education provided by prefectural governments, etc. The government provides joint support for Japanese language education with local governments, and improves the level of Japanese language education in local communities utilizing the "Framework of Reference for Japanese Language Education". <Policy 1>^{*}
- The government develops and promotes educational models by discipline based on the curriculum in the "Framework of Reference for the Japanese Language Education". <Policy 3>^{*}
- The government supports the establishment and stabilization of Japanese language classes through project to encourage the reduction of areas where Japanese language classes are missing. The government develops and provides ICT lesson materials for Japanese language for different daily occasions, etc. <Policy 4>^{*}
- The government provides support for attending Japanese language education and orientation for living in Japan to ensure smooth integration into society. <Policy 7>^{*}
- Improving of the quality of Japanese language education, etc.
- The government starts accreditation of Japanese language educational institutions. The government operates a certification system for registered Japanese language teachers smoothly. <Policy 5 (repeated)>^{*}
- Improving the Japanese language proficiency of foreign nationals accepted under Employment-for-Skill-Development Program
- The government promotes the improvement of Japanese language and other skills, etc. to be included in the Employment-for-Skill-Development Plan in order to improve the quality of Japanese language education. <Policy 131 (repeated)>^{*}

Disseminating information to foreign nationals/Strengthening consultation systems for foreign nationals

- Enhancement of information dissemination from the perspective of foreign nationals
- The government seeks options to contribute to the planning, drafting and implementing of harmonious coexistence measures through "Hearings with the relevant parties" and "Option box", etc. <Policy 20>^{*}
- The government considers the publication policy of the "Guidebook on Living and Working" and "A Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals". <Policy 23>^{*}
- The government establishes an environment, etc. for the dissemination of disaster prevention and weather information in multiple languages, etc.. <Policy 32>^{*}
- Strengthening the consultation system to help foreign nationals with their problems
- The government considers measures that facilitate the establishment of one-stop consulting counters by local governments, for example enhancing the subsidies to improve the environment for acceptance of foreign nationals. The government develops the system for Employment-for-Skill-Development Organization to ensure that support is provided appropriately to Skill Development Employees. <Policy 35>^{*}
- The government takes effective and efficient supporting measures for creating an environment accepting foreign nationals to Japanese society by FRESC. The government implements joint consultation sessions by relevant organizations providing support to foreign nationals in local communities, and so on. <Policy 36>^{*}
- The government makes efforts towards realizing practical-level simultaneous interpretation utilizing multilingual translation technology. The government expands the priority languages to 21 languages. <Policy 37>^{*}
- Further promoting the use of plain Japanese in providing information and consulting services
- The government considers the use of a translation tool, etc. for plain Japanese. <Policy 49>^{*}

Support for each life stage and life cycle

- Support for foreign nationals in infancy and school age, etc.
- The government promotes to implement community-based programs that provide opportunities for parents and their children to meet up and consult about their concerns and problems encountered when parenting. <Policy 52>^{*}
- The government creates models of educational environment for children that is attractive for foreign nationals and roll out to local governments and schools across the country. <Policy 59>^{*}
- Support for foreign nationals in the early stage of adolescence and adulthood, etc.
- The government collects, publicizes and disseminates examples of special education curricula designed and implemented for Japanese language guidance. <Policy 61>^{*}
- Support for foreign nationals in adolescence and adulthood, etc.
- Support for employment, etc. of international students
- The government establishes a model for cooperation with companies that employ foreign students at specialized training colleges, with a focus on the process from promoting the strategic acceptance of foreign students to retention. <Policy 77>^{*}
- The government promotes employment and the successful work life of international students through the formation of Consortiums for promoting employment of highly-skilled foreign professionals in regional areas. <Policy 89>^{*}
- Support at work
- The government disseminates and promotes utilization of bi-directional educational video training materials and guidebooks in workplaces for Japanese employees and foreign national employees. <Policy 90>^{*}
- The government provides career counseling through expert consultants and interpreters at employment service counters for foreign nationals at Hello Work. <Policy 92>^{*}
- The government provides vocational training for settled foreign residents with special consideration for their Japanese proficiency levels. <Policy 95>^{*}
- Ensuring appropriate work conditions, etc.
- The government implements, on a trial basis, lessons related to the employment and labor officer to be appointed on the basis of the guidelines for foreign employee management. <Policy 98>^{*}
- The government provides promotion and education activities on systems that can be used by technical intern trainees who are pregnant or have given birth to a child. <Policy 108>^{*}
- Support for senior foreign nationals, etc.
- The government continues publicity and public relations concerning the pension system and considers to enhance it. <Policy 109>^{*}
- Initiatives common to all life stages
- The government grasps actual conditions by using the "Basic Survey on Foreign Residents", etc. <Policy 21 (repeated)>^{*}
- The governments makes efforts to prevent foreign nationals from becoming victims of crime. The government makes efforts to prevent the penetration of criminal organizations into the foreign national communities. <Policy 116>^{*}
- The government makes efforts to improve the convenience of financial services for foreign nationals at financial institutions such as opening accounts (including remittances, credit transfers, and use of debit cards). <Policy 119>^{*}

*1: Underlined words indicate policies that are not related to the "Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals (FY2024 Partly Changed)". *2: Policy numbers in red indicate new policies.

Smooth and appropriate acceptance of foreign nationals

- Employment support for specified skilled workers and other measures, etc.
- The government provides information through field-specific councils, etc. and improves the working environment for foreign human resources. <Policy 127>^{*}
- Initiatives to ensure the smooth operation of the Employment-for-Skill-Development Program and the Specified Skilled Worker System
- The government develops an environment for accepting foreign human resources including a mechanism to improve the Japanese language proficiency in line with establishment of the Employment-for-Skill-Development Program and other measures. <Policy 131 >^{*}
- The government trains personnel before they come to Japan, for example, by supporting dispatch organizations using ODA and local educational institutions and similar organizations. <Policy 140>^{*}
- Elimination of malicious intermediary organizations, etc.
- The government reinforces partnerships with relevant organizations in developing countries through ODA programs, and supports foreign workers, etc. <Policy 152>^{*}
- Expansion of the Japanese language education base abroad, etc.
- The government reinforces the foundation for Japanese language education through the Japan Foundation. The government promotes to disseminate the attractiveness of Japanese culture and society. <Policy 13 (repeated)>^{*}
- The government utilizes the "Fourth-Generation Japanese Acceptance System" through support of teacher dispatch provided by JICA, etc. <Policy 153>^{*}

Initiatives to establish the foundation of a society of harmonious coexistence

- Raising awareness to realize a society of harmonious coexistence
- The government promotes a month for raising public awareness of the harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals. The government implements various events to raise public awareness, etc. <Policy 154>^{*}
- The government implements surveys and research for the establishment of a network to identify the actual conditions of schoolchildren in scattered local areas. <Policy 155>^{*}
- Improvement of survey statistics to investigate the actual living conditions of foreign nationals, etc.
- The government creates and publishes new statistics to analyze the living conditions of foreign residents utilizing the statistics on foreign residents in Japan, etc. <Policy 160>^{*}
- The government implements statistical surveys to identify the actual conditions of the employment management of working conditions, etc. of foreign workers and of labor transitions, etc. <Policy 161>^{*}
- Enhancement of information collection and strengthening of cooperation among relevant organizations for the development of infrastructure to realize the society of harmonious coexistence, etc.
- The government promotes support for foreign nationals and improvement of the environment for acceptance of them through development of highly professional Accepting Environmental Coordinators. <Policy 163>^{*}
- The government enhances and strengthens information dissemination, etc. by implementing projects to support the efforts of private support groups to provide outreach support to foreign nationals. <Policy 164>^{*}
- The government enhances cooperation between related organizations in the consultation offices and the counseling function of the Immigration Information Centers. <Policy 165>^{*}
- The government takes initiatives for information sharing between relevant organizations with the aim of improving convenience in the procedures for residence status. The government takes initiatives for information sharing between relevant organizations with the aim of ensuring appropriate residence management through the implementation of such examinations based on accurate information. <Policy 166>^{*}
- The government improves the system for providing information that can be obtained through the Myportal API for obtaining self-information. <Policy 167>^{*}
- The government considers to improve the environment for acquisition of Individual Number Cards (My Number Card)*). The government makes efforts towards the integration of Individual Number Cards and residence cards. <Policy 168>^{*}
- The government considers the development of professionals who can support foreign nationals with life problems. <Policy 6 (repeated)>^{*}
- The government considers how data contributing to the plans and drafts of coexistence measures related to foreign nationals should be mounted and the collection of data, etc. to be mounted. <Policy 169>^{*}
- The government provides adequate qualification management for insured persons who have changed to a residence qualification under which they are not covered by National Health Insurance. <Policy 174>^{*}
- The government prepares a suitable human resources and physical infrastructure, including improved training for staffs and necessary upgrades to the immigration control system such as the introduction of an electronic system for travel authorization (JES/TA (tentative name)). <Policy 181>^{*}
- Creating a system that enables foreign nationals to also play an active role in a society of harmonious coexistence
- The government supports international students aiming to qualify as certified care workers, including allocation of scholarships. <Policy 182>^{*}
- The government supports leading local government initiatives through Digital Garden City Nation grants. <Policy 184>^{*}
- The government reviews the "Fourth-Generation Japanese Acceptance System". <Policy 185>^{*}
- The government promotes volunteer community revitalization activities for the settlement of foreign nationals in the local community in collaboration with the local government, etc.. <Policy 189>^{*}
- Building the residency management system as an infrastructure of a society of harmonious coexistence
- ① Strengthening residency management network
- The government makes efforts to clarify the independent livelihood requirement for permanent residents. The government formulates guidelines for revocation of permanent residence status. <Policy 189>^{*}
- The government protects and supports refugees promptly and securely. <Policy 191>^{*}
- The government supports foreign nationals applying for Individual Number Cards to promote the possession of Individual Number Cards among foreign nationals. <Policy 192>^{*}
- ② Accurate management of international students enrollment
- The government improves Japanese-language institutes through on-site inspections and confirms compliance with various standards, etc. <Policy 197>^{*}
- ③ Further optimization of the Technical Intern Training Program
- The government establishes a system that integrates the counseling and instruction functions in the Technical Intern Training Program. The government strengthens on-site inspections as measures against the disappearance of technical intern trainees, and terminating acceptance of new technical intern trainees from sending organizations with a large number of missing technical intern trainees. The government promotes joint efforts with related organizations to prevent technical intern trainees from running away, such as publication of a leaflet on preventing the disappearance of technical intern trainees. <Policy 206>^{*}
- ④ Strengthening of measures against illegal foreign residents
- The government promotes deportation and voluntary departure by further enhancing the forms of deportation in a case-by-case manner. <Policy 215>^{*}

Section 3 Major Efforts in Which the ISA 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” 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 238 local governments in FY 2023, and to 259 local governments in FY 2024 as of April 1, 2024.

Introduction page for subsidies for preparations for an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyuukokukanri02_00039.html)



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 (excluding the Airport District Immigration Services Offices and some branch offices) 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.



Efforts made by Accepting Environmental Coordinators (view of the outreach lecture)



Efforts made by Accepting Environmental Coordinators (view of counselor dispatch)

3 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 four ministries and agencies, as well as eight 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), etc.).

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.

Based on the cases of collaboration at FRESC, measures such as participation by relevant organizations in a joint consultation meeting are also taken in regions other than Tokyo.

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.



Scene of consultation at the Foreign Residents Support Center (FRESC)

Introduction page for FRESC

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/fresc/fresc01.html>)

Introduction video for FRESC

(<https://youtu.be/6BvwblqbvM8>)



4 Support at the Immigration Information Center

The ISA has set up Immigration Information Centers at each Regional Immigration Services Bureau and District Immigration Services Offices (except Airport District Immigration Services Offices, including consultation counters of Regional Immigration Services Bureau and District Immigration Services Offices, which are implemented as general consultation services for foreign residents, hereinafter referred to as “Centers”), as consultation counters that mainly provide guidance on immigration procedures related to status of residence.

In recent years, there is a growing need to deal with the problems faced by foreign residents in their daily lives. Therefore, in addition to conventional guidance on immigration procedures, the Centers will also provide consultations on general life issues, and serve as a gateway to support for staying in Japan.

Introduction page for the Immigration Information Center

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/consultation/center/index.html>)

5 Training and Certification of Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals

For the purpose of considering the content of the training, etc., to train professionals who can lead foreign nationals facing problems in their lives to an appropriate source of assistance (hereinafter referred to as “Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals”), the Committee on Approaches to the Training of Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals and the Committee on the Formulation of a Curriculum for Training Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals, which comprised ISA’s officials and experts, were held in 2023 and the results of the consideration were summarized in reports in March 2024.

In FY 2024, based on these reports, the ISA implements training programs for Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals in August. Also, the ISA continues discussing matters such as the approaches for a certification system for highly-skilled support professionals (References 86, 87).

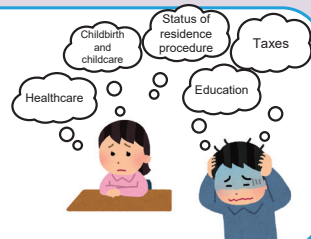
Reference 86 Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals

Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals

Background

In order to realize a society that has harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals, it is necessary to support foreign nationals who have problems in their lives and enable them to stay in Japan in a stable and continuous manner and demonstrate their abilities

Based on the Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals, we considered the content of the training program in FY2023, and from FY2024 we will implement the training and certification of Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals



What is a Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals?

A Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals is "a human resource who provides consultations to foreign nationals^(Note 2) who have problems in their lives^(Note 1) using their expert knowledge and skills, supports such foreign nationals with liaison and coordination with partners and leads them to solutions^(Note 3), and provides information to prevent problems occurring in their lives."

(Note 1) Refers to problems faced in their daily, social, or professional lives.

(Note 2) Includes individuals who have roots in foreign countries regardless of their nationality.

(Note 3) Includes guidance to enable people seeking a consultation to independently solve their own problems.

Consulting support



Preventive support



Intended targets for training program*

Personnel who are currently engaged with responding to consultations at consulting counters for foreign nationals operated by the national government, local governments, or other organizations mandated by either of the former two, and who have actual work experience for a certain amount of time in consultation services

* Nationality is not a concern as it is assumed that the intended targets will include people who hold a foreign nationality.

Scan here for Report on Discussions

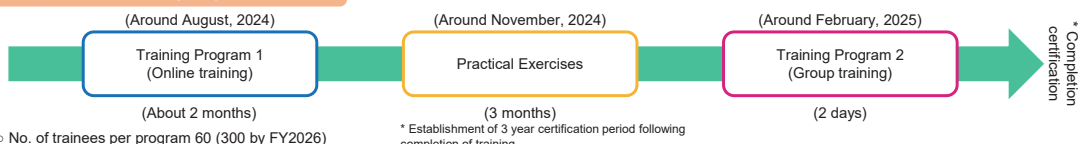


https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/policies/coexistence/04_00038.html

Reference 87 Steps Flow for Training of Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals and Matters to be Addressed from FY 2024

Step Flow for Training of Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals and Matters to be Addressed from FY2024

Step flow for the training program in FY2024



Training Program 1 (Online training)

- Classes on basic knowledge and skills that need to be acquired in the training program (about 60 hours (of classes))

On-demand format

Items	Knowledge and skills that need to be acquired in the training program
A	Significance of the deployment of Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals
B	Knowledge for accurately assessing the statuses of residency of foreign nationals
C	Knowledge for understanding different cultures and values
D	Knowledge and skills for responding to consultations from foreign nationals on complex, multi-layered issues and guiding them to appropriate solutions
E	Knowledge for swiftly referring foreign nationals to appropriate sources of assistance

Practical Exercises

- Application of basic knowledge and skills acquired in Training Program 1^(Note 1) (at the workplaces of trainees)

(Note 1) Work on set assignments while consulting with superiors at the workplace and the lecturers, etc.

- Reporting on progress of efforts

- Assignment reports



Training Program 2 (Group training)

- Case studies and group discussions

- Completion test



Matters to be addressed from FY2024

- Discussions on a certification system for highly-skilled support professionals
- Consideration for remedial measures to ensure that proper recognition is received and that working conditions correspond to the expertise of staff
- Holding of case study workshops for those who have completed the training program
- Consideration for measures to improve the environment for accepting foreign nationals
- Efforts for publicizing the activities of Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals
- Assessment and revision of content and methods, etc., of the training programs
- Expanding intended targets, scale, and activities of the training programs based on the availability of lecturers
- Approaches to training for certification renewal

6 Providing Information through “Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals”

A webpage titled “Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals” on the ISA’s website has been set up to supply to foreign residents and their supporters with useful information on matters including the lifestyle support provided by each ministry or agency to foreign nationals, as well as disaster-related information for disaster victims, in multiple languages by classifying the information into categories.

Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals
(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/portal/index.html>)



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

The ISA, with cooperation from a wide range of sections of the government, has compiled a “Guidebook on Living and Working” that covers basic information (residency procedures, labor-related laws and regulations, social insurance, crime prevention, traffic safety, etc.) necessary for foreign residents to lead their lives and take up employment in Japan safely and securely, and has published this guidebook in multi language^(※) on “Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals” website.



Guidebook on Living and Working

Guidebook on Living and Working
(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/guidebook_all.html)



(※) Japanese (Including Plain Japanese), English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Nepali, Thai, Indonesian, Burmese (Myanmar language), Khmer (Cambodian), Filipino, Mongolian, Turkish, Ukrainian, French and Russian

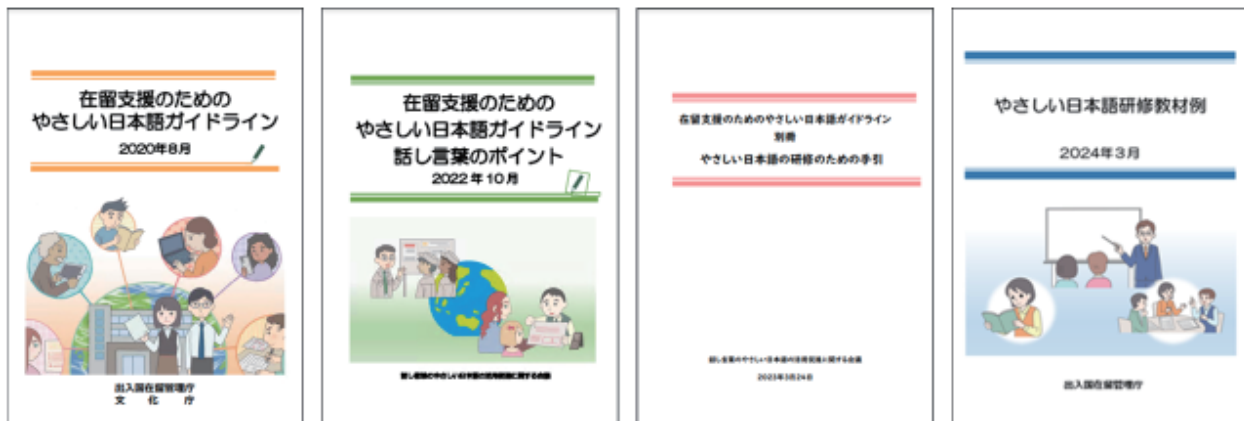
8

Use of Plain Japanese for Foreign Residents Support

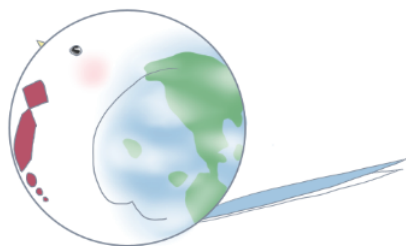
In order to promote the use of plain Japanese by the national government, local governments and other entities, expert committee meetings were held. In FY 2020, the “Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support” were created, and in FY 2022, the “Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support: Key Points of the Spoken Language” and the “Guidelines for Plain Japanese Training: Supplement to the Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support” were made.

Furthermore, in FY 2023, the “Teaching Material Examples for Plain Japanese Training” were created. They are available on “Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals” on the ISA’s website.

These guidelines and teaching material examples have been disseminated to local governments and related ministries and agencies, and are used during training sessions for personnel such as local government officials or otherwise to promote the spread of plain Japanese.



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。



Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support

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

9 LIFE IN HARMONY PROMOTION MONTH

To foster awareness and promote understanding toward realizing a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals, it was decided to designate January of each year from 2024 as “LIFE IN HARMONY PROMOTION MONTH” (hereinafter referred to as the “Promotion Month”), and carry out various awareness-raising activities.

In January 2024 as the first time, initiatives towards achieving a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals were implemented, and outreach lectures on matters including plain Japanese were provided for elementary and middle school children, or high school or other students. In addition, the All Together Festival took place as a central event. Based on the theme of “Enjoy! Learn! World Cultures and a Society of Harmonious Coexistence,” exhibits, experiential workshops, and stage and other events were held, where all participants regardless of their nationalities could experience the cultures and customs of other countries and learn about a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals, all while having fun.

Also in FY 2024, the contents will be further enriched based on results of the previous initiatives implemented and events held, and initiatives leading to the dissemination of the Promotion Month will be implemented on a continuous basis.



LIFE IN HARMONY PROMOTION MONTH

Introduction page for LIFE IN HARMONY PROMOTION MONTH
(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/coexistence/04_00066.html)

10 Videos for the Daily Life Orientation

Videos for the daily life orientation that introduce basic information and rules necessary for living in Japan, including living rules and job and tax information, are prepared in 17 languages^(※) and published on the ISA website and YouTube MOJ channel so that foreign nationals currently living in Japan and those considering to do so can have a pleasant life here.

Videos for the daily life orientation

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/coexistence/04_00078.html)



(※) Japanese, English, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Nepali, Indonesian, Filipino, Thai, Portuguese, Spanish, Khmer (Cambodian), Burmese, Mongolian, Ukrainian, and Russian

Topics: Training Program for Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals for FY 2024

In order to realize a society that has harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals, it is necessary to support foreign nationals who have problems in their lives (such problems refer to those faced in their daily, social, and professional lives) and enable them to stay in Japan in a stable and continuous manner and demonstrate their abilities.

The ISA implements training programs for Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals to train and certify professionals who can lead foreign nationals facing problems in their lives to an appropriate source of assistance.

The training program consists of three stages: “Training Program 1” (online training), “Practical Training” and “Training Program 2” (group training) and the training program lasts for 6 months.

The training program for FY 2024, the program’s first year, started in August 2024. Participants deemed capable of performing the basic tasks of Support Coordinator for Foreign Nationals will be certified as such around March 2025.

Topics: Examples of Plain Japanese Training Materials

Plain Japanese is easy-to-understand Japanese that avoids using difficult words out of consideration for the other person.

The number of foreign residents in Japan is growing almost every year, with nationalities becoming more diverse. And among the top ten countries and territories of origin, nine languages are spoken.

In light of this, it is important to ensure that foreign residents correctly understand laws and rules, residency and social insurance procedures, disaster and evacuation information, and other notices from the national and local governments so they can live safely and securely here. However, providing all such information in multiple languages, so the use of plain Japanese for these purposes is gaining traction.

To promote the use of plain Japanese toward a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals, the ISA and the Agency for Cultural Affairs created the following sets of guidelines: the Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support, which focuses on written language and describes how to write documents using plain Japanese, in August 2020; the Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support: Key Points of the Spoken Language, which focuses on spoken language and summarizes effective ways of speaking in plain Japanese, in October 2022; and the Guidelines for Plain Japanese Training: Supplement to the Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign Residents Support, which is to be used to plan and implement plain Japanese training provided by local governments and other entities to local government employees and local residents, in March 2023.

In March 2024, the ISA created the Examples of Plain Japanese Training Materials. It consists of a textbook that summarizes important points not covered by the previous guidelines, and separate workbooks that provide exercises using common sentences and conversations in everyday life.

These workbooks are written- and spoken-language workbooks, each with a volume for students and a volume for instructors. The volumes for instructors contain examples of plain Japanese and key points for teaching. This makes it possible to conduct plain Japanese training using just one set of examples of training materials.

Plain Japanese training is effective for helping foreign residents learn and familiarize themselves with the language.

We hope that plain Japanese training programs and initiatives will spread nationwide to make plain Japanese widely used.

Topics: Publication of “HarmoniUp!”, the Guidebook of the Japanese Government’s Initiatives to Realize a Society of Harmonious Coexistence Between Japanese and Foreign Nationals

In January 2024, the ISA published “HarmoniUp!”, the Guidebook of the Japanese Government’s Initiatives to Realize a Society of Harmonious Coexistence Between Japanese and Foreign Nationals. This guidebook aims to help more Japanese nationals and foreign residents become familiar with and understand the government’s coexistence initiatives to improve existing efforts and plan new ones with a solid understanding of these activities. It summarizes the government’s initiatives included in the Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals approved in June 2022. The FY 2023 version is available in Japanese and English.

This guidebook has been distributed to visitors at events, such as the All Together Festival held by the Ministry of Justice in January 2024 to raise public awareness and understanding of a society of harmonious coexistence. It is also available at regional immigration services bureaus and the Foreign Residents Support Center (FRESC), as well as from accepting environment coordinators. We hope as many people as possible will read the guidebook, as we plan to continue our efforts to make it more widely available to ensure it helps promote awareness and understanding of the government’s coexistence initiatives among Japanese nationals and foreign residents.

(ISA’s website: https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/support/coexistence/04_00070.html)

Article: Message from an Officer in Charge of Residency Support

(Eiichi Araki, Department of Employment and Permanent Residency Application Screening, Hiroshima Regional Immigration Services Bureau)

I'm engaged in residency support duties as an accepting environment coordinator at the Hiroshima Regional Immigration Services Bureau's Department of Employment and Permanent Residency Application Screening.

The Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals require "the consultation offices of national administrative agencies and those of local governments to promote and strengthen mutual cooperation to ensure foreign nationals have quick access to the appropriate information or place for support when needed, taking into consideration the reality of their residence in Japan." Each regional immigration services bureau is now expected to promote cooperation with those involved in supporting foreign residents in the region under its jurisdiction. This is to identify support needs particular to their nationalities or statuses of residence. In light of this, every month the Hiroshima Regional Immigration Services Bureau monthly provides consultation services at Hiroshima City's one-stop consulting counter. It also plans to build a network for multicultural coexistence by deepening cooperation with the local communities of foreign residents that have been known to us through surveys and other activities up to the end of the last fiscal year.

Our medium- to long-term projects include giving outreach lectures to elementary, junior high, and high school students every January, which is LIFE IN HARMONY PROMOTION MONTH. However, by January of last year, the first year of the Promotion Month, most local schools had already finalized their curricula. As such, we have been asking boards of education and other relevant local authorities since last fiscal year to provide us with opportunities to deliver those lectures this fiscal year.

In addition, we have been working with local governments to provide adequate support to many evacuees from Ukraine coming to Japan since the onset of the Russian invasion. This support includes surveying their living needs and helping them apply for recognition of eligibility for complementary protection and for the Refugee Assistance Headquarters' settlement support program.

I'll continue dedicating myself to my duties to help reduce, even slightly, the anxieties that foreign residents may experience as they live in Japan, while striving for self-improvement.



Accepting Environment Coordinator

Article: Event Promoting Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals

I'd like to talk about our participation in the Thai Festival in Sendai in 2023 and 2024. The festival is celebrating its 12th anniversary this year. Before 2023, the Sendai Regional Immigration Services Bureau had never participated in events like this.

We had never joined any before. So we took advantage of our strengths unique to small organizations: holding meetings joined by accepting environment coordinators, general affairs staff, and even senior officials ("Thai Festival" Taisaku [preparation] Meetings). The ideas shared there and event experiences from other regional bureaus helped us successfully create our booth from nothing, with cooperation from the Agency and other regional bureaus in developing our event program and decorating the booth.

On festival day, we ran public relations activities, including offering a free administrative consultation session for foreign residents, as well as uniform-wearing and picture-coloring experiences for children. In 2024, we introduced a new approach of Immigu, the Agency's mascot, which significantly increased visitors to our booth compared to last year. For the second year in a row, we gave away all 300 of our promotional bags to visitors, helping to raise their awareness of the Agency's services.

We will continue working together to contribute, even in small steps, to realizing a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals by promoting public understanding of the immigration services.



Our booth at the Thai Festival in Sendai

Chapter 6 Measures against Illegal and Imposter Foreign Residents, etc.

Section 1 Implementation of Measures against Illegal Foreign Residents

1 Efforts to Reduce the Number of Illegal Foreign Residents

As a result of the measures taken so far, the number of illegal foreign residents had seen a steady decline, but due to the rapid increase in the number of foreign nationals entering Japan through the various measures taken by the government to make Japan a tourism-oriented country, it has been increasing again in recent years. In 2020 and thereafter, the number of illegal foreign residents had again decreased temporarily along with a fall in the number of new foreign nationals entering Japan due to countermeasures at the border taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19. However, once the border restrictions were lifted, the number of illegal foreign residents has started to rise again, and accordingly, initiatives stated below are being strengthened to further reduce that number.

2 Strengthened Detention

The ISA 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 the ISA’s attention that illegal foreign residents tend to be concentrated in smaller groups and are scattered throughout the country, these days the ISA 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.

3 Preparation of an Environment Facilitating Voluntary Appearance

The ISA has introduced the departure order system (see Section 5, Subsection 5 of the Data Section) as a measure to encourage illegal foreign residents in various parts of the country to voluntarily appear at an immigration office, and has also taken other measures, including a revision of the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan”^(※) and publica-

(※) In order to ensure further improvement of the transparency and equity of the special permission to stay, the ISA formulated and published the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan.” The guidelines articulate 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 present 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)

tion of such cases, as well as public relations activities to encourage voluntary appearance at an immigration office.

9,176 foreign nationals were issued with a departure order based on this system in 2023.

In addition, the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan,” which were approved and announced in 2006, were revised in July 2009 and again in March 2024 in order to increase the transparency of the operations. The revised guidelines clearly state that if an illegal foreign resident voluntarily appears at an immigration office, this is considered a positive factor in the judgment on Special Permission to Stay in Japan.

The ISA is also taking measures to further publicize the departure order system and the revised “Guidelines 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 an immigration office^(※).

Section 2 Implementation of Measures against Imposter Foreign Residents

1 Countermeasures against Imposter Foreign Residents, etc.

“Imposter foreign 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 foreign residents is also an important task in terms of immigration control and residency management administration along with measures against illegal residents. Imposter foreign 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 foreign 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. Therefore, the ISA has been working to respond strictly to clarify the realities of such cases through detailed investigations and has been enforcing deportation procedures against people who are subject to deportation and enforcing the procedures for revoking the status of residence of people who are subject to such revocation.

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 ISA closely collaborate

(※) Examples of public relations activities:

- (i) We hold the “Month to Promote Appropriate Employment of Foreign Nationals to Realize a Harmonious Society” and conduct publicity related to preventing illegal employment.
- (ii) A page for “Procedures for Voluntary Appearance at the Immigration Office” was created on the websites of the MOJ and the ISA 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)

with the police and other related organizations, and in malicious cases, the ISA 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 ISA 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 Bureaus 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

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 ISA 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 ISA 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, etc.

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 on the IC chip, such as a residence card, by smartphone or the like and confirming that the information has not been forged or altered, was introduced from December 2020. Information on the application is published on the ISA website.

Introduction page for the residence card reading application

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/rcc-support.html>)

Introduction video for the residence card reading application

(<https://youtu.be/nF3Ati9QIY>)

The residence card reading application is available via the following links:

Windows



Mac



iPhone



Android



Section 3

Efforts for Further Appropriate Treatment

1 Efforts for Further Appropriate Treatment of Detainees

In September 2010, the ISA agreed with the Japan Federation of Bar Associations to hold continuous discussions with the Federation in order to realize more desirable measures for various problems related to detention. Regarding the detainees of immigration detention facilities, bar associations are providing regular telephone consultations and legal consultations through business trips.

In addition, while considering the actual circumstances at each detention facility, we are striving to enhance the daily lives of detainees, such as ensuring sufficient time in open space and for outdoor exercise and bathing within a scope that does not hinder security. We also install translation equipment at all agency offices with detention facilities and use translators and translation equipment in order to correctly understand the health and other conditions of detainees. Furthermore, we have prepared an emergency response manual for emergency cases and are continuing to make efforts to treat detainees with greater consideration for

their human rights.

We continue working to further optimize the treatment of detainees, such as by strengthening the medical system, based on the improvement measures described in the “Investigation Report on the Death of a Detainee at the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau” published in August 2021 and recommendations made in the “Advisory Panel on Enhancing the Medical System at ISA Detention Facilities” presented in February 2022. We will also follow up on overall improvement measures.

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 detention centers and departure waiting facilities in 24 locations (as at the end of March 2024) spread across Japan according to its districts. 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 Facility or the Director of the Regional Immigration Services Bureau (hereinafter referred to collectively as “Directors”).

Over the course of a year from April 2023 to March 2024, a total of 18 inspections and 41 interviews took place in the facilities throughout Japan, and 54 opinions were given to the Directors. 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 management of the immigration detention facilities, 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 are published each year pursuant to the provisions of the Immigration Control Act.

3 Medical Treatment of Detainees

The ISA is working to strengthen the medical system based on the report titled “Recommendations for Enhancing the Medical System at Immigration Detention Facilities,” which was prepared by an advisory panel of external experts in February 2022. To further strengthen the medical system on a steady and continuous basis, the progress of strengthening the medical system was verified by external experts, and a verification result report was published in December 2023.

At immigration detention facilities, a wide variety of health care providers including not only doctors, nurses, and pharmacists, but also medical radiology technicians, clinical psychologists, and immigration control officers qualified as assistant nurses, are managing the

health of detainees on a daily basis.

To make sure that the health conditions of detainees are understood and to take appropriate action as needed, the ISA is conducting health examinations for all new detainees, in principle, and arranging an interpreter when providing medical care. It has prepared an “emergency response manual,” and operations in line with this manual are becoming widespread.

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.

People attempt to evade deportation because they intend to continue working or living in Japan. However, they have been issued with a deportation order through legal proceedings on the grounds that they were engaged in a crime or illegal employment in Japan or failed to comply with the rules of Japan, so it is necessary to promptly deport them from Japan.

The ISA 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.

Some deportation evaders shout loudly and behave violently when boarding a plane, in doing so expecting that they will be refused permission to board, or cause trouble on a plane such as urinating or spitting, or attempt to destroy equipment on a plane after boarding.

Troubles occur not only on a plane. Some deportees despair when they receive news of their deportation and assault escort officers or harm themselves.

Such an act of obstructing deportation is one of the factors why the number of deportation evaders is increasing, so escort officers need to restrain deportees as needed in order to prevent such acts, avoid any injury to both deportees and escort officers, and escort detainees safely and securely to the destination. For this purpose, as professionals, escort officers discipline themselves daily and train repeatedly by assuming the worst that can happen. For example, they sometimes use a training facility equipped with the same seats and equipment as a real airplane for more practical training.

2 Initiatives for Resolving the Deportation Evasion Issue

On June 10, 2024, the Act for 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 (Act No. 56 of 2023) providing for measures to resolve the deportation evasion issue came into force.

- a. Before the enforcement of the amended Act, since deportation was suspended by filing an application for recognition of refugee status regardless of the reason for or number of times of filing (having a suspensive effect on deportation), foreign nationals could avoid deportation once they applied for recognition of refugee status, even if they had been denied refugee status multiple times, were previously convicted for serious

crimes, or were any unauthorized persons such as terrorists. Since the amended Act entered force, applicants reapplying for recognition of refugee status or other recognition for the third time or more (excluding those who have submitted “materials with reasonable grounds” on which they should be recognized as a refugee or the like upon filing their applications), who have been sentenced to imprisonment for a definite term of not less than three years or are any unauthorized persons such as terrorists, shall be excluded from the suspensive effect on deportation.

- b. The system for issuing deportation orders with penalties was established to encourage acceptance of deportation indirectly. This order will be issued to foreign nationals for whom the means of completing deportation is insufficient, such as those whose destinations of deportation are countries that do not accept repatriation of their nationals who refuse to be deported from Japan, or those who have performed an act of obstructing deportation such as behaving violently on a plane and are likely to perform a similar act again upon deportation.

There are some countries to which it is difficult to deport foreign nationals and in which issuance of passports takes a long time unless foreign nationals subject to deportation themselves apply for such issuance. Since this problem had been a hindrance to prompt and smooth deportation, the system for issuing orders with penalties to have them file applications for issuance of passports or otherwise was also established.

- c. In addition, as measures to encourage voluntary return, the scope of foreign nationals subject to departure orders was expanded, and the period of denial of landing was allowed to be shortened for those who have obtained permission for departure at their own expense.

Under the former Act, only those who appeared in person wishing to return to their home countries might be subject to departure orders. Under the amended Act, those who promptly depart from Japan may also be subject to departure orders as long as they meet requirements, even if they have been charged with illegal stay or otherwise.

The amended Act also provides that if foreign nationals to whom a written deportation order has been served obtains permission for departure at their own expense, then the period of denial of landing may be shortened to one year (excluding the time for activities with the Temporary Visitor status of residence) when it is deemed appropriate after taking into comprehensive consideration the foreign national’s behavior and conduct, the facts that constitute the grounds for deportation, and other reasons.

3 Implementation of Mass Deportation Using Chartered Flights

Although we use various methods to repeatedly try to 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, the ISA has 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 2022, a total of 339 foreign nationals were deported over a total of eight flights (five destinations).

4 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 International Organization for Migration (IOM) Japan office. This AVRR program aims to dispel the anxiety that deportees feel about returning home and to encourage their voluntary return with dignity by providing reintegration support after returning, such as employment support and provision of opportunities for medical care (**Reference 88**).

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 ISA 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.

Reference 88 Changes in the number of people who return home under the AVRR program of the IOM

(Person)

Fiscal year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of people returning home	19	32	15	24	28

Section 5 Creation of Sponsorship in lieu of Detention

1 Creation of Sponsorship

On June 10, 2024, the Act for 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 (Act No. 56 of 2023) came into force, under which a Sponsorship been put into operation.

The Sponsorship is a system to change the former system based on the premise that all those who are subject to deportation procedures are also subject to detention, and to enable the progress of deportation procedures for them without detention but under the support of a Sponsor. Whether to detain them or to refer them to a Sponsorship will be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account disadvantages they may suffer due to detention, in addition to flight or other risks. Even once they are detained, the requirement for detention will be reconsidered as needed every three months to avoid unnecessary detention.

The amendment provides that under this system, a security deposit is to be paid only if it is necessary to prevent flight or other risks.

As measures to prevent flight or other risks, a foreign national who is subject to a Sponsorship is obliged to submit notifications, and a Sponsor is obliged to submit notifications and reports (to report matters requested by the supervising immigration inspector^(※) only if it is necessary to ensure that the foreign national will appear and comply with other conditions of a Sponsorship), and penalties for fleeing or other action are established.

Furthermore, only before a written deportation order is issued, when it is necessary to maintain a living and deemed appropriate of a foreign national who is subject to a Sponsorship, the foreign national may be allowed to engage in activities for which the foreign national receives remuneration under certain strict requirements, including the specification of the place of employment, to the extent necessary to maintain a living upon application by the foreign national (only with the consent of the supervisor).

2 Clarification of Requirements for Provisional Release

With respect to provisional release, along with the creation of Sponsorship, the amendment clarifies the system for temporary release from detention on health or other grounds. Penalties for fleeing or other action are established, while payment of a deposit is not required.

The amendment provides that the director of the immigration detention center or the supervising immigration inspector is obliged to make an effort to determine whether to accept a request for provisional release on health grounds by taking into full consideration the health condition by means such as hearing a doctor's opinion.

(※) This refers to a senior immigration inspector designated by the Commissioner of the ISA, who has the authority to issue a written detention order or written deportation order, provisional release or revocation thereof.

Topics: Immigration Control Officers' Mission and Proper Performance of Duties

Immigration control officers are assigned the important mission of taking strict action against foreign nationals who violate the Immigration Control Act, as well as protecting Japan's security, the lives of its people, and maintaining social order.

With this mission, immigration control officers are responsible for detecting violations, treating and deporting detainees, and other duties. Detection duties involve dealing with those found to possess dangerous or other illegal items and those who resist or flee in an attempt to evade detection. Their treatment duties cover detainees who assault officers or damage property at immigration detention centers and the like. Regarding deportation duties, they deal with deportees who resist in various ways in an attempt to be denied permission to board aircraft, and perform other tasks that always involve the risk of injury in the course of their work.

Therefore, immigration control officers strive to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their duties safely and properly, and work with a high level of vigilance, keeping in mind the Mission and Principles of the Officials at the Immigration Services Agency of Japan.

Mission and Principles of the Officials at the Immigration Services Agency of Japan

The "Mission and Principles of the Officials at the Immigration Services Agency of Japan" outlined here are to be observed by all officials at the Immigration Services Agency of Japan engaged in immigration control and residency management, so that they may perform their duties with confidence and pride without losing sight of the mission entrusted to them by the people of Japan, and so that immigration control and residency management may be conducted properly and meet the trust and expectations of the people of Japan.

[Mission of the Officials at the Immigration Services Agency of Japan]

In the current global society, immigration control and residency management, which is the right of sovereign nations, is becoming increasingly important. In this respect, the basic function of immigration control and residency management is, while respecting the human rights of all people, to ensure the just management of the arrival and departure of all persons entering or leaving Japan as well as the residence of all foreign nationals residing in Japan, and, Japan being a signatory to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, to protect refugees, and furthermore, to provide general coordination relating to improving the circumstances for the acceptance of foreign nationals. In Japan, the Immigration Services Agency, which is responsible for the aforementioned roles, is committed to ensuring smooth, strict, and appropriate immigration and residency management by actively welcoming foreign nationals who abide by the rules, while preventing foreign nationals who threaten the safety and well-being of Japan from entering Japan or staying in Japan, and ensuring that such foreign nationals are removed from Japan. Furthermore, in cooperation with other countries and international organizations, the Immigration Services Agency of Japan aims to provide prompt and reliable protection to those who truly need asylum. Additionally, it works with related organizations to realize a harmonious society of coexistence where all Japanese citizens and foreign nationals accepted into Japanese society can live together as good neighbors. To contribute to the realization of an orderly society and to the sound development of Japan's economy and society by realizing these goals is the mission of Japan's immigration control and residency management, and so it is the mission of the officials at the Immigration Services Agency of Japan, aspiring to an honorable position in the international community.

[Principles of the Officials at the Immigration Services Agency of Japan]

All personnel engaged in immigration control and residency management must always bear in mind that as government officials they are servants of the people as a whole, must be aware that they have a mission to contribute to the realization of an orderly and harmonious society, and that they have to live up to the trust of the people who have placed such an important mission in their hands. To this end, they must maintain high professional ethics, strive for continuous self improvement, always ask themselves whether their own decisions are truly in the best interests of society as a whole, make fair judgments with confidence and pride, and perform their duties with sincerity and integrity, paying particular attention to the following points.

- 1 Taking pride in being a specialist in immigration control and residency management To be aware of oneself as a specialist in immigration control and residency management, to read laws and regulations intensively, to cultivate related knowledge, and to comply with required standards.
- 2 Enhancing the ability to perform duties with a broad perspective To strive to keep abreast of social trends including international affairs on a regular basis, to foster sophistication and common sense through training and diverse social activities, to cultivate a wide-ranging perspective and the ability to think flexibly, and to utilize these skills in the performance of duties.
- 3 Having a sense of fairness and the need for improvement To always be aware of whether duties are being performed impartially and to never hesitate to express opinions on areas that need improvement or to revise matters by oneself.
- 4 Respecting human rights and dignity and retaining politeness To respect human rights and dignity and, when interacting with other parties in any kind of setting, to be kind and polite while giving due consideration to the other party's position, culture, and customs.
- 5 Understanding the feelings of others while maintaining composure To understand the feelings of others while always responding resolutely without losing one's calm and without letting one's emotions interfere.
- 6 Cultivating the capability of communication To listen to a variety of opinions from both domestic and foreign sources, to strive to make judgments that are not bound by precedent and that reflect the common sense of the public at large, to provide all explanations necessary to gain the understanding of concerned parties and all of society, and to proactively communicate information.
- 7 Building good rapport with a variety of related parties and organizations Being aware that proper immigration control and residency management cannot be realized without the understanding and cooperation of related parties and organizations, to work to build good relationships with them, both domestic and foreign as well as public and private.
- 8 Creating an open organizational culture To strive to develop an open organizational culture in which all officials respect each other, freely express their opinions, and promptly consult with and report to their colleagues and superiors on matters that are difficult for them to judge for themselves and where matters are addressed in a unified manner without bureaucratic sectionalism.

Mission and Principles of the Officials at the Immigration Services Agency of Japan
(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/policies/others/30_00041.html)

Chapter 7 Promotion of Appropriate and Prompt Protection of Refugees, etc.

Section 1 Efforts to Appropriately Protect Refugees, etc.

Japan has properly recognized applicants who should be recognized as refugees, and even when they cannot be recognized as refugees, they have been allowed to stay in Japan as long as they need protection based on humanitarian consideration with the situation in their home country. Under such circumstances, from the perspective that persons such as displaced persons from conflict whose stays had been permitted on compassionate grounds in the past should be protected in the same manner as refugees under the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the system for recognizing eligibility for complementary protection was created on December 1, 2023. On the other hand, the need to further optimize the operation of the refugee recognition system in Japan on a continuous basis remains.

As stated below, the ISA is protecting and providing support for individuals such as displaced persons from conflict as persons under complementary protection, as well as reconsidering and working on the operation of the system as necessary, and training Refugee Inquirers^(*) to improve their capability, in a timely and appropriate manner.

Section 2 System for Recognizing Eligibility for Complementary Protection

1 Outline

“Persons under complementary protection” means those who are not refugees under the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees but who meet all requirements for refugee status except the requirement of “fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.”

During procedures for recognizing eligibility for persons under complementary protection, a decision will be made after investigating whether an applicant meets the criteria, in the same manner as for the refugee recognition system.

2 Support for Persons under Complementary Protection

It is planned that persons under complementary protection is provided with, in the same manner as for refugees, the “Settlement Support Program” under which they may take Japanese language lessons for a 572 period (45 minutes per period) and lifestyle guidance for

(*) Refugee inquirers mean immigration inspectors who are appointed by the Commissioner of the ISA to engage in work such as the investigation of facts for the recognition of refugee status and eligibility for complementary protection.

a 120 period (same as above), as well as other support for independence in Japan (decided by the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues on December 1, 2023).

With respect to the content and other matters of the Settlement Support Program for persons under complementary protection, in addition to publication on the ISA website and provision of information by offices of regional immigration services bureaus, they are published on the website of the Foundation for the Welfare and Education of the Asian People, Refugee Assistance Headquarters (RHQ), to which the settlement support business for persons under complementary protection has been outsourced, for wide dissemination. The first Settlement Support Program started on April 15, 2024.

3 Acceptance of and Support for Evacuees from Ukraine

In February 2022, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, many Ukrainian citizens were forced to flee to neighboring countries. In these circumstances, the former Prime Minister Kishida announced on March 2, 2022 that Japan would accept Ukrainian evacuees who had evacuated from Ukraine to third countries. Since then, the government of Japan as a whole has accepted evacuees from Ukraine smoothly and provided them with support such as livelihood support.

Japan has taken measures for evacuees from Ukraine as emergency measures based on the critical situation in Ukraine in cooperation with the international community. In the future, the system for recognizing eligibility for persons under complementary protection will be operated appropriately to securely and promptly protect those who really need to be protected, such as displaced persons from conflict including evacuees from Ukraine. Furthermore, initiatives will be taken so that persons under complementary protection may be provided with appropriate support.

Section 3

Further Optimization of Operation of Systems for Recognizing Refugee Status and Eligibility for Complementary Protection

The ISA is working in close cooperation with relevant organizations such as UNHCR (the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) to further optimize operation of the refugee recognition system based on three pillars: (i) clarifying normative elements on the eligibility for refugee status, (ii) improving the capability of refugee inquirers and (iii) enriching the content of country of origin information.

For the purpose of accelerating these measures, the ISA exchanged a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) with the UNHCR in July 2021. Under the MOC, the ISA continues to cooperate with the UNHCR in collecting the country of origin information and implementing training, and also conducts case studies based on actual cases to examine how refugee inquirers should conduct investigations.

1 Establishment of the “Guide to Eligibility Determination for Refugee Status”

March 24, 2023, the “Guide to Eligibility Determination for Refugee Status,” was published in which mainly summarizes the points to be considered when determining the eligibility for refugee status. This guide was formulated based on practices in Japan, and in reference to documents issued by the UNHCR, with exchanging opinions with the UNHCR. The formulation and publication of this guide is expected to improve the transparency and reliability of the refugee recognition system. In addition, we also expect to have more appropriate and efficient examinations by having officers engaged in refugee recognition examinations refer to the guide, as well as speedy recognition of refugee status by having applicants file applications for refugee recognition based on the guide.

The guide also clearly states that persecution related to sexual minority or gender may fall under persecution based on “membership of a particular social group” under the Refugee Convention. It is assumed that the content of the guide will need to be reviewed in consideration of refugee recognition practices, changes in the conditions of countries surrounding refugees, and other matters. The necessity for updating the guide will be considered continuously.

The guide will also be used in examinations of applications for recognizing eligibility for persons under complementary protection.

2 Improving the Capability of Refugee Inquirers

We have been conducting training to refugee inquirers and other officers in cooperation with the UNHCR, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, university professors, and other people with expertise in international affairs.

We also provide new refugee inquirers in particular with training so they can acquire the necessary special knowledge for investigations related to refugee status recognition, etc., as well as training in the form of case studies for them to gain more specialized knowledge through reviews of specific individual cases.

Furthermore, based on case studies conducted with the UNHCR as mentioned above, matters to be considered when interviewing and questioning applicants for refugee status recognition are summarized and shared within officers to improve the capability of refugee inquirers.

3 Enriching the Content of Country-of-Origin Information

We collect a wide variety of information on applicants’ country of origin and international affairs, including reports of government agencies, news about applicants’ country of origin, and information owned by the UNHCR, for the purpose of referring to such information in examinations for refugee recognition, etc. We have been actively collecting the latest information by cooperating properly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the UNHCR, and other related organizations. In addition, we will take measures such as actively exchanging country of origin information with foreign authorities that are accepting many refugees to further enrich the country of origin information.

In addition, as an initiative to increase the transparency of the refugee recognition system, some country-of-origin information referred to in examinations during procedures for recog-

nizing refugee status and eligibility for complementary protection is published to the extent that it does not interfere with operations. Specifically, reports related to country-of-origin information compiled by foreign government agencies are translated into Japanese, and then published on the ISA website.

Country-of-origin information on refugees

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/refugee/resources/index.html>)

Section 4 Acceptance of Refugees Through Resettlement

1 Resettlement

Resettlement is a process to transfer and resettle refugees, who have been evacuated from their countries of origins and who are temporarily taking shelter in a refugee camp or another place in a neighboring country, 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 “settlement 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 order to deal with the various problems relating to refugees in the Asian region, Japan commenced a pilot project to accept resettlement refugees in FY 2010. The acceptance of resettlement refugees has been fully implemented from FY 2015. The ISA is mainly in charge of the selection process for resettlement refugees and conducts interviews.

2 Acceptance in FY 2020 and Thereafter

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 consider the necessity of expanding the scope of acceptance and the scope when expanding acceptance^(※1). Based on the results of the review by the study group, a Cabinet approval on June 28, 2019^(※2) and a decision of the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues on the same day^(※3) were determined on the following 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 the number of acceptance opportunity being doubled per year); and refugees accepted through resettlement would be able to bring their relatives with them as family

(※1) “Study Group on the 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

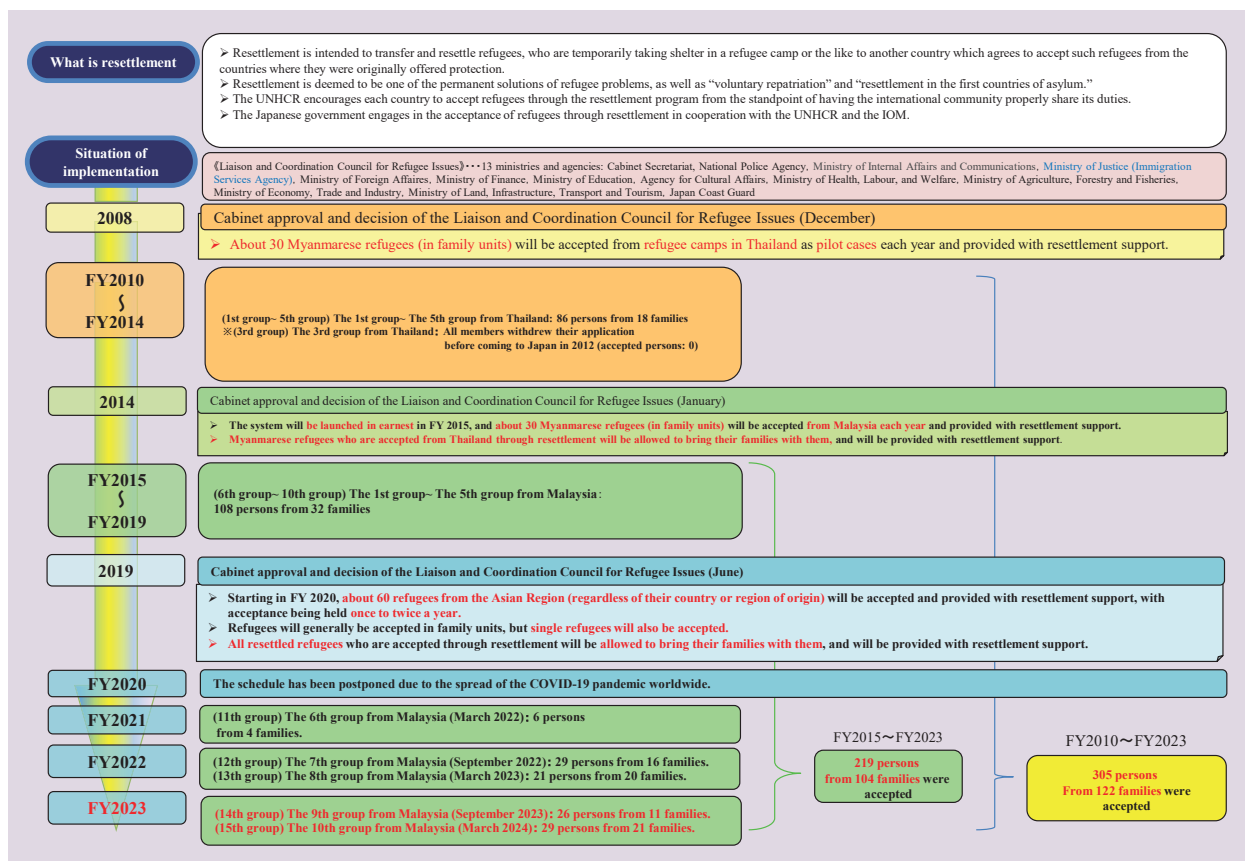
(※2) “Partial amendment to ‘Implementation of the Acceptance of Refugees through Resettlement’” approved by the Cabinet on June 28, 2019

(※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” which was determined by the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues on January 24, 2014 was also partially amended on June 28, 2019.

members. In consideration of the government's policy, the ISA will continue to properly fulfill its role and strive to accept these refugees seamlessly, while working together with the relevant ministries and agencies.

In FY 2023, Japan accepted 26 refugees in the first acceptance, and 29 refugees in the second acceptance. Japan has so far accepted 305 refugees as resettled refugees ([Reference 89](#)).

Reference 89 Situation of implementation and cases of acceptance through resettlement



Section 5 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 (as it was called 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 Japan Federation of Bar Associations, agreeing to hold discussions to identify the refugee-related administrative matters that the Immigration Bureau is responsible for and that need improving. Such matters include procedures for recognizing refugee status. The memorandum also covered information exchange 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 at that time 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, when foreign nationals from these airport branches have been sent to the Higashi-Nihon Immigration Center, the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau, the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau, or the Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau, and 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.

Section 6

Status of Protection of Myanmar, Afghans, Syrians, and Sudanese in Light of the Situation in Their Home Countries

With respect to the world’s refugee situation, after the 2015 refugee crisis in Europe when more than one million Syrian and other refugees and immigrants entered European countries, many people became refugees and evacuees due to events such as Myanmar’s military coup and the Taliban’s seizure of the capital in Afghanistan in 2021, and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022, and Sudan’s armed conflict in 2023. The number of refugees and evacuees in the world has exceeded 100 million, and continues to increase.

Based on this situation, Japan specially responded to Myanmar, Afghans, Syrians, and Sudanese as follows. (for the acceptance of and support for evacuees from Ukraine, see Section 2, Subsection 3.)

1 Status of Protection of Myanmar

In Myanmar, a military coup occurred on February 1, 2021, and people demonstrated to protest against it all over the country. Citizens were killed and shot by the military or police, and the situation was uncertain. In response to this, on May 28 of the same year, the ISA decided to allow, as an emergency evacuation measure, Myanmar (including foreign nationals who have habitual residence in Myanmar) who wish to stay in Japan because of the unstable situation at their home country to stay under the status of residence of “Designated Activities.” The number of Myanmar who stayed in Japan under the status of residence of “Designated Activities” based on this measure, including those who followed refugee recognition procedures, was 15,172 as of the end of December 2023.

The number of Myanmar who were recognized as refugees as a result of refugee recognition procedures was 26 in 2022 and 27 in 2023. The number of Myanmar who were not recognized as refugees but were allowed to stay in Japan after taking into account the situation at their home country and other circumstances was 1,682 in 2022 and 920 in 2023.

2 Status of Protection of Afghans

In Afghanistan, Taliban seized Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, on August 15, 2021 and the situation was uncertain. In response to this, the ISA decided to allow Afghans who wish to stay in Japan because of the unstable situation at their home country to stay under the status of residence of “Designated Activities.” The number of Afghans who stayed in Japan under the status of residence of “Designated Activities” based on this measure, including those who followed refugee recognition procedures, was 248 as of the end of December 2023.

The number of Afghans who were recognized as refugees as a result of refugee recognition procedures was 147 in 2022 and 237 in 2023. The number of Afghans who were not recognized as refugees but were allowed to stay in Japan after taking into account the situation at their home country and other circumstances was 10 in 2022 and 5 in 2023.

3 Status of Protection of Syrians

In Syria, anti-governmental demonstration occurred all over the country after the middle of March 2011, and the situation was uncertain. In response to this, the ISA decided to allow Syrians who wish to stay in Japan because of the unstable situation at their home country to stay under the status of residence of “Designated Activities.” The number of Syrians who stayed in Japan under the status of residence of “Designated Activities” based on this measure, including those who followed refugee recognition procedures, was 274 as of the end of December 2023.

The number of Syrians who were recognized as refugees as a result of refugee recognition procedures was 23 from 2011 to 2023. The number of Syrians who were not recognized as refugees but were allowed to stay in Japan after taking into account the situation at their home country and other circumstances was 98 from 2011 to 2023.

4 Status of Protection of Sudanese

In the Republic of Sudan, a conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces occurred on April 15, 2023. As the situation remained uncertain, the ISA decided to permit Sudanese who wished to stay in Japan on the grounds of a turbulent situation in the home country to stay with the Designated Activities status of residence. As of the end of December 2023, the number of those staying in Japan with this status of residence due to these measures is 21. This number includes those permitted to stay through procedures for recognizing refugee status.

The number of Sudanese who were recognized as refugees as a result of refugee recognition procedures is one in 2023. The number of those whose stays in Japan are permitted based on the situation or circumstances in their home country is 12 in 2023, although their refugee status has not been recognized.

Chapter 8**Responses to International Society and International Situations****Section 1 Treaties and International Conventions****1 Support for Bilateral and Multilateral Frameworks**

In frameworks such as the EPA (Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement), which aims to promote liberalization and facilitation of foreign trade between signatory nations, and to harmonize policies, relax regulations, and cooperate in various economic fields, such as trade in services, the ISA is involved in the field of “movement of natural persons.”

The ISA, 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 (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), and ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization).

For the purpose of simplifying port procedures, necessary adjustments have been made in order to maintain consistency between Japan’s immigration control 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.

2 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 (ICERD), 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 ISA 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 The 3rd Tokyo Immigration Forum

The 3rd Tokyo Immigration Forum, organized by Japan's ISA, took place from December 20 to 22, 2023, with the participation of representatives (senior officials) from the immigration control and residency management authorities of 17 countries and regions (Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, China, France, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, the U.S., and Viet Nam). The forum was also attended by the IOM, UNHCR, the embassies of participating countries in Japan, and the related ministries and agencies of Japan (the forum was held in person).

The former Minister of Justice, Mr. Koizumi, made an opening remark, followed by a remark by the former Commissioner of the ISA, Mr. Kikuchi, and then by a keynote report by the Director General of the IOM, Ms. Amy Pope.

In plenary sessions, with regard to the “protection of human rights of foreign nationals in the immigration control administration,” recognizing that the protection of human rights as a universal value is the cornerstone of peace and stability of the international community, participants shared issues held and action taken by the immigration control and residency management authorities that were required to cope with both “strict and appropriate immigration control and residency management” and “respect for basic human rights of foreign nationals.” Opinions were then presented and exchanged on what kinds of action they should take in the future.

In a breakout session held between the plenary sessions, participants shared issues and exchanged opinions on the following four themes: immigration control measures introduced recently; information dissemination abroad in the immigration control administration; ideal protection of refugees and evacuees; and measures to prevent illegal immigration including unauthorized immigrants. In addition, lectures were given by Ms. Elizabeth Tan, Director of the Division of International Protection and Mr. Ayaki Ito, the UNHCR's Representative in Japan.

The participants appreciated that the Tokyo Immigration Forum served as an international platform for the immigration control and residency management authorities and confirmed that the immigration control and residency management authorities need to keep sharing information about their issues, including the themes discussed at this Forum, and to exchange opinions. The participants also welcomed the fact that the Forum would continue to take place regularly, and that the next Forum would be held in Tokyo in FY 2024.



The 3rd Tokyo Immigration Forum

2 Responses 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 Meetings took place in Tokyo in October 2023 and online in April 2024, and officials from the ISA participated in the meetings to exchange information and opinions with the counterparts from the immigration control and residency management authorities of other countries.

In addition to the international meetings mentioned above, the ISA sends delegates to the Consular Consultation and the like to actively express Japan's position and build cooperative relationships with other countries. The ISA also sends officials to participate in multinational meetings, such as the ASEAN Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs Plus Three Consultation, for the purpose of sharing information and exchanging opinions.

3 International Exchange

The ISA has been striving to strengthen cooperative relations with other countries and regions by means such as actively exchanging views with the immigration control and residency management authorities of other countries at different levels, and by accepting inspection visits by related organizations.

In FY 2023, the ISA held meetings at the director-general level with the immigration control and residency management authorities from the Republic of Korea and Australia. The ISA also participated in the meeting held by the Japan Taiwan Exchange Association and the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association, mutually sharing information and exchanging opinions on the measures taken.

In addition, relevant parties from other countries including Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, and Uzbekistan visited the ISA to exchange opinions.

Chapter 9 Public Relations Activities

Section 1 Promotion of Public Relations Activities

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, and the ISA has been further promoting more active PR activities than ever before. As the main public relations activities, we provide information on a timely and appropriate basis, 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 applicants for recognition of refugee status and eligibility for complementary protection, are released to the media and published on the ISA's website. In addition, the ISA also discloses information on cases of special permission to stay in Japan, the average processing time for examinations of status of residence and refugee status recognition, the immigration examination waiting time at airports, and endeavors 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 ISA website. The ISA also performs public relations activities by creating and publishing various PR videos or participating in various events for the purpose of promoting the understanding of the ISA's work.

Furthermore, we have designated every June as the "Month to Promote Proper Employment of Foreign Nationals for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence," which is the same period as the government-wide "Foreign Workers' Issues Awareness Month." In addition, we have been conducting awareness-raising activities for the public, companies employing foreign nationals, and related organizations during that month, on matters such as points to keep in mind when recruiting foreign nationals, in addition to measures to prevent illegal employment.



The video clip "The Mission and Role of the ISA"



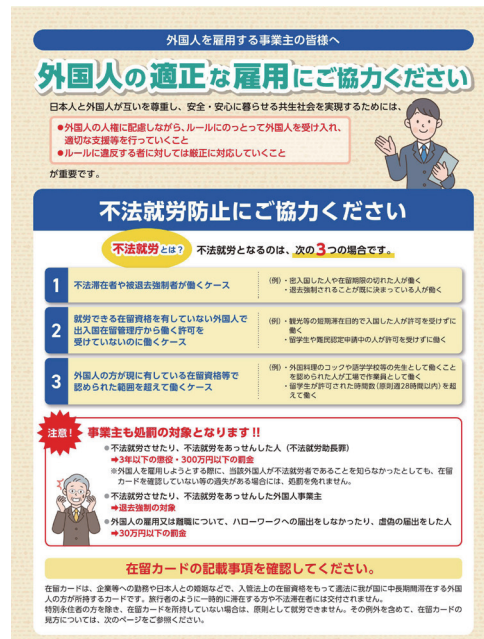
The video clip "Initiatives to Accept Foreign Nationals and for a Society of Harmonious Coexistence"

The video clip “The Mission and Role of the ISA”

(<https://youtu.be/Ce4yWo1UbOo>)

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

(<https://youtu.be/rGv5sAsShsY>)



Leaflet for the Month to Promote Proper Employment of Foreign Nationals for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence



Public relations and enlightenment activities during the Month to Promote Proper Employment of Foreign Nationals for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence

Section 2 Information Dissemination

1 ISA Website

The ISA website (<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/index.html>) offers Q&As on immigration and residence procedures, as well as addresses, contact information, opening hours, and other information about the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus. It also provides residency support measures and policy information like various meetings, in a centralized manner. The ISA is working to enhance content and improve usability and accessibility so users can easily obtain the information they need.

Furthermore, in order to enhance information provision to foreign nationals, we opened a new multilingual website in February 2021, supporting 14 languages. In March 2023, we introduced an automatic translation function to the website to increase the number of supported languages to more than 100, so that the website will be useful for foreign nationals as well.

2 ISA Social Media, etc.

(1) ISA X (Formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram

To further enhance its public relations activities, the ISA uses X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook to provide information on new systems and useful information for foreign residents. Furthermore, since July 2024, the ISA has started a new Instagram account based on the concept that the ISA's mascot character, "Immigu" makes the ISA feel closer to the public, and been sending information such as the content of the ISA's services and new recruitment information.

In addition, the official X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook of the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus are used to send real-time information on waiting time to visitors coming to the residence examination desks, and also to give information on various events and campaigns to be held at airports and other places.

Various Social Media

(https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/publications/nyuukokukanri01_00184.html)

(2) ISA Email Distribution Service

In addition to the website and social media mentioned above, the ISA provides a service of distributing information for foreign residents, such as information on immigration and residency procedures, and residency support, by email written in Japanese, plain Japanese, and English. Since March 2024, the ISA has added to this service the function of informing the expiration date of the resident's period of stay. The ISA has also launched a new email distribution service for related organizations that employ or support foreign nationals to further strengthen and enrich information dissemination.

These email distribution services enable users to select what information they want to receive, and send information according to the needs of individual users.

Email distribution service

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/publications/mail-service.html>)

Topics: Public Relations Activities to Promote Public Understanding of the Immigration Control and Residency Management Administration

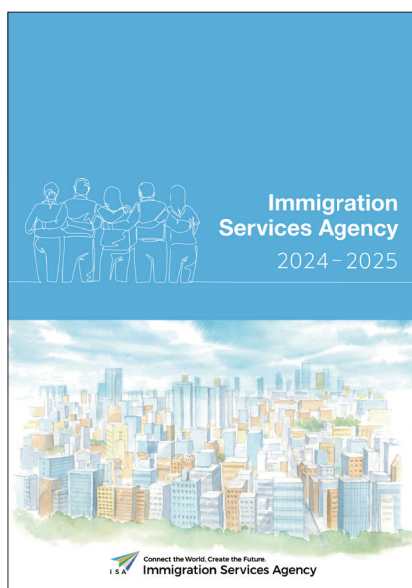
The ISA promotes public understanding of the immigration control and residency management administration through various activities and opportunities, including the following public relations activities:

1. Creating brochures

We offer brochures that show our works and initiatives to increase interest in and understanding of the immigration control and residency management administration, both at home and abroad. In addition, we newly provide a brochure “the Guide to the ISA’s Roles and Activities”, which is primarily aimed at elementary and junior high school students, in an effort to raise awareness about what we do among all ages.

ISA’s brochures

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/policies/policies/shiori.html>)



Immigration Services Agency 2024-2025, a brochure on the ISA's functions



Guide to the ISA's Roles and Activities

2. Creating an online content “Introduction to the Immigration Services Agency”

We have created an online content titled “Introduction to the Immigration Services Agency” on our website to provide a visual overview of our facilities and operations. This content explains the operations of our facilities, such as regional bureaus and airports, by enabling users to click on the facility icons on the city map.

Introduction to the Immigration Services Agency

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/about/organization/naruhodonyuukan.html>)



Introduction to the Immigration Services Agency

3. Branding efforts using a mascot

We have created the ISA's mascot "Immigu" for various events and media. We use this mascot to provide a better introduction by our media such as brochures, websites, and Instagram and help familiarize the public with the immigration control and residency management administration.



Immigu, the ISA's mascot

4. Participating in various events

At various events, we set up booths and conduct activities to provide information on our works in order to raise public awareness of the immigration control and residency management administration.

Information on our participation in events

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/publications/index.html>)



Vietnam Festival 2024



GLOBAL FESTA JAPAN 2024

Topics: ISA's Actions for the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake

To support foreign nationals affected by the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake that occurred on January 1, 2024, the ISA took the following actions:

1. Actions taken under the Act on Special Measures concerning Preservation of Rights and Interests of Victims of Specified Disaster (the "Special Measures Act")

Under the Special Measures Act, we extended the periods of stay of all foreign residents in the municipalities covered by the Disaster Relief Act to June 30, 2024.

For those who were considered to have difficulty fulfilling their obligations, such as reporting a change of the place of residence, under the Immigration Control Act and other relevant laws and regulations, we decided not to treat them disadvantageously for their failure to fulfill the obligations as long as they fulfill them by April 30, 2024.

These actions under the Special Measures Act were the first of their kind since the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011.

2. Holding consultation sessions

The Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau, which has jurisdiction over the affected regions, held five consultation sessions to support technical intern trainees, specified skilled workers, and other foreign residents affected by the disaster, as well as their related parties, in their immigration and other necessary procedures.

In addition, the main office and other offices of the Organization for Technical Intern Training opened special support sections for affected technical intern trainees, etc.

3. Permitting foreign nationals who had difficulty engaging in the permitted activity to engage in an activity not permitted

We permitted foreign nationals to engage in an activity not permitted for up to eight hours a day for up to three months if they had a status of residence with work authorization but were unable to work due to the disaster.

4. Disseminating information

Following the disaster, we shared useful resources, including links and apps that provided disaster information for foreign residents, through our social media channels. We also posted such useful resources on A Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals of our website.

(Pictures 40 and 41) Consultation session for foreign nationals affected by the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake held by the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau



Consultation session for foreign nationals affected by the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake held by the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau

Chapter 10 Organizations and Systems

Owing to significant changes in the circumstances affecting immigration control and residency management administration in recent years, in response to an increase in the quantity and in the complexity of immigration duties, measures have been taken to improve and expand the organization and staff for immigration control.

Immigration control and residency management administration work was carried out by 6,358 officials as of the end of FY 2024 at the ISA and other immigration control and residency management offices. Due to a wide range of challenges in immigration control and residency management administration, further improvement and expansion of the organization and staff are still necessary.

Section 1 Organizations

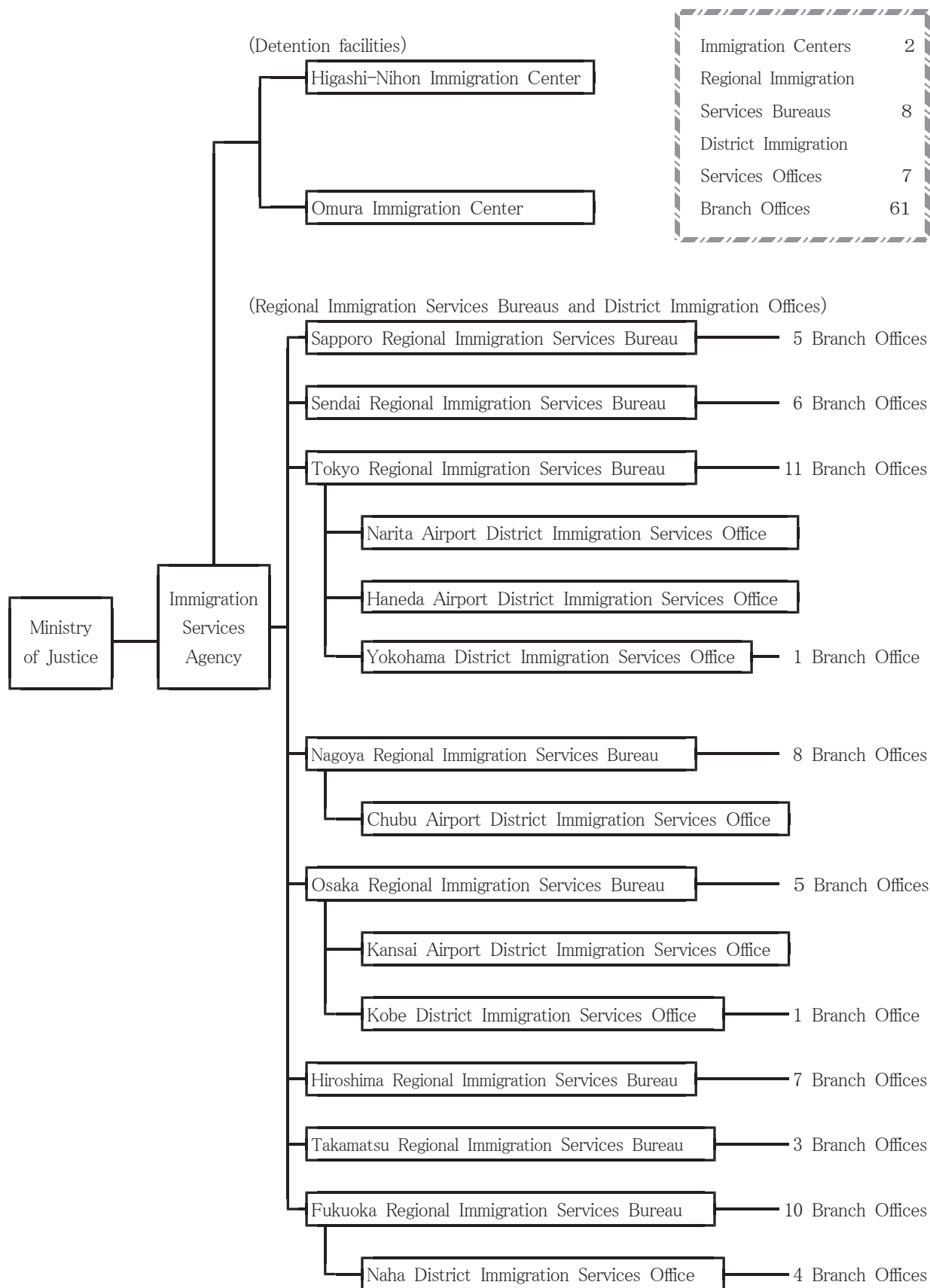
1 Outline of the Immigration Control and Residency Management Offices

As the organization with jurisdiction over immigration control and residency management work, the ISA was established as an external agency of the MOJ, and as regional bureaus established under the ISA, Regional Immigration Services Bureaus have been established for each of the eight regional blocks throughout the country, and below them, District Immigration Services Offices and Branch Offices (including Branch Offices of District Immigration Services Offices). In addition, Immigration Detention Facilities have been established as facilities and other organs of the ISA, and based on the laws and regulations, the ISA engages in various tasks related to immigration control and residency management administration. These include immigration examinations, residence examinations, residency support, deportation procedures, recognition of refugee status and eligibility for complementary protection, and general coordination relating to the establishment of an environment for accepting foreign nationals.

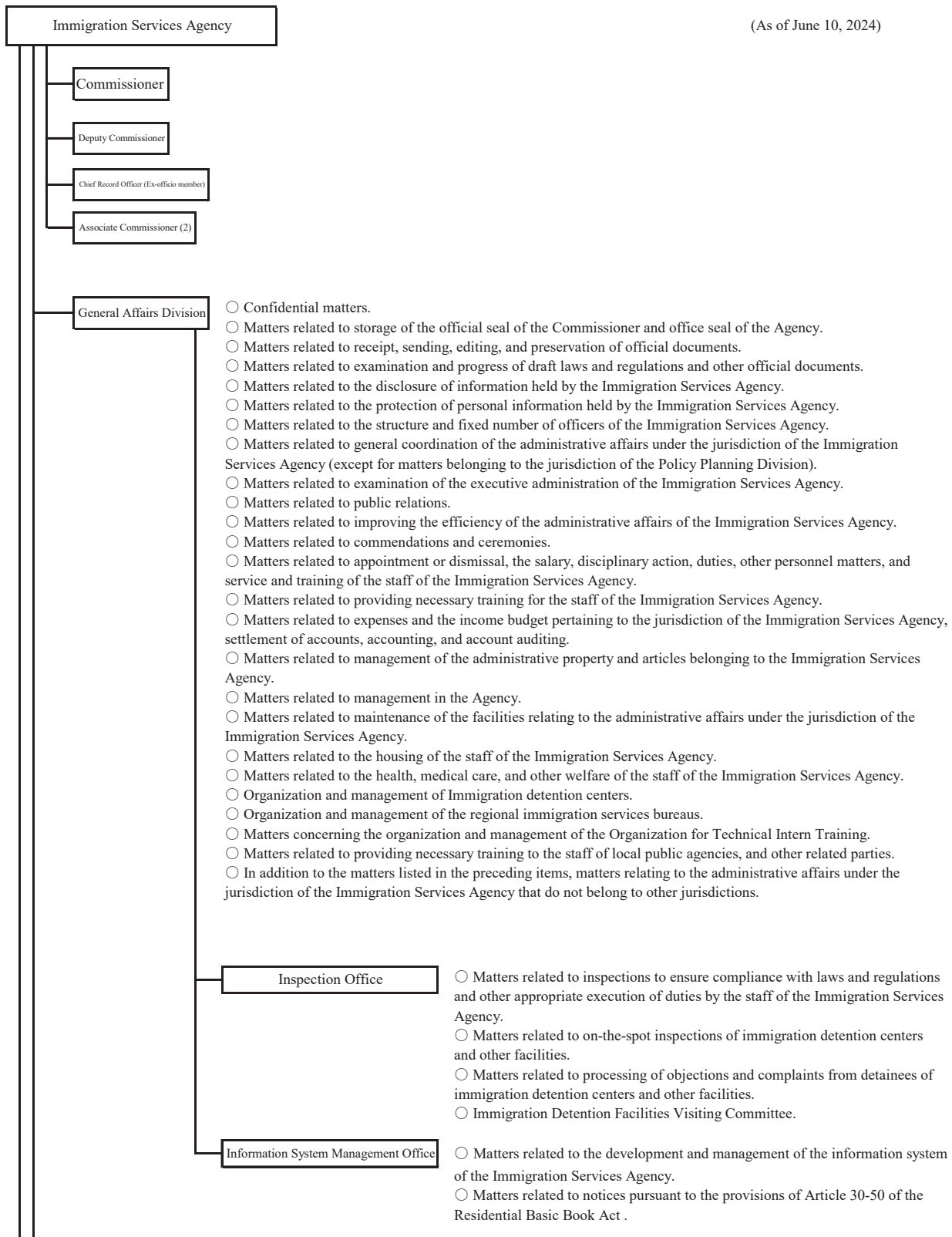
The ISA, Regional Immigration Services Bureaus, District Immigration Services Offices, Branch Offices, and Immigration Detention Facilities are collectively referred to as “Immigration Control and Residency Management Offices” ([References 90, 91](#)).

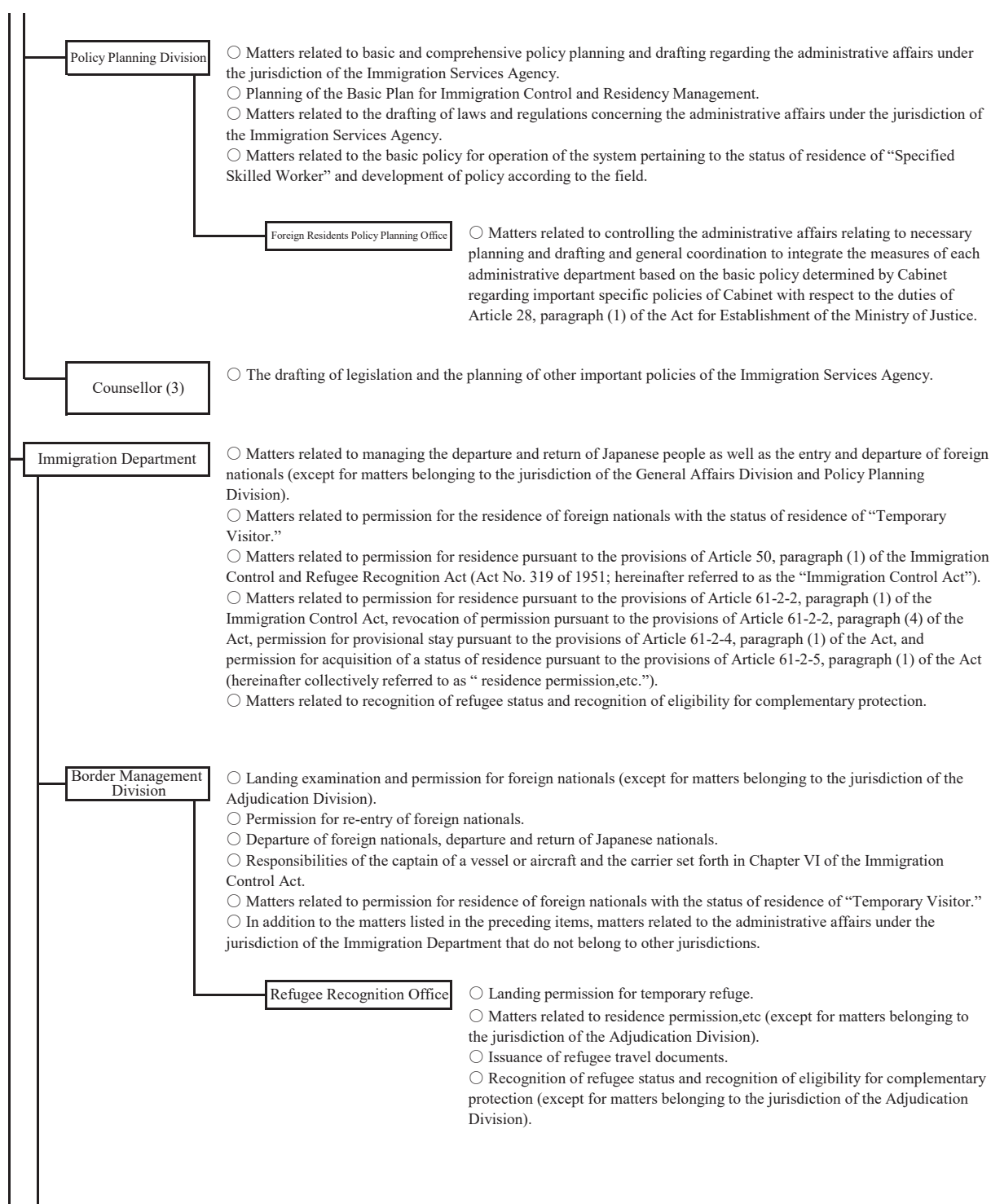
Reference 90

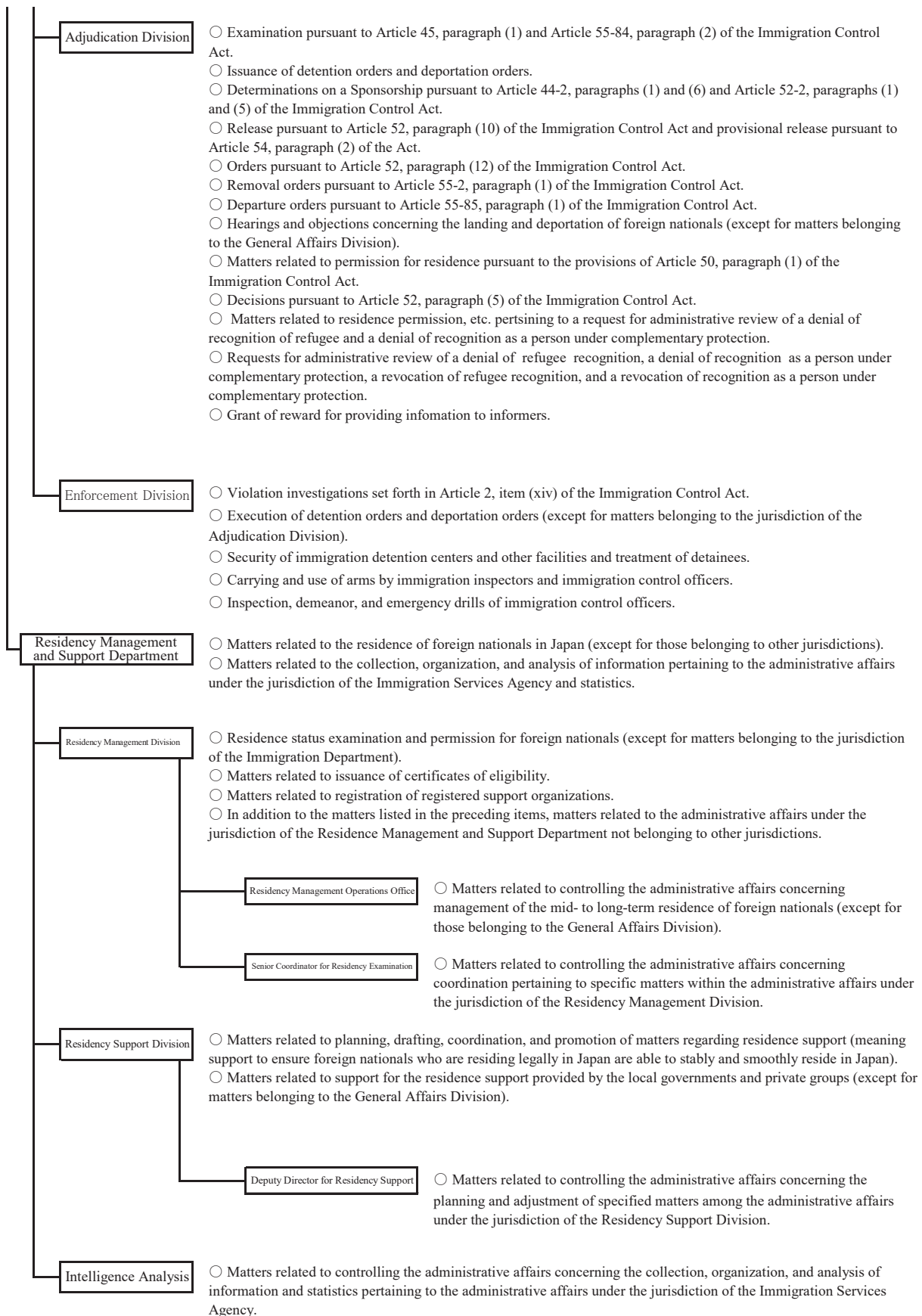
(As of April 1 , 2024)



Reference 91 Responsibilities of the ISA







(*) Other than the positions mentioned above, attorneys (legal specialists) are assigned to the Immigration Services Agency.

2 Review of the Organizational Structure of the Immigration Control and Residency Management Offices

Major organizational expansions in FY 2024 are as follows.

- Assign more Assistants to the Director and Senior Experts in the ISA to strengthen the immigration control system smoothly and strictly by means such as introducing iAPI (interactive Advance Passenger Information system).
- Assign more Assistants to the Director and Senior Experts in the ISA to strengthen the examination system related to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker”.
- Establish the Inspection Coordination Department at the Yokohama District Immigration Services Office to strengthen the residency examination system by separating residency examination work from inspection coordination work.
- Establish Employment Inspection Department 2 at the Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau to strengthen the residency examination system in order to respond to a rapid increase in the number of applications related to the Specified Skilled Worker.
- Assign more Assistants to the Director and Senior Experts in the ISA and Supervisor Inspectors at the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau and Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services Bureau, and establish the Refugee Adjudication Department at the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau to strengthen the examination system related to the recognition of refugee status and eligibility for complementary protection.
- Assign more Instructors in the ISA, and Assistants to the Director at the Sapporo Regional Immigration Services Bureau, the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau, the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau, the Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau, the Hiroshima Regional Immigration Services Bureau, and the Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services Bureau to strengthen the training system to make it appropriate and sustainable as part of a strategic approach to cultivate human resources.
- Assign more Supervisor Control Officers at the Yokohama District Immigration Services Office and the Naha District Immigration Services Office to strengthen the medical system and security system at detention facilities.
- Assign more Senior Experts in the ISA, and Supervisor Inspectors at the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau, the Yokohama District Immigration Services Office, the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau, and the Hiroshima Regional Immigration Services Bureau to promote the system for digitalization of immigration control and residency management work.
- Assign more Senior Experts in the ISA, and Public Relations Coordinators at the Sendai Regional Immigration Services Bureau, the Takamatsu Regional Immigration Services Bureau, the Yokohama District Immigration Services Office, the Kobe District Immigration Services Office, and the Naha District Immigration Services Office to strengthen the public relations system strategically and effectively.

Further most Branch Offices of Regional Immigration Services Bureaus (including Branch Offices of District Immigration Services Offices) were located within the area of seaports, based on the historical background that they were originally established for immigration examinations of crew members and passengers on oceangoing vessels. Now as the primary means of international transportation has shifted from oceangoing vessels to airplanes, immigration examinations at airports became main service, and as foreign nationals residing in Japan for a long time increased, the ISA has proceeded to reorganize, integrate or scrap Branch Offices at seaports to respond to the foregoing change in administrative needs, and

has made efforts to re-allocate Branch Offices by establishing them at local airports where many international flights arrive, prefectural capitals, and other major cities. ([Reference 92](#)).

As a result, the number of Branch Offices established in the country through reorganization of Regional Immigration Offices into Regional Immigration Bureaus, which was 103 as of April 1, 1981, is 61 as of April 1, 2024. The establishment of at least one Regional Immigration Control and Residency Management Office in each prefecture has been achieved, while Branch Offices have decreased by about 40% from 1981.

Those Branch Offices should not only improve convenience for foreign nationals who come to submit various applications, reports or consultation but also enhance close cooperation with related local organizations, such as the police, in collecting information on illegal and imposter foreign residents. With a view to enhancing cooperation with local governments and related organizations which accept foreign nationals who intend to reside in Japan for a medium to long term, it is necessary to continue rationalizing and streamlining the organizational structure, with the aim of ensuring smooth and proper processing, including immigration examination, residence examination, residence support and collection of information on offenders in violation of the Immigration Control Act, and establishing a more comprehensive framework for branch offices.

Reference 92 Reorganization, abolishment or establishment of Branch Offices of the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus (actual result)

(As of April 1, 2024)

Fiscal Year	Division	Abolition		Establishment	
		Name	Location	Name	Location
2000		Amagasaki Port Branch Office Kure Port Branch Office Karatsu Port Branch Office Imari Port Branch Office	Amagasaki City Kure City Karatsu City Imari City	Saga Branch Office	Saga City
2001		Yokosuka Port Branch Office Kagoshima Airport Branch Office Shimizu Port Branch Office Tagonoura Port Branch Office	Yokosuka City Mizobe-cho Aira-gun Shimizu City Fuji City	Shizuoka Branch Office	Shizuoka City
2002		Iwakuni Port Branch Office Yatsushiro Port Branch Office Hitachi Port Branch Office Kashima Port Branch Office	Iwakuni City Yatsushiro City Hitachi City Kamis-u-cho Kashima-gun	Kofu Branch Office Gifu Branch Office Otsu Branch Office Mito Branch Office	Kofu City Gifu City Otsu City Mito City
2003		Tokyo Port Branch Office Shibuya Branch Office Muroran Port Branch Office Miyako Port Branch Office Ofunato Port Branch Office Ishinomaki Port Branch Office Sasebo Port Branch Office Naha Port Branch Office	Koto-ku Tokyo Shibuya-ku Tokyo Muroran City Miyako City Ofunato City Ishinomaki City Sasebo City Naha City	Shinjuku Branch Office Morioka Branch Office	Shinjuku-ku Tokyo Morioka City
2004		Aomori Port Branch Office Hachinohe Port Branch Office Yokohama Port Branch Office Nagoya Port Branch Office Nagoya Airport Branch Office Sakai Port Branch Office Kobe Port Branch Office Mizushima Port Branch Office Shibushi Branch Office	Aomori City Hachinohe City Yokohama City Nagoya City Toyoyama-cho Nishika-sugai-gun Sakai City Kobe City Kurashiki City Shibushi-cho Soo-gun	Aomori Branch Office	Aomori City
2005		Naoetsu Port Branch Office	Joetsu City		
2007		Osaka Port Branch Office Tennoji Branch Office	Osaka City Osaka City	Tobu Branch Office	Edogawa-ku Tokyo
2010		Haneda Airport Branch Office	Ota-ku Tokyo		
2014		Otaru Port Branch Office	Otaru City	Asahikawa Branch Office	Asahikawa City
2022		Tobu Branch Office	Edogawa-ku Tokyo	Matsudo Branch Office	Matsudo City

Section 2 Staff

1 ISA Staff

In immigration detention facilities and Regional Immigration Services Bureaus, immigration inspectors and immigration control officers are assigned as staffs who are engaged in immigration control duties. In addition, administrative officers of the MOJ engage in general administrative duties and technical officers of the MOJ, including doctors, are also assigned.

Immigration inspectors are responsible for (i) examinations and hearings in entry (landing) procedures, (ii) examinations of various applications for residence, investigations of facts, and on-site inspections of institutions to which Specified Skilled Workers belong, (iii) examinations and hearings in deportation procedures, issuance of written detention orders and deportation orders, as well as provisional release clerical work, (iv) investigations related to refugee recognition, and recognition as a person under complementary protection, and (v) work related to improving the environment for accepting foreign nationals.

Immigration control officers are responsible for (i) investigating violations related to the unauthorized stay of illegal entrants and illegal overstayers, (ii) detaining and escorting suspects by executing written detention orders, as well as guarding detention facilities, (iii) deporting people subject to deportation by execution of a deportation order, (iv) fact-finding and on-site inspections of organizations to which Specified Skilled Workers belong. The immigration control officers come under the provisions of “police officials” under the National Public Service Act, and moreover, since they often have to engage in dangerous work, they also come under the “public security service officials” of the Act on Remuneration of Officials in Regular Service. Immigration control officers are divided into seven ranks (keibikan, keibicho, keibishicho, keibishi, keibishiho, keishucho, and keishu, in order of descending superiority) in order to clarify the chain of command for group operations for detection.

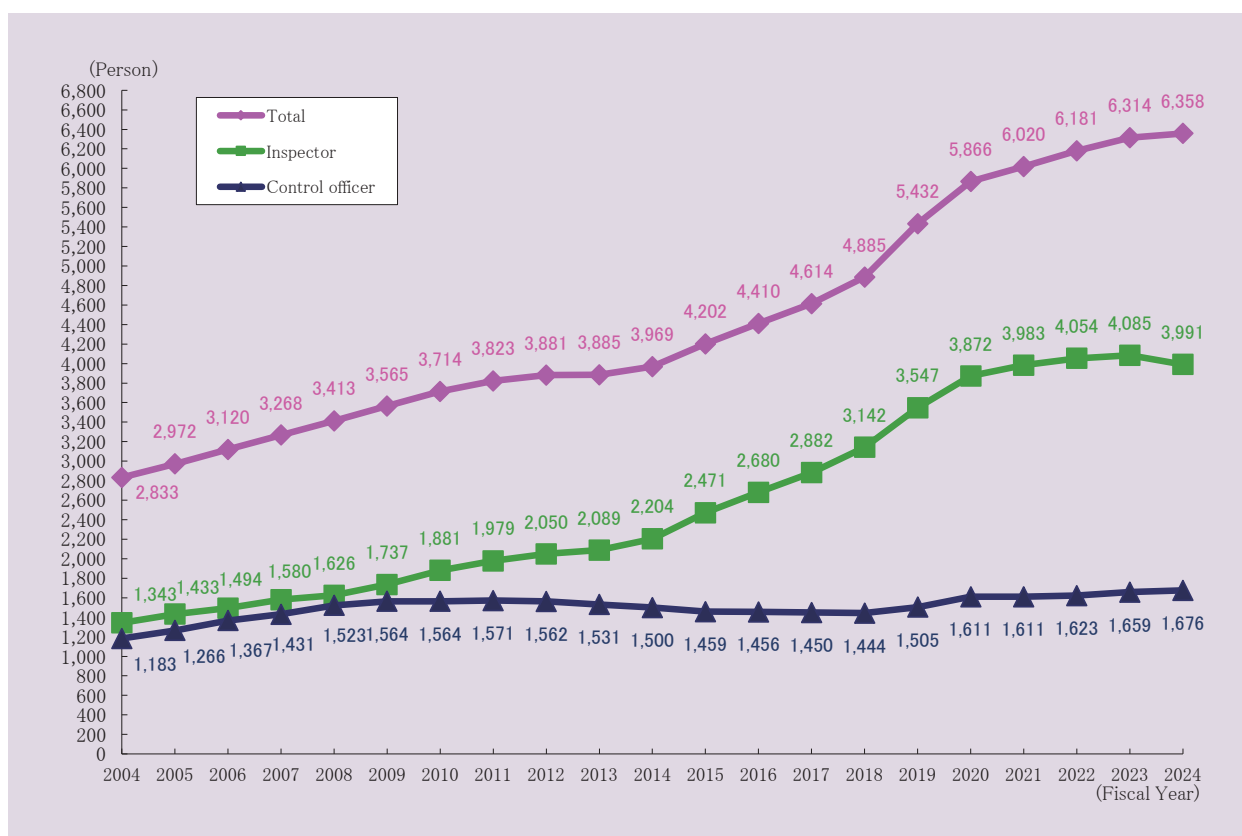
Since individual immigration inspectors and immigration control officers perform their duties independently as specialists in immigration control and residency management, the specialist system was introduced. These officials are required to have legal knowledge necessary for their duties as well as a balanced point of view from an international perspective and the ability to interact with foreign nationals flexibly while giving consideration to their diverse cultures, custom and religions and their human rights.

2

Staff Increase

The number of ISA-related staff was 6,358 in FY 2024, which was an increase of about 17% (926) compared to five years ago in FY 2019 when the number was 5,432. However, during this period, the number of cases handled by the immigration offices has remained at a high level, and the immigration control work has been getting more complex and difficult such as the need to balance smooth yet rigorous entry examinations in order to promote Japan as a tourism-oriented country but to prevent terrorist acts and illegal entry; to implement measures to deal with the forged or altered documents that are becoming increasingly more sophisticated; to strengthen the residence management and support pertaining to foreign nationals after entry into Japan; to enforce strengthened detection and reliable deportation of illegal foreign residents, some of whom are potential criminals; to implement measures against imposter foreign residents disguised as legal residents; and to implement even more appropriate yet stricter examinations of applications for refugee recognition and others. Further staff increase is necessary in order to deal appropriately and swiftly with such situations and to meet the public needs for administration ([Reference 93](#)).

Reference 93 Changes in the number of Immigration Control and Residency Management Office personnel



(Person)

Fiscal Year	Division	Administrative officials in the Ministry of Justice	Regional Immigration Bureaus				Sub-Total	Total
			Administrative officials	Inspectors	Control officers	Others		
1985		169	155	703	658	55	1,571	1,740
1995		163	165	1,152	869	38	2,224	2,387
2000		157	164	1,196	998	26	2,384	2,541
2003		152	144	1,272	1,101	24	2,541	2,693
2004		142	142	1,343	1,183	23	2,691	2,833
2005		131	122	1,433	1,266	20	2,841	2,972
2006		129	122	1,494	1,367	8	2,991	3,120
2007		128	121	1,580	1,431	8	3,140	3,268
2008		127	129	1,626	1,523	8	3,286	3,413
2009		126	130	1,737	1,564	8	3,439	3,565
2010		126	135	1,881	1,564	8	3,588	3,714
2011		126	139	1,979	1,571	8	3,697	3,823
2012		126	135	2,050	1,562	8	3,755	3,881
2013		126	131	2,089	1,531	8	3,759	3,885
2014		126	131	2,204	1,500	8	3,843	3,969
2015		140	124	2,471	1,459	8	4,062	4,202
2016		140	126	2,680	1,456	8	4,270	4,410
2017		140	134	2,882	1,450	8	4,474	4,614
2018		139	152	3,142	1,444	8	4,746	4,885

* The administrative officers of the Ministry before FY2018 do not include the Deputy Director-General.

Division Fiscal Year	Immigration Services Agency						Total
	Administrative officials in the Immigration Services Agency	Immigration Control and Residency Management Offices					
		Administrative officials	Inspectors	Control officers	Others	Sub-Total	
2019	211	161	3,547	1,505	8	5,221	5,432
2020	211	164	3,872	1,611	8	5,655	5,866
2021	251	164	3,983	1,611	11	5,769	6,020
2022	291	188	4,054	1,623	25	5,890	6,181
2023	348	197	4,085	1,659	25	5,966	6,314
2024	429	231	3,991	1,676	31	5,929	6,358

The “Japan Revitalization Strategy (revised in 2015)” decided by the Cabinet in June 2015 set out the goal of quickly preparing for the “era of 20 million” foreign visitors coming to Japan, and its early realization. As a result of promoting the various measures by the government to become a tourist-oriented country, such as relaxation of visa requirements measures, the number of foreign nationals entering Japan rapidly increased to approximately 19.69 million people in 2015. Consequently, the “Tourism Vision to Support the Future of Japan” (decision of the Council for the Development of a Tourism Vision to Support the Future of Japan) in March 2016 outlined the goal of attracting 40 million visitors by 2020, and 60 million visitors by 2030. After that, the Cabinet decided the “Basic Plan for Promoting Tourism-Oriented Country,” which outlined a new goal of increasing the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan, which had significantly decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic, to more than the level of 2019 by 2025.

The “Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2019,” decided by the Cabinet in June 2019, states that steady efforts shall be made to accept foreign professionals and establish an environment for them. This is for the purpose of properly and smoothly accepting foreign professionals with the new statuses of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii),” as well as realizing a society of harmonious coexistence, where Japanese nationals and foreign nationals can live together safely and with peace of mind.

In such circumstances, we were allowed to increase the number of staff by a total of 269 in FY 2023, including 27 staff to enhance and strengthen immigration inspection operations, and 156 to upgrade and reinforce the residence management and support system for accepting foreign professionals. Approval has been given to further increase staff by a total of 175 in FY 2024, including 15 to organize immigration examinations due to the introduction of iAPI, 29 to enhance and strengthen the residence management system for accepting foreign professionals, and 85 to upgrade and reinforce the organizational structure due to the Amendment Act of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act. Based on the “Policy on Organization and Staffing of National Government Offices” decided by Cabinet in July 2014 (partly amended in June 2024), as a part of the government, we have specifically promoted administrative service reform initiatives in order to rationalize staffing, while working on administrative digital transformation (administrative DX) to sustain administrative services even though it is becoming difficult to secure human resources for national public offices.

3 Training

Training for the ISA staff has been previously provided by the Research and Training Institute (RTI), an agency that conducts research and training for the MOJ. However, since the establishment of the ISA, the scope of operations under its jurisdiction has expanded, making it necessary to add new training courses. The Ministry shifted its training functions from the RTI to the ISA on April 1, 2021, so that the ISA can conduct training adapted to ever-changing societal conditions.

The ISA is working to enhance its training by, for example, adding new training on residency support to the systematic training conducted by the RTI according to each class of staff. In order to improve the expert knowledge of staff, lectures in training have been delivered by not only its own staff, but also outside experts, and the ISA has conducted various types of training in addition to systematic training, such as training for officers engaged in the work of entry and residence examinations, training for officers engaged in refugee recognition work, training for fingerprint forensics, training related to human rights and training related to mental health. Also, because the ISA's work mainly involves foreign nationals, the ISA is making efforts to improve staff's language skills needed for work, such as by outsourcing English and other languages training for staff to professional language schools. In these manners, the ISA is making efforts to train staff who are well versed in practical matters related to immigration control and residency management.

In addition, the ISA conducts training on measures for coexistence with foreign nationals, not only for its own staff, but for local government staff as well.



Scene of Training

Chapter 11 Budget, etc.

Section 1 Budget

The changes in the budget for immigration control and residency management administration are as shown in Reference 94, and amid the severe administrative and financial situation of recent years, the necessary funds to implement the various measures being promoted by the ISA were allocated in the FY 2024 budget. The ISA will continue to strive to make effective use of the budget and to reduce administrative costs ([Reference 94](#)).

Reference 94 Changes in the budget



- (*1) The budgets for FY 2018 and subsequent fiscal years include the costs of projects financed by the international tourism passenger tax (included in a lump sum by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism [the Japan Tourism Agency]).
- (*2) The budget for FY 2021 includes government information system costs (included in a lump sum by the Cabinet Secretariat and the Digital Agency).
- (*3) The budgets for FY 2022 and subsequent fiscal years include government information system costs (included in a lump sum by the Digital Agency).
- (*4) Some figures may not be consistent owing to the fact that the numbers are rounded off to units of 1 million yen.

Section 2 Facilities

As of March 31, 2024, eight Regional Immigration Services Bureaus are housed in independent office buildings of the MOJ (Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka), joint office buildings of the MOJ (Sendai, Hiroshima, Takamatsu, and Fukuoka), and joint office buildings with other national government authorities (Sapporo) respectively. All of the District Immigration Services Offices and the Branch Offices are housed either in independent office buildings of the MOJ (Yokohama), in general offices of the MOJ, in office buildings jointly with branch offices of port-related national government authorities, in office building jointly with other national government authorities, in airport terminal building, or in other civil or public facilities.

Two immigration detention facilities are maintained as independent offices of the MOJ (Omura and Higashi-Nihon).