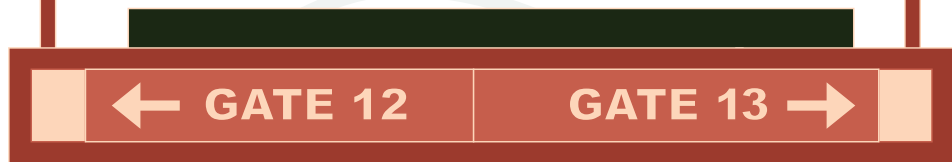


IMMIGRATION CONTROL *2013*



EW500	MILANO	18:00
DG852	TOKYO	18:20
HIL27	NEW YORK	19:00
LAQ20	PARIS	19:30



Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice, JAPAN

2013

Immigration Control

Japan

Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice

Introduction

Publication of the 2013 Report on “Immigration Control”



Haneda Airport

(Photo credit, Tokyo International Air Terminal Corporation)

The immigration report entitled “Immigration Control”, first published in 1959, has now reached its 19th edition. Prior to the 2003 report, “Immigration Control” was a publication which merely summarized the trends in immigration control administration over a five-year period. However, given the accelerated pace of changes in the conditions affecting Japan’s immigration control policies, immigration control administration has had to incorporate various new measures so as to be able to respond properly. In line with the rapid changes, starting in 2004, the “Immigration Control” report has been published annually mainly summarizing the trends in immigration control administration over a twelve-month period.

The 2013 Immigration Control Report gives a brief description of the operations of the Immigration Bureau and, while looking back over the changes in the operations which took place over the past five years from 2008 to 2012, gives a summary focusing mainly on the actions taken in FY 2012 such as the introduction of a new residency management system in July 2012, the implementation of a points-based system offering preferential immigration treatment to highly-skilled foreign professionals in May 2012, the efforts toward the achievement of a tourism-oriented country intended to attract more foreign tourists to Japan, the reduction in the number of illegal and imposter foreign residents, and the measures taken for stringent prevention of the entry of

possible terrorists at the port of entry.

Part I, entitled “What is Immigration Control Administration? Equitable Control over the Entry into and Departure from Japan of All Persons,” introduces the role of the Immigration Bureau (Chapter 1) and gives an outline of Japan’s immigration control system (Chapter 2).

Part II, entitled “Immigration Control in Recent Years,” introduces, based on statistical data, such topics as foreign nationals entering and departing from Japan (Chapter 1), foreign nationals residing in Japan (Chapter 2), implementation of technical intern training programs (Chapter 3), Japanese nationals departing from and returning to Japan (Chapter 4), deportation procedures for foreign nationals (Chapter 5), recognition of refugee status (Chapter 6), and promotion of measures against trafficking in persons and proper protection of foreign victims of domestic violence (Chapter 7).

Part III, entitled “Major Policies Related to Immigration Control Administration in FY 2012,” describes such measures as the introduction of a new residency management system (Chapter 1), implementation of a points-based system offering preferential immigration treatment to highly-skilled foreign professionals (Chapter 2), smooth and strict implementation of immigration examinations at the port of entry (Chapter 3), measures against illegal or imposter foreign residents in Japan (Chapter 4), promotion of appropriate and prompt refugee protection (Chapter 5), international society and responses to international situations (Chapter 6), improvement of public relations activities and public services (Chapter 7), policy for the achievement of a symbiotic society together with foreign nationals (Chapter 8), and discussions on future immigration control administration (Chapter 9).

Furthermore, the data section features major developments relating to immigration control administration and related statistics for FY 2012.

Finally, we hope through this report that immigration control administration will prove to be beneficial and easy to understand.

12, 2013

Kazuo Sakakibara

Director-General of the Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice of Japan

Points of the 2013 Immigration Control Report

■ Organization of the 2013 Immigration Control Report

- This report consists of three parts: An Outline of Immigration Control Administration (Part I), Immigration Control in Recent Years (Part II), and Major Policies in FY 2012 (Part III), as well as a Data Section.
- Part I summarizes the operations of the Immigration Bureau.
- Part II describes the immigration operations conducted during 2012 based on statistics over the five-year period from 2008 to 2012.
- Part III describes the major immigration control policies implemented during FY 2012 (as well as some of the measures for FY 2013).

■ Part I What Is Immigration Control Administration? Equitable Control over the Entry into and Departure from Japan of All Persons

- The role of the Immigration Bureau
- Japan's immigration control system

■ Part II Immigration Control in Recent Years

- Number of foreign nationals entering Japan in 2012

The number of foreign nationals who entered Japan in 2012 (including those who re-entered Japan with a re-entry permit) was 9,172,146, and the number of foreign nationals newly entering Japan, excluding those who had re-entered, was 7,549,998, which marked a substantial increase of 2,036,739 (28.5%) and 2,101,979 (38.6%), respectively. This substantial increase in the number of foreign nationals entering Japan in 2012 is thought to have been partly caused by an increase in the supply of airplane seats triggered by new flight services on low-cost carriers (LCCs) coupled with lower air fares, which encouraged a rebound in the number of tourists, which had previously seen a decline owing to the occurrence of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

- Number of foreign residents as of the end of 2012

The number of foreign residents combining the number of mid to long-term residents with the number of special permanent residents was 2,033,656 as of the end of 2012, down by 0.7% when compared to the number of foreign nationals with alien registrations (excluding temporary visitors) at the end of 2011.

The percentage of foreign residents to the total population of Japan was 1.59%, down by 0.04 point compared to the number at the end of 2011.

- Number of foreign nationals illegally staying beyond their authorized period of stay

The number of foreign nationals illegally staying beyond their authorized period of stay as of January 1, 2013 was 62,009. This marks a consistent decline from the 298,646 recorded on May 1, 1993 when the number reached the highest record ever.

■ Part III Major Policies Relating to Immigration Control

Administration in FY 2012

- Introduction of a new residency management system
 - In accordance with the Act to Amend the Immigration Control Act and Other Related Acts, which was enacted in July 2009, the Alien Registration Act, which had previously formed the foundation of the alien registration system, was abolished. The amendment of the Immigration Control Act meant that all functions of residency management came to be governed by the Immigration Control Act, which led to the introduction of a new residency management system whereby the Minister of Justice would be able to accurately and continuously maintain necessary information in managing the residence of those foreign nationals residing in Japan for a mid to long-term with a legitimate status of residence (enforced on July 9, 2012).
 - The Immigration Bureau implemented proactive public relations activities in preparation for the July 9, 2012 enforcement.
- Implementation of a points-based system offering preferential immigration treatment to highly-skilled foreign professionals
 - For the purpose of facilitating the acceptance of highly-skilled foreign professionals who are extremely qualified, talented and are expected to bring innovation and economic growth to Japan, a notice was issued by the Ministry of Justice following which a points-based system offering preferential immigration treatment to highly-skilled foreign professionals was adopted (enforced on May 7, 2012).
 - The system provides for three categories of activities, namely: “advanced academic research activities,” “advanced specialized/technical activities” and “advanced business management activities” with points being awarded according to the characteristics of the particular category for such items as “academic background,” “professional career” and “annual salary”. Foreign nationals whose total number of points is equal to or greater than the prescribed number of points are recognized as “highly skilled foreign professionals” and are granted the status of residence of “Designated Activities”, thereby enjoying preferential immigration treatment.
- Smooth and strict implementation of immigration examinations at the port of entry
 - Government-wide efforts are currently underway in Japan toward achieving a tourism-oriented country, and for its part, in order to further promote smoother immigration examinations, the Immigration Bureau has introduced secondary immigration examinations, installed or increased the number of automated gates and streamlined the immigration examinations for cruise ship passengers.
 - In order to protect people’s lives and public safety, it is of vital importance to unflinchingly prevent the entry into the country of terrorists disguising themselves as tourists. Therefore, the Immigration Bureau continues to implement strict immigration examinations at the ports of entry through the utilization of such measures as biometrics data, ICPO’s data on lost and stolen passports and the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS).
- Measures against illegal and imposter foreign residents in Japan
 - There has been a steady decline in the number of foreign nationals illegally staying beyond their authorized period of stay. This decline appears to be the result of past measures which have been taken over the years. However, it is estimated that there are still some 62,000 illegal foreign residents (as of January 1, 2013) in Japan, and therefore efforts to further reduce the number of foreign nationals illegally staying beyond their authorized period of stay are being promoted through strengthened detection, reinforced collection and analysis of information on illegal foreign residents, and the promotion of voluntary appearances.
 - “Imposter residents” refers to foreign nationals who illegally work or reside in Japan having falsified their identity or the purpose of their activities by means of a fake marriage or by pretending to be a student or through the use of counterfeit or altered documents or fraudulent documents and, having received permission for residence, pretend to be lawful residents. The presence of imposter residents in Japan who illegally use a status of residence cannot be overlooked, and therefore, the Immigration Bureau is striving to strengthen the detection of imposter

foreign residents and to reinforce the collection and analysis of information.

- Based on an agreement concluded between the Immigration Bureau and the Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA) in September 2010, the Immigration Bureau and the JFBA are to discuss methods of improving the situation of problems related to detention in immigration control. In addition, the Immigration Bureau and the JFBA have arranged for legal consultations etc. to be provided by attorneys to the detainees.
 - With regard to detainees who have been detained for a considerable period of time following the issuance of a written deportation order, the Immigration Bureau will continue to check and examine the necessity for and suitability of provisional release for such detainees at regular intervals, and will flexibly utilize provisional release while taking individual situations into account so as to implement further appropriate deportation procedures.
 - In July 2010, the Immigration Bureau established the Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee consisting of experts from outside the Immigration Bureau, and the Immigration Bureau will continue to make efforts to ensure further transparency in security measures, and to improve and enhance the operations of the immigration detention centers, etc., while taking the Committee's views into consideration.
- **Promotion of appropriate and prompt refugee protection**
- In order to quickly stabilize the legal status of foreign nationals who are to be recognized as refugees, the Immigration Bureau set six months as the standard processing time for the examination of refugee applications, and the average processing and examination times for each quarter of FY 2012 were kept to less than six months.
 - A program to accept and support the resettlement of Myanmarese refugees who were staying in a refugee camp in Thailand was launched in FY 2010 as a pilot case for the acceptance of refugees desiring resettlement in a third country. In FY 2010, the first group consisting of twenty-seven refugees from five families came to Japan, and in FY 2011, eighteen refugees from four families came to Japan. (Although sixteen refugees from three families were to enter Japan in FY2012, each of them declined the offer of acceptance prior to entry into Japan.)
 - In February 2012, the Immigration Bureau concluded a memorandum with the NPO Forum for Refugees Japan and the Japan Federation of Bar Associations agreeing to hold discussions in order to uncover areas requiring improvement in the administration of refugee-related issues coming under the jurisdiction of the Immigration Bureau, including the procedures for recognition of refugee status, and also to exchange information such as on the provision of housing by refugee support groups to applicants awaiting the results of their refugee applications.
- **The international community and responding to international situations**
- With respect to extending the authorized period of stay of Indonesian and Filipino nurse and care worker candidates under the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), approval was granted through a Cabinet decision on February 26, 2013 for even nurse and care worker candidates, who had entered Japan between FY 2010 and FY 2012, but had not taken part in a six-month Japanese language training course prior to coming to Japan, to be afforded an exceptional one-time opportunity to extend the period of stay permitted under the EPA for an additional year, continue their work and training in Japan and to retake the national nursing exam subject to the condition that they had acquired a prescribed minimum score in the FY 2012 national nursing exam.
 - The Immigration Bureau has actively participated in negotiations to conclude an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with various countries.
 - The Immigration Bureau attended international conferences, including G8 meetings and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) to develop cooperative ties and to share information through discussions and exchanges of opinions with other countries.

2013 Immigration Control Report

Introduction - Publication of the 2013 Immigration Control Report

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