

# Part II.

## Major Policies Related to Immigration Control Administration

- Chapter 1** Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act
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## Chapter 1

# Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act

On November 18, 2016, the “Act for Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act” (Act No. 88 of 2016) was passed at the 192nd session of the National Diet, and promulgated on the 28th of the same month.

An outline of the Act is as given below.

### Section 1 Establishment of the New Status of Residence of “Nursing Care”

A new status of residence “Nursing Care” was established enabling international students who have graduated from an institution of higher education designated as a care worker training facility in Japan, and who have acquired the qualification of a certified care worker to engage in nursing care or the instructions of nursing care as a Certified Care Worker (effective from September 1, 2017).

### Section 2 Strengthening of Countermeasures Against Imposter Residents

Previously there were no penalties in place for persons who had received landing permission or permission to change their status of residence etc. by means of fraud or other illegal means, and in addition, the status of residence could be revoked solely in cases where the persons had not engaged for three months in the original authorized activities,

- (i) Penalties were established for persons who received landing permission and permission to change their status of residence etc. through fraud or other illegal means.
- (ii) Grounds for revocation of the status of residence were added. Namely, it has become possible to revoke the status of residence immediately a foreign national resides in Japan without engaging in the activities corresponding to the status of residence previously granted and is moreover, engaging in or attempting to engage in other activities.

In addition, as well as the immigration inspectors, it has also become possible for immigration control officers to conduct inquiry into the facts relating to revocation of the status of residence (effective from January 1, 2017).

## Chapter 2

# Establishment of the Act on Proper Technical Intern Training and Protection of Technical Intern Trainees

On November 18, 2016, the “Act on Proper Technical Intern Training and Protection of Technical Intern Trainees” (Act No. 89 of 2016) was passed at the 192nd session of the National Diet and promulgated on the 28th of the same month.

An outline of the Act is as given below.

### Section 1 Measures for Optimization of the System

#### 1. Strengthening of the System of Management and Supervision

A system of accreditation of the technical intern training plans was introduced and skill evaluation at each stage of the training became mandatory in order to ensure that technical intern training is being implemented in line with the intent of the system, which is to promote international cooperation through skill transfer, etc. to developing regions, etc. In addition, a licensing system was introduced for supervising organizations (effective from November 1, 2017).

#### 2. Protection of the Technical Intern Trainees

Provisions on prohibition and penalties for such acts by an implementing organization or a supervising organization as those confiscating passports or residence cards of technical intern trainees and such acts by a supervising organization as those stipulating contract breaching penalties were established (effective from November 1, 2017).

#### 3. Establishment of Organization on Technical Intern Training

The Organization for Technical Intern Training was established as a legal entity responsible for the administrative affairs relating to accreditation of the technical intern training plans and the licenses for the supervising organizations, on-site inspections of the implementing organizations and supervising organizations, and consultations for the technical intern trainees, etc. (enforced on November 28, 2016, and established on January 25, 2017).

### Section 2 Measures for Expansion of the System

Technical intern training (iii) (two years), which is the third stage of the technical intern training can only be conducted when the technical intern training is conducted under an excellent implementing organization and supervising organization, and based on this, the maximum total period of the technical intern training can be extended up to five years.

## Chapter 3

# Acceptance of Foreign Nationals and Immigration Control Administration

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

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

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

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

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

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

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The new statuses of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)” and “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” established by the 2014 Amendment Act are both limited to foreign nationals who meet the criteria prescribed in the Ordinance of the Ministry of Justice, and in response, the

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

### (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 <sup>(\*1)</sup>
- D. Permission for the parent(s) to accompany the highly-skilled foreign professional to Japan under certain conditions<sup>(\*2)</sup>
- E. Relaxation of requirements for permanent residence
- F. Permission for a domestic worker to accompany the highly-skilled foreign professional to Japan under certain conditions<sup>(\*3)</sup>
- G. Preferential processing of entry and residence procedures

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

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

Although the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” has no restrictions on the period of stay and cannot be granted at the time of landing similar to the status of residence of “Permanent Resident”, it differs from the status of residence of “Permanent Resident”, which has no restrictions on activities, because the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” requires engaging in activities as a highly-skilled foreign professional. As a result, if a foreign national with the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” does not engage in the activities as a highly-skilled foreign professional for an ongoing period of six months or more, this may become grounds for revocation of the status of residence, and there are certain requirements which are not imposed on the status of residence of “Permanent Resident” such as the requirement to notice the organization of affiliation (workplace, etc.) to the Minister of Justice. On the other hand, foreign nationals with the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled

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

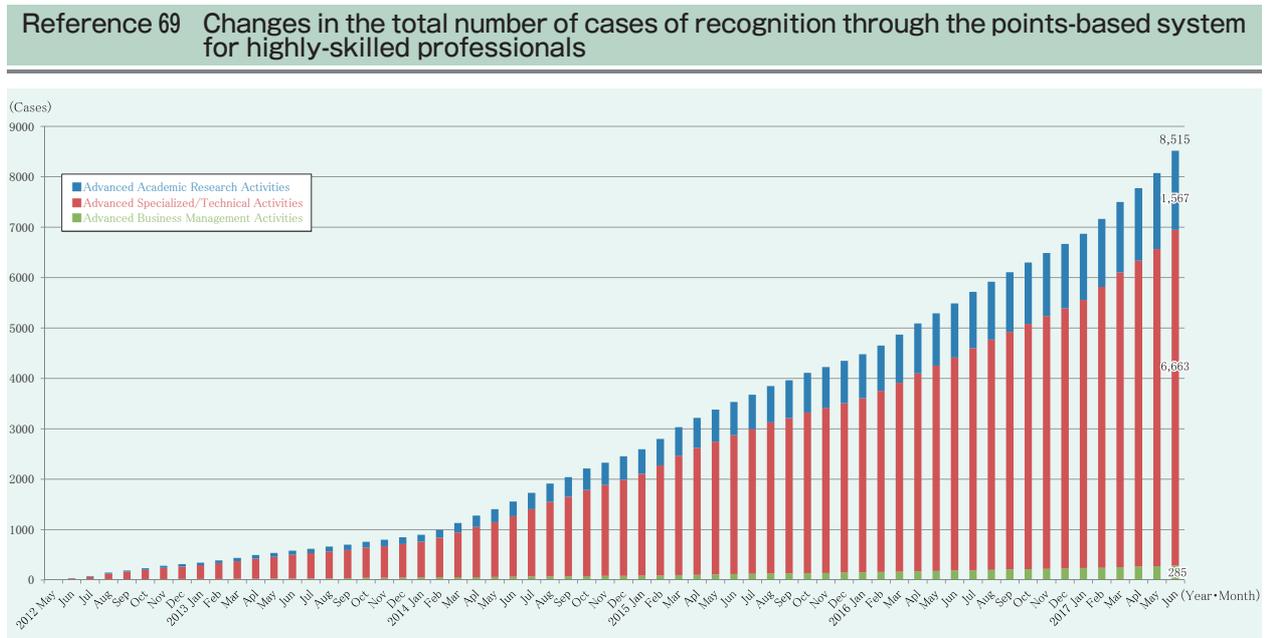
(\*2) In cases where there is a child under seven years old or where the highly-skilled foreign professionals or his/her spouse is pregnant.

(\*3) In cases where there is a child under 13 years old or where spouse is unable to engage in the day-to-day household chores owing to an illness or other reasons.

Professional (ii)” are given preferential immigration treatment which is not accorded to “Permanent Resident” such as allowing parents or a domestic worker to accompany the highly-skilled foreign professional.

### 3. Situation of Acceptance

After the start of the system in May 2012, the cumulative number of cases of recognition up until the end of 2013 was a low number of 845, but the number of new cases of recognition has significantly increased following the policy reform made in December of the same year. The “Growth Strategy 2017” (approved by the Cabinet decision of June 9, 2017) set a goal of recognition of 10,000 highly-skilled foreign professionals in number by the end of 2020, and 20,000 highly-skilled foreign professionals by the end of 2022. By the end of June 2017, 8,515 foreign nationals were recognized as highly-skilled foreign professionals since the start of the system (Reference 69).



### 4. Publicity Measures

It is important to proactively conduct publicity measures and to promote the use of the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals in order to have as many highly-skilled foreign professionals utilize the system as possible. Therefore, the Immigration Bureau has been conducting the following kinds of publicity measures.

(i) A special “Points-based System for Highly-Skilled Professionals” page was created in the Immigration Bureau’s website on which easily-comprehensible explanations on the system can be found in Japanese and English

(Japanese:[http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact\\_3/index.html](http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_3/index.html),

English: [http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact\\_3/en/index.html](http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_3/en/index.html)).

In addition, as well as attaching banners to specially prepared pages on the websites of the

relevant ministries and agencies, videos of the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals have been aired on the government public relations broadcasting site, “Japanese Government Internet TV”.

(ii) A leaflet which clearly show at a glance how the points are calculated has been created, and in coordination with the relevant ministries and agencies, officers of the Immigration Bureau have been sent to the various conferences hosted by companies, universities and other organizations, which are likely to employ the highly-skilled foreign professionals in order to give a talk explaining the system.

The Immigration Bureau intends to continue its efforts to enhance its publicity measures relating to the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals with the cooperation of the relevant ministries and agencies.

## **5. Establishment of a “Japanese Green Card for Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals”, etc.**

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The “Japan Revitalization Strategy 2016” (approved by the Cabinet decision of June 2, 2016) proposed the establishment of the world’s fastest “Japanese Green Card for Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals” greatly reducing the current five-year period of stay required for the application for permanent residence for highly-skilled foreign professionals as one of the “considerations of an entry and residence management system further inviting highly-skilled foreign professionals to Japan”, and the requirements were also reviewed and further promotion of publicity for the system conducted from the perspective of making the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals more accessible.

Based on the above, as a result of investigation with the relevant ministries and agencies, the residence period required in the applications for permanent residence of highly-skilled foreign professionals was reduced from the previous five years to three years (to one year for those human resources with specially outstanding abilities (where the total number of points is 80 points or more)), and additional point categories were added, and these measures have been implemented since April 2017.

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

### 1. Entrepreneurs

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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.

As of July 2017, operations for the project have commenced in the Tokyo Area National Strategic Special Zone, the Fukuoka-Kitakyushu National Strategic Special Zone, the Niigata National Strategic Special Zone, the Hiroshima-Imabari National Strategic Special Zone, the Sendai National Strategic Special Zone and the Aichi Prefecture National Strategic Special Zone.

### 2. Foreigners Conducting Housekeeping Services

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

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

As of July 2017, operations for the project have commenced in the Tokyo Area National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: all of Tokyo metropolitan area and all of Kanagawa prefecture) and the Kansai Area National Strategic Special Zone (all of Osaka city and all of Hyogo prefecture).

### 3. Foreigners Conducting Agricultural Works

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

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

### 4. Foreigners Supporting Overseas Demand Development

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

This project is a special measure where if the Council on National Strategic Special Zones intends to stipulate the contents of the activities of supporting overseas demand development, which is the subject of the project, as a special zone plan, it consults the related ministries and agencies in advance as to whether or not the activities of supporting overseas demand development come under the status of residence of “Engineer/ Specialist in Humanities/ International Services” or “Skilled Labor”.

If they do come under one of the statuses of residence, the Council on National Strategic

Special Zones consults the relevant ministries as to whether the level of knowledge and skills, etc. of the foreign nationals equivalent to the academic qualifications and practical experience required for the current landing permission criteria may be substituted with qualifications, examinations or awards, etc. in or outside of Japan.

If deemed appropriate as landing permission criteria as a result of the consultation, the Council on National Strategic Special Zones establishes the project as a special zone plan, and if the special zone plan is approved by the Prime Minister, the landing examination criteria for foreign nationals for the supporting overseas demand development, etc. specified in a Cabinet order as special measures for the Ministerial Ordinance for Landing Criteria, will be deemed to be the criteria prescribed by the Ordinance on Criteria, and if the foreign national meets these criteria, he or she will be permitted entry with the status of residence of “Engineer/ Specialist in Humanities/ International Services” or “Skilled Labor”.

## Section 3 Other Measures

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

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In order to deal with the further acceleration of the reconstruction projects and temporary increased demand for construction owing to the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, a decision was made by the Ministerial Committee on the Employment of Foreign Workers in the Construction Field (April 4, 2014) to permit as an emergency measure for a limited time, foreign nationals who have completed their technical intern training in the construction field to engage in construction work in Japan with the status of residence of “Designated Activities” under a special supervision framework, in principle, for a maximum period of two years (three years in the case of a person who has returned to their home country for a period of one year or more following the completion of their technical intern training), on condition that utmost efforts have been made to secure human resources in Japan.

In response, the “Public Notice on Projects for Acceptance of Foreign Construction Workers” (Public Notice of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism), which provides for the specific contents of the measures, was announced in August 2014, with the administrative work of certifying trustworthy supervising organizations, etc. commencing in January 2015, and those foreign construction workers who are eligible under these measures being accepted from April of the same year.

In addition, with regard to the shipping industry, which tends to see a large two-way flow of human resources to and from the construction industry, the “Japan Revitalization Strategy (Revised in 2014)” (approved by a Cabinet decision on June 24, 2014) stated that time-limited emergency measures similar to those of the construction industry should be taken, and therefore, the “Public Notice on Projects for Acceptance of Foreign Shipbuilding Workers” (Public Notice of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism), which provides for the specific contents of the measures was announced in December 2014, with the administrative work of certifying trustworthy supervising organizations, etc. commencing in January 2015, and those foreign shipbuilding workers who are eligible under these measures being accepted from April of the same year.

Moreover, these projects for acceptance are a temporary measure until FY 2020.

### 2. Domestic Acceptance of Employees from Overseas Subsidiaries in the Manufacturing Industry

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In light of fears about de-industrialization within Japan due to accelerating overseas expansion by Japanese manufacturing industry, the “Japan Revitalization Strategy (Revised in 2014)” (approved by a Cabinet decision on June 24, 2014) proposed the development of a system that will enable domestic bases to function as mother plants, carrying out production activities based on a division of roles with overseas bases, and which will also facilitate research and development and capital investment based on this premise. In response, a system that requires approval of the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, was introduced in March 2016 in

order to make it possible to accept employees from overseas subsidiaries of Japanese manufactures to Japan, with acceptance permitted limited to a maximum limit of one year.

### **3. Revision of the Requirements for the Status of Residence of Ski Instructors**

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Based on the fact that there is an increasing number of foreign tourists enjoying skiing in Japan, the “Japan Revitalization Strategy” (revised in 2015) (approved by the Cabinet decision of June 30, 2015) included a proposal to implement a survey on the needs of ski resort related persons at the earliest possible date with regard to the requirements for the status of residence of foreign ski instructors, to proceed with a study on a requirement to replace the requirement of years of practical experience and to obtain a conclusion.

As a result of the study, the landing permission criteria for foreign ski instructors were revised, and with regard to foreign ski instructors who intend to enter and stay in Japan with the status of residence of “Skilled Labor”, even in the absence of at least three years of practical teaching of sports, equivalent persons will be permitted to enter and stay; and specifically, with regard to the skills related to skiing, if the foreign national has the ISIA card issued by the International Ski Instructor Association (ISIA), he or she will be deemed eligible, and operation of this requirement commenced on July 22, 2016.

### **4. Formulation of the Public Notice Criteria for Japanese Language Education Institutions**

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Japanese language education institutions pertaining to the status of residence of “Student” were specified by a public notice of the Ministry of Justice based on the results of an examination conducted by a private organization, but the Administrative Reform Council Working Group convened in May 2010 pointed out that Article 63 of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act regulating the framework was ambiguous and should be revised to become a clearer legal system. To respond to this, the provision of Article 63 of the Enforcement Ordinance was abolished in July 2016, and with regard to the Ministerial Ordinance to Provide for Landing Criteria, the provision was stipulated that the Minister of Justice would ask the opinion of the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. At the same time, the “Criteria for the Public Notice of Japanese Language Education Institutions” were formulated as the judgment criteria for the public notice, and they are to be applied to Japanese language education institutions opening from October 2017, and as for the existing Japanese language education institutions, they are required to conform to these standards by the end of July 2018.

### **Article** International Student Employment Support Activities by the Local Governments, and Status of Residence of “Designated Activities”

As a measure from FY 2009, in cases where international students, who had graduated from university or acquired a diploma through a specialty course from a specialized training college, wished to stay in Japan after the expiration of the period of stay of the status of residence of “Student” to continue job search activities, they were permitted to change their status of residence to “Designated Activities” for six months period of stay to engage in that activities (to be extended only once). Based on a backdrop of the requests of the local governments in the proposal recruitment process pertaining to the national strategic special zones of the Cabinet Office, a further measure has taken place from December of the same year. Particularly if those who were engaging in job search activities with the abovementioned status of residence of “Designated Activities” after graduating from university, etc. as well as having been supported by the employment support project offered by the local governments (limited to those complying with the requirements set by the Immigration Bureau) and wished to engage in the job search activities, including participation in an internship through participating in the project in the second year after graduating from university, etc. he or she will be permitted to change his or her status of residence to “Designated Activities” for six months of period of stay to participate in the project and the job search activities (to be extended only once), and will be able to reside in Japan a maximum of one year (two years after graduation maximum) in order to participate in the project and engage in job search activities.

## Chapter 4

# Smooth and Strict Implementation of Immigration Examination at the Port of Entry

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

The number of foreign nationals entering Japan in 2016 reached approximately 23 million and it is expected that this number will continue to increase in the future, but since acts of terrorism are taking place in many parts of the world and Japanese nationals have been held captive and murdered, the Immigration Bureau has been working to reconcile the seemingly conflicting goals of smooth and strict examinations through the implementation of smooth and strict examinations depending on the case.

### Section 1 Efforts to Promote a Tourism-Oriented Country

#### 1. Introduction of Bio Carts

Regarding the time spent waiting in line for an entry examination, the “Tourism Vision Realization Program 2016” (Tourism Vision Realization Action Program 2016) (decision of the Ministerial Conference for the Promotion of Tourism of May 2016) set the objective of keeping the time spent waiting in line for an entry examination at the airports in FY2016 to within 20 minutes, and as one of the measures to reduce the waiting time, devices to obtain the personal identification information (fingerprints and facial photos) utilizing the waiting time, referred to as “Bio Carts” commenced at Kansai Airport, Takamatsu Airport and Naha Airport, which are the airports where the reduction of waiting time was deemed to be the most effective, were introduced from October 2016.

Bio Carts obtain the personal identification information, which immigration inspectors usually



Bio Carts

obtain from applicants for landing at the immigration examination booth, in advance during the time the applicant for landing spends in line waiting for an examination using a dedicated device separate from the examination devices, thereby omitting the procedures at the immigration examination booth, and aiming to expedite the entry procedures of the foreign travelers. From April 2017, the use of Bio Carts will also commence at 12 airports such as Narita Airport, further promoting smooth examinations.

## 2. Automated Gates

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

Japanese nationals and foreign nationals satisfying certain requirements (in possession of re-entry permission, etc.), who have registered in advance as users of the automated gates, are able to undergo the immigration procedures using the automated gates and do not have to undergo the usual examination by an immigration inspector at an immigration examination booth, and in this way, smooth and strict examinations are being further promoted. Following the installation of the automated gates at Narita Airport in November 2007, automated gates were installed at Chubu Airport and Kansai Airport in September 2009 and were additionally installed at Haneda Airport in October 2010. As of the end of FY 2016, 70 automated gates had been installed throughout the country.

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

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



Automated Gates



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

(2) Trusted Traveler Program

Registered User Card



Front



Back

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

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

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

As further expediting of the immigration examinations is required in order to promote Japan as a tourism-oriented country and in anticipation of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020, the Immigration Bureau 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 allocating more inspectors to the examination of foreign nationals.

The Immigration Bureau conducted a trial test of examinations utilizing facial recognition technology in 2014, and although the evaluation of the “Committee for Evaluation of Facial Recognition Technology in the Immigration Examinations” composed of outside experts was that from the perspective of technology “there is sufficient possibility of utilizing facial recognition technology in the departure and return examinations of Japanese nationals”, since there were issues which needed to be examined such as ensuring the devices had high usability, studies were being conducted to ensure higher-quality facial recognition gates.

Based on the results of the research survey on optimal installation of the facial recognition automated gates conducted in FY 2016, facial recognition gates were developed in the two years of FY 2016 and FY 2017, and advance operations of the facial recognition automated gates in the return confirmation procedures for Japanese nationals commenced at Haneda Airport on October 18, 2017.

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

The “Tourism Vision Realization Program, 2016” (Tourism Vision Realization Action Program 2016) (decision of the Ministerial Council on the Promotion of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country of May 2016) outlined a plan to expand the use of the automated gates in the departure procedures for foreign nationals in order to reduce the time required for the departure procedures at airports in Japan. Based on this, as well as conducting research and surveys related to expansion of the use of automated gates in the departure procedures for foreign nationals in FY 2016, consideration was given to the range of users of the automated gates in the departure procedures for foreign nationals, matters necessary for system renovation and methods of installing the automated gates in the departure examination halls.

### **Article** “Tourism Vision” and Efforts of the Immigration Bureau

In March 2016 the “Tourism Vision to Support the Future of Japan” of the “Council for the Development of a Tourism Vision to Support the Future of Japan” chaired by Prime Minister Abe outlined the goal of aiming for 40 million visitors by 2020 and 60 million visitors by 2030.

As efforts of the Immigration Bureau, we will be implementing the following measures in order to introduce the world’s first immigration control package, to utilize the world’s most advanced technology and to realize innovative immigration examinations.

- Advance acquisition of personal identification information through the implementation of Bio Carts utilizing the time spent waiting in line for an immigration examination (implemented at Kansai Airport, Takamatsu Airport and Naha Airport in 2016. Also expanded to 12 airports such as Narita Airport from April 2017, with further consideration to be given to the need to expand the applicable airports in light of the status of implementation at these airports and the situation of airports without Bio Carts.)
- Implementation of pre-clearance for advance acquisition of personal identification information at airport of departure and simplification of the procedures at the time of entry at the earliest possible date (aim for early start of operations in FY 2018).
- Realization of the use of the automated gates not just by business persons but by foreign tourists, etc. as trusted travelers (aim for implementation by 2020)
- Introduction of the world’s most advanced facial recognition technology in the departure and return procedures for Japanese nationals (advance implementation at Haneda airport on October 18, 2017, aim for full-scale introduction in FY 2018)
- Expansion of the use of the automated gates in the departure procedures for foreign nationals (promptly consider expanding the range of users of the automated gates at the time of departure utilizing personal identification information)

Based on these, the Immigration Bureau has implemented commencing operation of the Trusted Traveler Program (November 1, 2016), expanding of airports introduced Bio Carts (April 2017) and commencing advance operation of facial recognition automated gates (October 18, 2017).

### 3. Response to Cruise Ship Passengers

In recent years, the number of cruise ships calling at ports in Japan has increased and the size of ships has been getting much larger in size. In response to requests from the municipalities hosting the cruise ships at their ports, for prompt processing of post-arrival procedures to enable passengers to fully enjoy sightseeing and other activities within the limited time the ship stays at the port, the Immigration Bureau has been conducting prompt examinations, while securing strict examinations, since June 2012. These efforts include preparation for onboard examinations for large-sized cruise ships, adoption of a new method of examination utilizing permission for landing at a port of call, utilization of examination devices for which the systems have been modified, and the dispatch of help personnel for examinations across Japan.

In addition, the operation of a system of landing permission for cruise ship tourists permitting foreign passengers of cruise ships designated by the Minister of Justice to land through simplified procedures commenced on January 1, 2015, with permission granted to 1,070,000 passengers in 2015 and 1,940,000 passengers in 2016.



Cruise ship examinations

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

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



Newly-arranged examination booth

## **Article** Measuring the Waiting Time for Entry Examinations

The Immigration Bureau has been implementing advance acquisition of personal identification information through the implementation of Bio Carts utilizing the time spent waiting in line for entry examinations at the 15 airports with the longest waiting times for entry examinations in order to implement smooth examinations so as to respond to the surge of foreign travelers to Japan and, in particular, to realize the government's goal of implementing the entry examinations within a maximum of 20 minutes. In addition, we are continuing to consider the implementation of facial recognition technology in the departure and return procedures for Japanese nationals and expanding the range of users able to use the automated gates, and will be focusing the immigration inspectors who have become available through these measures on the entry examinations for foreign nationals and reducing the time spent waiting for an immigration examination.

In the past we measured the waiting time for an immigration examination by distributing a survey form to foreign travelers who were standing at the end of the immigration queue every 30 minutes at each airport (by terminal and examination hall) and collecting the survey form from them when they reached the immigration examination booth. Taking these measurements, the average time for the month was calculated taking the longest examination time in that day as the longest waiting time for that airport, but we did not proactively or regularly release information on the longest waiting times to the public.

However, considering the fact that the time spent waiting in line for an entry examination is a matter of great concern as it affects the time spent in Japan of foreign travelers visiting Japan, a decision was made to revise the measurement method utilizing the electronic data held by the Immigration Bureau from January 2017. As a result, it is possible to measure the "completion rate of within 20 minutes waiting for an immigration examination" and the "longest time spent waiting for an immigration examination, and time of day this occurred" for each airport (by terminal and examination hall), and these results are compiled on a monthly basis and published once a month on the Ministry of Justice website.

In this way, foreign visitors to Japan are able to see the information on the waiting time for an immigration examination at each airport, and the time period when the longest waiting time occurred, thereby offering more information for their convenience and making it possible for them to make adjustments to their arrival time. In addition, it has also become possible for the Immigration Bureau to more accurately assign immigration inspectors through utilization of the results of the measurements as an indicator of the degree of congestion at the airport, contributing to further reduction in the waiting time.

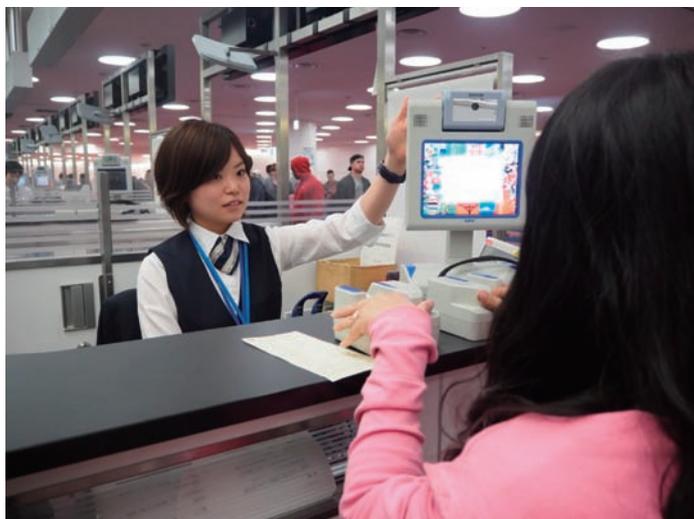
## Section 2 Strengthened Countermeasures at the Port of Entry

### 1. Immigration Examinations Utilizing Information

#### (1) Implementation of Immigration Examinations Through the Use of Biometric Information

Since November 20, 2007, foreign nationals who intend to enter Japan have been required to submit their biometric information (fingerprints and a facial photograph). This enables the Immigration Bureau to accurately and promptly confirm that the applicant for the verification for landing is the same as the passport holder, and to check the applicant against the blacklist maintained by the Immigration Bureau. 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 departed under a departure order or who were deported in the past retained by the Immigration Bureau. The total number of foreign nationals ordered to depart through a departure order and deported through a deportation order based on the utilization of personal identification information was approximately 7,400 from the start of utilization of this information in the immigration examinations by the end of December, 2016.

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



Immigration examination through the use of biometric information

## (2) Utilization of Facial Image Cross-Checking

The “Reinforcement of Measures against Terrorism in Response to the Terrorism Case Involving Murdered Japanese Nationals” (decision of the Headquarters for Promotion of Measures against Transnational Organized Crime and Other Relative Issues and International Terrorism dated May 29, 2015) stated that “The Ministry of Justice will study reinforcement of the utilization of facial image cross-checking capabilities with the cooperation of the relevant ministries and agencies (omitted), in light of the serious terrorist situation and the increase in foreign nationals entering Japan” as part of the reinforcement of the border measures. In response, to reliably find the terrorists and other related persons, etc. at the landing examinations, the Immigration Bureau has implemented the cross-checking of facial photographs provided by foreign nationals at the time of landing examination at airports and seaports across the country against the facial images of terrorists and other related persons, etc. kept by the Immigration Bureau since October 2016.

## (3) Use of ICPO’s Database of Stolen and Lost Travel Documents

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

The Immigration Bureau seeks to detect illegal entry cases by terrorists and those contemplating illegal conduct through the misuse of lost or stolen passports, by utilizing the abovementioned database.

## (4) Immigration Examinations Through the Use of APIS and PNR

The Immigration Bureau is collecting the information on movements of international terrorists and various kind of information related to them in close cooperation with the relevant agencies to prevent them from entering Japan and committing terrorist acts. In the process of the entry (landing) examinations, the Immigration Bureau is trying to detect terrorists, etc., by unflinchingly checking foreign nationals against a blacklist based on such information.

Since February 2007, all vessels and aircrafts calling at a port in Japan have been required to submit, in advance, a list of crew members and passengers which contains their personal identification data. Since February 2010, it has become possible to receive advance passenger information about aircraft calling at an airport through the NACCS (Nippon Automated Cargo and Port Consolidated System) operated by the Nippon Automated Cargo And Port Consolidated System, Inc., and the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) has been utilized.

Since June 1, 2017, the reporting time for the information which was previously, in principle, “by at least 90 minutes before arrival” was revised to “by at least 30 minutes after departing the area outside of Japan”, and by doing so, it has become possible to detect the arrival of suspected persons at an earlier stage and has realized stricter and expedited immigration examinations.

In addition, in order to be able to respond to the significant increase in the number of foreign nationals entering Japan in line with the various strategies aimed at realizing Japan as a tourism-oriented country and to prevent terrorists and other foreign nationals who pose a risk in

terms of immigration control from entering the country, we have been collecting new information which is effective in immigration control, and moreover, the 2014 amendment of the Immigration Control Act has enabled the Immigration Bureau since January 1, 2015 to request the airline companies to provide reports on the Passenger Name Record (PNR), and moreover from January 1, 2016, it has become possible to electronically receive the PNRs via the NACCS. Through utilization of the PNRs, we have been preventing the entry of terrorists and other suspected persons at the border.

## 2. Reinforcement of Information Collection and Analysis

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Stricter border measures are required more than ever of the Immigration Bureau owing to the increasingly more serious terrorist situations such as the occurrence of acts of terrorism all around the world, including the series of terrorist attacks in Paris, France in November 2015, and with the upcoming hosting of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020.

Meanwhile, due to various measures being implemented to promote Japan as a tourism-oriented country and the continuing trend of the increasing number of foreign visitors coming to Japan, it is necessary to achieve the intricate balance of strict immigration control, including measures to prevent terrorism, and also smooth landing examinations to realize Japan as a tourism-oriented country.

Therefore, the “Center of Collection and Analysis of Intelligence” was established in the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice on October 1, 2015 as a central agency to collect and analyze information in the field of immigration control. Using this center, the Immigration Bureau is able to implement strict border measures by promoting information-sharing among the relevant organizations in Japan and other countries, conducting sophisticated analysis using the information, and by having the regional immigration offices such as those at the airports utilize the results of the analyses.

## 3. Patrol Activities at Airports and Seaports

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

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

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

Owing to the possibility that terrorists or other related persons, etc. may be hidden among the foreign nationals who have illegally entered Japan, in order to deal appropriately with these cases, mobile teams composed of immigration control officers (mobile teams for Kita-Nihon (northern Japan), Tokyo Bay Chiba, Tokyo Bay Yokohama, Naka-Nihon (central Japan), Kobe and Nishi-Nihon (West Japan)) have been assigned to the regional immigration bureaus in

Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Fukuoka, and the border measures have been strengthened. These mobile teams gather, analyze and share information on illegal foreign nationals entering and departing from Japan and conduct various joint drills, while reinforcing their cooperation with the related ministries and agencies. These mobile teams conduct patrols at the seaports and coastal areas under their jurisdictions and search onboard ships in port, as well as conducting investigations and detection of suspects, related suspects and brokers in connection with illegal immigration issues.



Joint drill



Patrol activity



Detection on a smuggling boat

## Chapter 5

# Measures Against Illegal and Imposter Foreign Residents, etc.

### Section 1 Implementation of Measures Against Illegal Foreign Residents

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

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

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

However, as of January 1, 2015, the number of illegal residents staying beyond their authorized period of stay became about 60,000, which was an increase for the first time in 22 years, and at the time of January 1, 2016, the number of illegal residents staying beyond their authorized period of stay was about 63,000. This further increased to about 65,000 as of January 1, 2017, for the third consecutive year, and has now reached a situation where future trends are unpredictable.

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

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The steady decrease of the number of illegal foreign residents in Japan is recognized as a result of past efforts. However, it is estimated that there are still approximately 65,000 foreign nationals staying in Japan illegally beyond their authorized period of stay.

Owing to the variety of measures being taken by the entire government aiming at the realization of a tourism-oriented country, it is expected that the number of foreign nationals entering Japan will further increase in the future. In response to this, since it is very likely that the number of foreign nationals staying illegally beyond their authorized period of stay will also increase, we will be maintaining a commensurate framework in order to crack down on these illegal residents and will also be strengthening the following measures in order to work on

further reducing the number of illegal residents.

### (1) Strengthened Detection

The Immigration Bureau 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 Immigration Bureau has reinforced the ability to detect illegal foreign residents, has strengthened cooperation with the local police authorities and has promoted joint detection.

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

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

The Immigration Bureau introduced the departure order system as a measure to encourage illegal foreign residents existing in various parts of the country to voluntarily appear at the immigration office, and also took other measures, including a revision of the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan”<sup>(\*1)</sup> and publication of such cases, as well as public relations activities to encourage voluntary appearance at an immigration office.

The departure order system is a system where, unlike with the deportation procedures, foreign nationals staying illegally beyond their authorized period of stay, who meet certain criteria such as appearing in person to make a declaration in order to depart from Japan, are able to depart through simple procedures without being detained (see Part 1, Section 5, Subsection 5 below). 4,101 foreign nationals were issued with a departure order based on this system in 2016.

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

The Immigration Bureau is also taking measures to further publicize the departure order system and the revised guideline on special permission to stay in Japan by conducting active public relations activities, improving the environment for voluntary appearances and aiming to encourage illegal foreign residents to voluntarily appear at an immigration office<sup>(\*2)</sup>.

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(\*1) In order to ensure further improvement of the transparency and equity of the special permission to stay, the Immigration Bureau formulated and published the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan”. The guideline articulates what elements are considered positive elements and what are considered negative elements in determining whether special permission to stay should be granted or not and presents what points are considered in determining whether special permission to stay should be granted or not (<http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000048156.pdf>).

(\*2) Examples of public relations activities:

(i) During the “Campaign for Measures against Illegal Foreign Workers” held in June, every year public relations for the prevention of illegal employment are conducted.

(ii) A page for “Procedures for Voluntary Appearance at the Immigration Office” was created on the websites of the Ministry of Justice and the Immigration Bureau in order to give clear explanations of the benefits of a voluntary appearance at an 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 (<http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000052868.pdf>).

## Section 2 Implementation of Measures Against Imposter Foreign Residents

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

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

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

In addition, in recent years, there has been a significant number of cases where foreign nationals use forged or altered residence cards or abuse the refugee recognition system. Since these methods are becoming more malicious and sophisticated, the Immigration Bureau closely collaborate with the police and other related organizations, and in malicious cases, the Immigration Bureau 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. Crackdowns on Imposter Foreign Residents, etc.

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

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

For this reason, the Immigration Bureau will continue to effectively uncover and crack down on imposter residents by accurately tracking the information reported by foreign nationals and their organizations of affiliation, as well as utilizing the abundant information sent in by the general public, the information shared by the police or other related organizations and the employment status reports of foreign nationals provided by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, and strengthening the analysis of information at the Center of Collection and Analysis of Intelligence newly established in October 2015 as a center dedicated exclusively to

information gathering and analysis, all of which enables the immigration bureau to implement strict crackdowns on imposter foreign residents.

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

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

In addition, even if a foreign national does not fall under the grounds for deportation, the Immigration Bureau 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

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Article 24 of the Immigration Control Act provides that anyone coming under any of the following grounds for deportation will be deported: a person who has prepared or otherwise provided forged or false documents for the purpose of having another foreign national illegally acquire permission; a person who has had another foreign national engage in illegal work; a person who possesses forged residence cards for the purpose of using them; and a person who has forged or otherwise provided residence cards. In close cooperation with the police and other agencies, the Immigration Bureau 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.

### Section 3 Efforts for Further Appropriate Treatment

#### 1. Efforts for Further Appropriate Treatment of Detainees

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

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

Furthermore, in order to realize more proper treatment to the detainees with due consideration being given to their human rights, while taking into consideration the circumstances of individual facilities, the hours of open treatment, outdoor activities and taking a bath have been extended to the greatest extent permissible in terms of security and, periodical medical checks by visiting psychiatrists commenced in June 2011 at the Higashi-Nihon Immigration Center.

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

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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. Currently there are two committees; one is in the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau, and the other is in the Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau. Each committee takes charge of immigration centers and departure waiting facilities in 24 locations (as at the end of March 2017) 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 an opinion to the Director of the Immigration Detention Center or the Director of the Regional Immigration Bureau (hereinafter referred to collectively as “Directors”).

Over the course of a year from April 2016 to March 2017, a total of 14 inspections and 115 interviews took place in the facilities throughout Japan, and 42 opinions were given to the directors of the facilities. On receiving the opinions from the committee, the directors promptly review them and endeavor to take measures where possible.

Committee members, who are selected from people who have a reputable character, possess deep insight and are committed to improving the operations of the immigration detention centers, are appointed as part-time officers 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 representatives of the local community.

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.

## Section 4 Promotion of the Deportation of Deportees

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

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

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

In addition, some foreign nationals who attempt to evade deportation are often anxious about their lives after return, and with regard to foreign nationals who are deemed to require humanitarian considerations, programs are implemented for voluntary return and reintegration support with the cooperation of the Japan office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

### 2. Implementation of Mass Deportation Using Chartered Flights

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

However, deportation using a regular flight can cause a disturbance, for example, deportees might start shouting in the cabin, and there are cases where the deportation cannot be implemented owing to the decision of the captain to deny boarding, or alternatively, even if detainees are able to board the aircraft, there might be the situation that tremendous burden is imposed on the private airlines by the detainee bothering other ordinary passengers.

For this reason, since 2013, we have been implementing the mass deportation using chartered flights, which allows for safe and reliable deportation without boarding being refused by the captain of the aircraft, and by the end of FY 2016, a total of 248 foreign nationals were deported over a total of six flights (five destinations).

### 3. Promotion of the Use of IOM Repatriation Programs

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On the other hand, there are some foreign nationals whose deportation has been decided who attempt to 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, programs for voluntary return and reintegration support have been implemented since FY 2013 with the cooperation of the IOM Japan office. This program aims to dispel

the anxiety deportees feel about returning home and to encourage the voluntary return of the deportees through the provision of reintegration support after return such as job placement and medical support.

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

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

### **Article** Case Examples of Crackdowns on Imposter Residents

Since imposter residents appear to be “regular residents” on the surface, it is difficult to accurately ascertain their actual status, but the existence of imposter residents is related to the foundation of immigration control administration in our country, so we proactively enforce the deportation procedures against persons who come under the grounds for deportation. However, the disguised means they use takes many different forms, so even in cases where a foreign resident appears not to come under the grounds for deportation, when the legitimacy of the status of residence comes under question such as in the case of a fake marriage, we cooperate with the police and conduct appropriate residence management by enforcing the procedures for revocation of the status of residence.

Cases of imposter residents, etc. exposed by the Immigration Bureau are given below.

- Some Chinese nationals, who illegally stayed in Japan after the authorized period of stay, possessed a fake residence card of another person’s name, which had their own facial image and the print of “No restrictions on employment” in the section on restrictions on work and submitted a copy of the card to their employer.
- A Nepalese national, after graduating from a professional training college, requested to be introduced to a place of employment by paying close to 1 million yen to Company A and after several months, signed an employment contract with the same company as “international student support staff”, obtaining the status of residence of “Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/ International Services”. However, the job content referred to as “on-site training” was, in fact, washing dishes in restaurants and convenience stores, helping with cooking and working on the cash register, and in reality, there were few opportunities for the person to use a foreign language such as English, and the foreign national was not engaging in the activities corresponding to the status of residence of “Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/ International Services”.

In addition, starting with the discovery that one foreign company, where a foreign national was registered as an officer, was a fictitious company, the Immigration Bureau conducted an investigation of approximately 60 companies where the same foreign national was involved in the establishment of the company, and which were ascertained to be the organization of affiliation of another foreign national, and discovered that most of them were fictitious companies, and that all the declarations of the foreign nationals who were supposedly employed by each company were false.

**Chapter 6****Promotion of Appropriate and Prompt Refugee Protection****Section 1 Revision of the Operation of the Refugee Recognition System, etc****1. Revision of the Operation of the Refugee Recognition System****(1) Outline**

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

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

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

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

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

In the press release in March 2016 on the number of foreign nationals recognized as refugees in 2015, the cases of those recognized as refugees, the cases of those not recognized as refugees and cases where permission to stay was granted due to humanitarian considerations were announced with the points of these respective judgments. The same announcement was released in March 2017.

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

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

As well as implementing refugee recognition administrative staff training for management-level officers with the cooperation of the UNHCR, the Immigration Bureau has been working on

the development and capacity-building of refugee inquirers through enhancing the content of the regular training relating to information on the countries of origin of the applicants for refugee recognition, and practical training using case studies.

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

In order to quickly and reliably provide asylum to those in genuine need, applications attempting to abuse or misuse the refugee recognition system such as applications claiming circumstances which clearly do not come under the grounds of persecution under the Refugee Convention are sorted beforehand at the stage prior to a fully-fledged investigation, and such cases are quickly processed while ensuring that the applicant has an opportunity to make a sufficient claim such as through a hearing into the circumstances by a refugee inquirer, and moreover, we have been revising the handling of permission for employment and residence for applicants of refugee recognition and by setting certain conditions, have been striving to make decisions on an individual basis<sup>(\*)</sup>.

## 2. Revision of the System by Amendment of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition

A Ministerial Ordinance amending part of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act was promulgated on May 1, 2017, based on which the authority for recognition of the refugees permitted only to the Minister of Justice was entrusted to Directors of the Regional Immigration Bureaus, a new application form to reapply for recognition of refugee status was established, which made it easier to grasp the contents of applicant's claim more efficient at sorting of cases and facilitated judgments pertaining to restrictions on employment or stay (effective from June 1, 2017).

### Section 2 Acceptance of Refugees Through Resettlement

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

(\*) If a person who has applied for recognition of refugee status submits an application for permission to change the status of residence or permission to extend the period of stay pertaining to the status of residence of "Designated Activity" by reason of the application for refugee status being processed, but he/she is deemed to be able to maintain his/her livelihood without working or makes the same argument without a justifiable reason as before, the person will not be permitted to work (employment restrictions).

In addition, those who re-apply claiming circumstances which apparently do not come under the grounds of persecution under the Refugee Convention or who apply repeating the same claim as before three times or more without a justifiable reason will not be permitted to stay (residence restrictions).

The number of employment restrictions from September 2015 to June 2017 was 464, and the number of residence restrictions was 441.

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

In the past, Japan took measures to support the resettlement of Indochinese refugees and those recognized as refugees, but in order to deal with the various problems relating to refugees in the Asian region, Cabinet approval was given to the introduction of a system of resettlement (“Implementation of a Pilot Project for the Admission of Refugees through Resettlement”) on December 16, 2008.

The Cabinet approval and the “Specific Measures for Implementation of a Pilot Project for the Admission of Refugees through Resettlement” (decision of the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues on December 19, 2008) prescribed that the relevant ministries and agencies would accept approximately 30 Myanmarese refugees every year from refugee camps in Thailand, as a pilot project starting from FY 2010 and would support their resettlement through inter-ministry and agency cooperation. It was also stated that the pilot project would, in the future, be reviewed from various angles, and that based on the review, further consideration would be given to a future system of acceptance (After that, targeted camps were expanded.). The first group of five families comprising 27 family members came to Japan in FY 2010, four families comprising 18 family members came in FY 2011, four families comprising 18 family members came in FY 2013, and five families comprising 23 family members came in FY 2014 (three families comprising 16 family members were scheduled to come to Japan in FY 2012, but all of the families withdrew their request before coming to Japan.).

Based on the results of the Advisory Council on Resettlement held under the auspices of the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues from March 2012 to December 2013, Japan’s future policy on resettlement was approved by the Cabinet on January 24, 2014, and in accordance with the contents of this Cabinet Agreement and the “Specific Measures for the Acceptance of Refugees through Resettlement” (decision of the Liaison and Coordination Council for Refugee Issues of January 24, 2014), Myanmarese refugees staying temporarily in Malaysia became eligible for acceptance from FY 2015 onwards. Then, six families comprising 19 family members came to Japan in FY 2015, and seven families comprising 18 family members came to Japan in FY 2016.

The Immigration Bureau, which is primarily in charge of the selection process for the acceptance of refugees and conducts interviews by sending officers out to the field, with the cooperation of the related organizations, intends to continue in the future with efforts for the acceptance of refugees through resettlement program.

### Section 3

## Promotion of Collaboration with NGOs

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

Therefore, on February 10, 2012, the Immigration Bureau concluded a three-party agreement and exchanged a memorandum on cooperation with the Forum for Refugees Japan, which is a network of NGOs and groups supporting refugees and the JFBA, agreeing to hold discussions to identify the refugee-related administrative matters that the Immigration Bureau is responsible for and that need improving, including procedures for recognizing refugee status, and to exchange

information on the provision of housing, with the assistance of refugee support groups, for refugees awaiting the results of their application for recognition of refugee status.

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

Subsequently, following discussions by the three parties, the same measures under this project are currently being taken at Narita Airport, Haneda Airport, Chubu Airport and Kansai Airport. Since March 2017, foreign nationals from these airport branches have been sent to Higashi-Nihon Immigration Center, Tokyo Immigration Bureau, Nagoya Immigration Bureau, or Osaka Immigration Bureau, and when one of the immigration offices to which the person was sent makes a decision on permission for provisional stay or permission for provisional release, the same measures apply.

## Chapter 7

# Responses to International Society and International Situations

### Section 1 Treaties and International Conventions

#### 1. Major Actions for Negotiations for the Conclusion of EPAs with Other Countries

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

As of November 1, 2017, the Immigration Bureau has primarily been involved in negotiations for the conclusion of EPAs with Canada, Colombia, EU and Turkey, etc.

#### 2. Acceptance of Nurse and Certified Care Worker Candidates Based on EPAs

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From the point of view of strengthening bilateral cooperation in economic activities, Japan commenced the acceptance of nurse and certified care worker candidates, who aim to acquire Japanese national nursing qualifications or national certified care worker qualifications, from Indonesia in FY 2008, the Philippines in FY 2009 and Viet Nam in FY 2014. The number of foreign nationals accepted as nurse and certified care worker candidates based on EPAs up until FY 2016 was 1,792 from Indonesia, 1,633 from the Philippines, and 470 from Viet Nam.

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

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Japan is a signatory to various treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT). With regard to government reports on the status of the implementation of those treaties, the Immigration Bureau is involved in the drafting of reports, review of the government reports and

follow-up thereof from the perspective of immigration control administration.

## Section 2 International Conferences/ International Exchange

### 1. Responding to International Conferences

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

MESG meeting was held in Hiroshima in November 2016 and in Italy in April and October 2017, and officials from the Immigration Bureau attended the meetings to exchange information and opinions with the counterparts of other countries.

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

### 2. International Exchange

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

The High-Level Immigration Officers Meeting is held mutually with the Korean immigration authorities, and the Immigration Bureau attends the immigration control meetings with Taiwan organized by the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association and the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association and shares information and exchanges opinions on mutual efforts. In addition, a memorandum of cooperation was signed with the Australian immigration authority in August 2016, pertaining to the establishment of a framework to strengthen cooperative relations between the authorities of both countries, so that in the future, two authorities will be sharing information relating to border control to combat terrorist threats and transnational crimes and facilitation of the immigration procedures, and strengthening cooperation to develop the professional capacity of the authorities of both countries.

In addition, in FY 2016, the relevant organizations of the United States, the Netherlands, Sweden and China visited the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice in order to exchange opinions, and the relevant organizations of Thailand, Singapore and Kenya visited the regional immigration bureaus and the airport district offices.

## Chapter 8 Improvement of Public Relations Activities and Public Services

### Section 1 Promotion of Public Relations Activities

Recognizing that public relations and enlightenment activities both in Japan and abroad play a major role in the smooth implementation of immigration control administration, the Immigration Bureau has been further promoting more active public relations activities than ever before. The main promotion of public relations activities are provision of information including the circumstances concerning immigration control administration, new systems and changes of procedures.

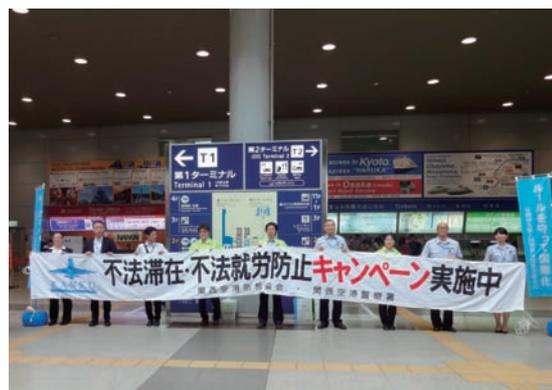
In terms of immigration control administration, statistics concerning immigration control administration such as the number of those entering or departing from Japan, the number of foreign residents and the number of foreign nationals overstaying their authorized period of stay are released on the website of the Ministry of Justice. In addition, we also disclose information on cases of special permission to stay in Japan, the average processing time for refugee recognition examinations, the immigration examination waiting times at Japanese airports and endeavor to widely spread understanding of the current situation of immigration control administration.

We also proactively publicize the immigration control system and procedure guidelines, post information such as on switching to the special permanent resident certificate, changes to the format of the disembarkation card for foreign nationals and notices on the Trusted Traveler Program and also conduct publicity activities by distributing posters and leaflets.

In 2017, as a tie-up plan with Yoshimoto Creative Agency Co., Ltd., the Immigration Bureau produced publicity videos on the automated gates and points-based system for highly-skilled professionals and posted them on the Ministry of Justice website. In addition, for the purpose of preventing illegal work through the appropriate employment of foreign nationals, the Immigration Bureau holds an “Illegal Work Prevention Campaign” as part of the larger campaign for “Foreign Labor Problems Awareness Month” conducted by the government every June, so that the general public, companies hiring foreign nationals and relevant organizations and governments in other countries will be able to better understand the issues and offer cooperation to the Immigration Bureau.



Promotion of the automated gates



Illegal Work Prevention Campaign



Publicity video made through a tie-up plan with Yoshimoto Creative Agency Co., Ltd. (Automated gates and Points-based system for highly-skilled Professionals)

## Section 2 Improvement of Public Services

### 1. Information Services for Foreign Nationals

There is a large number of foreign nationals who are unfamiliar with the procedures relating to entry and residence as well as Japanese laws and social systems due to differences between Japan and their countries in lifestyle, manners, customs and language, etc. For the purpose of providing consultation and information services to such foreign nationals, the immigration information centers offer advice on the various procedures related to entry, the statuses of residence and the application forms.

These information centers were established in the Sendai Regional Immigration Bureau, Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau and its Yokohama District Immigration Office, the Nagoya Regional Immigration Bureau, Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau and its Kobe District Immigration Office, the Hiroshima Regional Immigration Bureau and Fukuoka Regional Immigration Bureau, and they are consulting in various languages such as English, Korean, Chinese and Spanish. Counseling staff members have been assigned to the Sapporo Regional Immigration Bureau, Takamatsu Regional Immigration Bureau and Naha District Immigration Office of Fukuoka Regional Immigration Bureau to provide the same services as the above information centers.

In addition to the above, in cooperation with local authorities where many foreign long-term residents are concentrated, one-stop consultation centers, which provide consultations and information on administrative procedures for entry and residence as well as on daily life, were established and have been operating in Hamamatsu City, Shizuoka Prefecture since April 2009, in Saitama City, Saitama Prefecture since August 2009 and in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo since November 2009.



Immigration Information Center



One-stop consulting center

## 2. Immigration Bureau Website

The Immigration Bureau set up a website (<http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/>) in March 2002 to provide Q&A such as on immigration and residence procedures, the location of the regional immigration offices, contact addresses and opening hours of the information desks, and in January 2016, the website was redesigned newly implementing in-site search functions and font size change functions and improving usability and accessibility by expanding the site for smartphones, in order to strengthen the information transmission capabilities both inside and outside the country, and since March of the same year, we have been using Twitter, disseminating highly useful information such as the waiting time for residence examinations and updating information on the website.

In addition, in order to improve the provision of information to foreign nationals, we have been providing translations in English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese and Spanish since FY 2005 and have also been striving to enhance convenience for foreign nationals by continuously improving the contents.



Immigration Bureau website

## Article Hiroshima Regional Immigration Bureau Mascot Characters “Immiglemon-chan” and “Gate-kun”

In this era of an increasing number of foreign residents and a rapid increase in the number of foreign nationals entering the country, the operations of the immigration bureau have been steadily increasing and have become more and more important.

Hiroshima Regional Immigration Bureau has been proactively engaging in publicity activities and endeavoring to provide guidance on immigration administration by proactively sending tweets from the Immigration Bureau Official Twitter, and through news organizations, welcoming lower secondary school students for workplace experiences and participating in “Sky Day” events held at airports throughout the jurisdictional districts.

Under such circumstances, we came up with the idea of creating mascot characters so as to publicize our friendly immigration control administration to people at large, and when we asked for entries from our staff, there were several excellent entries. The thing that came to mind when we looked at the mascot characters was that we didn’t necessarily have to have just one character.

In the immigration control work, we have been trying to achieve the seemingly opposite objectives of “smooth” but “strict” measures, so we came up with the idea of having a mascot character for each image and of having them coordinate in pairs.

In order for the mascot character to be loved by the general public, it first has to be loved by the staff of the Hiroshima Regional Immigration Bureau, which is why a questionnaire was sent out to all of the staff, and as a result, a pair of mascot characters were born which gained a lot of likes, that is, “Immiglemon-chan” and “Gate-kun” as shown in the photos.

“Immiglemon-chan” which calls attention to “smooth” measures derives its name from the lemons for which Hiroshima is the leading production area, and “Gate-kun” which calls attention to “strict” measures derives its design from the torii of Itsukushima shrine on Miyajima which is a world heritage site, and both characters incorporate the local colors of Hiroshima.

The designs have just been completed, so their appearances are limited to Twitter and have been printed on the envelopes and other materials of Hiroshima Regional Immigration Bureau, but in the near future, the characters of “Immiglemon-chan” and “Gate-kun” will dress up in costumes, and we hope that they will develop a notable presence at events taking photos with the children.



“Immiglemon-chan” and “Gate-kun”

\*We also have other mascot characters at the Immigration Bureau such as “Toribu” (Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau), “Entra-kun” (Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau) and “Poppo-chan” (Fukuoka Regional Immigration Bureau).

## Chapter 9

# Policy for the Achievement of a Symbiotic Society Co-existing with Foreign Nationals

### Section 1 Participation in the Meeting on Cities with Large Populations of Foreign Nationals

The Meeting on Cities with Large Populations of Foreign Nationals consists of the local governments of cities where a large population of foreign residents, including foreign nationals of Japanese descent, mainly from South America, known as “newcomers”, is concentrated and international exchange associations. The purpose of the council meetings is to exchange information relating to policies related foreign residents and the activities of member cities, and to proactively resolve the various associated problems arising in the area. The first meeting of the Council was held in May 2001, and officers from the Immigration Bureau proactively took part in the meeting.

The “Town Meeting for Cities with Large Foreign Populations in Toyohashi FY 2016” was held in January 2017 on the theme of the “Acquisition of Japanese Language Proficiency of Foreign Residents” and “A Society in which Foreign Residents Play an Active Role”, and discussions were held between the member cities and the related ministries and agencies, and this meeting was also attended by officers of the Immigration Bureau.

### Section 2 Participation in Government-Wide Efforts

The Council for Promotion of Measures for Long-Term Residents of Japanese Descent with the Minister of State as a chair person has been convened on a regular basis since March 2009 in order to promote measures to be taken by the government as a whole with regard to the policies relating to long-term residents of Japanese descent such as consideration of support for foreign nationals of Japanese descent who are faced with difficult circumstances such as a lack of employment, with the Immigration Bureau also taking part in the considerations. In March 2014, the “Promotion of Policies for Long-Term Residents of Japanese Descent” describing the policies of the government to be taken with regard to long-term residents of Japanese descent was compiled. Where necessary, the measures are to be revised three years after the start.

In addition, the Promotion Council for Long-Term Residents of Japanese Descent came to be held a number of times together with the Inter-ministerial Liaison Council for Foreign Worker Issues established in 1988 in order to study the various problems related to the acceptance of foreign nationals focusing on foreign workers, and therefore the Immigration Bureau has also been participating in the meetings of this liaison council.