

Part II

Major Policies Related to Immigration Control and Residency Management Administration

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Chapter 1

Overview of the Act for the Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Justice

(Promulgated on December 14, 2018 and entered into effect on April 1, 2019 (some provisions effective from the date of promulgation).)

1. The current system for acceptance of foreign nationals in specialized and technical fields was expanded in order to accept foreign nationals with a certain degree of expertise and skills belonging to industrial fields where it is difficult to secure human resources, the statuses of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)” pertaining to foreign nationals with such skills were established, and provisions relating to the basic policy concerning the operation of the system pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” (hereinafter referred to as “government basic policy”) and the policy relating to operation of the system pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” (hereinafter referred to as “field-specific operational policy”), provisions relating to the process of acceptance of foreign nationals, provisions relating to support for foreign nationals and provisions relating to the organizations accepting foreign nationals were established.
2. As an organization to work in an integrated and efficient manner for new operations such as planning, drafting and general coordination related to developing an environment for acceptance of foreign nationals while accurately responding to the increase in the number of foreign residents residing in Japan due to the creation of the new statuses of residence, the Immigration Services Agency was newly established as an external agency of the Ministry of Justice.

Section 1

Establishment of the Statuses of Residence “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)”

As labor shortages have become more serious, instructions were issued by the prime minister at the Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy in February 2018 to urgently review reform of the current system for the acceptance of foreign human resources in the specialized and technical fields, due to which a task force comprising officers of the director-general rank of the relevant ministries and agencies and its executive group were convened several times between February and May of the same year, and various reviews were conducted of matters requiring consideration when establishing the system.

In order to deal with the worsening labor shortages, in response to the “Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2018” (Cabinet Decision, June 15, 2018) stating, “It is necessary to construct a system that enables wide acceptance that foreign human resources who have a certain level of professional knowledge and skills can contribute immediately, by eliminating the traditional limitation of only accepting foreign human resources having special professional and technical skills. For this purpose, the government will focus on the areas that really need foreign human resources and create a new status of residence to expand the acceptance of foreign human resources, with the understanding that such actions are not an immigration policy”, the statuses of

residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)” were established pursuant to the Act to Amend the Immigration Control Act and Related Laws”. “Specific Skilled Worker (i)” is a status of residence for foreign nationals engaging in work requiring skills that necessitate a considerable degree of knowledge or experience belonging to an industrial field where labor shortages need to be supplemented by foreign nationals since it is difficult to secure human resources, and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)” is a status of residence for foreign nationals engaging in work requiring proficient skills belonging to the same field.

As well as the establishment of the statuses of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)”, the main contents included in the Act to Amend the Immigration Control Act and Related Laws were as follows.

1 Establishment of provisions relating to the process of acceptance

Provisions relating to the process of acceptance were established as follows:

- (1) Provisions relating to the government basic policy to clarify cross-industrial policies.
- (2) Provisions relating to the field-specific operation policy to clarify policies for each field of acceptance.
- (3) Provisions in cases where suspension of acceptance is required.

2 Establishment of provisions relating to support for foreign nationals

Provisions relating to support for foreign nationals were established as follows:

- (1) Accepting organizations are required to prepare a support plan, and based on the support plan, to provide support in terms of the working life, daily life and social life of foreign nationals with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” (hereinafter referred to as “foreign national with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)””).
- (2) The support plan must meet the prescribed criteria.

3 Establishment of provisions relating to the accepting organizations

Provisions relating to the accepting organizations were established as follows:

- (1) The amount of remuneration for the foreign national residing in Japan with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” (hereinafter referred to as foreign national with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker”) must be equivalent to or greater than that a Japanese national would receive for the same work, and the contract between the foreign national with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” and the accepting organization must meet the prescribed criteria.
- (2) The accepting organization must meet the prescribed criteria to ensure the proper performance of the employment contracts and proper implementation of the support plans.

4 Establishment of provisions relating to the registered support organizations

Provisions relating to the registered support organizations were established as follows:

- (1) If the accepting organization entrusts a registered support organization with providing

support for foreign nationals with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)”, it will be deemed to have met the criteria for ensuring proper implementation of the support plan.

- (2) A person who is entrusted with providing support for foreign nationals with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” may be registered with the Commissioner of the Immigration Services Agency.
- (3) Other matters related to registration.

5 Establishment of provisions relating to notifications, guidance, advice and reports etc.

Provisions relating to notifications, guidance, advice and reports were established as follows:

- (1) Provisions on notifications to be submitted to the Commissioner of the Immigration Services Agency by foreign nationals with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker”, the accepting organizations and registered support organizations.
- (2) Provisional relating to guidance, advice and the collection of reports from the Commissioner of the Immigration Services Agency to the accepting organizations and registered support organizations.
- (3) Provisions on improvement orders from the Commissioner of the Immigration Services Agency to the accepting organizations.

Section 2 Overview of the System of “Specified Skilled Worker”

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

1 The government’s basic policy

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

As well as matters relating to the significance of the system pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker”, the government’s basic policy stipulates the basic matters relating to the industrial fields where labor shortages need to be supplemented by foreign nationals since it is difficult to secure human resources (hereinafter referred to as “designated industrial field”), the basic matters relating to human resources required in a designated industrial field, basic matters relating to coordination of the clerical affairs of the relevant administrative agencies concerning operation of the system pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker”, and other important matters related to operation of the system related to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” ([Reference 76](#)).

Reference 76

Outline of the Basic Policy on Operation of the System Related to the Status of Residence of “Specified Skilled Worker”

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

1. Matters concerning the significance of the system

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

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

➤ Fields where specified skilled workers will be accepted

Industrial fields where foreign workers are needed to supplement the labor shortage, which is still difficult to secure human resources even after efforts have been made to improve productivity and secure domestic human resources (hereinafter referred to as “specified industrial fields”).

➤ Consideration to regions facing labor shortage

Efforts to take necessary measures will be made so as not to have an excessive concentration of specified skilled workers in metropolitan areas or other particular areas

➤ Expected number of acceptance

The number of specified skilled workers to be accepted over the next five years will be stated in the operation policy of each field

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

➤ Measures taken in Japan: Malicious intermediary organizations (brokers), etc. will be eliminated completely through enhancing collaboration between the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare and other related organizations.

➤ Measures taken outside Japan: In order to prevent the intervention by malicious intermediary organizations such as those that collect deposits, intergovernmental documents such as bilateral arrangements will be made as well as necessary measures will be taken.

➤ Responses to changes in the situation of labor shortages

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

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

➤ Responses in the event of public security problems

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

5. Important matters concerning operation of the system

➤ Supports for “Specified Skilled Worker (i)”

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

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

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

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

3. Matters concerning necessary human resources

* Confirmed through the exams or other methods specified by the ministries in charge of each field

Specified Skilled Worker (i)		Specified Skilled Worker (ii)
Skill level	Skills that require considerable knowledge or experience *	Proficient skills *
Japanese proficiency level	The workers should be basically able to deal with daily conversation to a certain extent, which is enough to survive daily life, as well as to have Japanese language proficiency required for their work *	—
Period of stay	Upper limit of a total of 5 years	Extension of the period of stay is possible
Accompanying family members	In principle, not permitted	Permitted

2 Field-Specific Operation Policy

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

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

The field-specific operational policies stipulated the matters related to the situation of the shortage of human resources in the designated industrial fields as well as matters relating to the criteria for the human resources required in the designated industrial fields and other important matters related to operation of the system pertaining to the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” ([Reference 77](#)).

Reference 77 Field-Specific Operation Policy (14 fields)

	Field	Labor shortage	Human resource criteria		Other important matters	
		Prospective no. of foreign nationals to be accepted (maximum no. over 5 years)	Skills test	Japanese language exam	Type of work	Employment form
M H L W	Care worker	60,000	Nursing care skills evaluation test (provisional) [Newly established]etc.	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional), etc.(In addition to the above) Nursing care Japanese language evaluation test (provisional), etc.	As well as physical care (such as bathing, meals, assistance for excretion, etc., adjusted to the mental and physical state of the user), supplemental support services (recreation, assistance with functional exercise, etc.) (Note) Home visit services are excluded [1 test category]	Direct
	Building cleaning management	37,000	Building cleaning field specified skills (i) evaluation test [Newly established]	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	Interior building cleaning [1 test category]	Direct
M E T I	Machine parts & tooling industries	21,500	Manufacturing field specified skills (i) evaluation test (provisional) [Newly established]	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Casting - Forging - Die casting - Machining - Metal press - Metal press - Factory sheet metal work - Electroplating - Aluminium anodizing - Finishing - Finishing - Machine inspection - Machine maintenance - Machine maintenance [13 test categories]	Direct
	Industrial Machinery industries	5,250	Manufacturing field specified skills (i) evaluation test (provisional) [Newly established]	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Casting - Forging - Die casting - Machining - Painting - Iron Work - Factory - Electroplating - Finishing - Machine inspection - Machine maintenance - Industrial packaging - Electronic equipment assembling - Electric equipment assembling - Metal press - Welding - Print wiring board manufacturing - Plastic molding - Palstic molding [18 test categories]	Direct
	Electric, electronics and information industries	4,700	Manufacturing field specified skills (i) evaluation test (provisional) [Newly established]	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Machining - Metal press - Factory sheet metal work - Electroplating - Finishing - Machine maintenance - Eletonic equipment assembling - Electric equipment assembling - Print wiring board manufacturing - Plastic molding - Painting - Welding - Industrial packaging [13 test categories]	Direct
M L I T	Construction industry	40,000	Construction field specified skills (i) evaluation test (provisional) [Newly established]etc.	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framework construction - Plastering - Concrete pumping - Tunnel and propusion - Construcion machinery and construction - Earthwork - Roofing -Telecommunications - Reinforcement construction - Reinforcing bar joints - Interior finishing/ Material mounting [11 test categories]	Direct
	Shipbuilding & ship machinery industry	13,000	Shipbuilding/ship machinery field specified skills (i) evaluation test (provisional) [Newly established]etc.	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welding - Painting - Iron Work - Finishing - Machining - Electrical equipment [6 test categories]	Direct
	Automobile repair & maintenance	7,000	Automobile repair and maintenance field specified skills evaluation test (provisional) [Newly established]etc.	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	Automobile daily checks and maintenance, periodical checks and maintenance, disassembly repair [1 test category]	Direct
	Aviation industry	2,200	Aviation field specified skills evaluation test (airport ground handling or aircraft maintenance) (provisional) [Newly established]	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport ground handling (handling of an aircraft on the ground, handling of baggage / cargo, etc.) • Aircraft maintenance (maintenance work, etc. for an aircraft, equipment, etc.) [2 test categories]	Direct
	Accommodation industry	22,000	Accommodation industry skills proficiency test (provisional) [Newly established]	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	Providing accommodation services such as working at the front desk, planning / public relations, hospitality and restaurant services [1 test category]	Direct
M A F F	Agriculture	36,500	Agriculture skills proficiency test (cultivation agriculture or livestock agriculture) (provisional) [Newly established]	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivation agriculture (cultivation management, harvesting and shipping / sorting of agricultural products, etc.) • Livestock agriculture (management of rising, harvesting and shipping / sorting of livestock products, etc.) [2 test categories]	Direct Dispatch
	Fishery & aquaculture	9,000	Fishing industry skills proficiency test (fishery or aquaculture industry) (provisional) [Newly established]]	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishery (Production and repair of fishing gear, aquatic animals and plant exploration, operation of fishing gear and fishing machinery, aquatic animal and plant harvesting, treatment and storage of Fishery products, securing of safety and health, etc.) • Aquaculture industry (Production, repair and management of aquacultural materials, cultivation and management of aquatic animal and plant farming, harvesting and processing, securing of safety and health, etc.) [2 test categories]	Direct Dispatch
	Manufacture of food and beverages	34,000	Food and beverage manufacturing industry skills proficiency test (provisional) [Newly established]	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	General food and beverage manufacturing (manufacture and processing of food and beverages (excluding alcoholic beverages), health and safety) [1 test category]	Direct
	Food service industry	53,000	Restaurant industry skills proficiency test (provisional) [Newly established]	Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (provisional) etc.	General restaurant work (food preparation, customer service, restaurant management) [1 test category]	Direct

	Field	Other important matters
		Conditions specially imposed on the acceting organization
M H L W	Care worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by the MHLW, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by the MHLW •Set the number of specified skilled workers to be accepted per facility
	Building cleaning management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by the MHLW, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by the MHLW •Be registered as a “Building Cleaning Business” or “Building Environment Sanitation Comprehensive Management Business”
M E T I	Machine parts & tooling industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by METI, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by METI
	Industrial Machinery industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by METI, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by METI
	Electric, electronics and information industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by METI, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by METI
M L I T	Construction industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Be a member of a construction business group for the acceptance of foreign nationals •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by MLIT •Be licensed under the Construction Business Act •Have signed a contract to pay stable remuneration equal to or higher than a Japanese person would receive for the same work, and to give pay raises in accordance with the level of skill mastery •Explain important matters concerning employment contracts by giving a written document in the mother tongue of the foreign worker •Set the number of foreign workers per accepting construction company •Receive accreditation from MLIT concerning the “plan for acceptance of specified skilled workers in construction” stating the remuneration to be paid and other important matters •Receive confirmation from MLIT and other related ministries and agencies that it is properly implementing the “plan for acceptance of specified skilled workers in construction” •Register the specified skilled workers in the construction job advancement system
	Shipbuilding & ship machinery industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by MLIT, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by MLIT •When entrusting implementation of the support plans to a registered support organization, the implementation must be entrusted to a registered support organization that meets the above conditions
	Automobile repair & maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by MLIT, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by MLIT •It must be a business operator which has received approval to engage in business on airport premises or other permission based on the Airport Management Regulations or be an approved organization relating to aircraft maintenance etc. based on the Civil Aeronautics Act When entrusting implementation of the support plans to a registered support organization, the implementation must be entrusted to a registered support organization that meets the above conditions •Being a business site certified under the Road Transport Vehicle Act
	Aviation industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by MLIT, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by MLIT •When entrusting implementation of the support plans to a registered support organization, the implementation must be entrusted to a registered support organization that meets the above conditions • It must be a business operator which has received approval to engage in business on airport premises or other permission based on the Airport Management Regulations or be an approved organization relating to aircraft maintenance etc. based on the Civil Aeronautics Act
	Accommodation industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by MLIT, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by MLIT •When entrusting implementation of the support plans to a registered support organization, the implementation must be entrusted to a registered support organization that meets the above conditions •Be a person who obtained a licence for “Inn and Hotel Operation” • Does not fall under accommodation facilities related to adult entertainment business • Does not let employees serve customers in a way that related to adult entertainment business
M A F F	Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by MAFF, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by MAFF •When entrusting implementation of the support plans to a registered support organization, the implementation must be entrusted to a registered support organization that provides the necessary cooperation to the council •It must be an agriculture management entity with experience of employing workers for a specified period or more
	Fishery & aquaculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by MAFF, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by MAFF •Take prepared measures at the council organized by MAFF •When entrusting implementation of the support plans to a registered support organization, such entrustment must be restricted to registered support organizations that conform to the field-specific criteria
	Manufacture of food and beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by MAFF, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by MAFF
	Food service industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Participate in the council organized by MAFF, and provide necessary cooperation •Provide necessary cooperation for the surveys or guidance conducted by MAFF •Does not let employees work at facility related to adult entertainment business •Does not let employees serve customers in a way that related to adult entertainment business

3 Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC)

As of the end of July 2019, bilateral agreements aimed at excluding unscrupulous intermediary business operators and constructing information-sharing frameworks, etc. were entered into with eight countries (the Philippines, Cambodia, Nepal, Myanmar, Mongolia, Viet Nam, Sri Lanka and Indonesia).

Section 3

Establishment of the Immigration Services Agency, etc.

Establishment of the Immigration Services Agency

Based on the Act to Amend the Immigration Control Act and Related Laws, which was established on December 8, 2018 and promulgated on the 14th of the same month, the Immigration Services Agency was established on April 1, 2019 as an external agency of the Ministry of Justice to accurately respond to the increase in the number of foreign residents residing in Japan due to the creation of the new statuses of residence and as an organization to work in an integrated and efficient manner on new tasks such as the planning, drafting and general coordination relating to the development of an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals.

The duties of the Immigration Services Agency include as before “(1) equitable control of immigration and the residence of foreign nationals”, which was the usual work of the Immigration Bureau, but also “general coordination of the development of an environment of acceptance of foreign nationals” which is an important policy of the Cabinet based on the provisions of the Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Justice which is “(2) to assist with the administrative affairs of the Cabinet relating to specific key policies of the Cabinet in connection with the duties”.



Establishment of the Immigration Services Agency

Chapter 2

Efforts for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign nationals

Section 1

Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign nationals

1 Background

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

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

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

2 Outline

In order to achieve the purpose of contributing to the realization of a society where Japanese nationals and foreign nationals are able to live safely and comfortably together through the proper acceptance of foreign nationals and to realize a society of harmonious coexistence, the comprehensive measures will indicate the direction to be taken in relation to the acceptance and harmonious coexistence of foreign nationals.

The Comprehensive Measures include 126 measures for the entire government, and a total of 21.1 billion yen was allocated as a related budget (in addition to this, there are related budgets such as subsidies for the promotion of regional revitalization) ([Reference 78](#)).

The main measures are as follows.

(1) Provide multilingual information on administrative procedures and living, and develop a structure of counseling

- Establish a support system for local governments pertaining to one-stop services providing multilingual information and advice on administrative procedures and living (about 100 locations nationwide, support for more than 11 languages)

- Prepare and disseminate a new “Guidebook on Living and Working” (supported in 11 languages) for safe and secure living and working in Japan
- Construct a platform for a multilingual system and promote use of the multilingual interpretation system
- Multilingualize support at Consumer Affairs Centers, JLSC (Japan Legal Support Center), human rights bodies (supported in 8 languages), and consultation services by the needy
- Promote responses envisaging the use of social networking services (SNS) for the provision of information on administrative matters and general living in Japan.

(2) Promote and support measures for multicultural coexistence in local communities

- Support pioneering measures of the local governments by using subsidies for promoting local revitalization in order to promote the activities of foreign nationals in the regions and to realize harmonious societies of coexistence through measures such as setting up an organization that provides support for the acceptance and co-existence of foreign nationals

(3) Develop an environment to provide medical care, health and welfare services

- Improve the system to allow foreign patients to receive medical care in all of the areas of residence with peace of mind through promoting use of telephone interpreters and multilingual translation systems, developing manuals, and establishing regional countermeasures council, etc.
- Assign medical interpreters to local core medical institutions, support multilingualization of hospital information maps
- Acceptance of requests for consultations from foreign national families raising children and the provision of information on childcare support

(4) Enhance information dissemination and support at the time of a disaster

- Promote dissemination of disaster and weather information in 11 languages through Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) website and the push-enabled information alert application, which disseminates public protection information of National Early Warning System (J-ALERT), improve information transmission making it easier for foreign nationals to understand (map information, warning sounds, etc.)

(5) Prepare an environment and support for securing housing

- Disseminate practical service manuals for landlords and rental agencies, rented housing standard contracts in foreign languages, etc. (supported in 8 languages)
- Promote registration, provision of housing information, and housing support on rental housing that are intended for the promotion of smooth move-in for persons requiring housing support, including foreign nationals

(6) Improve user-friendly financial and telecommunication services

- Improve the environment (including support from the accepting company), promote multilingual services related to opening of a savings or deposit account by foreign nationals at financial institutions
- Promote multilingual services at the time of entering into contract for mobile phones

(7) Enhance Japanese language education and education of foreign children and pupils

- Develop Japanese language education based on a standard Japanese language curriculum for daily lives on a nationwide scale
- Steadily improve the Fixed Number of Teachers Required for Japanese Language Teaching based on the provisions of Act on Standards of the number of educational personnel in Compulsory Education Schools, and support the assignment of support staff
- Improve the support system for foreign children and pupils by the local governments (utilization of ICT, cooperation with diverse entities)
- Support Career education for senior high school students and others in collaboration with regional companies and NPOs, and ensure learning opportunities
- Enhance websites about Japanese language education contents related to the Japanese language learning of foreign nationals visiting Japan

(8) Ensure an appropriate work environment

- Expand advice structure and promote multilingualization at the “Foreign Workers Consultation Corner (Advisor for Foreign Workers)” and “Telephone Consultation Service for Foreign Workers”
- Multilingualize and provide information and advice based on the situation of foreign residents by region
- Expansion of training programs for long-term residents, who are settled in Japan, to study the Japanese language, etc., and implementation of vocational training corresponding to the level of Japanese language skills

(9) Promote enrollment in social insurance, etc.

- Promote enrollment in social insurance through the provision of information from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, etc.
- Improve the tax payment environment such as support for reliable performance of the tax obligation

Other measures include stricter public notice criteria to improve the quality of Japanese language educational institutions and the preparation of bilateral documents for the technical intern training program for foreign nationals.

Reference 78 Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign nationals (Outline)

(Provisional Translation)

In recent years, the number of foreign nationals residing in Japan has increased (2.64 million), and the number of foreign workers in Japan has also rapidly increased (1.28 million). A new status of residence is established (to be enforced from April 2019)⇒ As well as **efforts towards promotion on appropriate and smooth acceptance of foreign nationals, development of an environment to achieve a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals** will be further promoted. Measures will be enhanced in the future as well.

**Total amount of
21.1 billion yen (Note)**

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

(1) Build a framework to listen to opinions of Japanese and foreign nationals

Continuously listen to opinions from both Japanese and foreign nationals at the Meeting to Listen to “Voices of Our people”

(2) Implement awareness-raising activities

Further promote “mental barrier-free” efforts to realize a “cohesive society” where all people support mutually and value each other’s human rights

Support for foreign nationals as residents

(1) Create livable local communities

(i) Provide multilingual information on administrative procedures and living, and develop a structure of counseling

- Establish a support system for local governments pertaining to one-stop services providing multilingual information and advice on administrative procedures and living (Develop a “one-stop comprehensive consultation center for multicultural coexistence” (tentative) (about 100 locations nationwide, supported in 11 languages)) [2 billion yen]

- Prepare and disseminate a new “Guidebook on Living and Working in Japan” (tentative) (supported in 11 languages) for safe and secure living and working in Japan

- Construct a platform for a multilingual system [800 million yen] and promote use of the multilingual interpretation system

(ii) Promote and support measures for multicultural coexistence in local communities

- Support pioneering measures of the local governments by using subsidies for promoting local revitalization in order to promote the activities of foreign nationals in the regions and to realize harmonious societies of coexistence through measures such as setting up an organization that provides support for the acceptance and co-existence of foreign nationals

- Train personnel and organizations involved in providing for foreign nationals and build networks

(2) Improve the environment on life services

(i) Develop an environment to provide medical care, health and welfare services

- Improve the system to allow foreign patients to receive medical care in all of the areas of residence with peace of mind through promoting use of telephone interpreters and multilingual translation systems, developing manuals, and establishing regional countermeasures council, etc., [1.7 billion yen]

- Assign medical interpreters to local core medical institutions, support multilingualization of hospital information maps

(ii) Enhance information dissemination and support at the time of a disaster

- Promote dissemination of disaster and weather information in 11 languages through Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) website and the push-enabled information alert application, such as “Safety tips”, which disseminates public protection information of National Early Warning System (J-ALERT), improve information transmission making it easier for foreign nationals to understand (map information, warning sounds, etc.)

- Multilingualize responses to the emergency number “119” through three-way simultaneous interpretation, use a multilingual speech translation application for ambulance service, train Information Coordinators for foreign disaster victims

(iii) Enhance traffic safety measures, and responses to accidents and incidents, consumer problems, legal problems, human rights issues, and requests for advice by the needy

- Implement public relations and awareness-raising activities on traffic safety, multilingualize the driver’s license written tests

- Multilingualize responses to “Dial 110” calls, and responses at the sites of accidents and incidents

- Multilingualize support at Consumer Affairs Centers (tel. number: 188), JLSC (Japan Legal Support Center), human rights bodies (supported in 8 languages), and consultation services by the needy

(iv) Prepare an environment and support for securing housing

- Disseminate practical service manuals for landlords and rental agencies, rented housing standard contracts in foreign languages, etc. (supported in 8 languages)

- Promote registration, provision of housing information, and housing support on rental housing that are intended for the promotion of smooth move-in for persons requiring housing support, including foreign nationals

(v) Improve user-friendly financial and telecommunication services

- Improve the environment, promote multilingual services, improve the guidelines related to opening of a savings or deposit account by foreign nationals at financial institutions

- Promote multilingual services at the time of entering into contract for mobile phones, widespread knowledge to the effect that a person’s identity can be verified through presentation of a residence card

(3) Realize smooth communication

(i) Enhance Japanese language education

- Develop Japanese language education based on a standard Japanese language curriculum for daily lives on a nationwide scale (support for a comprehensive structure of Japanese language education, support for resolving issues of lacking Japanese language classes in such communities, etc.) [600 million yen]

- Handleneeds of various learning forms (development and provision of multilingual ICT learning teaching materials, use and multilingual provision of the teaching materials of the Open University of Japan, and NHK’s Japanese language teaching contents, promotion of the establishment of evening-classes at public junior high schools at least one school in each prefecture, etc.)

- Create standards for Japanese language education (Japanese CEFR : Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)

- Develop new qualifications to prove the skills of Japanese language teachers

(ii) Improve and properly manage the quality of Japanese language education institutions

- Make stricter of public notice criteria to improve the quality of Japanese language education institutions (stricter criteria for improving the attendance rate and eliminating percentage of overstaying foreign nationals, introduction of numerical standards based on pass rate on Japanese language exam, etc.)

- Implement mandatory periodic inspections and reports for Japanese language education institutions

- Implement mandatory publication of the results of Japanese language exams of students by Japanese language education institutions and enhance information disclosure

- Share information on Japanese language education institutions among the related organizations and utilize such information in the examinations by the Ministry of Justice and visa screening by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

(4) Improve education for foreign children and pupils

- Steadily improve the Fixed Number of Teachers Required for Japanese Language Teaching based on the provisions of Act on Standards of the number of educational personnel in Compulsory Education Schools, and support the assignment of support staff [300 million yen]

- Improve the support system for foreign children and pupils by the local governments (utilization of ICT, cooperation with diverse entities)

- Improve the competency of teachers and others (promotion of nationwide training through the development of training instructors and dispatch of instructors to training sessions organized by the local governments, and other measures)

- Support Career education for senior high school students and others in collaboration with regional companies and NPOs, and ensure learning opportunities [100million yen]

(5) Support employment for international students, etc.

- Develop a status of residence to promote the employment of university students or specialized training college graduates in the field of “Cool Japan”

- Simplify the procedures for changing the status of residence when getting a job in a small or medium-size business or other businesses.

- Accredited by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology programs at universities to promote employment, etc. [600 million yen]

- Request publication of the employment rate of international students, prioritize allocation of scholarships to educational institutions, enhance support for study abroad / Japanese language learning to secure nursing care personnel depending on the status of employment support efforts and employment situation [1.4billion yen]

- Promote diversified recruitment processes based on differences in the companies depending on the level of Japanese proficiency required for their business

- Form and horizontally develop best practices on diversified human resource development and conditions after employment, etc. through collaboration among industry, government and academia

(6) Ensure an appropriate work environment

(i) Ensure proper working conditions and employment management, guarantee industrial health and safety

- Strengthen the structure of the labor standards inspection offices and Public Employment Security Offices (Hello Work) strengthen the institutional capability of the Organization for Technical Intern Training, multilingualize responses at the “Advice Hotline on Labor Conditions” (supported in 8 languages)

- Expand advice structure and promote multilingualization at the “Foreign Workers Consultation Corner (Advisor for Foreign Workers)” and “Telephone Consultation Service for Foreign Workers”

(ii) Support stable local employment

- Promote multilingual responses at Hello Work (supported in 11 languages) and support local reemployment

- Multilingualize and provide information and advice based on the situation of foreign residents by region, implement vocational training

(7) Promote enrollment in social insurance, etc.

- Promote enrollment in social insurance through the provision of information from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, etc.
- Secure proper use of Health Care Insurance (in principle, introduce a domestic residence requirement as a rule to recognize dependents, respond to inappropriate cases, etc.)
- Improve the tax payment environment such as support for reliable performance of the tax obligation

Efforts aimed at promoting appropriate and smooth acceptance of foreign nationals**(1) Eliminate malicious intermediary business operators**

- Make bilateral intergovernmental documents (9 countries) and share information based on the documents
- Eliminate malicious intermediary businesses (brokers) etc. thoroughly through strengthening of cooperation among the relevant organizations such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Embassies and Consulates), the National Police Agency, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the Organization for Technical Intern Training, and impose stricter entry examination criteria
- Improve the contents of descriptions to be given in the residence applications to identify malicious intermediary businesses

(2) Expand supports for Japanese language educational infrastructure overseas

- Implement tests to measure the Japanese language proficiency necessary for living and working in Japan on CBT(Computer Based Testing) under strict supervision (9 countries)
- Enhance supports for Japanese language educational infrastructure overseas through the Japan Foundation, etc. (training of local teachers, supports for local institutional activities of local institutions)
- Enhance information dissemination by Embassies and Consulates, etc.

[3.4 billion yen]

Construct a new residency management system**(1) Implement smooth and expedited procedures for the status of residence**

- Start online applications for status of residence procedures by the accepting companies, etc. [1.2 billion yen]
- Further reduce the burden of the application procedures by utilizing the residence card number, etc., enforce a standard processing period (2 weeks to 1 month)

(2) Strengthen residence management network

- Accurately monitor status of residency and employment situation of foreign nationals by further promoting information sharing by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
- Build a mechanism to accurately grasp employment situation such as by industry type, occupation type, status of residence, etc., improve / utilize public statistics
- Strengthen immigration and residency management system in line with the establishment of the Immigration Services Agency [1.8 billion yen]

(3) Strengthen measures against illegal foreign residents

- Eliminate illegal foreign residents thoroughly by strengthening cooperation among the relevant agencies, such as the National Police Agency, Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [500 million yen]
- Collect and analyze information on the missing technical intern trainees, and based on this information, conduct thorough investigations, tighten enforcement of the law such as revocation order of accreditation, against the technical intern training implementing organization, etc., and exhaustive surveys and handling of missing technical intern trainees in 2017

(Note) The budget amount is the supplementary budget for FY2018 (2) and the budget amount for FY2019. In addition, there were such related budgets as the supplementary figure of 100 billion yen as regional revitalization promotion subsidies, the supplementary figure of 13.1 billion yen as the Japan Student Services Organization's operating expenses (related to international students finding employment, etc.), the supplementary figure of 57.1 billion yen as human resources development support subsidies (related to stable employment support in the region), and the budget of 15.7 billion yen for countermeasures against overstaying illegal residents.

3 Enhancement of "Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign nationals"

In June 18, 2019, the government adopted Enhancement of "Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals" at the Fifth "Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign nationals". This enhanced the content of the comprehensive measures, focusing on matters that are urgent issues at this stage (Reference 79).

The main measures are as follows.

(1) Promotion of appropriate and smooth acceptance of foreign nationals (measures to prevent the concentration of specified skilled workers in metropolitan areas and other specific areas)

- Provide job matching support connecting foreign workers seeking employment to companies in the region (mediation for job offers and job seeking by specified skilled workers testing corporations in the construction field, financial support for local governments that perform job matching in the Care Workers field, support for acceptance by small and medium-sized enterprises through collaboration between the local governments and the Public Employment Security Offices (Hello Work))

(2) Preparation of an environment of acceptance in order to realize a society of harmonious coexistence

- Establish a "Center for Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals" (provisional name) consolidating the related departments of the Immigration Services Agency, the Japan Legal Support Center's (Houterasu's), the human rights organs, the Public Employment Security Offices (Hello Work), the Visa Information desk, JETRO and others

- Examine the conditions of local governments for subsidies to run one-stop consulting counters, and consider the way how to respond to consultation from Japanese nationals contribute to a society of multicultural coexistence
- Development of the system for Accepting Environmental Coordinator, who will serve as a bridge between the national government and local governments
- Promote “Guidebook on Living and Working” and disaster information in 14 languages

(3) Accurate management of international students enrollment and further optimization of the Technical Intern Training Program

- With regard to universities and other educational institutions inadequately managing the enrollment of international students, implement stricter status of residence examinations, such as not allowing the acceptance of international students, or reduction of private education institution aid and others
- In order to prevent the disappearance and others of technical intern trainees, quash the occurrence of misconduct such as that related to the payment of wages by obligating the payment of wages through a wire transfer into the trainee’s account

(4) Promotion of the employment of international students and other foreign nationals in Japan

- Publicize information on the amendment of the public notice on “Designated Activities” in order to increase employment opportunities for international students who have graduated from Japanese universities

Reference 79 Enhancement of “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign nationals” [Main Policies]

Promotion of appropriate and smooth acceptance of foreign nationals (measures to prevent the concentration of specified skilled workers in metropolitan areas and other specific areas)

- Provide job matching support connecting foreign workers seeking employment to companies in the region (mediation for job offers and job seeking by specified skilled workers testing corporations in the construction field (new), financial support for local governments that perform job matching in the Care Workers field, support for acceptance by small and medium-sized enterprises through collaboration between the local governments and the Public Employment Security Offices (Hello Work) (new))
- Examine the adoption of preferential treatment in the procedures for changes the status of residence or other procedures (new)
- In order to facilitate use of Subsidy Program for Promotion of Regional Revitalization, implement surveys to have foreign nationals effectively settle down in the region, inform the local governments about the leading projects in relation to measures for acceptance of foreign nationals and deploy horizontally
- Provide strong financial support including regional funds for the efforts of the housing support corporations in rural areas which introduce housing and the local governments which provide rent subsidies and others

Preparation of an environment of acceptance in order to realize a society of harmonious coexistence

- Establish a “Center for Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals” (provisional name) consolidating the related departments of the Immigration Services Agency, the Japan Legal Support Center’s (Houterasu’s), the human rights organs, the Public Employment Security Offices (Hello Work), the Visa Information desk, JETRO and others (new)
- Examine the conditions of local governments for subsidies to run one-stop consulting counters, and consider the way how to respond to consultation from Japanese nationals contribute to a society of multicultural coexistence
- Development of the system for Accepting Environmental Coordinator, who will serve as a bridge between the national government and local governments
- Promote “Guidebook on Living and Working” and disaster information in 14 languages, and utilize “easy Japanese” (new)
- Reduce the occurrence of non-payment to medical institutions by denying repeated entry to foreign nationals with a history of unpaid medical expenses
- Appropriately implement pre-entry screening for tuberculosis to prevent the spread of infectious diseases
- Requests for driving license tests, and procedures to change from a foreign driving license to a Japanese driving license to be provided in multiple languages (new)
- Prepare an environment to facilitate the opening of accounts by foreign nationals at banks and other financial institutions (preparation of leaflets and others), requests for account closure at the time of return to the home country, publicizing of information that the selling or buying of bank accounts may become grounds to deny landing or grounds for deportation (new)
- Prepare a comprehensive system to reinforce the Japanese language education environment in the region, develop Japanese language learning materials using ICT
- Requests for appropriate support for foreign national children at day care centers and others
- Monitor the state of school enrollment of foreign national children through conducting a national survey (new), promote school enrollment with the cooperation of the local governments
- Promote safety and health education through the use of safety and health education materials for foreign workers in multiple languages (14 languages)

Accurate management of international students enrollment and further optimization of the Technical Intern Training Program

- With regard to universities and other educational institutions inadequately managing the enrollment of international students, implement stricter status of residence examinations, such as not allowing the acceptance of international students, or reduction of private education institution aid and others (new)
- With regard to the special Japanese languages courses for foreign students at universities that exclusively teach Japanese language education, create the same standards as for Japanese language education institutions, and establish a system that does not allow the acceptance of foreign students by universities that do not meet the standards (new)
- Strengthening the onsite inspection capacity of the Organization for Technical Intern Training
- In order to prevent the disappearance and others of technical intern trainees, quash the occurrence of misconduct such as that related to the payment of wages by obligating the payment of wages through a wire transfer into the trainee’s account (new)

Promotion of the employment of international students and other foreign nationals in Japan

- Publicize information on the amendment of the public notice on “Designated Activities” in order to increase employment opportunities for international students who have graduated from Japanese universities
- Form and horizontally develop best practices in order to promote diversity in the recruitment process and treatment after hiring suited to the diverse nature of the international students
- Develop guidelines for promotion of appropriate use of internships and publicize information about internships
- Expand the range of work in which international students who have graduated from cooking or confectionery colleges can find jobs

Section 2 Measures of the Immigration Services Agency

1 One-stop consulting counter

Financial assistance through the “subsidies for preparations for an environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals” (referred to below as “subsidies”) is provided for the measures for preparation and expansion of the one-stop consulting counter through which the local governments provide information and advice so that when a foreign national has questions or concerns about various matters related to life such as the residence procedures, employment, medical care, welfare, childbirth, child care or child education, he or she will be able to receive appropriate information or will be able to quickly reach a place that offers advice and consultations.

As of July 2019, there have been applications for subsidies from 95 local governments, all of which have been granted subsidies, and preparations are being made in turn to prepare a one-stop consulting counter. It is expected that the one-stop consulting counter that have received a subsidy will provide appropriate information to the persons seeking advice through consultations offered in numerous languages and through coordination with the relevant organizations.

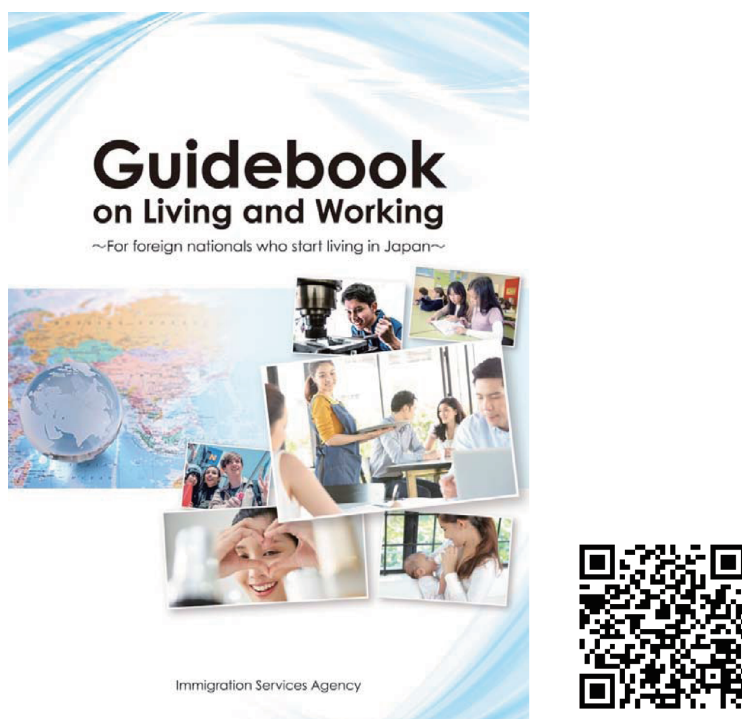
In addition, the relevant local government counters will strive to respond as smoothly as possible to requests from foreign nationals who live in the area of a local government that is not the recipient of subsidies, and therefore, foreign nationals who live in the area of a local government which has not established a one-stop consulting counter will also be able to receive consultation services.



Scene of a one-stop consultation service counter

2 Guidebook on Living and Working

The Immigration Services Agency prepares a cross-government agency “Guidebook on Living and Working” with regard to the basic information necessary for safe and secure living and work (such as residence procedures, labor-related laws, social insurance, crime prevention and traffic safety). In April 2019, the Ministry of Justice started the “Portal Site to Support the Life of Foreign Nationals” on the Ministry of Justice website and released Japanese and English versions and in June of the same year, released a Vietnamese version, and in October of the same year, an “easy Japanese” version was released. In the future, other language versions will be open to the public.



Guidebook on Living and Working

外国人生活支援ポータルサイト

平成31年4月1日



Portal Site to Support the Lives of Foreign Nationals

3 Cooperation with local governments, etc. through Accepting Environmental Coordinator

In April 2019, “Accepting Environmental Coordinator” were assigned to the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus, and officers of the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus are sent to the one-stop consulting counter based on a request from the local government irrespective of whether the local government is granted for subsidies while information and training is provided to the officers of the local governments engaging in consultation services. As well as promoting multicultural coexistence policies in each region through facilitating the establishment of councils for the realization of a harmonious society of coexistence with foreign nationals in each prefecture, useful information such as good practices obtained through efforts by Accepting Environmental coordinator assigned to the Regional Immigration Services Bureaus are given to the local governments.

Chapter 3

Formulation of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control and Residency Management

The Basic Plan for Immigration and Residence Management is a plan formulated by the Minister of Justice, which serves as the basis for the measures on the management of the entry, departure and residence of foreign nationals in accordance with Article 61-10 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in order to ensure equitable management of entry, departure and residence.

The first Basic Plan for Immigration Control was formulated in 1992 followed by the second Basic Plan for Immigration Control in 2000, the third in 2005, the fourth in 2010, and the fifth in 2015. However, the “Basic Plan for Immigration Control” was renamed the “Basic Plan for Immigration and Residence Management” due to the enforcement of the Act to Amend the Immigration Control Act and Related Laws.

Section 1

Outline of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control and Residency Management

1 Background of Formulation of the Basic Plan for Immigration and Residency Management

The Act to Amend the Immigration Control Act and Related Laws, which was enacted in December 2018, clearly states that the Ministry of Justice is to be responsible for the fair management of “the residence of foreign nationals” as well as immigration, and the “Basic Plan for Immigration Control” was also renamed as given above to the “Basic Plan for Immigration and Residence Management”.

In addition, it was necessary to organize the main issues and response policies in light of the renewed system for carrying out immigration control administration such as the establishment of the Immigration Services Agency.

In addition, aiming for the realization of a harmonious society of coexistence with foreign nationals, the Ministry of Justice came to be responsible for general coordination to improve the environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals, and since it was necessary to clarify the basic policy pertaining to execution of this new duty, it was decided that a new basic plan for immigration and residence management would be formulated.

2 Basic Principles of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control and Residency Management

Japan’s economy has been continuing its moderate recovery after bottoming in November 2012. In 2018, the jobs-to-applicants ratio was 1.61 times, the highest level since 1973, and the unemployment rate dropped to 2.4% to a level not seen since 1992, and while the employment situation is improving, there is a growing sense among companies of a labor shortage. Amid such a situation, in Japan, the birthrate is declining rapidly and the population aging.

In addition, the number of foreign nationals visiting Japan has increased rapidly in recent

years, and the number of foreign tourists from other Asian countries has grown significantly, especially against the backdrop of economic growth in the region. Moreover, the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan is expected to continue increasing with the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games to be held in 2020.

Meanwhile, conflicts and terrorism are still occurring in various parts of the world and in some cases Japanese people have fallen victim, and therefore, it is also necessary for Japan to constantly prepare for such threats as terrorism.

Under these circumstances, in order for Japan to be able to achieve steady economic growth, the Japanese government, while absorbing the growth of other Asian countries, has been working on raising productivity through such measures as deregulation, investment in fields where growth is expected, effective utilization of human resources and promotion of innovation. In addition, since one of Japan's appeals is its safety, robust efforts are being made to tackle both domestic and foreign threats, in the aim of having Japan become the world's safest country.

In this kind of situation, with the increase in the number of foreign nationals entering and residing in Japan, the importance of immigration control and residency management administration is increasing, and while responding appropriately and promptly to changes in domestic and foreign situations, there is a need to contribute to the revitalization of Japan's economy and society and to ensure a safe and secure life for people through coordination with government-wide efforts.

Therefore, in this plan, the basic policies of the measures of the immigration control and residency management administration are set out as follows.

- Proactive acceptance of foreign nationals who vitalizing the Japanese economy and society.
- Promote international contribution to developing countries, etc., and promote optimization of the technical intern training program from the perspective of protection of the technical intern trainees.
- Prepare an environment for the realization of a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals who have been accepted by Japan.
- Contributing to the realization of a tourism-oriented country through the implementation of fast and smooth immigration procedures for foreign nationals visiting Japan.
- Reinforcement of strict and proper immigration examinations and residency management and countermeasures against illegal residents ,etc. in order to realize a safe and secure society.
- Promotion of appropriate and prompt asylum for refugees in light of Japan's standing as a member of the international community with regard to the issue of refugees.

Section 2

Major Challenges of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control and Residency Management

Based on the basic policy described in the previous section, the Basic Plan for Immigration and Residency Management lists the following measures ([Reference 80](#)).

1 Smooth Acceptance of Foreign Nationals Vitalizing the Japanese Economy and Society

(1) Acceptance of Human Resources Contributing to Economic Growth

A. Promotion of the Acceptance of Foreign Nationals in Professional and Technical Fields Contributing to Revitalization of the Economy and Society

There is a need to proactively accept foreign nationals in professional and technical fields, who contribute to the revitalization of Japan's economy and society, and continuous efforts will be made to facilitate smooth acceptance by clarifying the operations and reducing the burden of the procedures involved in determining the status of residence.

In addition, when foreign nationals in professional and technical fields are required afresh owing to changes in Japan's economy and society, examination the statuses of residence and landing permission criteria from a broad perspective will be taken, taking into consideration of the impact on the labor market, industry, and people's lives in Japan.

B. Promotion of the Acceptance of Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals

In coordination with the relevant administrative agencies, etc., the Immigration Services Agency will work to promote the acceptance of highly-skilled foreign professionals and work proactively on effective public relations to ensure widespread use of the points system for highly-skilled professionals (see the below mentioned Chapter 4, Section 1).

C. Proper and Smooth Operation of the System for the Acceptance of Specified Skilled Workers

The Immigration Services Agency will implement smooth and appropriate operation of the newly established system for specified skilled workers with the cooperation of the relevant administrative agencies.

Therefore, with the cooperation of the relevant administrative agencies, efforts will be made to accurately and continuously keep track of the situation of the shortage of human resources in the fields of acceptance, the situation of the concentration of foreign nationals in the designated areas, the situation of areas where there is a particularly serious shortage of human resources and the situation of the residence of foreign nationals with the status of residence of "Specified Skilled Workers", and to study the necessary measures from a multifaceted perspective.

In addition, in order to exclude the unscrupulous intermediary business operators in the sending country, bilateral agreements will be prepared and close cooperation built with the government of the sending country.

D. Promotion of Entrepreneurship in Japan

In December 2018, the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry approved a plan relating to a project to promote foreign entrepreneurship activities formulated by the local governments with the aim of further expanding the acceptance of foreign entrepreneurs, and in cases where a foreign national is preparing to launch a business based on the plan, measures will be taken to grant a period of stay of up to one year based on the status of residence of "Designated Activities", and in order to continue to promote the acceptance of foreign entrepreneurs, efforts will be made towards smooth operation of this system.

(2) Promotion of the Appropriate Acceptance of Foreign Students

A. Employment Support for Foreign Students

Measures will be taken to broadly expand the range of work that foreign students who have graduated from or completed a course at a Japanese university or graduate school and have a high level of Japanese proficiency or who have graduated from a professional training college or equivalent educational institution in the “Cool Japan” field will be able to engage in.

B. Optimization of the Japanese Language Educational Institutions

It is necessary for Japanese language educational institutions that accept foreign students to be optimized as educational institutions, for example, by continuously ensuring an appropriate learning environment, and from this perspective, the criteria such as the attendance rate of all of the students and the percentage of foreign nationals staying illegally beyond their authorized period of stay out of all of the students with regard to the criteria for deletion specified in the public notice criteria will be made stricter, and conducting periodic self-inspections on compliance pertaining to conformity with the public notice criteria and reporting its result will be made mandatory.

2 Call for National Debate on the Acceptance of Foreign Nationals in Light of the Declining Birthrate and Aging Population

In response to this age of a declining population, it is necessary to effectively and energetically work on measures in a wide range of fields, such as improving productivity and utilizing the potential labor force of women, young people and the elderly, and to conduct a review on ways of accepting foreign nationals based on the premise that these measures will be carried out.

In areas where a need arises for new human resources, if it is a field that can be evaluated as a specialized or technical field, it is necessary to consider the acceptance of foreign nationals taking into account the impact on industry and other factors.

Regarding the acceptance of foreign nationals in fields that are not evaluated as specialized and technical fields, it is essential to conduct a review from a wide range of viewpoints, and this review must be conducted based on a national consensus.

Regarding future acceptance of foreign nationals, as well as understanding the systems and circumstances of other countries and proactively listening to the voices of the citizens, there is a need to take into account the situation of operation of the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” created for the purpose of dealing with the labor shortages and to conduct a broad government-wide review, and the Ministry of Justice will respond appropriately from the perspective of carrying out immigration and residence administration and making overall adjustments to the environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals.

3 Efforts toward Optimization of the Program of Technical Intern Training

Measures will be appropriately implemented and the program of technical intern training further optimized in order to protect the technical intern trainees and manage and supervise the supervising organizations and implementing organizations based on the provisions of the Technical Intern Training Act, including efforts to promote the preparation of bilateral agreements and strengthen operations, strengthen support and protection for technical intern trainees and strengthen the state of implementation of examinations and on-site inspections with the cooperation of the relevant agencies.

4 Efforts for Acceptance of Foreign Nationals and Harmonious Coexistence

(1) Measures for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals

With regard to the comprehensive measures, efforts will be made to promote the steady implementation of the related measures with the cooperation of the relevant administrative agencies, local governments, and even the private sector, and accurate monitoring and follow-ups will be conducted on the situation of implementation. In particular, measures will be proactively taken in order to collaborate with the local governments, such as listening to opinions and providing information related to improving the environment of acceptance of foreign nationals with the officer in charge of coordinating an environment of acceptance assigned to the regional immigration and residence bureau acting as the contact point.

In addition, in order to contribute to the government's overall review of ways to implement comprehensive measures, efforts will be made to understand the situation of implementation of each related measure, to listen to the voices of the Japanese people and foreign nationals, and to keep track of information on domestic and foreign situations that may affect the implementation of the related measures, and this information will be shared with the relevant administrative agencies.

(2) Accurate Operation of the Residency Management System and Strengthening of the Residency Management Base

The current residency management system is indispensable in order for the municipal governments to be able to smoothly provide the residents' services through information linkage with the Residential Basic Book system, and since it also has great significance from the perspective of realizing a harmonious society of coexistence with foreign nationals, efforts will be made to continue to ensure its proper operation.

In the future, since the acceptance of foreign human resources is likely to expand, and the scope and mode of activities in Japan will become broader and more diverse, efforts will be made to strengthen the ability to collect and analyze information from both the aspects of system and human resource development in order to accurately and reliably grasp the residence situation and work situation of foreign nationals and information relating to the affiliated organizations, and to conduct residency management based on such information.

In order to conduct accurate residency management, addition of the residence card number to the items of information on the Notified Foreign National Employment Status that the employer reports to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and by receiving information on the Notified Foreign National Employment Status including this number, measures will be promoted for appropriate information collaboration with the relevant administrative agencies such as more accurate matching with the information that the Ministry of Justice possesses.

5 Efforts to Realize a Tourism-Oriented Country

(1) Promotion of the Deployment of Bio Carts

Regarding the Bio Carts, on account of the time spent waiting in line for an examination and the number of visitors coming to Japan, developments will be promoted according to the need not only at the airports but also at the seaports.

(2) Promotion of the Deployment of Facial Recognition Automated Gates

The facial recognition automated gates that are already being used in the departure and return procedures for Japanese nationals will also be used in the departure procedures for foreign nationals who have entered Japan for the purpose of sightseeing, etc. to further improve the efficiency in the immigration procedures, and to promote the deployment of the facial recognition automated gates as needed based on the situation of congestion in the examination hall.

(3) Responses to the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games

As well as making effective use of such devices as the Bio Carts and the facial recognition automated gates, efforts will be made for implementation of smooth and prompt immigration procedures through the flexible allocation of staff.

In addition, efforts will be made to collect and analyze information with the cooperation of the domestic and overseas related organizations, to share the necessary information with the examination sites in a reliable and prompt manner, and also to take border measures such as thorough countermeasures against terrorism at the sites through closer cooperation with the relevant administrative agencies.

(4) Facilitation of the Immigration Examination Procedures Pertaining to Foreign Visitors Passengers on Cruise Ships

Efforts are being made to speed up the immigration procedures for cruise ship passengers through operation of the system for landing permission for cruise ship tourists introduced in January 2015, and as well as working on smooth operation for the expected increase in the number of cruise passengers, a study is being conducted on further facilitation of measures such as on-board inspections on foreign vessels on the high seas.

(5) Other Efforts Approaches Contributing to the Realization of a Tourism-Oriented Country

A review will be conducted to continue to examine the expansion of the individuals eligible to use the automated gates, the digitalization of the immigration record cards and certificates of eligibility and the introduction of a structure to prevent travel through pre-screening in the country of departure aimed at the realization of a tourism-oriented country.

6 Promotion of Countermeasures at the Port of Entry and Countermeasures, etc. against Illegal Residents toward the Realization of a Safe and Secure Society

(1) Implementation of Strict Immigration Examinations and Other Countermeasures at the Port of Entry for the Purpose of Preventing the Entry of Terrorists and Other Suspect Persons

A. Promotion of Effective Operation of Landing Examinations That Utilize Biometric Information

Going forward, efforts will be made to continue to promote effective operation of the system such as by obtaining personal identification information related to foreign nationals who are not welcome in Japan such as terrorists and other suspect persons with the cooperation of the relevant organizations and while realizing smooth entry procedures using state-of-the-art technology, efforts will be made to prevent terrorists from entering the country at the border through even stricter entry examinations.

B. Reinforcement of Countermeasures at the Port of Entry Utilizing Information in Cooperation with the Relevant Organizations

By analyzing such information as the PNRs provided by the airlines, measures are being taken to identify suspect persons before they enter the country and to take measures to prevent their entry, and while strengthening the utilization of such information, smooth and prompt entry examinations will be conducted for foreign nationals who do not pose a problem.

Furthermore, by using ICPO's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents database search system, the entry of terrorists who attempt to use lost or stolen passports will be reliably prevented at the border.

C. Reinforcement of Measures against Foreign Nationals Attempting to Illegally Enter Japan through the Use of Patrols

The Immigration Services Agency takes border measures such as detecting stowaways through such means as a mobile team composed of immigration control officers patrolling the seaports and coastal areas, and will continue to strive to maintain the security of Japan while strengthening cooperation with the relevant organizations such as the Japan Coast Guard, the police and customs.

In addition, immigration control officers board the patrol vessels of the Japan Coast Guard in order to prevent illegal landing on the Senkaku Islands, and in the future, we will continue to work with the relevant agencies to protect Japan's territorial sovereignty.

(2) Promotion of Countermeasures against Foreign Nationals Illegally Residing or Posing as Legitimate Residents in Japan

A. Implementation of Proactive Detection

In order to secure various measures for the realization of a tourism-oriented country, we will continue to accurately ascertain the origins of the foreign nationals staying illegally in Japan from various kinds of information and implement effective detection.

B. Reinforcement of Countermeasures against Imposter Residents

Countermeasures against imposter residents will be strongly promoted in cases of identifying foreign nationals who come under the deportation procedures and procedures for revocation of the status of residence through proactively exercising the authority of the immigration inspectors and immigration control officers to investigate the facts, such as by promptly executing these procedures.

Furthermore, with regard to countermeasures against the forgery or alteration of residence cards, we will further strengthen the publicity activities and other initiatives related to methods of determining whether a residence card is fake or not.

C. Reinforcement of Coordination with the Relevant Organizations

If the origin of a criminal act is detected in the process of an investigation by the regional immigration and residence bureau, measures will be taken to deal strictly with these criminal acts such as proactively using accusations and reports to the investigating agencies such as the police.

In addition, since there are cases where foreign nationals illegally transfer their bank accounts to other people or where these accounts are otherwise used in crimes, with the cooperation of the relevant organizations, we will endeavor to raise awareness by warning

foreign nationals and related parties, and will also conduct a review relating to preventive measures from the perspective of robustly preventing crimes.

D. Responses to So-called Deportation Evaders

It is necessary to realize safe and reliable deportation for those individuals who evade deportation and refuse to comply with deportation, and therefore deportation is being enforced through such means as group deportation using charter flights implemented from 2013, deportation using security personnel and priority deportation based on the circumstances of the person subject to deportation.

E. Implementation of Appropriate Treatment of Detainees and Prompt Deportation

In response to the opinions of the Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee, instructions or advice are immediately sought from health care professionals regarding the necessity of a foreign national being taken to an outside hospital in the event of a foreign national being in poor physical condition and improvements have been made such as fully prohibiting smoking in the detention facilities etc. in order to prevent the effects of second-hand smoke, and we will continue to strive to improve the treatment of the foreign nationals being detained taking into account the opinions of the committee.

(3) Reinforcement of the Intelligence-Gathering Functions of Immigration Control and Residency Management

As well as collecting and analyzing a broad range of information from domestic and overseas related organizations, etc. that may be useful for the execution of immigration control administration, efforts will be made to train officers with high information utilization capabilities and to ensure that they are able to analyze diverse information in order to strengthen the intelligence functions of the entire organization.

(4) Appropriate Operation of Special Permission to Stay

In the future, we will continue to work on proper operation of special permission to stay in Japan, and will appropriately publicize information on special permission to stay in Japan from the viewpoint of promoting the appearance of illegal residents.

In addition, we will consider revising the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan” as necessary, taking into account various situations inside and outside the country.

7 Promotion of Appropriate and Prompt Refugees Protection

(1) Efforts for Prompt and Reliable Protection for Those who are Truly in Need of Asylum

In order to ensure the quick and reliable protection of those who really need asylum, we will continue to clarify the scope of protection and work to further improve the quality of the examinations, and moreover, clearly distinguish between those who are truly in need of asylum and those who are not, and carry out appropriate and prompt case processing according to the contents of the case.

Based on the effects of these measures, with regard to measures to suppress the number of applications which particularly attempt to abuse or misuse the system, as a further measure,

further review will be conducted of the legal system and operational aspects such as imposing restrictions on the grounds for re-submission of applications and establishing certain exceptions to the effect of suspension of deportation with regard to unscrupulous illegal residents who attempt to evade deportation by repeatedly applying for refugee recognition.

(2) Acceptance of Refugees through Resettlement

While proactively participating in the discussions of the “Study Group on Expansion of the Project for the Acceptance of Refugees through Third-Country Resettlement”, we will continue to promote smooth acceptance with the cooperation of the relevant agencies based on the results of the study.

8

Examination of the Granting of Permission for Permanent Residence

In the deliberations of the Legal Affairs Committee of the House of Councilors pertaining to the Act to Amend the Immigration Control Act and Related Laws, which was enacted in December 2018, a supplementary resolution was passed that applications for permanent residence should be strictly examined. With a view to conducting a review two years later based on the supplementary provisions of the Act to Amend the Immigration Control Act and Other Laws, we will consider how to move forward with the status of residence of “Permanent Resident” that has no restrictions on the activities of residence and no restrictions on the period of stay.

Reference 80 Basic policies and countermeasures in the Basic Plan for Immigration and Residency Management (future policies)

Basic Policies

- Proactive acceptance of foreign nationals who vitalizing the Japanese economy and society.
 - Promote international contribution to developing countries, etc., and promote optimization of the technical intern training program from the perspective of protection of the technical intern trainees.
 - Prepare an environment for the realization of a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals who have been accepted by Japan.
 - Contributing to the realization of a tourism-oriented country through the implementation of fast and smooth immigration procedures for foreign nationals visiting Japan
 - Reinforcement of strict and proper immigration examinations and residency management and countermeasures against illegal residents etc., in order to realize a safe and secure society.
 - Promotion of appropriate and prompt asylum for refugees in light of Japan's standing as a member of the international community with regard to the issue of refugees
- The above six points form the basic policies, and the necessary measures will continuously be developed while also ensuring sufficient consideration is paid to the human rights of foreign nationals throughout all of the measures.

Countermeasures (Future Policies)

1 Smooth Acceptance of Foreign Nationals Vitalizing the Japanese Economy and Society

- **Promotion of the acceptance of foreign nationals in specialized and technical fields** (clarification of the operations, reduction in the burden of the procedures)
- **Promotion of the acceptance of highly-skilled foreign professionals** (cooperation with the relevant administrative agencies, proactive public relations)
- **Proper and smooth operation of the system for acceptance of foreign nationals with the status of residence of "Specified Skilled Worker"** (with the collaboration of the relevant administrative agencies, accurate and continuous understanding of the situation of residence and the situation of labor shortages, etc., collection and analysis of information such as from notifications, implementation of investigations and guidance by immigration inspectors and others, cooperation with the government of the sending country using a bilateral agreement to exclude unscrupulous brokers, etc., establishment of a mechanism to support foreign workers, promotion of payment of social insurance and tax payment obligations, preparations for review based on the provisions of Article 18, paragraph (2) of the Supplementary Provisions of the Act to Amend the Immigration Control Act and Related Laws, etc.)
- **Promotion of entrepreneurship in Japan** (smooth operation of the system to promote the facilitation of acceptance of entrepreneurs)
- **Employment support for foreign students** (expansion of the range of work in which university graduates can find employment, employment in the "Cool Japan" field, etc.)
- **Optimization of the Japanese language education institutions** (stricter criteria on deletion from the public notice, mandatory periodic inspections and reports, information exchange with foreign governments to exclude unscrupulous brokers, obligation of reporting or announcing the results of Japanese language proficiency tests, review of criteria pertaining to judgments on appropriateness, review of documents submitted for the residence application, etc.)

2 Call for National Debate on the Acceptance of Foreign Nationals in Light of the Declining Birthrate and Aging Population

- In terms of the acceptance of foreign nationals, it is necessary to work effectively and vigorously on measures in a wide range of fields, such as improving productivity and utilizing the potential labor force of women, young people and elderly people and therefore, consideration will be given on the premise that such efforts will be made.
- If the field where a need for new human resources arises can be evaluated as a specialized or technical field, consideration will be given to the impact on the industry
- Consideration to be given to the acceptance of foreign nationals in other fields based on a national consensus from wide ranging perspectives, including social costs, the impact on overall employment and the impact on the industrial structure
- Regarding the acceptance of foreign nationals in the future, it is necessary to conduct a broad government-wide review taking into account the situation of operation of the status of residence of "Specified Skilled Worker" as a countermeasure for labor shortages

3 Efforts toward Optimization of the Program of Technical Intern Training

- **Promotion of the preparation and operations of bilateral agreement** (exclusion of improper sending organizations through notifications to the sending country and necessary responses taken on receipt of notifications of misconduct pertaining to the implementing organization, etc.)
- **Reinforcement of support and protection for technical intern trainees** (dissemination of information on the support mechanisms for technical intern trainees such as native language consultations conducted by the Organization for Technical Intern Training, and enhancement of measures to prevent the disappearance of the technical intern trainees starting with consultations and to correct misconduct.
- **Reinforcement of the conditions of implementation such as examinations and on-site inspections in cooperation with the relevant organizations** (strengthening of the initial response when receiving notification of the disappearance of a technical intern trainee, investigation into the cause by promptly conducting an on-site investigation, rigorous responses to misconduct, thorough implementation of examinations and on-site inspections, strict operation such as revocation of the license of the supervising organization and revocation of accreditation of the technical intern training plan, and implementation of complex and multi-layered measures including responses based on laws and regulations other than the Technical Intern Training Act)

4 Efforts for Acceptance of Foreign Nationals and Harmonious Coexistence

- **Promotion of the "Comprehensive Measures for the Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals"** (steady implementation] of related measures, accurate understanding and follow-up of the situation of implementation, collaboration with the local governments with the Accepting Environmental Coordinator acting as contact point, listening to the voices of the citizens and the foreign nationals and sharing this information with the relevant administrative agencies and proactive dissemination of information)
- **Accurate operation of the residency management system and strengthening of the residency management base** (information linkage with the Basic Resident Registration system, enhancement of information collection and analysis capabilities, use of the residence card number for appropriate information linkage with the relevant administrative agencies such as crosschecking with the information in the notifications on the situation of employment of foreign nationals, and increased convenience through the use of online application procedures, etc.)

5 Efforts to Realize a Tourism-Oriented Country

- **Implementation of greater efficiency in the examination work through utilizing the latest technology** (expansion of implementation of Bio Carts at the airport and seaports, utilization of facial recognition gates in the departure procedures for foreign nationals)
- **Responses to the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games** (implementation of smooth and prompt immigration procedures through the use of equipment such as Bio Carts and flexible all location of staff, thorough counter-terrorism measures at the border with the cooperation of the relevant administrative agencies, etc.)
- **Facilitation of the immigration examination procedures pertaining to foreign visitors passengers on cruise ships** (smooth operation of the system of landing permission for cruise ship tourists, etc.)
- **Other efforts approaches contributing to the realization of a tourism-oriented country** (expansion of examinations using the automated gates, digitization of the immigration record cards and certificates of eligibility, pre-screening in the country of departure, consideration of pre-clearance at the airports at the point of departure, promotion of travel insurance coverage, stricter entry examinations for non-payment of medical expenses, etc.)

6 Promotion of Countermeasures at the Port of Entry toward the Realization of a Safe and Secure Society and Countermeasures etc., against Illegal Residents

- **Implementation of border measures such as strict immigration examinations** (effective operation of landing examinations using personal identification information, utilization of information (PNRs, etc.) in cooperation with the relevant organizations, utilization of Interpol's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents database search system, coastal patrols, etc.)
- **Promotion of measures against illegal residents and imposter residents** (proactive detection, utilization of a variety of information including information in the notification on the situation of employment of foreign nationals, strengthening of countermeasures against forged and altered residence cards, strengthening of cooperation with the relevant organizations, implementation of effective deportation of those attempting to evade deportation, improvement of treatment based on the opinions of the visiting committee, avoidance of long-term detention by utilizing the provisional release system when humanitarian consideration is necessary, counseling for the detainees, etc.)
- **Strengthening of the intelligence functions related to immigration and residence management** (promotion of information analysis led by the "Immigration Control Intelligence Center", training of staff, etc.)
- **Appropriate operation of special permission to stay**

7 Promotion of Appropriate and Prompt Refugees Protection

- **Efforts for prompt and reliable protection for those who are truly in need of asylum** (clarification of the subjects of protection through accurate interpretation of applicability as a refugee, examination of clarification of special permission to stay as an opportunity to get under shelter, examination of the presence of a representative or other person at the time of an interview of a vulnerable applicant, and further measures based on the effects of measures to prevent abuse and misuse of the system (restrictions on reasons for reapplication, exceptions to the effect of suspension of deportation, etc.))
- **Acceptance of refugees through resettlement**

8 Others

- **Development of the immigration control and residency management system, human resource development of the officers, further promotion of international cooperation, consideration for victims of trafficking in persons, review of the granting of permission for permanent residence**

Chapter 4

Acceptance of Foreign Nationals and Immigration Control and Residency Management Administration

Section 1

Promotion of the Acceptance of Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals

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

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

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

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

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

The new statuses of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)” and “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” established by the 2014 Amendment Act are both limited to foreign nationals who meet the criteria prescribed in the Ordinance of the Ministry of Justice, and in response, the Ordinance to Provide for the Criteria in the Right-Hand Column Corresponding to “Highly-Skilled foreign 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 foreign 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^(*1).
- D. Permission for the parent(s) to accompany the highly-skilled foreign professional to Japan under certain conditions^(*2).
- E. Relaxation of requirements for permanent residence
- F. Permission for a domestic worker to accompany the highly-skilled foreign professional to Japan under certain conditions^(*3).
- G. Preferential processing of entry and residence procedures

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

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

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

(*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.

treatment which is not accorded to “Permanent Resident” such as allowing parents or a domestic worker to accompany the highly-skilled foreign professional.

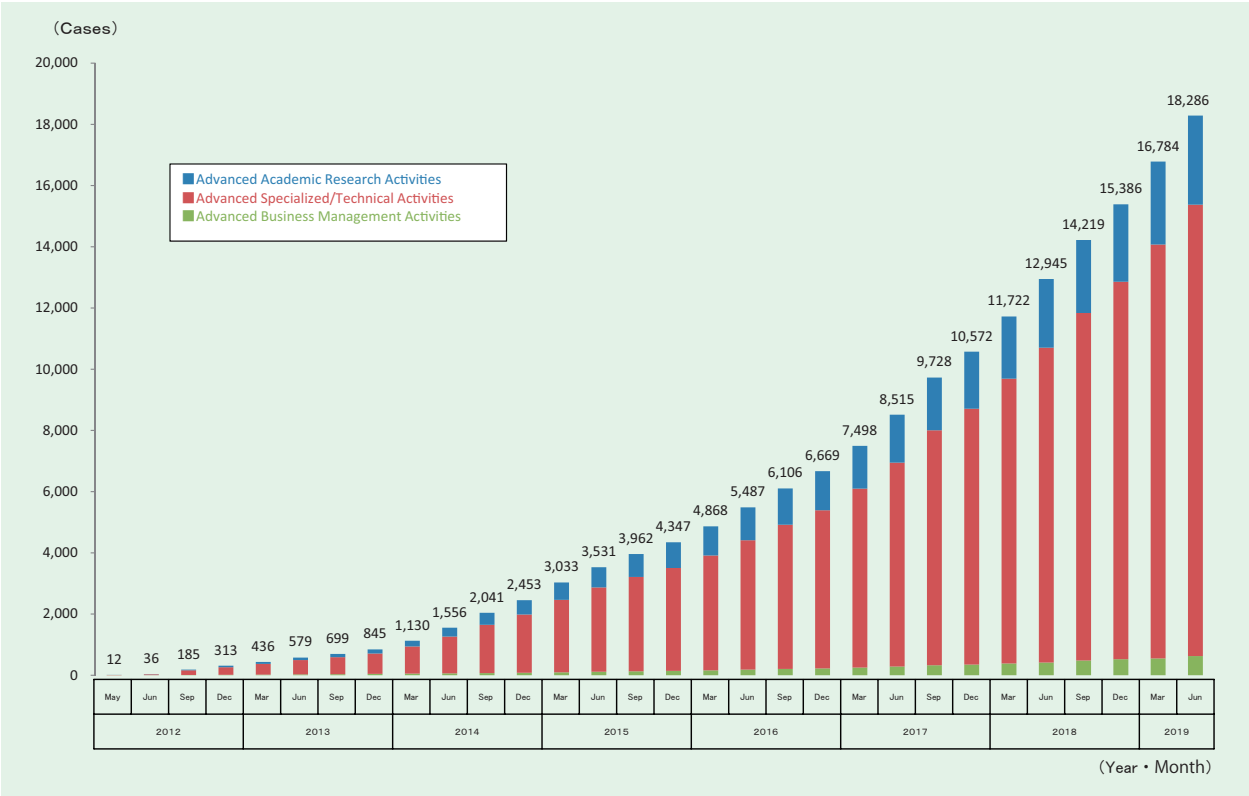
3

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 by the end of 2020, and 20,000 highly-skilled foreign professionals by the end of 2022 cumulatively. By the end of June 2019, 18,286 foreign nationals were recognized as highly-skilled foreign professionals since the start of the system ([Reference 81](#)).

Reference 81

Changes in the number of cases of recognition (cumulative) through the points-based system for highly-skilled foreign professionals



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

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

Based on this, the residence period required in the applications for permanent residence of highly-skilled foreign professionals was reduced from the previous five years to three years (to one year for professionals with particularly high skills (where the total number of points is 80 points or more)), additional points categories were added, and the operations for these commenced in April 2017, the number of cases of permission for permanent residence through the operations granted up until end of March 2019 was 2,434 cases.

Section 2

Acceptance of Foreign Nationals in the National Strategic Special Zones

1 Entrepreneurs

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

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

As of July 2019, operations for the project have commenced in the Tokyo Area National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: all of Tokyo metropolitan area and all of Kanagawa prefecture), the Fukuoka-Kitakyushu National Strategic Special Zone (all of Fukuoka city and all of Kitakyushu city), the Niigata National Strategic Special Zone (all of Niigata city), the Hiroshima prefecture-Imabari National Strategic Special Zone (all of Hiroshima Prefecture and all of Imabari city), the Sendai National Strategic Special Zone (all of Sendai city) and the Aichi Prefecture National Strategic Special Zone (all of Aichi Prefecture).

2 Foreigners Conducting Housekeeping Services

The “Project to Accept Foreigners Conducting Housekeeping Services in National Strategic Special Zones” that the activities of domestic workers (foreigner conducting housekeeping services) 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 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, Labor 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 2019, operations for the project have commenced in the Tokyo Area National Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: all of Tokyo metropolitan area and all of Kanagawa prefecture and all of Chiba city), the Kansai Area National Strategic Special Zone (all of Osaka city, all of Toyonaka city, all of Ikeda city, all of Minoh city and all of Hyogo prefecture) and the Aichi Prefecture National Strategic Special Zone (all of Aichi prefecture).

3 Foreigners Conducting Agricultural Works

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

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

As of July 2019, operations for the project have commenced in the Kansai Area National

Strategic Special Zone (project implementation area: all of Kyoto), the Niigata National Strategic Special Zone (all of Niigata city), the Aichi Prefecture National Strategic Special Zone (all of Aichi prefecture), and the Okinawa National Strategic Special Zone (all of Okinawa prefecture).

In addition, a decision was made at the Advisory Council on National Strategic Special Zones on June 11, 2019 that the project would be transferred to the system of specified skilled workers in stages in light of the fact that agriculture was positioned as a designated industrial field, and in cases of new acceptance of foreign nationals supporting agriculture, efforts would be made to have such foreign workers enter Japan by March 31, 2020.

4 Foreigners Supporting Overseas Demand Development

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

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

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. Hereinafter referred to as “Construction notification”), 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. Hereinafter referred to as “Shipbuilding notification”), 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.

In October 2017, in response to the “Future Investment Strategy 2017” (Cabinet decision of June 9, 2017) stating to the effect that, “With regard to the construction field, in light of the purpose of the program which is to take all possible measures to ensure the success of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, review the operations to further enhance the construction system, and review the operations as well in the shipbuilding field”, as well as the enforcement of Technical Intern Training Act on November 1, 2017, making the acceptance of technical intern trainees (iii) possible, the construction notice and shipbuilding notice were revised, and the acceptance period based on these acceptance projects was extended to the end of FY 2022, and in principle, a period of return home is required of one month or more after the completion of “technical intern training (ii)” and before the start of the designated activities, and of one year or more after the completion of “technical intern training (iii)” and before the start of the designated activities (one month or more in cases of having gone back to the home country for one year or more after the completion of technical intern training (ii) and before the start of technical intern training (iii)), and the employment period, in principle, is for a maximum of two years (in cases of returning to the home country for one year or more after completion of technical intern training (ii), or in cases of completing technical intern training (iii), a maximum of three years).

2 Work from a fashion design educational institutions

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

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

With regard to fourth-generation foreign nationals of Japanese descent, only unmarried minors who are natural children supported by a third-generation foreign national of Japanese descent residing in Japan with the status of residence of “Long-Term Resident” were permitted to enter or reside in Japan, but following the deliberations at the National Diet, in February 2017, Prime Minister Abe asked Minister of Justice Kaneda to consider further acceptance of fourth-generation foreign nationals of Japanese descent. In response, a system was established for the purpose of promoting understanding of and interest in Japan through the acceptance of young fourth-generation foreign nationals of Japanese descent and activities to have them learn about Japanese culture, and thereby, to develop human resources acting as a bridge to strengthen the connections between Japan and Japanese societies abroad, that became effective from July 2018.

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

4 Online residence procedures

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

Based on the above, a staff member of the organization of affiliation which meets certain requirements and an attorney or certified administrative procedures legal specialist who has been appointed by the organization of affiliation is able to submit an application online for permission for extension of period of stay, and an application for re-entry permission and application for permission to engage in an activity other than that permitted under the status of residence previously granted to be submitted at the same time as the application for

extension of period of stay based on a request from the applicant (the acceptance of requests for use commenced in March 2019, and the acceptance of applications commenced in July of the same year). Consideration is being given to expansion of online coverage regarding the kind of applications and type of statuses of residence.

5 Promotion of the Acceptance of foreign entrepreneurs

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

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

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

6 Promotion of the Appropriate Acceptance of Foreign Students

(1) Employment Support for Foreign Students

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

Therefore, in order to promote the settlement of excellent foreign human resources and expand opportunities for employment in Japan for the foreign students who are expected to contribute to revitalize the Japanese economy and society, the public notice on the status of residence of “Designated Activities” was amended, promulgated and enforced on May 30, 2019. Accordingly, foreign students who have graduated from a Japanese university or graduate school are permitted to work in a wide range when they engage in the work that anticipated to make use of the knowledge and applied skills that they acquired at a Japanese university or graduate school, and Japanese language skills under certain conditions such as requiring a high level of Japanese language skill such as the Japanese Language Proficiency Test N1 level, being a full-time employee, and receiving remuneration equivalent to or more than that a Japanese national would receive for the same work.

(2) Optimization of the Japanese Language Educational Institutions

Since Japanese language educational institutions that accept foreign students need to be optimized as educational institutions which steadily provide an appropriate learning environment, the public notice criteria for the Japanese language educational institutions were partially amended, introducing stricter criteria such as for the attendance rate of all students or for the proportion of foreign nationals staying illegally beyond their authorized period of stay to all of the students, etc. pertaining to deletion from the public notice, as well as making it obligation to report the results of periodic self-inspections in terms of conformity with the public notice criteria and the results of the exams pertaining to Japanese language proficiency. These amendments entered into force on September 1, 2019.

7 Revision of the “Guidelines for Permission for Permanent Residence”

Pursuant to the Act to Amend the Immigration Control Act and Related Laws, which was enacted at the 197th Diet (extraordinary session), the status of residence of “Specific Skilled Worker” was newly established on April 1, 2019, and the “Guidelines for Permission for Permanent Residence” were revised on May 31, 2019 with the aim of clearly stating the handling of the status of residence and clarifying the contents of the guidelines.

Specifically, of the 10 years or more of the period of stay in Japan stipulated as a requirement for residence, “Technical Intern Training” and “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” are clearly stated not to be included in the statuses of residence which are recognized as having a period of stay of five years or more based on the work qualification or residence qualification, and with regard to public duties, proper fulfillment of the payment of taxes, public pension contribution and public health insurance contribution as well as notification in accordance with the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act are clearly stated.

Chapter 5

The status of operation of the technical intern training program

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

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

Section 1 Status of Expansion of the Program

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

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

2 Expansion of the job categories

Under the program, a number of skills-transfer job categories such as the category of nursing care (nursing care work) have been added when needed (80 job categories, 144 selective works as of April 25, 2019). In addition, airport ground handling (aircraft ground support work) was added to the skills-transfer job categories / selective work as an enterprise-specific job category utilizing internal testing in the individual-enterprise-type technical intern training.

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

1 Business councils

The minister with jurisdiction over the business may form a business council consisting of the related organizations for each industry for the purpose of connecting to optimization of the technical intern training in the relevant business field through sharing information on problematic cases and reviewing the voluntary standards. Therefore the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries established and convened the Fisheries Technical Intern Training Business Council on December 13, 2017 and the Agricultural Training Intern

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

2 Regional councils

The issues and concerns of the technical intern training program differ depending on the region where technical intern trainees are being accepted, and the organizations of the national government and prefectural governments, and the Organization for Technical Intern Training collaborate with each other and hold regional councils divided into eight blocs (Hokkaido, Tohoku, Kanto, Chubu, Kansai, Chugoku, Shikoku, and Kyushu) in order to promote information-sharing at a regional level of the measures aimed at securing proper technical intern training, and during June and July, 2018, the regional council was established and held in each bloc for the first time where information-sharing and discussions on efforts towards the securing of proper technical intern training were conducted in each region. From June to July 2019, each second regional conference was held, and information was shared with each region.



Scene of a regional council

3 Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC)

Memorandum of Cooperation with the government of the sending country have been entered into with 14 countries (Vietnam, Cambodia, India, the Philippines, Laos, Mongolia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bhutan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Thailand and Indonesia) at the time of June 2019 with the aim of securing proper sending organizations. In addition, the Ministry of Justice, based on the same agreements has been striving to give out thorough information on the purpose of the programme of technical intern training and to foster understanding, and has made requests for the securing of proper sending organizations by holding opinion exchanges with the government of the sending countries and has also been

attending seminars on explanations on the programme in the partner country together with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Organization, and the Organization for Technical Intern Training.



Scenery of opinion exchange based on a bilateral agreement

4 Protection of the technical intern trainees

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

In addition, in cases where it has become difficult to continue with the technical intern training at the training site due to the business problems of the accepting enterprise or various circumstances such as acts of violation of human rights, but where the technical intern trainee wishes to continue with the technical intern training, it is possible for the technical intern trainee to change the training site, and in relation to this, the Organization for Technical Intern Training provides various kinds of support such as giving advice and counseling in response to consultations from the technical intern trainees, introducing training sites to which the trainee will be able to transfer through the establishment of a website to provide support to change the training site for supervising organizations, and also providing temporary housing facilities for

those technical intern trainees for whom it has become difficult to stay in the housing facilities secured by the supervising organization, etc.

5 Establishment of the “Project Team on Operation of the Technical Intern Training Program”

On November 16, 2018, under the direction of the Minister of Justice Yamashita Takashi (at that time), a “Project Team on Operation of the Technical Intern Training Program”, chaired by Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Justice Kadoyama Hiroaki (at that time), was established and it verified the state of enforcement of the Act on Technical Intern Training, and conducted a review of improvement measures for operation of the program.

Specifically, on-site investigations of the organizations implementing the technical intern training of technical intern trainees who had disappeared, investigations of cases of death, examination of the interview sheets including a review of the interview sheets pertaining to missing technical intern trainees, a verification of the operational status of the new program and a review of the improvement measures for operation of the program were conducted, and on March 29, 2019, a report on the results of these investigations and examinations was published.

Of the measures for improving operations shown in the report, the main ones are as outlined below.

○ Strengthening of initial responses to cases of disappearance and death

The Organization for Technical Intern Training or Regional Immigration Services Bureaus will promptly conduct on-site inspections after an incident occurs, and strengthen the initial response such as confirming and preserving evidence on the wages etc. of the technical intern trainees.

○ Review of the format of the interview sheets

The format of the interview sheets for technical intern trainees who have disappeared will be improved, sufficient interview items set, and a specialized immigration inspector will conduct the interview.

○ Amendment of the relevant ministerial ordinances

Based on the Ordinance of the Ministry of Justice for the system of specified skilled workers, even in the technical intern training program, the ministerial ordinances are to be amended aimed at introducing such measures as suspending the acceptance of new technical intern trainees for a certain period when the implementing organization has been causing disappearances and measures to require remuneration payments to be made in a way where the actual payment can be confirmed such as wire transfer to a bank account.

Chapter 6

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

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

The number of foreign visitors to Japan in 2018 reached approximately 31.19 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 Services Agency has been working to reconcile the seemingly conflicting goals of smooth and strict examinations through the implementation of examinations with a focus on important points.

Section 1

Efforts to Promote a Tourism-Oriented Country

1 Introduction of Bio Carts

Regarding the waiting time for immigration examinations, in the “Tourism Vision Realization Program 2018” (2018 Action Program for Realization of the Tourism Vision) (decision of the Ministerial Conference for the Promotion of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country of June 2018) as with the previous year, the Immigration Services Agency has been aiming to realize the goal of reducing the waiting time for an immigration examination at the airport to within 20 minutes, and as one of the measures to reduce the waiting time, devices to acquire Biometric information (fingerprints and a facial photograph) utilizing the time spent waiting in line for a landing examination, so-called Bio Carts, were introduced at Kansai, Takamatsu and Naha airports in October 2016 where it was thought they would be particularly effective in reducing the waiting time for an examination.

Bio Carts help to simplify the procedures at the landing examination booth through acquiring the Biometric information of applicants for a landing examination, which usually is collected by the immigration inspector at the landing examination booth, utilizing the time normally spent waiting in line by means of specialized devices which differ from the examination equipment, and aims to expedite the immigration procedures of foreign travelers, and they were introduced at 12 airports including Narita Airport in April 2017, and at Kitakyushu and Oita Airport in May 2018 for further promotion of smooth examinations.



Use of Bio Carts

2 Automated Gates

(1) Promotion of Use of the Automated Gates

Japanese nationals and foreign nationals satisfying certain requirements (in possession of re-entry permission, etc.), who have registered in advance as users of the automated gates, are able to undergo the immigration procedures using the automated gates without 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 and Kansai Airport in September 2009 and were additionally installed at Haneda Airport in October 2010. As of the end of FY 2018, 70 automated gates had been installed throughout the country.

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

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



Automated Gates

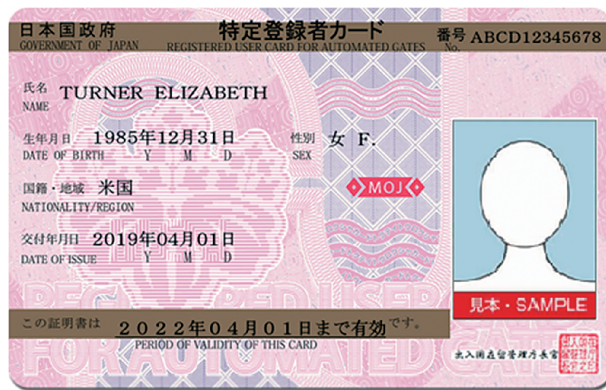


On-site registration using a mobile device to register as a user of the automated gates

(2) Trusted Traveler Program

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

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



Front of Registered User Card



Back of Registered User Card

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

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

The Immigration Services Agency conducted a trial test of examinations utilizing facial recognition technology in 2014, and the evaluation of the “Committee for Evaluation of Facial Recognition Technology in the Immigration Examinations” composed of outside experts was that from the perspective of technology “there is sufficient possibility of utilizing facial recognition technology in the departure and return examinations of Japanese nationals”.

After necessary reviews facial recognition automated gates were developed in the two years of FY 2016 and FY 2017, and advance operations of the facial recognition automated gates in the return confirmation procedures for Japanese nationals commenced at Haneda Airport on October 18, 2017.

In addition, during 2018, the facial recognition automated gates were introduced on a full-scale in the landing and departure examination areas of Narita, Haneda, Chubu, Kansai and Fukuoka Airport, and are being operated in the departure and return procedures for Japanese nationals.



Using the facial recognition automated gates

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

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

3 Response to Cruise Ship Passengers

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

Also, from January 1, 2015, operation of the system of landing permission for cruise ship tourists that allows foreign passengers on cruise ships designated by the Commissioner of the Immigration Services Agency to undergo simplified procedures commenced and guidance for

cruise ship companies has been strengthened, and in addition, strict yet smooth examinations are being conducted through implementing on-board examinations on cruise ships on the open seas with the consent of the country of registration. In 2015, the number of applications for landing permission for cruise ship tourists was approximately 1.07 million, approximately 1.94 million in 2016, approximately 2.45 million in 2017, and approximately 2.33 million in 2018, showing a steady increase over the past few years.



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 landing examination respectively at the same time.



Newly-arranged examination booth

5 Revision of the method of measuring the waiting time for an examination, and announcement of the waiting times for the examination

The waiting time for an immigration examination is measured at each airport (by terminal and examination areas), by distributing a survey form to the last foreign tourist in the immigration waiting queue every 30 minutes, and when this person reaches the immigration examination booth, the survey form is collected and the time is measured. Through these measurements, the longest waiting time for an examination on the day was set as the longest examination waiting time at the airport, and then the average time per month was calculated, but in the past, there were no proactive or regular announcements of the longest waiting time for an immigration examination.

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

(http://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri07_00117.html)

Section 2

Strengthened Countermeasures at the Port of Entry

1 Immigration Examinations Utilizing Information

(1) Implementation of Immigration Examinations Utilizing Biometric Information

Since November, 2007, foreign nationals who intend to enter Japan have been required to submit their Biometric information (fingerprints and a facial photograph). This enables the

Immigration Services Agency to accurately and promptly confirm that the applicant for the verification for landing is the same as the passport holder, and to check the applicant against the blacklist maintained by the Immigration Services Agency. In addition, it has become possible to stringently detect those who have previously been deported and again try to enter Japan illegally using a forged passport or another person's passport by checking their information against the data on fingerprints and facial photographs of those who departed under a departure order or who were deported in the past retained by the Immigration Services Agency. In addition, since October 2016, in order to rigorously detect terrorists etc. at the time of the landing examination, we have been cross-checking the facial photographs provided by foreign nationals at the time of the landing examination against the facial images of terrorists and other suspect persons. The total number of foreign nationals ordered to depart through a departure order and deported through a deportation order based on the utilization of Biometric information was approximately 9,900 from the start of utilization of this information in the immigration examinations by the end of December, 2018.

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



Immigration examination utilizing Biometric information

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

The introduction and operation of a system to enable the utilization of ICPO's database of stolen and lost travel documents at the time of the landing examinations as a measure to prevent terrorism was decided in the "Action Plan for the Prevention of Terrorism" (decision of the Headquarters for the Promotion of Measures against Transnational Organized Crime and

Other Relative Issues and International Terrorism on December 10, 2004), and examinations have been conducted since August 2009 utilizing ICPO's stolen and lost travel documents database search system.

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

(3) Immigration Examinations Utilizing API and PNR

From February 2007, the Immigration Services Agency has made it mandatory for the captain of all vessels and aircraft entering Japan to submit advance passenger information (API), and from February 2010, the advance passenger information system (APIS) is being operated making it possible for the API, etc. of aircraft arriving at the airports to be received electronically via the Nippon Automated Cargo and Port Consolidated System (NACCS) operated by Nippon Automated Cargo and Port Consolidated System, Inc. From June 2017, the reporting time of the information, which, in principle, used to be set at "90 minutes before arrival" was revised to, in principle, "30 minutes from the time of departing the area outside of Japan", making it possible to detect the arrival of suspect persons much sooner and to realize stricter and more prompt immigration examinations.

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

2 Reinforcement of Information Collection and Analysis

Even in 2019, terrorist attacks were committed in various parts of the world, including Asia and Africa, and there have been an increasing number of people who have experienced hostilities in the conflict areas, and since the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games are due to take place in 2020, the Immigration Services Agency is required to take even stricter border measures.

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 entry examinations to realize Japan as a tourism-oriented country.

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

3 Patrol Activities at Airports and Seaports

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

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

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

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



Joint drill



Detection on a smuggling boat



Patrol activity

Chapter 7

Measures Against Illegal and Imposter Foreign Residents, etc.

Section 1

Implementation of Measures Against Illegal Foreign Residents

1 Past Efforts to Reduce the Number of Illegal Foreign Residents

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

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

However, after the number of foreign nationals overstaying their authorized period of stay increased for the first time in 22 years to reach approximately 60,000 as of the time of January 1, 2015, the number as of January 1 each year increased consecutively for five years, and as of January 1, 2019, there are approximately 74,000 such foreign nationals in Japan.

2 Efforts to Further Reduce the Number of Illegal Foreign Residents

As a result of the above efforts, the number of illegal foreign residents has seen a steady decline, but due to the rapid increase in the number of foreign nationals entering Japan through the various measures being taken by the government aimed at making Japan a tourism-oriented country, there is the possibility that the number of foreign nationals overstaying their authorized stay will further increase in the future, and therefore efforts will be made to maintain a corresponding structure to crack down on these illegal foreign residents, and moreover, to strengthen the following measures and further reduce the number of illegal foreign residents.

(1) Strengthened Detection

The Immigration Services Agency has established the “Special Detection Officer Units” that are to engage full-time in detecting offenders in violation of the Immigration Act and locate the

unit in large city areas where there are many illegal foreign residents, by which the Immigration Services Agency 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 Services Agency has introduced the departure order system as a measure to encourage illegal foreign residents existing in various parts of the country to voluntarily appear at the immigration office, and also took other measures, including a revision of the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan”^(*1) and publication of such cases, as well as public relations activities to encourage voluntary appearance at an immigration office.

The departure order system is a system where, unlike with the deportation procedures, foreign nationals staying illegally beyond their authorized period of stay, who meet certain criteria such as appearing in person to make a declaration in order to depart from Japan, are able to depart through simple procedures without being detained (see Part 1, Section 5, Subsection 5 below). 6,223 foreign nationals were issued with a departure order based on this system in 2018.

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^(*2).

(*1) In order to ensure further improvement of the transparency and equity of the special permission to stay, the Immigration Services Agency formulated and published the “Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan”. The guideline articulates what elements are considered positive elements and what are considered negative elements in determining whether special permission to stay should be granted or not and presents what points are considered in determining whether special permission to stay should be granted or not (http://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan_nyukan85.html).

(*2) Examples of public relations activities:

- (i) During the “Campaign for Measures against Illegal Foreign Workers” held in June, every year public relations for the prevention of illegal employment are conducted.
- (ii) A page for “Procedures for Voluntary Appearance at the Immigration Office” was created on the websites of the Ministry of Justice and the Immigration Services Agency 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/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan_nyukan87.html).

Section 2

Implementation of Measures Against Imposter Foreign Residents

1 Countermeasures Against Imposter Foreign Residents, etc.

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

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

In addition, in recent years, there has been a significant number of cases where foreign nationals use forged or altered residence cards or abuse the refugee recognition system. Since these methods are becoming more malicious and sophisticated, the Immigration 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.



Confiscation of counterfeit documents

2 Crackdowns on Imposter Foreign Residents, etc.

(1) Reinforcement of the Collection and Analysis of Information

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

For this reason, we continuously and accurately keep track of the information notified by the foreign nationals and organizations of affiliation, and effectively uncover and crack down on imposter foreign residents and deal strictly with them by using and analyzing the large amount of information received from the general public as well as the information shared by the police and other related organizations and information in the notifications on the situation of the employment of foreign nationals provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

(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

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

Section 3 Efforts for Further Appropriate Treatment

1 Efforts for Further Appropriate Treatment of Detainees

Based on an agreement reached with the Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA) in September 2010, the Immigration Services Agency started discussions with the JFBA on better measures about treatment of foreign nationals held in the detention centers, and will continue to hold such discussions in the future. To date, the Immigration 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 and in September 2018 at the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau.

2 Activities and Duties of the Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee

The Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee was established for the purpose of securing transparency in security treatment and of improving the management of the immigration detention facilities. Currently there are two committees; one is in the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau, and the other is in the Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau. Each committee takes charge of immigration centers and departure waiting facilities in 24 locations (as at the end of March 2019) 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 Services Bureau (hereinafter referred to collectively as “Directors”).

Over the course of a year from April 2018 to March 2019, a total of 17 inspections and 273 interviews took place in the facilities throughout Japan, and 36 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.

Article**At the Front Line of Immigration Control Administration**
(voice of an immigration control officer in the Detention Department)
(Detention Department, Higashi-Nihon Immigration Center:
Ishizuka Kyosuke)

The duties I am engaged in involve guarding the detainees and maintaining security inside and outside the detention facility of the Higashi Nihon Immigration Center.

This facility holds foreign nationals who are not permitted to stay in Japan up until the time for them to be deported outside of Japan.

The “treatment” of detainees must be managed appropriately while also respecting their human rights.

Every day, the detainees have time for outdoor exercise in the yard, bathing, telephone calls, TV, and time for interactions with other detainees within a certain range, as well as the opportunity to purchase goods twice a week. Furthermore, we have prepared an environment so that detainees are able to receive free legal counseling from lawyers twice a year. Also, at Christmas time, arrangements are made so that the detainees are able to participate in a Christmas mass held by a pastor who comes to the facility, and meal delivery times are adjusted so that Muslims are able to follow the customs of Ramadan.

However, in the facility, there are those who do not follow the instructions of the staff or interfere with the duties of the staff or engage in nuisance acts against others simply because they did not get what they wanted. Furthermore, there are those who try to harm others and those who destroy property, and we have to try and stop them in a calm and resolute manner.

Of course, it is not easy to deal with these problems, but it is our basic duty as immigration control officers to appropriately and promptly deport foreign nationals who fall under the grounds for deportation.

Therefore, by providing appropriate treatment, we strive to keep track of the daily movements and emotions of the detainees and share such information with each department in

order to realize prompt deportation and fulfill our mission.

In the future, since the acceptance of foreign nationals is likely to become even more intense, I would like to continue fulfilling my duties so as to be able to deport those foreign nationals who are unwelcome in Japan and to prevent the safety and interests of foreign nationals, who are leading their lives in Japan, and those of Japanese nationals from being harmed.



Section 4 Promotion of the Deportation of Deportees

1 Implementation of Safe and Reliable Deportation of Deportation Evaders

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

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

In addition, some foreign nationals who attempt to evade deportation are often anxious about their lives after return, and with regard to foreign nationals who are deemed to require humanitarian considerations, 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

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 2018, a total of 295 foreign nationals were deported over a total of seven flights (five destinations).

3 Promotion of the Use of IOM Repatriation Programs

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

Chapter 8

Promotion of Appropriate and Prompt Refugee Protection

Section 1

Revision of the Operation of the Refugee Recognition System, etc.

1 Revision of the Operation of the Refugee Recognition System

(1) Outline

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

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

(2) Proper Operation of the System

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

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

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

In addition, since March 2017, 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

Since 2015, as well as implementing refugee recognition administrative staff training for

management-level officers with the cooperation of the UNHCR, the Immigration Services Agency has been working on the development and capacity-building of refugee inquirers through enhancing the content of the regular training relating to information on the countries of origin of the applicants for refugee recognition, and practical training using case studies.

In addition, in May 2017, the position of officers to engage in the collection and analysis of country of origin information (COI officer) was created, and later, a structure, consisting of multiple officers in charge, was formed while the collecting and sharing of the COI and other information was strengthened with the cooperation of the UNHCR.

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

Since September 2015, applications that attempt to abuse or misuse the refugee recognition system, such as cases claiming a situation that clearly does not come under the 1951 Refugee Convention which is for the purpose of prompt and reliable protection of genuine refugees, are pre-sorted before they reach the stage of a full-scale investigation. Furthermore, while ensuring that an opportunity is given to the applicant to make a sufficient case such as the setting of a hearing into the circumstances by a refugee inquirer, the applications are handled promptly and measures are being taken so as not to permit employment to repeat applicants who re-submit applications which attempt to abuse or misuse the system (hereinafter referred to as “restrictions on employment”) or measures which do not permit stay (hereinafter referred to as “restrictions on stay”). Moreover, with regard to the sorting of applications, from the perspective of case processing optimization, a verification was conducted by an expert panel for verification of the situation of revisions for operation of the refugee recognition system (hereinafter referred to as “expert panel”) composed of outside experts.

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

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

3 Further Revision of the Operations of the Refugee Recognition System

(1) Background

As described above, since September 2015, applications that attempt to abuse or misuse the system of refugee recognition are processed promptly, and restrictions on employment or restrictions, on stay depending on the content of the application, are imposed on those applicants who repeatedly submit refugee recognition applications for such purposes as working in Japan. These measures are intended for repeat applicants who re-submit applications for recognition of refugee status, and although these measures have had a certain degree of effect in curbing the re-submission of applications, the number of first-time applicants who attempt to abuse or

misuse the system is still increasing rapidly, and the number of refugee recognition applicants, which was 5,000 in 2014, reached a record high of 19,629 in 2017, about four times the number, and this situation is interfering with the provision of prompt protection for genuine refugees.

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

(2) Outline

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

(i) Setting of a pre-sorting period

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

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

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

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

A. First-time applications

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

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

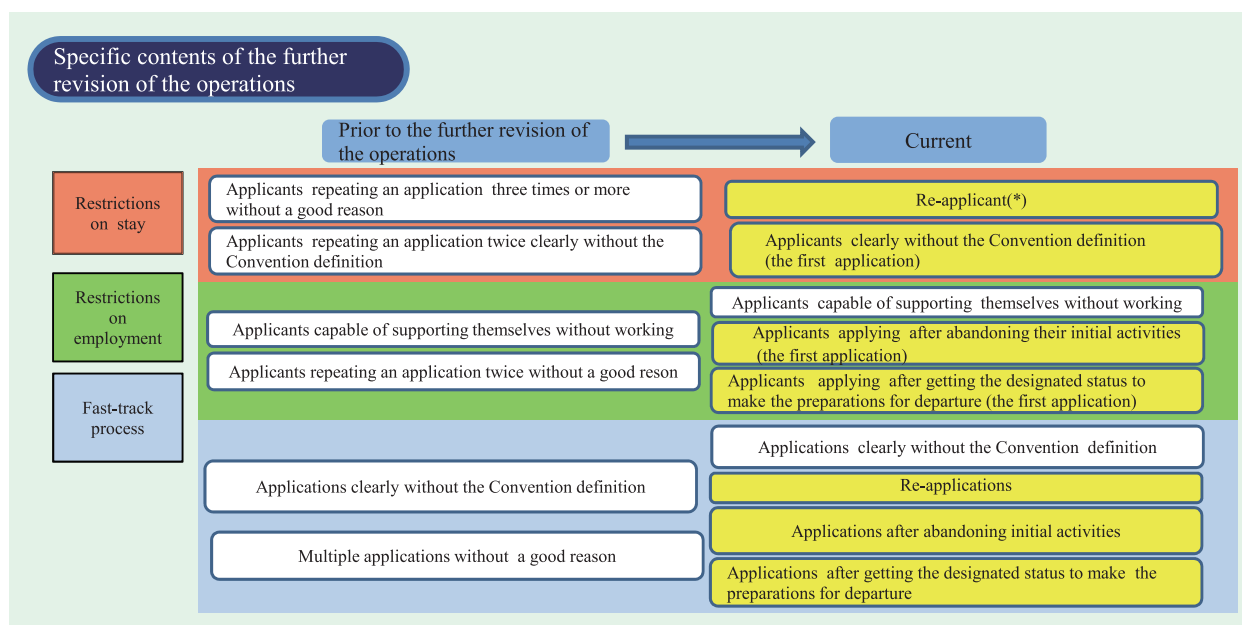
B. Re-submission of applications

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

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

C. Fast-track process

Cases of applicants for recognition of refugee status who come under the abovementioned A and B will be promptly examined, and processed as quickly as possible ([Reference 82](#)).

Reference 82 Summary of further revision of the operations of the refugee recognition system

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

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

As a result of these efforts, the number of applicants for refugee recognition mainly from neighboring countries in Asia such as the Philippines and Vietnam, which had been increasing rapidly in recent years, started to decrease significantly in 2018 to almost half compared to the previous year (decline of approximately 47%). On the other hand, the number of applicants recognized as refugees in 2018 doubled from 20 in the previous year to 42, and so far, there has been a certain degree of effect in meeting the objective in that applications that attempt to abuse or misuse the system have been curbed and genuine refugees are being offered prompt protection.

However, since there are still a number of applications that attempt to abuse or misuse the system, a consideration will be conducted from the aspects of both the legal system and operations with regard to measures to further curb applications that attempt to abuse or misuse the system while taking into account the effects of previous efforts towards fundamental resolution of the problem.

Section 2 Acceptance of Refugees through Resettlement

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

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

In the past, Japan took measures to support the resettlement of Indochinese refugees and those recognized as refugees, but in order to deal with the various problems relating to refugees in the Asian region, in December 2008, the Cabinet approval was given to the introduction of a system of resettlement^(*1). The Cabinet approval^(*2) prescribed that the relevant ministries and agencies would accept approximately 30 Myanmarse refugees every year from refugee camps in Thailand, as a pilot project starting from FY 2010 and would support their resettlement through 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.

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

The Immigration Services Agency is mainly in charge of the selection process for resettlement refugees to be accepted, and dispatches staff to conduct local interviews. From FY 2010 to FY 2014, Myanmarse refugees comprising 18 families composed of 86 family members were accepted from Thailand (in FY 2012 all of the families who had decided to come to Japan declined before coming to Japan). In FY 2015, Myanmarse refugees comprising six families composed of 19 family members, in FY 2016 seven families composed of 18 family members, in FY 2017 eight families composed of 29 family members and in FY 2018 five families composed of 22 family members were accepted from Malaysia totaling 44 families composed of 174 family members over the nine years from FY 2010 to FY 2018.

Then in October 2018, in order to continue accepting resettlement refugees, a study group consisting of the relevant ministries and agencies and experts was established to examine the necessity of expanding the scope of acceptance and the scope when expanding acceptance^(*6), and based on the results of the review by the study group, Cabinet approval^(*7) was given on June 28, 2019 that partially amended the Cabinet approval of January 2014. Based on this Cabinet approval amongst others^(*8), the number of resettlement refugees is due to be increased from about 30 to

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

about 60 per year from FY 2020 onwards and the eligible refugees were expanded from Myanmarese refugees staying temporarily in Malaysia to refugees staying temporarily in the Asian region (regardless of the country of origin), and the Immigration Services Agency will continue to play an appropriate role with the cooperation of the relevant ministries and agencies based on these government policies and strive for smooth acceptance of refugees.

Section 3 Promotion of Collaboration with NGOs

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

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

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

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

Chapter 9

Responses to International Society and International Situations

Section 1 Treaties and International Conventions

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

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

As of April 1, 2019, the Immigration Services Agency has primarily been involved in negotiations for the conclusion of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and EPAs with Turkey and other countries.

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

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 2018 was 2,445 from Indonesia, 2,265 from the Philippines, and 892 from Viet Nam.

3 Reports and Examinations in Accordance with Human Rights Treaties

Japan is a signatory to various treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) 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 Services Agency is involved in the drafting of reports, review of the government reports and follow-up thereof from the perspective of immigration control and residency management administration.

Section 2 International Conferences/ International Exchange

1 Responding to International Conferences

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

MESG meeting was held in Canada in October 2018, and officials from the Immigration Bureau (at that time) attended the meetings to exchange information and opinions with the counterparts of other countries.

In addition to the international meetings mentioned above, the Immigration Services Agency sends delegates to the Government Delegation on Anti-Human Trafficking Measures to exchange information on recent efforts to counter trafficking in persons, as well as to the Consular Consultation etc. to express Japan's position actively and build cooperative relationships with other countries. The Immigration 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

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

The High-Level Immigration Officers Meeting is held mutually with the Korean immigration authorities, and the Immigration Services Agency 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 2018, the relevant organizations of the kingdom of the Netherlands, Cambodia and Indonesia visited the Immigration Bureau (at that time) in order to exchange opinions, and the relevant organizations of R.O.Korea, China and Canada visited the regional immigration bureaus and the airport district offices (at that time).

Chapter 10

Improvement of Public Relations Activities and Public Services

Section 1 Promotion of Public Relations Activities

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

In terms of immigration control and residency management administration, statistics concerning immigration control and residency management administration such as the number of those entering or departing from Japan, the number of foreign residents, the number of foreign nationals overstaying and the number of applications for refugee recognition 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, examination of statuses of residence, 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 and residency management administration.

In addition, we proactively publicize the immigration control and residency management systems and procedural guidelines, and give out information such as guidance on using the facial recognition gates, and guidance on the systems corresponding to changes in the amended Immigration Control Act and amendments of the Technical Intern Training Act by posting information on the websites of the Ministry of Justice and the Immigration Control and Residency Management, and also distribute posters and leaflets.

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. In addition, in 2017, we produced a public relations video on the automated gates and on the points-based system for highly-skilled professionals through a tie-up plan with Yoshimoto Creative Agency Co., Ltd., and in addition, the Minister of Justice Kamikawa Yoko (at that time) held a Hometown Talk Circle on the topic of “Aiming for a Tourism Developed Country – Expectations of the Immigration Examinations” at a Kansai Airport affiliated facility, and engaged proactively in public relations by exchanging opinions with the staff working at the airport, persons studying tourism at universities and technical schools, persons from tourism volunteer groups and local government officers.



Promotion of the automated gates



Illegal Work Prevention Campaign



(Automated gates)

Publicity video made through a tie-up plan with Yoshimoto Creative Agency Co., Ltd.



(Points-based system for highly-skilled foreign nationals)



Public relations activities at airport



Sit in a circle of hometown talk

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 procedures related to entry and residence, and the guideline for the various applications.

These information centers were established in the Sendai Regional Immigration Services Bureau, Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau and its Yokohama District Immigration Services Office, the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau, Osaka Regional Immigration Services Bureau and its Kobe District Immigration Services Office, the Hiroshima Regional Immigration Services Bureau and Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services 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 Services Bureau, Takamatsu Regional Immigration Services Bureau and Naha District Immigration Services Office of Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services 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 Services Agency Website

The Immigration Services Agency 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 services 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.

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 Services Agency website

3 Immigration Services Agency Official Twitter

In order for the Immigration Services Agency to be able to further enhance its public relations activities, Twitter accounts have been acquired for the Immigration Services Agency and each of the regional immigration services offices, which have been in operation since March 2016.

The official Twitter account of the Immigration Services Agency is usually used to send out information on updates to the website and information about new systems, and the official Twitter account of the regional immigration services offices is used to send out real-time information on waiting times so that visitors coming to the residence examination desks will have an idea of the waiting time, and also to give information out on various events and campaigns to be held at the airports and other places.



Immigration Services Agency Official Twitter

List of Immigration Services Agency official Twitter accounts

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

Article**Public Relations Activities at Immigration Services Agency
(Voice of Public Relations Activity Officer)****(General Affairs Division, Immigration Services Agency: Kizaki Takahiro)**

My current duties involve engaging in the work of immigration public relations at the headquarters of the Immigration Services Agency. Before moving to the headquarters, I worked in the field conducting examinations at the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau and Narita Airport District Immigration Office.

When I started in my current position, the headquarters was in the middle of considering a new system for the acceptance of foreign workers and so the phone never stopped ringing because of inquiries from citizens seeking information and the press, and I had hard time dealing with tasks which were completely different from the ones I was used to handling.

The work of the public relations officers is to respond to inquiries and opinions from the general public, and to coordinate the various types of inquiries from each department in the Agency, each government office in the Ministry of Justice, the regional immigration offices, other related ministries and agencies and related organizations and to draw up draft responses, and in addition in my case, I am also in charge of work related to the website such as editing the content and changing the design of the website where information on the Immigration Services Agency is posted.

I feel that publicizing a new policy is worthwhile work, but I also realize that the information I send out impacts society in various ways. For this reason, I strive to create a better website by considering the scope of impact derived from publicizing the information and the selection of information that is really necessary.

In Japan, where internationalization is steadily progressing, immigration work has now entered an era of being covered by various media. It is in all honesty quite challenging to engage in public relations at the forefront, but I feel like it is rewarding work.

We will continue in the future to respond carefully and accurately to the interests and questions received from everyone.

