

Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign nationals (FY2020 revised) Outline

The number of foreign nationals residing in Japan as of the end of 2019 was 2.93 million, while the number of foreign nationals working in Japan as of the end of October 2019 was 1.66 million, both of which were at record highs. In addition, the government started to accept the Specified Skilled Workers in April 2019.

In December 2019, the government revised its “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign nationals” to steadily put the relevant measures into practice.

→Formulated the “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign nationals” (FY2020 revised) from the standpoint of continuing to accept foreign nationals smoothly and properly and further enhancing the environment to accept them, while taking appropriate actions for the ongoing novel coronavirus infection (191 Policies). The government will get together and continue to steadily implement the relevant measures and strive to enhance the Comprehensive Measures.

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

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

- Continuously listen to opinions from a broad range of stakeholders at the Meeting to Listen to “Voices of Our people” (establishment of “opinion boxes” which accept opinions as to the coexistence policies in multiple languages, and continuous exchange of opinions with local governments), and to appropriately reflect opinions obtained in planning and formulating coexistence measures
- (2) Implementation of awareness-raising and other activities**
 - To implement human rights awareness-raising activities to realize an “inclusive society” where all people support mutually and value each other’s human rights

2. Efforts aimed at promoting appropriate and smooth acceptance of foreign nationals

(1) Matching support for specified skilled workers and other measures

- To promote job matching support connecting foreign workers seeking employment to companies (steady implementation of employment maintenance support measures for technical intern trainees who have been dismissed, etc. and are having difficulties with continuing their training due to the impact of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), consideration and implementation of matching support methods based on the working situations specific to each field)
- Active support for voluntary, proactive and leading efforts by the local governments through Subsidy Program for Promotion of Regional Revitalization (collection of reference cases, horizontal deployment, etc.)

(2) Smooth implementation for skill exams and Japanese language tests of the Specified Skilled Worker, and dissemination and smooth utilization of the Specified Skilled Worker System, etc.

- To expand opportunities to take the skill exams on the Specified Skilled Worker (expanding opportunities to take exams in Japan and abroad)
- Consider adding specified industry fields that accept specified skills, and encourage discussions about details of industrial fields falling under Specified Skilled Worker (ii) in each field and implementation of skill exams
- To implement dissemination and public relations on the Specified Skilled Worker System in Japan and abroad
- To implement a new Japanese language test with a focus on measurement of communication ability in the field of nursing
- Support for fostering skilled human resources and business people in developing countries through Japan’s ODA

(3) Elimination of malicious intermediary organizations (brokers)

- Strengthened cooperation with the relevant agencies in developing countries through technical cooperation as part of ODA

(4) Expansion of Japanese language educational base abroad

- To reinforce the Japanese language educational infrastructure through the Japan Foundation, and encourage efforts to communicate the attractiveness of Japanese culture and society
- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to prepare curricula and tests for encouraging acquisition of Japanese language proficiencies toward promotion of utilization of the “Program for Further Acceptance of Fourth-generation Japanese”

3. Support for foreign nationals as residents

(1) Creation of livable local communities

> Provision of administrative and living information in multilingual languages and plain Japanese, and development counseling systems

- To review the coverage of the subsidies for preparations for an environment for acceptance of foreign nationals based on requests from local governments
- To provide interpreter support at local government office counters and business seminars for employment and retention of foreign nationals in the Foreign Residents Support Center
- To create guideline for utilization of “plain Japanese”, and provide training and publicity for officials of local governments and other organizations
- To create guidelines for introduction of multilingual translation systems for local governments
- To encourage provision and dissemination of administrative and living information in multiple languages and in plain Japanese
- To ensure communication of necessary matters that require attention, among others, through the Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals and the Organization for Technical Intern Training for the purpose of preventing the spread of novel coronavirus infection

> Promotion and support measures for multicultural coexistence in local communities

- To consider measures to promote fostering of human resources who will coordinate comprehensive support for foreign residents
- Cooperation between local governments and JICA for positive hiring of human resources with a wealth of international experience

(2) Improvement of the environment on life services

> Enhancement of information dissemination and support at the time of a disaster

- To promote utilization of the multilingual dictionary for disaster management and weather information in applications, etc. of private business operators

> Enhancement of traffic safety measures, responses to accidents and incidents, consumer problems, legal problems, and human rights issues

- To revise the websites regarding the Japanese police systems and activities, and enhance information provided in foreign languages

> Development of an environment and support for securing housing

- To prepare “Guide for foreigners looking to rent” that is available to foreigners looking for an apartment

> Improve user-friendly financial and telecommunication services

- To prepare an environment to facilitate the opening of accounts by foreign nationals at banks and other financial institutions (publication and horizontal deployment of best practices at financial institutions, appropriate management of bank accounts through keeping track of the period of stay by financial institutions)

(3) Enhancement of Japanese language education (realization of smooth communication)

- To enhance Japanese language education for “foreign nationals as residents” (preparation of a comprehensive system to reinforce the Japanese language education environment in the region, promotion of preparation of a basic plan by each local government under the Act on Promotion of Japanese Language Education, etc.)
- Strengthened support for opening Japanese language classes in regional areas where no Japanese language classes are located
- To develop a program for the certified public Japanese language teacher (tentative name) as the new qualifications to prove the qualities and abilities of Japanese language teachers
- Conducting surveys on points of effective communication with foreign staff and methodologies of learning those points
- Considering how programs relating to the Japanese language education institutions that have qualifications necessary for maintenance and improvement of the Japanese language education levels should be developed, and take necessary measures based on the results of such consideration

(4) Measures for foreign national children

- Positively publicize programs to provide free early childhood education and care services and High School Tuition Support Fund System and university learning
- To conduct practical studies into ideal Japanese language guidance in areas with a high concentration of foreigners and areas with a low concentration of foreigners
- To promote utilization of digital textbooks for learners, and conduct research including development of training programs based on characteristics of early childhood
- Making efforts aimed at establishment of special capacities for public senior high school entrance exams in all prefectures, and build curricula for Japanese language guidance and subject lessons at senior high schools
- To ensure school opportunities for foreign children and students appropriately (encourage integrated management and identification of school attendance of foreign children using registers of school-age children through formulation of guidelines for matters to be taken by local governments)

(5) Supporting employment for international students, etc.

- To encourage dissemination and utilization of “Handbook for the Employment of International Students and Empowerment after Hiring”
- To prepare learning programs for small or medium-sized businesses, and guidance curricula for SME’s supporting organizations to enhance performance of highly-skilled foreign professionals after joining companies
- To reinforce collaboration through conclusion of a cooperation agreement between universities and prefectural labor bureaus (Hello Work)

(6) Ensuring an appropriate work environment

- To reinforce dissemination of information on labor conditions and other support measures in “plain Japanese”
- To reinforce Hello Work-based consultation systems for foreign workers who are affected by the novel coronavirus infection

(7) Promotion of enrollment in social insurance, etc.

- To make it possible for medical and other institutions to conduct personal identification and verification of insurance qualifications by using Individual Number Cards
- To increase the maximum number of years for lump-sum withdrawal payments of the public pension system from 3 years to 5 years

4. Construction of a new residency management system

(1) Implementation of smooth and expedited procedures for the status of residence

- To further expand the coverage of online applications for status of residence procedures
- To consider the integration of the residence cards and the Individual Number Cards
- To simplify documents to be submitted upon applications for the “Specified Skills” status of residence
- Consider issuance of certificates of eligibility in the form of electromagnetic records

(2) Strengthening residency management network

- To implement proper examination of residence by strengthening countermeasures against forgeries of the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) and other certificates

(3) Accurate management of international students enrolment

- To implement stricter examinations of status of residence, such as not to allow universities and other educational institutions with improper management of the enrolment of international students to accept international students, and create the same standards to Japanese language education institutions

(4) Further optimization of Technical Intern Training Program

- Strengthening information cooperation between the Immigration Services Agency and the Organization for Technical Intern Training, and reform the operational systems of the Organization for Technical Intern Training
- To implement positive public relations activities for technical trainees for the purpose of preventing disappearance by reason of significant guarantee money and other fees

(5) Strengthening of measures against illegal foreign residents

- Distribution of applications to check forged and altered residence cards free of charge