

Fundamental Approach to Facilitating
Employment of Workers from Overseas
—Summary—

November 21, 2016

Japan Business Federation (Keidanren)

1. Key Considerations

- (1) It is essential to facilitate employment of workers from overseas, not only for the sake of the economy, but also to maintain and boost the vitality of Japanese society
- (2) There is a strong sense of impending crisis in the business community, including worries that Japan may lose out in global competition to secure workers, and concern over the survival of industries suffering bottlenecks due to lack of workers
- (3) The following recommendations are based on the recently adopted reform bills relating to the legislation on technical intern trainees and immigration control

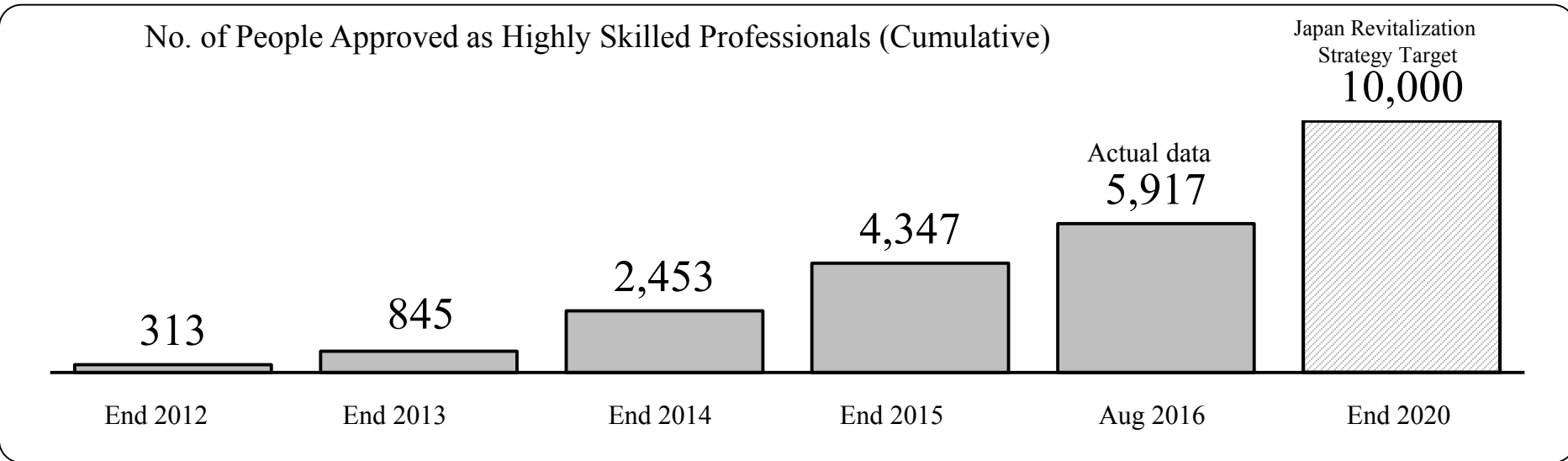
Employment should be facilitated for:

Highly skilled professionals	Economic infrastructure workers/social infrastructure workers
To generate innovation & bolster competitiveness	To pass on technologies and skills necessary to maintain Japan's economic infrastructure (industry and physical infrastructure) To maintain Japan's social infrastructure (nursing care, etc.)
Across multiple industries	By individual industry
Via measures catering to the needs of highly skilled professionals	Via measures catering to the urgent needs of industry

2. Current Situation and Issues

(1) Highly skilled professionals

- Increase in number of non-Japanese being approved under the points-based system for highly skilled professionals is evidence of extent to which they are needed by the business community
- Many international students want to work in Japan, but cannot, or do not, actually find employment here
- Issues exist in relation to employment, legislation, society, etc.



Source: Documents of the Ministry of Justice's round-table conference on migration control policy (November 2016)

2. Current Situation and Issues

(2) Economic infrastructure workers/social infrastructure workers

- The construction industry, and manufacturing industries such as shipbuilding, that provide, maintain, and manage economic infrastructure are struggling to pass on skills due to Japan's aging population
- We need governmental policy measures to expand employment of workers from overseas in parallel with efforts to increase investment in mechanization and hiring of Japanese people
- There is a severe lack of workers to undertake nursing care and other jobs that maintain social infrastructure, despite expanding demand
- Very few candidates for care worker jobs are accepted under economic partnership agreements (EPAs)

3. Necessary Governmental Policy Measures

(1) Highly skilled professionals

- Japan needs policies that help to enhance its appeal for highly skilled professionals and international students and facilitate personnel administration for global corporations

Policies	Recommendation outlines
Improve points-based system for highly skilled professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerate introduction of “Japanese Green Card for Highly Skilled Foreign Professionals”, etc.
Relax residence requirements for obtaining permanent residency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the requirement to 10 years total residence, rather than 10 years continuous residence
Relax requirements for intra-company transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow exceptions to requirement for at least one year’s employment immediately prior to transfer • Revise existing residence screening criteria (re. salary levels)
Bolster support for international students seeking employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expedite screening when international students apply to change residence status on finding employment • Improve programs for learning Japanese

3. Necessary Governmental Policy Measures

(2) Economic infrastructure workers

- Japan should address the needs of each industry, targeting a broader range of workers for employment and extending periods of employment, etc.

Policies	Recommendation outlines
Target a broader range of workers for intra-company transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a flexible approach according to companies' needs
Consider reviewing "project for acceptance of foreign employees from overseas in the manufacturing industry"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider broadening scope of project to non-manufacturing fields • Extend existing 1-year residence period to 2-year level
Consider whether the existing temporary measures in the construction and shipbuilding fields are appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include consideration of whether temporary measures should be extended to fiscal 2021 and beyond, based on the extent to which they are utilized, etc.
Make use of non-Japanese workers with prescribed levels of skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider form of residence status to be offered to non-Japanese workers meeting the requirements of objective skills assessments

3. Necessary Governmental Policy Measures

(3) Social infrastructure workers

Japan needs to employ more non-Japanese nursing care workers and housekeeping workers to help alleviate the labor shortage at care homes and facilitate workforce participation by Japanese women

Policies	Recommendation outlines
Add nursing care positions to the Technical Intern Training Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake detailed planning and make the addition promptly
Encourage active workforce participation by EPA-based care worker candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand annual employment limit • Relax qualification for continuing work in Japan to completion of first level of care work training • Apply measures extending period of stay for those who entered Japan in fiscal 2014 or thereafter
Expand employment of housekeeping workers from overseas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer employment in more regions of Japan, assessing precedents

3. Necessary Governmental Policy Measures

(4) Multiculturalism

- Japan needs the entire government to address the needs of non-Japanese residents and issues arising in areas where they are highly concentrated

Policies	Recommendation outlines
Involve the entire government in action on policies for multiculturalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treat measures to help non-Japanese residents as an issue for Japan as a whole. Address education, medical care, public services, information to deal with natural disasters, etc.
Expand state support for education of non-Japanese children and Japanese language teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for international schools, etc.
Meet needs of differing cultures and religions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extend availability of halal foods beyond major cities

4. Corporate Action

Japan's corporations need to take the following action:

Further improvement of working conditions	Action to support multiculturalism
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pursue diversity-oriented business management• Reduce long working hours• Reform personnel systems, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate initiatives such as support for the education of non-Japanese children are expected to be further expanded

5. Remaining Issues

The issues below require ongoing discussion:

Formation of a national consensus	Issues relating to the acceptance of immigration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pursue deliberations aimed at forming a national consensus on policies for multiculturalism, including the financial costs of social integration to be covered by public funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thorough discussion is required, including discussion of how to define immigration for which the permanent residence and integration of non-Japanese nationals is the key focus• The overall issue of Japan’s acceptance of immigration must not be put off, but instead should be considered now to prepare for the future