

Overview of the Policy to Promote Multiculturalism in Hiroshima City (Revised Edition)

1) Purpose of the revision

In 2006, the City of Hiroshima formulated the Policy to Promote Multiculturalism in Hiroshima City (hereinafter “policy”) and has since worked to multilingualize information for daily life, upgrade and expand consulting systems in multiple languages, as well as enhance Japanese language education, in order to realize a multicultural society.

There were approximately 2.12 million foreign residents in Japan at the end of 2014 when we previously revised our policy. Excluding a temporary decrease in numbers during the COVID-19 pandemic, the numbers have since continued to rise, culminating in over 3.58 million foreign residents at the end of June 2024, the highest number ever recorded. This trend is also applicable to Hiroshima City: foreign residents numbered 15,651 at the end of March 2014 when we previously revised our policy, and, at the end of March 2025, they numbered 23,297 or 2.0% of the population of the city, the highest numbers on record. In addition, the composition ratio of nationalities and residential statuses has also changed significantly.

During these ten years, Japan has become a society marked by serious population decline due to the declining birthrate and increasing elderly population. In the Hiroshima City as well, population has steadily declined since peaking in 2018. As such, aiming to maintain a vibrant regional society in the future and realize a Hiroshima which we can be proud to show the world, the City of Hiroshima has high expectations for international residents¹ as important players who will help revitalize local society, economy, and community.

Given the above, we must create an environment that makes it easier for international residents, regardless of their nationality, to live safe and comfortable lives together with the people in the community.

In addition, our city aims to be an International Peace Culture City. As such, while ensuring that all citizens respect one another’s human rights and diversity, including cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, and nationalities, we must make steady progress in creating a city that fosters well-rounded citizens and where culture thrives—where all citizens realize the preciousness of peace. We must also make progress in realizing an inclusive local community where citizens have support each other and play roles based on their values and lifestyles.

Furthermore, according to the Hiroshima City Multiculturalism Survey conducted in 2022, with the increase in foreign residents and multiculturalization comes an increased need for enhanced support measures. Similarly, in Japan, the Technical Intern Training Program will be abolished in 2027 based on a revision to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in June 2024. The Training Employment System, which will be created in place of the program, aims to foster human resources through employment, as well as retain human resources. The City of Hiroshima must be able to respond accurately to these changes that come with revisions to the immigration policies of the national government.

In consideration of these points, the City of Hiroshima hereby revises this policy. As a municipality which is directly involved with the lives of citizens, after the revision, the City of Hiroshima will enact multicultural coexistence initiatives in line with changes in the circumstances surrounding international residents while cooperating with related organizations and taking into account the division of roles between our city, Hiroshima Prefecture, and the national government in terms of immigration.

¹International residents

In addition to the foreign nationals residing in Hiroshima City, this policy defines “international residents” as all those who have become naturalized Japanese citizens, those with the cultural background of a parent with foreign roots, and those who have foreign roots for various reasons.

When referring to foreign nationals with addresses in Hiroshima City, the term “foreign residents” will be used. Note that there will be no changes made in terminology for projects and programs already in progress.

2) Multiculturalism in city planning: our goals

1) Promote international resident-conscious city planning initiatives

To help make life a little easier for international residents, the City of Hiroshima will work to support communication measures like the multilingualization of information for daily life. In addition, the city will promote city planning initiatives that aim to enhance policy implementation to support residents in their daily lives, including disaster preparedness, education, and employment, so that everyone, including international residents, can live in safety and comfort.

2) Foster multicultural awareness

While providing support for international residents to gain understanding of local culture and customs, the City of Hiroshima will work to cultivate a better understanding of the importance and significance of building a community together where all citizens, including international residents, respect one another and their human rights by cultivating awareness of the need to be understanding toward multiculturalism and different cultures, as well as promoting socializing opportunities for citizens.

3) Policy progress management

- As we conduct a multiculturalism survey once every ten years (next survey planned for FY2032), this policy will be reviewed in FY2033 based on the results of that survey.
- A midterm review will be conducted in FY2029, as it is the midterm year between the formulation and review of this policy, as well as when work is expected to begin on formulating the Seventh Hiroshima City Basic Plan.

FY	2025		2029		2032	2033
Task	Revision complete		Midterm review		Conduct survey	Policy review

Hiroshima City Basic Plan Term (until 2030)

Midterm review held at same time as the next Basic Plan is formulated

4) Changes in foreign resident data

Comparing statistical data from the previous policy revision at end of March 2014 to data as of end of March 2025

Number of foreign residents

- Foreign residents increased from 15,651 to 23,297 (approx. 50% increase)
- Percentage in the total population rose from 1.32% to 1.99%

Numbers based on nationality

- Vietnamese: 8.8 fold increase (508→4,469)
- Indonesian: 14.5 fold increase (103→1,495)
- Nepalese: 13.6 fold increase (69→939)
- South/North Korean: 24.4% decrease (5,976→4,520)
- Percentage of Chinese and South/North Koreans in the foreign resident population has decreased from 71.4% to 41.3%

Numbers by status of residence

- Technical intern training: 3.1 fold increase (1,371→4,193)
- Engineer/specialist in humanities/international services¹: 2.6 fold increase (522→1,368)
- Dependent: 2.1 fold increase (642→1,335)
- Permanent resident: 1.4 fold increase (4,614→6,308)
- Special permanent resident: 28.3% decrease (5,345→3,832)
- Skilled labor: 43.7 fold increase² (43→1,880)
- Percentage held by the top three resident statuses (special permanent resident, permanent resident, technical intern training) decreased from 72.4% to 61.5%

¹Total number is a combination of the number of engineer and specialist in humanities/international services status holders from 2014.

²As skilled labor status was created in 2019, the comparison is from numbers at end of March 2020 to end of March 2024.

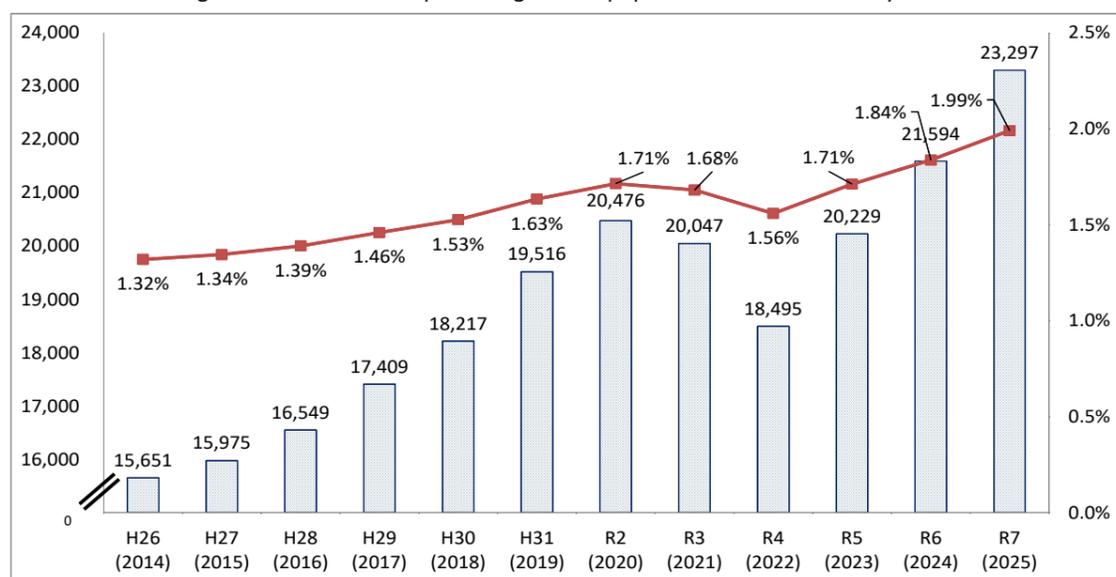
Comparing results from the 2015 National Census to the 2020 National Census

Children and the Elderly

- Children (0-14) with foreign nationalities increased 19.9% (1,246→1,494)
- Elderly (60 and above) with foreign nationalities increased 4.8% (2,647→2,774)

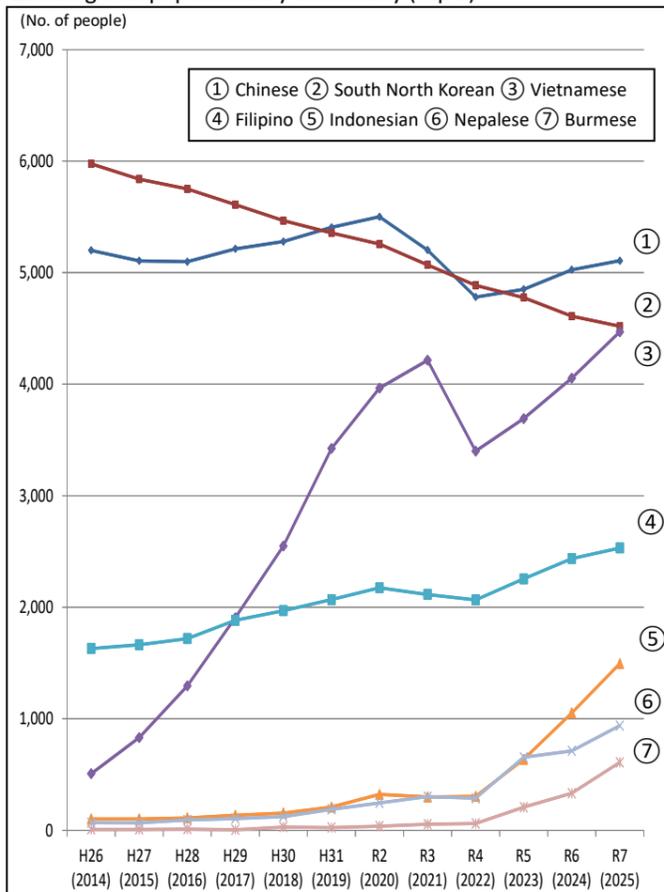
Statistics at a glance

■ Number of foreign residents and their percentage in the population of Hiroshima City



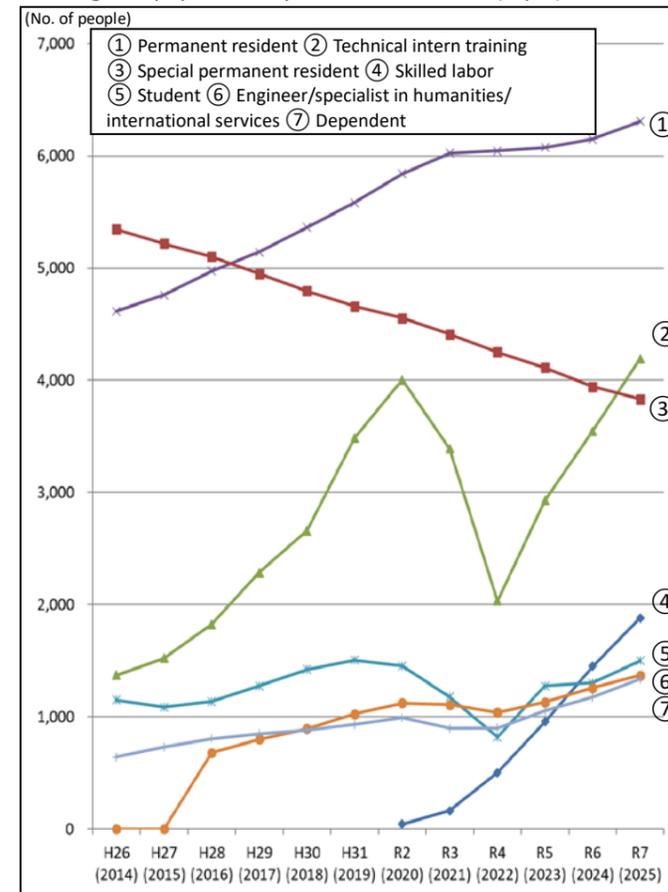
Source: Data from the Hiroshima City Basic Resident Register (end of March each year)

■ Changes in population by nationality (top 7)



Source: Data from the Hiroshima City Basic Resident Register (end of March each year)

■ Changes in population by status of residence (top 7)



Source: Data from the Hiroshima City Basic Resident Register (end of March each year)

Results of the Multiculturalism Survey

(1) Regarding international residents

Comparing the results of the FY2012 City of Hiroshima Survey on the Reality of Life and Thoughts of Foreign Residents and the FY2022 Hiroshima City Multiculturalism Survey

Plans to continue living in Japan

- Those who answered "I plan to live in Japan indefinitely" decreased from 74.4% to 57.2%
- Those who answered "I will mainly live in Japan, but will travel between Japan and my home country" rose from 11.4% to 19.9%, and "I don't know yet" rose from 4.7% to 11.7%

Japanese language ability

- Regarding language ability comparable to native Japanese speakers, speaking/listening fell from 50.4% to 32.9%, reading fell from 53.0% to 35.3%, and writing fell from 56.1% to 38.1%.

Japanese language ability comparable to a native Japanese speaker

	2012 (A)	2022 (B)	Difference (B-A)
Speaking/listening	50.4%	32.9%	-17.5
Reading	53.0%	35.3%	-17.7
Writing	56.1%	38.1%	-18.0

Source: Multiculturalism Survey Results Report (March 2023)

Help and information for everyday life

- When turning for help, those who answered "Family/relatives living in Japan" decreased from 70.0% to 54.8%.

Where to go for help and information for everyday life

	2012 (A)	2022 (B)	Difference (B-A)
Family/relatives living in Japan	70.0%	54.8%	-15.2
Friends and acquaintances living in Japan who are from my country	45.2%	45.2%	0.0
Japanese friends and acquaintances	47.2%	35.0%	-12.2
Municipal/prefectural consultation services	11.8%	13.5%	1.7

Source: Multiculturalism Survey Results Report (March 2023)

(2) Comparing awareness levels in Japanese residents and international residents (from the results of the 2022 survey)

- In response to the question, "Is there anything you feel is difficult about interacting with Japanese nationals/international residents?", the highest percentage of both international residents, and Japanese residents answered, "The language barrier." The second highest percentage of answers from international residents was "Differences in customs/culture," while for Japanese residents, it was "There aren't many chances to interact."
- In response to the question of whether Japanese nationals and international residents should actively engage in exchange, over 60% of both international residents and

What we anticipate in the near future

- Increase in international residents and diversification of nationalities
- Further increase in the number of foreign workers
- Continuous increase in permanent residents
- Aging of international residents
- Increase in children with foreign roots
- Diversification of support needed by international residents
- Heightened need for building relationships between the local community and international residents

5) Issues

1) Enhancing communication

- International residents living in Hiroshima are on the rise and from more diverse nationalities, hence an increased necessity for providing information in multiple languages and simplified Japanese.
- The number of international residents requiring Japanese language education is on the rise, hence the City of Hiroshima must proceed with Japanese language education-related projects as needed.

2) Creating an environment where international residents can live comfortably and participate in society

(1) Support based on the lifestyles of international residents

- International residents in Hiroshima are composed of a wide range of ages and living situations, such as single workers, families with small children, young people seeking higher education or employment, elderly in need of care, and more. As the number of these residents increases, the City of Hiroshima must provide support for each of them based on their living situation and make it easier for them to live their lives together with the people of the community while maintaining their own way of living and culture.
- International residents who do not have family or friends in Japan with whom they can consult about their lives here can often feel isolated. To prevent this, the city must continue to publicize municipal consultation services and ensure their convenience, as well as further strengthen their function.
- As we anticipate a further increase in international residents visiting city and ward offices, the city must create a framework to allow these offices to provide appropriate support.

(2) Promoting active societal participation

- Many of the international students who studied in Hiroshima City have the tendency to move to bigger cities such as Tokyo or Osaka, hence, the importance of creating an environment where these students want to live in Hiroshima after graduation.
- It has been decided that the Technical Intern Training Program will be abolished, and the new Training Employment System will be introduced. As such, the city must promote securing and fostering human resources in the municipal area in cooperation with related organizations while keeping an eye on national policy.
- By including the opinions of international residents in the policies of the city, we can enact policies that suit their needs.
- We must create an environment where international residents can be proactive participants in the local community to enable these residents to become integral players in their communities.
- To create an environment where international residents can be proactive, we must also change the mindsets of local communities and promote understanding on their part.

3) Promote socializing and mutual understanding

- To promote mutual understanding between international residents and the local community, it is vital to increase opportunities for socialization.
- In order to also eliminate discrimination and prejudice about foreigners and those with foreign roots, we must continue to promote multicultural awareness.

6) Policy system

Goal 1: Promote international resident-conscious city planning initiatives

Basic policy 1: Facilitating communication

Policy 1: Multilingualization of city government service information and information for living in Hiroshima

- Provide information necessary for living in Hiroshima in multiple languages
- Provide city government service information via the internet and apps
- Provide opportunities to learn about the customs of Japanese society

Policy 2: Promoting Japanese language education and simplified Japanese

- Enhance opportunities for Japanese language education based on students' Japanese level
- Secure and foster human resources who support Japanese language education, such as Japanese teachers and Japanese learning supporters
- Promote simplified Japanese usage
- Build a cooperative framework linking businesses and Japanese language education after assessing the actual Japanese language education needs of foreign workers, as well as their workstyle
- Raise awareness among businesses of the importance of Japanese language education for foreign workers and promote simplified Japanese usage

Basic policy 2: Enhance support systems for living in Japan

Policy 1: Operating consultation services for foreigners

- Further publicize consultation services for foreigners to international residents
- Accurately understand the context of the consultation and the needs of the consulter, and reliably connect them to the necessary support (municipal government, NPOs, etc.)

Policy 2: Provision of medical, health, and welfare services

- Provide multilingual information on national health insurance, long-term care insurance, etc.; discuss and enact support for these services

Policy 3: Ensure opportunities for education and support children and those raising children

- Build support frameworks necessary for children with foreign roots and their guardians
- Fully comprehend matters such as schooling, homelife, linguistic background, and more
- Provide multilingual information regarding schooling to guardians
- Create a network of supporters
- Support for Japanese language learning in schools; foster and secure human resources to support Japanese language learning
- When selecting candidates for enrollment in high schools, conduct special selections for returnee students and foreign students
- Raise awareness of the importance of fostering age-appropriate first language ability
- Provide multilingual information on support services for children and those raising children; promote multilingual support when providing these services

Policy 4: Support for securing housing

- Housing support for international residents by the Hiroshima City Housing Support Council
- Provide multilingual information about businesses and organizations that help international residents find housing, as well as about housing etiquette and rules (etc.)

Policy 5: Support in times of emergencies (natural disasters, etc.)

- Provide support during natural disasters such as establishing a Natural Disaster Multilingual Support Center and operating a volunteer system for interpreters during natural disasters
- Support for carrying out preparedness drills in communities that include international residents
- Publicize disaster preparedness knowledge and how to get information to international residents
- Provide city government service information via the internet and apps (mentioned previously)

Basic policy 3: City planning for active participation in society by international residents

Policy 1: Ensure appropriate work environments

- Initiatives for foreign worker placement in collaboration with foreign worker placement organizations
- Build a network of organizations involved in foreign worker placement and raise awareness to create a good workplace environment for foreign workers
- Cooperate with the Immigration Services Agency of Japan and Labor Bureau to share information regarding issues with foreign worker placement and securing appropriate workplace environments
- Build a cooperative framework linking businesses and Japanese language education after assessing the actual Japanese language education needs of foreign workers, as well as their workstyle (mentioned previously)
- Raise awareness among businesses of the importance of Japanese language education for foreign workers and promote simplified Japanese usage (mentioned previously)
- To encourage international students to settle in Hiroshima City, we must accurately understand and organize the issues and information from related parties and reflect them in our policies

Policy 2: Promote participation in society

- Create opportunities to incorporate the opinions of international residents in city government by having them register as city deliberative council members (etc.)
- Promote international resident participation in society via participation in activities organized by the Social Welfare Council, as well as local/citizens organizations such as Hiroshima LMO
- Promote understanding of foreign cultures (etc.) in local communities

Goal 2: Foster multicultural awareness

Basic policy 1: Create opportunities for socializing and promote mutual understanding

- Create opportunities for socialization between international residents and the local community by holding events where international residents introduce their culture or Japanese residents introduce Japanese culture
- Create opportunities for socialization between Hiroshima Scholarship recipients, residents at Hiroshima International House, and the local community to promote mutual understanding
- Promote international resident participation in society via participation in activities organized by the Social Welfare Council, as well as local/citizens organizations such as Hiroshima LMO (mentioned previously)

Basic policy 2: Promote multicultural understanding

- Raise awareness about the human rights of foreigners and those with foreign roots and provide opportunities to learn about the cultures and customs of international residents by means such as community events and seminars, and education at school
- Use municipal PR to promote understanding for multicultural city planning measures

Develop a promotion framework for multicultural policies

With the increase and diversification of international residents, we must strengthen our city's framework to develop an environment capable of realizing a multicultural society and promote cooperation with the local community, businesses, and related organizations.

(1) Developing a promotion framework within City Hall

- Gather, provide, and share information at the Hiroshima City Meeting of Directors for Multiculturalism regarding multiculturalism initiatives
- Promote awareness of multiculturalism in city employees and share knowledge about supporting international residents through seminars

(2) Cooperate and collaborate with diverse partners

- Provide seminars and knowledge about multiculturalism to the Social Welfare Council, as well as local/citizen organizations such as Hiroshima LMO
- With the City Diversity & Inclusion Division of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation as the main promoter for multiculturalism, cooperate and collaborate the Social Welfare Council and local/citizen organizations such as Hiroshima LMO
- Gather and share information about volunteer organizations and NPOs supporting international residents; create an environment where it is easier for these organizations to work

(3) Develop a headquarters for promoting multiculturalism

- Deliberate the establishment of a headquarters in downtown Hiroshima to enhance our multiculturalism promotion capabilities