

RECORD 3.2 MILLION FOREIGNERS LIVE IN JAPAN



Japan is a society that is primarily known for its homogeneity. Most foreigners residing in the country are from East Asia, and the requirements for permanent residency in Japan are challenging. However, it is becoming more evident that Japan can only continue with the support of immigrants.

Foreigners stabilize the economy

Japan faces a significant challenge due to its aging population and declining birth rates, resulting in a severe labor shortage. The repercussions of this problem are already being observed in various sectors like tourism, care, and transportation.

To stabilize its economy and society, Japan must look for solutions beyond its borders. In 2024, more foreign workers will be hired in the transportation industry. Additionally, some administrative departments, where only Japanese citizens were allowed to be employed, are changing perspectives.

The Japanese government recently published data that shows an increase in the number of foreign workers in the country. As of October 13th, the number of foreigners living in Japan reached a new record of 3.2 million.

Although this represents only 2.6 percent of Japan's total population of around 123.3 million expected in 2023, the number reflects the success of recruitment measures for foreign specialists. The number of foreigners in Japan has increased by almost 150,000 since December 2022. Many new arrivals are specialized professionals who can be directly employed in their respective fields. The government's internship programs have also contributed to the increase.

Both groups have seen an increase of over 10 percent compared to the previous year. Additionally, the number of foreigners with permanent residence permits in Japan has increased by approximately two percent.

Most foreigners living in Japan come from East Asian countries, with Chinese citizens being the most common, followed by people from Vietnam and South Korea.

Travel activity increased significantly after border openings

The Japanese government has recently released data on border crossings, which indicates the impact of the pandemic and border openings on travel activity. The data revealed that in the first half of 2023, Japan recorded 10.14 million entries by foreign nationals, most of whom were tourists. This is a significant increase compared to the previous year, which saw less than 500,000 entries due to closed borders. However, the current numbers have still not reached the levels of 2019, which was a record year for Japan's tourism industry. As for the Japanese citizens themselves, they are also traveling more frequently again. Although the rate of increase is much lower than that of foreign tourists, more than 3.6 million Japanese citizens left the country in the first half of this year, often for tourist trips. This is a significant increase of 2.99 million compared to the previous year.

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