



EUROPEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL IN JAPAN
THE EUROPEAN (EU) CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN JAPAN

HUMAN RESOURCES

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The background of the image shows several immigration-related documents. In the upper left, there is a rectangular stamp with the text 'IMMIGRATION', 'CENTRAL DEPARTMENT', and 'YANGON'. Below this, there is a circular stamp with some illegible text. To the right, there is a vertical stamp with the word 'SHEETS' and some numbers. The entire scene is overlaid with a white horizontal banner containing the text 'IMMIGRATION POLICIES' in a bold, dark blue font.

IMMIGRATION POLICIES

Immigration Policies

YEARLY STATUS REPORT: Good Progress

- With the amendment to the Immigration Control Act leading to effective removal, in practice, of the re-entry permit, Japan has made considerable improvements to the visa process.
- There are, however, some areas that can still be improved.

Immigration Policies

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Government of Japan should:

- Introduce on-line applications;
- Lower the requirement for industry experience from ten to five years for those who do not have a relevant university degree;
- Expand the Technical Intern Training Programme;
- Automatically grant work permits to spouse visa holders so that multinational companies can attract the best talent to postings in Japan;
- Extend the benefits, such as permission to sponsor a foreign maid or nanny, given to “highly skilled professions” to permanent residency holders.
- Look into the possibility of granting short-term work visas for manual labour.





LABOUR MARKET REGULATIONS



Labour Market Regulations

YEARLY STATUS REPORT: Some Progress

- ❑ Japan's future prosperity depends greatly on maintaining an adequate workforce that can support its ageing population and drive its economy.
- ❑ By far the easiest way to increase the working population would be to increase female participation.
- ❑ The EBC strongly urges the Japanese Government to place more focus on workplace diversity and to support and encourage more female participation in the workforce and more male participation in household and child-rearing activities.

Labour Market Regulations

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Remove the spouse special income tax credit (*haigusha-tokubetsu-kojo*).
- ❑ Vastly increase and improve the infrastructure necessary to ensure sufficient child-care facilities, systems and staffing to support female participation in the workforce and male participation in the home.
- ❑ Encourage companies to set up child-care facilities by offering them identical or similar financial contributions to those given to public day-care centres.

Labour Market Regulations

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Introduce employment legislation that encourages the creation of a competitive workforce based on performance and not on long-term employment. Adequate protection of employees is required, but employers also need a legal framework within which to remove non-performing workers.
- ❑ Allow longer periods during which over-time can be balanced.
- ❑ Allow for easier corporate restructuring, while setting up clear rules for compensation of regular employees whose jobs disappear.

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Pension

PENSIONS

Pensions

YEARLY STATUS REPORT: Gradual Progress

- ❑ Social security agreements have been concluded or are being negotiated with several European countries, to the benefit of their citizens, whose mandatory contributions to Japanese pension plans can now be refunded in full.
- ❑ For the nationals of countries without an agreement, however, refunds remain capped at a maximum of three years.
- ❑ Meanwhile, the EBC is encouraged by the discussions on lowering the number of years of pension premium payments required in order to receive a pension.

Pensions

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Lower the number of years required to pay pension premiums in order to receive a pension.
- Make contributions to foreign-based pension plans subject to the same tax relief as contributions to pension plans in Japan.
- Japan and EU Member States should swiftly conclude mutual social security agreements.