

Tourism-Oriented Country Bringing in People from Around the World

—Action Program Towards the Realization of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country 2015—

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Japan Tourism Agency

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- In March 2013, the Ministerial Council on the Promotion of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country was established, with the government creating a framework to work together and make Japan a tourism-oriented country
- On June 11, 2013, the Action Program Towards the Realization of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country was resolved, and on June 17, 2014 Action Program 2014 was resolved, enhancing initiatives. As a result, 13.41 million foreign tourists visited Japan in 2014, the most ever. Spending by foreign visitors was over 2 trillion yen, having doubled in the 2 years since establishing the Ministerial Council.
- On June 5, 2015, Action Program 2015 was made, with goals of preparing for when there are 20 million visitors, contributing to regional economies, developing tourism into a core industry for Japan, and realizing a high-quality tourism-oriented country.

Ministerial Council on the Promotion of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country

[Members] All Cabinet members (Chair: Prime Minister)

<Meetings>

- 1st March 26, 2013
- 2nd June 11, 2013
- 3rd January 17, 2014
- 4th June 17, 2014
- 5th June 5, 2015

(Action Program 2015 resolved)



(5th Council meeting)

Working Team for the Promotion of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country

[Chair] Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism [Deputy Chair] MLIT Parliamentary Vice-minister
[Members] Related Vice-Ministers, etc.

<Meetings>

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 st April 10, 2013 | 6 th January 23, 2014 |
| 2 nd April 17, 2013 | 7 th April 16, 2014 |
| 3 rd May 20, 2013 | 8 th May 29, 2014 |
| 4 th June 7, 2013 | <u>9th March 17, 2015</u> |
| 5 th September 20, 2013 | <u>10th April 21, 2015</u> |
| | <u>11th May 21, 2015</u> |

<Comments by Prime Minister Abe> (June 5, 2015:

5th Ministerial Council on the Promotion of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country meeting)

- On the increase in foreign tourists: "...ensure that this trend is **not temporary** and that **tourists are drawn to all parts of the country.**"
- "We have **strengthened the CIQ system** so that **all necessary preparations are in place** for the coming era in which **20 million tourists visit Japan annually.** Additionally, we will promote the creation of **tax-free shops in shopping areas and elsewhere,** expanding the current number of over 6,000 tax-free shops in the **regions** to around **20,000 shops by 2020.** Furthermore, we will enhance the **revenue-generating ability** of tourism, doubling the 2 trillion yen **spent by foreign tourists** last year, such that **in the year when 20 million tourists visit Japan, they will spend 4 trillion yen.**
- "We will **exert every effort** to implement the Action Program, while also **revising it each year**"

○Attracting Western Tourists

The promotion strategy targeting the west will be updated, with promotions based on **Japanese history and traditional culture** to appeal to **Western tourists**, and expanding the amount of experiential tourism products.



○Strategic Relaxation of Visa Requirements

- Multiple-entry visas will begin to be issued for **Brazil** by mid-June this year.
- Multiple-entry visas will be issued for **Mongolia** as soon as possible.
- Promotions will be focused on countries and regions where visa requirements are relaxed.

○Spending by foreigners visiting Japan was **2.278 trillion yen**. The goal is to develop tourism into a core industry driving Japan's economy, to have **4 trillion yen in spending by foreign visitors when 20 million people visit Japan**.

- Increase the number of **tax-free stores**, from 18,800 in total and 6,600 **regional stores** (April 2015), to 12,000 regional stores in 2017 and **20,000 regional stores in 2020**.



A first, an entire shopping arcade in Omotecho, Okayama is now tax-free.



- Efforts will be made to encourage local governments, chambers of commerce, and shopping arcade businesses to develop **"tax-free shopping arcades"**.
- In addition to promoting the installation of ATMs that allow **foreign-issued credit cards** to withdraw cash, provide information on ATMs that allow foreign-issued credit cards on the JNTO website and in guidebooks.
- By cooperating with industrial organizations, such as with promotions for **Chinese New Year sales** targeting Chinese tourists at retailers across the country during February, a slow season for Japan, strongly promote Japanese shopping tourism overseas.
- In order for foreign tourists to be able to easily purchase **food and agricultural/marine products**, develop systems to allow them to bring these goods home.
- At the Transport Bureau for each region, select high quality services and goods to promote to foreign tourists, and label them with the regional brand mark (ex. Japan. Shikoku Brand)
- Promote participation in high-quality **Japanese cultural experiential programs**, including noh, kabuki, tea ceremony, temples, and **unique regional cultures developed into tourism resources**, and encourage longer stays.



○Attracting the Wealthy and Promoting Use of System for Long-term Stays

In order to encourage wealthy people to use the new system starting in 2015 for **long-term stays by foreigners**, in addition to overseas advertising and explanatory sessions in promising markets, provide explanations to private businesses and local governments in Japan.

○Promote High Quality Tourism Interactions

In order to sufficiently communicate the value and appeal of the cultural properties representing Japanese history and culture, provide support for **providing information about cultural properties in English**, studying easy to understand English displays, including ICT use.

○Developing Regional Resources to Be World Class

By advertising the appeal of the winter snow season, create year-round demand for tourism in Japan with promotions for every season. Advertise domestically and overseas Niseko, Hakuba, and Myoko, world-class **snow resorts**, and support improvement, branding, and overseas advertisement of snow resorts. Also, consider requirements for visas for foreign ski instructors other than the number of years of work experience, making a final decision this fiscal year.

○Stimulate Driving Tourism with Rental Cars

With the number of foreign tourists on non-group trips increasing, **driving tourism with rental cars** is increasing rapidly, especially in areas such as Hokkaido and Okinawa. Develop systems to improve safety and convenience of driving tourism with rental cars.

○Improving Speed and Ease of Entry and Exit Procedures

A goal of decreasing **maximum waiting time to 20 minutes or less** for immigration procedures at the airport by fiscal year 2016.

- To make entry and exit procedures quick and easy, increase booths for foreigner immigration processing and ensure **sufficient CIQ budget and personnel**, to develop the necessary physical and personnel structure.
- To handle temporary seasonal demand, etc. such as international charter flights to regional airports and international cruise ships stopping in Japan, including emergency systems, build a **flexible system** for CIQ.
- To decrease the time necessary for entry procedures in airports, examine specific locations and necessary procedures to establish **preclearance** to check visitors travelling to Japan by airplane at their point of departure.



*Immigration at airport (example)

○Developing Tourism Areas So Visitors Experience the Appeal of the Area and Want to Visit Again

In order to respond to the needs for a variety of interpreter guides in regions, in addition to implementing a **regional guide system** where local governments train guides independently, ensure quality of national guides with workshops after certification.

○Enhanced Multilingual Support

As well as creating **consistent, continuous signage** for all **national parks** by 2020, ensure bathrooms, etc. use universal design. Improve multilingual support for providing information on evacuation, notifications and explanation in the case of natural disasters or other situations where a rapid response is necessary.

○Promote Free Public Wi-Fi, Improve Communications for Foreign Tourists

Building a system where after **registering once, it is possible to sign in** at 200,000 spots throughout Japan, adoption of a common **Japan. Free Wi-Fi** symbol easy for foreign tourists to recognize, and providing an open database of Wi-Fi spots to increase effectiveness of web sites and applications.



○Developing Public Transportation for Comfortable, Easy Travel

In addition to promoting **Hands-Free Travel** by letting tourists send their luggage or purchases to airports, stations or hotels, provide consolidated shipping and tax-free processing at shopping arcades, etc., to speed up service.



○Cultural Events Throughout Japan

After the end of the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics, use the **cultural events** held throughout Japan to attract visitors to rural regions, by promoting the appeal of Japanese culture such as tangible and intangible cultural properties, seasonal festivals and fireworks, regional traditional performing arts, and food.

<2012 London Olympics Cultural Events Examples>

-Cultural events throughout the UK, not just London, since 2008.
(approximately 60% outside London)



© Chris Christodoulou
Outdoor orchestral concert by Stirling Castle near Glasgow.



World Shakespeare Festival (Birmingham, etc.)



Hatwalk: 21 statues in London were given avant-garde hats

○Olympics/Paralympics as Opportunity to Increase Adoption of Barrier-Free

As the site of the 2020 Olympics, create a advanced, focused model of **barrier-free and universal design** in a continuous area linking popular tourist attractions in the city and the route from the airport to event facilities in Tokyo.

Pillar of Growth Strategy

By attracting global demand for international tourism, such as from rapidly growing countries in Asia, Japan can regain a strong economy.

Key to Regional Development

With the reduced birth rate and aging population, increasing travel spending and the domestic and international tourist population, will help maintain regional vitality and develop society.

Japan in International Society

Through two-way interaction with foreign countries, international mutual understanding will be increased, and there will be greater trust in and empathy for Japan.

Regional and Cultural Pride

By opening the country with tourism, and having foreigners experience Japanese culture and the nature of Japanese people, Japanese people themselves will reaffirm the worth of and feel pride in their culture and region.