

Mobility: Immigration alert

February 2023



Japan

Expansion of immigration routes for highly skilled professionals and top international graduates

Executive summary

On 17 February 2023, the Japanese authorities announced the expansion of its current immigration routes for highly skilled foreign nationals and graduates from the world's top universities. The government is seeking comments from the public until 24 March 2023 regarding the upcoming expansion and is expected to accept applications under these routes starting in mid-April 2023.

Japan System for Special Highly Skilled Professionals

Under the upcoming Japan System for Special Highly Skilled Professionals (J-Skip), high-level managers, engineers and researchers who seek to apply for Highly Skilled Professional (HSP) Visa status will be considered to have qualified under the current point-based system if they meet the following conditions:

- ▶ *Engineers and researchers.* These applicants must earn at least JPY 20 million annually and have at least 10 years of related work experience or a master's degree or above.
- ▶ *Managers.* These applicants must earn at least JPY 40 million annually and have at least five years of related work experience.

Individuals who are granted HSP Visa status under the J-Skip will receive the following benefits:

- ▶ Visa holders will move from HSP Level 1 to HSP Level 2 after one year of residing in Japan (down from three years currently). While in Level 1 status, individuals are granted residence authorization for five years and can undertake work only within their professional field. In Level 2 status,

they receive permanent residence authorization and are not subject to any restrictions on their work activities.

- ▶ Dependent spouses of primary applicants who seek to take up full-time work in Japan will be subject to relaxed requirements and fewer restrictions. Currently, these individuals must have a job offer from a Japanese company prior to applying for dependent status and can work in white-collar jobs only.

Individuals who seek to apply for HSP Visa status must score at least 70 points in Japan's points-based system, which assigns scores to applicants based on their overall educational and career background (e.g., academic qualifications, research achievements, work experience, annual income and Japanese language proficiency).

Japan System for Future Creation Individual Visa

Individuals who enter the country pursuant to the Japan System for Future Creation Individual Visa (J-Find) will be granted authorization to reside in Japan for up to two years (up from 90 days currently). During this period, they may seek employment or set up businesses in the country. In order to qualify for the J-Find, applicants must:

- ▶ Have graduated from one of the world's top 100 universities (based on the [QS](#), [Times](#) and [Shanghai](#) rankings) in the five years prior to filing their application
- ▶ Submit proof that they have at least JPY 200,000 upon arrival in Japan

During their period of authorized residence in Japan, J-Find visa holders will be able to undertake internships at Japanese companies. In addition, they will be eligible to bring in dependent family members (e.g., spouses or minor children). Currently, they are not eligible to bring in dependents or undertake internships in Japan.

The Japanese government is expected to release further details about the J-Skip and J-Find in the near future.

Impact on employers

The expansion of the two immigration routes is intended to attract and streamline the immigration process for qualifying foreign nationals. Employers are expected to benefit from enhanced access to global talent.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

EY | Building a better working world

EY exists to build a better working world, helping create long-term value for clients, people and society and build trust in the capital markets.

Enabled by data and technology, diverse EY teams in over 150 countries provide trust through assurance and help clients grow, transform and operate.

Working across assurance, consulting, law, strategy, tax and transactions, EY teams ask better questions to find new answers for the complex issues facing our world today.

EY refers to the global organization, and may refer to one or more, of the member firms of Ernst & Young Global Limited, each of which is a separate legal entity. Ernst & Young Global Limited, a UK company limited by guarantee, does not provide services to clients. Information about how EY collects and uses personal data and a description of the rights individuals have under data protection legislation are available via ey.com/privacy. EY member firms do not practice law where prohibited by local laws. For more information about our organization, please visit ey.com.

Ernst & Young LLP is a client-serving member firm of Ernst & Young Global Limited operating in the US.

© 2023 Ernst & Young LLP.
All Rights Reserved.

EYG no. 001853-23Gbl

2101-3682263
ED None

ey.com

Yoshito Kijima

Partner - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: +81 70 2478 0144
Email: yoshito.kijima@ey.com

Yoko Kiumi

Manager - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: +81 90 1133 6287
Email: yoko.kiumi@ey.com