

Japanese-Language Education Overseas

According to the Japan Foundation's "Survey on Japanese-Language Education Abroad 2006" approximately 2.98 million people outside of Japan are studying Japanese, in 133 countries and regions around the world. If the number of people studying Japanese independently was included, it is estimated that the figure would be several times higher.

In response to the keen and growing interest in studying Japanese, the Japan Foundation provides assistance for Japanese language education and the study of Japanese in a number of ways. We provide support to Japanese language teachers, educational organizations, and students; dispatch Japanese language specialists abroad; and conduct the Japanese Language Proficiency Test and develop and disseminate teaching materials.



Production and Donation Teaching Materials

In order to provide various types of support for the development of teaching materials, the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa carries out the following programs: Development of Teaching Materials, Support for the Development and Publishing of Materials on Japanese-language Education, and Donation of Japanese-language Teaching Materials.



Animation character of "Erin's Challenge"
(From left to right; Erin, N21-J, Honigon) © 2006 The Japan Foundation

Website, Material Production Support, and Donation

The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa runs the website "Minna no Kyōzai." This site helps Japanese-language teachers all over the world to create teaching materials appropriate for their learners. <http://momiji.jpf.go.jp/kyozai/>

In the past year the Japan Foundation has also provided 15 partial grants in 13 countries to organizations that publish Japanese-language teaching materials, supplements, and dictionaries. Furthermore, the Foundation donated Japanese-language teaching materials to 1,028 Japanese-language educational institutions in 100 countries in which it is difficult to obtain such materials.

TOPIC Erin's Challenge! I Can Speak Japanese.

Erin's Challenge! I Can Speak Japanese. is a new television course/DVD teaching material for learners, produced by the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa. Aimed at beginner-level language students, its lessons revolve around a series of 25 mini-dramas centering on life at the Japanese high school where Erin is an exchange student. Through a process of trial and error, Erin finds that she is able to achieve her goals in the Japanese language by applying what she learns from situations in her day to day life. Erin is helped by other friendly animated characters such as the teacher, Honigon, and the robot N21-J, who explain key phrases that arise in the sketches and acts as Erin's guide through each episode.

One of the notable features in this series is the emphasis on cultural understanding as part of Japanese-language study. The program is designed to encourage learners to compare situations in the series with situations in their own culture, and to reflect upon their own cultural background. The series also introduces Japanese-language students to people from around the world who use Japanese in the course of their work. Learners can

identify with these people, and gain encouragement and the motivation to set new targets of their own.

Erin's Challenge! I Can Speak Japanese. was broadcast by NHK Educational TV in Japan, and overseas by NHK World, NHK World Premium, and Television Japan (a total of 25 times between October 2006 and March 2007, and in reruns since April 2007). By October 2007, a total of 3 DVDs had been released by Bonjinsha Inc.



Erin (center) and her friends

Exchange of Information on Japanese-Language Education

Through print and electronic publications, the Japan Foundation discloses a variety of up-to-date information on Japanese-language education around the world, with hope to nurture and support a network of Japanese-language learners and specialists.

Information and Research on Japanese-Language Education

Nihongo Kyôiku Tsûshin, No. 55–57

This journal in Japanese provides overseas Japanese-language teachers in particular with information on teaching materials, teaching ideas for the classroom, current topics in Japan, the situation of Japanese-language education, and so on. The website features exclusive articles as well as the PDF version of the pamphlet.
<http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/japan/publish/tsushin/>

Kokusai Kôryu Kikin Nihongo Kyôiku Kiyô, No. 3

This is an anthology of articles that report the results of the educational and research activities of lecturers and staff members of the Japan Foundation. The PDF version is available on the Japan Foundation website.
<http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/japan/publish/bulletin/03/>

Sekai no Nihongo Kyôiku, Vol. 16

This annual professional journal in Japanese contains peer-reviewed articles, selected from among those submitted from around the world, concerning Japanese-language education and research. Abstracts and complete

PDF versions are available on the Japan Foundation website. It is distributed by the JFIC Library and Bonjinsha Inc. (price: ¥2,200)
<http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/japan/publish/globe/16/>

Nihongo Kyôiku Kunibetsu Jôhô

Information concerning trends in Japanese-language education, educational systems, language teachers and learners in countries around the world is available on the Japan Foundation website. (In Japanese)
http://www.jpf.go.jp/j/japan_j/oversea/kunibetsu/

A Report on the International Roundtable on the Establishment of Standards for Japanese-Language Education

This is a report on an international roundtable, which was held on three occasions in fiscal 2005 with the aim of establishing Standards for Japanese-Language Education (tentative title). The PDF version is available on the Japan Foundation website.
<http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/japan/publish/standard/>

Survey Report on Japanese-Language Education Abroad

To obtain an up-to-date picture of Japanese-language education around the world, the Japan Foundation conducts periodic surveys of Japanese-language students,

teachers, and educational organizations. The latest survey was undertaken in fiscal 2006.

International Speech Contest in Japanese

The 47th International Speech Contest in Japanese was held at the Shimonoseki Civic Auditorium, Yamaguchi on May 27, 2006. A total of 12 contestants from 9 countries were selected from 120 applicants in Japan and other countries. In fluent Japanese, they delivered excellent speeches about their cross-cultural experiences and international exchanges, with the attendance of Her Highness Princess Takamado, along with approximately 1,000 audience.

The International Speech Contest in Japanese has been held in various cities in Japan.

Participants of the 47th Speech Contest with involved parties



Foreign Minister's Award and Education Minister's Award prize winners



Support for Japanese-Language Education

With support for Japanese-language education overseas as one of its main pillars, the Japan Foundation responds to a broad range of demands from overseas by dispatching specialists to overseas organizations involved in Japanese-language education and training local Japanese-language teachers. Aid is extended toward the hiring of Japanese-language teachers and staff members, as well as toward covering part of the expenses for holding Japanese-language speech contests and seminars.

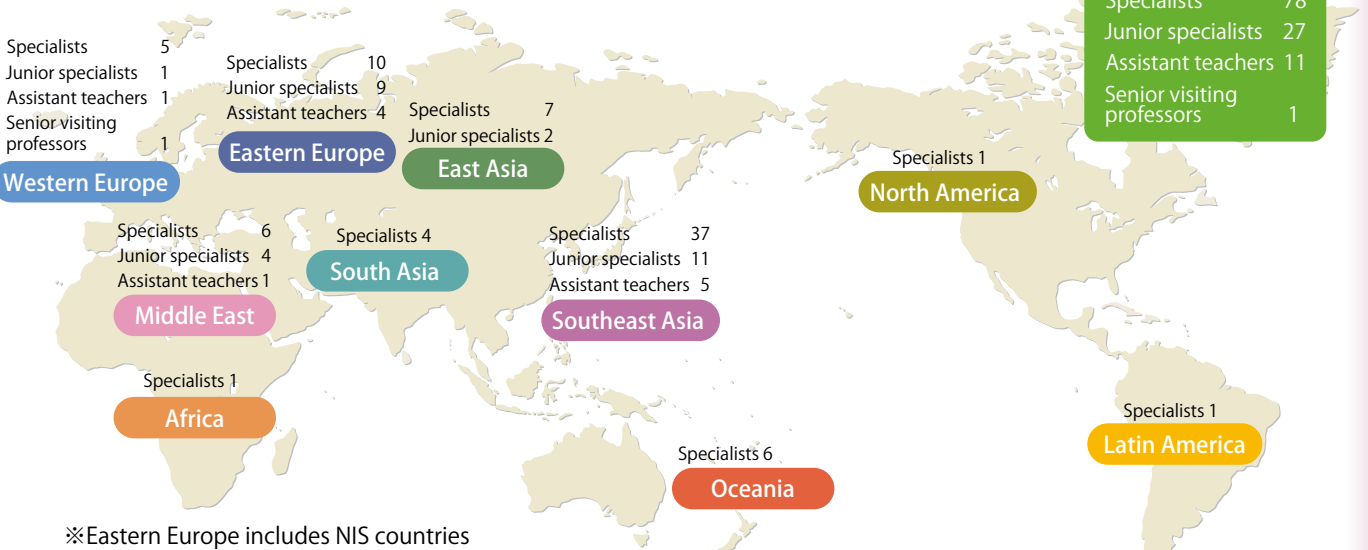
Dispatching of Japanese-Language Specialists

The Japan Foundation sends Japanese-Language Specialists, Junior Specialists, Assistant Teachers, and Senior Visiting Professors (the latter two as part of the Japan Foundation Volunteer Programs) to the overseas offices of the Japan Foundation, Ministries of Education, Universities, and other educational institutions in various countries. The Foundation also helps develop and spread Japanese-language education by training teachers, developing curricula and teaching materials, and providing classes and advice on teaching methodologies and the preparation of teaching materials. Japanese-Language Specialists also play an important role in

the Japanese-language courses of the Japan Centers, in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).



Japanese-language teachers in the Middle East gathered in Cairo



Grant and Support Programs for Japanese-Language Education Project Overseas

In the FY 2006, the Japan Foundation supported more than 140 projects, such as Japanese-language courses, speech contests, and Japanese-language education-related

academic conferences and seminars held abroad.

Japanese Language Test

The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test

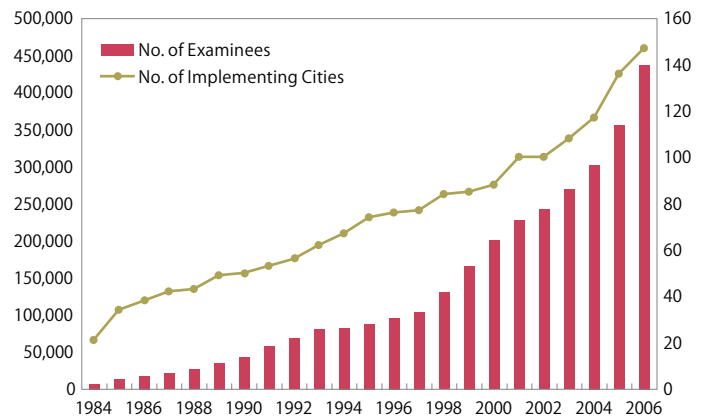
The Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) is designed to evaluate and certify proficiency in the Japanese language of non-native speakers. Established in 1984, the test is conducted by the Japan Foundation in cooperation with local host institutions overseas. In Japan, the test is administered by Japan Educational Exchanges and Services, and in Taiwan it is administered by the Interchange Association.

In 2006, the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test was held on Sunday, December 3 in 127 cities overseas, as well as 20 prefectures within Japan.

The total number of applicants was approximately 533,000, of whom 437,000 took the test.

JLPT Communication Square's website
<http://momo.jpf.go.jp/jlpt/home.html>

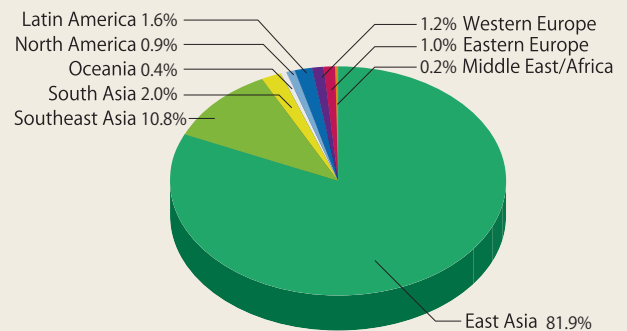
No. of Examinees taking the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test and No. of Implementing Cities



Top Ten Countries/Regions in Terms of Examinees in FY2006

	Country / Region	No. of Implementing Cities
1	China	165,353
2	Korea	70,495
3	< Taiwan >	49,571
4	< Hong Kong >	12,221
5	Thailand	11,861
6	Vietnam	8,045
7	Indonesia	7,108
8	India	5,366
9	Singapore	3,712
10	Brazil	2,914
	Overseas total	364,480
	Within Japan	72,880

Comparison of No. of Examinees by Region in FY2006 (Overseas)



Online Japanese-Language "Sushi" Test

The "Sushi" Test is a pilot online test, developed independently by the Japan Foundation, for younger Japanese-language students overseas. The test has been available to students since March 2004. Applicants may take the test free of charge, simply by registering as a user. Students who are able to complete the 29 questions, which are divided into three parts, within 30 minutes are able to order sushi based on the number of correct answers.

<http://momo.jpf.go.jp/sushi/>



Top page of "Sushi" Test website

Besides the headquarters in Tokyo, the Japan Foundation also has two affiliated organizations in Japan.

The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa

The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa was established in 1989 in Saitama City, Saitama Prefecture, as an organization affiliated with the Japan Foundation. The Institute provides professional training for overseas Japanese-language teachers who play key roles at their schools, and manages a library dedicated to Japanese-language instruction.

Every year, approximately 500 Japanese-language teachers from more than 50 countries and regions participate in special training programs that range in length from three weeks to nine months. These courses have been commended for their practical content, which, in addition to classroom study, includes visits to Japanese schools and a viewing of traditional performing arts such as *Kabuki*.

As projects in material production, the Japan Foundation

Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa also produced, besides *Erin's Challenge! I Can Speak Japanese.*, the 14 volumes of *The Japan Foundation Nihongo Kyôjuhô Series* and *For Real: Study Materials from Everyday Life in Japan-An Idea Book for Teachers*, which offer methods for using “raw” teaching materials such as food packages, labels, and other realia drawn from everyday life. (Distributed by 3A Corporation Online; Price:1,890 yen)



The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai

In response to the growing number of Japanese-language learners overseas and their increasingly diverse reasons and motivations for studying Japanese, the Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai was established in 1997 in Tajiri-cho, Osaka Prefecture as another facility for study of the Japanese language.

Taking advantage of the benefits of residential study programs, in which students live in dormitory accommodation during their term of study, the Institute invites personnel from the diplomatic service and other public services of various countries, as well as young researchers undertaking Japanese studies, and tailors specialized Japanese-language programs to their particular needs. The Institute also offers short-term study programs, for which the Japan Foundation invites students of the Japanese language to Japan as a means of giving further encouragement to motivated learners.

To promote international exchanges in various areas of Japan, the Institute cooperates with local public entities and non-profit organizations to arrange opportunities for Institute students and local people to interact and engage in activities and projects together.



Joining the locals in the Tajiri-cho Autumn Festival celebrations



Getting ready for a firsthand “taste” of Osaka

