

## 5. North America

### Status of Japanese-language education in North America

In North America, the number of institutions is 1,372 (down 14.6% compared to the previous (fiscal 2018) survey), the number of teachers is 4,675 people (down 0.2% compared to the previous survey), and the number of learners is 179,695 people (down 3.6% compared to the previous survey), so all items have decreased since the previous survey. The number of institutions and learners continued to decline since the previous survey in both countries, and although the number of teachers increased in the United States, it decreased in Canada.

The ratio of the number of learners by educational stage is primary education, 10.7%; secondary education, 42.0%; higher education, 39.2%; and non-school education, 8.1%, so while some increases and decreases were seen, there was no change in the general trend. Note

that the United States accounts for 90.5% of the number of institutions, 87.9% of the number of teachers, and 89.8% of the number of learners, but Canada has more learners when looking at the number of learners for every 100,000 people.

The online class implementation ratio in the United States was 43.4%, while in Canada it was 65.6%.

As for the objectives of Japanese-language learning, the three most popular responses, “interest in anime, manga, J-POP, fashion, etc.” (92.1%), “interest in the Japanese language” (82.2%), and “interest in Japanese culture (e.g. history, literature, arts)” (81.9%), were frequently answered by over 80% of the respondents, which is a similar trend to that seen in the previous survey.

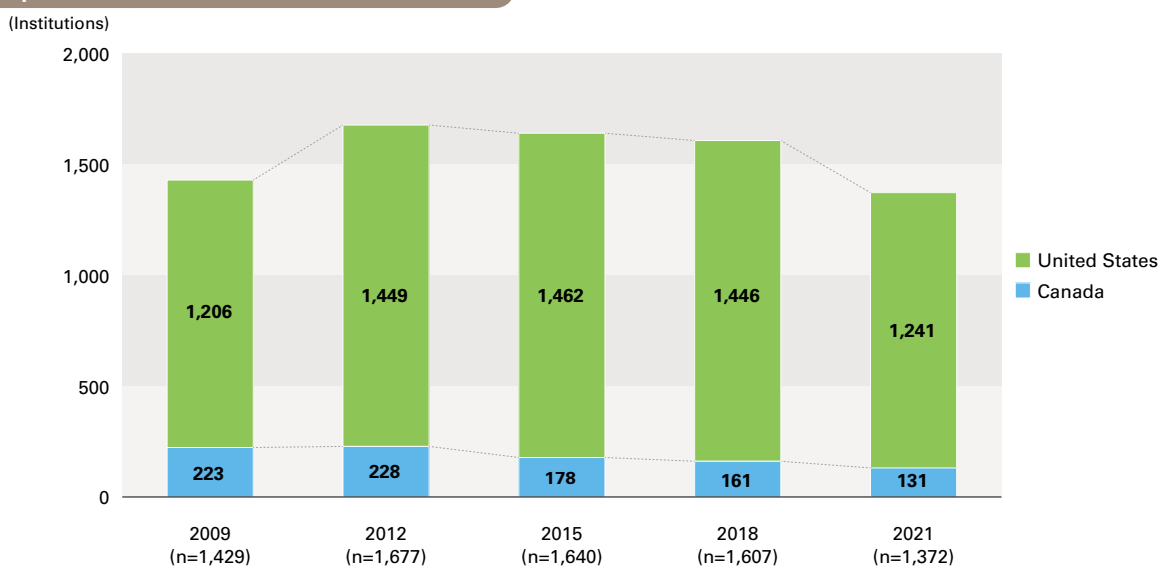
**Table 2-5-1 Number of institutions, number of teachers, and number of learners in North America**

(Listed in order of the number of learners in 2021)

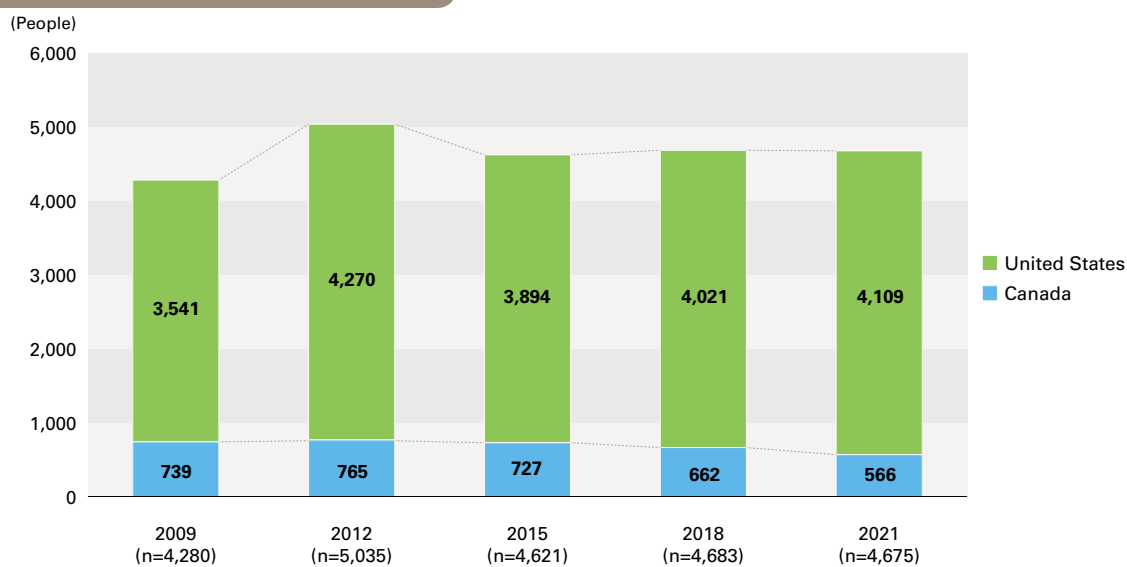
Country and region	2021									2018		
	Institutions (Institutions)	Teachers (People)	Learners (People)	Learners per 100,000 population (People)	Composition by educational stage (Learners) (People)				Population* (People)	Institutions (Institutions)	Teachers (People)	Learners (People)
					Primary education	Secondary education	Higher education	Non- school education				
United States	1,241	4,109	161,402	48.7	19,163	71,440	60,200	10,599	331,449,281	1,446	4,021	166,905
Canada	131	566	18,293	52.0	128	4,000	10,241	3,924	35,151,730	161	662	19,489
<b>North America overall</b>	<b>1,372</b>	<b>4,675</b>	<b>179,695</b>	-	<b>19,291</b>	<b>75,440</b>	<b>70,441</b>	<b>14,523</b>	-	<b>1,607</b>	<b>4,683</b>	<b>186,394</b>

\*Source: *Population and Vital Statistics Report (as of 3 June 2022)*, by United Nations

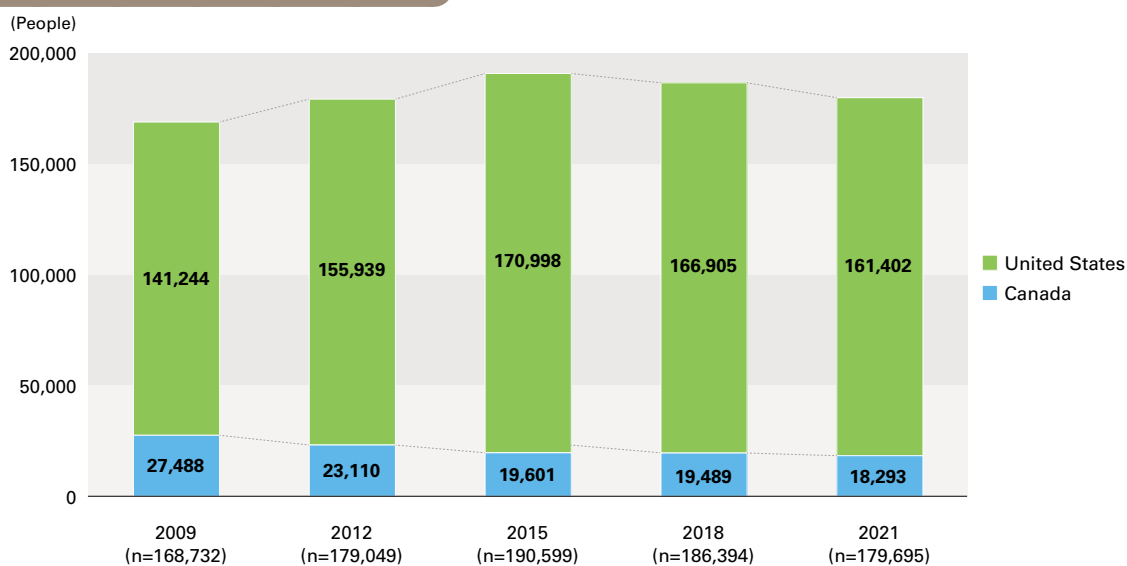
Graph 2-5-1 Number of institutions in North America



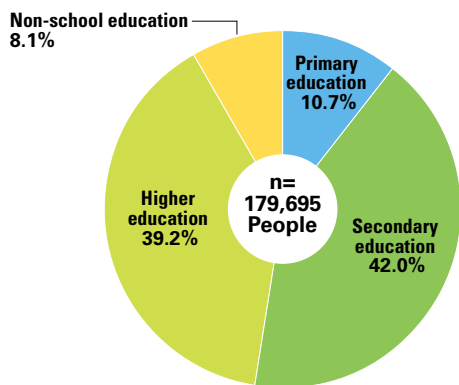
Graph 2-5-2 Number of teachers in North America



Graph 2-5-3 Number of learners in North America



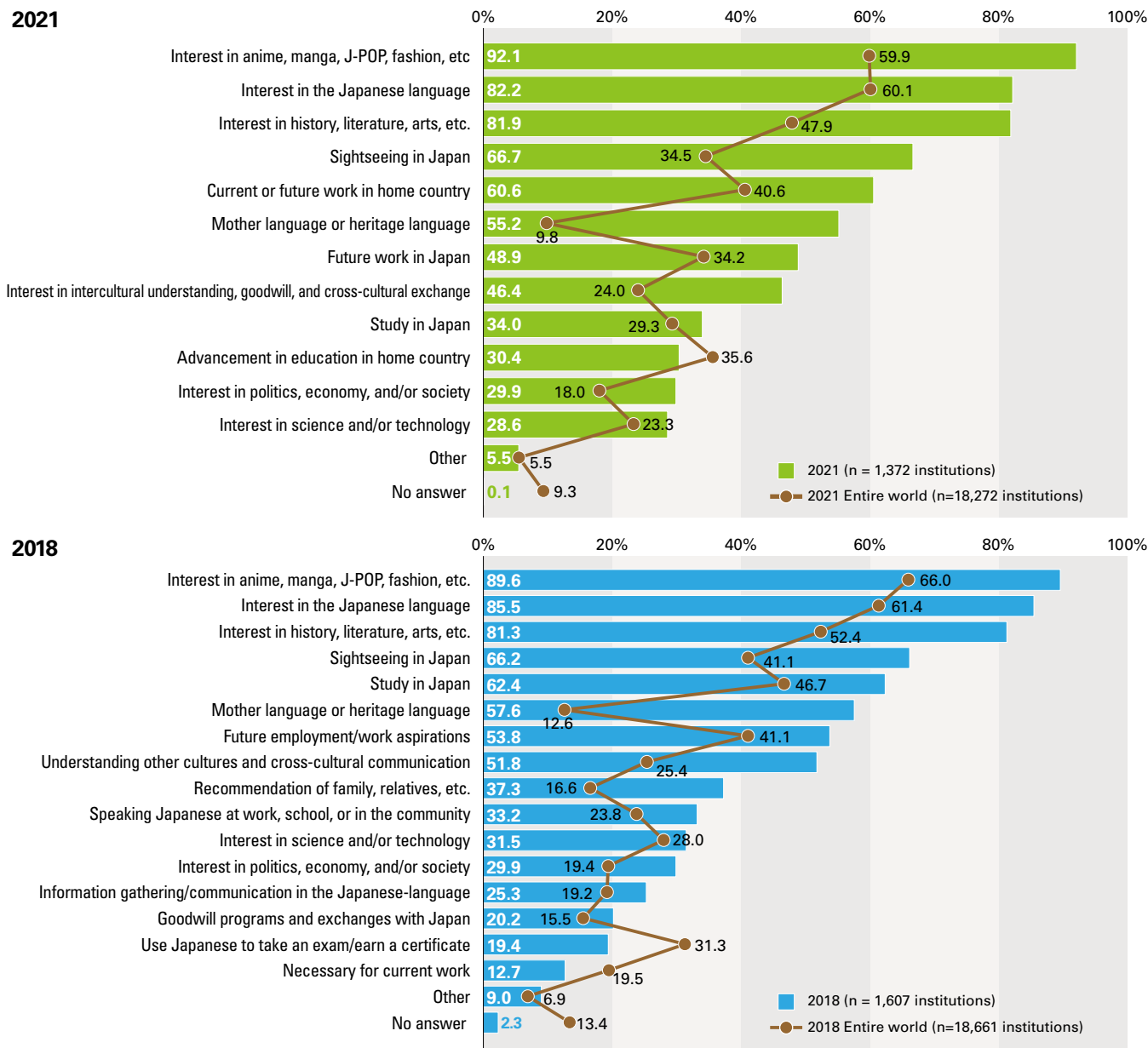
**Graph 2-5-4 Percentages of learners by educational stage in North America**



**Table 2-5-2 Online class implementation ratio in North America**

Country and region	Total number of institutions in the country and region	Online class implementation	
		(Institutions)	(%)
United States	1,241	538	43.4
Canada	131	86	65.6
<b>North America overall</b>	<b>1,372</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>45.5</b>

**Graph 2-5-5 Objectives of Japanese-language learning in North America**



## Trends in each country

### [United States]

The number of institutions is 1,241 (down 14.2% compared to the previous survey), the number of teachers is 161,402 people (down 3.3% compared to the previous survey), and the number of learners is 4,109 people (up 2.2% compared to the previous survey). Although the number of learners declined, the United States actually climbed up one notch from the previous survey, and now ranks seventh in the world for the number of learners.

Around 25% of primary education institutions in the United States offer foreign-language education, and of these, Japanese-language education is mainly provided in public schools such as charter schools, magnet schools, or immersion schools\* with a special curriculum focusing on foreign-language education, or at private schools, with 51% of the primary education institutions that responded to the current survey being private schools. According to an October 2021 report released by the CATO Institute, the number of households sending their children to private schools for the more well-developed programs they offer is on the rise, and the 19,163 Japanese-language learners in the primary educational stage, representing 11.9% of the total learners in the U.S., may increase further in the future.

In contrast, secondary Japanese-language education, which accounts for 44.3% of the total number of learners, is conducted mainly at public schools, and is heavily impacted by school district budgets and policies. Looking at the online class implementation ratio, secondary education is only 21.7% whereas primary education is 42.9% and higher education is 66.2%, which indicates that the percentage of public schools is higher in the secondary educational stage compared to other educational stages, which may result in having insufficient budgets to introduce online classes. In addition, over 70% of schools in upper secondary education have only one full-time Japanese-language teacher, which when combined with the schools that have only one part-time teacher account for over 80% of schools, which means there is a possibility of more Japanese-language classes being closed in the future as these teachers retire. Behind the increase in the number of teachers seen since the previous survey is the fact that single full-time teaching positions are being replaced by having multiple part-time teachers share the position, and it is assumed that there has been no net increase in the number of positions. In a survey released by Saint

Louis University in February 2022, it was reported that there had been a sharp increase in the number of teacher retirements in primary and secondary education due to burnout caused by the increased workload since the outbreak of COVID-19. Meanwhile, although the number of institutions has decreased, interest in Japanese culture, including anime, manga, J-POP, and fashion, remains high in the United States, and while the number of learners decreased in lower secondary education, it increased in upper secondary education, and the number of learners in secondary education as a whole has increased slightly by 1.4% since the previous survey.

The number of learners in higher education is 60,200 people, down 11.8% from the 68,237 people recorded in the previous survey. Compared to before COVID-19, the number of undergraduates in the United States has gone down by 1.4 million people, which is a 9.4% decrease, and the decline in Japanese-language learners can be attributed primarily to the decrease in the number of university students. In addition, the push to increase the emphasis on STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and math) at various educational institutions has led to a continuing trend to drop the foreign-language requirements for graduation, or alternately to loosen the requirements (reduce the number of required credits).

Of the 1,241 institutions overall, 538 (43.4%) offer online classes, which is less than half, although 66.2% of higher education institutions are offering them. In general, universities in the United States are more well-endowed and have more state support than other educational stages, and as a result a higher ratio have adopted online learning compared to other educational stages.

\*Charter schools: Public schools that are run by the community, teachers, parents, and other entities. They receive authorization (a charter) from the government and are publicly funded.

Magnet schools: A type of public school that originated in the United States. Named for the attractive specialized curricula they offer, which draws children to the school like a magnet from a wide range of neighboring communities, including different counties, cities, and school districts.

Immersion schools: Public schools that offer immersion education (a method of education in which a foreign language is used as the means to study various subjects. Study of a foreign language and of other subjects are conducted at the same time, in a foreign-language environment that is not the students' mother language).

The spreadsheets for survey results by state (1-3a and 1-3b) and for online class implementation by educational stage (10) are available on the Japan Foundation website.

**[Canada]**

The number of institutions, teachers, and learners in Canada all continue to be on a declining trend. The number of institutions decreased by 30, going from 161 to 131 (down 18.6% compared to the previous survey), the number of teachers decreased by 96 people, going from 662 people to 566 people (down 14.5% compared to the previous survey), and the number of learners decreased by 1,196 people, going from 19,489 people to 18,293 people (down 6.1% compared to the previous survey), and among these results, the decrease in the number of learners in the secondary education stage (decreasing by 375 people, down 8.6% compared to the previous survey) exceeded the rate of decline in learners overall. In Canada, this category accounted for the highest percentage of learners in comparison to the other educational stages at the time this survey began, but as a result of the continuing decline, higher education became the educational stage with the largest percentage of learners starting from the fiscal 2012 survey, and in the current survey, primary education is 0.7%, secondary education is 21.9%, higher education is 56.0%, and non-school education is 21.5%. The declining trend in Japanese-language learners at secondary education institutions in the province of British Columbia, which has the greatest number of learners in the country, has also had an effect. However, while the number of learners in secondary education fell by thousands of people every time in multiple past surveys, the current survey revealed a decrease of just 375 people. Given that most educational institutions had returned to in-person classes and were limiting the number of students to ensure social distancing, the rate of decline has slowed.

In higher education such as universities, which accounts for over half of the number of learners, the number

of learners increased slightly (up 467 people, or 4.8% compared to the previous survey), with increases in provinces including Quebec, Ontario, and Saskatchewan contributing to the rise. This increase is mainly due to the fact that over the past three years, various institutions have implemented budgetary measures to expand the number of students who can enroll in a course, as there had been many students who were unable to enroll in courses because the courses had exceeded the maximum number of students.

In addition, the availability of online courses has made it possible for students to take courses from remote locations, including overseas, which in turn has also led to an increase in the number of learners in higher education.

In non-school Japanese-language education, both the number of institutions and the number of learners, which had increased in the fiscal 2018 survey, decreased this time around. A large proportion of the institutions in this category provide Japanese-language education for pre-school children and young children in the primary education stage, or as a heritage language, and the decrease in non-school education is thought to be mainly due to a drop in enrollment resulting from the closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the switch to online classes.

Some of the factors reported to have contributed to the decrease in the number of learners during the COVID-19 pandemic include limitations on the number of students per class, mainly in secondary education, and, mainly at non-school education institutions, the cancellation of applications from students who only wish to sign up for in-person classes.

The spreadsheets for survey results by province (1-3a and 1-3b) are available on the Japan Foundation website.