



November 12, 2021

## Joint Statement on the Entry Restrictions in Japan

The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCI), British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ), Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan (CCCJ), German Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan (AHK Japan), French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan (CCI France Japon), Italian Chamber, and the European Business Council in Japan (EBC), welcome the change to the Government of Japan's inbound travel policy that took effect on November 8, 2021. Permitting business travelers and students to once again enter Japan is a critical step toward Japan's post-COVID-19 economic recovery. It will help to ensure that international businesses operating in Japan can continue serving their clients and customers in country and is a necessary precondition to attracting new investment and talent from overseas to meet Japan's economic goals.

We also welcome the reduction from 10 to three days for the quarantine period required of vaccinated business travelers permitted to enter Japan as well as the proposed new measure to allow pre-approved movements after the third day.

However, we note with concern that even with the aforementioned changes, new reporting requirements imposed on sponsoring companies and organizations, as well as other regulatory requirements, mean that Japan will remain more difficult to enter than most of its major economic partners, including other G7 countries.

Further, the continuing requirement for business travelers to obtain a visa (up to 3 months' stay) leads to a significant increase in administrative burden for Japanese and international companies, while limits on the number of businesspeople entering the country adds further uncertainty and complications.

In light of the aforementioned issues and recognizing that the safe resumption of international travel is vital to Japan's economy, we request:

- Simplification of, and greater transparency for, the decision-making process for obtaining visas for business travelers.
- The Government of Japan to move as rapidly as possible to eliminate quarantines and to simplify and eventually eliminate sponsorship procedures for vaccinated travelers.
- The Government of Japan to consider increasing the limits on the number of business people entering the country in the near future.

We have appreciated the Government of Japan's efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19 in Japan and to accelerate vaccination of the population, including all foreign residents.

Further, we applaud the Japanese government's willingness to recognize digital vaccination systems implemented in many major partner countries, such as the SMART system used widely in the United States and across Europe.

- To further facilitate the smooth resumption of international travel, we request that Japan enhance its procedures by recognizing the validity of all vaccines accredited by the World Health Organization for entry into Japan.

We commend the Government of Japan for re-opening its borders to international students. International education is critically important as an industry itself and more broadly as a vital incubator of the talent on which business depends. Unfortunately, the new procedures required of students seeking to study in Japan are costly, time-consuming, and onerous. These procedures and the resulting delays constitute a barrier to international education and will deter, rather than facilitate, international students from studying in Japan.

- In this context, we strongly encourage the Government of Japan to take immediate steps to simplify, expedite, and lower costs for entry of students into Japan.

Finally, we request that the entry process at Japan's airports, which can currently take many hours, be streamlined. Fuller utilization of digital documentation could substantially reduce entry waiting times, reduce costs, and help prepare for eventual expansion of visitor numbers as public health conditions permit.

We look forward to having the opportunity to discuss these recommendations, and to continuing to support Japan's economic recovery and growth.

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