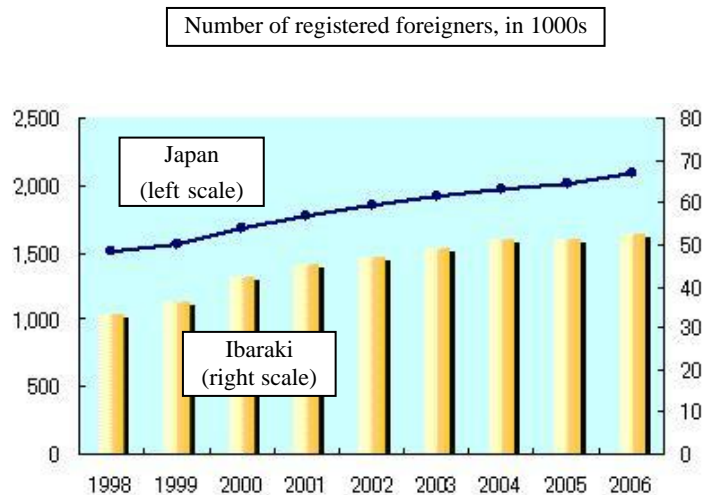


Moving Towards Multicultural Harmony

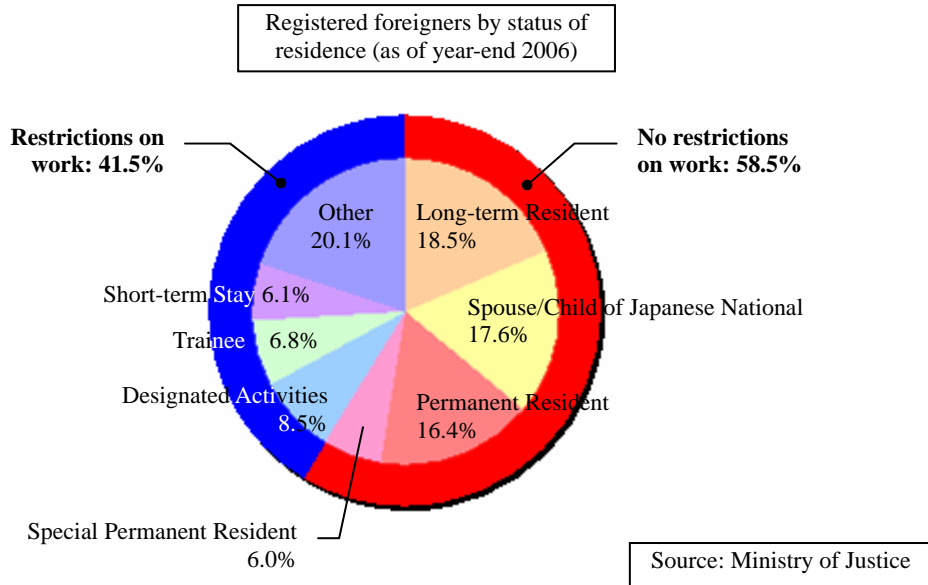
Ibaraki Prefecture is working towards the realization of a society in which Japanese people and foreigners understand and respect each other's culture and customs, and can live together as members of the same communities. We call this *tabunka kyōsei*, or “multicultural harmony” (literally “multicultural symbiosis”).

Along with the recent progress of globalization, a large number of foreigners have come to enter Japan for a variety of reasons, and as of year-end 2006, the number of foreigners living in Japan has surpassed two million. Ibaraki Prefecture has also had a 1.7-fold increase in the number of registered foreigners over the past 10 years, for a total of approximately 53,000 as of year-end 2006. The percentage of Ibaraki residents who come from abroad has risen to approximately 1.8%. This percentage is expected to continue to increase, as a result of factors including the declining Japanese population (due to the low birthrate) and an increase in foreign workers.



Source: Ministry of Justice

Many of the foreigners living in Japan are based in Japan for the medium- or long-term, for reasons such as work or marriage. Furthermore, there are a large number of foreigners in Ibaraki involved with manufacturing, agriculture, and other industries as trainees and apprentices; foreigners in Ibaraki are active in a variety of industries that form the prefecture's backbone.



Given these circumstances, it is important to aim for the realization of a society that's easy for everyone, including foreigners, to live in, and where everyone can exercise their abilities to the fullest. In other words, multicultural harmony—which is important both in terms of community-building, as well as in terms of Ibaraki's growth and the invigoration of its economy and society.

As a first step towards that end, Ibaraki Prefecture ran a “Foreigners’ Roundtable” for two years (fiscal years 2005–06 and 2006–07), made up of 10 foreigners living in Ibaraki, with the goal of getting government policies to reflect the opinions and needs of resident foreigners in the prefecture. The two Roundtables discussed the various problems and issues that face foreigners who live in Ibaraki, and collected their proposals into the following documents.

[2006–07 Proposals \(PDF\)](#)

[2005–06 Proposals \(PDF\)](#)

Next, we will take these proposals into consideration and work towards a realization of multicultural harmony.

For details about our efforts towards this end, please see the following page.
<http://www.pref.ibaraki.jp/bukyoku/seikan/kokuko/kokuko-en/multiculturalism.html>