

# International Comparison of the Foreign Care-worker Demography

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The proportion of the elderly aged 65 years and over exceeds 28% of the population of Japan at present, the highest in the world. The shortage of care workers has been the primary concern since the public long-term care insurance system was launched in 2000. However, this care-worker shortage is common in all parts of the world along with the global population ageing.

Four kinds of status of residence for the long-term care worker have been established quickly in recent years in Japan. However, even without counting these new visas, the number of foreign care workers rose to 11,584 persons as of 2015, although their proportion to the total care workers is as low as 0.6%.

In high income countries with available data (Italy, Netherlands, France, Spain, US, Austria, Ireland, Canada, Australia), the proportion of foreign care-workers is generally high, but this proportion is not particularly higher than the proportion of foreign worker in all the industries. There are substantial differences between the proportion of foreign citizens and those who are foreign-born, with the former being always lower than the latter. This implies the process where foreign-born migrants enter the country, obtain citizenship, and are engaged as care workers. However, the census data indicate skill wastage where more migrant nurses are engaged in long-term care. Moreover, census data might undercount the informal care workers and unregistered migrants.

The planned upper limit of 60,000 foreign care workers' admission into the country stipulated in the governmental policy might not be realistic, but inviting foreign care workers to improve the quality of the long-term care system would be important.