
Survey on current state of
Internationalization
Minato City
(Summary Report)

March 2026

Minato City

Survey Overview

1 Survey Purpose

Minato City aims to realize a multicultural society in which people of different nationalities, ethnicities, and backgrounds respect cultural differences and think, act, and support one another as members of the local community. This survey was conducted to understand the current situation of foreign residents in the city. The findings will be used as reference material for developing measures to achieve this goal and as foundational data for the city's internationalization promotion plan to be formulated in fiscal year 2026.

2 Survey Methodology

2-1 Survey Design

(1) Questionnaire Survey

Survey region	All areas of Minato City
Survey target	Foreign residents aged 18 and older who registered as residents in Minato City as of July 25, 2025
Sample size	3,106
Sample selection	Randomly selected from the Basic Resident Register
Survey method	Postal mail (distribution and return), online questionnaire One reminder postcard was sent.
Survey period	From August 27 to October 10, 2025

(2) Interview Survey

Survey region	All areas of Minato City
Survey target	Individuals who requested an interview
Sample size	30
Sample selection	i) Applicants who submitted an interview request form, enclosed with the questionnaire, by mail or online. ii) From the 278 applicants in i), individuals who were selected based on demographic attributes
Survey period	Late September to early December 2025

2-2 Survey Contents

(1) Questionnaire Survey

- i) About yourself
- ii) Languages
- iii) Information provision
- iv) Daily life and community
- v) Building a disaster-resilient city
- vi) Education (Only those with children may respond.)
- vii) City administration

(2) Interview Survey

The interview survey was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of specific experiences, backgrounds, and challenges and needs in daily life that could not be fully captured through questionnaires. An interview request form was enclosed with the questionnaire, and participants were selected after providing consent.

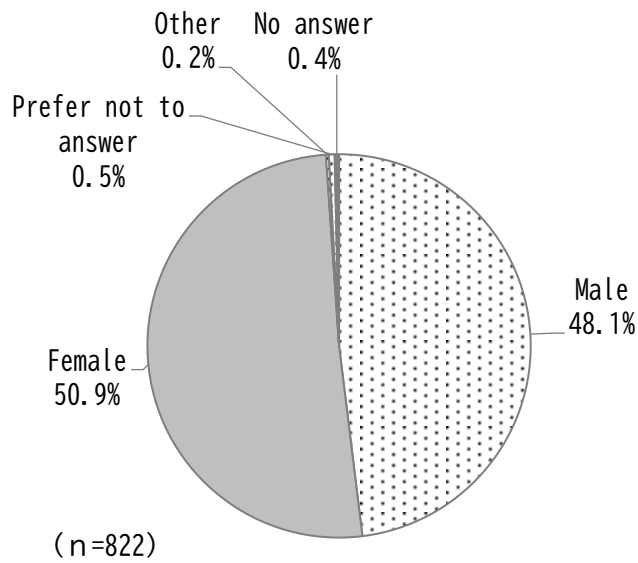
In selecting participants, we referred to questionnaire responses (nationality, residency status, years of residence, family composition, living conditions, etc.) and ensured a balanced representation of participant characteristics. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format, lasting approximately one hour per participant. We gathered information on their daily life, perceived challenges, and requests to the administration, building upon their questionnaire responses.

2-3 Collection Status

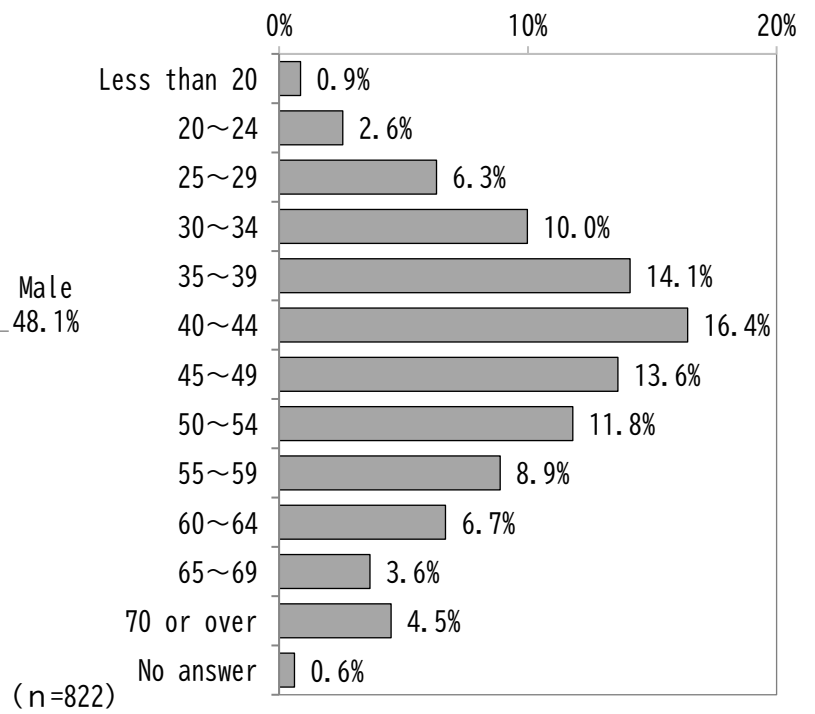
Sample size	3,106
Number of valid responses	822 Online responses: 528 Paper responses: 317 * Excluding 23 duplicate responses between online and paper questionnaires.
Response rate	26.5%

3 Respondent Characteristics

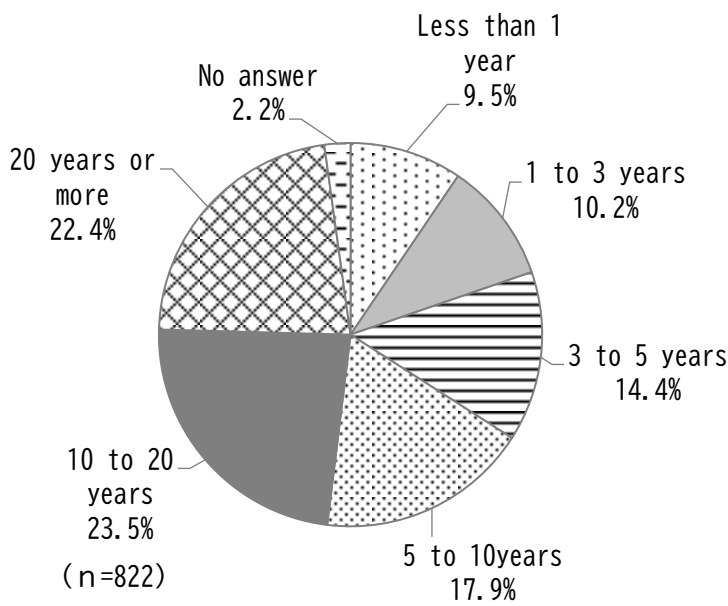
Gender



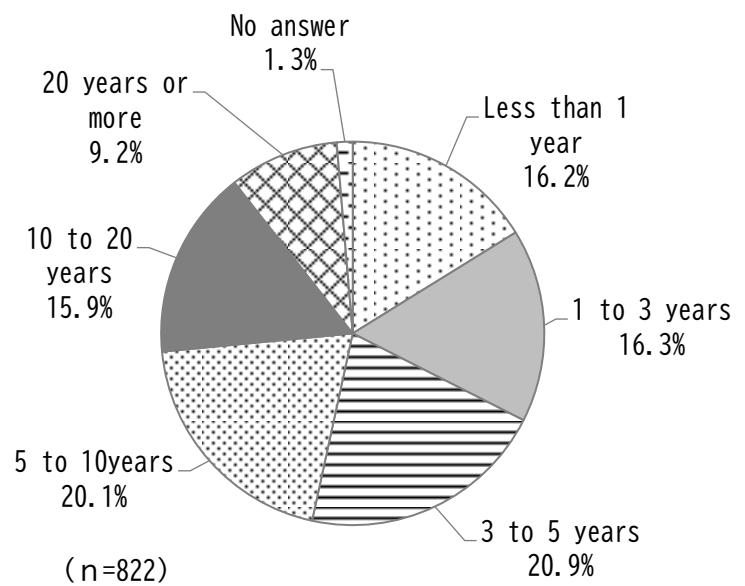
Age



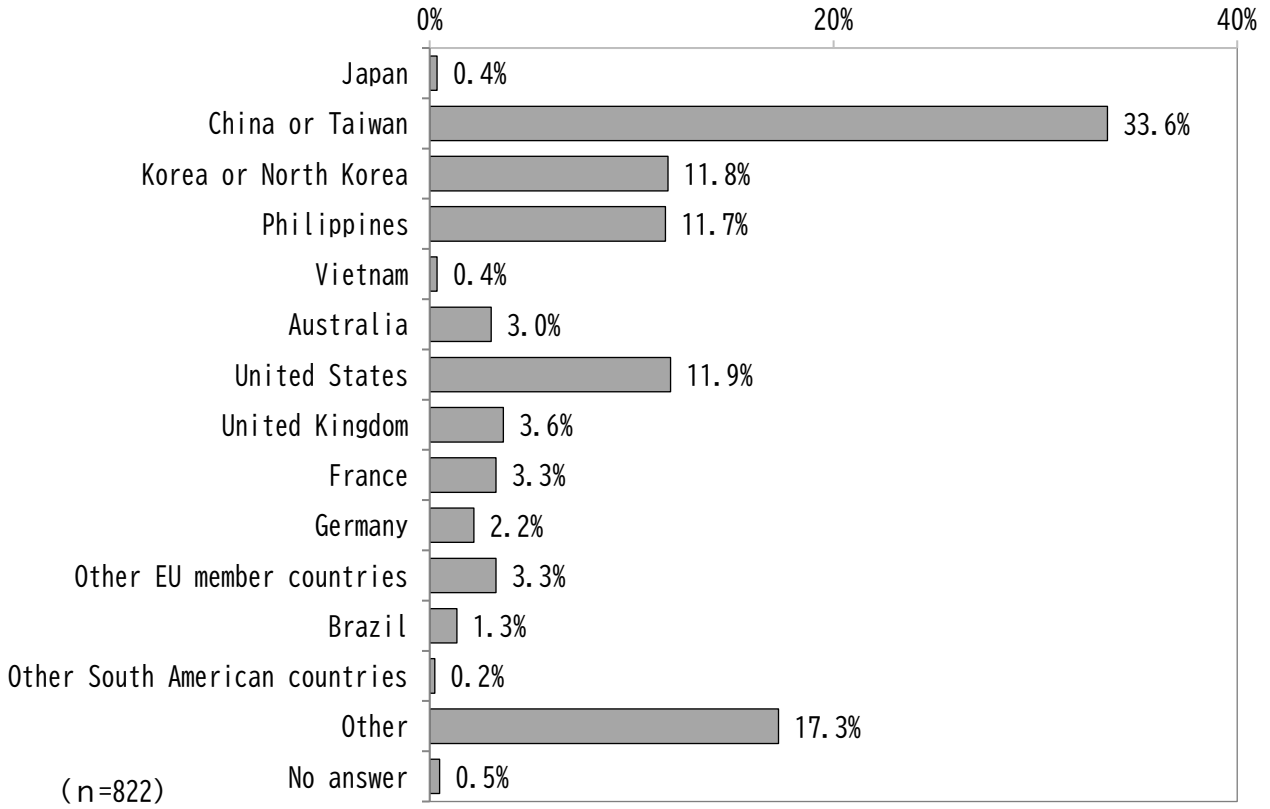
Length of Residence in Japan



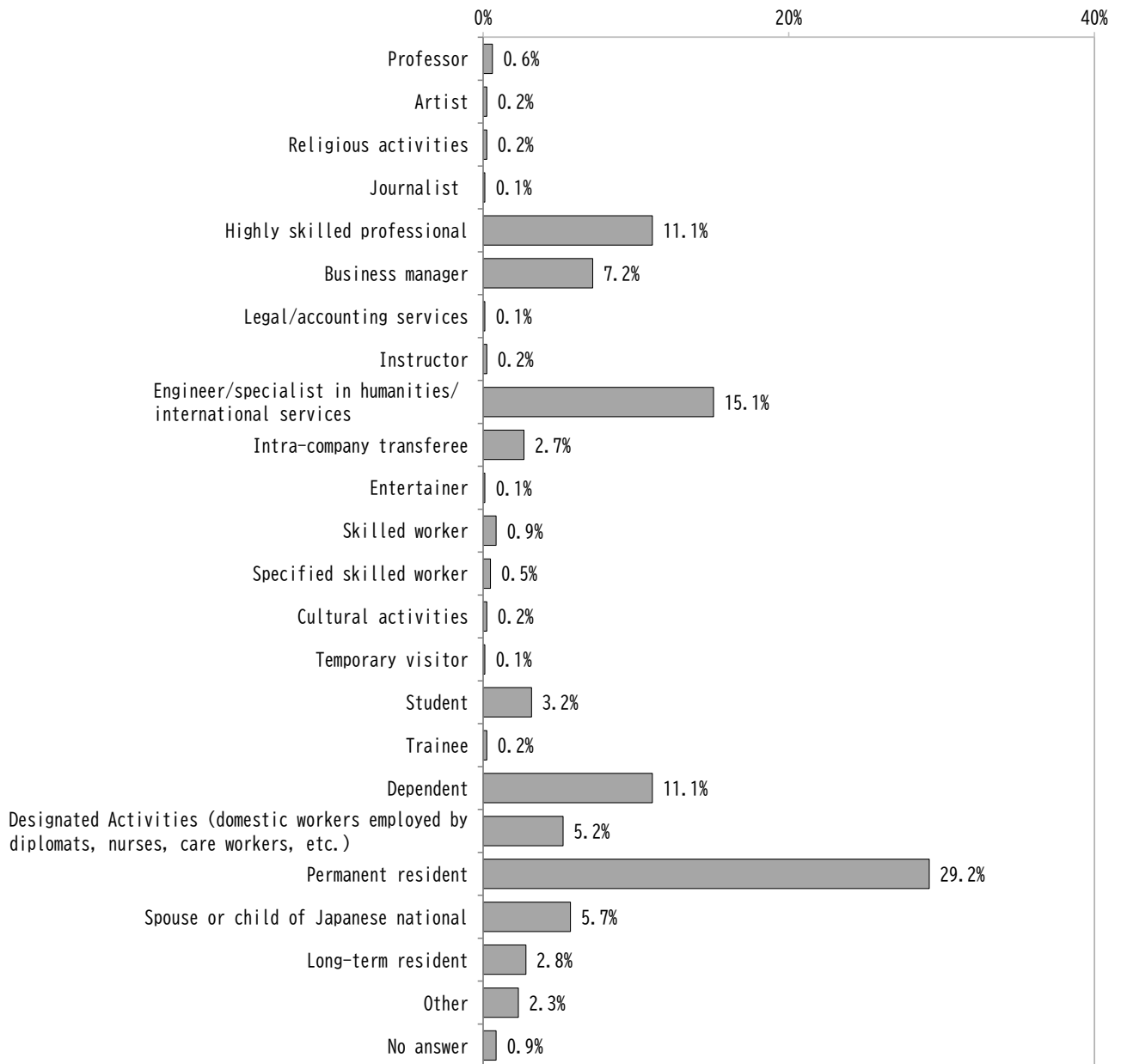
Length of Residence in Minato City



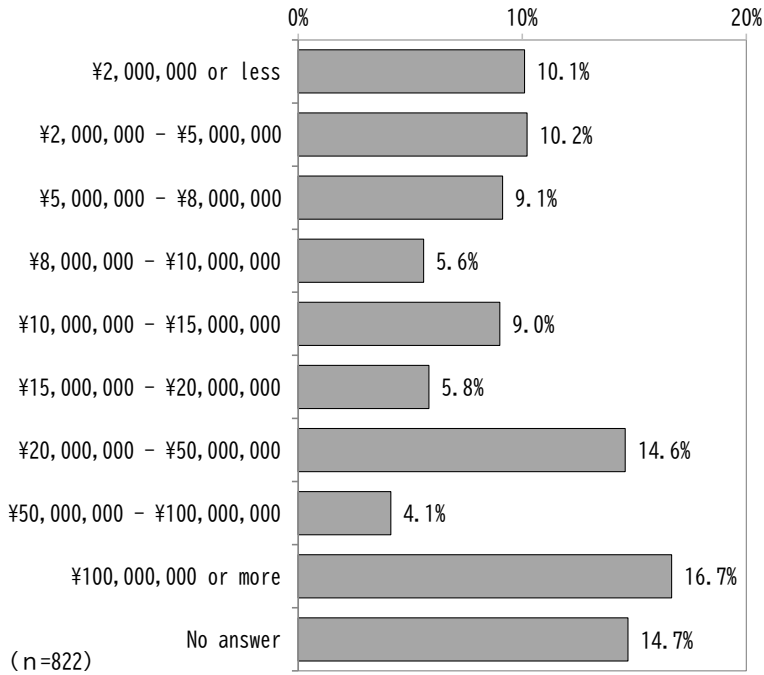
Nationality or region of origin



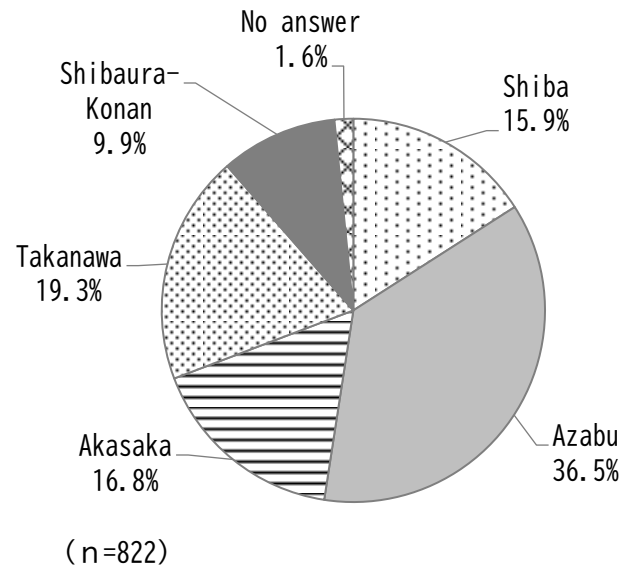
Status of residence



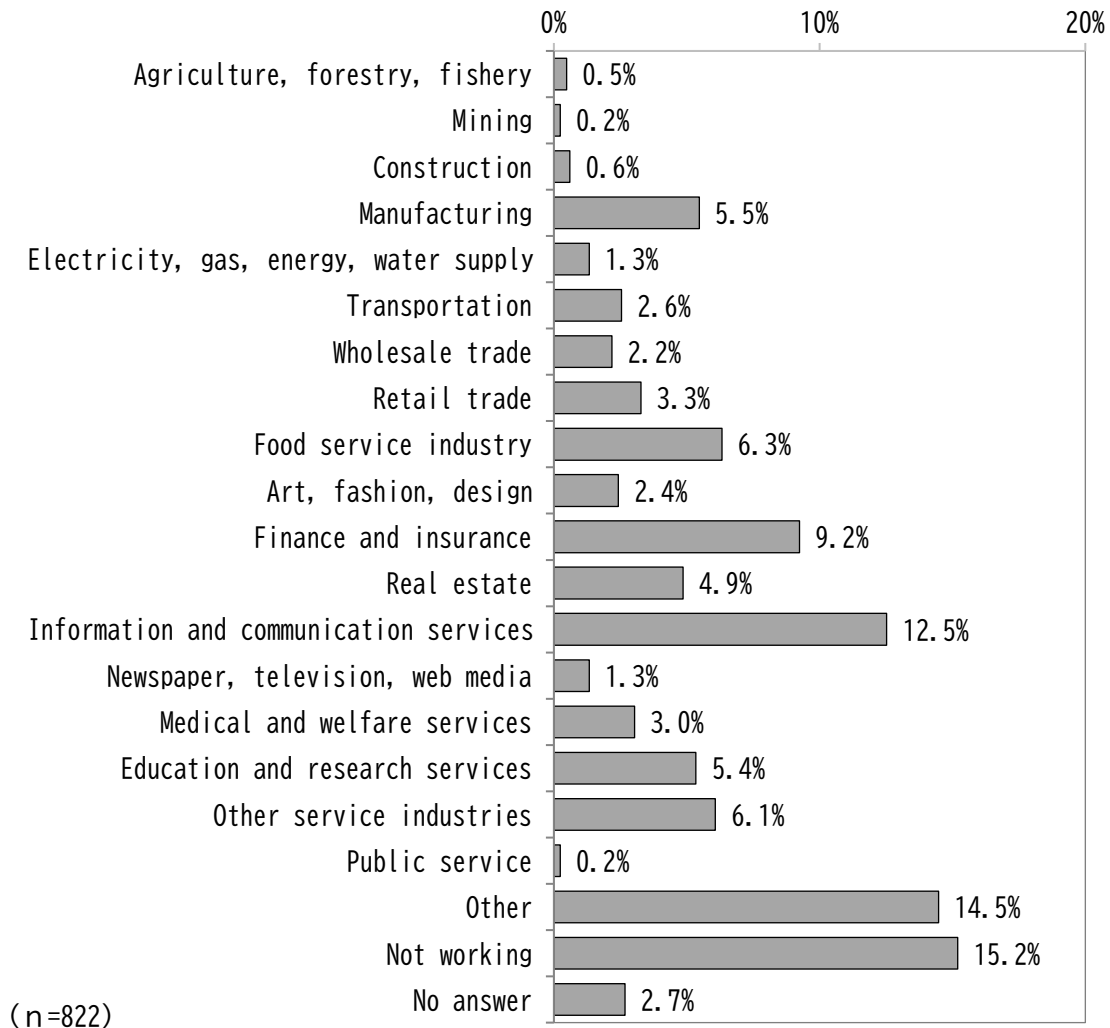
Household income



The area you live in



Workplace



4 How to read the report

- (1) Results are rounded to two decimal places. Therefore, the totals may not always sum to 100.0%.
- (2) “Sample size” refers to the number of respondents for each question.
- (3) The ratio of responses (%) is calculated using the number of respondents for that question. As a result, for questions with multiple answers, the total may exceed 100.0%.
- (4) In some cases, choice labels in the text and charts have been abbreviated or simplified.
- (5) Respondent groups with small sample sizes (fewer than 30 individuals), based on the survey attributes used as the primary analysis axis (such as nationality or region of origin, and years of residence in Japan), are included for reference purposes only and excluded from the main analysis due to the larger margin of sampling error. Furthermore, the attribute analysis focuses primarily on findings beyond the top-ranked trend in the overall tabulation.
- (6) “The previous survey” refers to the survey conducted in FY2022.

Main content of the survey

1 Multilingual Administrative Information

Efforts to provide administrative information in multiple languages have been positively received. However, there is an increasing need to ensure that information is accessible, understandable, and effectively delivered to individuals who need it.

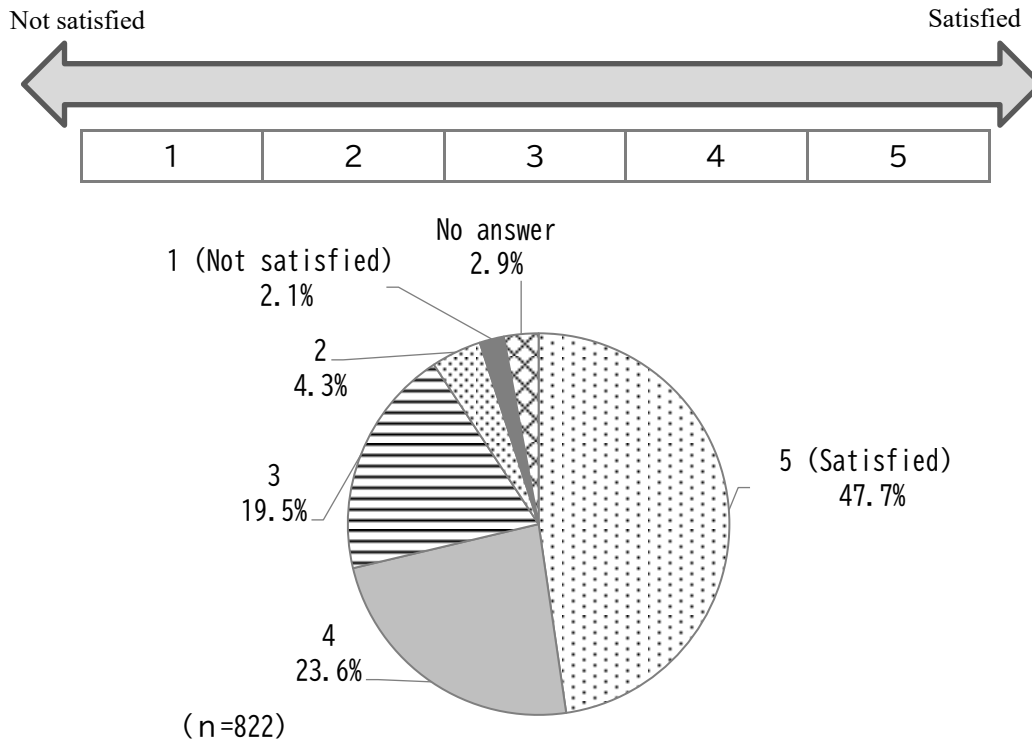
Survey results on information dissemination show that the proportion of respondents who reported being “satisfied” with multilingual support increased compared with the previous survey. This suggests that the city’s efforts to expand multilingual communication are generally viewed positively. At the same time, responses regarding Japanese language proficiency indicate differences across language skills. While relatively high levels were reported for listening and speaking, a larger share of respondents reported lower levels for reading and writing. This suggests that even when information is provided in Japanese, some residents may not be able to fully understand the content.

Open-ended responses also highlighted challenges in understanding the overall structure of administrative procedures and the relationships between multiple processes. In particular, when multiple systems or departments are involved—such as procedures related to the Individual Number (My Number) system or health insurance—respondents indicated that it can be difficult to determine what needs to be done, where to go, and in what order, which can create confusion and a sense of burden. Some respondents also noted that they learned about certain systems or services only after the fact, or that they gave up using services because explanations were provided only in Japanese and were difficult to understand. These responses suggest that even when information exists, it does not always reach those who need it at the appropriate time.

Interviews revealed similar concerns. Participants reported that the volume of information can be overwhelming, making it difficult to determine where to begin, and that it is not always clear which information is relevant to their own situation. Additionally, while residents’ needs change depending on their length of residence in Japan, some respondents indicated that it is difficult to identify information pathways that correspond to these changing needs.

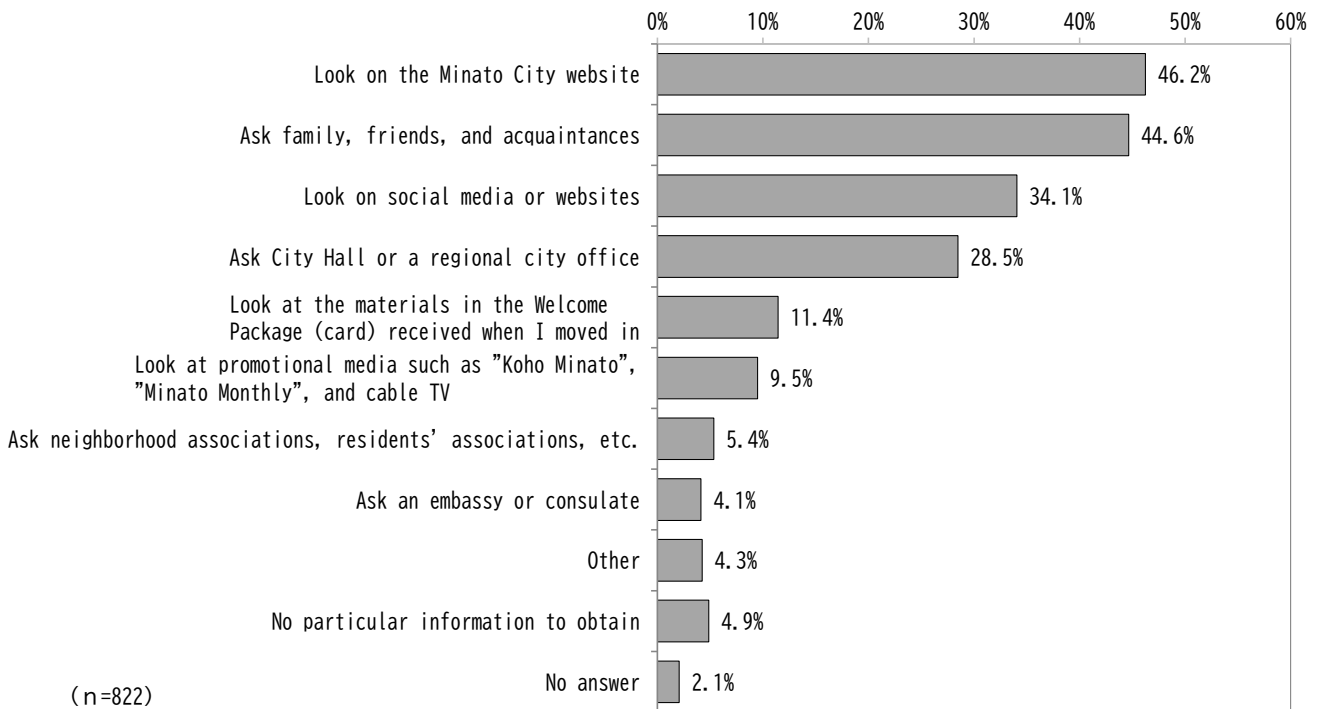
Overall, the findings suggest that while multilingual initiatives are generally well received, further efforts are needed to ensure that residents can easily identify and access the information that is relevant to them in a form they can understand.

Q Are you satisfied with Minato City's multilingual support (counter services, telephone response, letters from the City, etc.)?



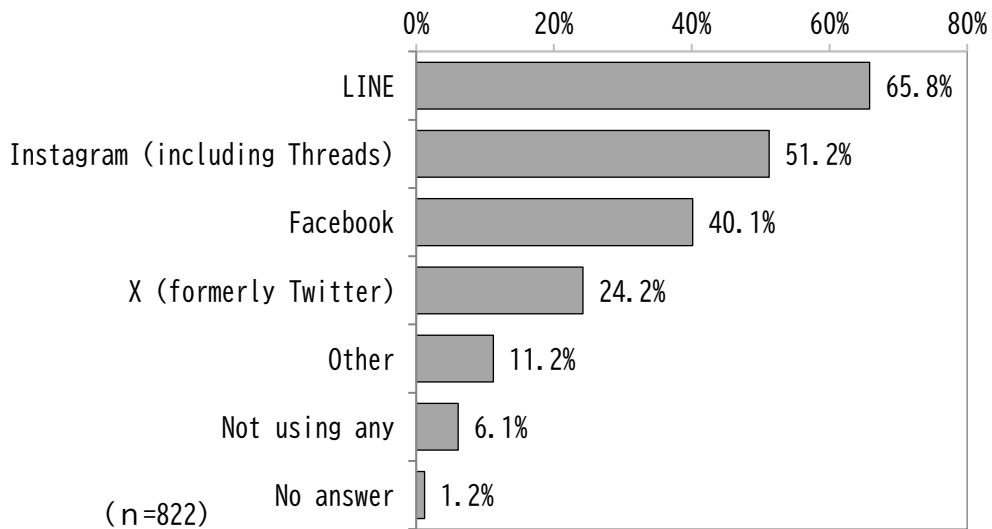
Q How do you obtain information about Minato City's administrative services and daily life information?

Regarding methods of obtaining administrative information, the largest proportion of respondents selected “Check the City’s website”, followed by “Ask family members, friends, or acquaintances”.



Q Which social media do you use?

Regarding the use of social media, LINE had the highest proportion, followed by Instagram (including Threads).



Interview Survey Results (Selected Excerpts)

- Multilingual information services such as Minato Monthly are helpful and make it easier to obtain information about daily life.
- The availability of an English-language version of the Minato City website helps respondents to obtain necessary information.
- The City’s social media accounts were not known, and the large amount of information on the website makes it difficult to know where to start looking.

2 Exchange and Cultural Understanding

Japanese language learning opportunities are expected not only to support language acquisition but also to provide spaces for social interaction and cultural understanding.

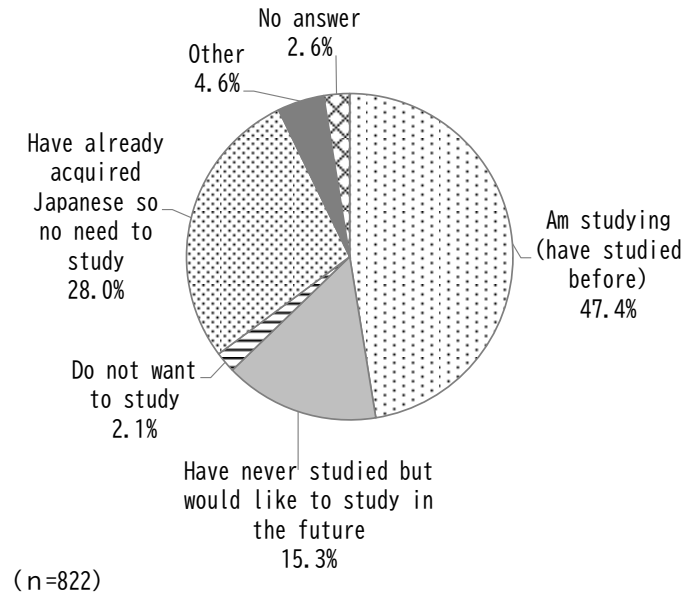
Survey responses on Japanese language proficiency indicate that a certain proportion of respondents reported relatively high levels of listening and speaking ability, indicating confidence in everyday communication. In contrast, responses for reading and writing tended to be lower overall. Patterns of language proficiency were also observed depending on factors such as length of residence in Japan and residence status. Differences by background were also observed. For example, among respondents from kanji-using regions, a higher proportion reported advanced proficiency levels in reading and writing Japanese.

Open-ended responses highlighted challenges in situations where administrative procedures are explained in Japanese. Some respondents indicated that they struggle to understand the overall process or are unsure which service counter they should consult. Others reported that explanations involving documents or institutional systems can be difficult to follow, which can create anxiety. Several respondents also noted that they have hesitated to seek consultation because they were unsure whether they could communicate effectively in Japanese. These findings suggest that communication in Japanese can sometimes create psychological burden, particularly in situations where written information or complex procedural explanations are involved.

At the same time, there is clear interest in Japanese language classes organized by the City. When respondents were asked what they expect from such classes beyond language learning, the most common response was opportunities to interact with Japanese people, followed by opportunities to learn about Japanese culture and customs. In particular, respondents staying in Japan with family members or those married to Japanese nationals showed relatively strong interest in opportunities for cultural understanding. Interview findings further support this perspective. Participants described Japanese language classes as places where they can communicate with Japanese residents and develop connections with the local community and schools. These results indicate that Japanese language education is expected to function not only as language instruction but also as a platform for building social connections and fostering cultural understanding within the community. Such expectations suggest that the ward's ongoing support for Japanese language learning is increasingly recognized as an initiative that contributes to community engagement and integration, beyond the provision of language education alone.

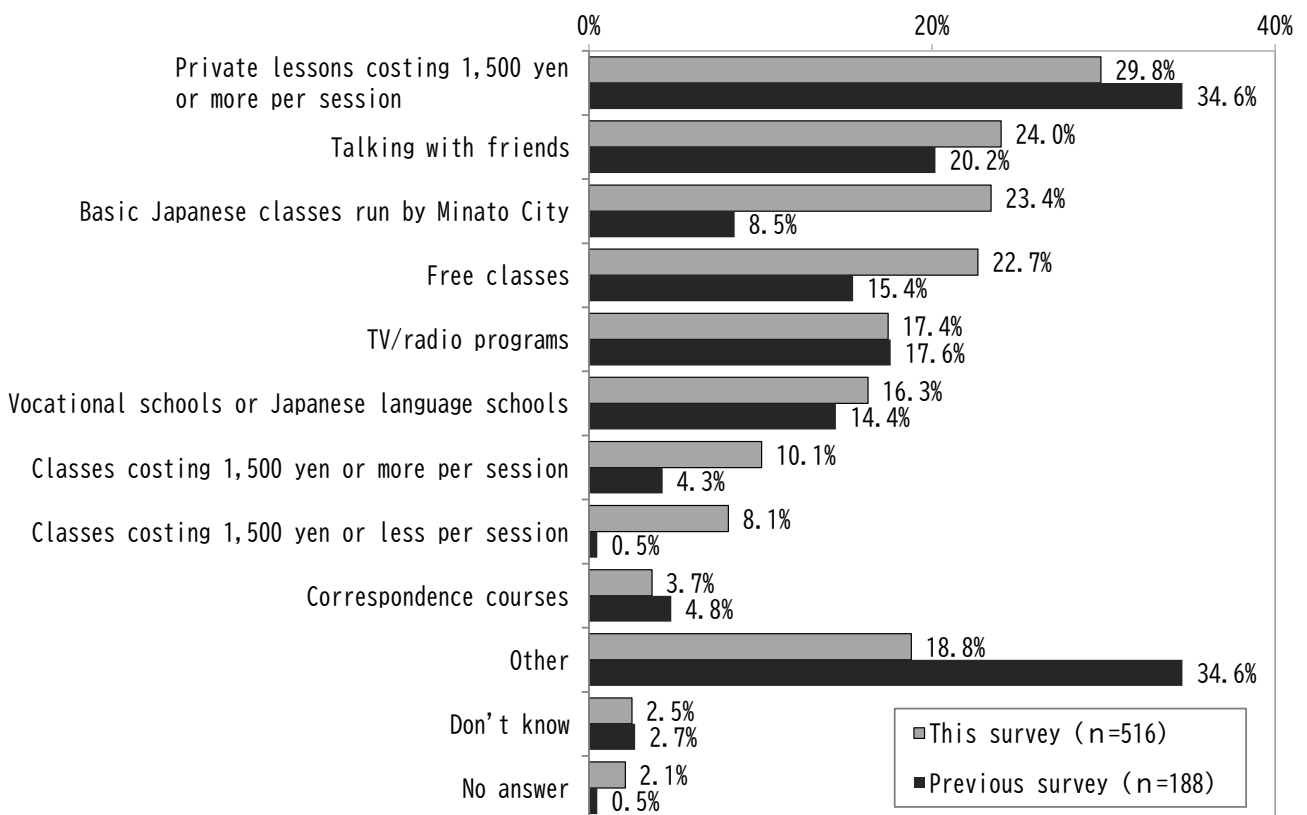
Q Are you studying Japanese?

Regarding Japanese language learning, the largest proportion of respondents selected “Am studying (have studied before)”, followed by “Have already acquired Japanese so no need to study”.

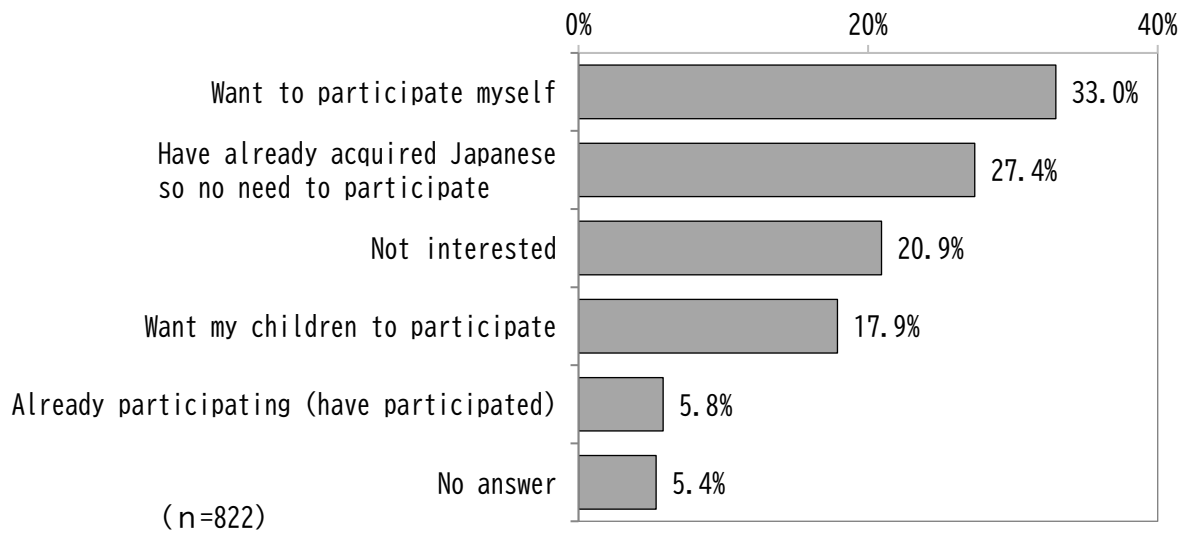


Q How are you studying Japanese, or how would you like to study in the future?

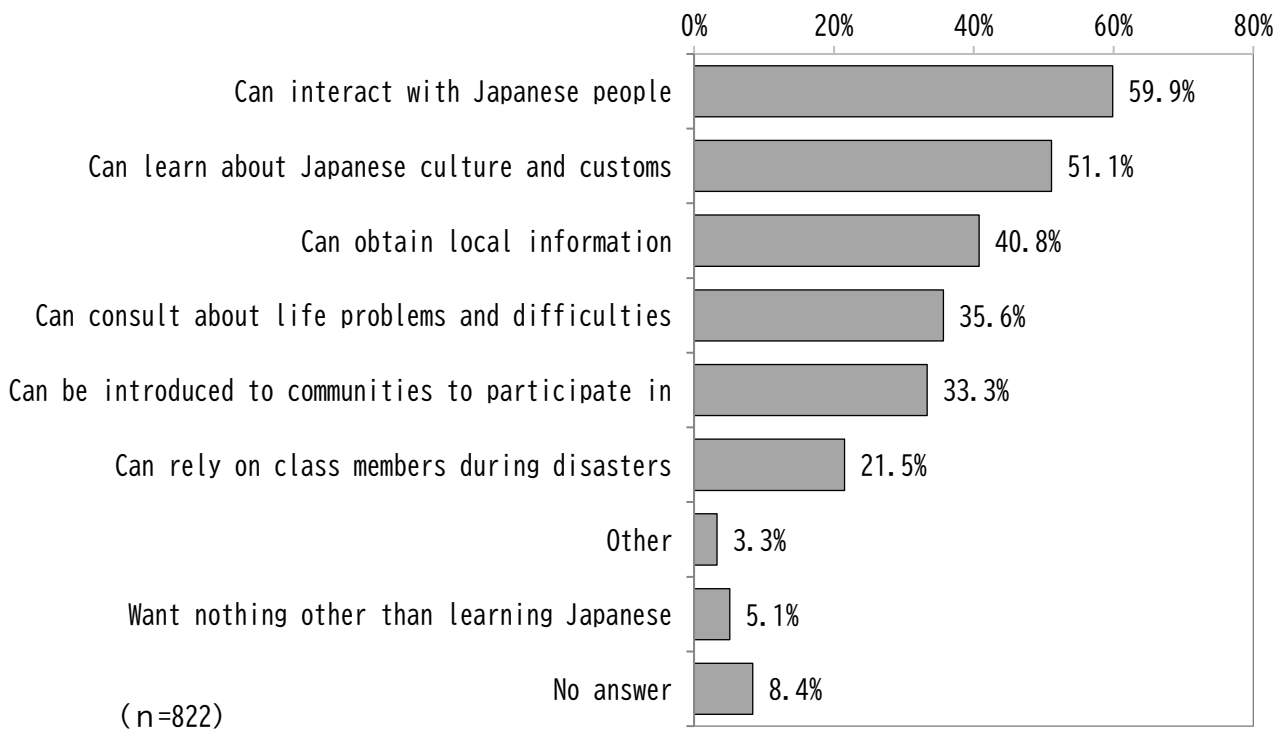
Regarding methods of learning Japanese, the largest proportion of respondents selected “Private lessons costing 1,500 yen or more per session”, followed by “Talking with friends” .



Q Would you like to participate (or have your child participate) in Minato City's "Basic Level Japanese Classes" or "Children's Japanese Classes"?



Q Besides learning Japanese, what do you expect to gain from Japanese language classes?



Interview Survey Results (Selected Excerpts)

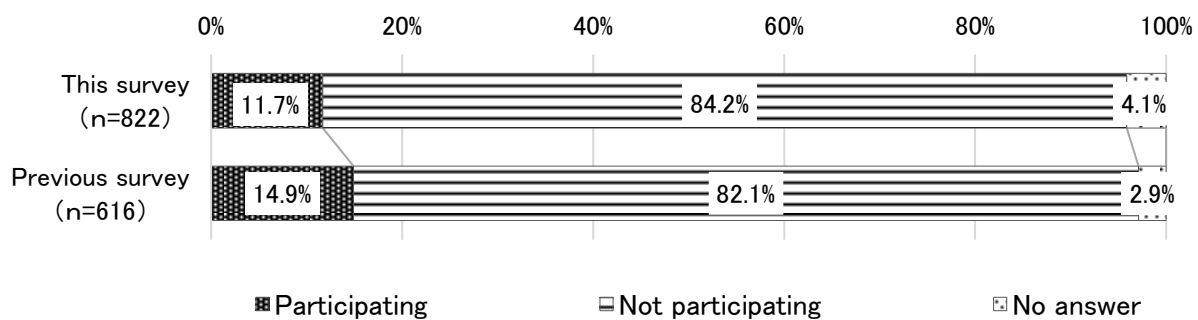
- There is interest in the City's Japanese language classes, and in some cases family members attend classes twice a week.
- The existence of Japanese language classes is known, but participation is difficult because details such as the schedule are not clear.
- Learning Japanese may broaden everyday interactions and increase opportunities to communicate with Japanese residents and connect with the local community.
- Lessons that reflect real-life situations in daily life are desired, and participation is seen as an opportunity to make friends from various national backgrounds.

Strong willingness to participate in community activities, with a need for opportunities or information to get involved.

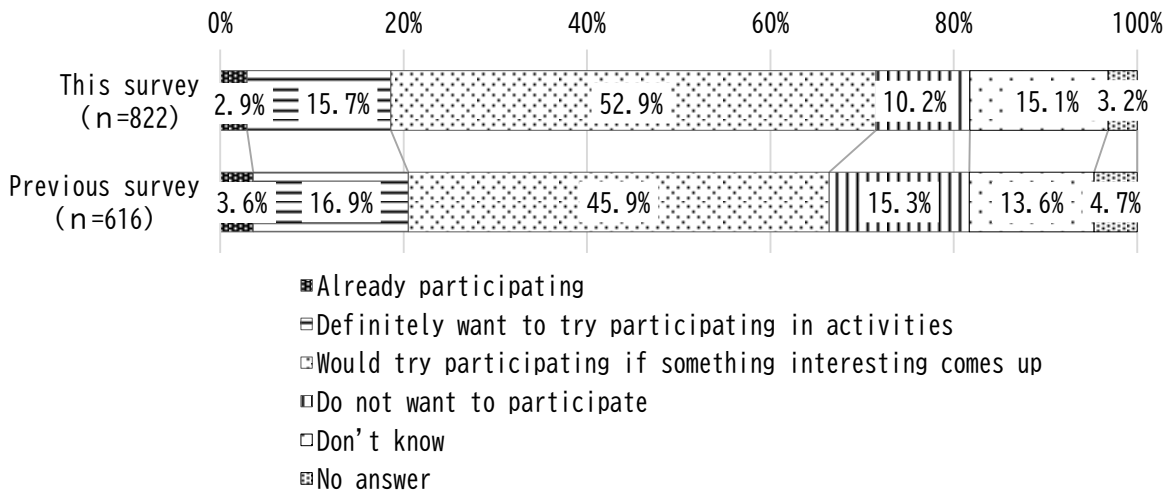
Survey results show that slightly more than 10 percent of respondents reported participating in community development activities. However, when asked about their interest in participation, more than half indicated that they would consider participating if the activities were of interest, and a certain proportion stated that they would like to participate actively. Interviews revealed similar sentiments. Several participants stated that they would like to become involved but do not know where or how to get started. These findings suggest that there is a gap between residents’ willingness to participate and their actual participation, largely due to a lack of opportunities or information on how to get involved.

Among households raising children, respondents were also asked about their expectations for their children’s childcare facilities or schools—such as Japanese language support and assistance with interpersonal relationships—as well as challenges they face as parents, including difficulties related to language and understanding school information. Many responses reflected concerns about children’s school life, educational pathways, and relationships with peers. These findings suggest that households with children often seek stronger connections with schools and the local community. Overall, while there is interest in community participation, the findings indicate that clearer opportunities and information on how to get involved are needed to support residents in participating more actively in community activities.

Q Do you participate in local communities or groups?

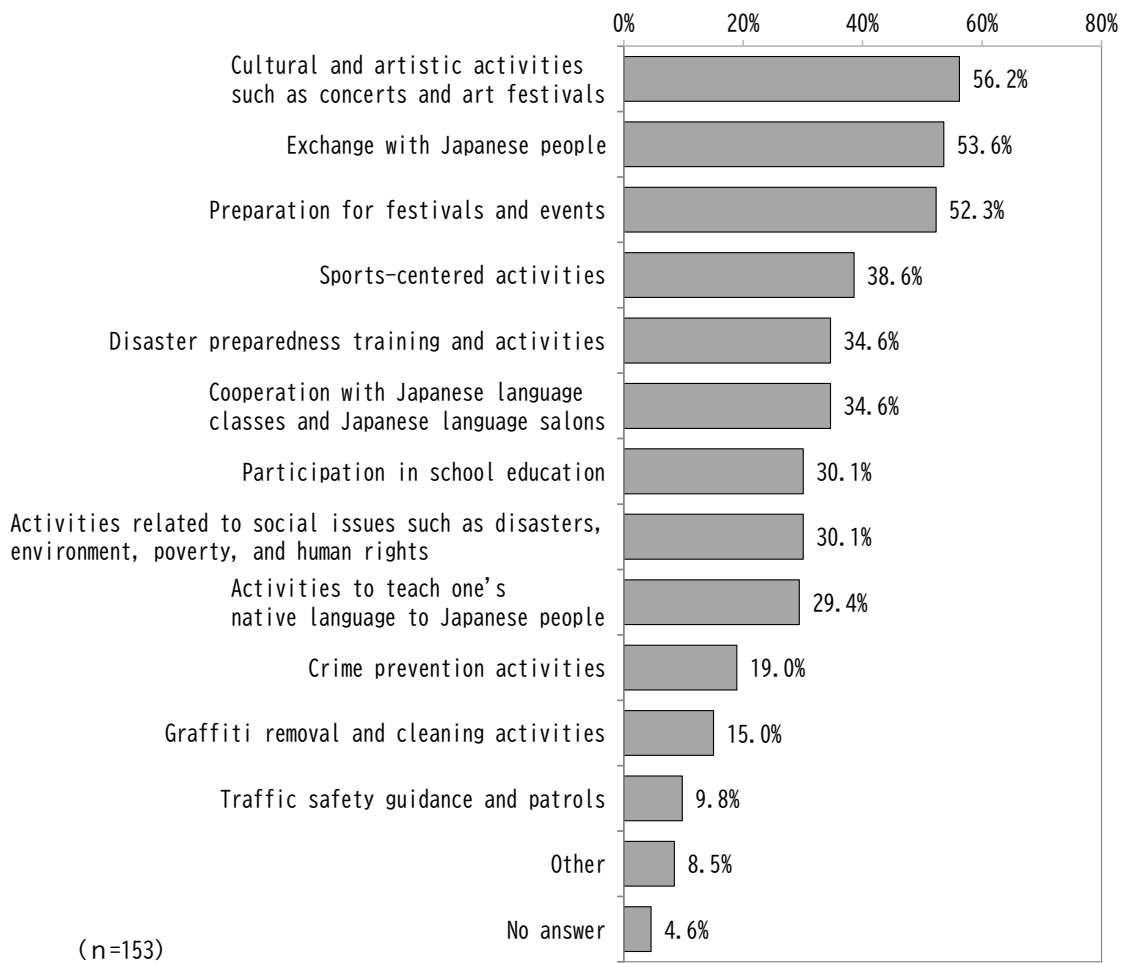


Q Would you like to participate in local activities or community development activities?

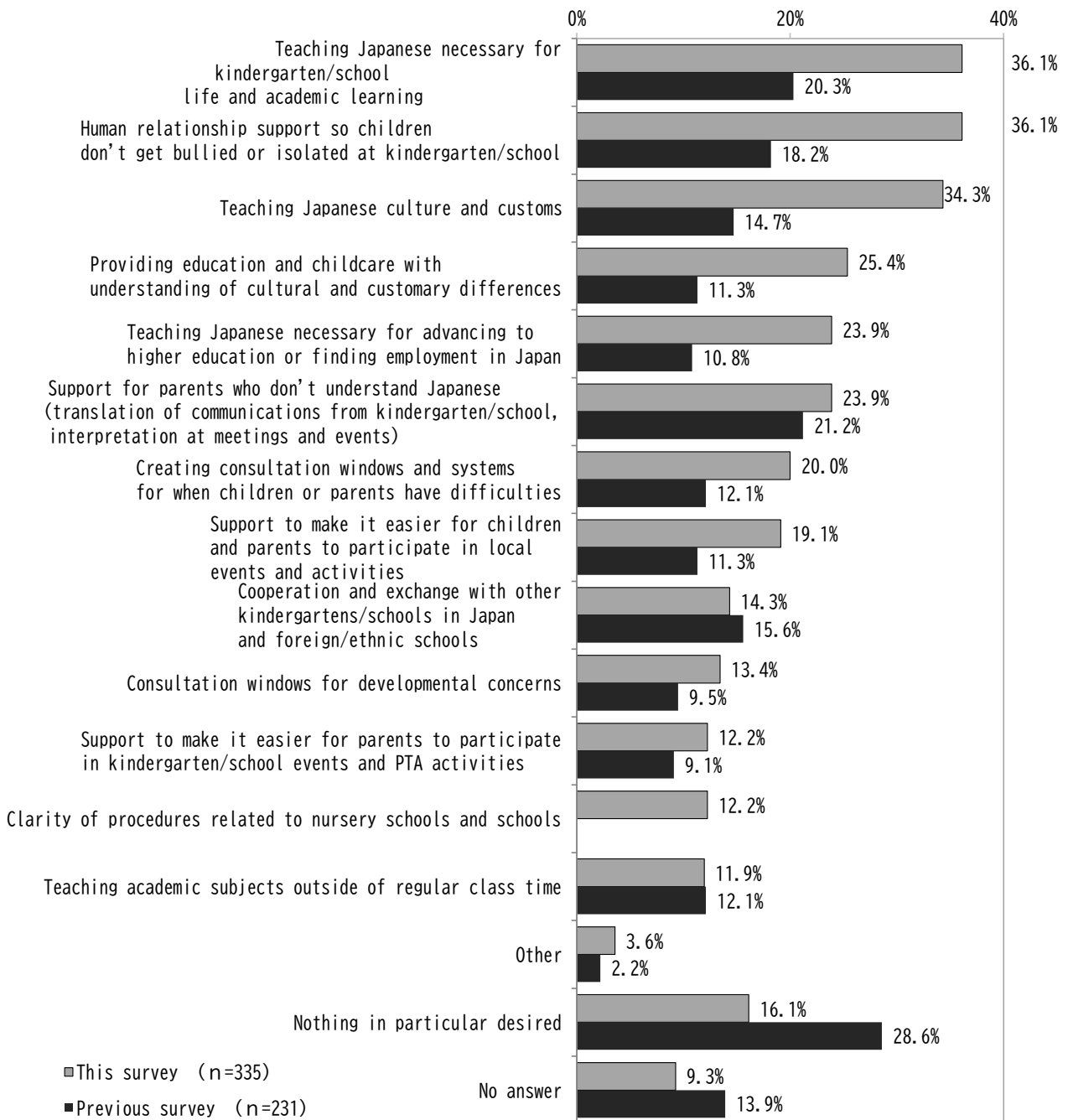


Q Which of the following activities are you participating in or want to participate in?

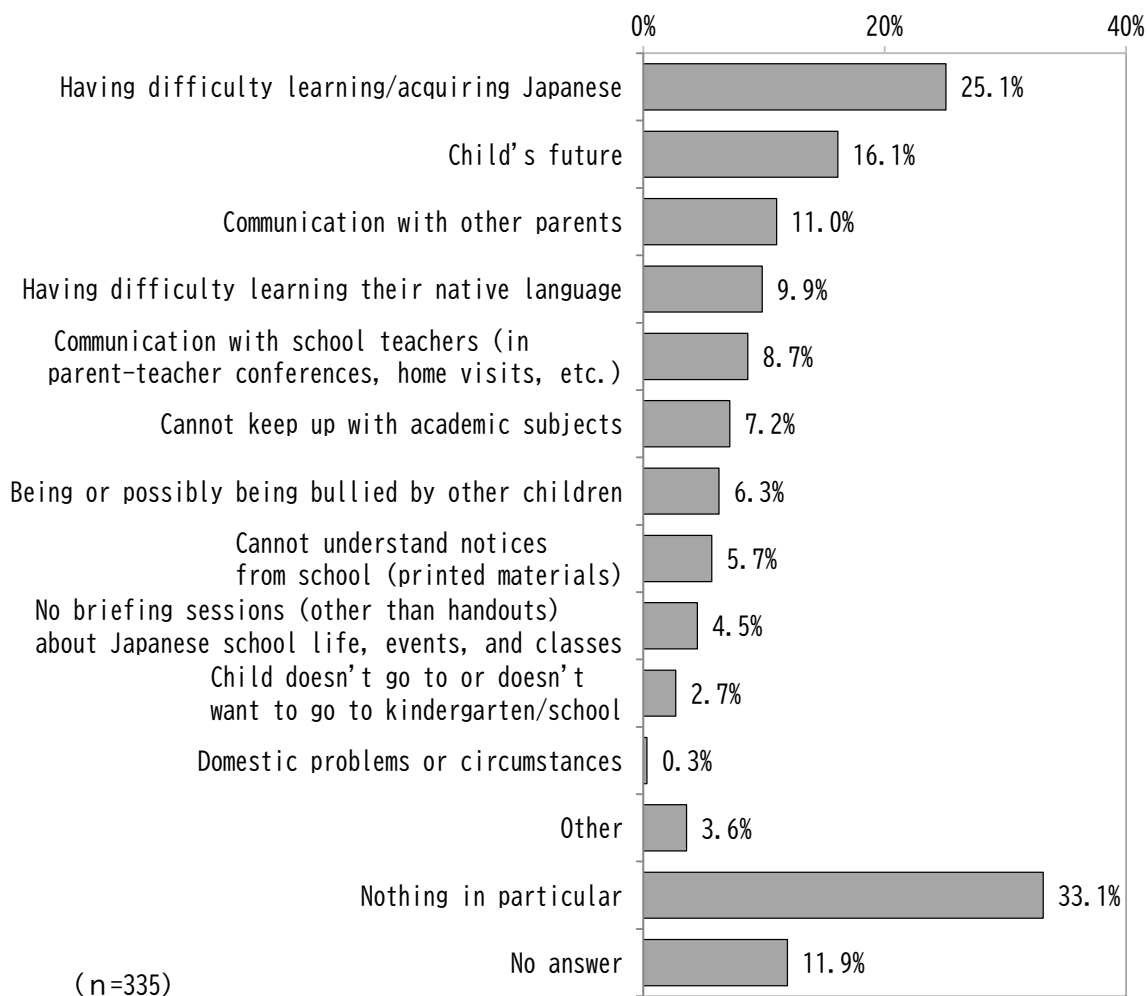
Regarding activities that respondents participate in or would like to participate in, the largest proportion selected “Cultural and arts activities such as concerts and art festivals”, followed by “Interaction with Japanese people”.



Q What do you hope for from the nursery school, kindergarten, elementary school, or junior high school your child currently attends?



Q As a parent, what difficulties are you experiencing?



Interview Survey Results (Selected Excerpts)

- Through conversations with Japanese friends about cultural differences, there is interest in participating in events where the culture of one's home country can be introduced.
- There are opportunities to talk with Japanese residents, but relationships have not developed into deeper connections, and although there is interest in participating in community activities, it is difficult to find information about them.
- Although there are opportunities to speak with teachers, the structure of educational pathways is difficult to understand, leading to uncertainty about how to consider future options.

4 Understanding of Daily Life Rules and Disaster Preparedness

Improving understanding of daily life rules and disaster preparedness requires clear explanations of the background and rationale behind rules, as well as the provision of information in multiple languages.

Responses to questions regarding daily life rules and systems in Japan indicate that many residents find it difficult to understand how certain systems and procedures work. In particular, respondents who had recently arrived in Japan reported difficulty distinguishing between mandatory and voluntary requirements, as well as anxiety caused by not being able to understand the overall structure of systems. Some respondents also noted that implicit rules and social customs are not always communicated in advance, and that they sometimes learn about them only after being corrected. Several respondents indicated that being corrected without an explanation of the reasons behind the rules can lead to confusion or psychological burden. These findings suggest that explaining the background and purpose of rules is important to promote understanding.

In contrast, responses related to disaster preparedness indicate some positive developments. The proportion of respondents who reported stockpiling supplies for sheltering at home or confirming evacuation locations increased compared with the previous survey. This suggests that the city's ongoing awareness and preparedness initiatives have had a measurable impact. At the same time, the proportion of respondents who reported not having made any disaster preparations decreased, indicating an overall improvement in disaster preparedness awareness. When asked about desired disaster response measures, many respondents expressed support for multilingual evacuation signage and multilingual announcements and guidance during disaster situations. These requests were consistently expressed across various groups, indicating a shared expectation for multilingual communication in disaster situations.

When asked about potential challenges during disasters, the most common responses included deciding whether to remain at home or go to an evacuation shelter and obtaining accurate disaster information. Concerns about accessing information were particularly prominent among residents who had recently arrived in Japan and among those with certain residence statuses. By contrast, long-term residents were more likely to express concerns related to continuing daily life during disasters, including ensuring water and food supplies. This suggests that disaster-related concerns vary depending on residents' length of residence. Interview findings further highlighted the importance of communication. Participants commented that rules and instructions are easier to follow when the reasons behind them are explained, and several expressed interest in participating in disaster drills or contributing to community preparedness efforts. Taken together, these findings suggest that providing multilingual information and clearly explaining the background and rationale behind rules and actions are key factors in promoting better understanding of both daily life practices and disaster preparedness measures.

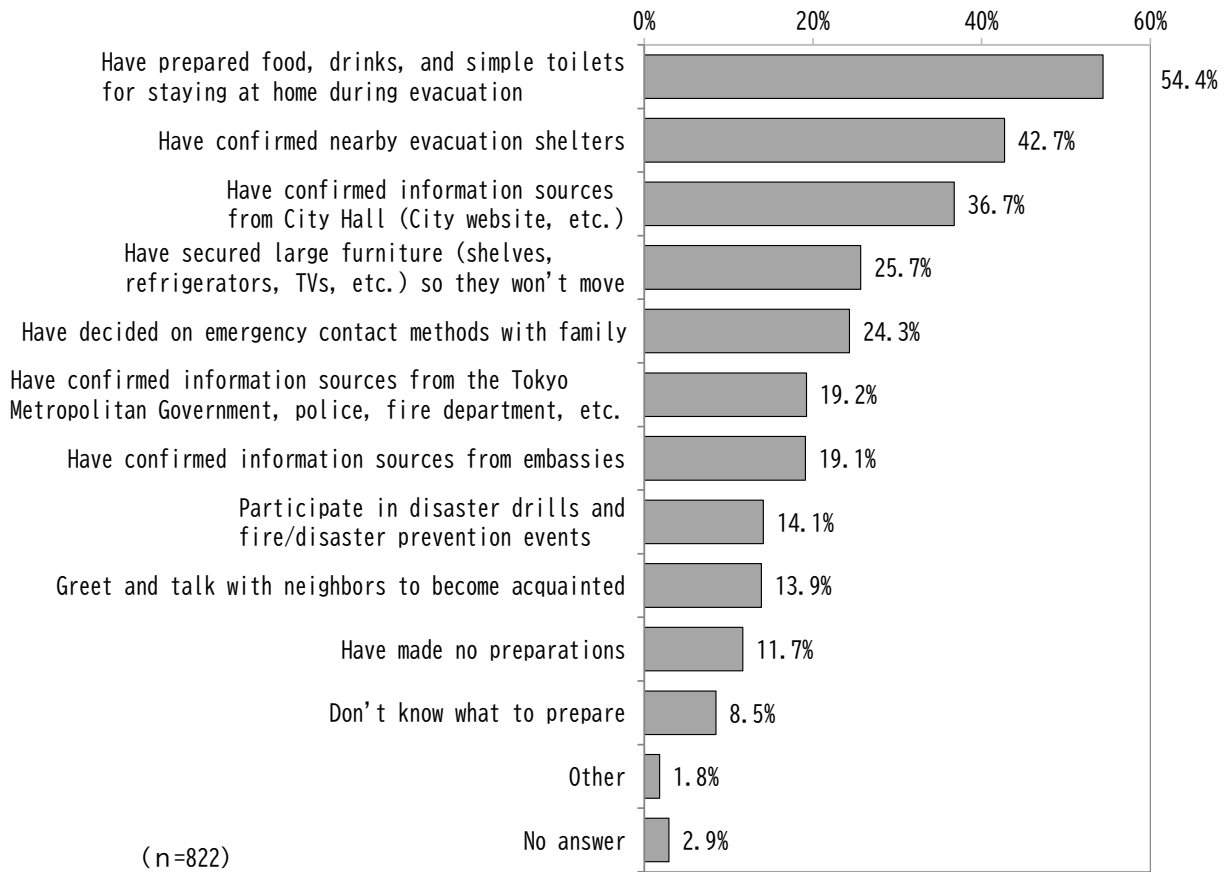
Q Are there any Japanese rules or culture that are different from your home country and complicated or hard to understand?

- I was not told in advance what would be considered a violation of etiquette, and it was difficult when I was later warned about it. (Male / 20s / Asia)
- Sometimes I cannot accept being told that certain behavior is inappropriate because the reasons are not explained. (Male / 30s / Europe)
- I was confused because garbage sorting rules differ depending on the area. (Male / 40s / Asia)
- I am not sure how careful I need to be about etiquette in public places. (Male / 30s / North America)
- I felt uncomfortable when I was reprimanded in a strong tone without any explanation of the reason. (Male / 30s / Asia)
- At work, it can be difficult to respond appropriately because indirect expressions and the distinction between one's true feelings and public stance are hard to understand. (Male / 30s / Asia)
- The rules regarding working styles and communication were not clearly explained, which caused confusion. (Female / 40s / Europe)

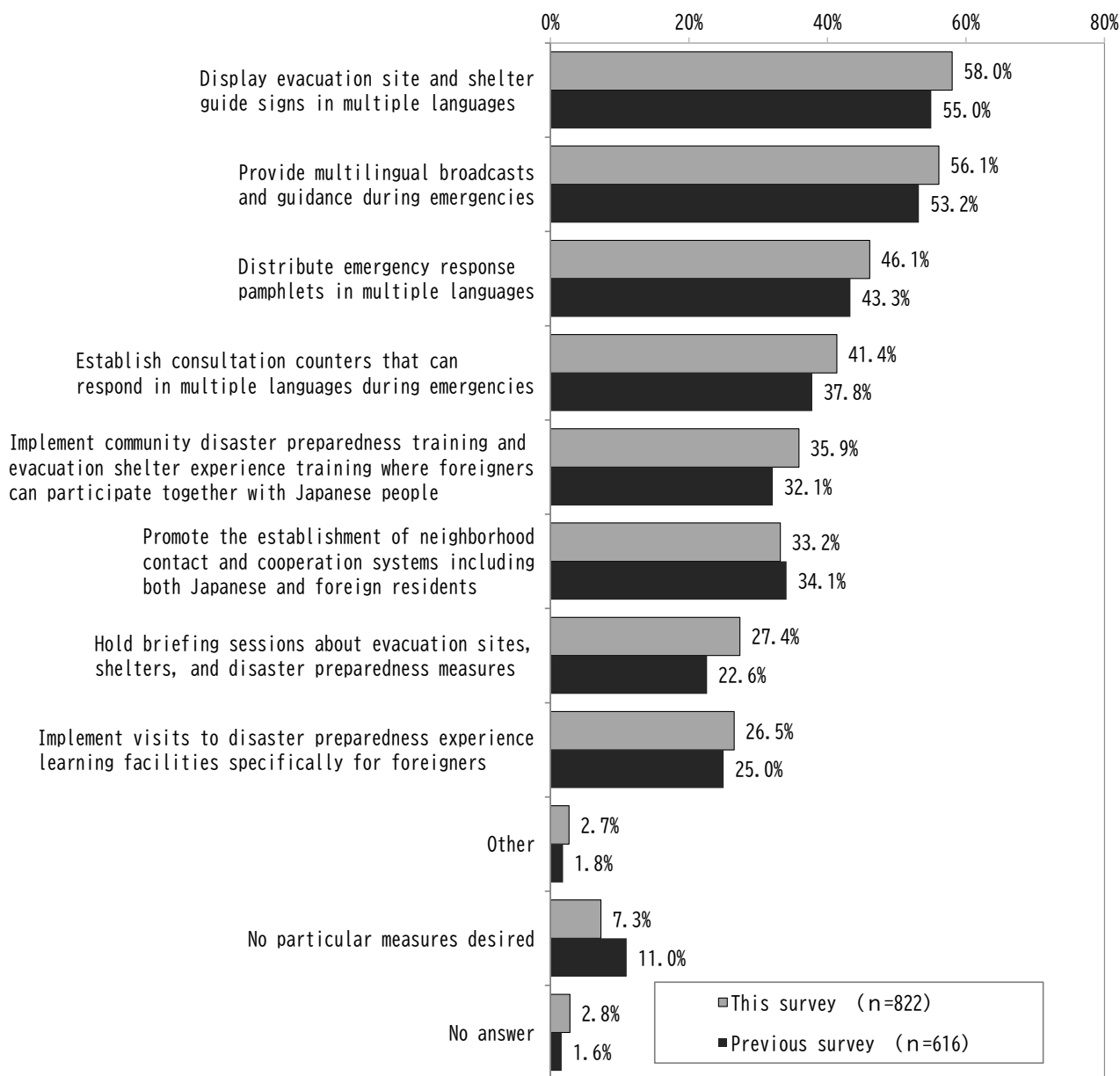
Interview Survey Results (Selected Excerpts)

- Garbage separation rules are detailed, making it difficult at first to understand how to sort items. There was also uncertainty about daily life etiquette, such as whether it is acceptable to use a washing machine at night.
- In administrative procedures, there are situations where the reasons for the required steps are not explained, leading to discomfort when completing procedures without fully understanding them.
- When a child makes noise on a train, surrounding people sometimes express disapproval through their gaze. This indirect way of signaling concern can feel unfamiliar.
- Being warned by a Japanese resident when riding a bicycle on the sidewalk caused confusion, not only because of differences in traffic rules but also due to the manner in which the warning was given.

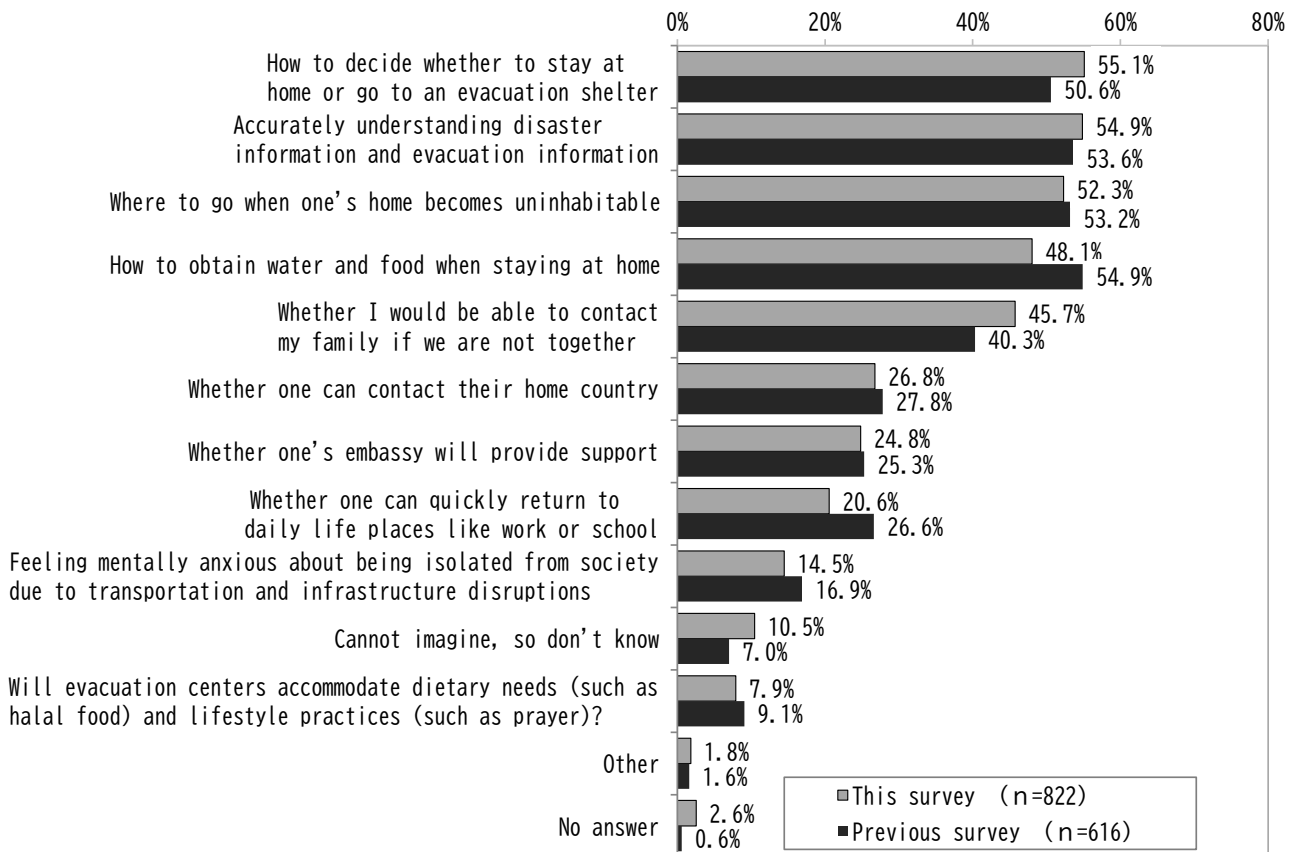
Q What preparations have you made for disasters such as earthquakes?



Q When disasters occur, people cooperate and help each other in the community. At that time, what measures do you want Minato City to implement?



Q When disasters such as earthquakes occur, what do you think you would have difficulty with?



Interview Survey Results (Selected Excerpts)

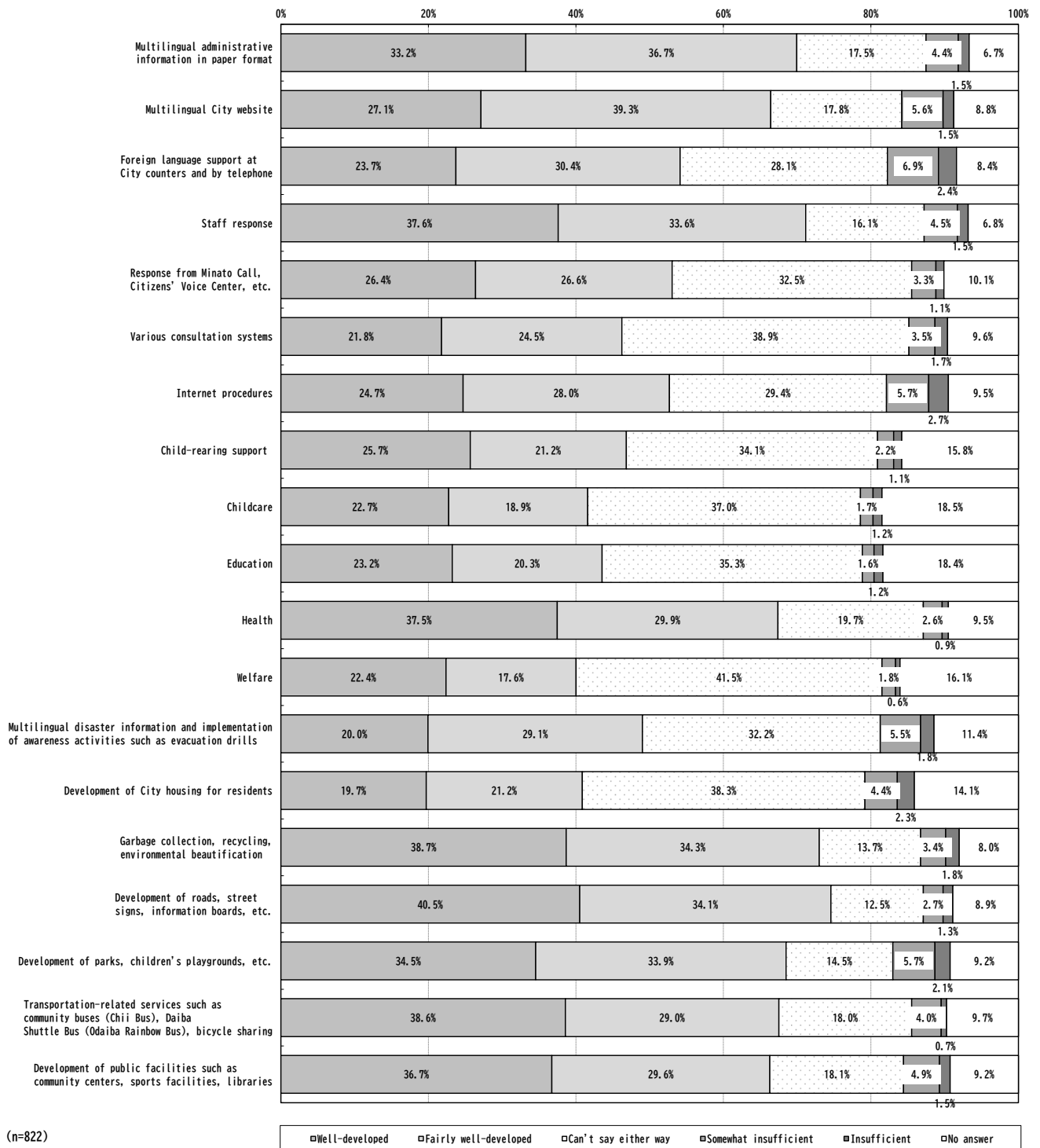
- Receiving portable toilets from Minato City makes it feel easier to prepare for disasters.
- There are concerns about how to protect children during disasters, and it would be helpful if information about evacuation shelters were provided clearly in English.
- Disaster drills have not been attended.
- Although the location of evacuation shelters is known, they have not been visited in practice.

5 City administration

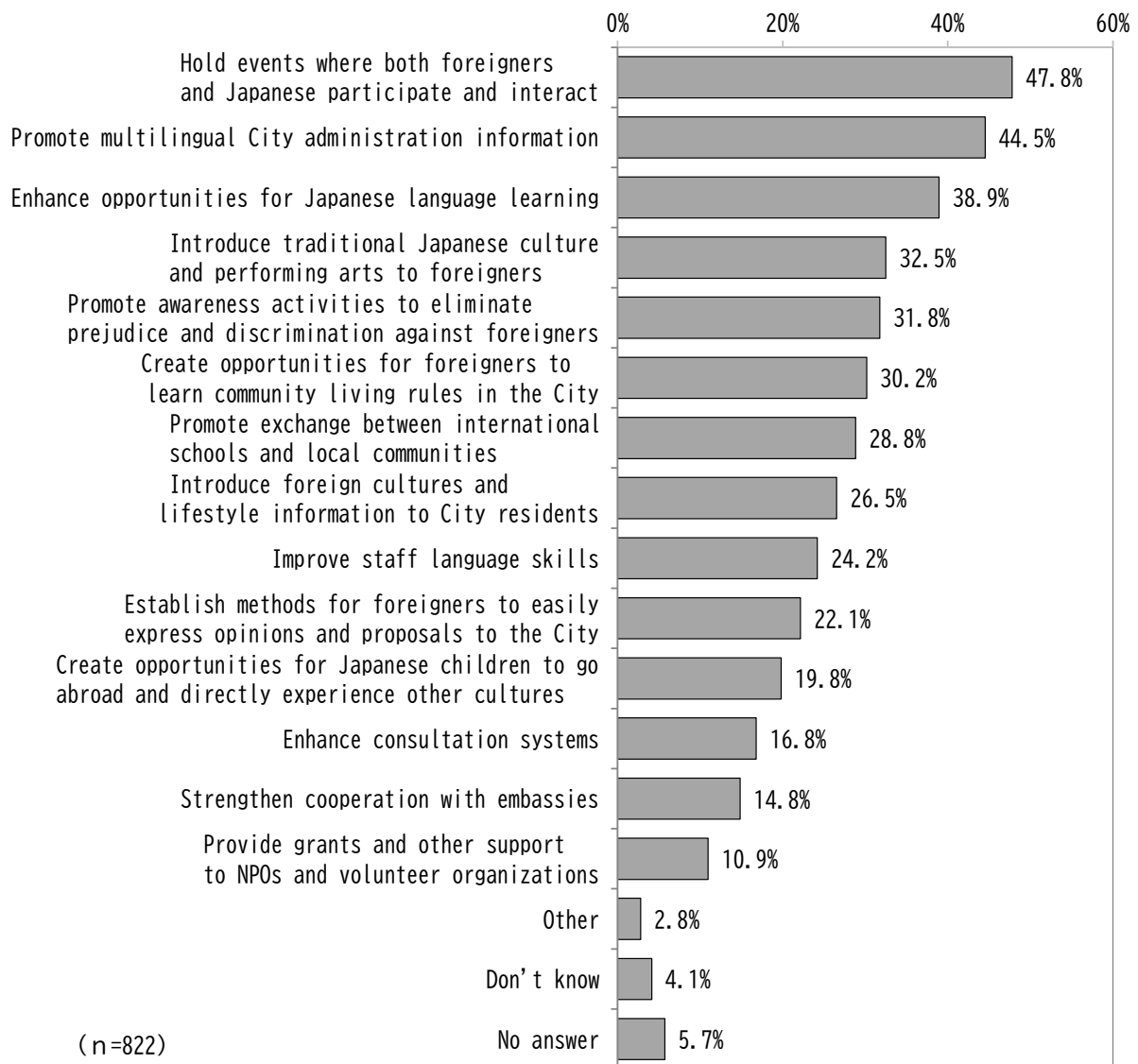
Q Which administrative services of Minato City do you think are well-developed? And which administrative services do you think are insufficient?

Regarding administrative services, the highest combined proportion of “Well provided” and “Fairly well provided” was observed for “Maintenance of roads, street signs, and information boards”, followed by “Garbage collection, recycling, and environmental cleanliness” and “Staff responsiveness”. These results indicate high levels of satisfaction with services related to the basic living environment, and staff responsiveness was also positively evaluated.

On the other hand, the highest combined proportion of “Somewhat insufficient” and “Insufficient” was observed for “Foreign language support at City offices and by telephone”, followed by “Procedures available via the internet” and “Maintenance of parks and children’s playgrounds”. However, the proportions for the top two items decreased compared with the previous survey, although their ranking remained the same.



Q What policies do you think Minato City needs to create a rich local community where Japanese and foreign residents think together and support each other?



Declaration as a City of Peace

Minato City

August 15, 1985

All people are one in wishing to preserve the beauty of the earth and the permanence of world peace. These sentiments will never change.

We are working to build a community dedicated to the welfare of its citizens, while striving for true peace and the preservation of our cultural traditions.

Our duty to the generations that will follow is to hand over into their keeping a society built on the brotherhood of all people and a natural environment that is flourishing and beautiful.

We request our government to abide firmly by the “three nonnuclear principles” (renouncing possession, production, and introduction of nuclear weapons) and appealing to all citizens everywhere to seek the abolition of nuclear weapons.

As it is our earnest wish for world peace, we hereby declare Minato City to be a City of Peace.

City Tree



Hanamizuki,
Dogwood

City Flowers



Hydrangea



Rose

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March 2023

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