

Framework for accepting nurse and care-worker candidates under the Economic Partnership Agreements with Indonesia, Philippines and Viet Nam

Cycle of Encounters on Bilateral Labour Migration Agreements, OECD
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Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)

Outline

- Japan has concluded **economic partnership agreements (EPAs)** with **Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam**.
- EPAs aimed **tariff reduction or elimination, free trade in services**, and enhancement of economic relations in general.
- EPAs also include specific commitments for the **movement of natural persons** to ensure entry and temporary stay of natural persons, following rules set for each sector and each country.
- EPAs were agreed upon by **the heads of states** and ratified by the **Parliament** of both country.

Purpose of Accepting EPA Candidates

- The framework for accepting candidates for nurses and care workers under EPA (hereinafter **EPA candidates**) is an officially recognized as **special treatment**, aiming
 - **not to address shortages of nurses and care workers** in Japan
 - but to **enhance bilateral partnerships** in economic activities.
- The EPA program aims to allow EPA candidates to obtain Japanese **national qualifications as nurses or care workers** while working and training.
- If a candidate passes the examination, they are allowed to **continue their stay in Japan.**

Framework for Accepting EPA Candidates (1)

General Scheme

- From the perspective of **mitigating the impact on the domestic labor market** and the proper operation of the system, the **maximum number of EPA candidates** per year is set for each acceptance year.
- The accepting coordinating organization (**JICWELS**) and the sending organization (**governmental organization** of the partner country) will **exclusively conduct the accepting and sending operations** of EPA candidates.
- Institutions accepting EPA candidates (hereinafter referred to as "**accepting institutions**") must comply with **specific requirements**.

Framework for Accepting EPA Candidates (2)

- **EPA candidates shall meet specific requirements.**
 - Regarding nurses, the candidate shall have a **nursing license or work experience** in his/her home country.
 - Regarding care workers, the candidate shall have **completed a specific educational course**.
- The Japanese government will pay for **Japanese language training (approximately one year)** for EPA candidates before and after their visit to Japan.
 - About **90% of the candidates'** Japanese language proficiency were at the **N3 level** (the level at which they can understand Japanese in daily situations.).
- Japanese government and JICWELS provide support to the candidates including **study support, subsidies, on-site visits, and a consultation service**.
- In case that an EPA candidate obtains a national qualification, he or she can **continue to work in Japan as an EPA nurse or care worker** status of residence.

Process of Accepting Candidates under EPA (before start working)

Candidates from Indonesia(2008~)

Candidates from Philippines(2009~)

Candidates from Vietnam(2014~)

Requirements

Nurse candidates: qualification and work experience of at least 2 years in Indonesia

Care worker candidates: Having finished at least 3 years of higher education and certification by the Indonesian government, or nurse education of at least 3 years.

Nurse candidates: qualification and work experience of at least 3 years.

Care worker candidates: having finished 4 year college course and certification by the government, or higher education in nursing area (4 year course)

Nurse candidates: Having finished 4 or 3 year nurse education, qualification, and 2 years of work experience

Care worker candidates: Having finished 4 or 3 year nurse education

Japanese language training sessions (12 months)

language test (required fluency level; above N3)

Job Matching

Japanese language training sessions (six months)

Japanese language test
Required; above N5 (2014-2019)
and above N4 (2020-)

Japanese language test
Required fluency level; Above
N5 (2016-)

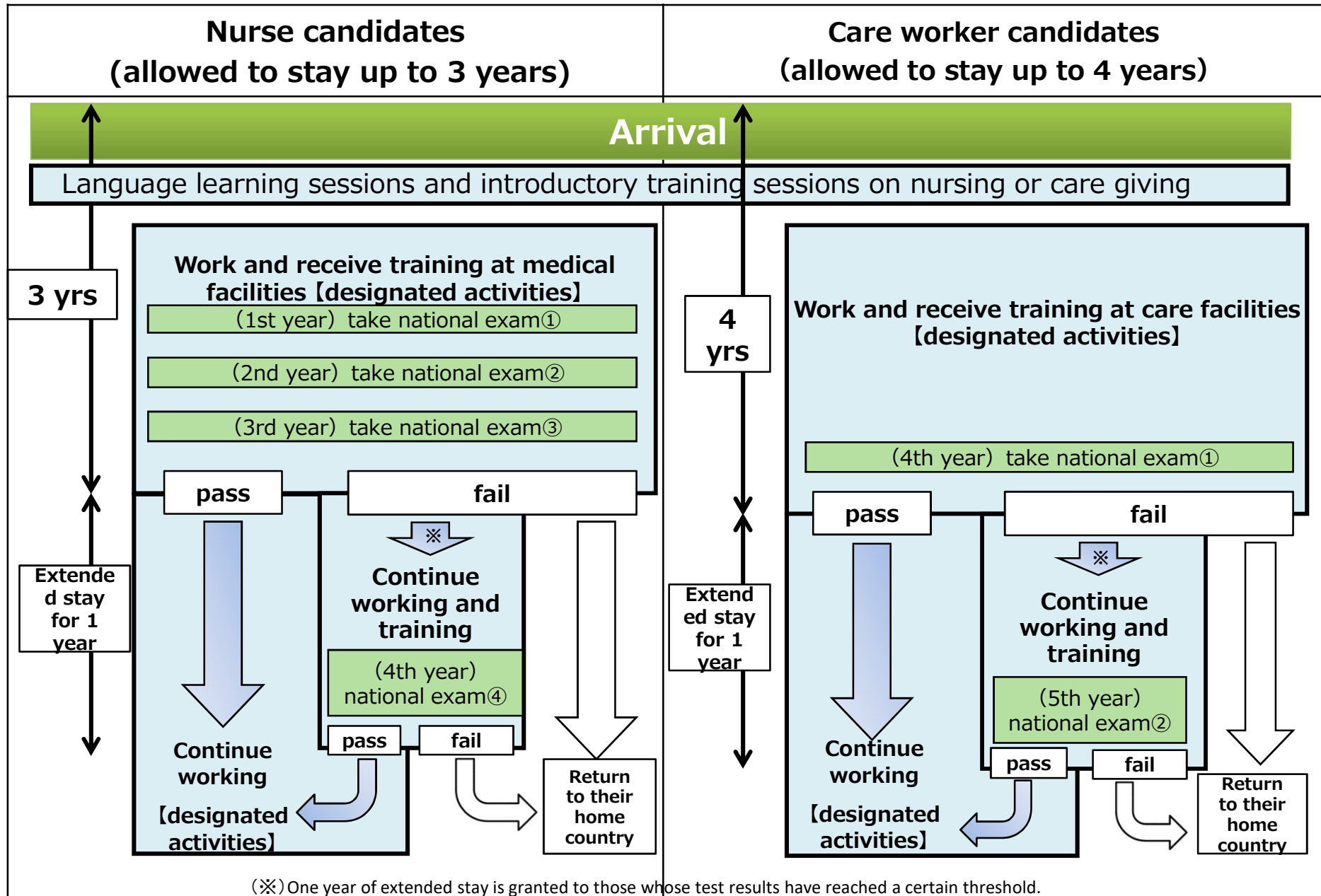
Arriving in Japan (designated activities visa)

Japanese language training sessions (six months)
【designated activities】

Japanese language training sessions (2.5 months)
【designated activities】

Work and receive training at accepting facilities under an employment contract (medical or care facilities) 【designated activities】

Process of Accepting Candidates under EPA (after start working)



Requirements for facilities accepting EPA candidates

1. General requirements

- Facilities should **not have any record of misconduct** in relation to foreign workers over the past 3 years.
- Medical facilities should satisfy requirements on the **number of trainers and nurses, management structure, and the arrangement of standardized procedures.**
- Care facilities should satisfy staffing requirements including the **number of certified care workers.**
- Facilities are required to
 - **submit reports** on regular basis and as needed.
 - **cooperate with inspections** on on-site visit and address identified shortcomings.

Requirements for facilities accepting EPA candidates

2. Training environment

- Facilities are required to **prepare training plan**, and have **training capacity** including training supervisors

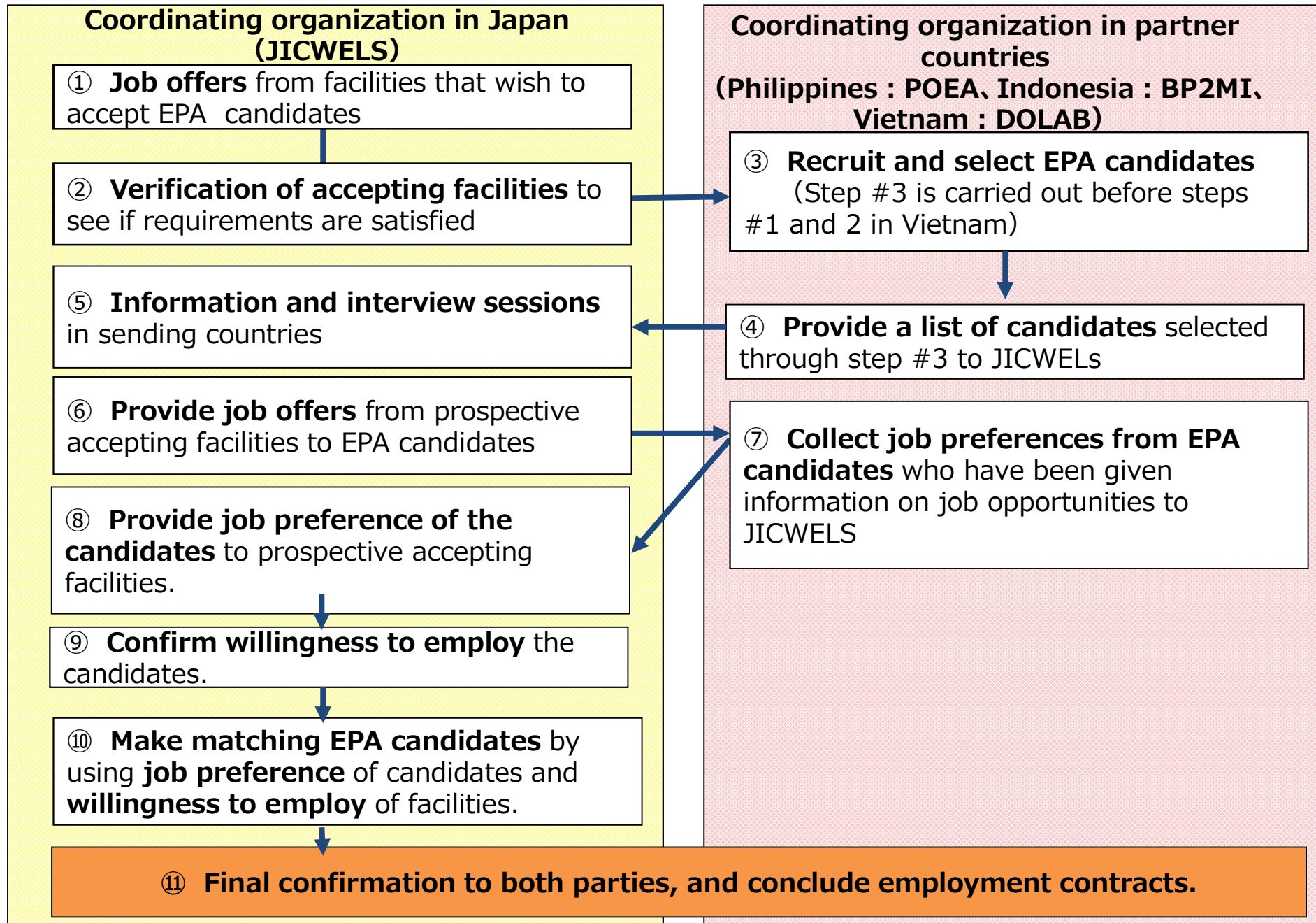
3. Employment contract

- The **remuneration** of EPA candidates should **be equal to or higher than that of Japanese** workers.

4. Accommodations and travel expenses to go back

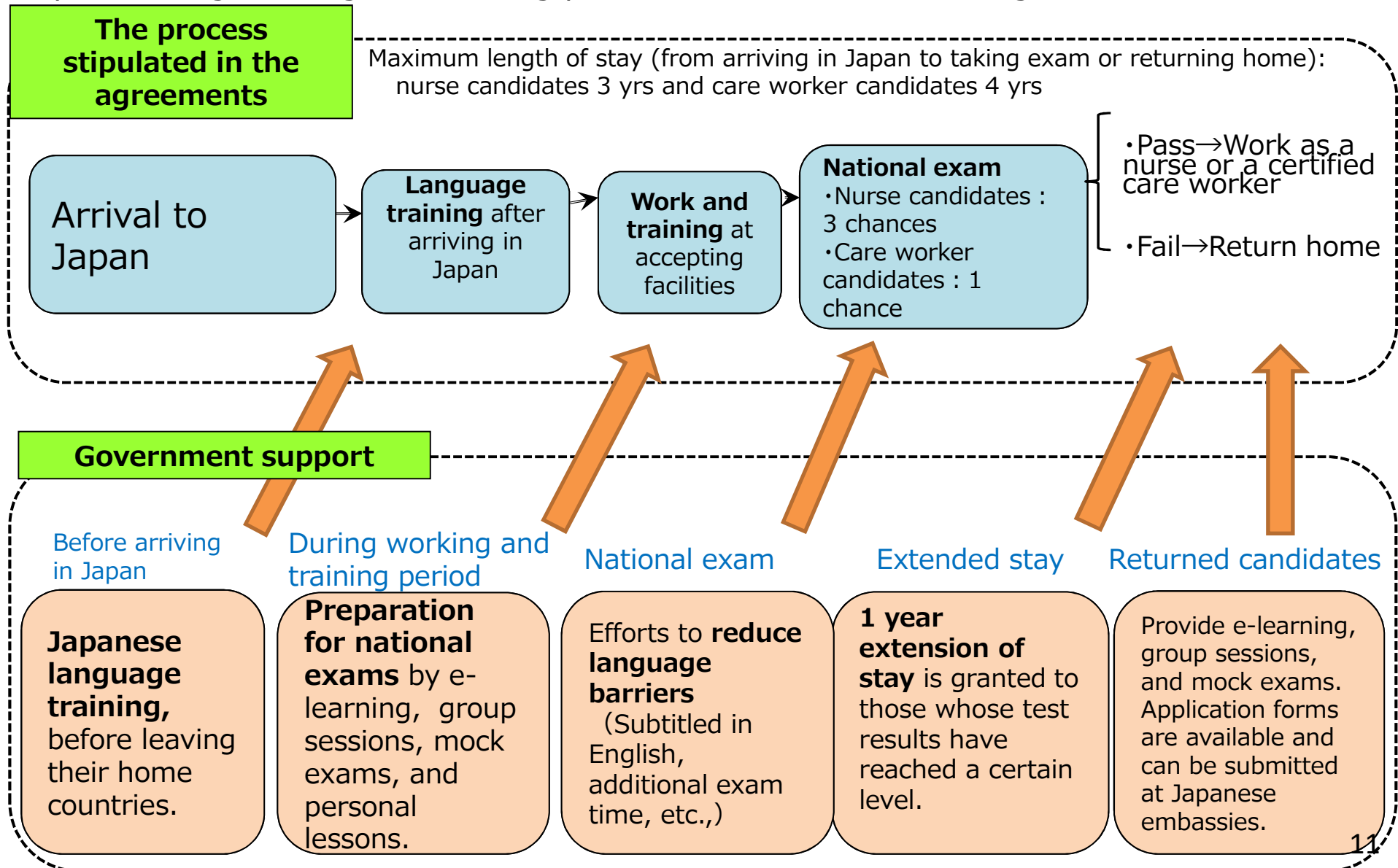
- Facilities have to arrange **accommodations** in advance, and **pay the travel expenses** for candidates to return home in principle.

Process of Matching EPA Candidates with Accepting Facilities



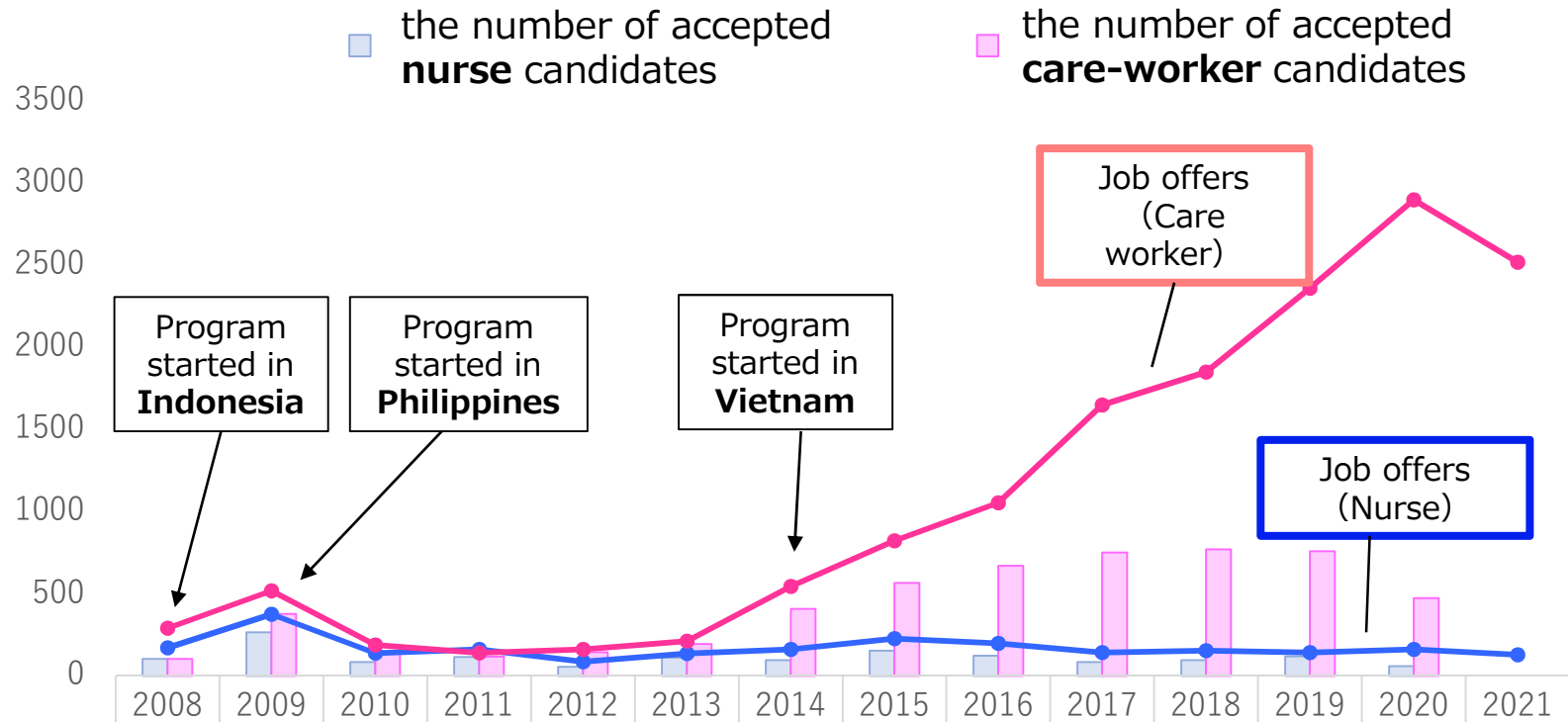
Governmental Support to EPA Candidates

Government provide supports at every stage of the process, including before arriving in Japan, during working and training period, before and after taking national exam.



Trend on Job Offers and Accepted EPA Candidates

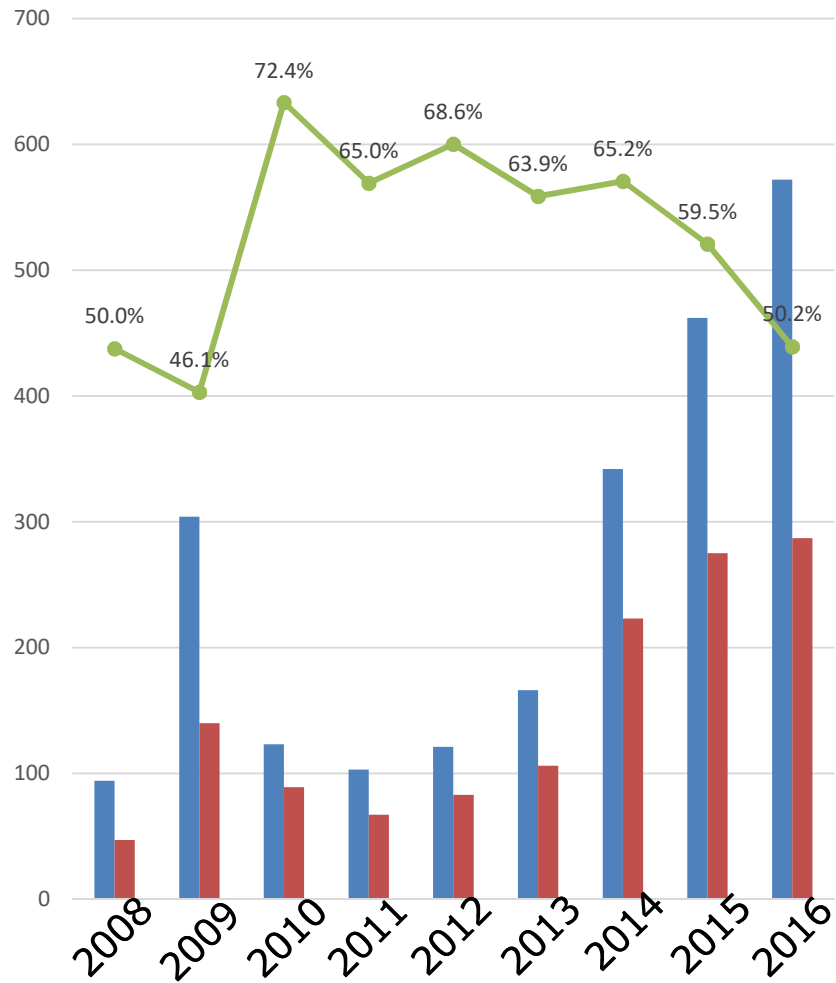
1482 nurse candidates and **5538 care worker** candidates were accepted by **April 2020**.
The number of **job offers for care worker candidates has been on the rise** since FY2014.



■ Nurse candidates	104	266	85	117	57	112	98	155	124	85	97	121	61	
■ care-worker candidates	104	379	149	119	145	195	410	568	671	752	773	761	475	
● Job offers for nurses	173	376	139	162	87	137	162	228	199	144	154	143	163	129
● Job offers for care-worker	291	520	190	142	162	212	547	825	1056	1651	1852	2363	2901	2522

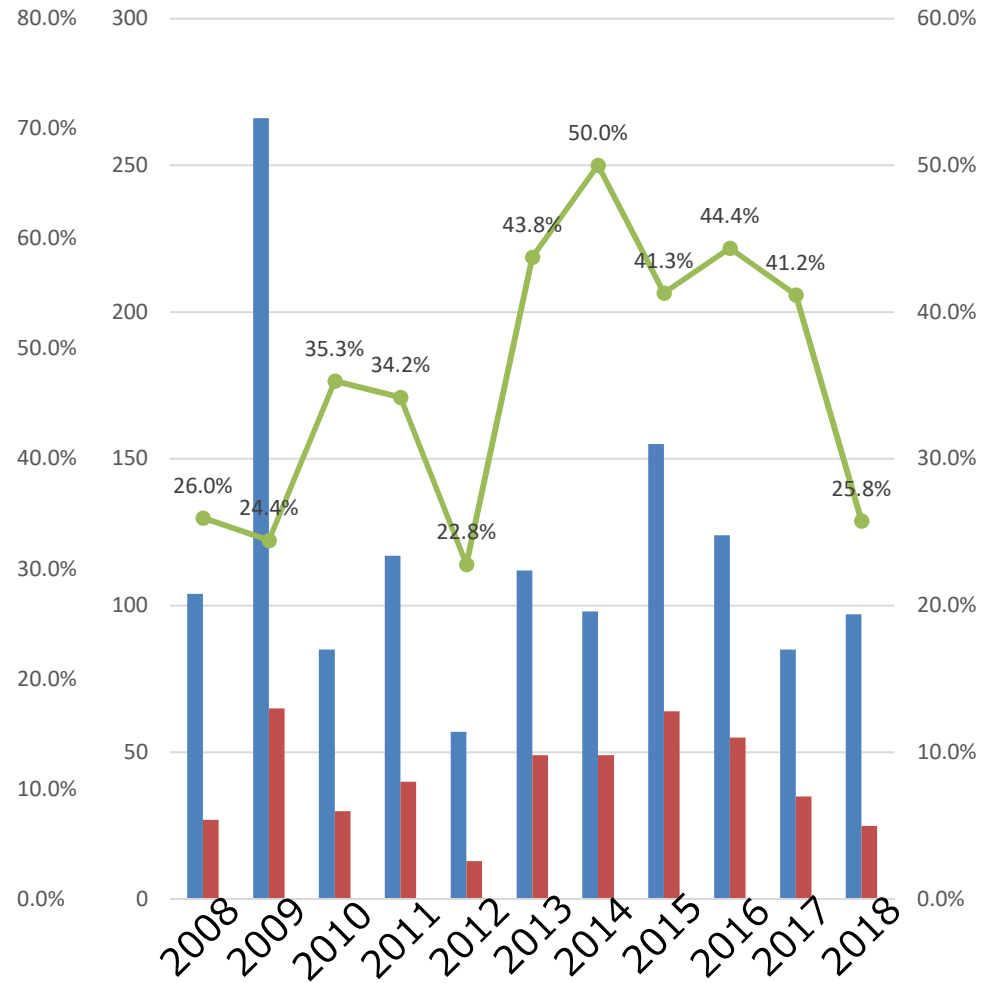
The Pass Rate for National Exams in Each Fiscal Year

Care worker candidates pass rate



■ candidates
 ■ candidates who passed
 —●— pass rate

Nurse candidates pass rate



■ Candidates
 ■ candidates who passed
 —●— pass rate