

Survey on Japanese Public Awareness on International Social Issues

Research Institute for Japan's Globalization
(RIJAG)

Institute for International Strategy and Information Analysis, Inc.
(IISIA)

May 2021

Survey Overview

< Purpose of the Survey >

We conducted a survey that includes a follow-up survey of the UN75 initiative conducted by the United Nations (UN) specifically for the Japanese people. We added some unique question items to clarify the awareness tendency towards their own country (Japan) and the international community.

In order to make concrete proposals to domestic and international society from our own point of view, we conducted this survey to obtain the numerical basis.

【Survey Overview】

- Target of the Survey: Men and women aged 16 – 69 residing in Japan
- Method of the Survey: Internet survey
- Period of the Survey: April 14 to 15, 2021
- Sample Size: 1000

【About sampling】

In the preliminary survey, we asked “Are you interested in Japanese/World social issues?”. Only the respondents who answered “Very interested” or “Interested” participated in the present survey.

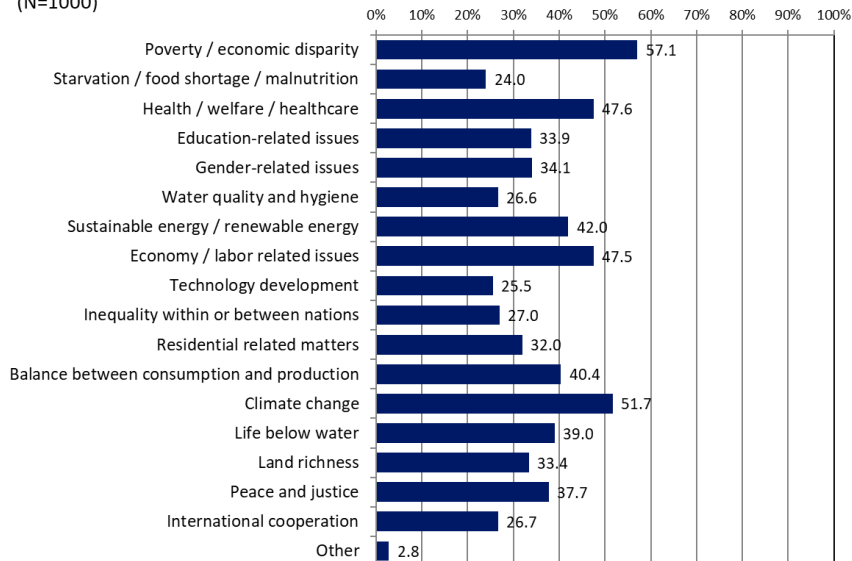
Key Findings

- ◆ **87.5% of respondents worry about Japanese society 10 years from now**
 - Asked if they were worried or hopeful about Japanese society 10 years from now, 87.5% said they were worried.
 - Also, 47% of respondents said that in the world 25 years later, people would not be happier than they are now.
- ◆ **Only 40% are aware of UN's activities**
 - Asked how much they knew about the United Nations (UN), it showed that 60.1% of the respondents heard of the name but did not know the specific activities or did not know about them at all.
- ◆ **46.7% said the UN has not been able to deal with international affairs well enough.**
 - Asked if they think the UN is successfully addressing international social issues, 46.7% said they do not.
 - On the other hand, the ratio of those who answered that the UN is successfully dealing with international social issues was only 8.8%.
- ◆ **80% say that issues in Japan should be emphasized rather than relationships with foreign countries**
 - Asked how Japan should build international relations with other countries, 80% said that Japan should emphasize domestic issues over international relations.
- ◆ **Voices for the UN organizational reform**
 - Against the current UN, some pointed out problems such as unbalanced power in the organization, or particular nations' profiting and so on.
 - Some respondents even expect the construction of a global social system that transcends nations, or the reorganization of the United Nations.

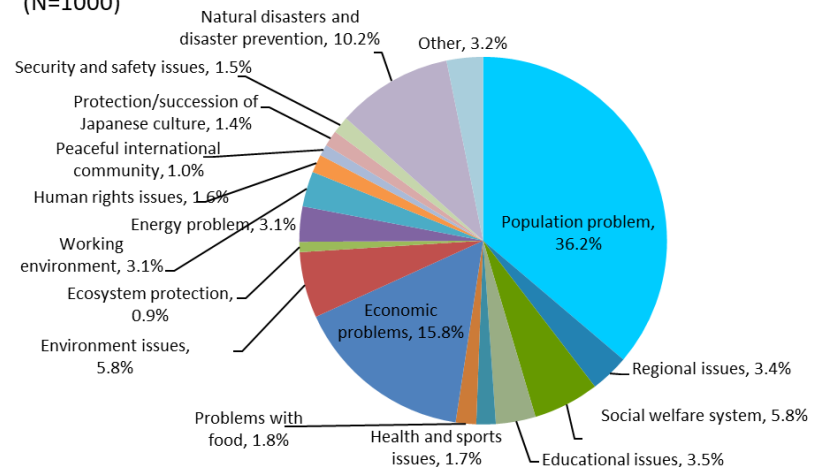
Awareness of the Social Issues (Domestic social issues)

- Regarding social issues of interest, the ratio of "**Poverty and economic disparity**" was the highest, followed by "**Climate change**" and "**Health, welfare, healthcare, etc.**"
- Due to the high level of interest in the spread of Covid-19 since the end of 2019, problems related to "Health, welfare, healthcare, etc." are attracting attention.
- Regarding social issues that are of most concern, the ratio of "**Population problems**" is the highest, followed by "**Economic problems**", "**Natural disasters and disaster prevention**".
- It can be said that "Population problems" and "Natural disasters and disaster prevention" are unique issues of Japanese society.

To those who are interested in Japanese social issues, please choose items you are interested in from the list below. (multiple)
(N=1000)



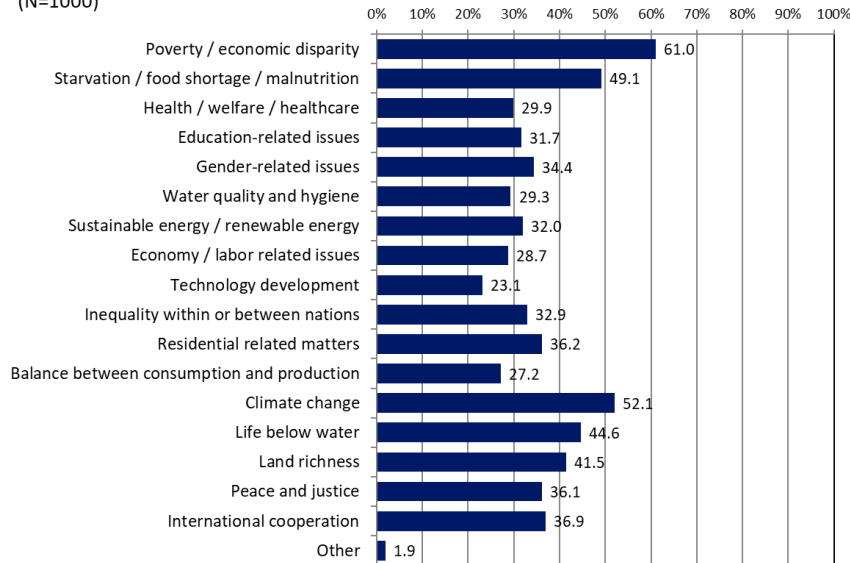
What is your biggest concern in Japanese society? (Single)
(N=1000)



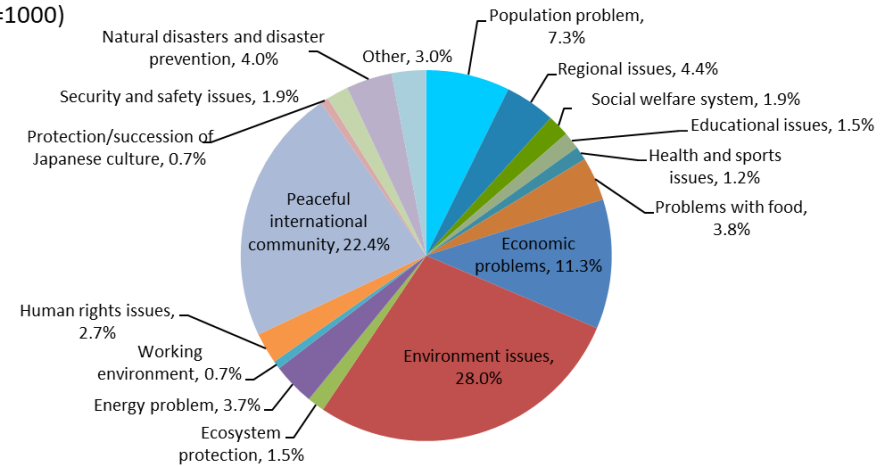
Awareness of the Social Issues (International social issues)

- Regarding social issues of interest, the ratio of "**Poverty and economic disparity**" was the highest, followed by "**Climate change**" and "**Hunger, food shortages and malnutrition**".
- There is little interest in "Health, welfare, healthcare, etc.", and it can be seen that "**Hunger, food shortages, and nutritional shortages**" are regarded as "typical" of international affairs.
- Regarding the social issues of greatest concern, the ratio of "**Environmental problems**" was the highest, followed by "**Problems toward a peaceful international community**", and "**Economic problems**".
- "Problems for a peaceful international community" can be said to be an issue unique to the international community.

To those who are interested in global social issues, please choose items you are interested in from the list below. (multiple)
(N=1000)



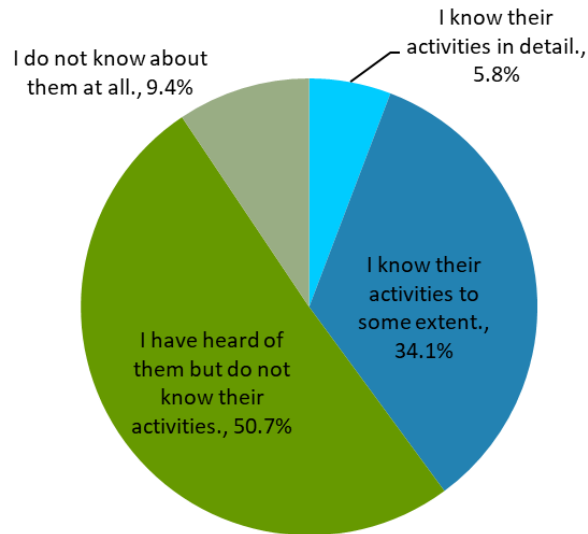
What is your biggest concern in the international community? (Single)
(N=1000)



Recognition of UN and Evaluation of their Activities

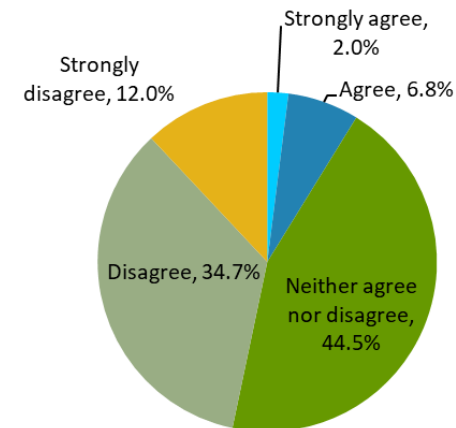
- Regarding the UN activity recognition status, 39.9% of the respondents are aware of the activity content ("I know their activities in detail" and "I know their activities to some extent"). About **60% answered that they did not know the activities of the United Nations.**
- Many people in their twenties said they "know their activities in detail."
- When it comes to assessing UN activities, **46.7% said they do not think the UN is doing well on addressing international social issues.**
- On the other hand, only 8.8% think that the United Nations is successfully dealing with international social issues.

How much do you know about the United Nations (UN)?
(N=1000)



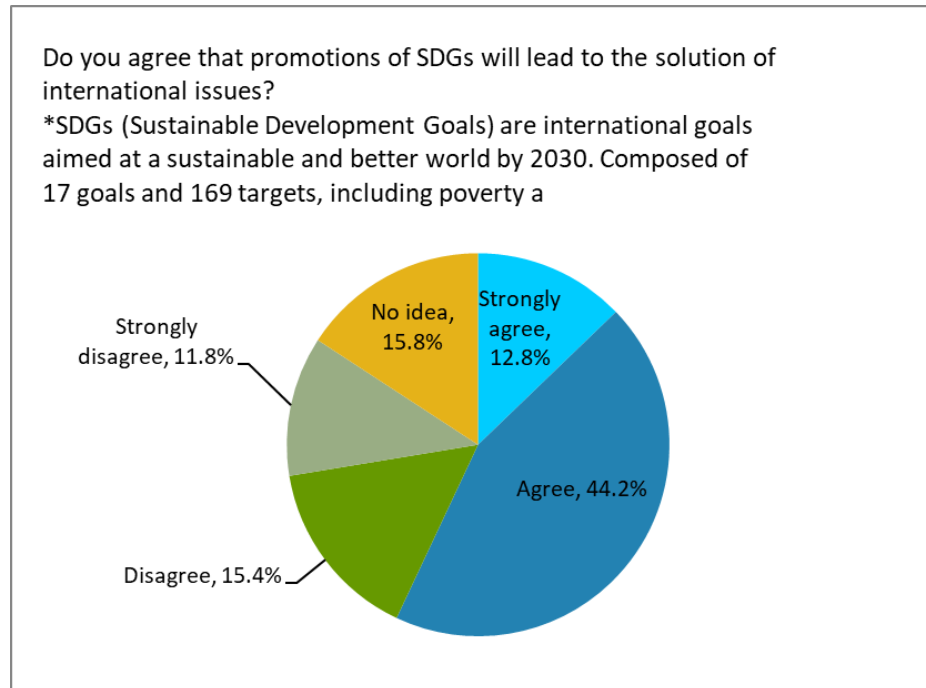
Do you think the United Nations is addressing international social issues well? (Single answer)

*If you are not aware of the United Nations, please answer based on your ideas whether the entire international community is able to cope with global social iss



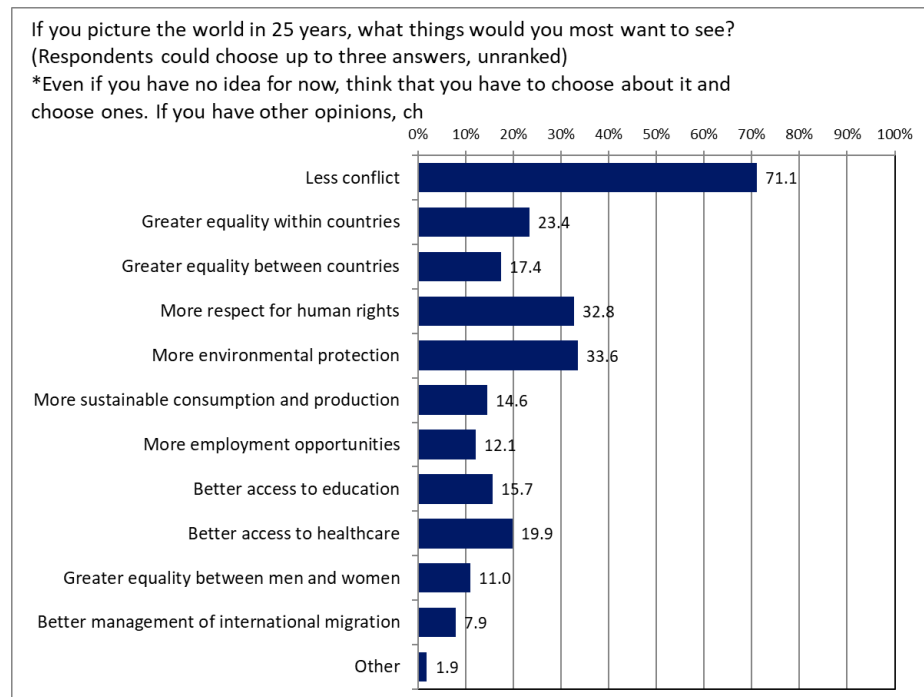
Evaluation on SDGs

- **57.0% said they think SDGs** (Sustainable Development Goals), which is an initiative led by the UN, **will help solve international issues.**
- For both men and women, the percentage of "Agree (that SDGs will help solve international issues)" was high in their 10s and 20s. From around 2015, when SDGs had been discussed and launched, SDGs and activities of the UN has been more discussed in educational field, which is a potential factor of high recognition of the UN and high evaluation of SDGs among young people.
- On the other hand, the percentage of "Disagree" was high among men in their 50s and 60s. (Appendix 1)
- When asked, "What kind of efforts do you think should be taken to aim for a world where no one is left behind?", some potential proposals came out such as: **"Building a world system that removes borders"**, **"Introduction of basic income"**, and **"Improve education for children"**.



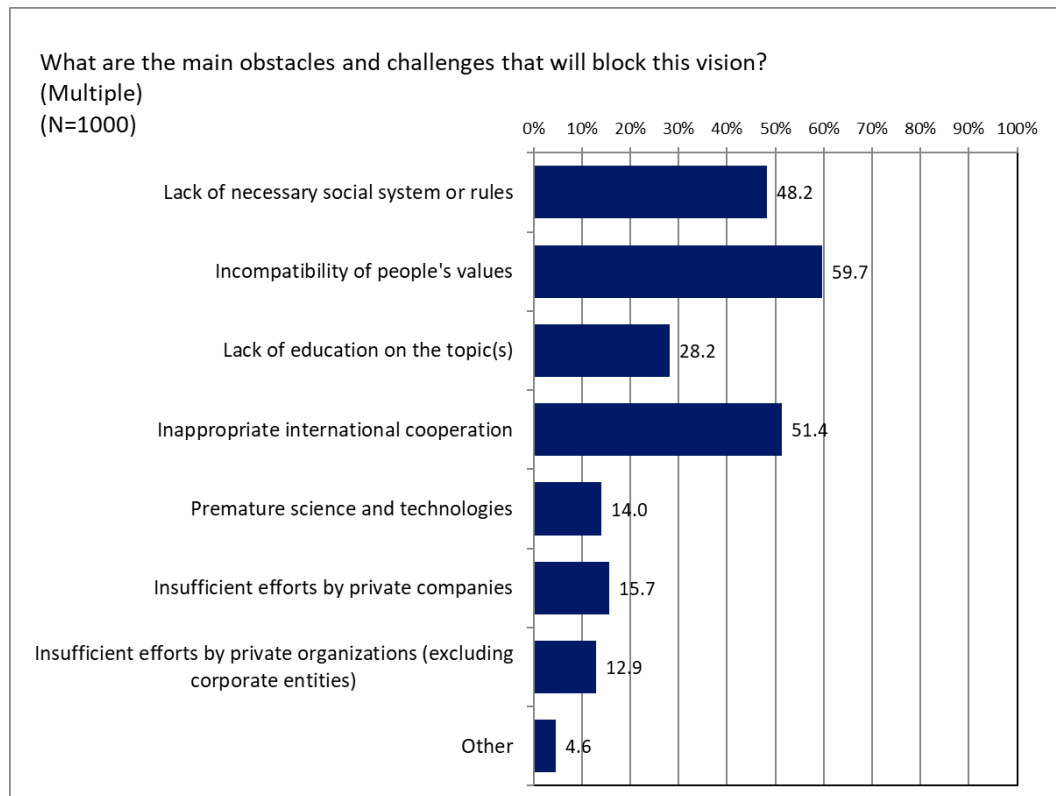
Expectation for the World 25 Years from Now - UN75 follow-up survey

- Based on the survey of people's attitudes toward the world 2045, conducted by the United Nations (UN) UN75 initiative in 2020, we used the same question items exclusively to residents of Japan. In addition, we added some items that are not asked quantitatively in UN75 survey.
- Regarding "three things you would most want to see in the world in 25 years", "**Less conflict**" (71.1%) was the highest, followed by "**More environmental protection**" (33.6%), "**More respect for human rights**" (32.8%), and "greater equality within countries" (23.4%).
- By male age group, the percentage of "Greater equality within countries" is higher than the whole in the late 20s to early 30s.
- By female age group, the percentage of "Greater equality between men and women" is higher in the late teens to early 20s than in the whole. (Appendix 2)



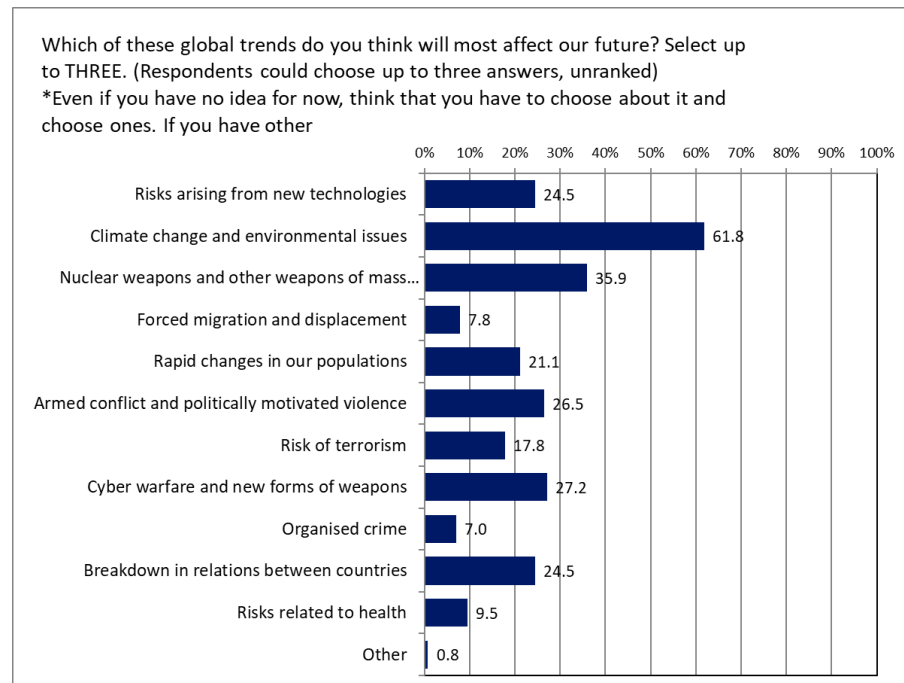
Main Obstacles and Challenges to the Vision - UN75 follow-up survey

- We added this question item due to lack of quantitative data from UN75 survey.
- Regarding main obstacles and challenges that would block the future vision in 25 years from now, **“Incompatibility of people's values”** (59.7%) was the highest, followed by **“Inappropriate international cooperation”** (51.4%), **“Lack of necessary social system or rules”** (48.2%) and **“Lack of education on the topic(s)”** (28.2%).
- It can be said that inclusiveness that does not exclude diverse values is required, and top-down social reform is also expected.



Influential Factors on Our Future - UN75 follow-up survey

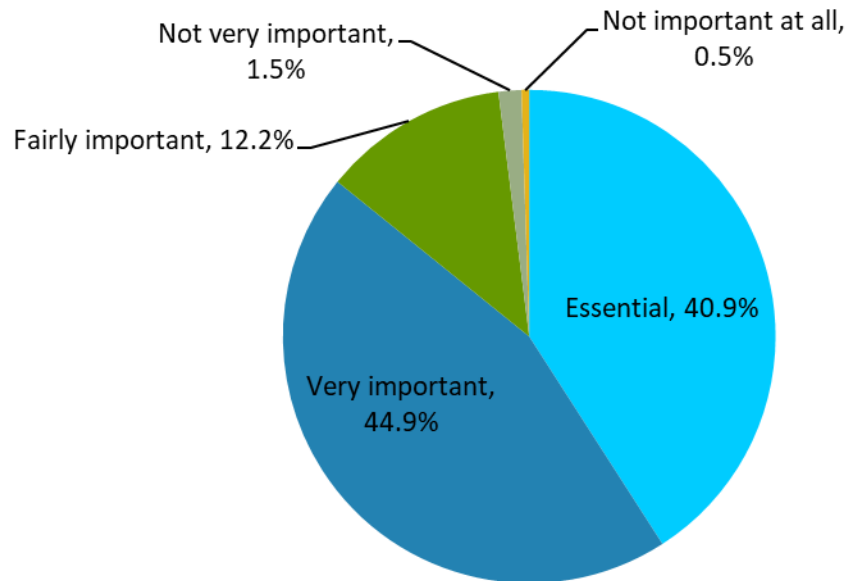
- Regarding global trends which may most affect our future, **“Climate change and environmental issues”** (61.8%) was the highest. This is followed by **“Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction”** (35.9%), **“Cyber warfare and new forms of weapons”** (27.2%), and **“armed conflict and politically motivated violence”** (26.5%).
- By men age group, **“Risks arising from new technologies”** is higher in the late 20s to 30s than in the whole.
- By women age group, **“Risks related to health”** in the early 20s and **“Climate change and environmental issues”** in the early 30s and early 60s is higher than the whole.
- For both men and women, **“Breakdown in relations between countries”** is higher than the whole in their late 60s. (Appendix 3)
- Despite the fact that the effects of the Covid-19 have not subsided, the percentage of “risks related to health” remains at 9.5%.



Importance of International Cooperation - UN75 follow-up survey

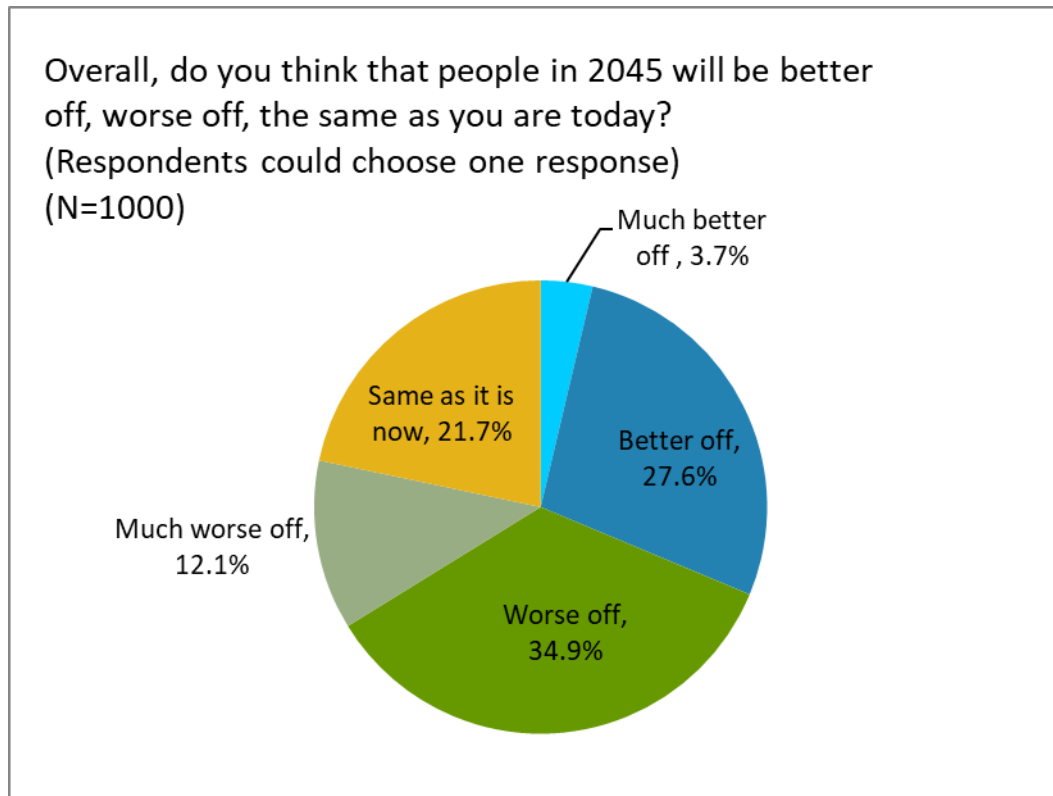
- Regarding the importance of working together with countries around the world, **98.0% answered that it was “Essential” or “Important”**.
- Among them, the ratio of “Essential” was 40.9%, “Very important” was 44.9%, and “Fairly important” was 12.2%.
- In the survey conducted at UN75, 66% of the responses from East Asia and Southeast Asia answered “Essential”, hence present survey shows the number is lower by comparison between the surveys.

How important – or not – is it for countries to work together to manage the above trends? (Respondents could choose one response)
(N=1000)



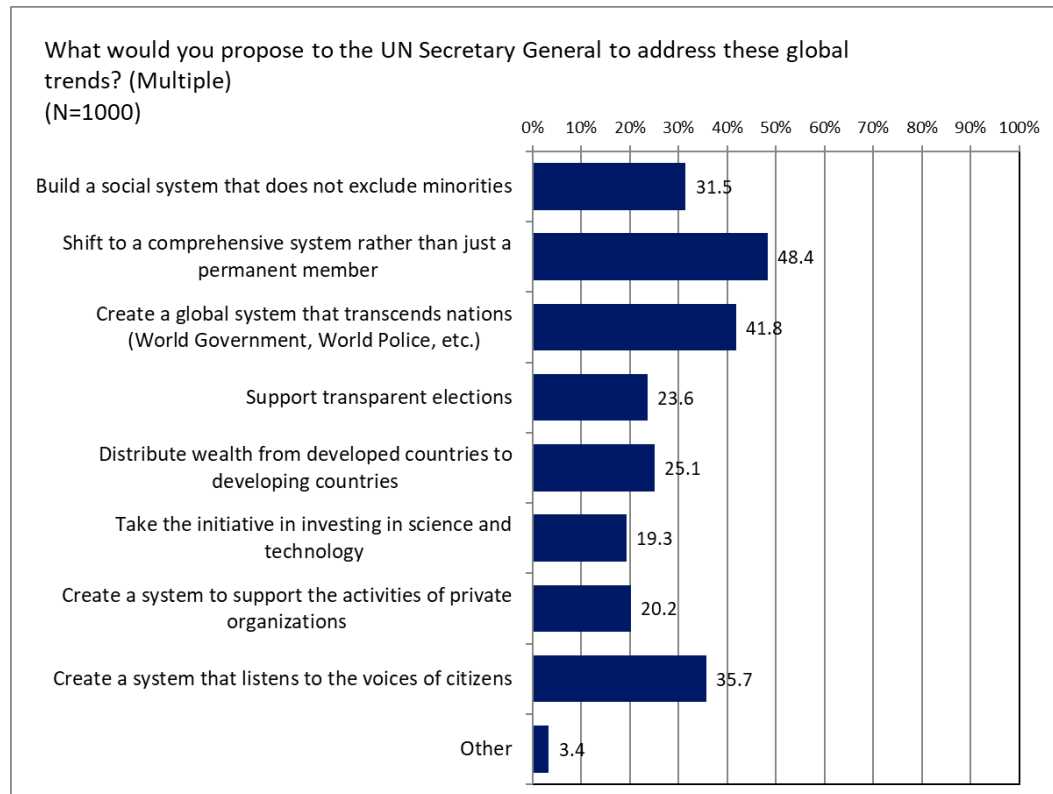
Happiness Forecast in the World - UN75 follow-up survey

- Asked if people in 2045 will be better off, worse off, the same as they are today, 31.3% answered "Much better off" or "Better off" than today.
- On the other hand, **about 50% are pessimistic about the future**, answering "Worse off" (34.9%) and "Much worse off" (12.1%).
- Men and women in their 20s have a higher percentage of "Better off", and men and women in their 50s (especially men) have a higher percentage of "Worse off" than the whole. (Appendix 4)



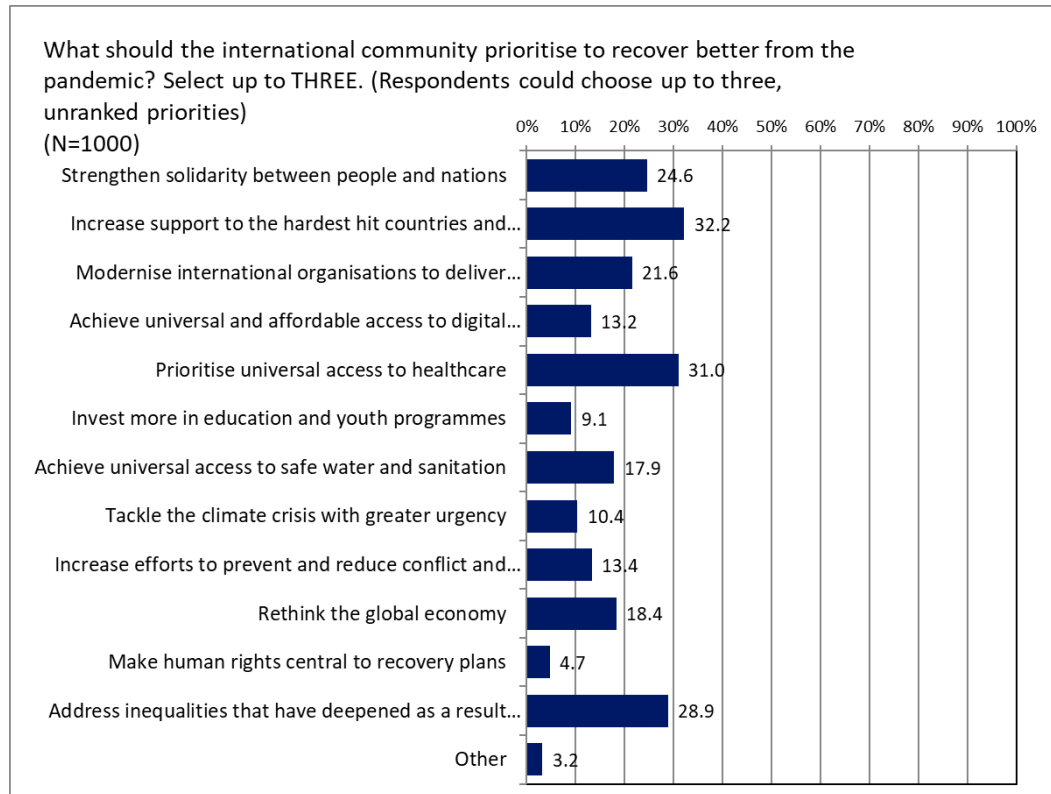
Proposals to Address Social Issues - UN75 follow-up survey

- We added this question item due to lack of quantitative data from UN75 survey.
- Regarding how the United Nations should deal with international social issues, **48.4% answered “Shift to a comprehensive system rather than just a permanent member”** followed by “Create a global system that transcends nations (World Government, World Police, etc.)” (41.8%), “Create a system that listens to the voices of citizens” (35.7%), and “Build a social system that does not exclude minorities” (31.5%)



Priorities for Recovery from a Pandemic - UN75 follow-up survey

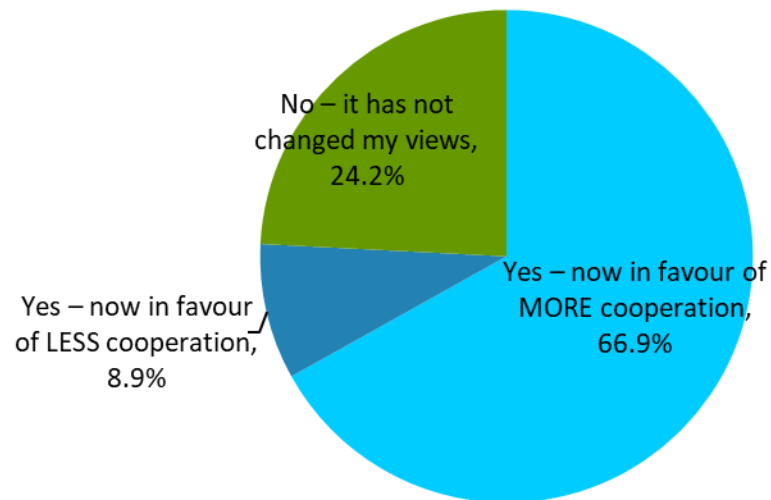
- As for what the international community should prioritize in order to recover from the pandemic, **“Increase support to the hardest hit countries and communities”** (32.2%) was the highest. This was followed by **“Prioritise universal access to healthcare”** (31.0%), **“Address inequalities that have deepened as a result of COVID-19”** (28.9%), **“Strengthen solidarity between people and nations”** (24.6 %).
- Women in their 10s and 20s have a higher percentage of “Strengthen solidarity between people and nations” than the whole. (Appendix 5)



COVID-19 and International Cooperation - UN75 follow-up survey

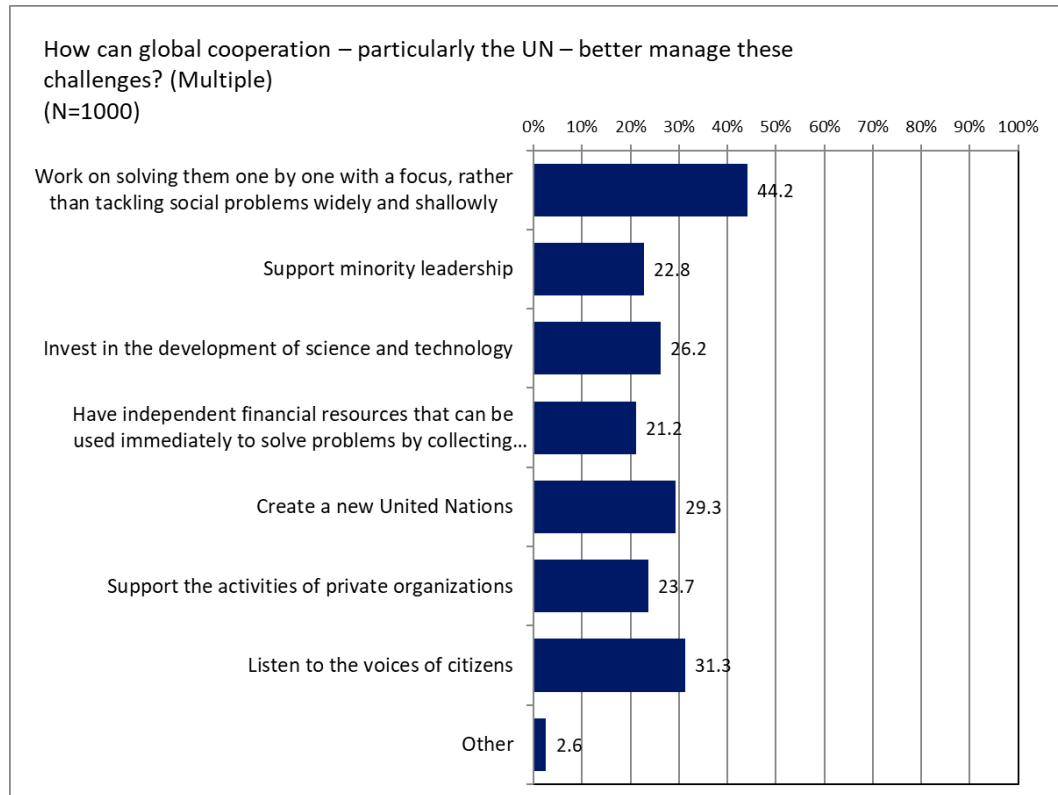
- As to whether the COVID-19 has changed opinions on interstate cooperation, **66.9% said "Yes – now in favour of MORE cooperation"**
- Men and women in their 60s have a higher percentage of "Yes – now in favour of MORE cooperation" than the whole. (Appendix 6)

Has COVID-19 changed your views on cooperation between countries? (Respondents could choose one)
(N=1000)



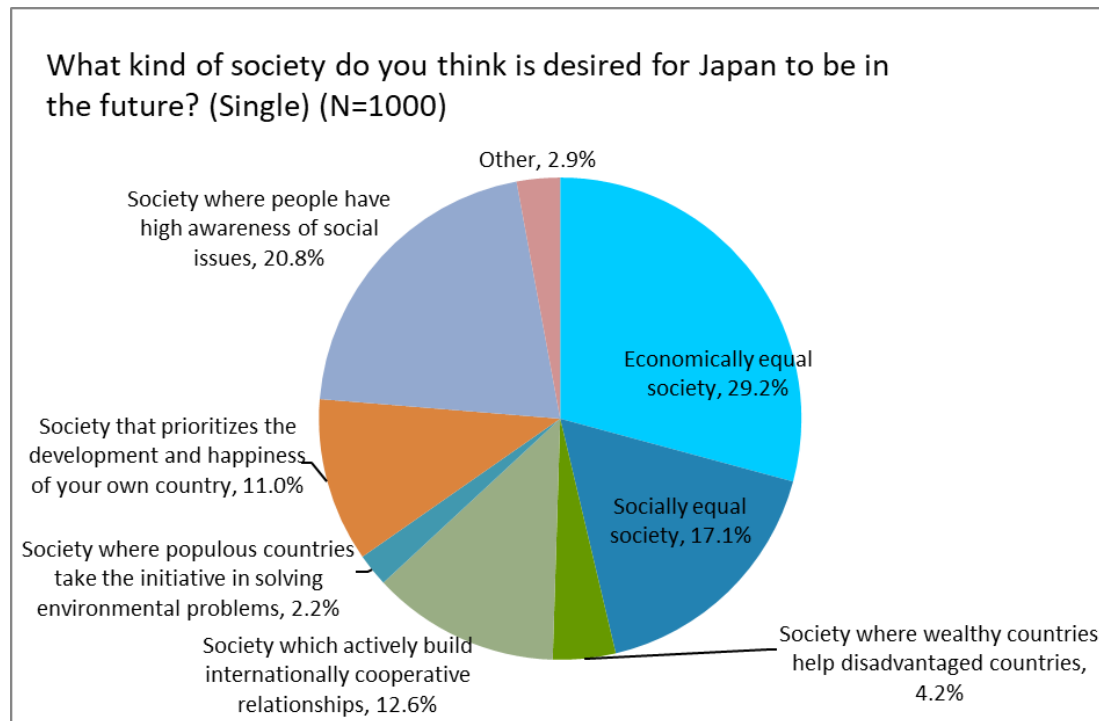
Proposals to Solve International Social Issues

- Asked how global cooperation could better manage international challenges, **44.2% answered "Work on solving them one by one with a focus, rather than tackling social problems widely and shallowly."**
- This is followed by **"Listen to the voices of citizens" (31.3%), "Create a new United Nations" (29.3%),** and **"Invest in the development of science and technology" (26.2%).**



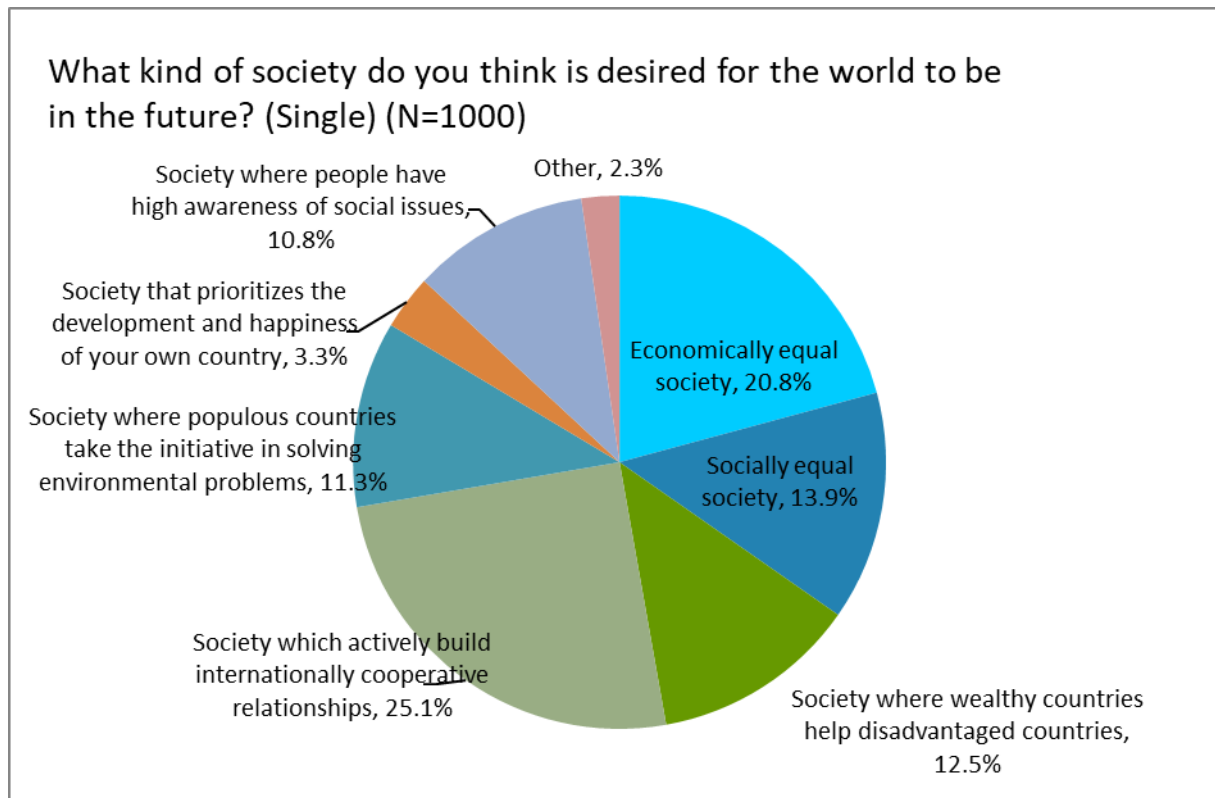
Ideal Japanese Society in the Future

- Asked what kind of society is desired for Japan to be in the future, **29.2% answered “Economically equal society”**.
- This was followed by **“Society where people have high awareness of social issues”** (20.8%), **“Socially equal society”** (17.1%), and “Society which actively build internationally cooperative relationships” (12.6%).
- Men and women in their late 50s and 60s have a higher percentage of "Society where people have high awareness of social issues" than the whole.
- Many teenage women answered “Socially equal society” (Appendix 7)
- There is a tendency to emphasize economic equality over social equality, but the situation of the recession caused by COVID-19 is also cited as a background situation.



Ideal International Society in the Future

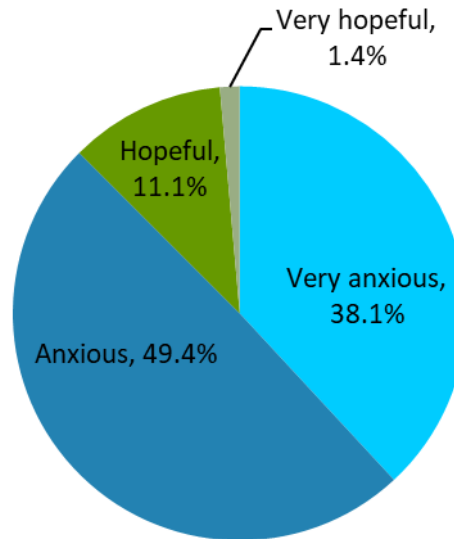
- Asked what kind of society is desired for the world to be in the future, the top answer was **“Society which actively build internationally cooperative relationships”** (25.1%)
- This was followed by **“Economically equal society”** (20.8%), **“Socially equal society”** (13.9%), **“Society where wealthy countries help disadvantaged countries”** (12.5%).
- For men in their 30s and 40s, “Economically equal society” is the highest.
- For women, “Economically equal society” is the highest in their early 20s, “Society where populous countries take the initiative in solving environmental problems” in their early 40s. (Appendix 8)



Anxiety about Japanese Society in 10 years

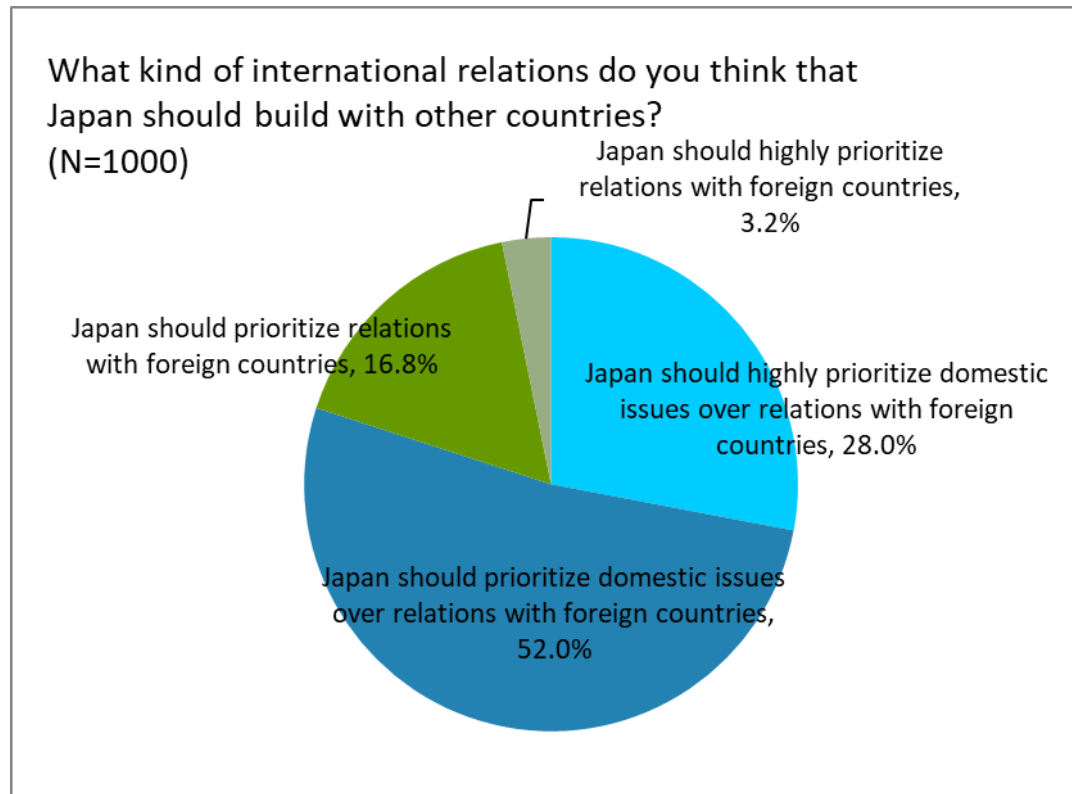
- Asked if you are anxious or hopeful about the Japanese society in 10 years, **about 90% answered "Anxious"**.
- The percentage men in 10s who answered "Anxious" is higher than the whole.
- On the other hand, relatively high percentage of men in their early 20s and early 40s answered "Hopeful". (Appendix 9)

Imagine Japan 10 years from now. Are you anxious about Japanese society 10 years from now? Or are you hopeful?
(N=1000)



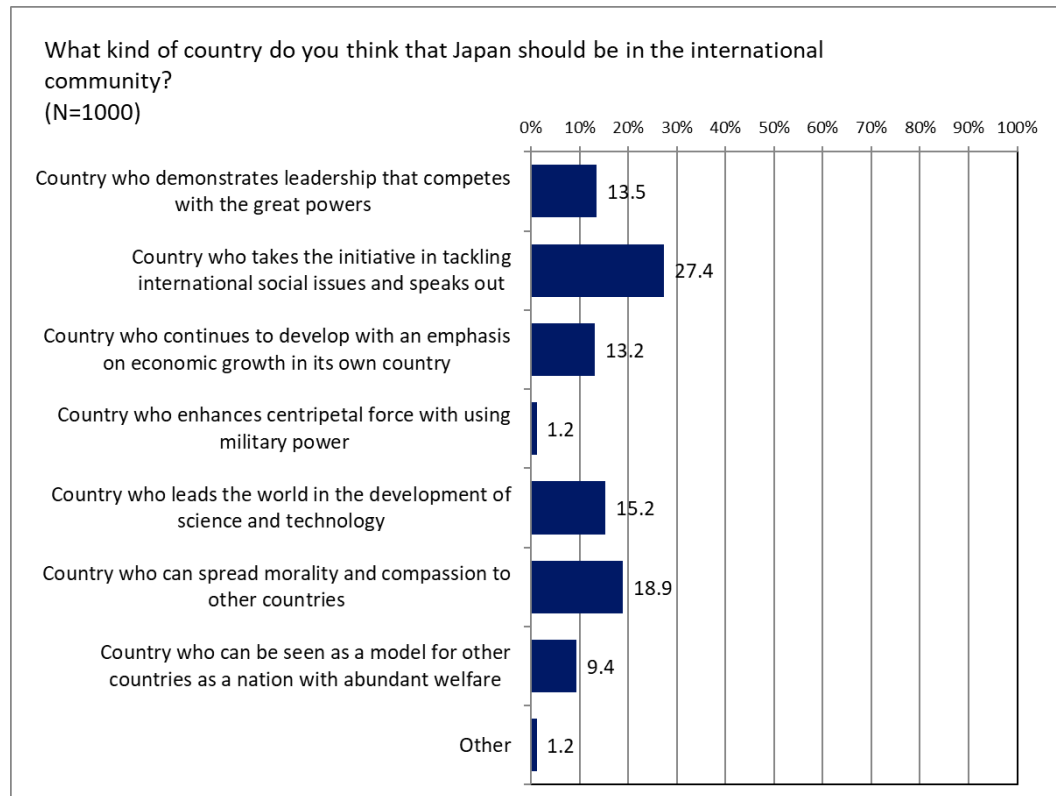
International Affairs with Foreign Countries

- Regarding what kind of international relations Japan should build with other countries, **80.0% answered that "Japan should prioritize domestic issues over relations with foreign countries."**
- For women in their late 20s, the percentage of "Japan should prioritize domestic issues over relations with foreign countries" is higher than the whole.
- On the other hand, the percentage of men and women in their late 60s who answered "Japan should prioritize relations with foreign countries" is higher than the whole. (Appendix 10)



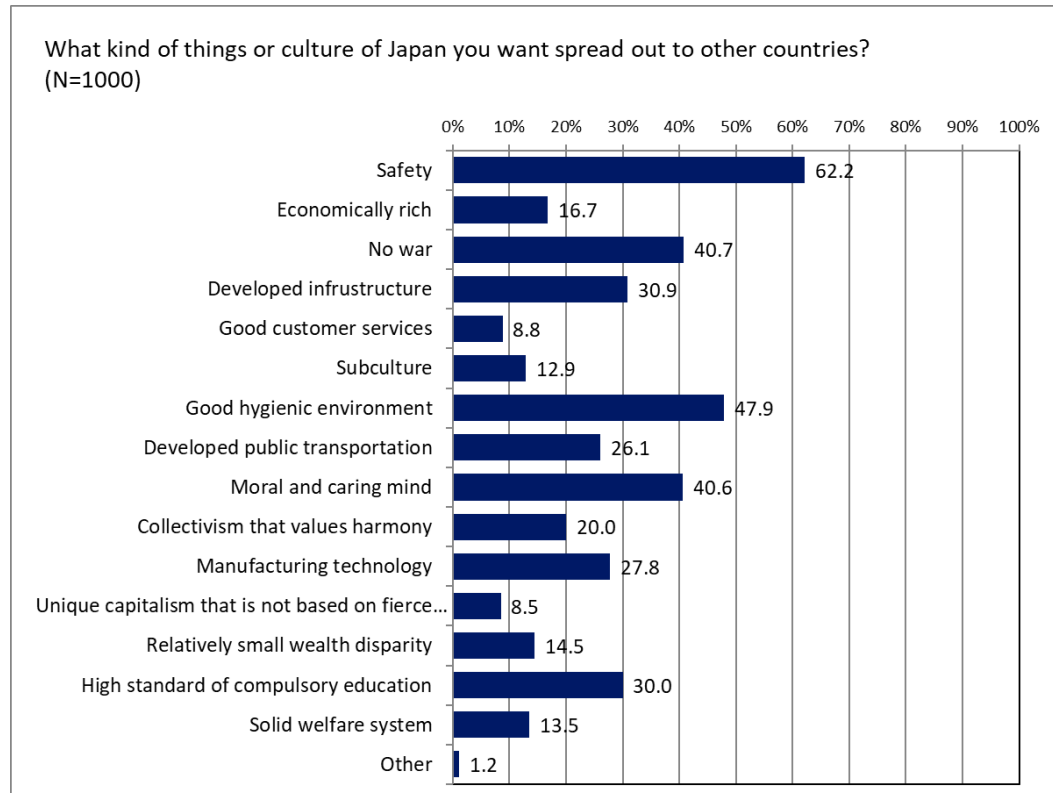
The Position of Japan in the International Community

- Asked what kind of country Japan should be in the international community, the top answer was “Country who takes the initiative in tackling international social issues and speaks out” (27.4%).
- This was followed by **“Country who can spread morality and compassion to other countries”** (18.9%), **“Country who leads the world in the development of science and technology”** (15.2%), and “Country who demonstrates leadership that competes with the great powers” (13.5%).
- It is expected that excellent leaders will be assumed in certain positions and that potential leaders will be cultivated.



Proud Things and Cultures of Japan

- Asked what kind of things and culture of Japan that you want spread out to other countries, **62.2% answered "Safety"**.
- This was followed by **"Good hygienic environment"** (47.9%), **"No war"** (40.7%), and "Moral and caring mind" (40.6%).
- The percentage of men and women in their 10s who answered "Subculture", and that of men and women in their 50s and 60s who answered Moral and caring mind" is higher than the whole. (Appendix 11)

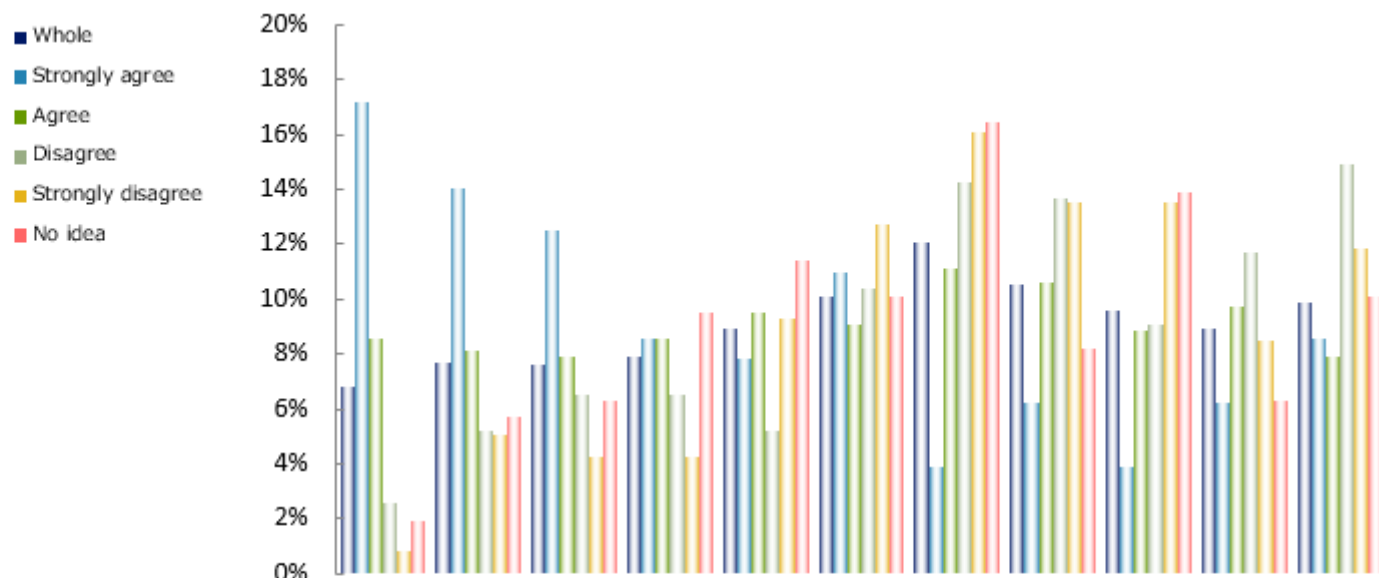


Wrap-up

- At the present time (April 2021), when the spread of Covid-19 does not stop, many people are pessimistic about the future amid increasing economic and social unrest.
- It was also clarified that while international cooperation is becoming more and more important, there are a certain number of opinions that the existing global organization needs to be reviewed.
- Our Institute will further investigate what kind of world system is desired in detail, and while examining the ideal state of Japan in the international community, we would revitalize people's efforts to address social issues.
- Furthermore, we intend to form a society full of hope by making proposals to appropriate organizations, based on the quantitative data obtained from the survey.

Appendix 1

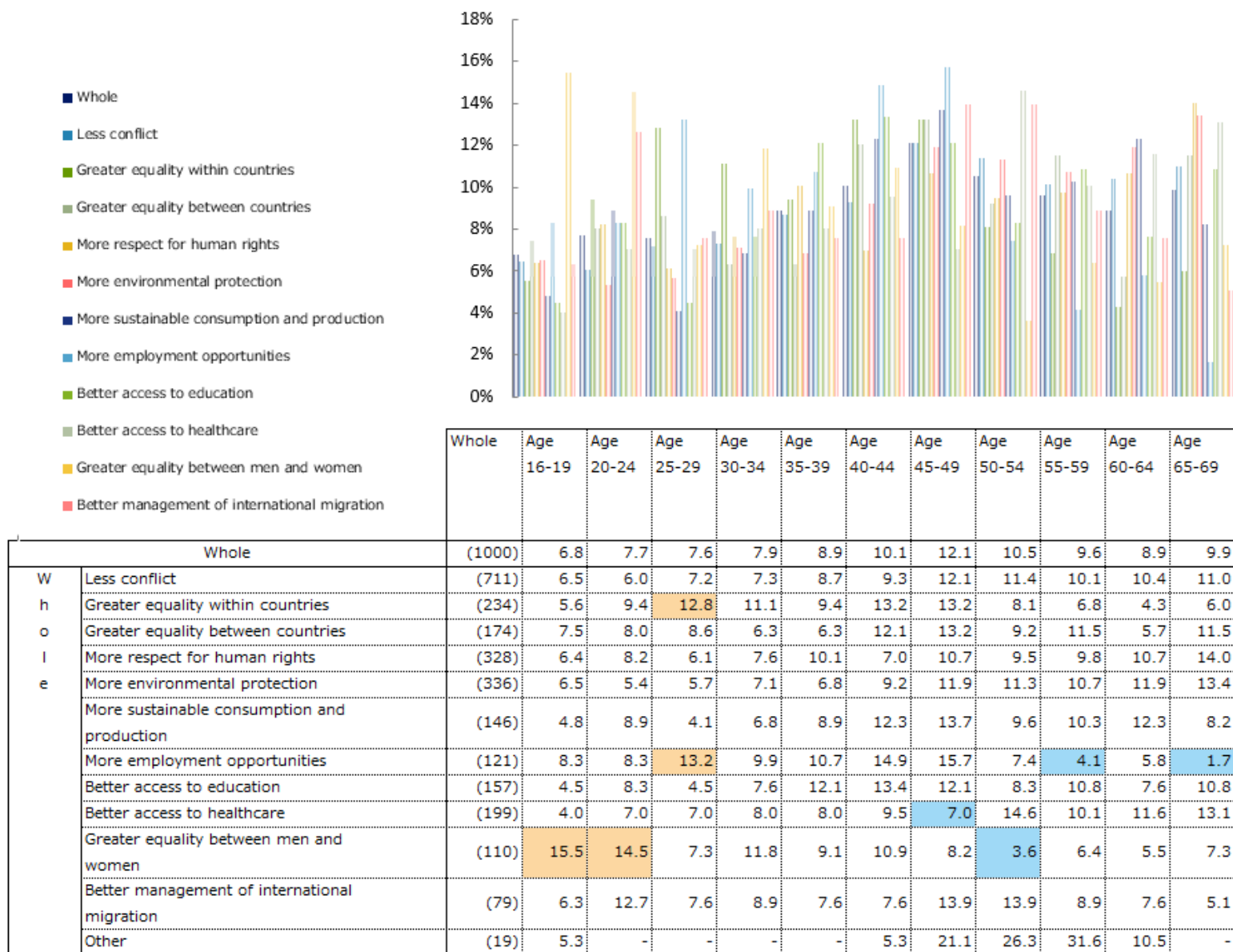
<By age group> Evaluation on SDGs



		Whole	Age 16-19	Age 20-24	Age 25-29	Age 30-34	Age 35-39	Age 40-44	Age 45-49	Age 50-54	Age 55-59	Age 60-64	Age 65-69
Whole		(1000)	6.8	7.7	7.6	7.9	8.9	10.1	12.1	10.5	9.6	8.9	9.9
Whole	Strongly agree	(128)	17.2	14.1	12.5	8.6	7.8	10.9	3.9	6.3	3.9	6.3	8.6
	Agree	(442)	8.6	8.1	7.9	8.6	9.5	9.0	11.1	10.6	8.8	9.7	7.9
	Disagree	(154)	2.6	5.2	6.5	6.5	5.2	10.4	14.3	13.6	9.1	11.7	14.9
	Strongly disagree	(118)	0.8	5.1	4.2	4.2	9.3	12.7	16.1	13.6	13.6	8.5	11.9
	No idea	(158)	1.9	5.7	6.3	9.5	11.4	10.1	16.5	8.2	13.9	6.3	10.1

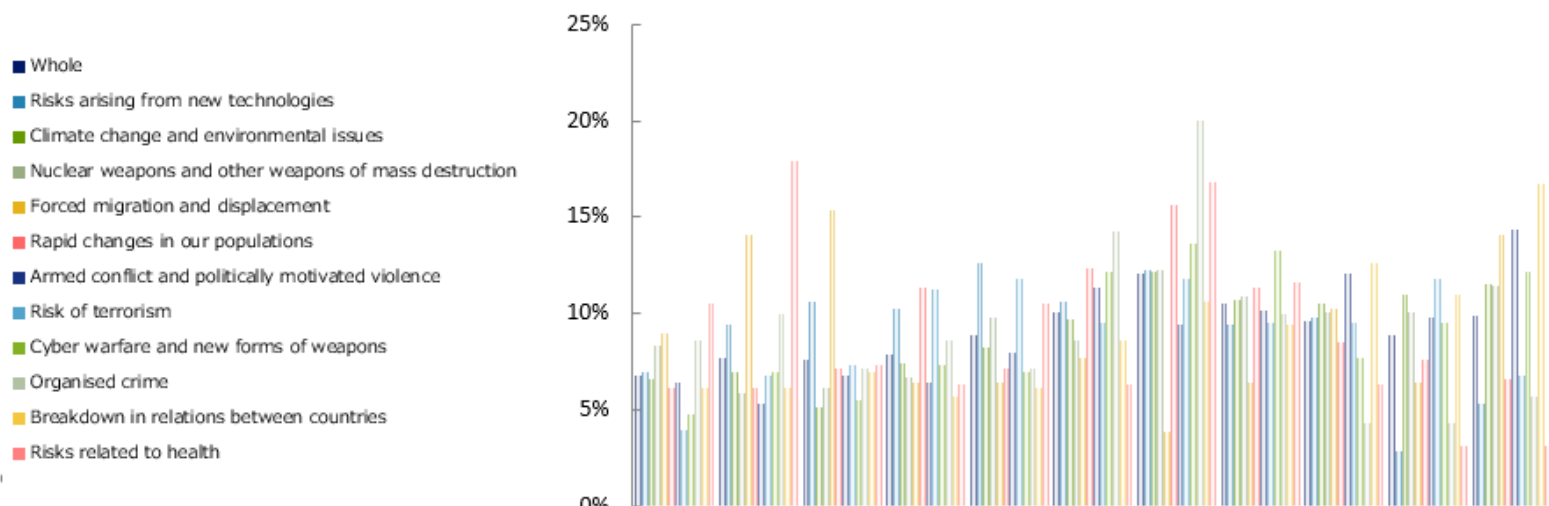
Appendix 2

<By age group> Expectation for the World 25 Years from Now



Appendix 3

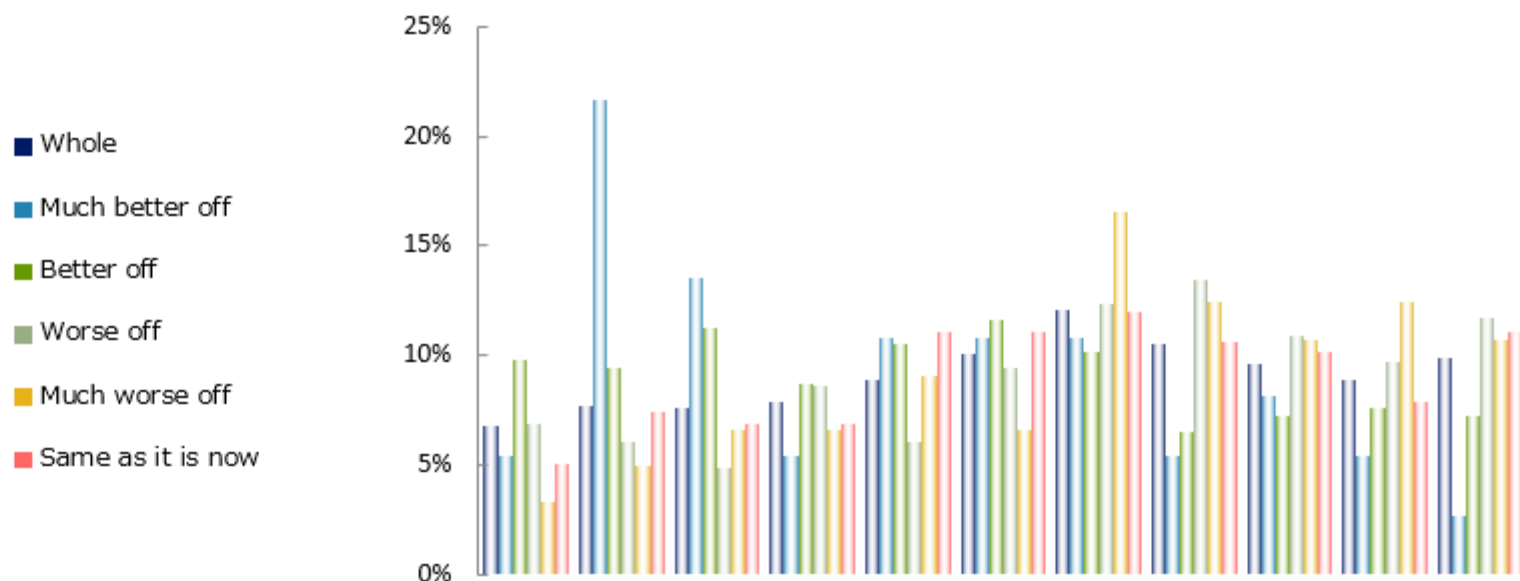
<By age group> Influential Factors on Our Future



		Whole	Age 16-19	Age 20-24	Age 25-29	Age 30-34	Age 35-39	Age 40-44	Age 45-49	Age 50-54	Age 55-59	Age 60-64	Age 65-69
Whole		(1000)	6.8	7.7	7.6	7.9	8.9	10.1	12.1	10.5	9.6	8.9	9.9
Whole	Risks arising from new technologies	(245)	6.9	9.4	10.6	10.2	12.7	10.6	12.2	9.4	9.8	2.9	5.3
	Climate change and environmental issues	(618)	6.6	7.0	5.2	7.4	8.3	9.7	12.1	10.7	10.5	11.0	11.5
	Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction	(359)	8.4	5.8	6.1	6.7	9.7	8.6	12.3	10.9	10.0	10.0	11.4
	Forced migration and displacement	(78)	9.0	14.1	15.4	6.4	6.4	7.7	3.8	6.4	10.3	6.4	14.1
	Rapid changes in our populations	(211)	6.2	6.2	7.1	11.4	7.1	12.3	15.6	11.4	8.5	7.6	6.6
	Armed conflict and politically motivated violence	(265)	6.4	5.3	6.8	6.4	7.9	11.3	9.4	10.2	12.1	9.8	14.3
	Risk of terrorism	(178)	3.9	6.7	7.3	11.2	11.8	9.6	11.8	9.6	9.6	11.8	6.7
	Cyber warfare and new forms of weapons	(272)	4.8	7.0	5.5	7.4	7.0	12.1	13.6	13.2	7.7	9.6	12.1
	Organised crime	(70)	8.6	10.0	7.1	8.6	7.1	14.3	20.0	10.0	4.3	4.3	5.7
	Breakdown in relations between countries	(245)	6.1	6.1	6.9	5.7	6.1	8.6	10.6	9.4	12.7	11.0	16.7
	Risks related to health	(95)	10.5	17.9	7.4	6.3	10.5	6.3	16.8	11.6	6.3	3.2	3.2
	Other	(8)	-	-	-	12.5	-	-	25.0	37.5	12.5	12.5	-

Appendix 4

<By age group> Happiness Forecast in the World

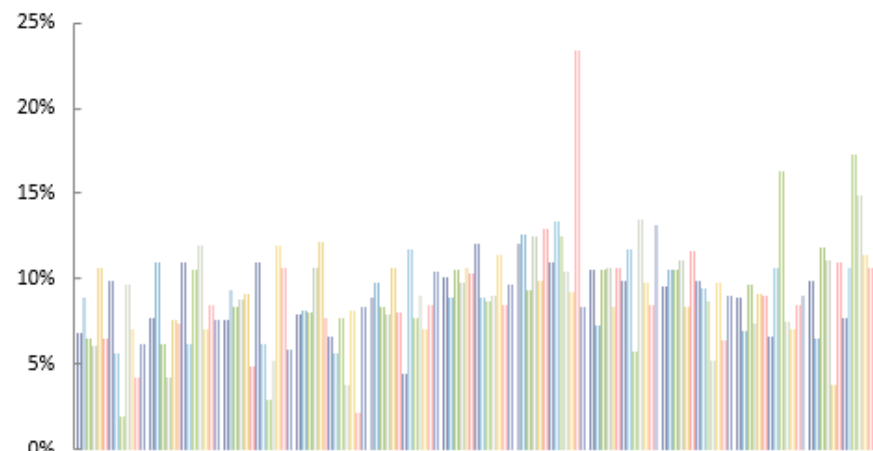


		Whole	Age 16-19	Age 20-24	Age 25-29	Age 30-34	Age 35-39	Age 40-44	Age 45-49	Age 50-54	Age 55-59	Age 60-64	Age 65-69
Whole		(1000)	6.8	7.7	7.6	7.9	8.9	10.1	12.1	10.5	9.6	8.9	9.9
World	Much better off	(37)	5.4	21.6	13.5	5.4	10.8	10.8	10.8	5.4	8.1	5.4	2.7
	Better off	(276)	9.8	9.4	11.2	8.7	10.5	11.6	10.1	6.5	7.2	7.6	7.2
	Worse off	(349)	6.9	6.0	4.9	8.6	6.0	9.5	12.3	13.5	10.9	9.7	11.7
	Much worse off	(121)	3.3	5.0	6.6	6.6	9.1	6.6	16.5	12.4	10.7	12.4	10.7
	Same as it is now	(217)	5.1	7.4	6.9	6.9	11.1	11.1	12.0	10.6	10.1	7.8	11.1

Appendix 5

<By age group> Priorities for Recovery from a Pandemic

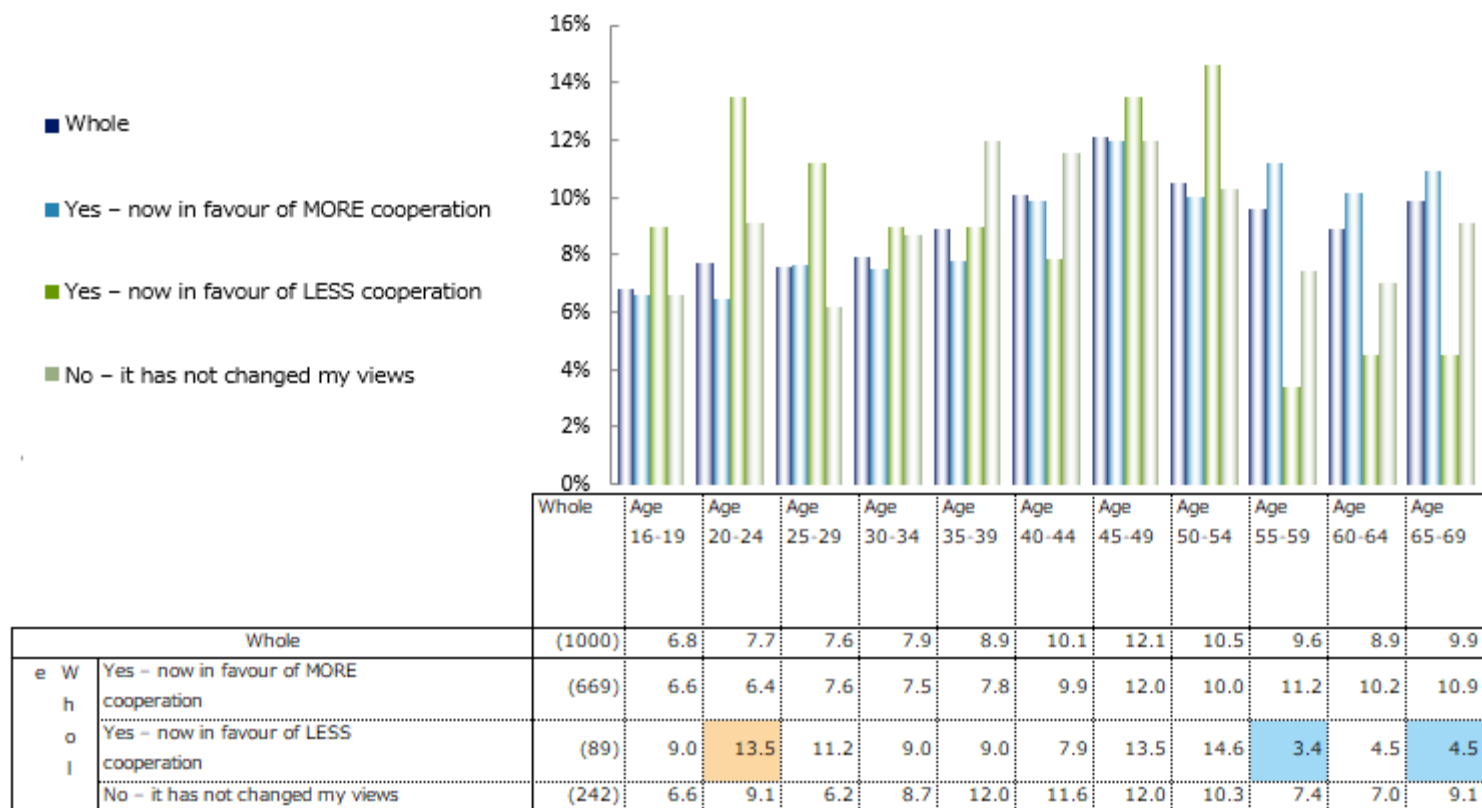
- Whole
- Strengthen solidarity between people and nations
- Increase support to the hardest hit countries and communities
- Modernise international organisations to deliver better results
- Achieve universal and affordable access to digital technologies
- Prioritise universal access to healthcare
- Invest more in education and youth programmes
- Achieve universal access to safe water and sanitation
- Tackle the climate crisis with greater urgency
- Increase efforts to prevent and reduce conflict and violence
- Rethink the global economy
- Make human rights central to recovery plans
- Address inequalities that have deepened as a result of COVID-19
- Other



		Whole	Age 16-19	Age 20-24	Age 25-29	Age 30-34	Age 35-39	Age 40-44	Age 45-49	Age 50-54	Age 55-59	Age 60-64	Age 65-69
	Whole	(1000)	6.8	7.7	7.6	7.9	8.9	10.1	12.1	10.5	9.6	8.9	9.9
W	Strengthen solidarity between people and nations	(246)	8.9	11.0	9.3	8.1	9.8	8.9	12.6	7.3	10.6	6.9	6.5
h	Increase support to the hardest hit countries and communities	(322)	6.5	6.2	8.4	8.1	8.4	10.6	9.3	10.6	10.6	9.6	11.8
o	Modernise international organisations to deliver better results	(216)	6.0	4.2	8.8	10.6	7.9	9.7	12.5	10.6	11.1	7.4	11.1
i	Achieve universal and affordable access to digital technologies	(132)	10.6	7.6	9.1	12.1	10.6	10.6	9.8	8.3	8.3	9.1	3.8
e	Prioritise universal access to healthcare	(310)	6.5	7.4	4.8	7.7	8.1	10.3	12.9	10.6	11.6	9.0	11.0
	Invest more in education and youth programmes	(91)	9.9	11.0	11.0	6.6	4.4	12.1	11.0	9.9	9.9	6.6	7.7
	Achieve universal access to safe water and sanitation	(179)	5.6	6.1	6.1	5.6	11.7	8.9	13.4	11.7	9.5	10.6	10.6
	Tackle the climate crisis with greater urgency	(104)	1.9	10.6	2.9	7.7	7.7	8.7	12.5	5.8	8.7	16.3	17.3
	Increase efforts to prevent and reduce conflict and violence	(134)	9.7	11.9	5.2	3.7	9.0	9.0	10.4	13.4	5.2	7.5	14.9
	Rethink the global economy	(184)	7.1	7.1	12.0	8.2	7.1	11.4	9.2	9.8	9.8	7.1	11.4
	Make human rights central to recovery plans	(47)	4.3	8.5	10.6	2.1	8.5	8.5	23.4	8.5	6.4	8.5	10.6
	Address inequalities that have deepened as a result of COVID-19	(289)	6.2	7.6	5.9	8.3	10.4	9.7	8.3	13.1	9.0	9.0	12.5
	Other	(32)	-	3.1	3.1	6.3	-	9.4	28.1	18.8	9.4	9.4	12.5

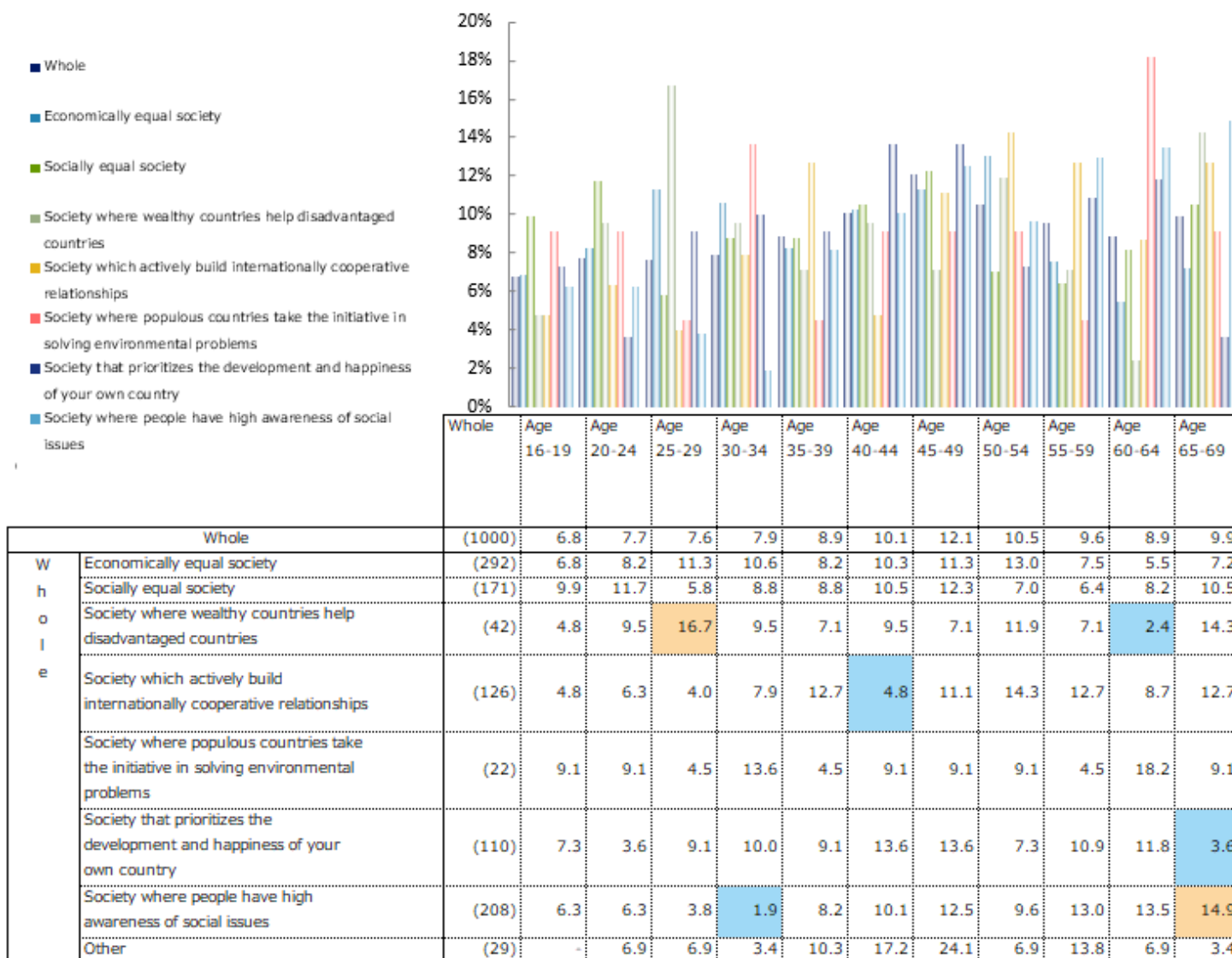
Appendix 6

<By age group> COVID-19 and International Cooperation



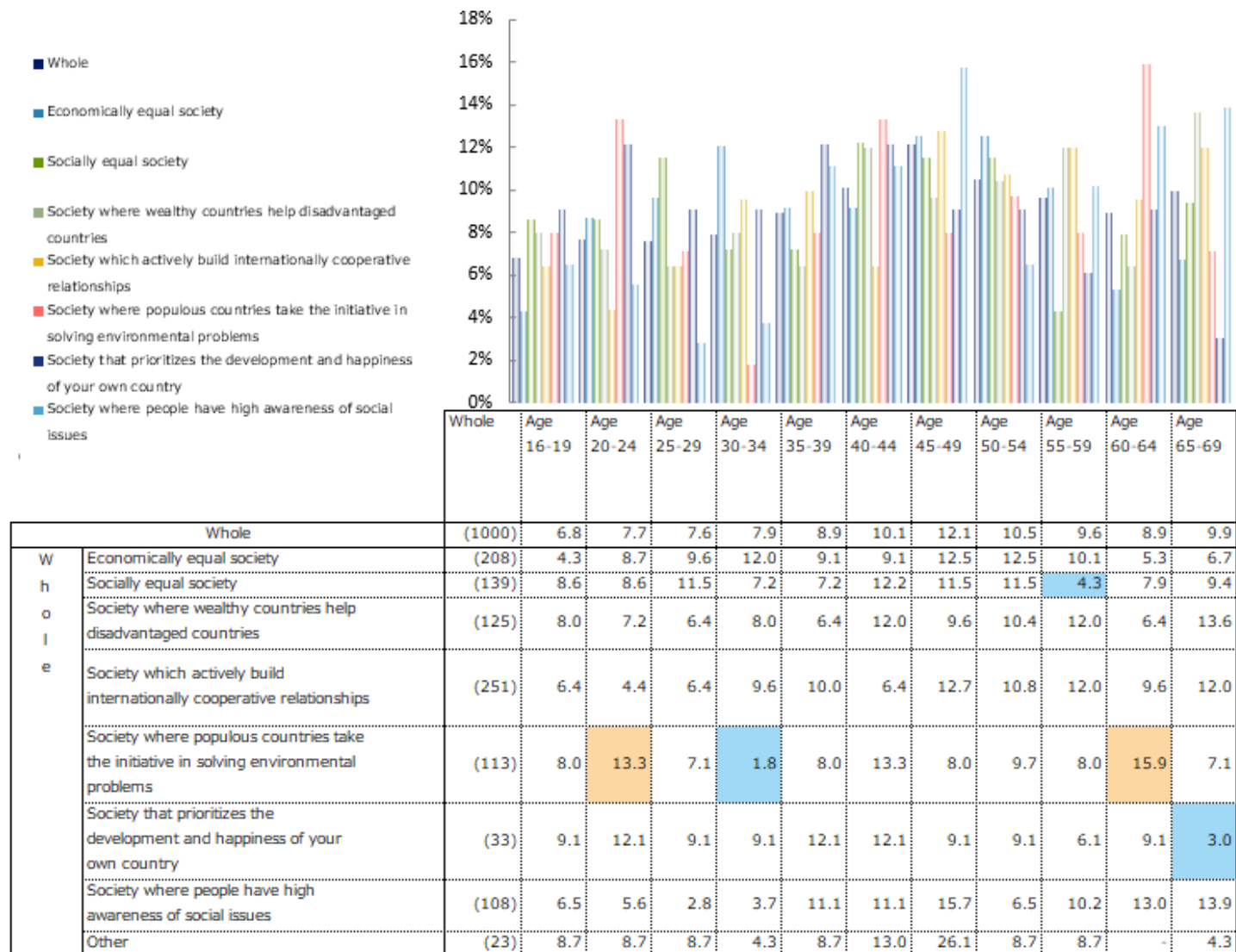
Appendix 7

<By age group> Ideal Japanese Society in the Future



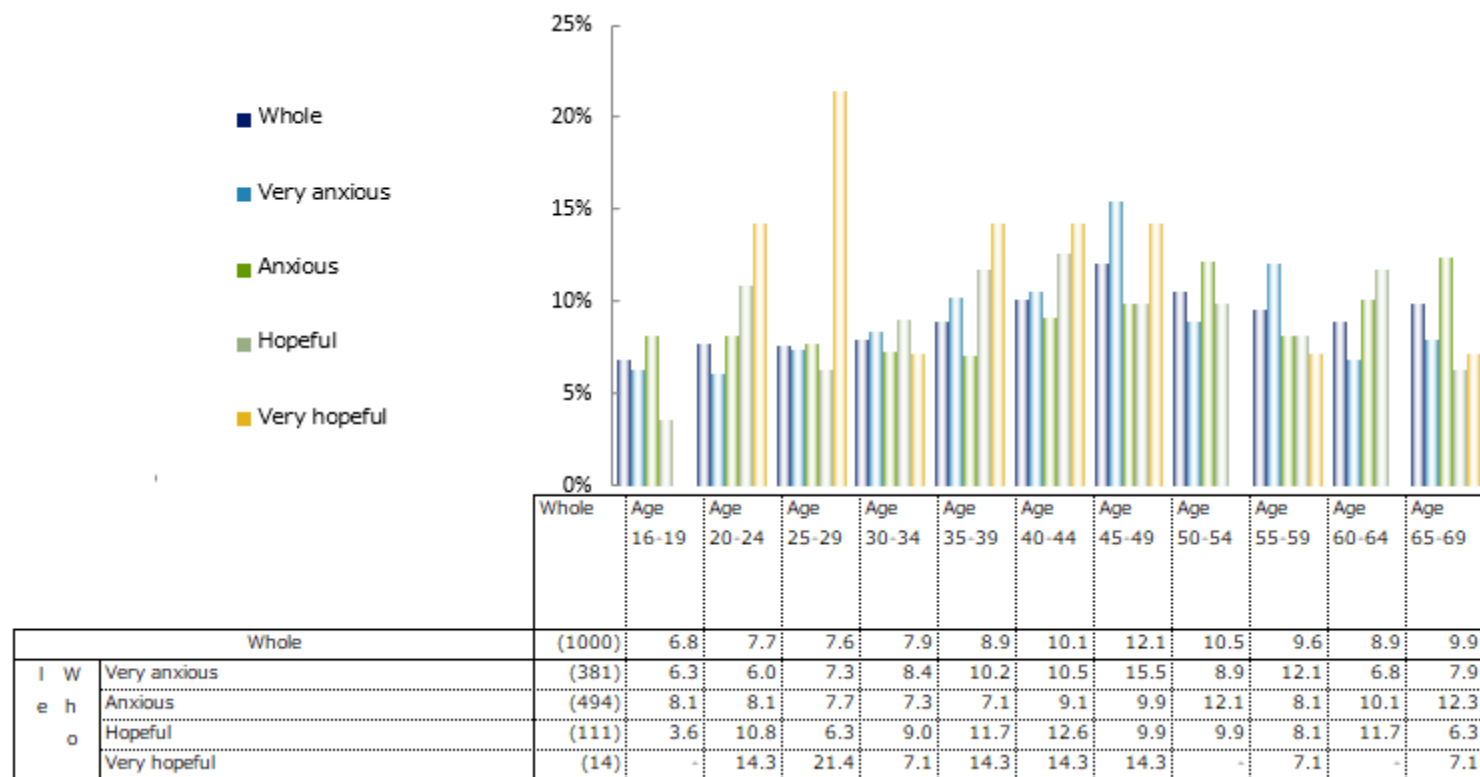
Appendix 8

<By age group> Ideal International Society in the Future



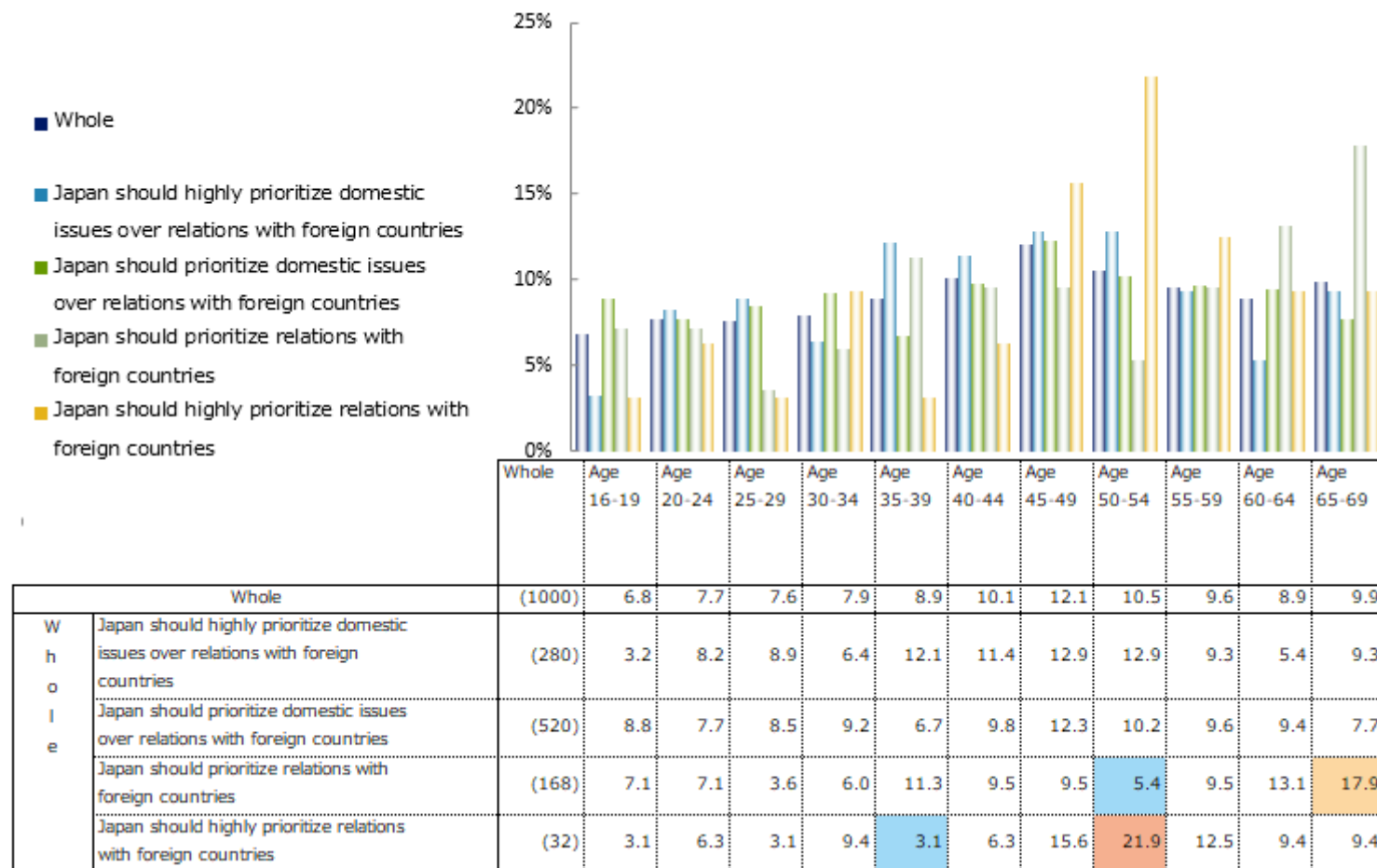
Appendix 9

<By age group> Anxiety about Japanese Society in 10 years



Appendix 10

<By age group> International Affairs with Foreign Countries



Appendix 11

<By age group> Proud Things and Cultures of Japan

