



THE GENRON NPO

Poll 2016

The Future of Northeast Asia
and Public Opinions

Northeast Asian public opinion

—on peace and future of the region

Asian public opinion

—on democracy and the future of their nations



Preface

The opinion surveys The Genron NPO conducted in 2016 pertain to the issues of peace in Northeast Asia, national sentiments toward each other's country and mutual understanding, and the challenges the world faces regarding democracy.

The annual opinion surveys are carried out jointly with our counterparts in China and South Korea. The joint polls with China have been held for 12 years since 2005 while those with South Korea have been held for four years since 2012. The findings of the joint polls with China provide valuable data as there is no other long-term survey in the world that follows Chinese people's mind-sets and views about China's policy issues.

In parallel with these survey results, The Genron NPO and our Chinese counterpart have been organizing large private-sector bilateral dialogues since 2005 by bringing together influential people from Japan and China, and those with our South Korean counterpart since 2012. The Tokyo-Beijing Forum, our annual dialogue with China, has become increasingly influential in both countries as a venue for effective private-sector diplomacy between the two countries.

We have been conducting private-sector dialogues based on the findings of these opinion surveys as we attach particular importance to public opinion in the countries concerned in realizing a peaceful and stable environment in Northeast Asia.

In the Northeast Asia region, the spread of nationalistic sentiments is becoming a major obstacle to solving issues through intergovernmental channels of negotiations, resulting in frequent vacuums in intergovernmental dialogue. The attempt to address given challenges on the basis of public opinion and with the backing of many citizens is commensurate with the approach of citizen participation in political democracy.

Aside from the bilateral joint opinion polls, The Genron NPO newly organized a joint opinion poll involving Japan, China and South Korea in 2015, focusing on the future and peace of Northeast Asia. The three-nation joint poll was launched against the backdrop of what we called the "No-War Pledge," which was adopted at the annual Tokyo-Beijing

Forum in 2013. At that time, we proposed spreading the motivation behind the pledge to the whole of Northeast Asia. To this end, we considered it necessary to trace public opinion trends regarding peace in neighboring countries.

The Genron NPO is an independent, not-for-profit think tank created 15 years ago with the mission to strengthen Japanese democracy and civil society. Therefore, it is quite natural that we take the ebbing of democracy in the world seriously. Indeed, the organization's *raison d'être* is being put to the test. This is why The Genron NPO carried out a multi-nation opinion poll concerning democracy.

We are adherents of the important role of public debate and public opinion in sustaining democracy, and of the creation of an environment in which many citizens are able to participate in efforts to solve pending issues as "stakeholders." We have taken up the new challenge of solving problems pertaining to democracy, and the advancement of freedom and democracy.

In 2016, we conducted a joint opinion poll involving Japan, India and Indonesia, Asia's major democracies, while carrying out a separate survey covering elites in Japan.

This report describes the findings of these four opinion surveys. We sincerely hope that this will be a useful source of information for the progress of peace and democracy in the Asian region.

Yasushi Kudo
President, The Genron NPO

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Executive Summary

1. Over the next 10 years, Japanese, South Koreans and Chinese expect the changes in Asia to continue around the rising influence of China, but the U.S. influence in the region is unlikely to grow. These views are unchanged in the 2016 poll, but three changes have occurred since 2015. First, the number of those who foresee China's influence in Asia growing decline from 2015 (insert reference). The decline is particularly sizable among Chinese people, down 16 percentage points from a year earlier. Second, Chinese people's views of South Korea worsen dramatically over the past year (insert reference). Third, the latest survey shows a marked increase in Chinese people's expectations of Russia. Almost half of the Chinese (46.8 percent) expect Russia's influence in Asia to grow over the next 10 years. This contrasts with an unimpressive 27.5 percent of Chinese who expect U.S. influence in Asia to grow in the same period.

2. Most Japanese (81.8 percent) and South Koreans (83.2 percent) see the United States as a reliable partner while a significant majority (80.7 percent) of Chinese thinks the same about Russia. There is a lack of trust among Japan, South Korea and China being a reliable partner to their country. Only 6.8 percent of Japanese trust China and 23.1 percent trust South Korea. Some 21.6 percent of South Koreans trust Japan, a third (36.1 percent) trust China. A bare 18.5 percent (an increase from 8.9 percent in 2015) of Chinese trust Japan and a third (34.9 percent, a significant decrease from 56.3 percent in 2015) trust South Korea. Reflecting the lack of trust, many voice their expectations on improving relations among the three countries.

See more details of 2nd Japan-China-ROK opinion poll on p.7

3. On perceptions of Japan-China relations, an increasing number of Japanese and Chinese see the current state of Japan-China relations as bad. Japan and China resumed their leaders' meetings in 2014, and the people's perceptions of the state of bilateral relations had improved since. However, it trends backward in 2016.

In contrast, despite the people's anxieties about the bilateral relations, Chinese perceptions of Japan continue to improve after peaking in 2013. An increased level of direct interaction such as growing

numbers of Chinese tourists to Japan is thought to have contributed to the continuing improvement.

On the other hand, the continued worsening of Japanese and South Korean people's sentiments toward each other's country came to a halt and began to improve in 2016. The improvement reflects actions taken by the two governments. 2015 marked the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and South Korea, and the two governments held foreign ministers' meetings six times in the year. They also resumed their top leaders' meetings. Toward the end of the year, they reached a landmark agreement on the handling of the so-called "comfort women" issue. These developments helped improve the views of Japanese and South Koreans of each other in the 2016 survey.

4. The survey highlights anxieties about the volatile security environment from an analysis of perceptions on security. Most Japanese (80.6 percent) feel that North Korea poses a military threat while two-thirds (66.6 percent) feel a threat from China. Around 70 percent of Chinese feel the strongest threats come from Japan (75.9 percent) and the United States (69.4 percent). The reasons why Japanese feel China poses a threat were because "sometimes Chinese intrude into Japanese territorial waters" (74.1 percent), and for Chinese, it was because "Japan attempts to besiege China on military, economy and ideological fronts in cooperation with the United States" (69.4 percent). In the latest survey, a majority of Chinese (62.6 percent) expected a military conflict to occur in waters around the Senkaku Islets, the disputed Japanese-controlled islands in the East China Sea, "in the future" or "in a couple of years." This was a significant increase of 20 points from 2015. Conversely, only 28.4 percent of Japanese foresaw a military dispute in the area.

5. Regarding the anti-China / Japan public sentiment, around 70 percent of both Japanese and Chinese said that “the situation must be improved” or “the situation is undesirable and a matter of concern.” Similarly, in the Japan-South Korea survey, about 60 percent of both Japanese and South Koreans have the same views on anti-South Korea / Japan sentiment. This finding represents a voice of the majorities in the three countries.

But we also should pay attention to the fact that the number of those who are “concerned” about Japan-China relations increased significantly on both sides, but at the same time, fewer people said that the situation “must be improved.”

This reflects the fact that many people have come to realize that the pending issues between Japan and China mostly stem from a nation-to-nation confrontation, and are unlikely to be solved anytime soon. However, the public anxieties have not yet led to a rift fueled by the spread of nationalistic sentiments such as was seen between the Japanese and Chinese peoples in the past. People are closely watching government actions but also placing more importance on people-to-people interaction rather than confrontation.

The survey also asked a question about norms and objectives that must be pursued in Northeast Asia. Many of those polled in Japan and China cited “peace” and “cooperative development” while South Korean people pin strong hopes on “peace.” This demonstrates that peace and cooperative development represent hopes among people living in the region, but at the same time, they are what cause concern for them.

See more details of 12th Japan-China opinion poll on p.16, 4th Japan-South Korea opinion poll on p.25

6. Japanese, Indians and Indonesians all have strong expectations of democracy itself, but they differ in their evaluations of the democratic systems in their countries and views on the future of their nations. Japanese are pessimistic about the future of Japan, while Indians and Indonesians tend to be more optimistic. Almost half in Japan (46.7 percent) and Indonesia (47.1 percent), and a majority in India (65.0 percent) consider that the democratic systems in their countries are working. For people who see the democratic system as not working, the reasons behind the view were centered on issues related to party politics in the three countries, such as winning elections becoming a purpose in itself, and that politics is not grappling with the real issues that concern people. On the issues that need to be

tackled in order for democracy to develop in their countries, Japanese say “the way party politics is conducted and money related to politics” (47.6 percent), Indonesians say “judicial reform” (39.0 percent) and Indians say “corruption and the lack of accountability” (41.3 percent). Around half in the three countries (Japanese 47.0 percent, Indonesians 55.1 percent, Indians 57.6 percent) said that “democracy is the best system compared to any other form of governance,” but a third of Indians (34.5 percent) said “in some circumstances, non-democratic political systems should be allowed to exist.”

See more details of Japan-Indonesia-India opinion poll on democracy on p.39

The 2nd Japan-China-ROK Joint Opinion Poll

The future of Northeast Asia, and public opinion in Japan, China and South Korea

–What kind of peace and order should we pursue in Northeast Asia?

For the latest one year, the security environment in Asia has been turning increasingly unstable. Prodded by China's growing assertiveness, the geopolitical confrontation is intensifying in the region, as shown by the territorial disputes in the South China Sea, including the Japan-China row over a chain of islets known as Senkaku in Japanese and Diaoyu in Chinese. North Korea's nuclearization and the successive launches of missiles are heightening security concerns in its neighbors. What matters in this region is the absence of an integrated security mechanism covering the countries in the region, including China, and the resultant non-realization of a peaceful order. As shown by the findings of our opinion surveys, however, peoples in the neighboring countries long for "peace" and our belief is that we would be able to outline a path toward its realization when such public sentiment becomes an irresistibly loud voice. Our private-sector dialogues and public opinion surveys are the foundation of our work to that end.

As was the case with the previous year, The Genron NPO conducted annual joint opinion polls this year in collaboration with the East Asia Institute (EAI), our dialogue partner in South Korea, and Horizon Research Consultancy Group, our partner in China with which we have conducted the annual poll for the past 12 years.

The Genron NPO conducted public opinion surveys jointly with South Korea's East Asia Institute and China's Horizon Research Consultancy Group to learn the views of people in Japan, China and South Korea about the future of Northeast Asia, and the security challenges facing the region. Northeast Asia is changing, as instanced by China's increasing political clout and instability on the Korean Peninsula amid North Korea's nuclear ambitions, but there is no regional governance to ensure a peaceful order in this part of the world and various factors that could trigger a conflict are sources of concern for the peoples of countries involved.

How should we pursue a peaceful order in Northeast Asia amid the current instability? What challenges must we address to that end? Then, as Japan, China and South Korea have direct interest in the regional situation, how should the peoples of the three countries work together for peace in Northeast Asia? These issues are at the heart of our awareness of the need to overcome the challenges facing the region.

The latest three-nation opinion survey was the second of its kind, following one in 2015. A total of 6117 people cooperated in the surveys in the three countries.

Japanese, South Koreans and Chinese perceptions about the future of Asia have changed dramatically over the past year

The first topic we look at is how Japanese, South Koreans and Chinese foresee the changes for the next 10 years in the region. What last year's poll found was that the publics of the major Northeast Asian countries viewed that the transformation in the region stemmed mainly from China's increasing influence, while the United States' intention to rebalance to Asia was not fully understood by people in the region. There was no major change in this basic public view in the 2016 poll. According to the findings of the latest surveys, more than half of Japanese (51.9 percent) expect China's influence in the region to increase in the next 10 years. A comparable figure for South Koreans came to 71.2 percent (Fig. 1-1).

As to whether U.S. influence in the region will grow in the next 10 years, the answer "no change" was most frequently cited by the people polled in the three countries (Fig. 1-2).

That said, there are some crucial changes in public opinion. First, the percentages of people who expect China's influence to grow have dropped in the three countries since last year. This tendency was particularly seen among Chinese who had been confident about their country's growing influence in recent years. In the latest survey, the percentage of Chinese foreseeing a further increase in its influence in the next 10 years fell to 66.4 percent, sharply down from 82.5 percent a year earlier. Conversely, those expecting the country's political influence to shrink grew from last year, if not sharply, to 5.7 percent from 1.6 percent.

Fig 1-1: China's influence in Asia in 10 years (2015-2016)

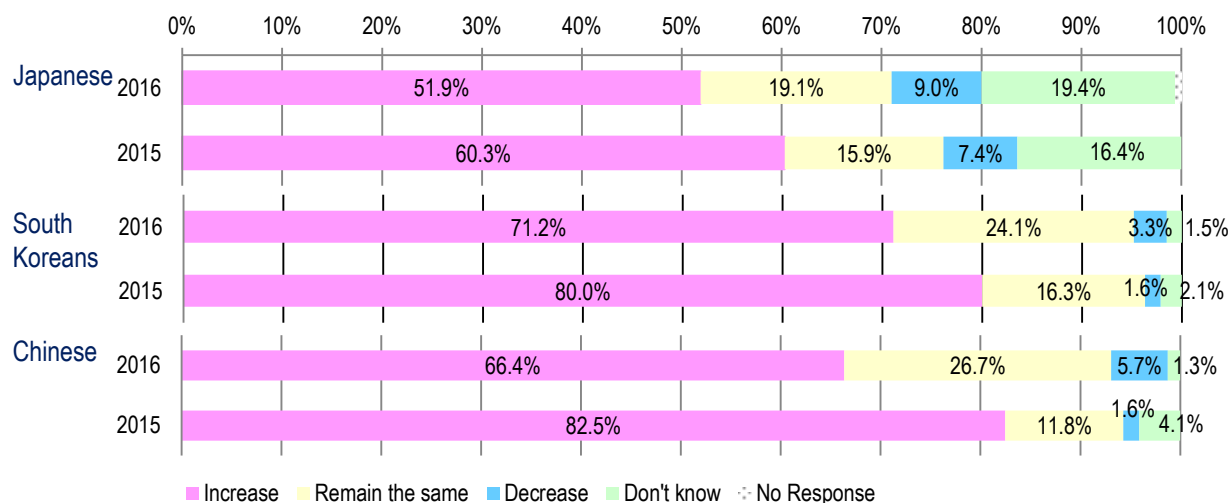
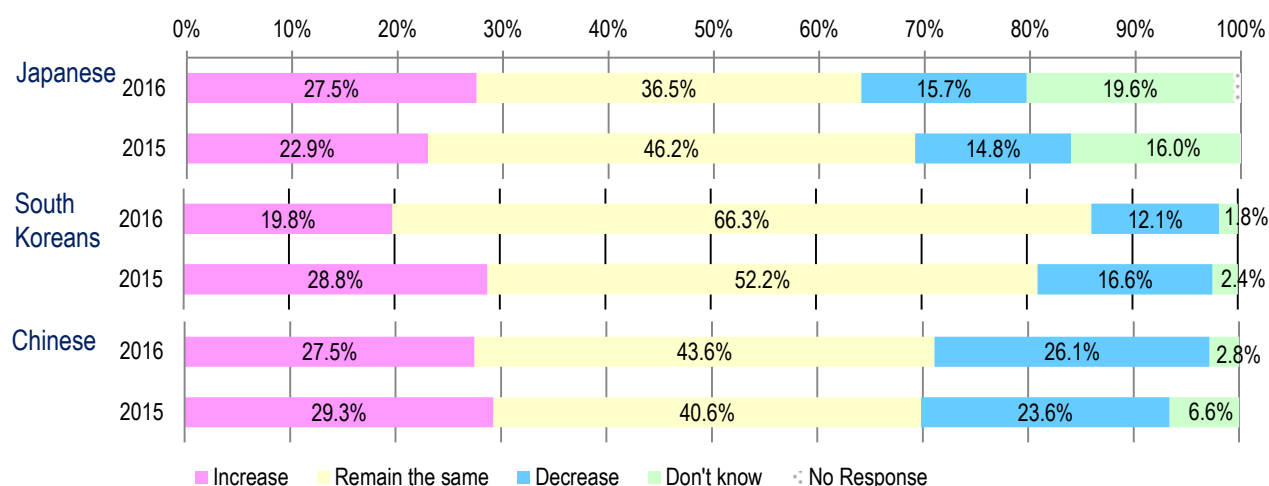


Fig 1-2: U.S.'s influence in Asia in 10 years (2015-2016)



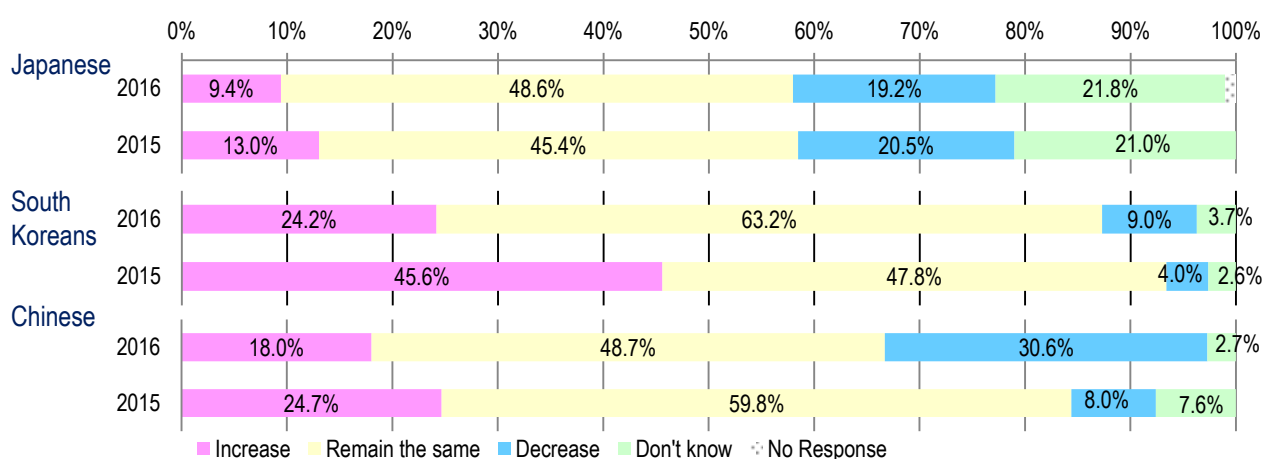
Worsening Chinese views on South Korea

Another major difference in the latest surveys was a significant worsening of Chinese people's views of South Korea. Some 30.6 percent of the Chinese polled replied that South Korea's influence in the region will decline in the next 10 years, far surpassing the 2015 figure of 8 percent (Fig. 1-3).

The deteriorating views of South Korea reflected a rift between the two countries over the planned deployment of the THAAD (terminal high altitude area defense) missile system for U.S. troops stationed in South Korea. The Chinese media's campaign against South Korea was also behind the Chinese people's soured views toward Seoul.

In last year's survey, 45.6 percent of South Koreans polled expected their country's influence in Asia to grow in the next 10 years, but the percentage plunged to 24.2 percent in the latest survey.

Fig 1-3: South Korea's influence in Asia in 10 years (2015-2016)



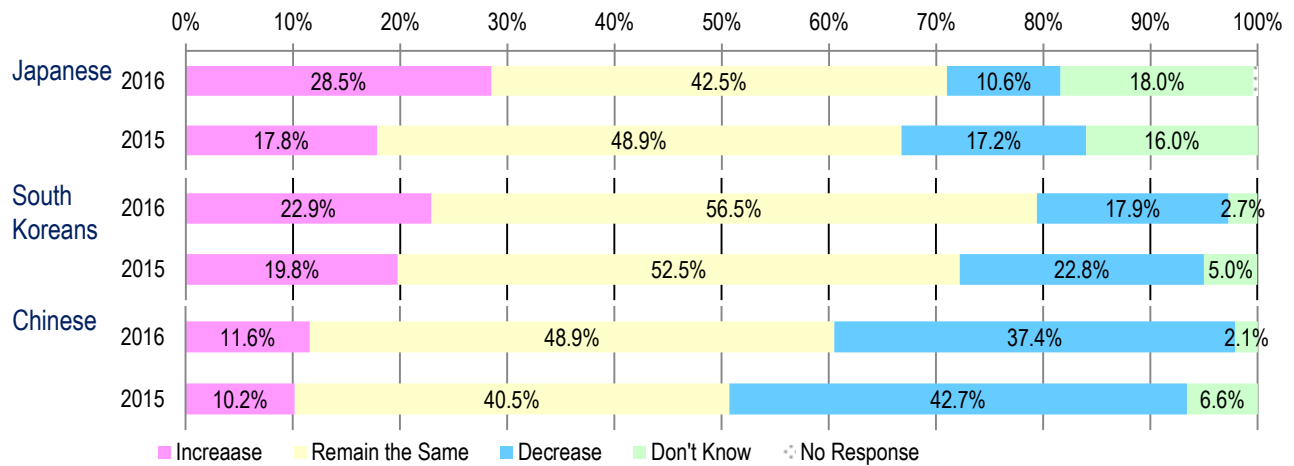
Japan's influence

Reflecting the shifts, there are slight rises in the percentages of people in the three countries

foreseeing an increase in Japan's influence in Asia.

Particularly, the figure for Japanese polled increased to 28.5 percent from 17.8 percent a year earlier.

Fig 1-4. Japan's influence in Asia in 10 years (2015-2016)



One of the central challenges Asia faces is the maintenance of peace, but people are unsure if and how Asia will have a peaceful future

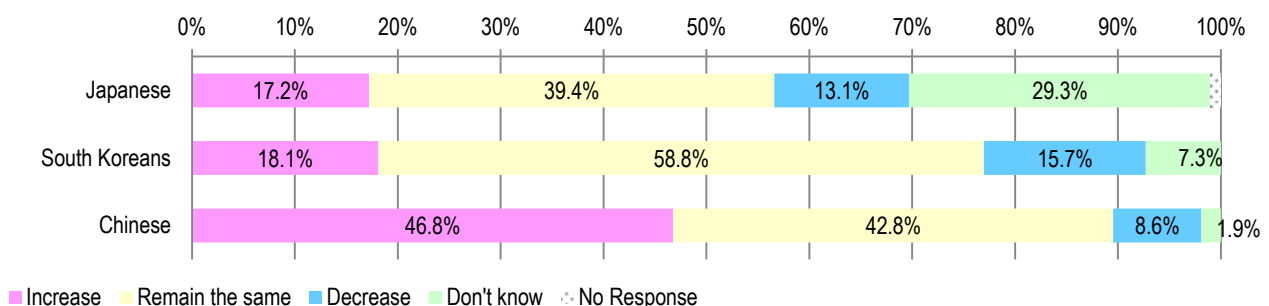
Chinese's expectations of Russia

Second, another crucial shift about the perceptions of Asia's future is an increase in Chinese people's expectations of Russia. Some 46.8 percent of Chinese foresaw a further increase in Russian influence in Asia, which contrasted with the much lower expectations among Japanese (17.2 percent) and South Koreans (18.1 percent) (Fig. 1-5). This tendency of expectations of Russia is prevalent in

China. For example, a large majority (74.1 percent) of Chinese trust Russia will "deal responsibly with world problems," in contrast to Japanese, the majority of whom (58.6 percent) think that they will not.

The views of Japanese, Chinese and South Koreans were divided on how to regard Russia's role in Northeast Asia. At a time when Japan is emphasizing diplomatic relations with Moscow, President Vladimir Putin will visit Japan in December. The peoples of Japan, China and South Korea will have to deliberate how they should incorporate Russia as a player in this part of the world.

Fig 1-5: Russia's influence in Asia in 10 years (2016)



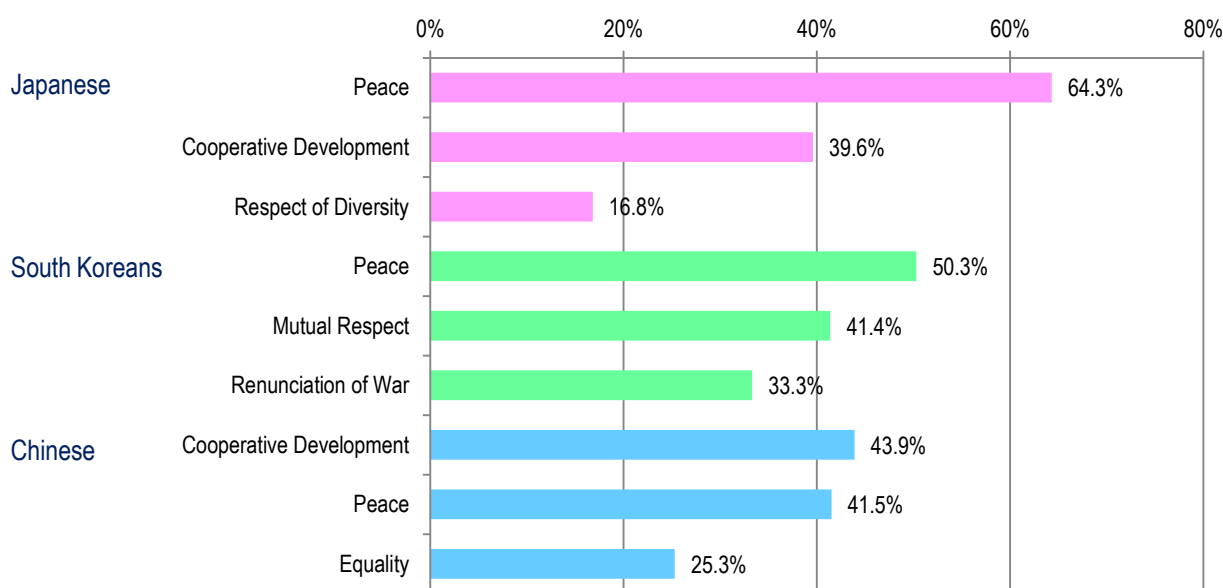
The latest surveys indicate that the views of the three countries' peoples about the situation in Asia in the next 10 years were about to change significantly in so short a period as one year. This illustrates how drastically the regional situation is changing. Behind the transformation is a series of moves by China to realign its economy, which has served as a prime mover for the world economy. But the recent trends in public opinion in the three countries rather reflect their anxiety of a difficult, unstable security environment in the region. China's increasing political presence is in direct opposition to the hub-and-spoke security system built around the United States, causing people to be more

concerned than ever about peace in the region.

Values to be pursued for the future

Peace has come to be viewed as the most important value to be pursued in the region under such circumstances. When asked about a value that must be pursued for countries in East Asia, "peace" was cited by 64.3 percent of Japanese polled, 41.5 percent of Chinese and 50.3 percent of South Koreans (Fig. 1-6). The findings were the same as last year, and the result indicates many people in this region strongly hope to see peace, which can be taken as "the voice of a silent majority."

Fig 1-6: Values to be pursued for the future of East Asia (Top 3 responses)



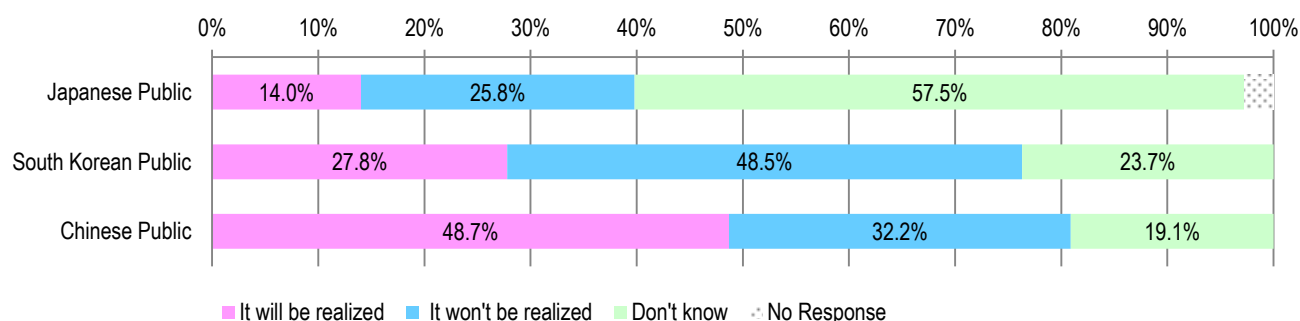
The problem is a lack of trust among Japanese, Chinese and South Koreans about each other

Although peace is something that the peoples of the three countries agree that they should pursue, they lack a vision for realizing a peaceful order in the region. In response to the question "Do you think a peaceful order, with participation of both China and the United States, will be realized in East Asia?" affirmative replies came from only 14.0 percent of Japanese and 27.8 percent of South Koreans. A majority (57.5 percent) of Japanese are unsure. Of South Koreans polled, 48.5 percent thought it will not happen. (Fig. 1-7). Conversely, 48.7 percent of Chinese polled replied a peaceful order will be

realized. But this should be taken to indicate that this is what they are hoping for.

In the Japan-China survey The Genron NPO released in September 2016, most Chinese felt a threat from a strengthened Japan-U.S. alliance, and a majority of Chinese foresaw a possibility of a military conflict with Japan in the future over the disputed islands in the East China Sea. When considering the worsening perception of the security environment among Chinese, there is no wonder why many Chinese hope to have a peaceful order that includes the United States. It is very interesting to see that some in China actually have an image of a peaceful order in Asia in which China and the United States will be a part.

Fig 1-7: Will peaceful order in East Asia be realized?



As we have seen, peoples in the three countries strongly hope to maintain peace. What may hinder the maintenance of peace in the region, however, is a lack of mutual trust among Japanese, Chinese and South Koreans. In recent years, diplomatic relations have improved to the point where the three countries are resuming the tripartite summit. Yet, the problems remain in public opinion where the gaps in perceptions and distrust persist. In response to the question whether a country is a reliable partner to your country, most Japanese (81.8 percent) see the “United States” as reliable, while a large majority (76.1 percent) see “China” as unreliable. The perception of “South Korea” has improved slightly since the last poll in 2015, but still a majority (57.6 percent) of Japanese think South Korea is not a reliable partner (Fig. 1-9).

In contrast, a significant majority (80.7 percent) of Chinese consider “Russia” is a reliable partner to

China. There has also been a slight improvement in the Chinese view on Japan, yet again a large majority (78.9 percent) say Japan is unreliable (Fig. 1-8).

Chinese perception of South Korea worsened, yet no noticeable improvement was seen in South Korean perception of Japan

The most notable finding in the latest survey was a change in Chinese people’s views of South Korea. Specifically, Chinese who believe “South Korea” is reliable accounted for 34.9 percent of the respondents, sharply down from 56.3 percent a year earlier. Conversely, Chinese who believe South Korea is unreliable grew to 61.1 percent, up from the year-before level of 36.8 percent.

Fig 1-8: Who is a reliable partner to China? (Chinese, 2015-2016)

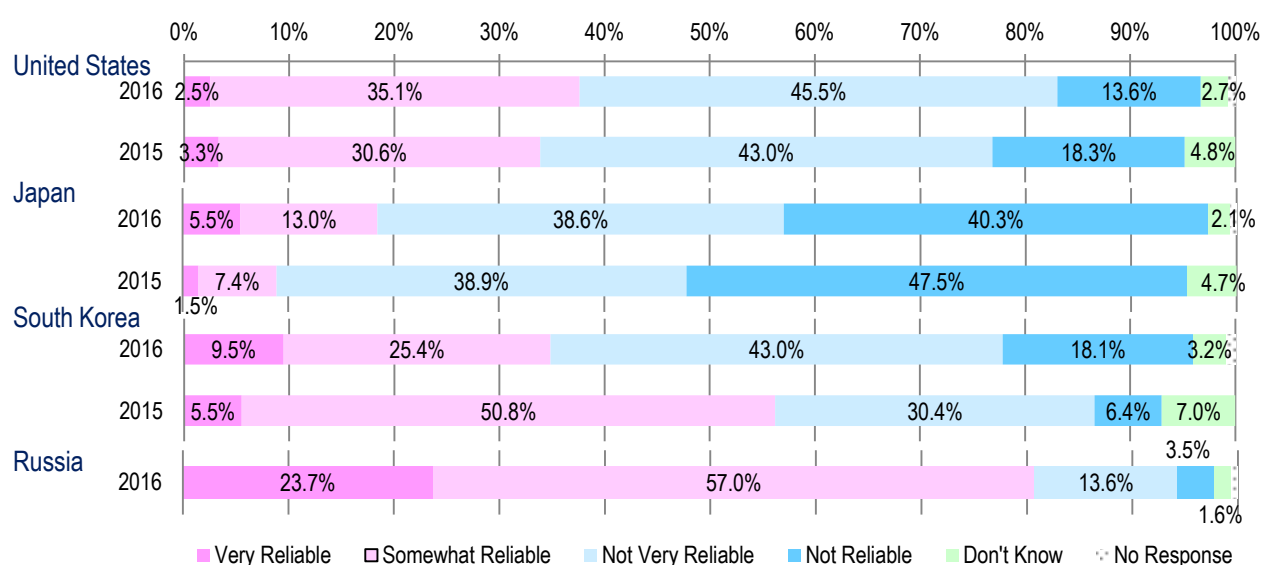


Fig 1-9: Who is a reliable partner to Japan? (Japanese, 2015-2016)

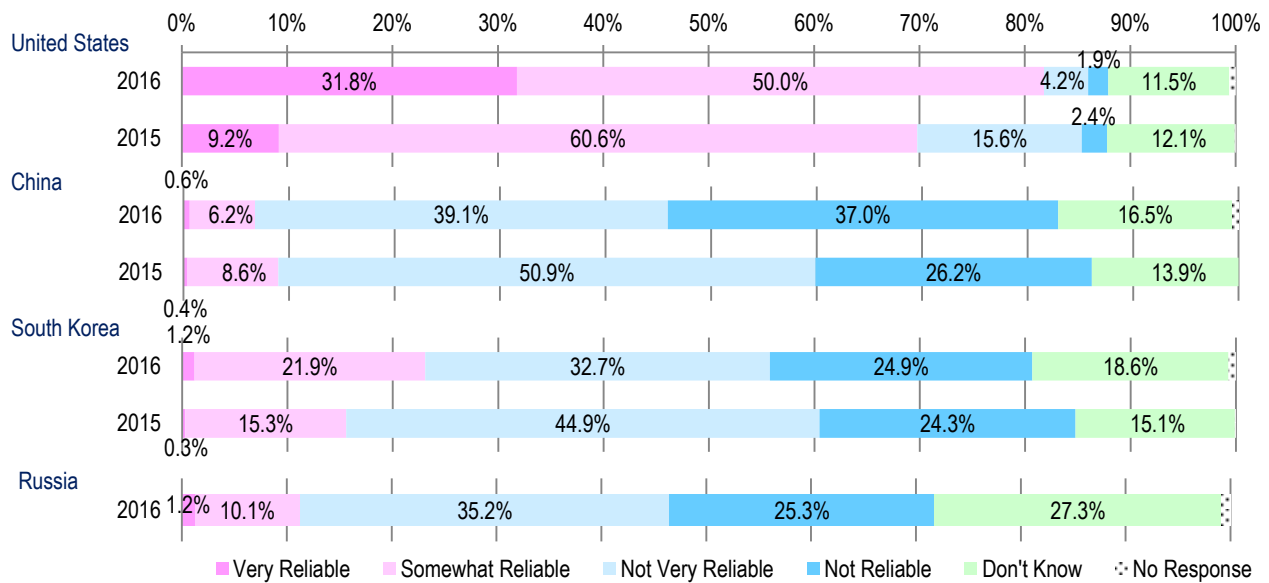
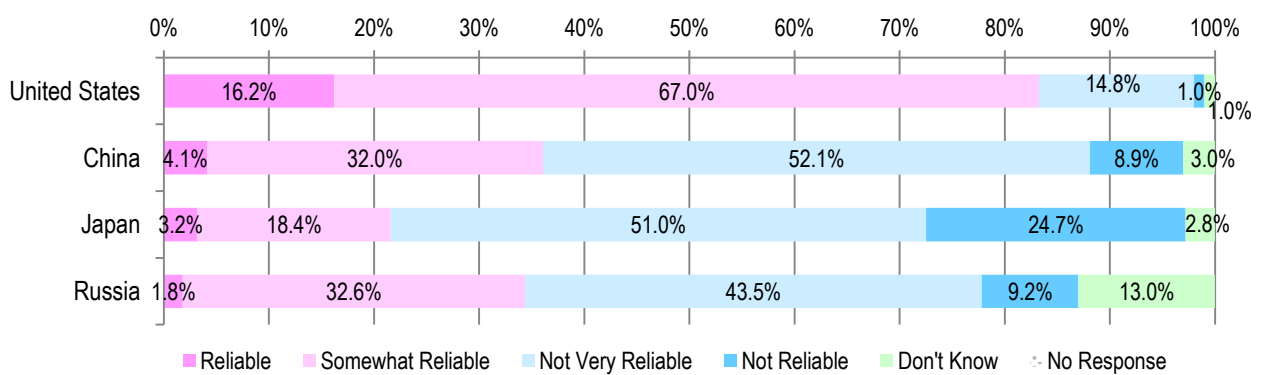


Fig 1-10: Who is a reliable partner to South Korea? (South Koreans, 2016)



Among South Koreans, the United States was chosen as the most reliable country by 83.2 percent of the respondents. There is no comparison with the previous year because the question was introduced for the first time this year. Those who believe Japan is unreliable amounted to 75.7 percent (Fig. 1-10).

South Koreans' views proved to be rather mixed about the reliability of China, with 61.0 percent of those polled viewing the country as unreliable and 36.1 percent viewing it as reliable.

Possibility of intervention by the U.S. troops in Asia

There is no significant change in the views of Japanese and Chinese about each other. The most significant shift over the past year was the worsening Chinese perception of South Korea. However, this did not result in a swing in the South Korean view of Japan, which stands on the same side as South Korea on the security and ideological fronts. This poses a big question on the path to enhanced security cooperation on maintaining peace in the region.

On the question of potential sources of conflict in Asia, Japanese, Chinese and South Koreans similarly think “competition over energy resources,” “situation on the Korean Peninsula,” and “a new country in Asia becoming a nuclear power” are the potential sources of conflict. A large majority (71.6 percent) of Chinese think “Japan-China relations” can trigger a conflict. Almost half (45.3 percent) of South Koreans also think that “Japan-South Korea relations” are a potential source of conflict. Japanese do not respond sharply to the threat of

conflict the bilateral relations may pose compared to the reactions by Chinese and South Koreans. Less than half (45.3 percent) of Japanese see Japan-China relations as a source of conflict and only one-fourth (27.3 percent) see the same about Japan-South Korea relations, which present a notable gap in the understanding of how big a problem the bilateral relations may cause. How we could improve the security environment in Northeast Asia also depends on the efforts to better bilateral relations.

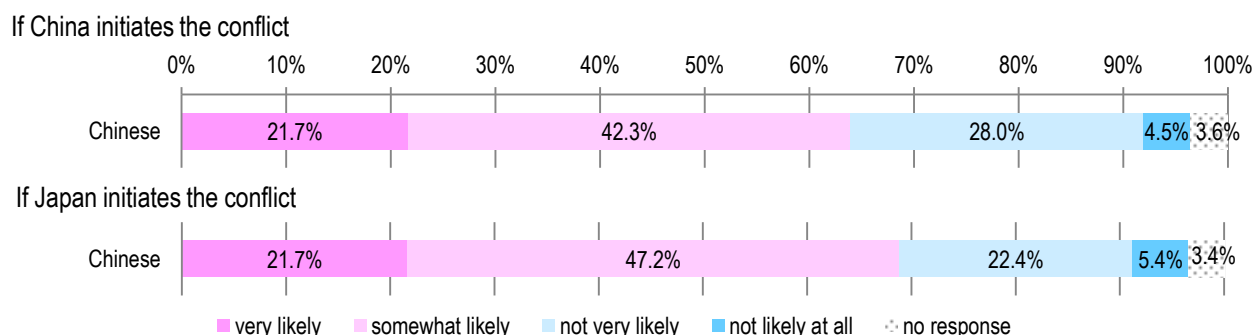
Fig 1-11: Potential sources of conflict in Asia



The latest surveys also examined Chinese people’s views about the possibility of U.S. military intervention in a territorial dispute between Japan and China over a group of islands in the East China Sea. Of the Chinese polled, 64.0 percent expected the United States to intervene in the dispute militarily if a military confrontation is triggered by China against Japan over the issue. Meanwhile, 68.8 percent of them expected the United States to do so if a military confrontation is triggered by Japan against China (Fig. 1-12).

Under such a persisting view on the unstable security environment, a majority (59.0 percent) of South Koreans supports South Korea to acquire nuclear weapon.

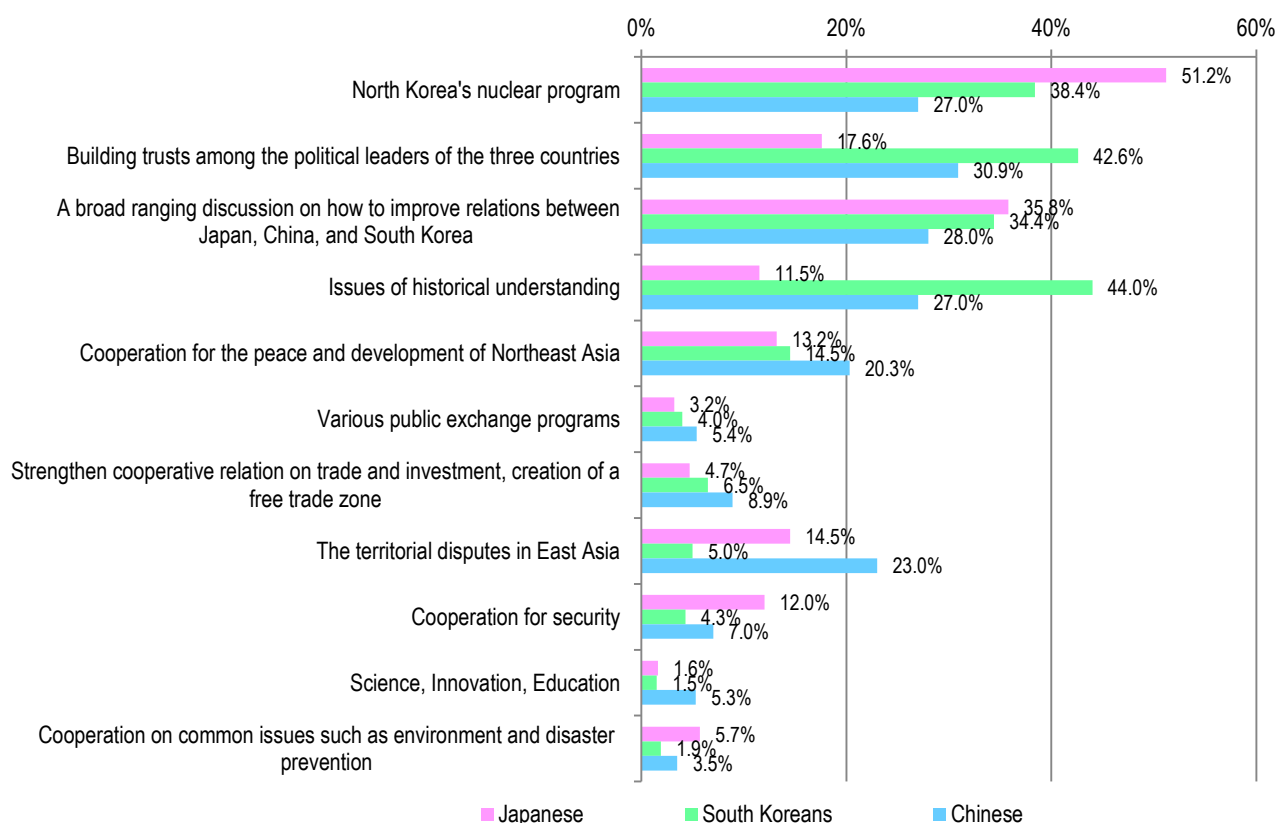
Fig 1-12: Will the U.S. send its troops if a military conflict breaks out between China and Japan over the disputed islands



At a time when there is this level of anxiety in the perception of the security environment in Northeast Asia, Japan, China and South Korea expect to hold a leaders' meeting in Tokyo as early as December 2016. Some 51.2 percent of Japanese want to see "North Korea's nuclear program" discussed at the tripartite summit, while South Koreans prioritize "issues of historical understanding" (44.0 percent) and "building trust among the political leaders" (42.6 percent) over the North Korean nuclear issue (38.4 percent). Some (27.0 percent) Chinese also

think North Korea's nuclear program should be on the agenda but a slightly large number (30.9 percent) of Chinese think building trust among the leaders is the priority at this point (Fig. 1-13). Replies by those polled in the three countries about which subject should be discussed at the tripartite meeting tell us that the three countries should take the occasion to first do all they can to strengthen their mutual trust, at a time when they lack a collective vision to realize stability in the region.

Fig 1-13: The Japan- China-ROK Summit agenda



The 12th Japan-China Joint Opinion Poll

Mounting concerns over geopolitical confrontation and diverging views on national security among Japanese and Chinese

– but both peoples have begun to seek interaction, instead of confrontation

For the last 15 years since the founding of The Genron NPO, intergovernmental diplomacy was virtually dysfunctional for five years (between December 2004 and October 2006, and between May 2012 and November 2014). The same held true with that between Japan and South Korea, or for about four years between 2012 and 2015. In those periods, no meetings between top government leaders were held.

The inability of intergovernmental diplomacy to function is attributable to the spread of nationalistic public sentiments against other countries. We attach particular importance to the role of public opinion in diplomacy because, like it or not, public opinion exerts immense influence on intergovernmental diplomacy. And this is why we place so much weight on the role of public opinion surveys in our activities.

The 12th annual Japan-China joint opinion poll (2016) was conducted from late August through early September covering whole geographical regions of Japan and 10 cities in China. The Japanese survey was conducted among a nationally representative adult sample of 1,000 through a placement method. The Chinese survey was conducted on an urban sample of 152 adults, aged 18 years and older. The survey used the PPS (probability-proportional-to-size) sampling method and was conducted face to face in 10 cities. The total number of questions was 54, which enabled a detailed analysis of perceptions of each other, issues and challenges the two countries are facing.

Why are public perceptions of Japan-China relations worsening again?

This year's findings show that the views on Japan-China relations among Japanese and Chinese people, which have been showing some improvement in recent years, have once again worsened. Some 71.9 percent of the Japanese surveyed said the current relationship between the two countries is bad, unchanged from last year compared to the gradual but consistent decline it had been showing in recent years, while 78.2 percent of the Chinese surveyed expressed similar sentiments, up 11 percentage points from last year (Fig. 2-2).

Furthermore, 44.8 percent of the Japanese and 66.8 percent of the Chinese responded that the bilateral relationship had worsened this past year, and 34.3 percent of the Japanese and 50.4 percent of the Chinese said the relationship would likely deteriorate further in future (Fig. 2-1). This figure comes despite the recent improvement in the political environment between the two countries, with meetings between Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping resuming for the first time since 2014. This seeming contradiction is an indication that the number of people who remain doubtful about seeing any improvement in bilateral relations is increasing in both countries.

Fig 2-1: Future prospects of Japan-China Relations

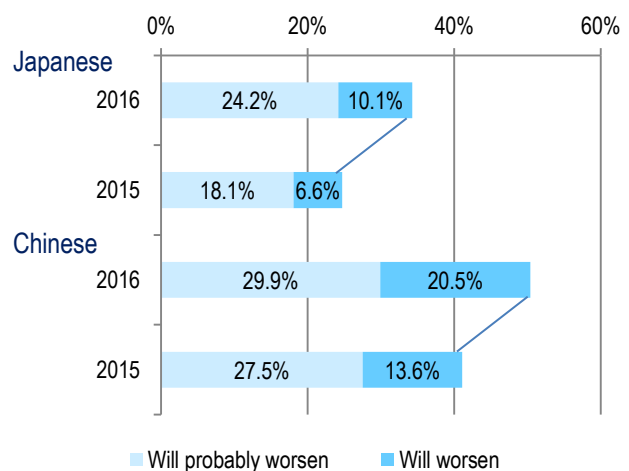
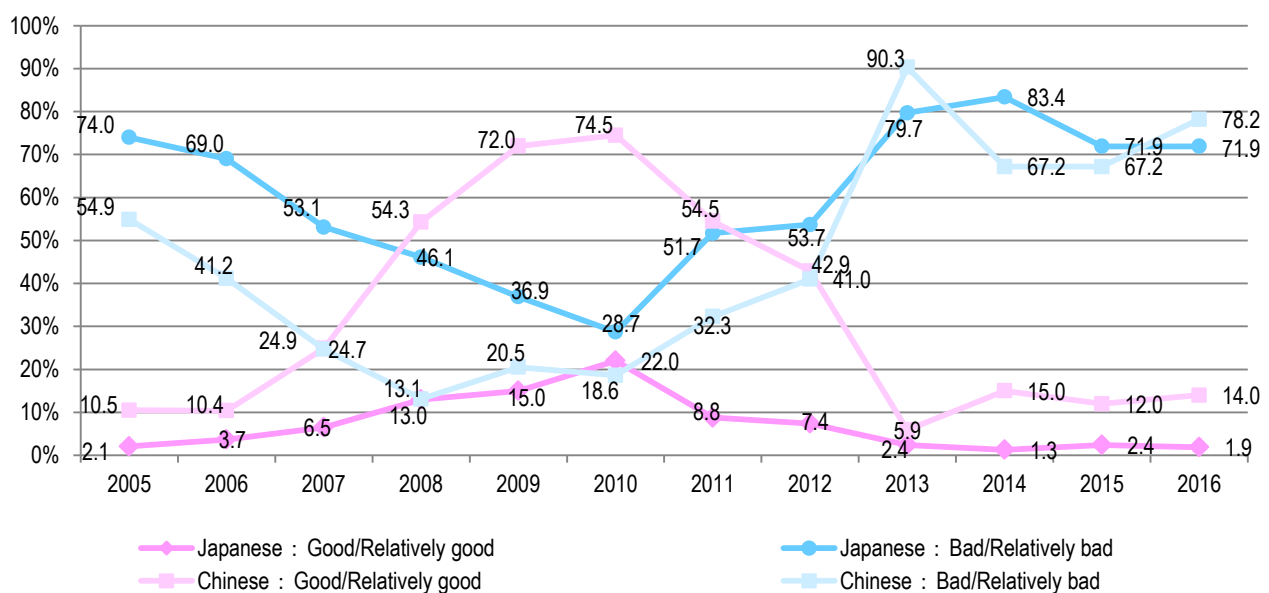


Fig 2-2: Perception of current Japan-China relations



How the structures and forming processes of public opinion in Japan and China have changed?

Why have Japanese and Chinese public opinion worsened? Does this signify the formation of a new barrier to future Japan-China relations? In order to analyze the trend, we need to look into the basic structure of Japanese and Chinese public opinion about each other, and the shifts over recent years.

How the people of both countries view each other is greatly affected by the media particularly television due to the lack of direct interaction between Japanese and Chinese on a public level. But the key difference between the two countries can be seen in the fact that while over 70 percent of the Chinese people believe the reporting by their country's media is "fair and objective," only 20 percent of the Japanese people think the same about their country's media (Fig. 2-3). This means that the public sentiment of the Chinese people about Japan is much more prone to be affected by the Chinese media environment due to the sense of trust. In short, Chinese public opinion about Japan is likely to be affected by the media coverage of Japan and the degree of direct interaction with Japanese people.

How has this changed over the past year? The survey was conducted after and during major international meetings in Asia, such as the Group of Seven Summit in Ise-Shima, Japan, in May, and the Group of 20 Summit in Hangzhou, China, in early September. This year also saw heavy media coverage of China's activities in the South China Sea as well as around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Media coverage of these events no doubt affected the outcome of the survey.

The change in the trend of direct interaction between the people of the two countries is also affecting the survey results. While a record 5 million Chinese visited Japan in 2015 and over 3 million Chinese visited Japan in the first half of 2016, the number of Japanese visiting China continued to decline, with less than 2.5 million Japanese – merely half of the number of Chinese visiting Japan – visiting China in 2015 (Fig. 2-4).

Fig 2-3: Are media reports of each other objective and fair in your country?

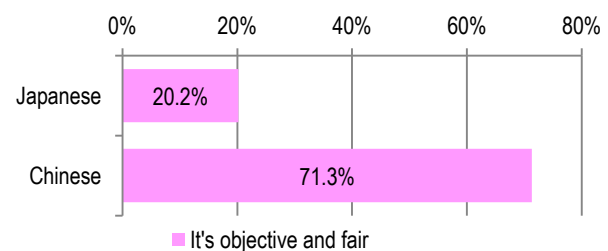
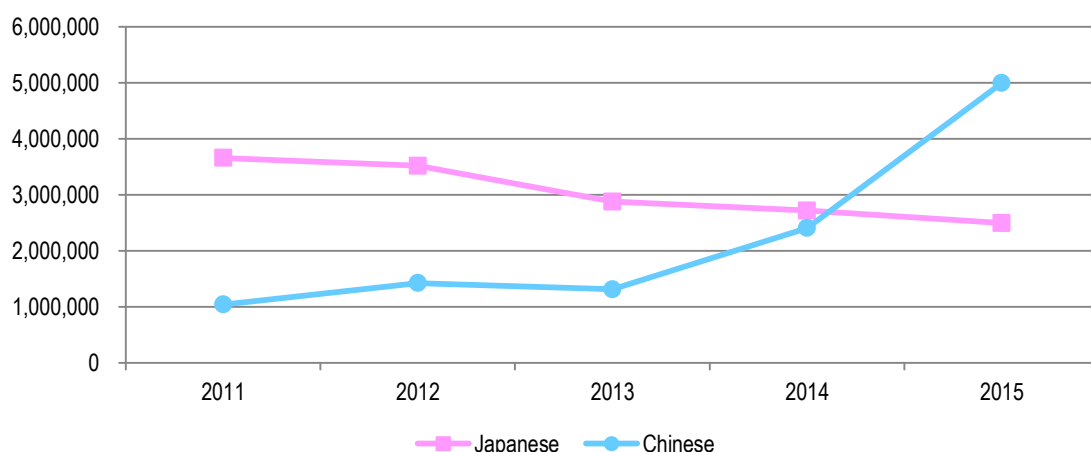


Fig 2-4: Number of tourists visited each other's country (2011-2015)



Source: Japan National Tourist Organization

Overreaching anxiety in Japan and China creates the gap in perceptions for the region's future

Another notable change in this year's survey results is that more people are worried about the kind of action the two countries may take regarding security issues. While over 60 percent of the Chinese cite "lack of an apology over the history of invasion" (63.6 percent) and "Diaoyu Islands" (60.6 percent) as key reasons for their negative image of Japan, the figure itself has dropped seven points compared to last year. Instead, 48.8 percent cited "Japan is

liaising with the United States to corral China" as a reason for their negative image of Japan, up seven points from the previous year (Fig. 2-5).

Meanwhile, 64.6 percent of the Japanese surveyed cited "(Chinese) intrusions into territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands" and over half (51.3 percent) cited "feeling uneasy about China's coercive actions in the international community" as reasons for their negative impressions of China. Both of these reasons rose 20 points from the previous year (Fig. 2-6). These results correlate with the presence of Chinese ships in disputed waters and the growing unease of many Japanese about China's activities in the seas near Japan around the time the survey was conducted.

Fig 2-5: Reason behind unfavorable impression (Chinese views on Japan, excerpted)

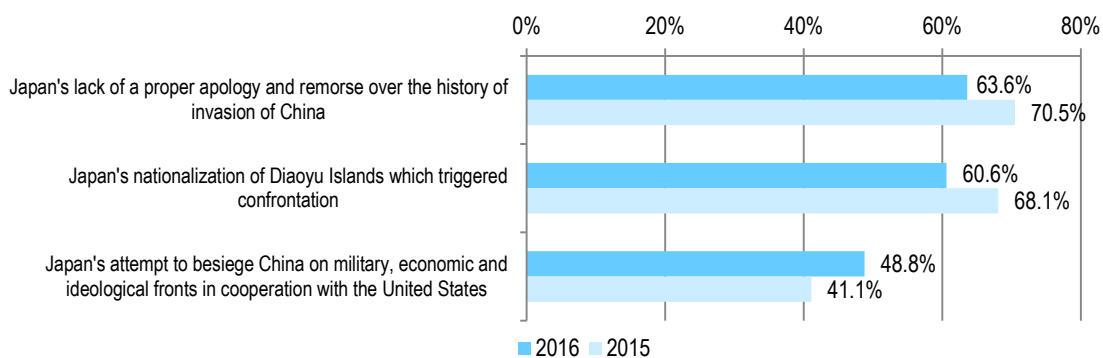
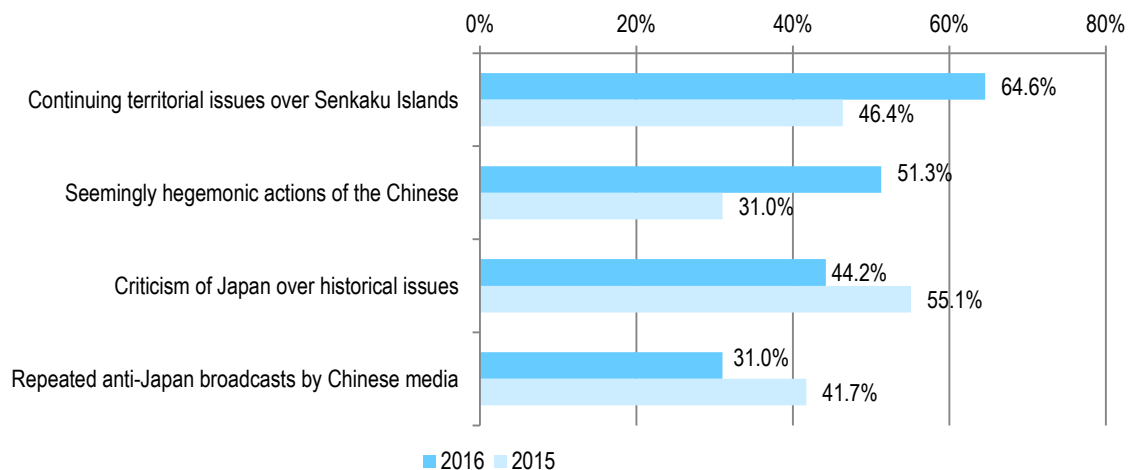


Fig 2-6: Reason behind unfavorable impression (Japanese views on China, excerpted)



What must be noted here is that such a sense of stagnation about the relationship is causing the public to harbor extreme sentiments regarding national security. For example, around 70 percent of the people from both countries said there are countries they consider a military threat, with Japanese respondents citing “North Korea” and “China,” and Chinese respondents citing “Japan” and “the United States” as posing such threats (Fig. 2-7).

What is more surprising is that over 60 percent of the Chinese believe a military clash may occur “in the next few years” or “future,” up 20 points from the previous year and the first time the figure has exceeded 60 percent since the question was included in the survey in 2012. Meanwhile only about 30 percent of the Japanese feel such conflict may occur, highlighting the difference in perceptions between the Chinese and Japanese public regarding this issue (Fig. 2-8).

Fig 2-7: Countries and regions that poses military threat

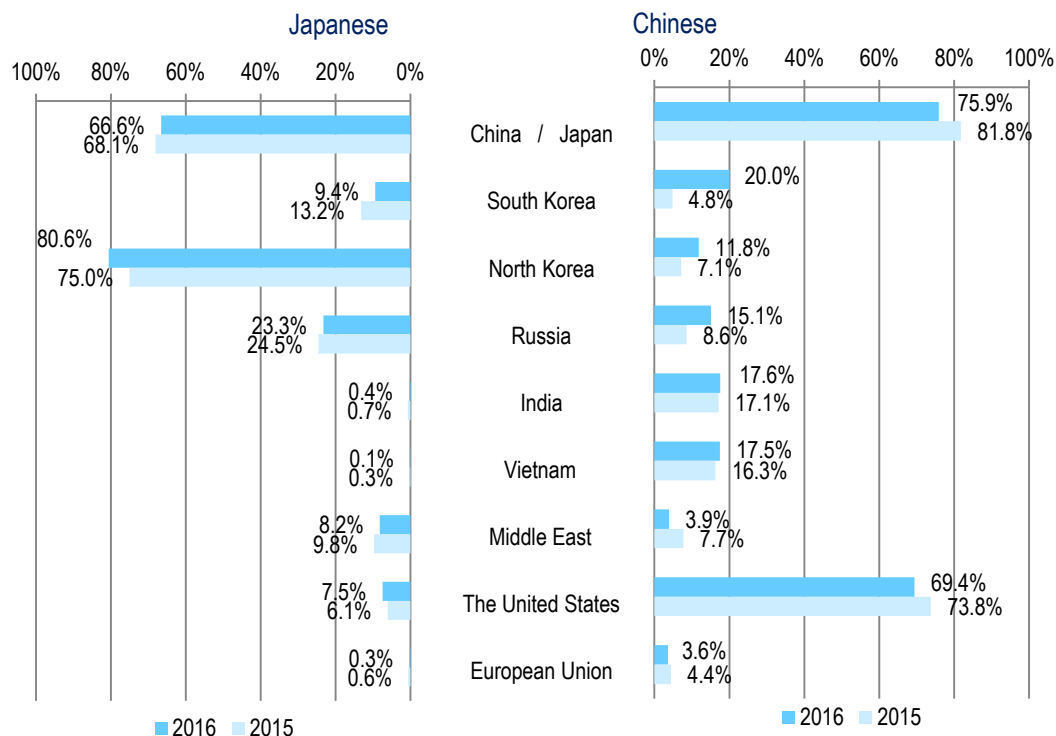
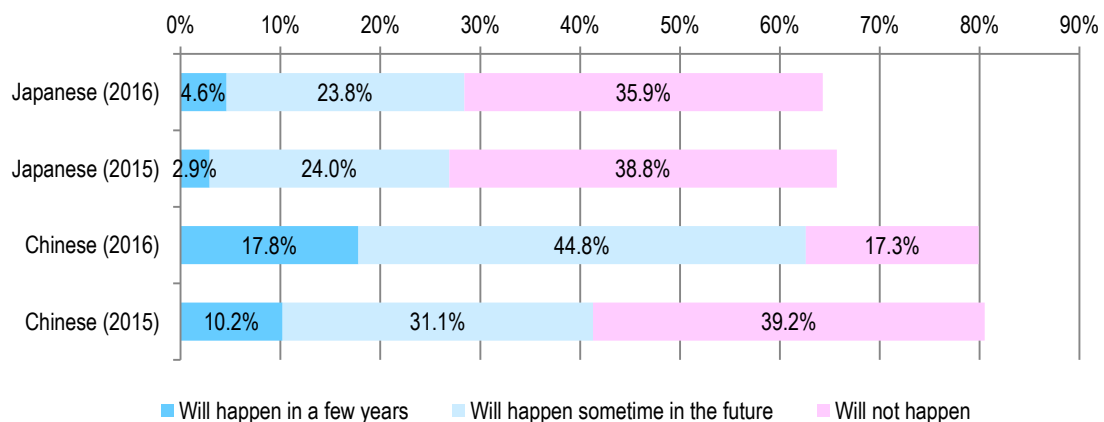


Fig 2-8: Will there be military conflicts between Japan and China over around the disputed islands?



No rise in nationalistic antagonism like in the past

While this year's survey shows that the issue of how the two nations view history remains a key point of contention between them, it also shows that the people are anxiously watching how the two governments are acting on security issues. But at the same time, the situation has not given rise to a nationalistic attitude like in the past due to several factors.

The success of international conferences like G-7 and G-20, the emphasis on economic cooperation and the media coverage of such developments, are some reasons that have prevented a more nationalistic sentiment from developing among the people of Japan and China. Also, the Japan-China summit was held where both governments sought some cooperative measures. This must have affected public perceptions of bilateral relations.

There is also the existence of "the silent majority" in China and Japan where nearly 70 percent of those surveyed say they are "worried" about worsening sentiment between the two countries, and that there is a "need for improvement." It must be noted, though, that more people are "worried" and less people see a "need for improvement" compared to the results of the previous year's survey (Fig. 2-9).

The people of both countries are starting to realize that the problem of the Japan-China relationship stems from a conflict in the interests of two nations and efforts to resolve this conflict are at a crossroads. Asked what measures would be effective in improving bilateral relations, close to 30 percent of Japanese and Chinese cited "improving the cooperative relationship between the two countries on global issues" along with "improving mutual trust in politics" (Fig. 2-10). Some 60 percent of respondents from both countries cited "territorial disputes" as an issue preventing bilateral relations from improving, and the Chinese people also cited "the two governments have yet to establish a relationship of trust" as an issue.

Fig 2-9: Perception of current state of national sentiment

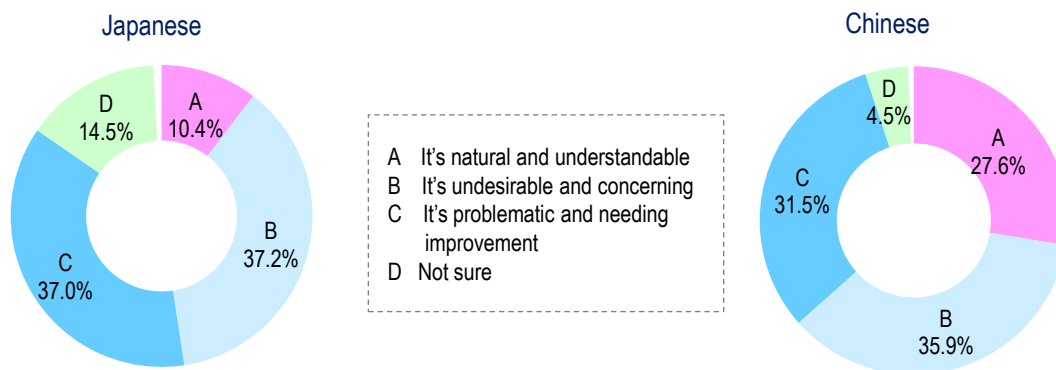
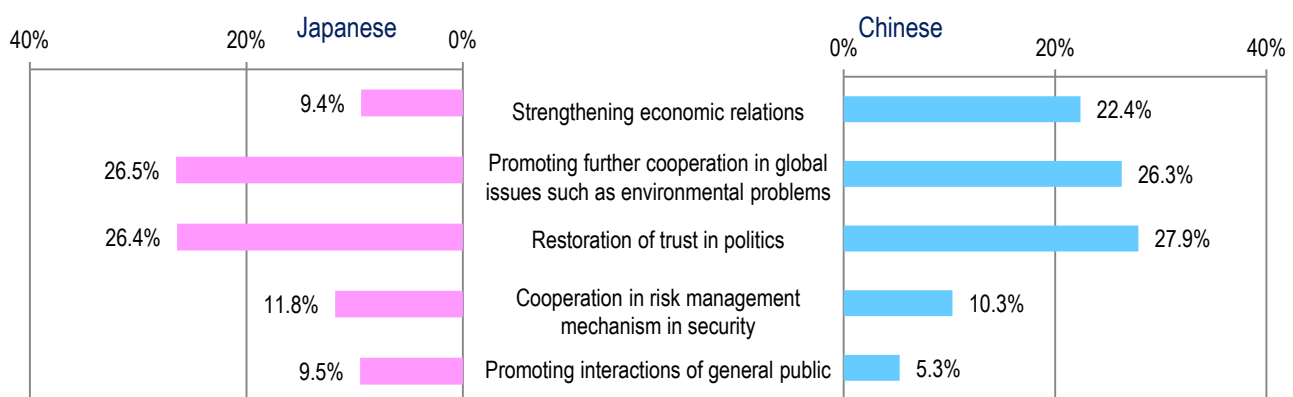


Fig 2-10: Effective measures that will improve bilateral relationship



Solving the issues cannot be the role of only government actors

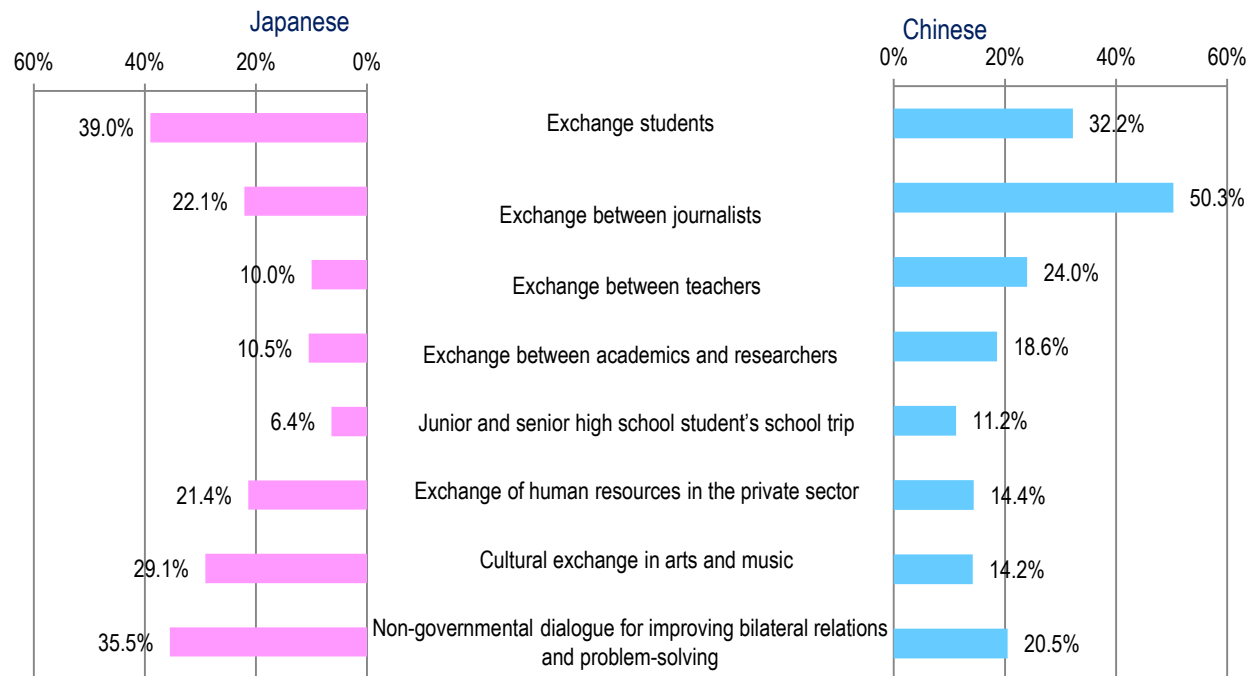
Another development that can be observed from this year's survey is that people in Japan and China are beginning to consider the role of direct interaction to improve the relationship. For example, over 60 percent of respondents from both countries said interaction on a private level was important, with 60 percent of the Chinese saying that private-level interaction between the two countries this past year was "active and good."

Asked what areas should work to improve interaction, the Chinese cited "exchange between

journalists" as being most important, while 35.5 percent of the Japanese chose "non-governmental dialogue to resolve various issues and improve the relationship between the two countries," following "exchange students."

The Chinese chose "exchange between journalists" as many people believe changes in media coverage will help alleviate the situation, while more Japanese chose "non-governmental dialogue" in the belief that this approach is more effective in changing public perceptions and government actions. Such changing perceptions among the general public reflect uncertainties as well as a realization that the two countries are at a stage where governments alone cannot improve the situation.

Fig 2-11: Area of private exchange between citizens to improve Japan-China relations



Direct interaction, diversity in information sources will bring signs for change

Another change in this year's survey results is the slight improvement in the Chinese people's perceptions of Japan due to the rising number of Chinese visitors. The number of Chinese visiting Japan has increased tenfold to 13.5 percent in this survey alone, compared to the 1.3 percent of Chinese who said they have visited Japan in 2005 when the survey started. The Chinese who have visited Japan in the past show different results from Chinese who have never visited the country, with

58.8 percent of the former respondents saying they have "good impressions of Japan" and 32.2 percent judging Japan-China relations to be "good." This compares to only 16 percent of the Chinese who haven't visited Japan saying they have a "good impression of Japan" and 11.4 percent saying the Japan-China relationship is "good."

Chinese people aged under 20 years old who rely heavily on the Internet as a source of information on Japan also have better impressions of Japan than other Chinese. These results indicate the importance of direct interaction, and the need for diversifying the sources of information in improving mutual understanding and improving relations.

Fig 2-12: Impression of the other country

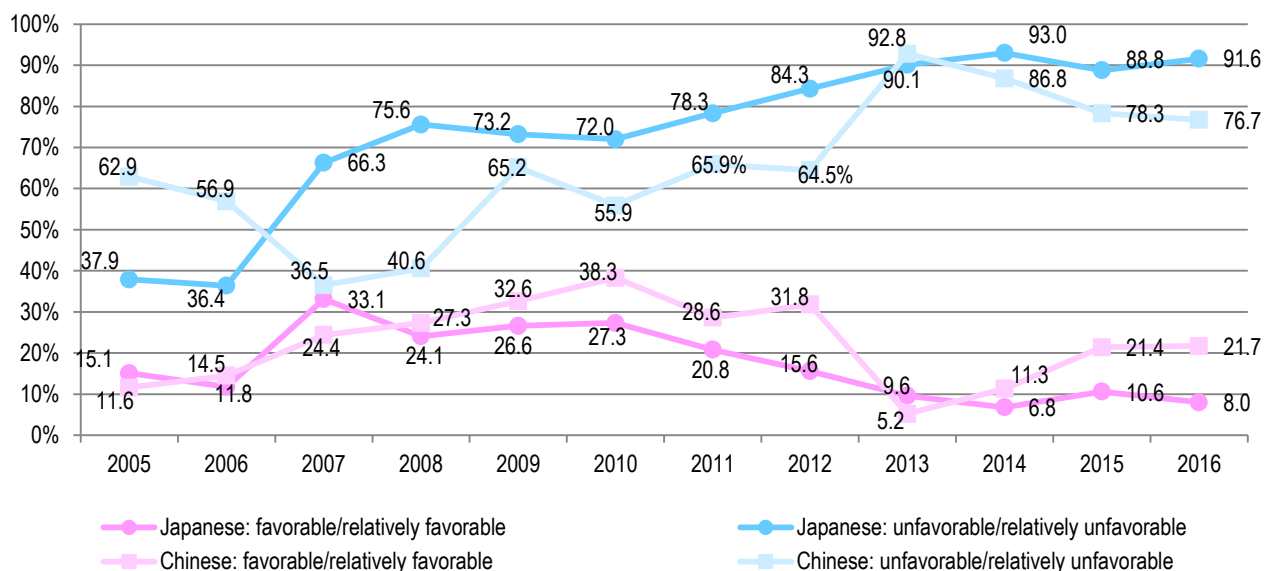
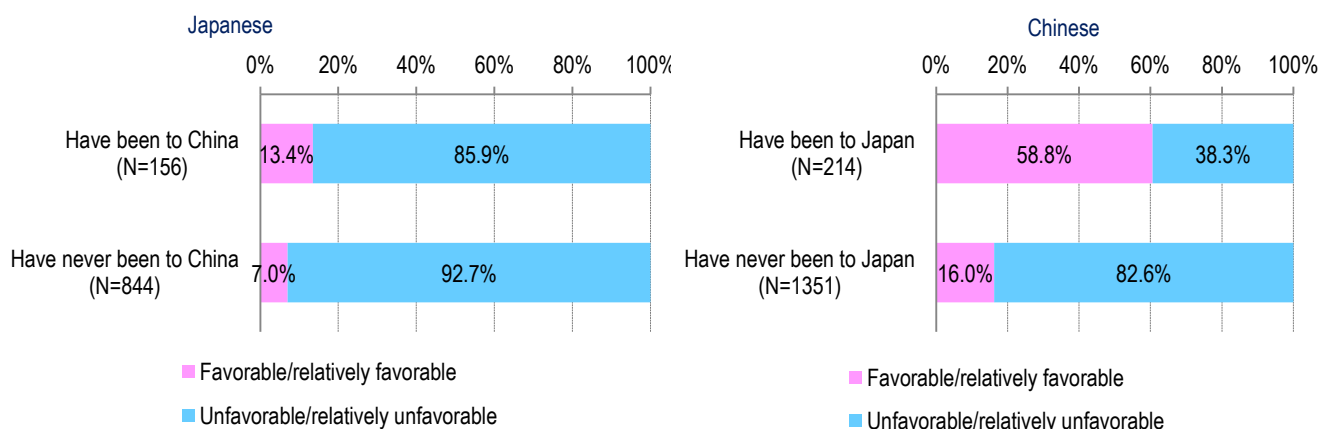


Fig 2-13: Impressions of the other country (comparison of responses by the experience of visiting the other country)



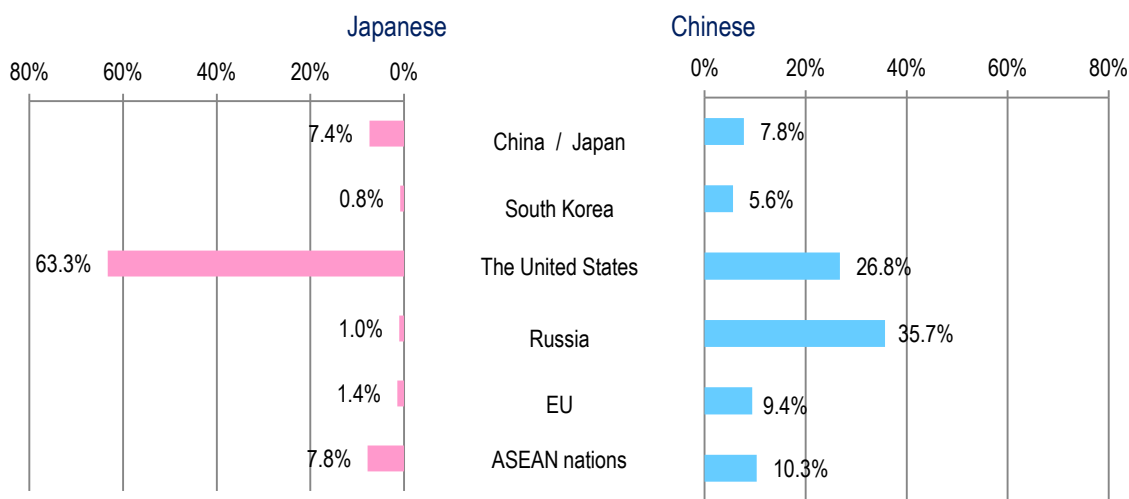
Why are Japan-China relations important? The debate on the future of Asia must start between the two partners

People in both countries believe in the importance of improving the bilateral relationship, with 56.1 percent of Japanese citing “cooperation between China and Japan is important for the development and peace of Asia,” and Chinese people citing Japan as an “important neighbor” (72.5 percent), and “important trade partners as the second- and third-largest economies” (58.9 percent) as reasons for believing improved bilateral relations to be important.

Meanwhile, asked which country was the most important in the world, 63.3 percent of the Japanese cited the United States. Among the Chinese, 35.7 percent cited Russia and 26.8 percent cited the United States. Only 7.8 percent of the Chinese named Japan as the most important and 7.4 percent of the Japanese named China as such (Fig. 2-14).

The rising uncertainty over the strained relations between the two countries is due to the fact that people cannot envision the future of both nations as well as Asia as a whole. To overcome this, the need for private-level debate about why an improved relationship between Japan and China is important, and how to improve cooperative efforts between the two countries becomes all the more pressing.

Fig 2-14 : The country of most importance for the future of their own country



The 4th Japan-South Korea Public Opinion Poll

Japanese and South Koreans uncertain about the improvement of Japan-South Korea relations

– with diverging perceptions on an increasingly assertive China and security affairs

The 4th Japan-South Korea comparative opinion poll shows a halt to years of worsening feelings toward each other's country, but Japanese and South Koreans are not totally confident that bilateral relations will continue to improve. There are noticeable differences between the Japanese and South Koreans in their perceptions of an increasingly assertive China, the future of Northeast Asia and its security environment.

The public opinion poll has been conducted by The Genron NPO and its South Korean counterpart, the East Asia Institute (EAI), since 2013. The fourth annual survey was carried out from the middle of June through early July 2016, in Japan and South Korea.

Overheated anti-South Korea/Japan sentiments of the past few years are beginning to cool

The first trend that can be observed in the latest survey is that people's unfavorable feelings toward each other's country have begun to calm down. The improvements were seen in responses to almost all questions conducted in the poll.

According to the latest findings, 44.6 percent of the Japanese continue to have "unfavorable" or "relatively unfavorable" impressions of South Korea, but the figure improved from 52.4 percent in 2015

by 7 percentage points. A comparable figure for South Korean respondents was as high as 61.0 percent. This represented a sizable improvement from 72.5 percent a year earlier (Fig. 3-1).

On the perception of the state of Japan-South Korea relations, 50.9 percent of Japanese think "the current relations between the two countries are very bad" or "relatively bad," yet it is an improvement of 14.5 percentage points from 65.4 percent a year before. Similarly, 62.3 percent of South Koreans described relations between the two countries as "bad." But this also improved from 78.3 percent in 2015 (Fig. 3-2).

Japanese opinions of South Korea hit rock bottom in 2014 but showed a slight improvement in 2015. The South Korean survey continued to show worsening public sentiments in 2015. When compared with these results in the past three years, significant improvements in the public's attitude can be seen in most questions in the 2016 poll.

What most symbolizes the improvement was that questions about the long-standing historical issues between the two countries drew overall optimistic views on both sides. The percentages of people who think that "the historical issues between Japan and South Korea will be gradually solved as their relations develop" grew over 10 percentage points both in Japan and South Korea (Fig. 3-3).

Fig 3-1: Impressions on one another's countries

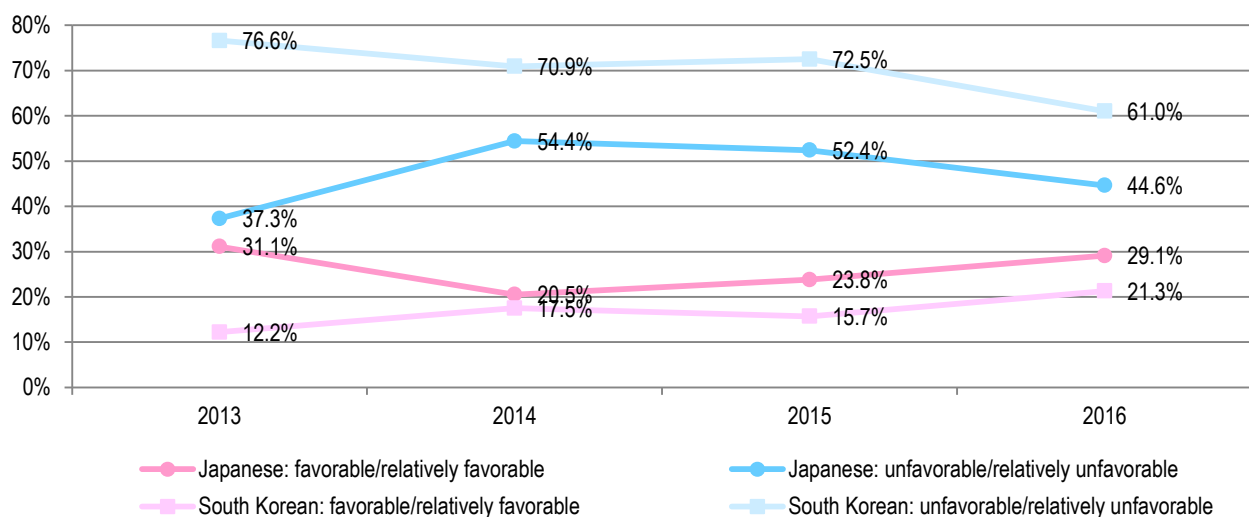


Fig 3-2: View on the current state of Japan-South Korea relations

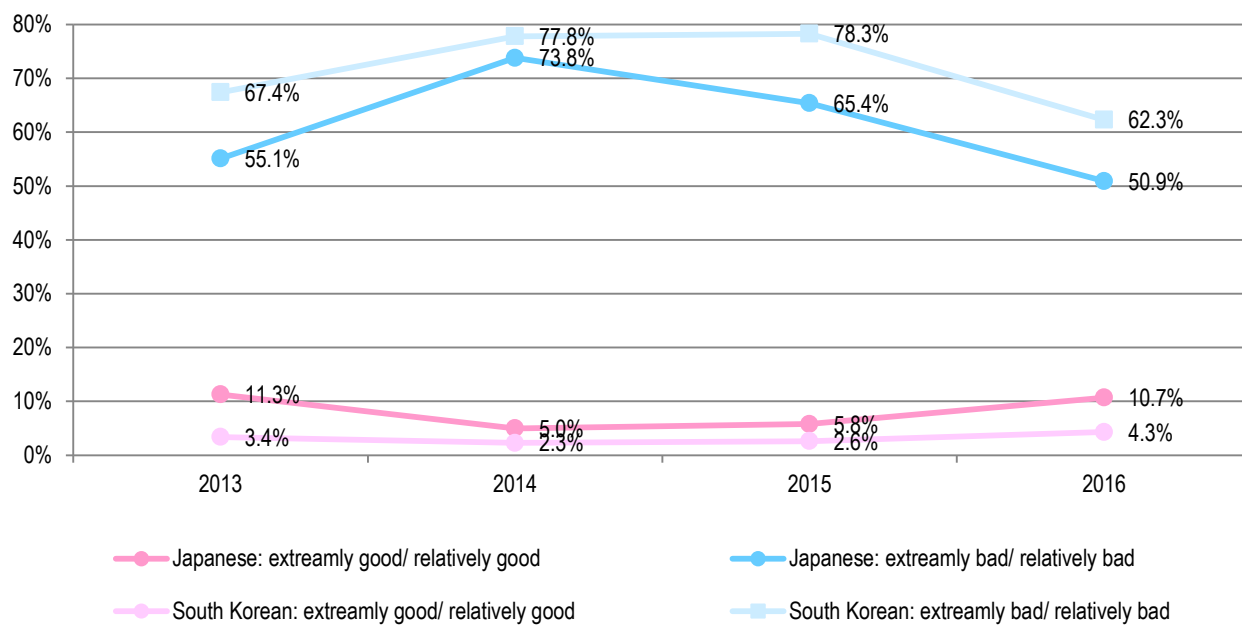
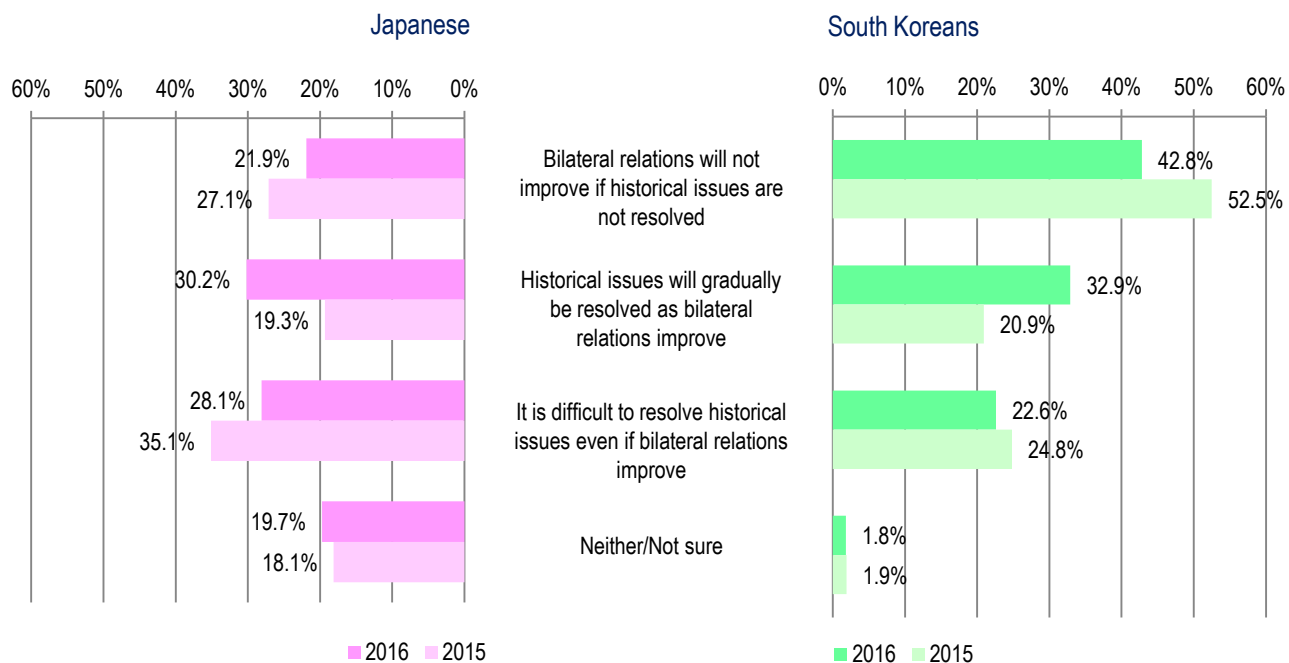


Fig 3-3: Relation between bilateral relations and historical issues



Why have public attitudes toward each other in Japan and South Korea begun to improve?

There are two questions that must be answered if we are to gain a more insightful understanding of the trends: Why the improvement happened and whether the improvement is genuine. In order to examine these, we need to understand the basic structure of the public opinion about each other. What can be observed from the past four annual surveys is there are two particular aspects that impact the forming of public opinion about each other: the lack of a sufficient level of people-to-people exchanges between the two countries and dependence on indirect information obtained from media reports, particularly TV news, to form views on each other. A similar pattern can be seen in the Japan-China comparative opinion polls carried out by The Genron NPO over the past 12 years.

An assumption that can be drawn from this is as follows: If someone has experience of direct communication such as visiting or having friends in each other's country, they are likely to have positive or balanced views compared to those who do not have such experience. This persisting trend can also be observed in this year's poll. Therefore, given the structure of public opinion, the changing trends and improving public attitudes toward each other may be attributed to the degree of direct interaction and the media environment in both countries.

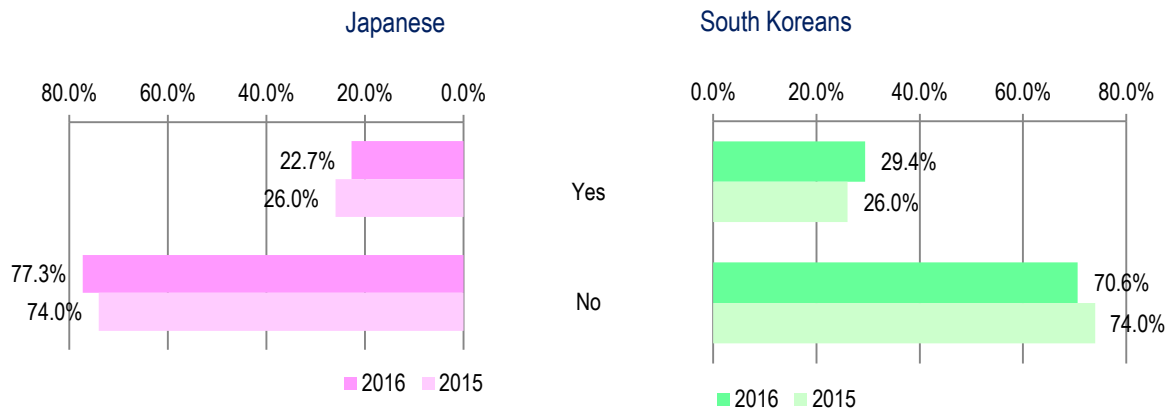
First, we should look back at what was in the news during the past year about Japan-South Korea relations. The foreign ministers of Japan and South Korea met six times in 2015 as the year saw the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations. A Japan-ROK (South Korea) summit took place in November for the first time under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's current administration, which

was inaugurated in December 2012, on the sidelines of a Japan-China-ROK trilateral summit. These developments, which mostly happened in the second half of 2015, came only after last year's opinion poll was conducted in May 2015. Toward the end of 2015, the two governments also reached a landmark agreement on the issue of Korean "comfort women," women and girls said to have been forced into sexual slavery by the Imperial Japanese Army in occupied territories before and during World War II. Further, the two countries' leaders held telephone conferences three times from late 2015 through early 2016.

In short, there was no "bad news" about Japan-South Korea relations like that which saturated the news environment in Japan and South Korea prior to summer 2015. Instead, the media covered the events that involved senior government officials from both sides working to amend the bilateral ties. There is no doubt that this has directly impacted the public's understanding of bilateral relations.

On the subject of direct interaction between Japanese and South Koreans, the number of South Koreans who visited Japan in 2015 grew by 1.25 million from the previous year. However, the number of Japanese visitors to South Korea has continued to decline from 2012, but overall, the exchanges and visits between the two countries are believed to have contributed to the better perceptions of each other in the latest survey. According to the poll, 29.4 percent of the South Korean respondents had visited Japan, an increase from 26 percent in 2015 (Fig. 3-4). This has had a noticeable impact on public opinion. When examined in cross analysis, people who have visited Japan have a significantly more favorable view of Japan and Japan-South Korea relations, which has also impacted the overall trend of South Korean public opinion about Japan.

Fig 3-4: Have you ever visited the other country?



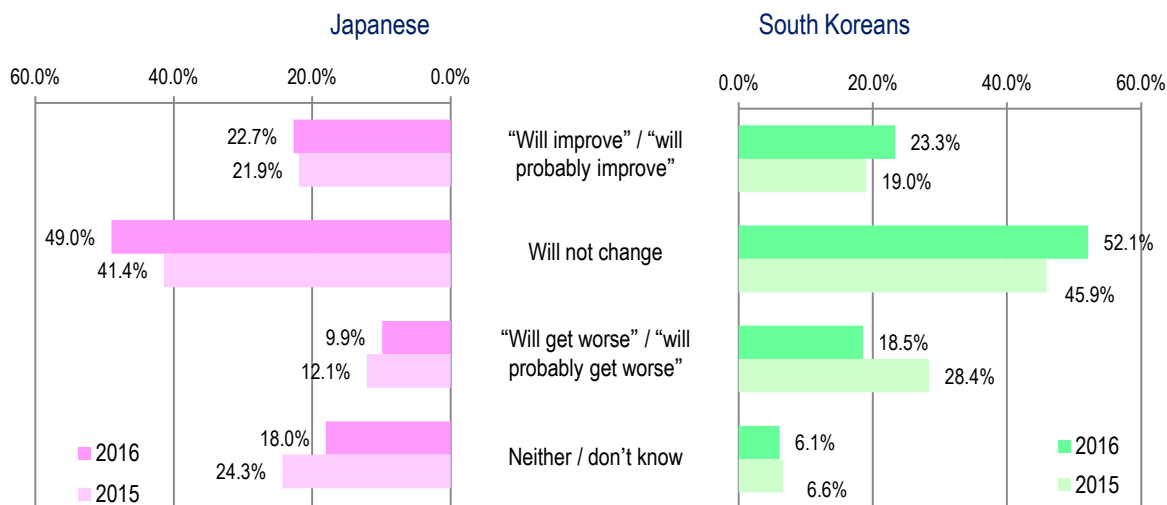
Despite the recent developments in bilateral relations, Japanese and South Koreans lack confidence in the future of Japan-South Korea relations

Behind the series of improving trends in public opinion, are the efforts by the two governments to better the ties, and the increasing direct interaction between Japanese and South Korean people. That said, this trend has not reached the point where unfavorable impressions on both sides could be overcome and a breakthrough made in mutual understanding. The latest results should be taken as a correction of excessively bad feelings toward each

other’s country as observed in the previous polls.

What the latest survey revealed was a lack of confidence about the future of Japan-South Korea relations on both sides. The percentage of those who foresaw better relations in the years ahead was only about 20 percent among the respondents both in Japan and South Korea. An increasing number of respondents expect “no change” (Japanese 49 percent (2015: 41.4 percent), South Koreans 52.1 percent (2015: 45.9 percent)) (Fig. 3-5). This can be seen as a sign that Japanese and South Koreans are not confident about the continued development of Japan-South Korea ties.

Fig 3-5: View on future Japan-South Korea relations



In addition, views are divided on the approval of intergovernmental agreements.

The agreement struck by the Japanese and South Korean governments in December 2015 about the fate of Korean “comfort women” drew mixed views from South Koreans. Of the South Koreans polled, 37.6 percent were disapproved the agreement, while 28.1 percent welcomed it (Fig. 3-6).

We would also like to point out the two shifts in South Koreans’ perceptions of Japan in relation to

the influence of South Korean TV coverage. In the past three surveys, from South Koreans who rely on South Korean TV to obtain information on Japan, there had been persisting negative views on Japan compared to those who have direct exchanges. However, the figure showed a slight improvement in the 2016 poll, where the ratio of negative views on Japan among these who rely on South Korean TV has decreased. The percentage of South Koreans who say “media coverage in South Korea is not objective nor fair” was 58.9 percent, up from 51.7 percent in 2015 (Fig. 3-7).

Fig 3-6: View of the agreement reached on comfort women issue

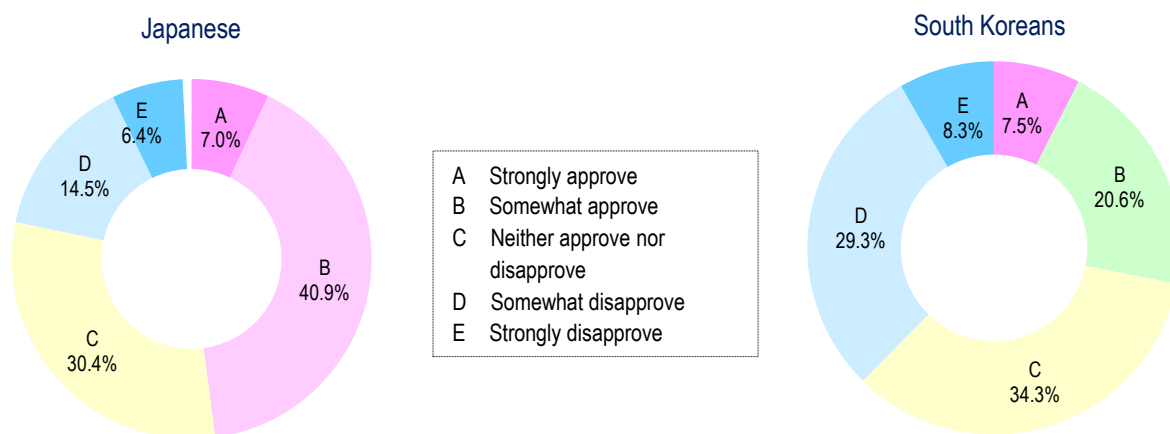
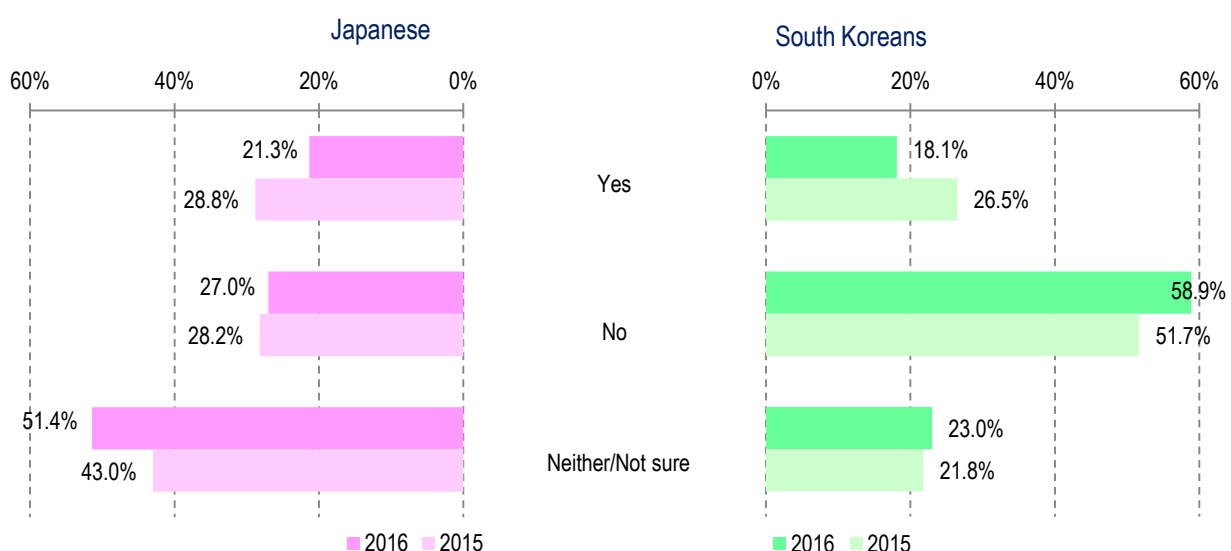


Fig 3-7: Are media reports of Japan and South Korea objective and fair in your country?



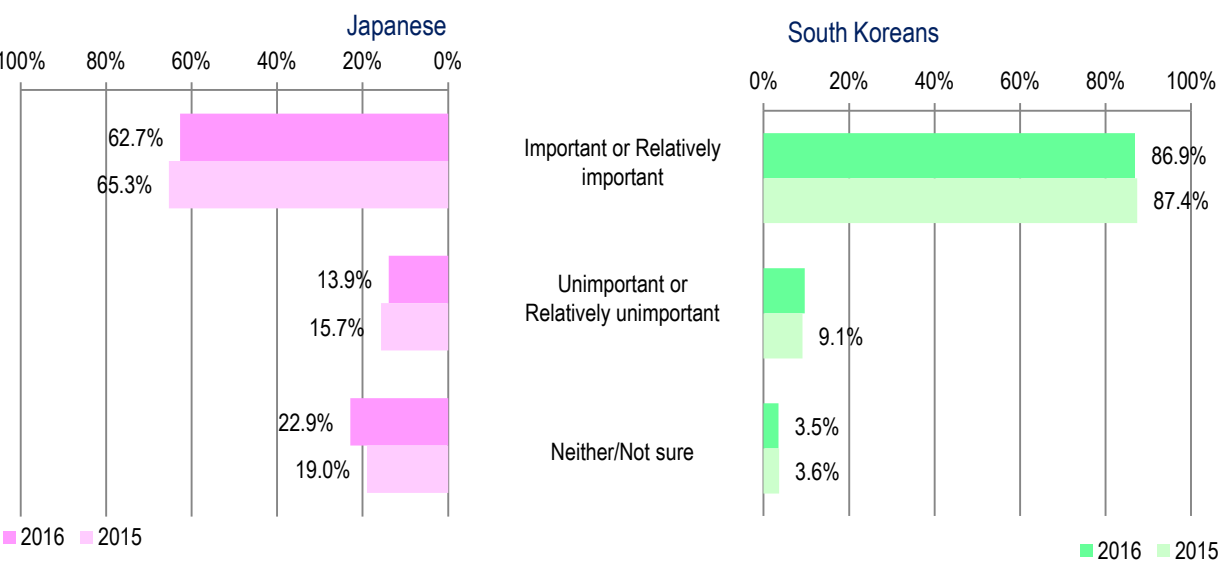
The gap in the perception of a rising China and security affairs among Japanese and South Koreans

One of the most emblematic findings of the 2016 poll from a Japanese perspective was the South Korean perception of an increasingly assertive China and security affairs. Japanese people generally regard South Korea as a country where the people share the same core values such as liberty and democracy. Having a common ally, the United States, Japan and South Korea share common interests and stand on the side to protect these core values. According to the poll, however, South Koreans regard China as the most important partner not the United States. When thinking about the

future of Japan-South Korea relations, this must be considered as a critical question: How should we think about the fundamental difference. That said, it should also be noted that such a China shift tendency in South Korean public opinion was less visible than in previous surveys.

The percentage of those who see Japan-South Korea relations as important remained high on both sides. On the Japanese side, 62.7 percent (2015: 65.3 percent) of the polled replied that relations between the two countries are “important” or “relatively important.” A comparable figure on the South Korean side was 86.9 percent (2015: 87.4 percent) (Fig 3-8).

Fig 3-8: Current recognition of the importance of Japan-South Korea relations



This consensual view on the importance of each other should serve as the foundation to develop future Japan-South Korean relations. In this context, it is also vital to understand the differences in how and why Japanese and South Koreans think each other is important to their respective countries. In response to the question on comparing the importance of each other and China to the future of their respective countries, “both are equally important” was the most common answer among

both Japanese (45.6 percent) and South Koreans (56.8 percent). The response “the bilateral relationship with China is more important” was more prevalent among South Koreans (35.1 percent) than Japanese (21.2 percent), although the South Koreans’ perception of the importance of China shows a decrease of 9 percentage points from 44.8 percent (2015).

Further to the comparison of relations with China, respondents were also asked to choose which country is the most important partner to their country. Japanese consider the United States is the most important (65.9 percent) and South Koreans chose China (47.1 percent) as the most important partner, more so than the United States (39.8 percent) (Fig. 3-9).

One factor that may have impacted such a view is the growing trade and economic dependency of South Korea on China. China has become South Korea's biggest trading partner, with the bilateral trade occupying a quarter of its total trade volume. 81.8 percent of South Koreans think "China" is the most important economic partner, which was

followed by "the United States" (68.3 percent) and "Japan" (36.9 percent). This directory reflects the ranking of trade volumes. Japanese think the important economic partners for Japan are "the United States" (77.3 percent) and "China" (63.0 percent). "South Korea" (32.2 percent) was fourth, behind "ASEAN" and at the same percentage as the "European Union" (Fig. 3-10).

The South Korean government's decision to join the Chinese-initiated Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, despite Washington's request for its non-participation, was supported by 64.8 percent of South Koreans (Fig. 3-11).

Fig 3-9: Country or region of importance for the future of their own country

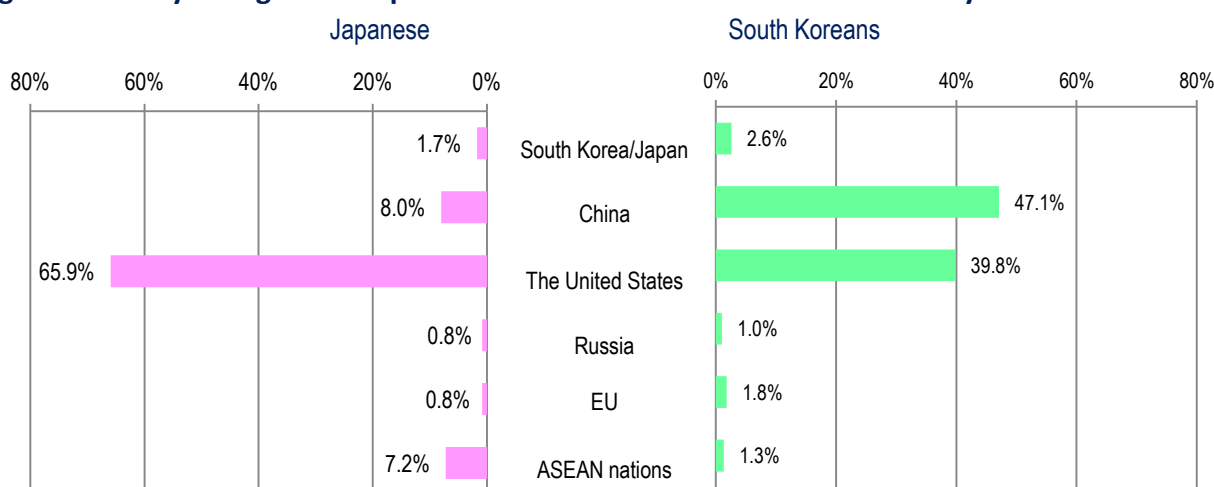


Fig 3-10: Countries and regions of economic importance for their own country

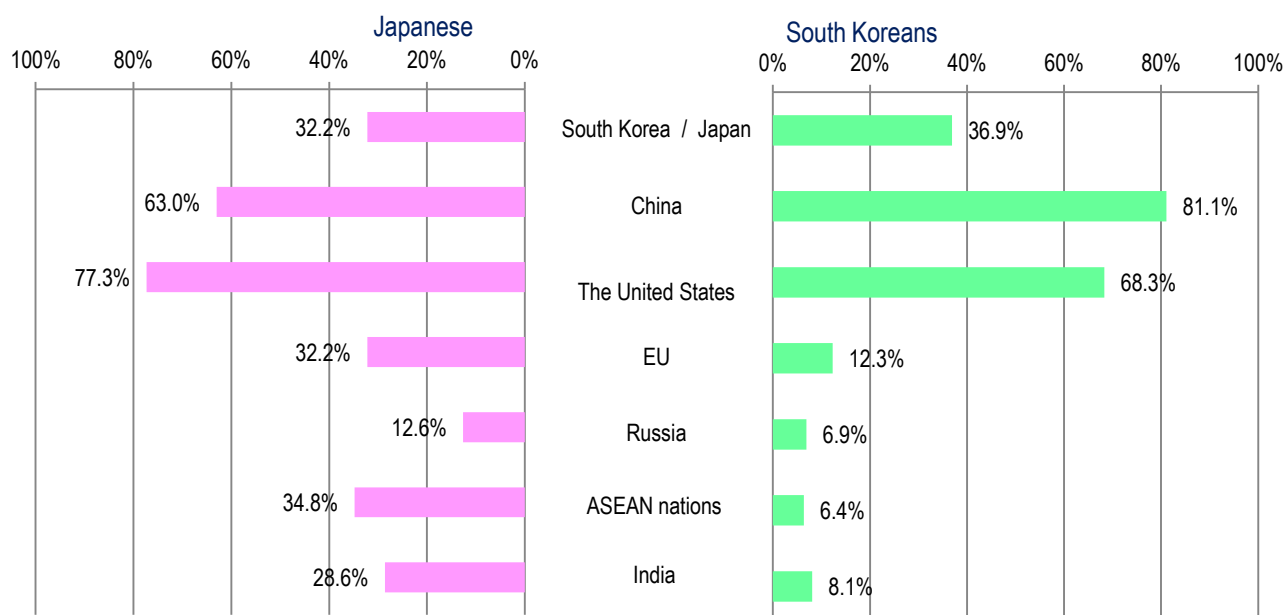
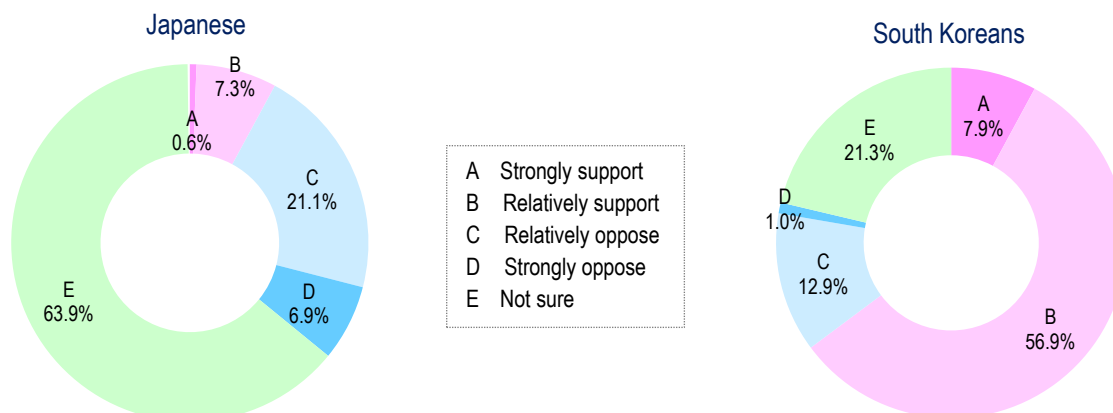


Fig 3-11 :Opinions on South Korea's Joining AIIB (Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank)

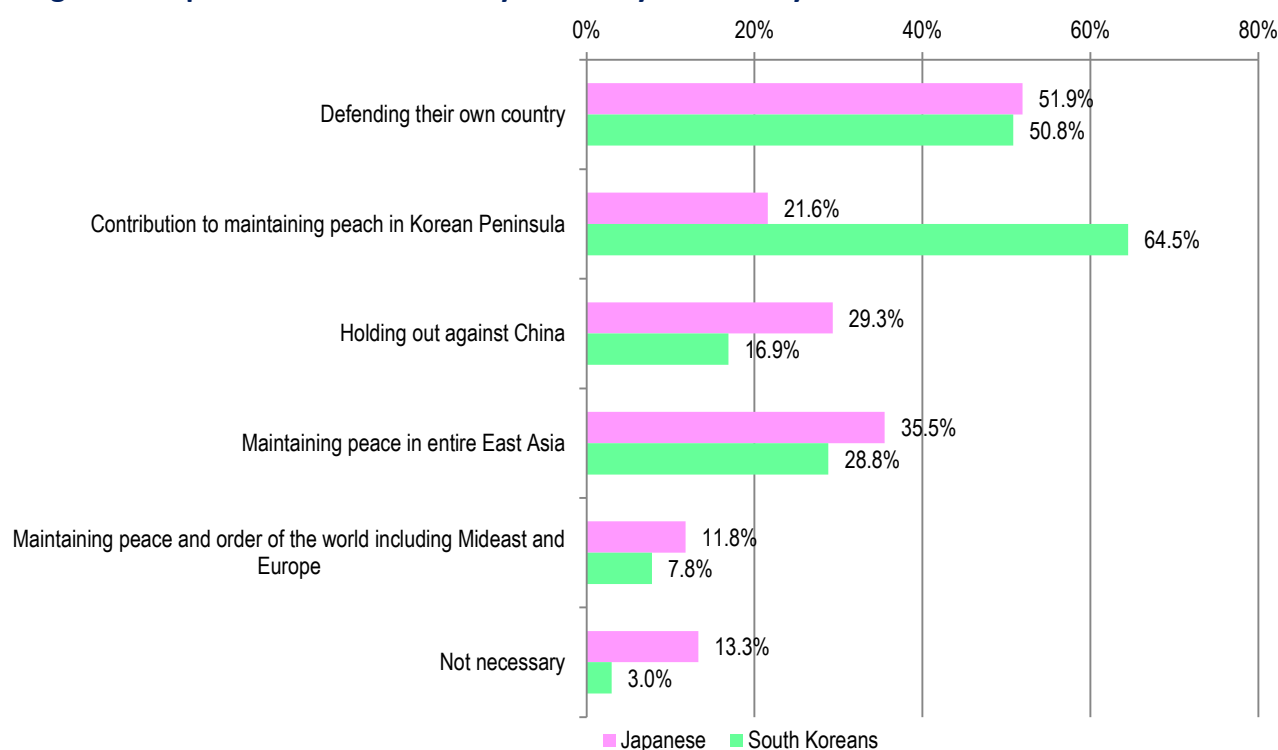


Diverging views of Japanese and South Koreans on Northeast Asian security issues

There is also a gap between Japanese and South Korean views on national and regional security issues. For instance, to the question asking what they expect from the U.S. bases in their respective countries, aside from national defense (Japanese

51.9 percent, South Koreans 50.8 percent), the Japanese respondents expressed their expectations on “maintaining peace in East Asia” (35.5 percent) and “counterbalancing China” (29.3 percent), while the majority of South Koreans expect “stabilizing the Korean Peninsula” (64.5 percent) and only 16.9 percent linked the U.S. military presence in South Korea to “counterbalancing China.” (Fig. 3-12).

Fig 3-12: Expectations of US military bases in your country



Another point of divergence was to the question “Which country poses a military threat to your country?” While overwhelming majorities, over 80 percent of the polled on both sides, said “North Korea” (Japanese 80.4 percent, South Koreans 83.4 percent), 72.8 percent of Japanese also saw “China” as a military threat, up from 64.3 percent the previous year. In contrast, South Koreans said that the second-largest military threat was “Japan” (37.7 percent), although the figure decreased by 20 percentage points from 2015. The reason why South Koreans feel that Japan poses a military threat was

due to the fact that “Japan claims ownership of the Dokdo” (60.1 percent), the disputed islands between Japan and South Korea (Fig. 3-13).

This also affects perceptions on the possibility of military conflict between Japan and South Korea. Only 8.1 percent of Japanese saw a possibility of a military conflict occurring either “in a few years” or “in the future,” while a third (37.7 percent) of South Koreans considered that a conflict may occur (Fig. 3-14).

Fig 3-13: Countries and regions pose military threat to your country

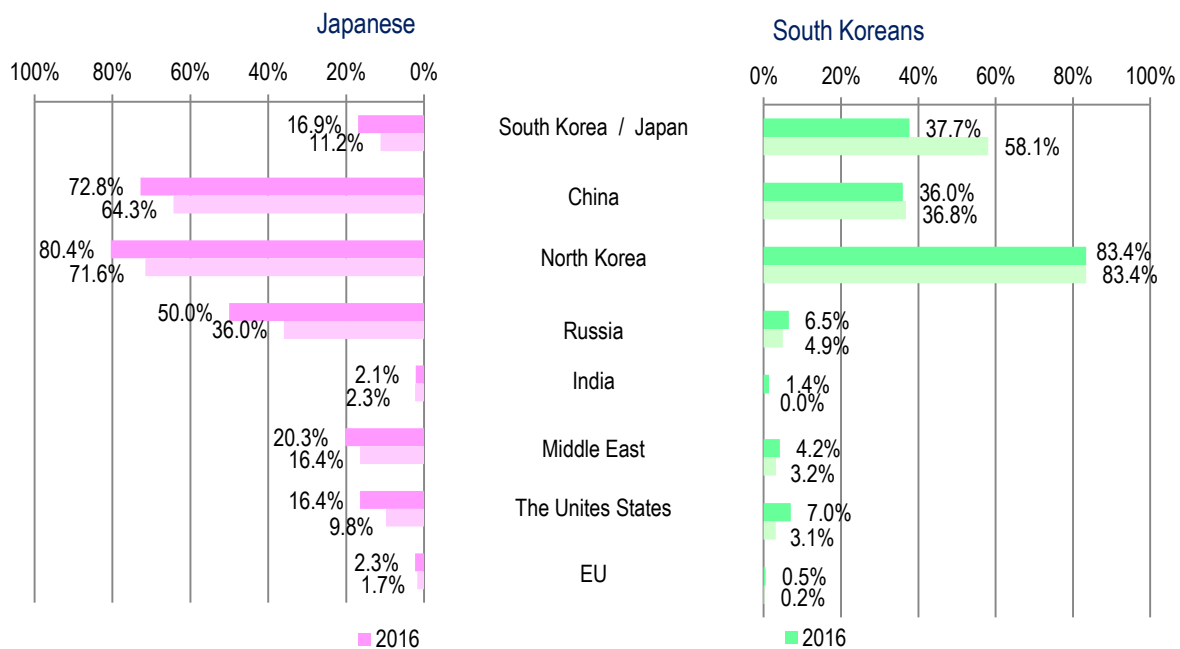
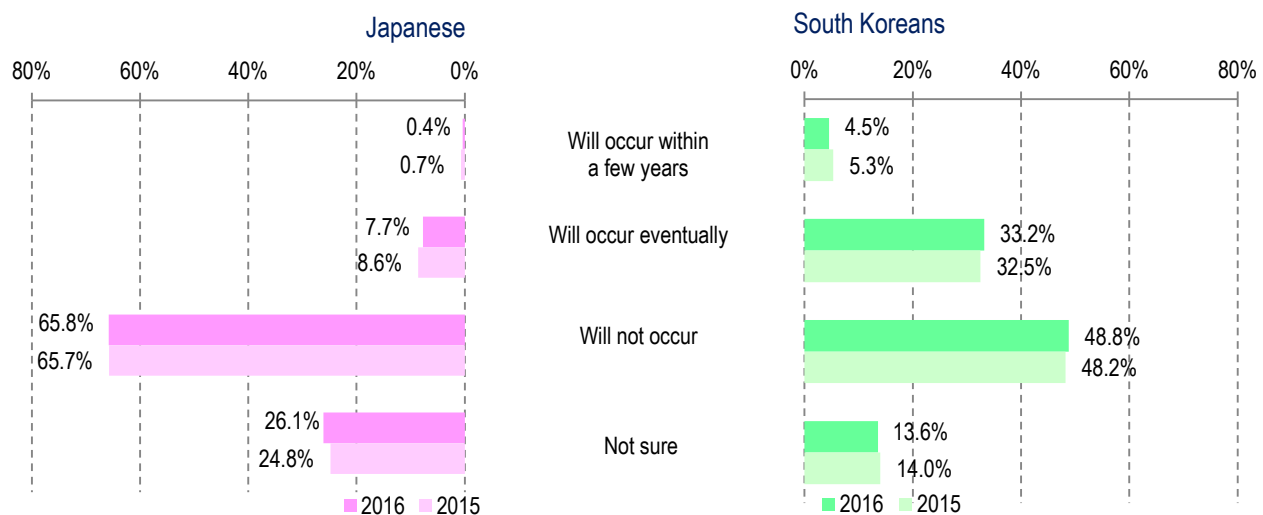


Fig 3-14: Will a military confrontation occur between Japan and South Korea?



Nuclearization of Japan and South Korea

The poll also asked if they are for or against Japan and South Korea becoming nuclear powers, a subject that came to prominence due to candidate Donald Trump's remarks during the U.S. presidential campaign. A significant majority of Japanese were against Japanese (80.3 percent) and South Korean

(82.5 percent) nuclearization. South Koreans were also against Japan acquiring nuclear weapons (82.2 percent), while supporting South Korean nuclearization (59.0 percent) (Fig. 3-15, Fig. 3-16).

Fig 3-15: Should Japan possess nuclear weapons?

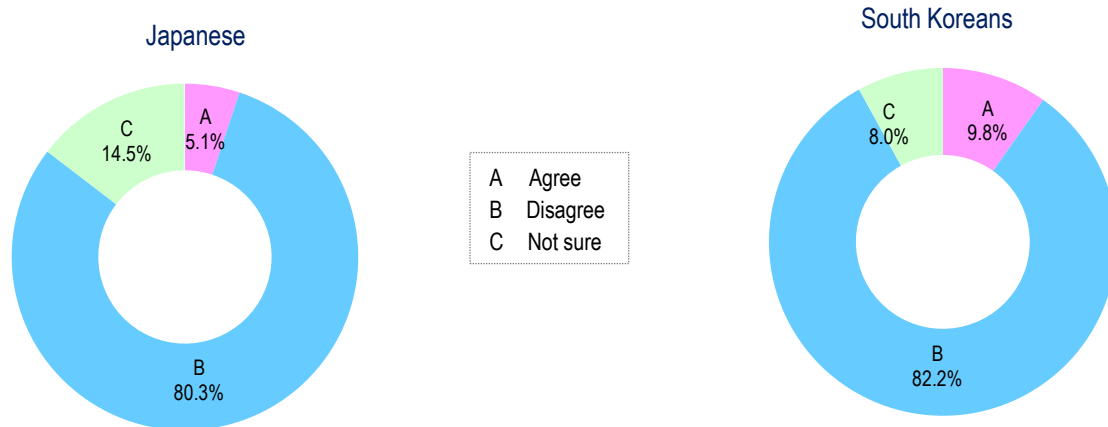
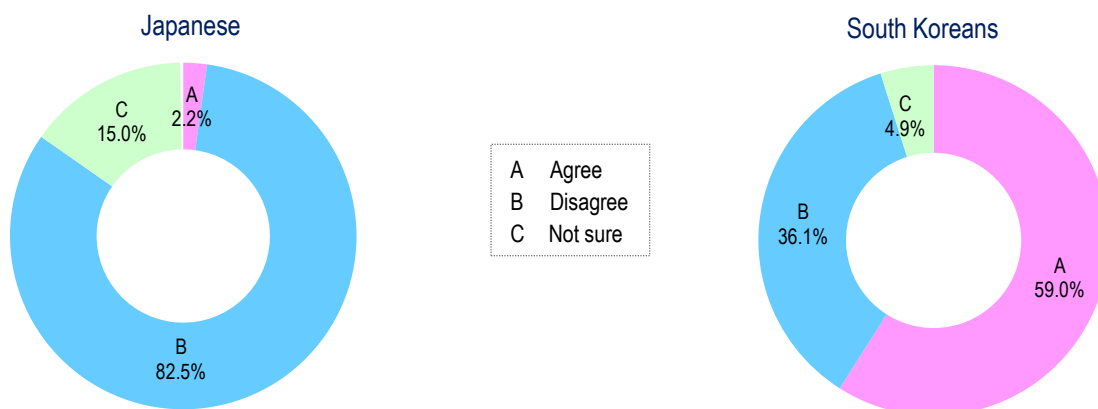


Fig 3-16: Should South Korea possess nuclear weapons?



What kind of Japan-South Korea relations should we build on common ground?

There is a possibility those diverging views on China and security could become barriers to the future development of Japan-South Korea relations. That said, there are many hints in the public opinion for the future development of Japan-South Korea relations, while mutually recognizing the differences. Many Japanese and South Koreans

thought the issues in Japan-South Korea relations “need fixing” or are “worrying.” (Fig. 3-17) There were increasing numbers of people who would like to visit each other’s country (Fig. 3-18). For the reasons why people have good impressions of each other, Japanese were interested in Korean culture, and South Koreans saw Japanese as hardworking and kind (Fig. 3-19). When considering the economic growth of each other’s country, many considered that it is beneficial to their own countries, which was more than those who saw it as a threat to their own countries (Fig. 3-20).

Fig 3-17: Recognition of current state of national sentiments

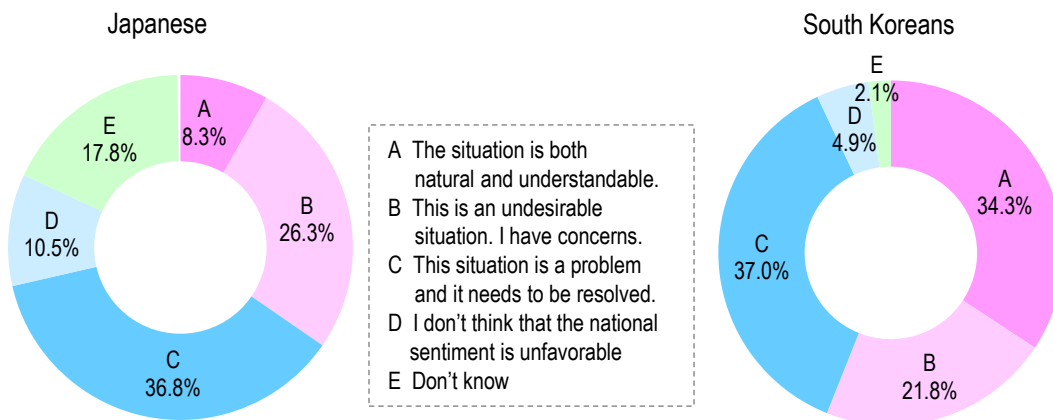


Fig 3-18 : Do you hope to visit the other country?

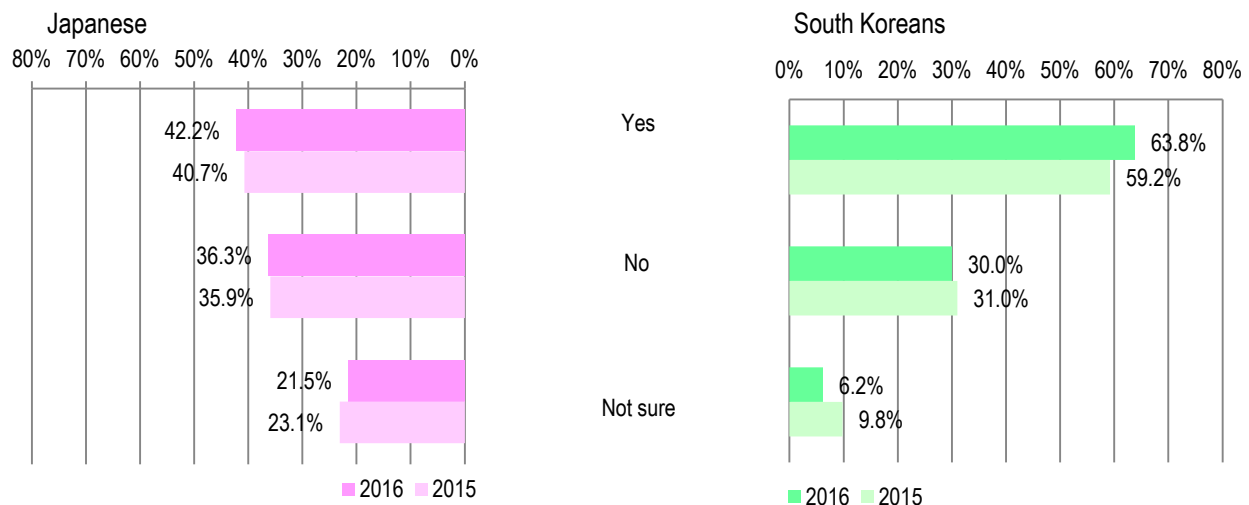
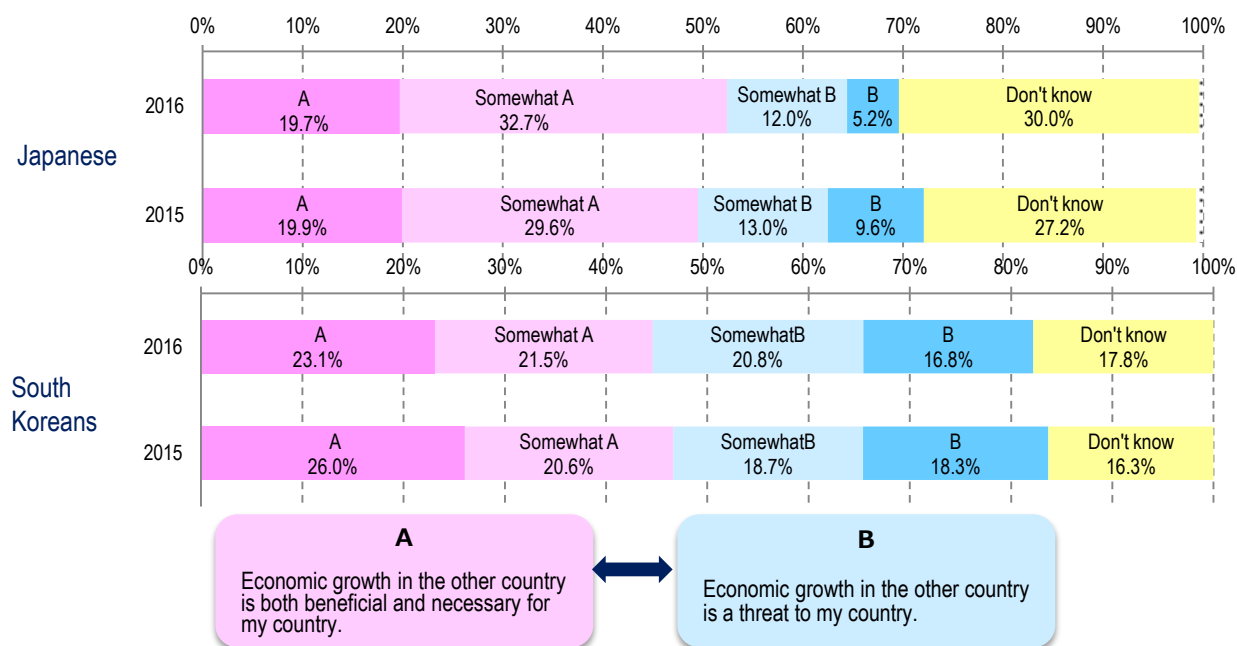


Fig 3-19: Reasons for positive impressions



Fig 3-20: Economic relations between Japan and South Korea



There are still deep-seated historical issues between Japan and South Korea, and efforts to overcome the problems are required. The survey results beg the question how we can make the development of bilateral relations meaningful for the future. The survey revealed that there are gaps in how Japanese and South Koreans see China and security issues. However, Japan and South Korea share common ground, a system of developed capitalism and democracy, and developing constructive public opinion toward each other and Japan-South Korea relations is surely a common benefit. What kind of bilateral relations we will build on this shared ground is the question we must answer from now on.

At the end of 2015, the Japanese and South Korean governments agreed to solve the issue of “comfort women.” The move caused divisions in South Korea, with 37.6 percent disapproving of the agreement, but 28.1 percent approving of the effort by the two governments.

Although the landmark agreement has been reached, the 2016 opinion poll suggests that the efforts by the governments alone are not sufficient.

Overall, there was a noticeable improvement in the perception of each other and Japan-South Korea relations. However, we must look beyond and question why we have a lack of public debate on the future of Japan-South Korean relations, even though we share core values such as liberty and democracy. The long barren period in future-oriented discussions between the two countries must have affected the peoples’ lack of confidence in the future of bilateral relations. This is where the China factor comes in to complicate even more the strained relations.

A vision cannot be drawn for Japan-South Korea relations and Northeast Asia without efforts to envision the future with a vibrant public debate among Japanese and South Koreans. We must ask ourselves whether we could propel the efforts even just half a step further through future-oriented dialogues. This is precisely why we, The Genron NPO, conduct open dialogue between Japan and South Korea for the future of Japan-South Korea relations and beyond.

The Japan-Indonesia-India Joint Opinion Poll on Democracy

Is democracy in decline? — How Indonesia, India and Japan address the challenge

Today, we are facing the serious challenge of how to sustain globalism and democracy, and how to re-define the true existence of nation-states. Populism that panders to people's anxieties is rampant in many parts of the world, as shown by the exclusionist remarks during the U.S. presidential election, the rise of anti-immigration sentiments in Europe, the approval in a national referendum of a new draft constitution that lays the foundation for a civilian government influenced by the military in Thailand, and the public support for Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's contentious remarks. The validity of the system called democratic government is being put to the test.

In order for us to overcome the crisis of democracy, it is necessary to make the world's opinion leaders engage in discussions and cooperate with one another across national borders.

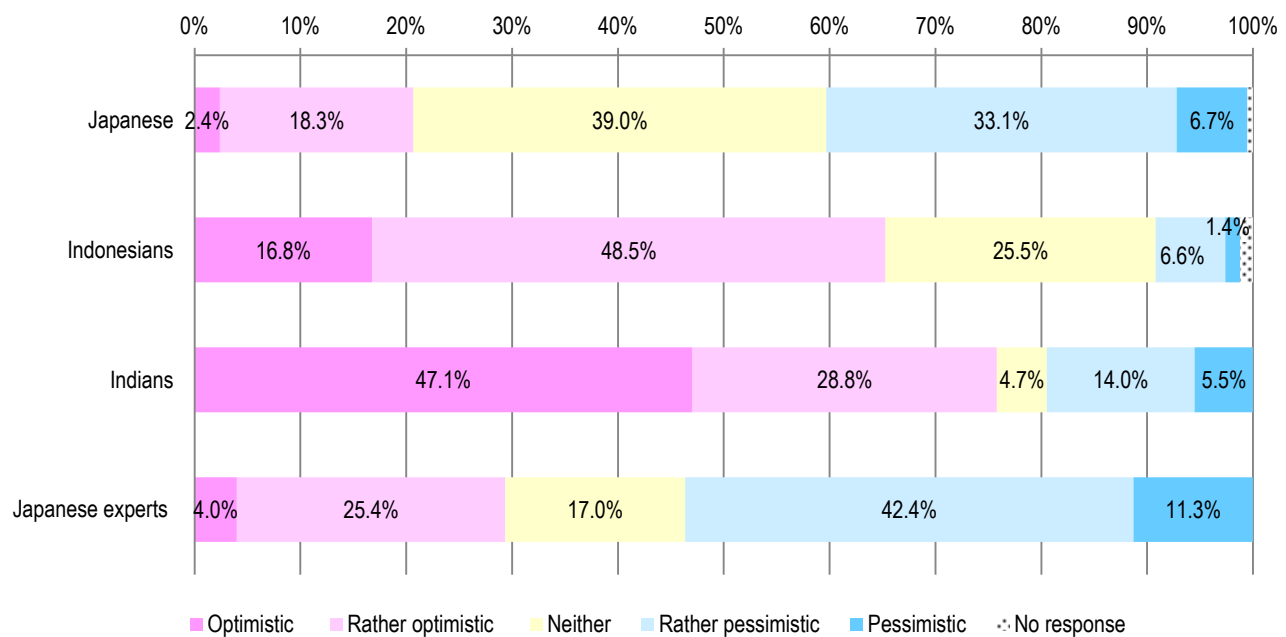
As our first initiative, The Genron NPO organized a forum in August in Tokyo, inviting opinion leaders from Asia's major democracies – India, Indonesia and Japan – while conducting a joint opinion survey in the three countries, focusing on the state of democracy in each country, in Asia and in the world at large.

Against the backdrop of the rise of populism and a crisis of democracy around the world, The Genron NPO began a joint three-country opinion survey this year, in collaboration with leading think tanks in Indonesia and India, to understand the perceptions of citizens in the three democracies of Japan, Indonesia, and India, on the future of their countries and on the current state of democracy. The survey was conducted nationwide in Japan and Indonesia and India, from June to August this year. A total of

3,032 persons, 1,000 Japanese and Indonesians, and 1032 Indians, responded.

The survey asked respondents' views on **the future of their countries**. In Japan, 39.8 percent of the respondents were "pessimistic" about the future of their country (the figure is a total of "pessimistic" and "rather pessimistic," the same applies hereafter), which was much higher than those who were "optimistic" (20.7 percent) (Fig. 4-1).

Fig 4-1: Views on future of the country



As for **reasons for their pessimism**, 84.7 percent of Japanese cited “no effective policy measures have been proposed to address the declining birthrate and the aging population” (Fig. 4-2).

In contrast, Indians and Indonesians were more optimistic about the future of their countries. Those who were “optimistic” about the future accounted for 65.3 percent and 75.9 percent in Indonesia and India respectively. Only 8.0 percent in Indonesia and 19.5 percent in India felt “pessimistic” about the future of their countries.

When asked about reasons for pessimism in India, 54.2 percent said “corruption in government and administration remains rampant,” followed by 44.3 percent who mentioned that “social and economic policies are unable to tackle large scale poverty and inequality” (Fig. 4-4).

In Indonesia, 51.3 percent cited “poverty problem remains unsolved due to a large economic disparity at home,” followed by 46.3 percent who said that “corruption in government or administration stays as an ordinary phenomenon.” In both countries, economic disparity and corruption were the main reasons for pessimism (Fig. 4-3).

Fig 4-2 : Reasons behind the pessimistic view –Japanese-

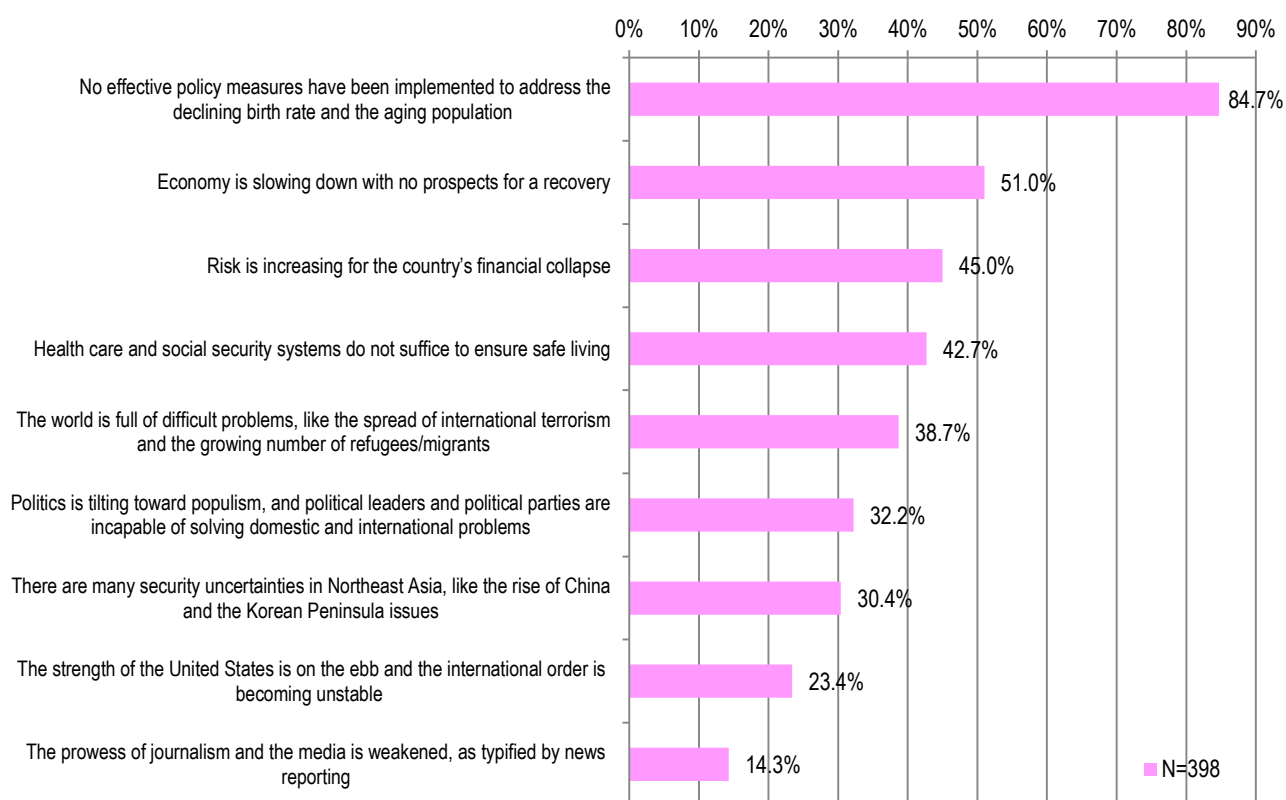


Fig 4-3: Reasons behind the pessimistic view –Indonesians-

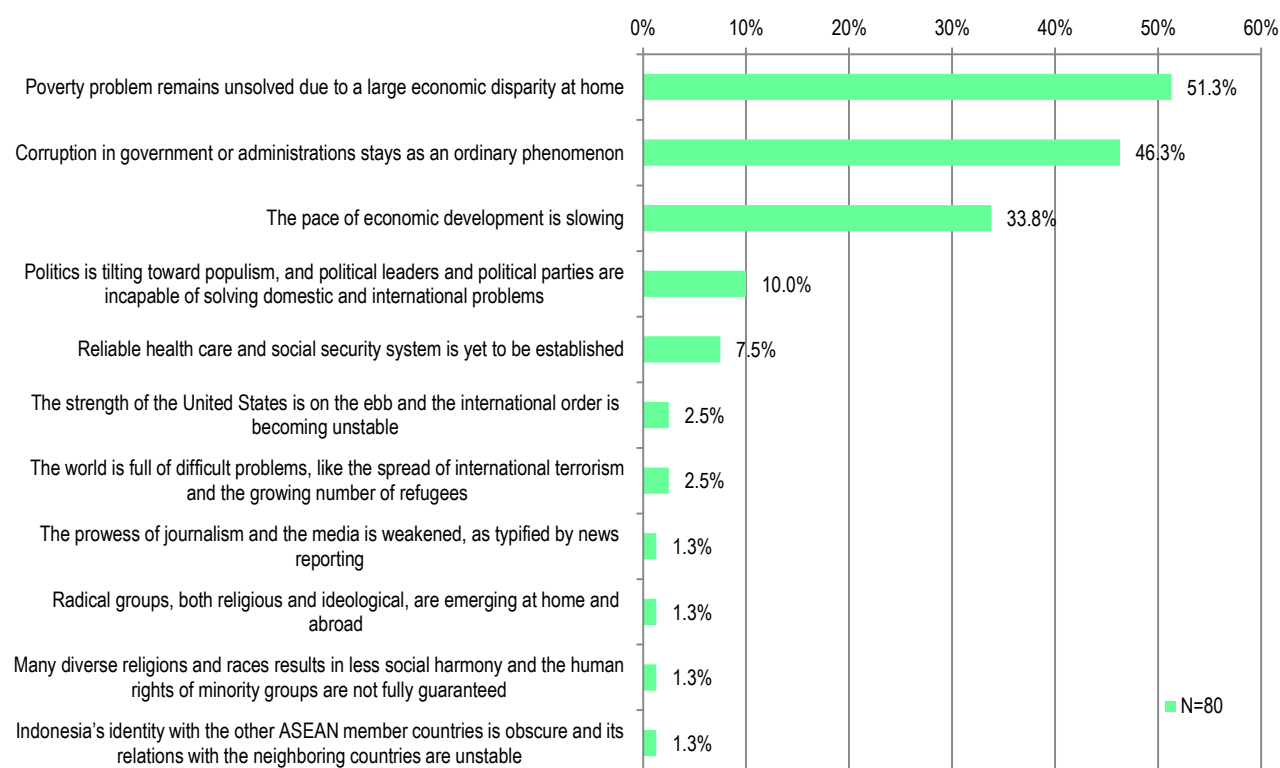
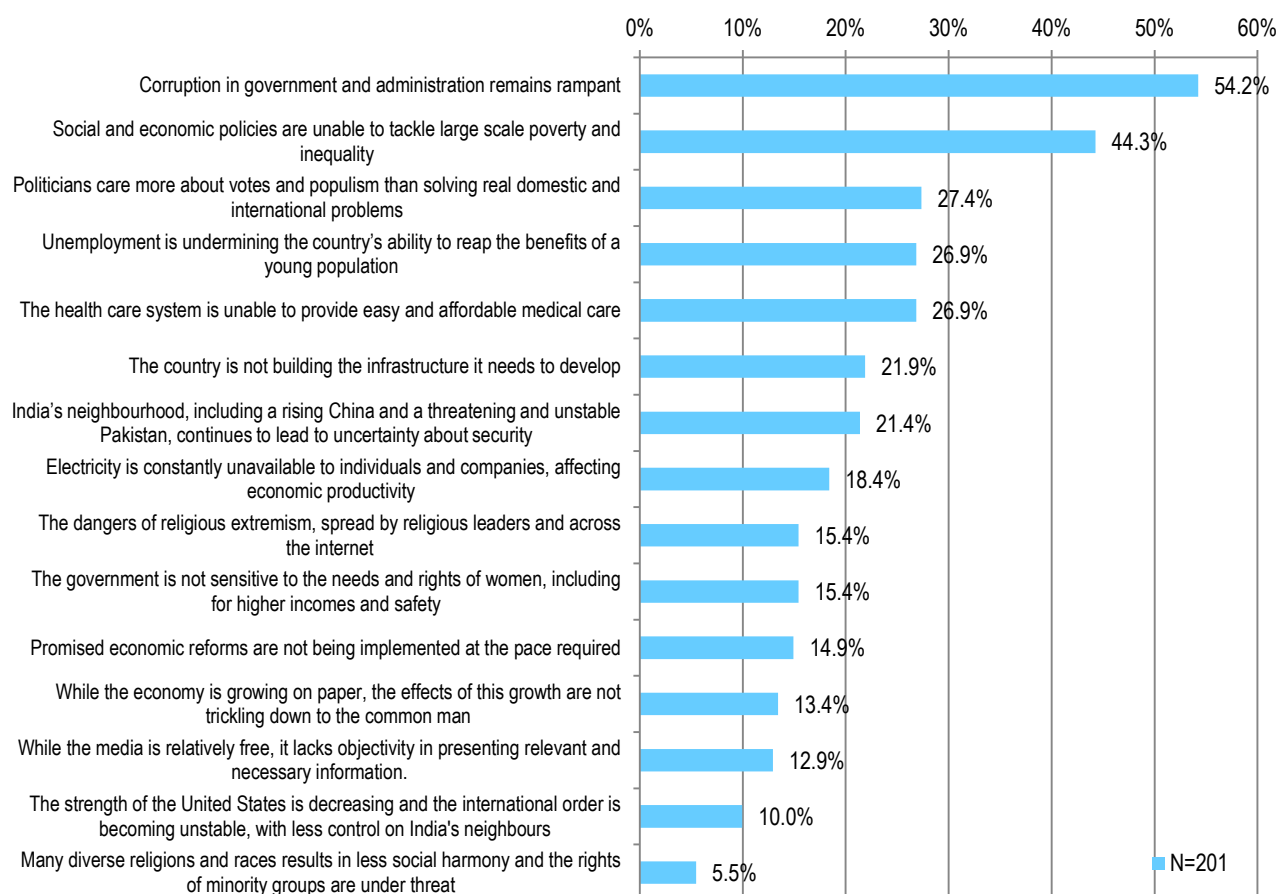


Fig 4-4: Reasons behind the pessimistic view –Indians-

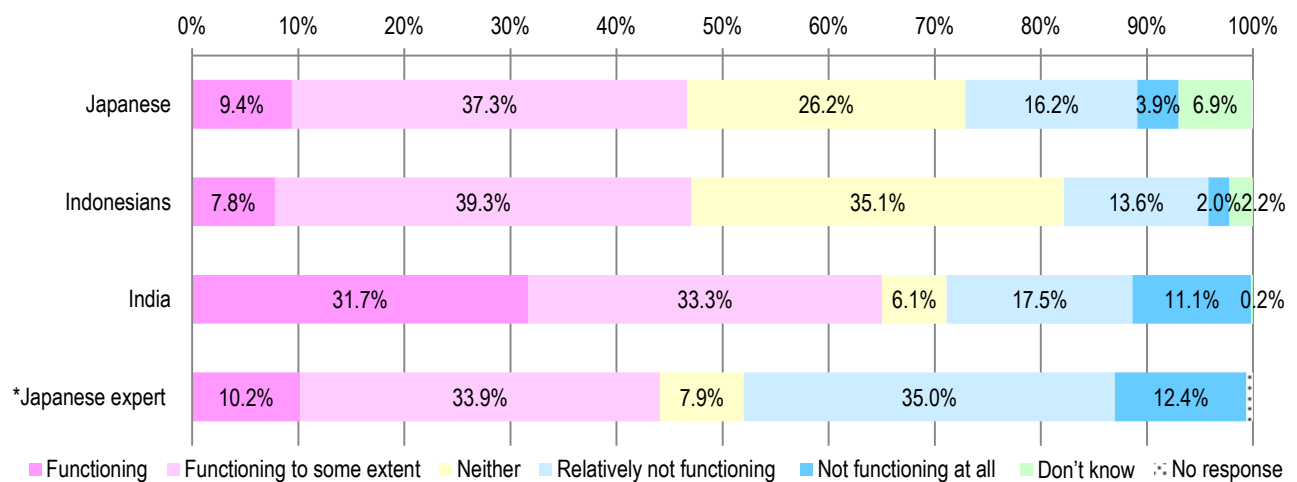


Is democracy functioning in your country?

In response to the question “is democracy functioning in your country,” 46.7 percent of respondents in Japan and 47.1 percent in Indonesia replied “democracy is functioning” (including “functioning to some extent”). Its percentage in India was markedly high at 65.0 percent.

On the other hand, there were also some who either felt “democracy is not functioning at all” or “it is relatively not functioning.” Such pollees accounted for a small portion in Indonesia at 15.6 percent, but for 20.1 percent in Japan and 28.6 percent in India (Fig. 4-5).

Fig 4-5: Is democracy functioning well?



Asked about reasons “democracy is not functioning well,” 60.2 percent of Japanese cited “election win is the primary concern and politics is not squarely facing their tasks,” followed by 45.3 percent who said “political parties’ non-fulfillment of election pledges and lack of sufficient accountability to the nation, leading to their miscommunication with the people.” The results highlighted rising distrust in political parties and politicians (Fig. 4-6).

There was a similar tendency in India : 38.2 percent of those who answered in the negative replied “political parties’ non-fulfillment of election pledges and lack of sufficient accountability to the nation,

leading to their miscommunication with the people” and another 38.5 percent mentioned “rampant corruption among politicians and political leaders ,” followed by 22.6 percent who cited “election win is the primary concern and politics is not squarely facing their tasks of promoting India’s development” (Fig. 4-8).

On the other hand, a significant portion of respondents in Indonesia mentioned “rampant corruption in the bureaucracy and administration ” (63.5 percent), followed by 35.9 percent who said “large gap between the rich and poor inside the country” (Fig. 4-7).

Fig 4-6: Reasons behind democracy not functioning –Japanese-

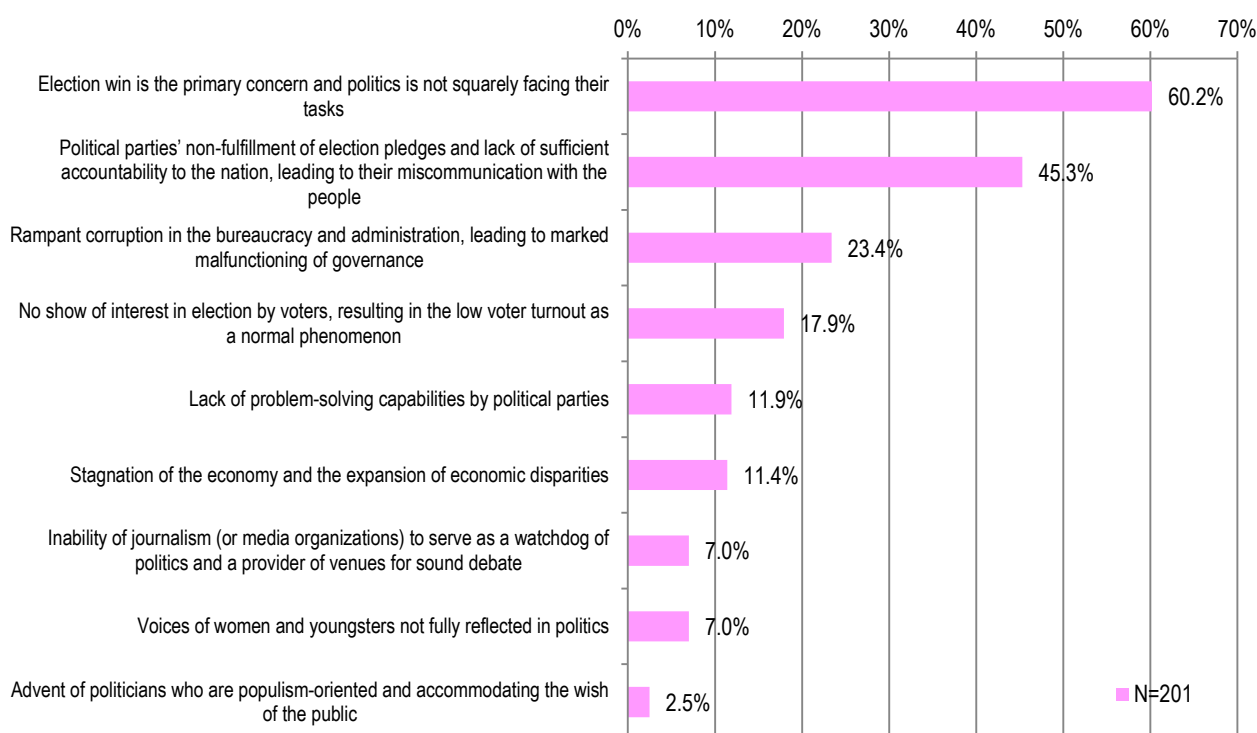


Fig 4-7: Reasons behind democracy not functioning –Indonesians-

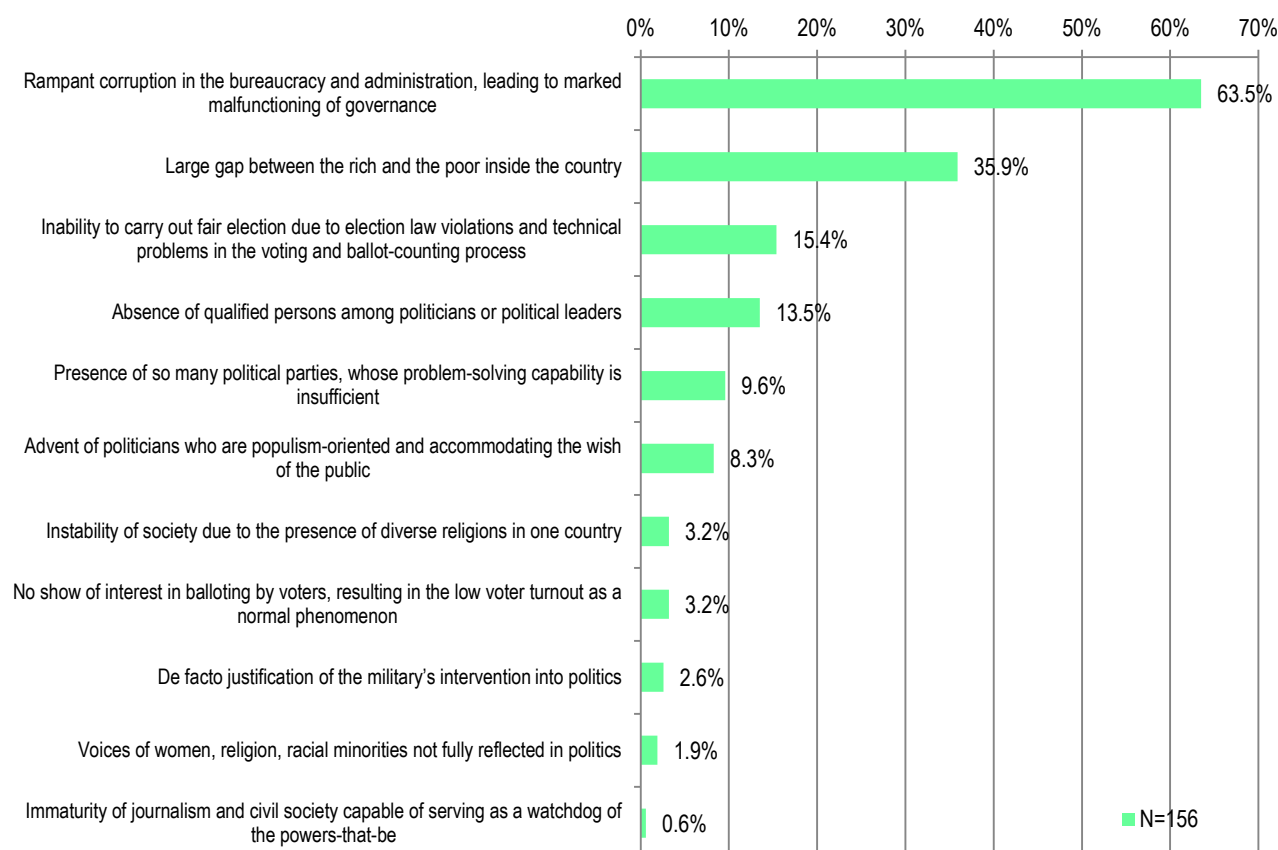
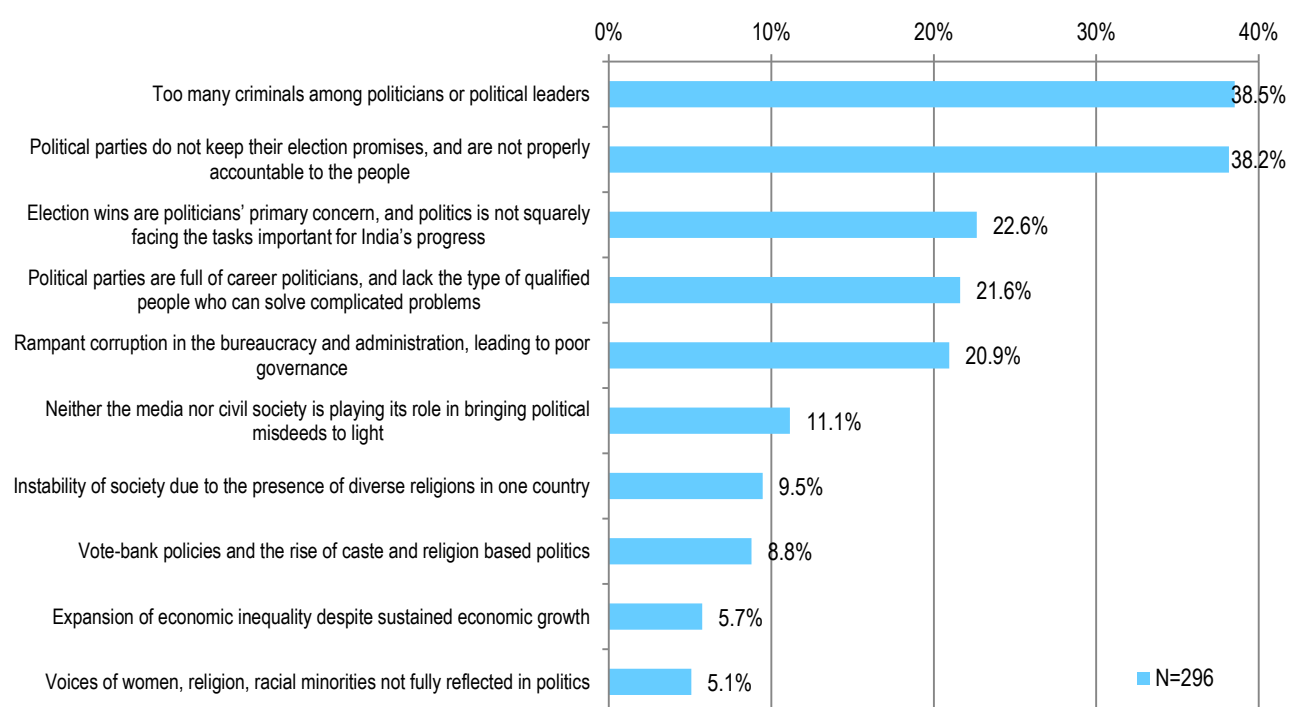


Fig 4-8: Reasons behind democracy not functioning –Indians-



What reform is needed to promote democracy?

On the question of **what reform is needed to promote democracy in one's country**, 47.6 percent, close to half of all respondents in Japan, replied reform of "political parties and political fund control system." On the other hand, the largest number of respondents in Indonesia, at 39 percent, felt reform is needed of the "judicial system." In India, the highest number of respondents, at 41.3 percent, believed that "corruption and lack of accountability" was the issue that needed to be addressed (Fig. 4-9).

The respondents were asked **whether they could expect political parties** to solve national issues or tasks and ensure economic development. In India

and Indonesia, 85.9 percent and 58.3 percent replied that they could count on political parties in their countries, respectively. In contrast, only 15.5 percent of the respondents in Japan felt they could rely on political parties in their country, and 51.7 percent, more than half of all respondents, thought that they could not pin their hopes on political parties (Fig. 4-10).

Is the election system fair?

Results also showed that while more than half of Indonesian (52.5 percent), think that their "election system is fair," only 27.4 percent of Japanese believe their election system is fair, and 39.7 percent of Japanese consider their election system as not fair. The question on fairness of election system was not put to pollees in India (Fig. 4-11).

Fig 4-9: Biggest challenges for reforming democracy

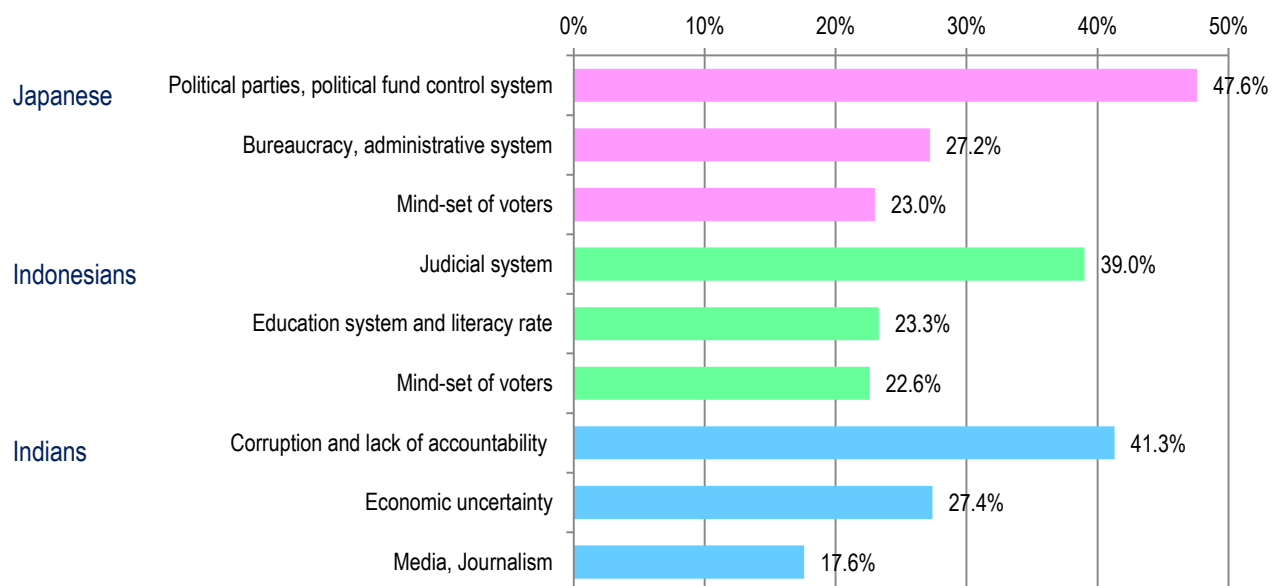


Fig 4-10: Expectations of political parties

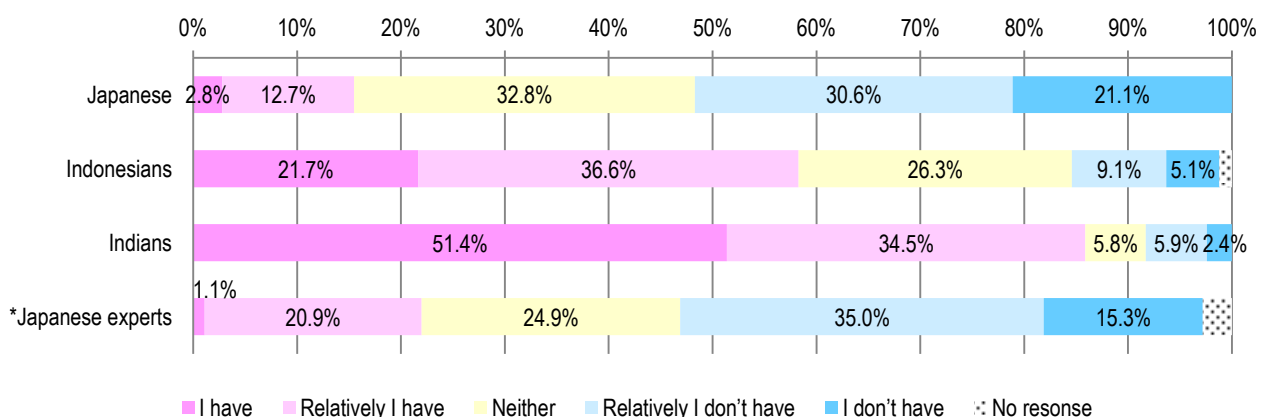
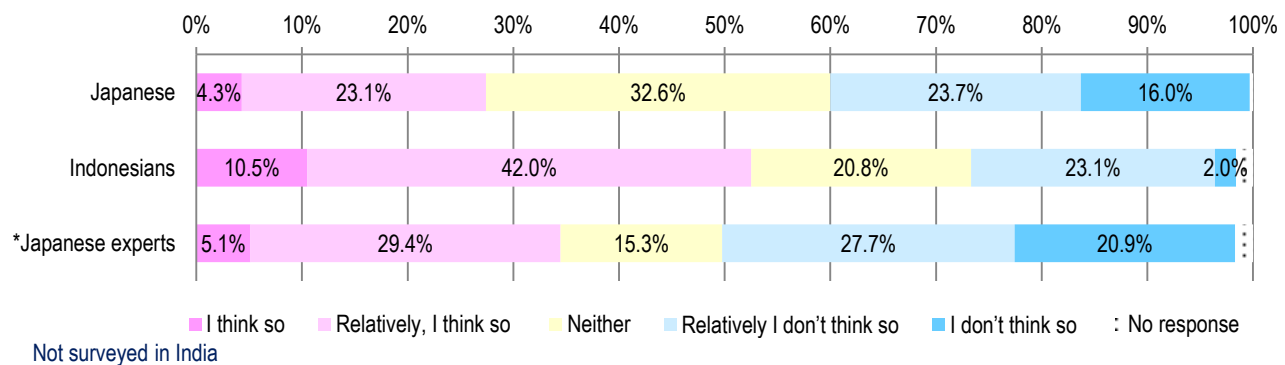


Fig 4-11: Is the election system fair?



Assessment of the current state of democracy

The survey asked respondents to evaluate **the state of democracy over the world in the past decade**. A large number of respondents in Indonesia and India felt that democracy has progressed globally in the last decade: 61.1 percent and 79.5 percent of respondents said so (including those who replied “it has more or less progressed”) in Indonesia and India, respectively. In contrast, only 26.5 percent of Japanese replied that the democracy has progressed. There were 17.7 percent of Japanese who said that democracy has retreated (including those who replied “it has more or less retreated”) (Fig. 4-12).

On the question of **whether democracy is a desirable political system**, 47.0 percent of respondents in Japan said “it is better than other forms of political system,” while 30.8 percent “did not know” and 17.3 percent answered that “in some circumstances, non-democratic political system should be allowed to exist.” In Indonesia, while the largest number of respondents, at 55.1 percent, replied that “democracy is better than other forms of political system,” there were also 21.3 percent who said “in some circumstances, non-democratic political system should be allowed to exist.” In India, the percentage of respondents in support of the view that “democracy is better than other forms of political system” was the highest among respondents in the three countries, at 57.6 percent. On the other hand, there were also 34.5 percent of respondents in India who said “in some circumstances, non-democratic political system should be allowed to exist” (Fig. 4-13)

Fig 4-12: Democracy in the world in past 10 years

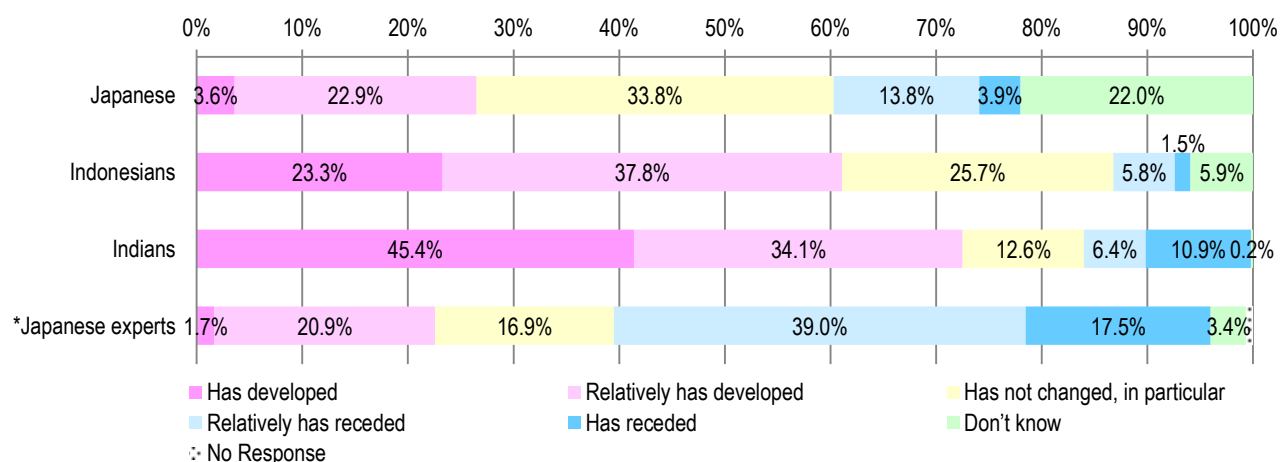
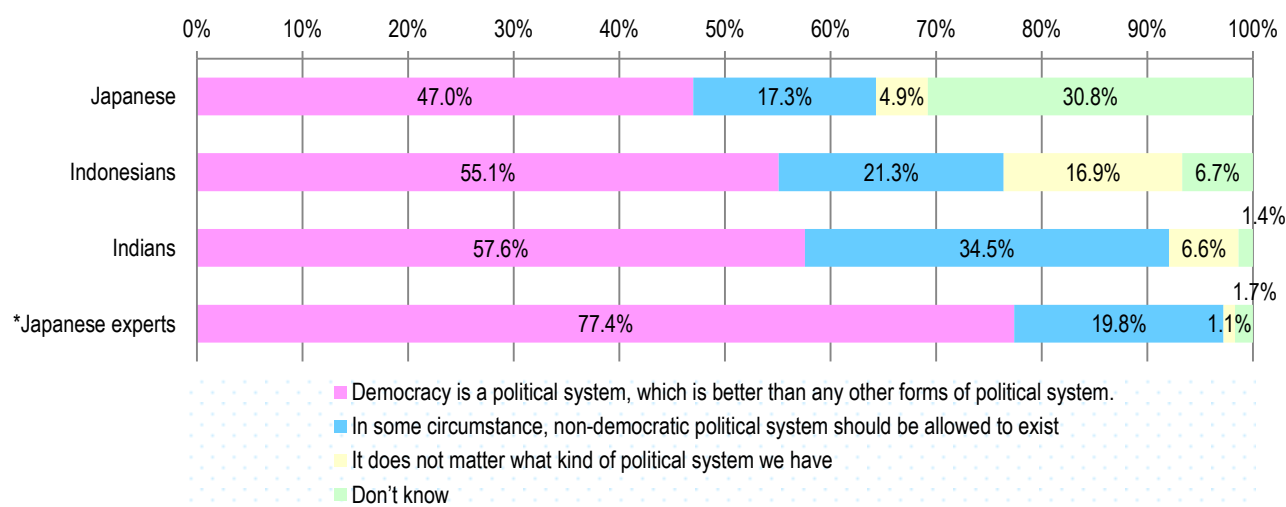


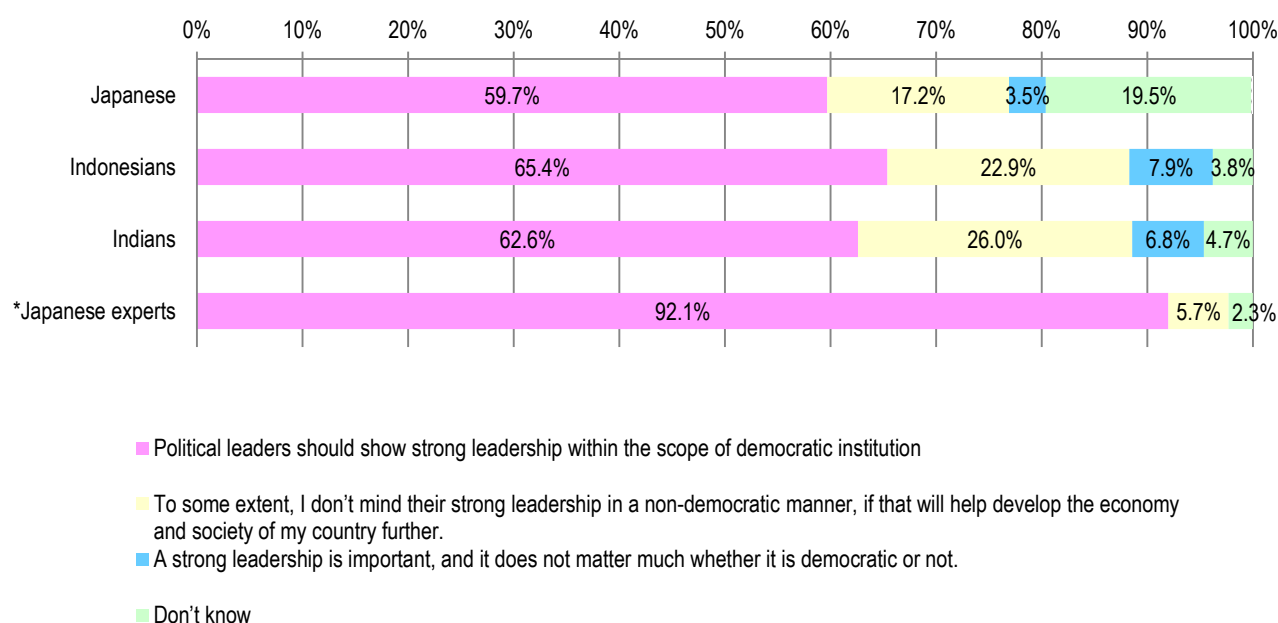
Fig 4-13: View about democracy



In the face of globalization and increasing instability of the international order, there is a tendency in people to seek strong political leaders. The survey asked respondents' perceptions on **political leadership in their respective countries**. Pollees who responded that "political leaders should show strong leadership within the scope of democratic institution" in Japan, Indonesia, and India accounted

for 59.7 percent, 65.4 percent, and 62.6 percent, respectively. On the other hand, there were also around 20 percent of respondents in each of the three countries who replied that "to some extent, I don't mind their strong leadership in a non-democratic manner, if that will help develop the economy and society of my country further" (Fig. 4-14).

Fig 4-14: Political leadership



More than half of the respondents in India and Indonesia expected more countries in Asia and other parts of the world would adopt democracy as a political system in the future, but close to half of the respondents in Japan thought that the number of democratic countries would stay more or less the same (Fig. 4-15).

The joint poll sought views on **the future role of the United States in the world**. In India, 63.7 percent think that the United States should continue to engage itself in, and yield influence on, affairs in Asia

and the rest of the world, as a dominant power. In Japan, the largest number of respondents, at 38.9 percent, feel that the United States, whose role in the world has been excessive, should limit its engagement to a supplementary level by leaving the settlement of regional issues and problems to the discretion of countries in respective regions. In Indonesia, the largest number of respondents, at 38.7 percent, were of the view that the United States should refrain from engaging in regional affairs (Fig. 4-16).

Fig 4-15: Will democracy expand to other countries in the world?

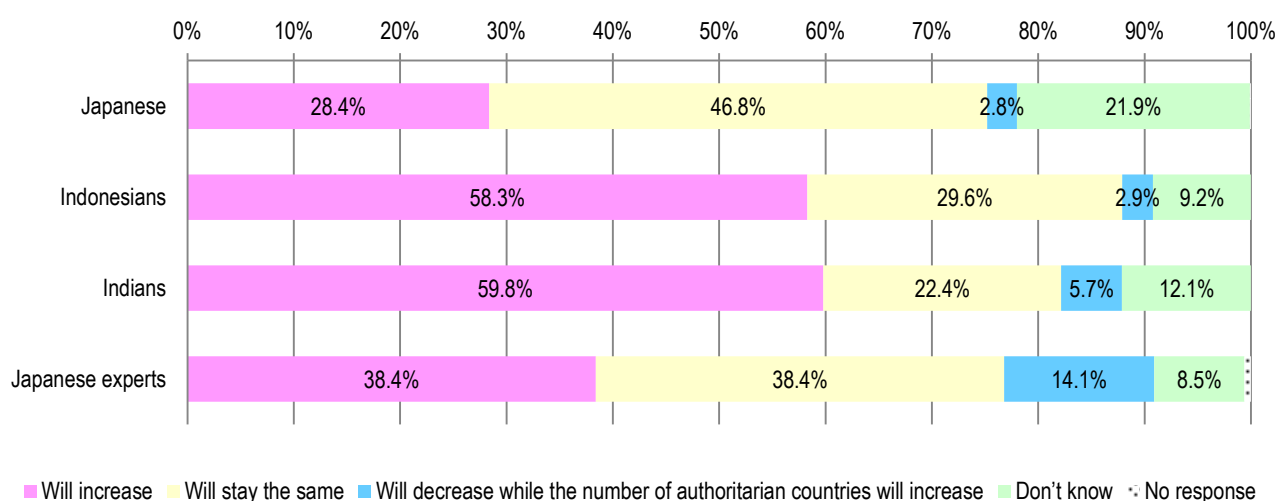
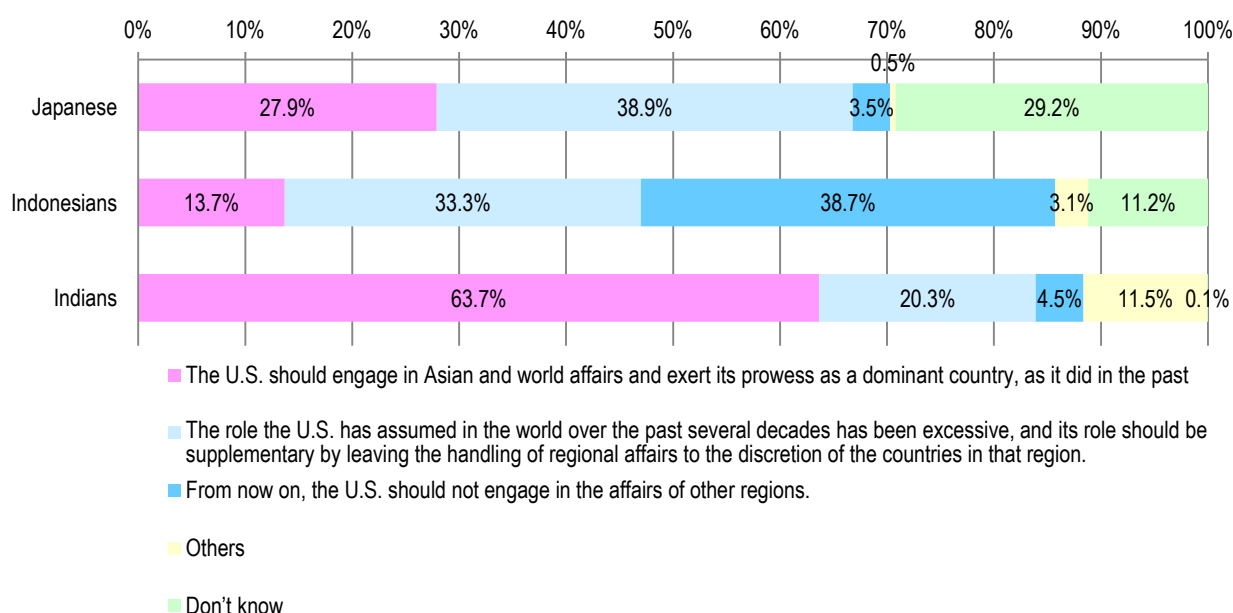


Fig 4-16: The role of the United States



Perception of Japanese experts on democracy

The Genron NPO also conducted an expert survey in Japan using the same set of questions on democracy. 177 experts responded to the survey from among 3,000 intellectuals, journalists, government officials, and business leaders who regularly participate in the discussions and activities of The Genron NPO. The survey of experts in Japan was conducted in August 2016.

Experts say democracy is not functioning in Japan

Results of the survey showed that more than half of the experts, 53.7 percent, were “pessimistic” about the future of the country (including those who were “rather pessimistic”), which were higher than the number of respondents in the public survey who replied in the negative (39.8 percent). Only 20.7

percent were “optimistic” about the future of the country (including those who were “rather optimistic”).

The reason cited the most was that “politics is tilting towards populism, and political leaders and political parties are incapable of solving domestic and international problems” (36.4 percent) (Fig. 4-17).

Also, 67.4 percent believed that “democracy is not functioning well in Japan” (including those who said “it is relatively not doing so”). The reasons cited by more than 40 percent of the respondents were “election win is the primary concern and politics is not squarely facing their tasks” (44.2 percent) and “inability of journalism (or media organizations) to serve as a watchdog of politics and a provider of venues for sound debate” (40.7 percent) (Fig. 4-18).

Fig 4-17: Reasons behind the pessimistic view –Japanese and Japanese experts-

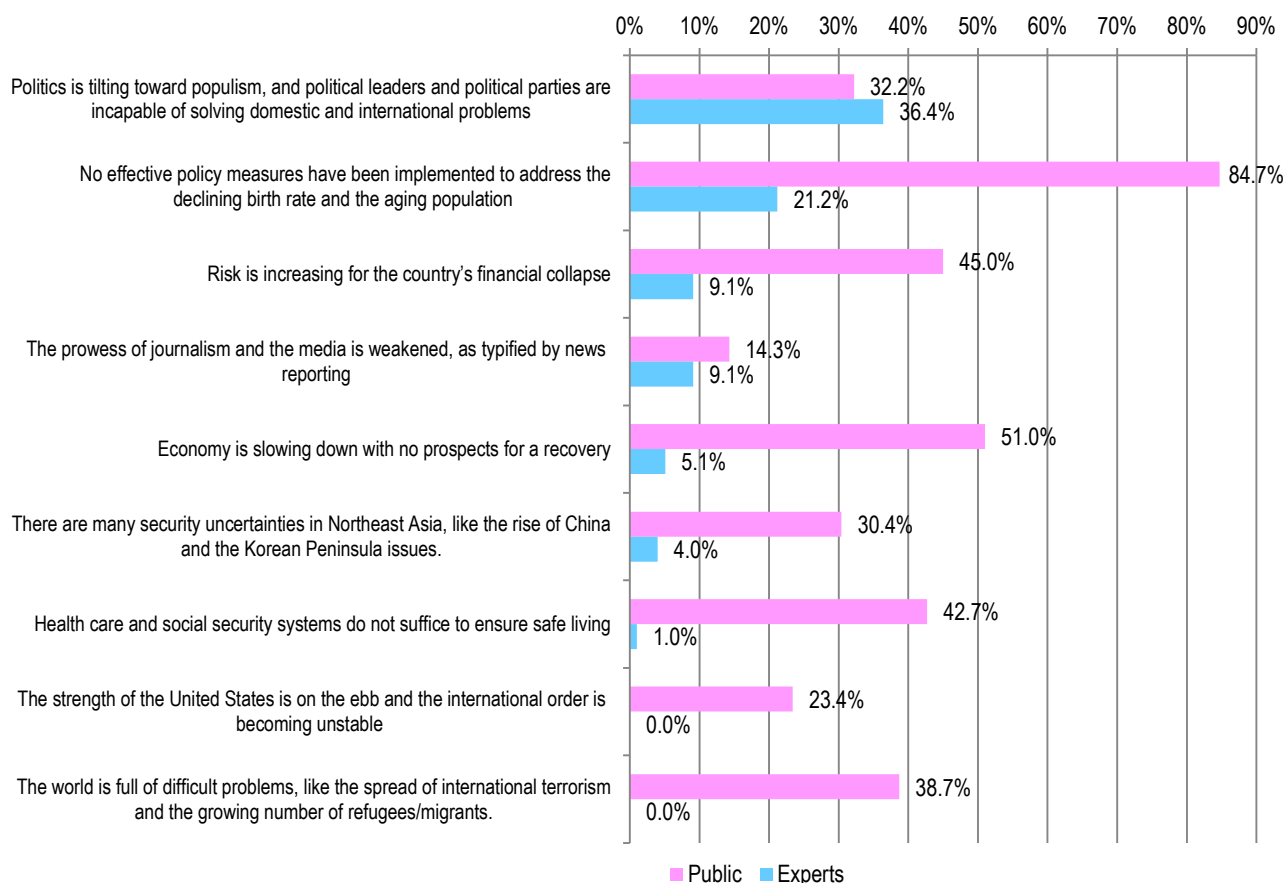
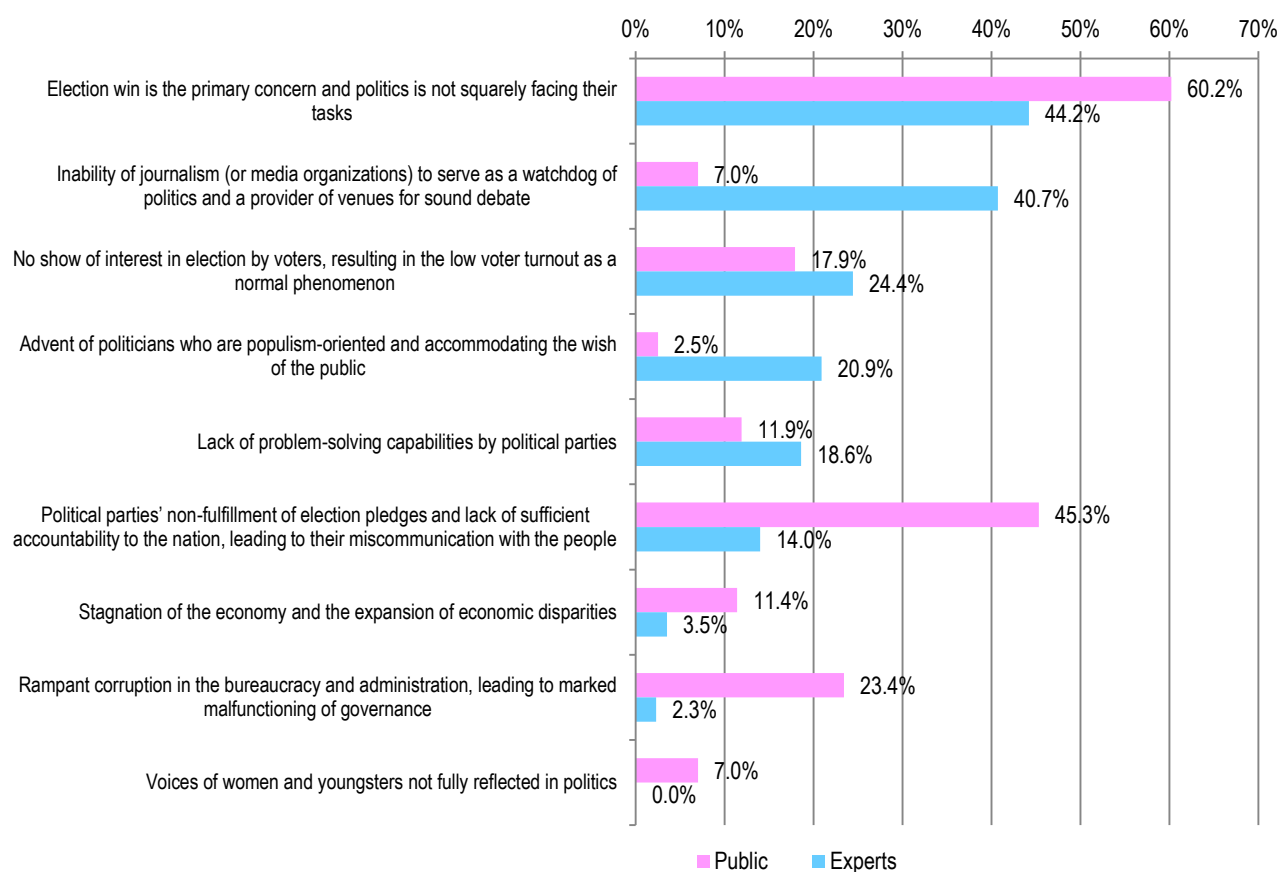


Fig 4-18: Reasons behind democracy not functioning –Japanese and Japanese experts-



Majority of experts believe democracy has retreated in the past ten years

The respondents who feel that democracy has retreated in the last ten years made up 56.5 percent of all experts surveyed (including those who replied “it has more or less retreated”).

As for reasons democracy is in retreat, more than half said “democracy has not sufficiently dealt with the issue of widening economic disparity accentuated by globalization that depends too heavily on the financial industry” (51.4 percent), 32.8 percent mentioned “instability of leadership in the world’s advanced democracies has resulted in shoring up support for political parties that exploit anxiety felt by citizens in those countries,” and 31.1 percent replied that “economic instability has

weakened democracy and the foundation for development of civil society.”

On the growing support for populism in democratic countries, 34.5 percent think “it is a manifestation of people’s anxiety and an expression of people’s mind” and 27.1 percent believe “it represents a crisis for democracy.”

As for the future of democracy, 40.1 percent are of the view that “with no other political system to replace democracy, democracy will survive even with difficulties” and 29.4 percent said “democracy will progress despite twists and turns.” Trust in democracy among experts in Japan remains strong. Only 11.9 percent felt that “eventually there will come a time when the validity of democracy will be questioned.”

Survey Methods

	Japanese Public Opinion Poll	South Korean Public Opinion Poll	Chinese Public Opinion Poll
Conducted by	①②The Genron NPO	East Asia Institute	①Horizon Research Consultancy Group ②China International Publishing Group
Survey area	①②Japan	South Korea	①②China (Urban)
Target population	①②18 years of age or older	19 years of age or older	①②18 years of age or older
Sampling method	①②Quota sampling: The survey was fielded in 50 regions of Japan, with 20 samples from each region collected based on a quota sampling method at the individual level	Quota sampling based on region, gender, and age	①②PPS(Probability-to-proportional-to-size) sampling
Fielding method	①②Placement Method	Face-to-face interview	①②Face-to-face interview
Fielding period	①June 18-July 3, 2016 ②August 20-September 4, 2016	June 16-July 5, 2016	①September 5-13, 2016 ②August 13-24, 2016
Sample size	①②1000 samples	1010 samples	①1520 samples ②1587 samples

	Indonesian Public Opinion Poll	Indian Public Opinion Poll	Japanese Expert Opinion Survey
Conducted by	Centre for Strategic and International Studies	Observer Research Foundation	The Genron NPO
Survey area	Indonesia	India (Urban)	Japan
Target population	18 years of age or older	19 years of age or older	Approximately 2000 Experts (business leaders, academics, journalists and government officials) registered with The Genron NPO
Sampling method	Multistage random sampling in all 34 regions of Indonesia	Quota sampling based on gender, and age at the individual level using the 2011 senses. 200 samples from Metros, 300 samples from Tier I/Tier II cities, 500 samples from towns	
Fielding method	Face-to-face interview	Email survey and online web portal survey	Online survey
Fielding period	August 8-14, 2016	June 24-July 15, 2016	July 24 – August 16, 2016
Sample size	1000 samples each	1032 samples	177 samples

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