

UNESCO Global Convention and establishment of an NIC in Japan

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Sub-theme 4

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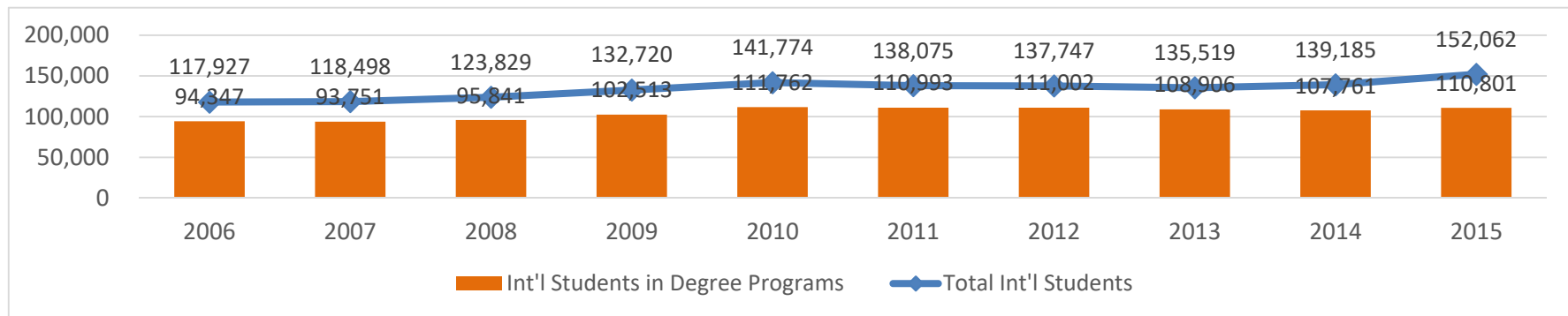
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Agenda

- Background: International student mobility and UNESCO Global Convention
- Research: Domestic and international survey on NIC-feasibility
- Findings: Needs of, and options for NIC
- Conclusion and suggestions

Background

Trends in number of international students in Japanese higher education



Reference:

http://www.jasso.go.jp/about/statistics/intl_student/data2015.html (last retrieved Jan. 12, 2017)
among others.

International students made up 3.4% of entire undergraduate enrollment, as of 2017.

2016-2017 annual growth rate is 10.1%.

- Push factor: Economic development in neighboring countries.
- Pull factor: Governmental initiatives in Japan to admit more international students through various competitive funds to institutions.

Regional Conventions on the Recognition of Studies initiated by UNESCO

Asia-Pacific	1983 Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific
	2011 Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education ★
African States	1981 Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in the African States
	2014 Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States
Europe Region	1979 Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees concerning Higher Education in the States belonging to the Europe Region
	1997 Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region
Arab States	1978 Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab States
Mediterranean Region	1976 Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab and European States Bordering on the Mediterranean
Latin America and the Caribbean	1974 Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean

Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education, 2011

Article VIII.1

Each Party shall provide adequate information on any institution belonging to its higher education system, and on its quality assurance system, with a view to enabling the competent recognition authorities of the other Parties to ascertain whether the quality of the qualifications issued by these institutions justifies recognition in the Party in which recognition is sought. This includes:

- (a) a description of its higher education system;
- (b) an overview of the different types of higher education institutions belonging to its higher education system, and of the typical characteristics of each type of institution;
- (c) a list of recognised and/or accredited higher education institutions (public and private) belonging to its higher education system, indicating their powers to award different types of qualifications and the requirements for gaining access to each type of institution and programme;
- (d) an explanation of quality assurance mechanisms; and
- (e) a list of educational institutions located outside its territory which the Party considers as belonging to its education system.

Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education, 2011

Article VIII.2

Each Party shall provide relevant, accurate and up-to-date information in order to facilitate the recognition of qualifications in higher education by:

- (a) facilitating access to authoritative and accurate information on its higher education system and qualifications;
- (b) facilitating access to information on the higher education systems and qualifications of the other Parties; and
- (c) giving advice or information on recognition matters and assessment of qualifications, in accordance with national laws and regulations.

Article VIII.3

Each Party shall take adequate measures for the development and maintenance of a national information centre that will provide higher education information. The form of the national information centre could vary.

Article VIII.4

The Parties shall promote, through their national information centres or otherwise, the use of the:

- (a) “UNESCO Diploma Supplement” or any other comparable qualification supplement; and
- (b) the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education and/or any comparable document produced by the Parties’ respective higher education institutions, subject to their respective national laws and regulations.

Source: UNESCO (2011)

Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education, 2011

The Convention became effective in February 2018 after five states ratified it.

State	Date of deposit of instrument (=ratification)
Australia	17/07/2014
China	17/07/2014
New Zealand	01/08/2016
Japan	06/12/2017
Republic of Korea	19/12/2017
Holy See	18/07/2018

[Reference]

<http://www.unesco.org/eri/la/convention.asp?KO=48975&language=F> (last retrieved January 27, 2019)

Project to assess needs for Foreign Credential Evaluation and NIC

- A research project by NIAD-QE (*nee*, NIAD-UE) sponsored by MEXT
 - Research on Development of an Appropriate Information-Provision System for Domestic and Foreign HEIs to Support Student Mobility, 2013~2015
- Components
 - National survey to determine the need for the Foreign Credential Evaluation (FCE)
 - International survey to determine needs of National Information Center (NIC)
 - Assessment of needs for a unified institution with FCE and NIC functions
- Final report is available at http://www.niad.ac.jp/n_kokusai/publish/rsc (in Japanese)
- Comprehensive report based on the final report is available at <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000266197> (in English)

Research
-Domestic survey-

Outline of the Survey

- Online survey implemented from February 26 through April 15, 2014
- Focuses on academic and administrative staffs in charge of international admissions at all Japanese 4-year institutions: Undergraduate and graduate

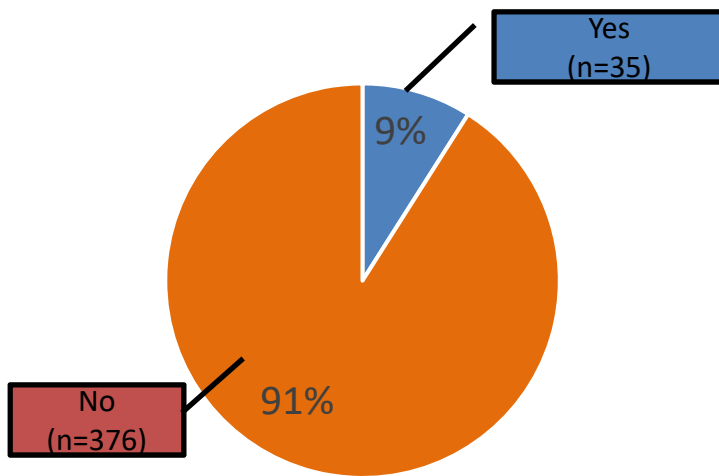
Type of Survey by Scope	n
I A: Evaluation of foreign diplomas@undergrad	484
I B: Evaluation of foreign diplomas@graduate	468
II A: Recognition of foreign credits@undergrad	469
II B: Recognition of foreign credits@graduate	425

Type of Respondents	IA		IB	
Admin.	403	(83%)	381	(81%)
Academic	81	(17%)	87	(19%)
Total	484	(100%)	468	(100%)

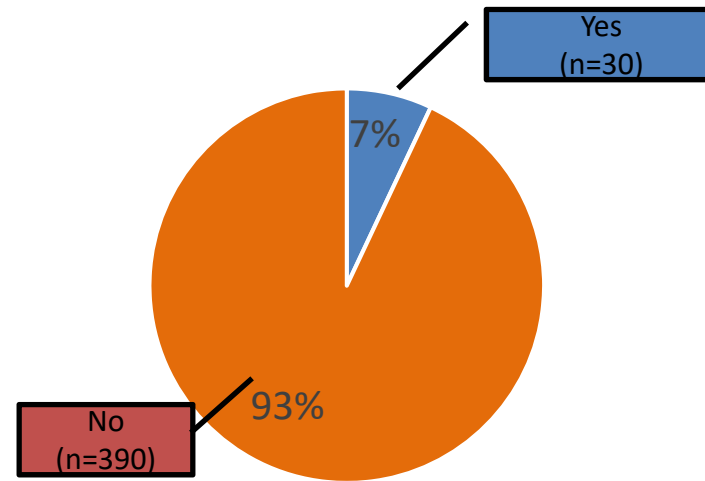
Type of Respondents	IIA		IIB	
Admin.	379	(81%)	347	(82%)
Academic	90	(19%)	78	(18%)
Total	469	(100%)	425	(100%)

Question:

Have you ever questioned the authenticity of documents submitted by prospective international students?



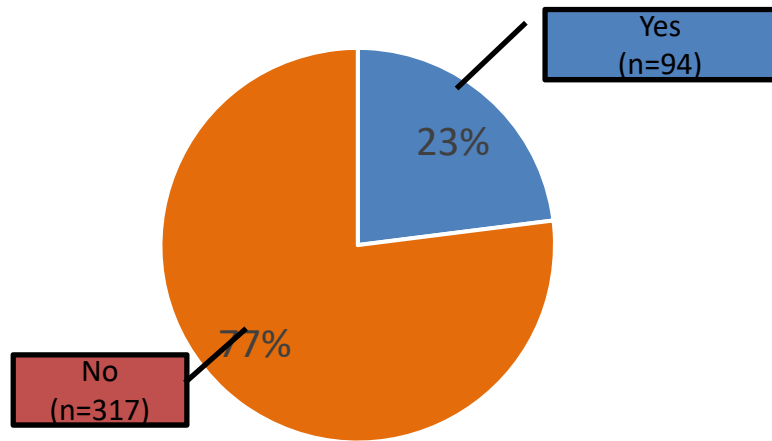
undergraduate



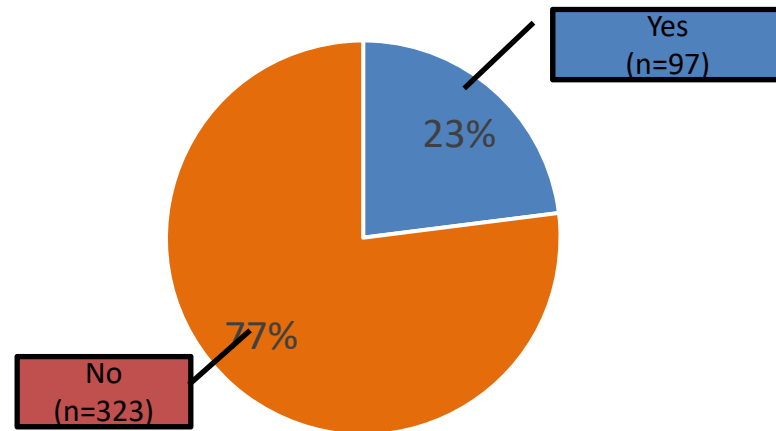
graduate

Question:

Is there a specific process in your office to determine the authenticity of submitted documents?



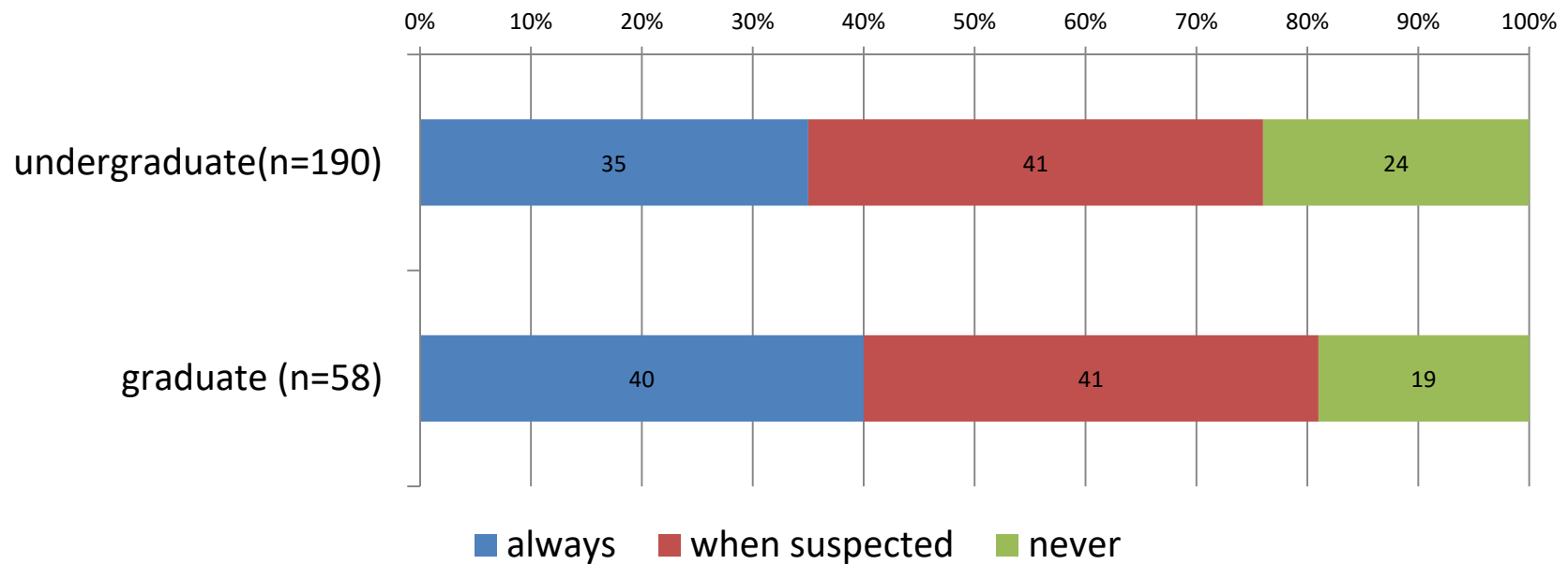
undergraduate



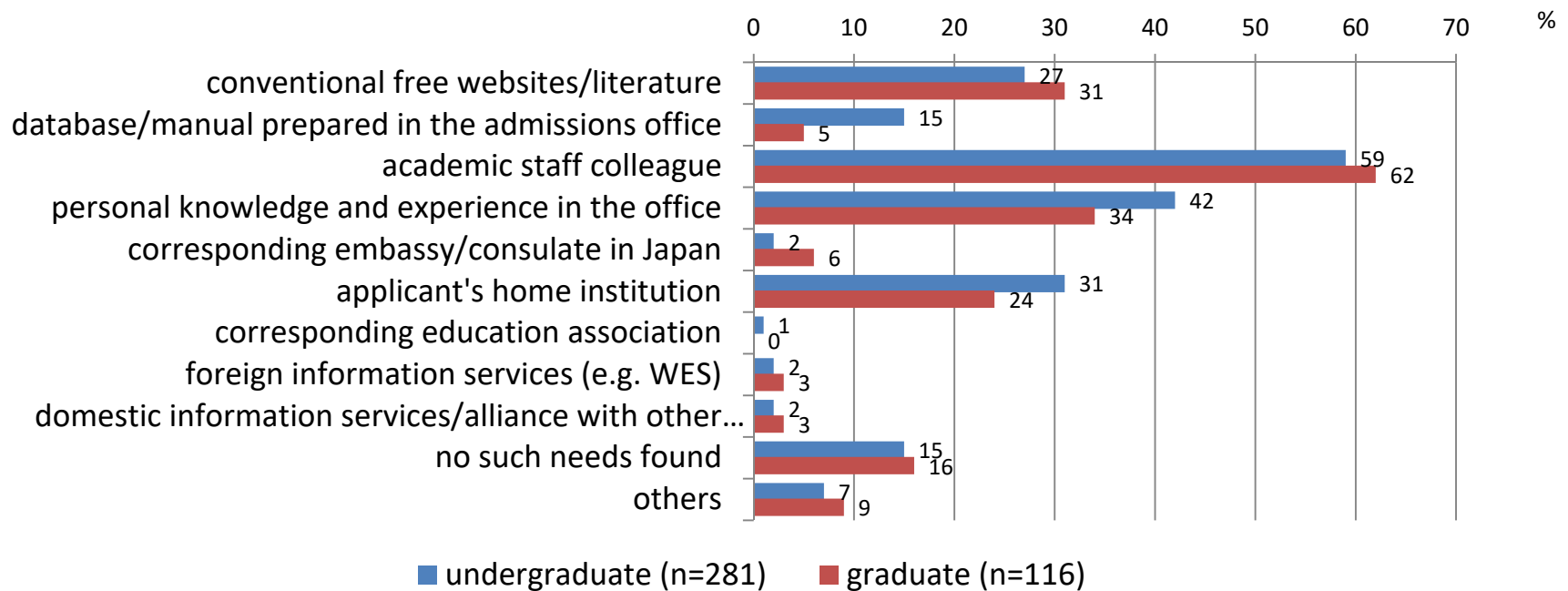
graduate

Question:

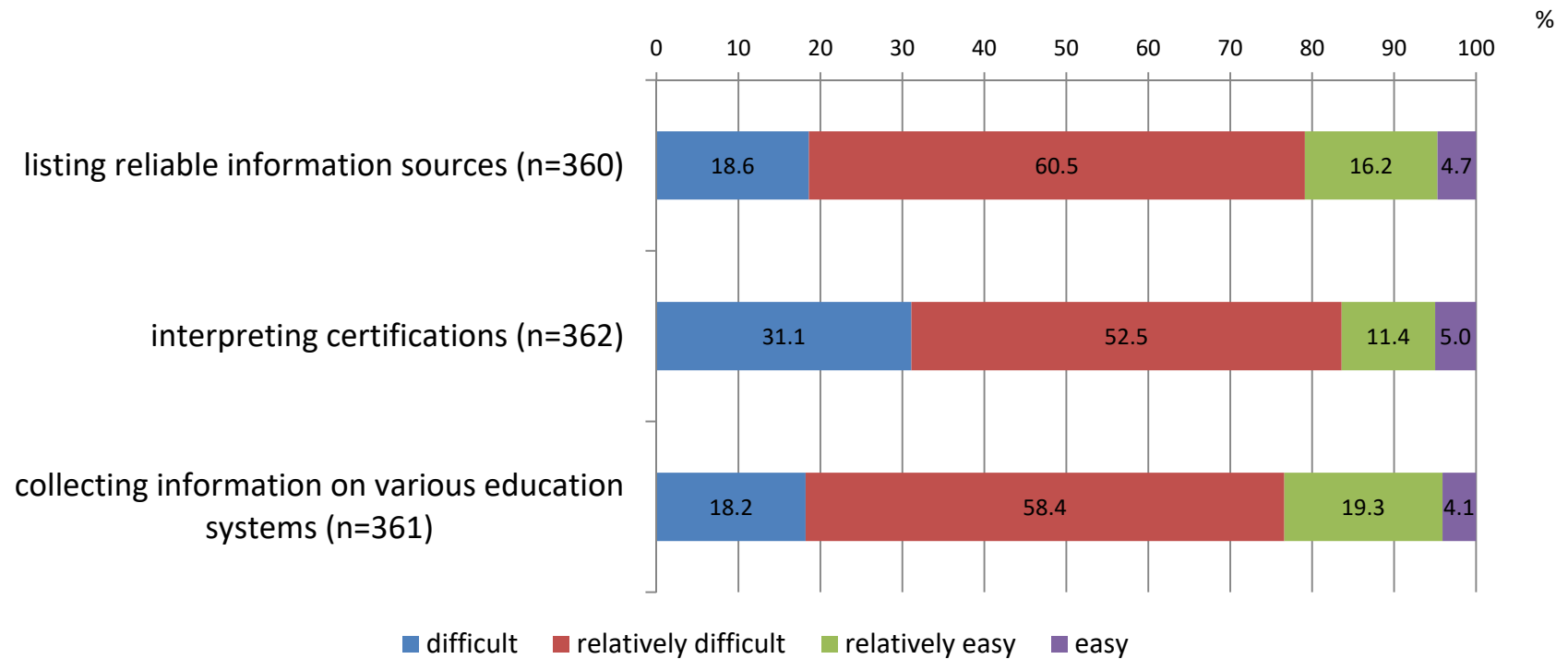
How often do you verify accreditation status of an applicant's home institution without institutional credit-transfer contract?



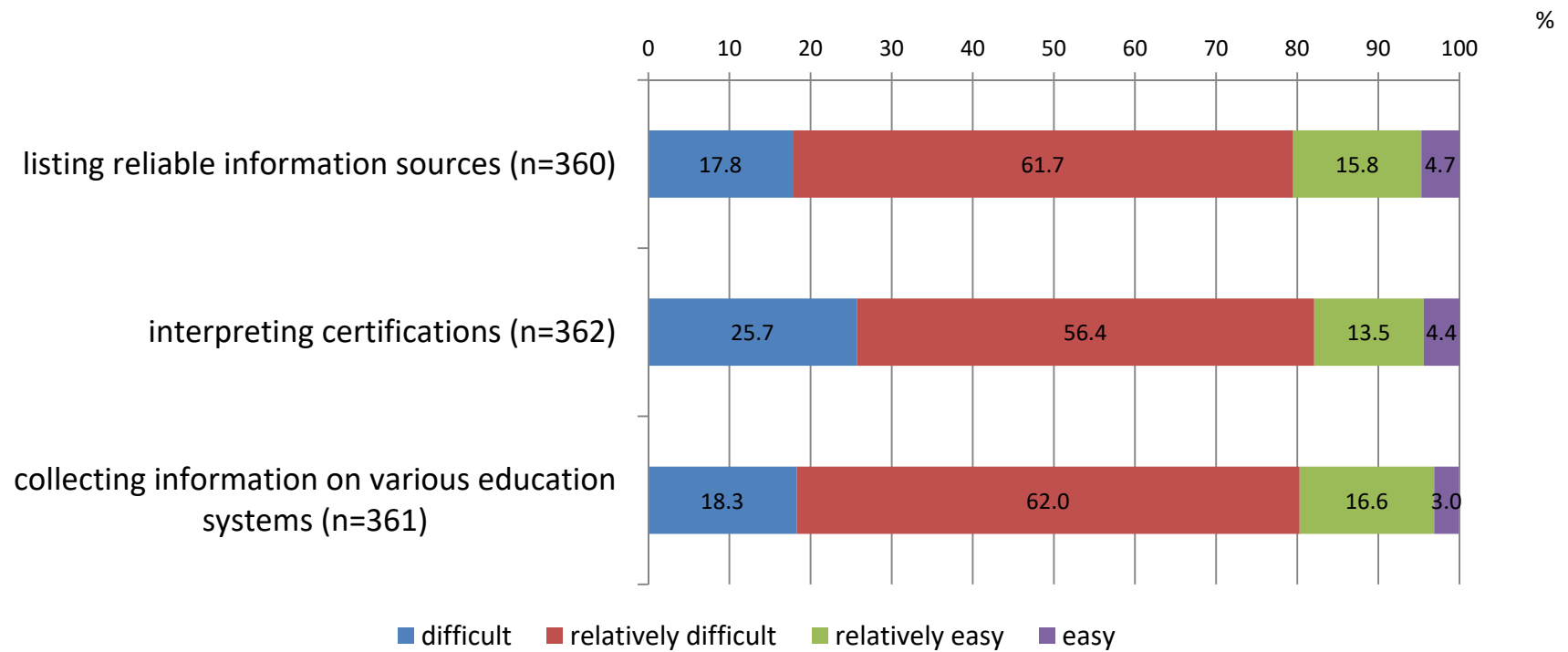
Question:
 Which sources of information do you use to assess applicants' qualifications? (multiple choice)



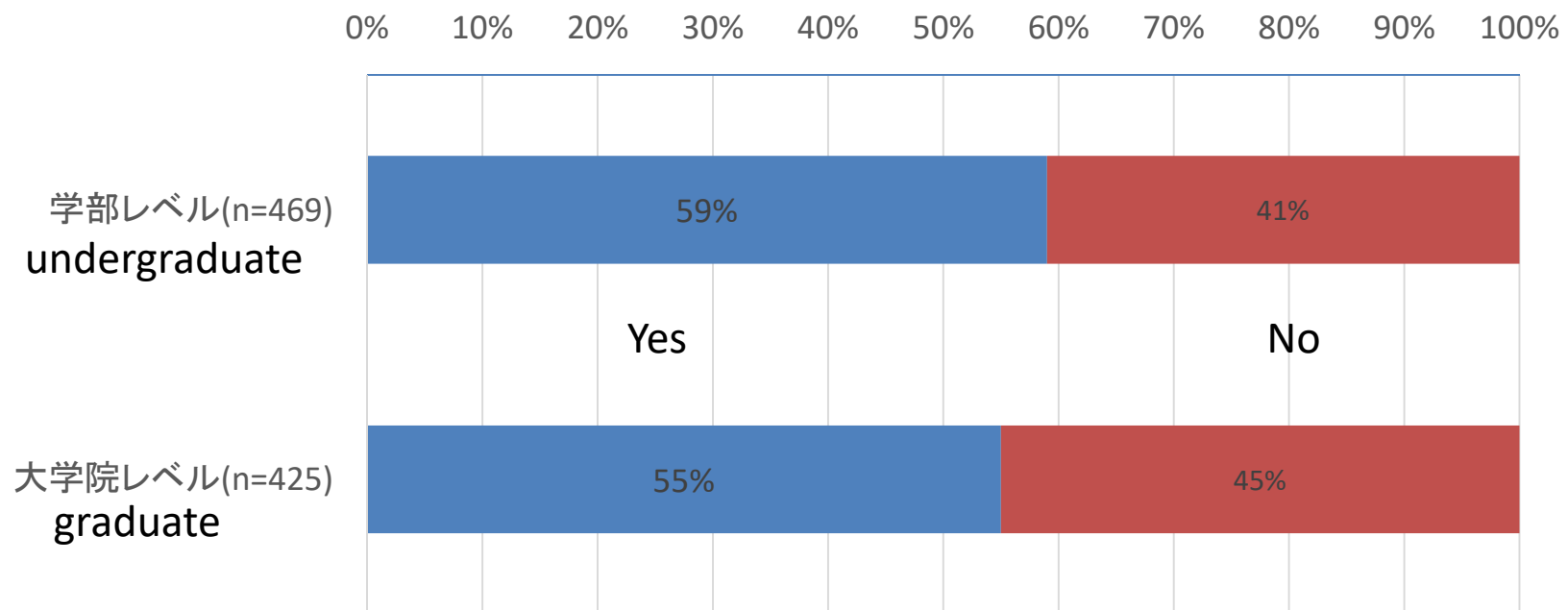
Question:
How difficult do you find each activity of FCE? (undergraduate)



Question:
How difficult do you find each activity of FCE? (graduate)



Question:
Have you ever felt a need for FCE services in Japan?



Research

-International survey-

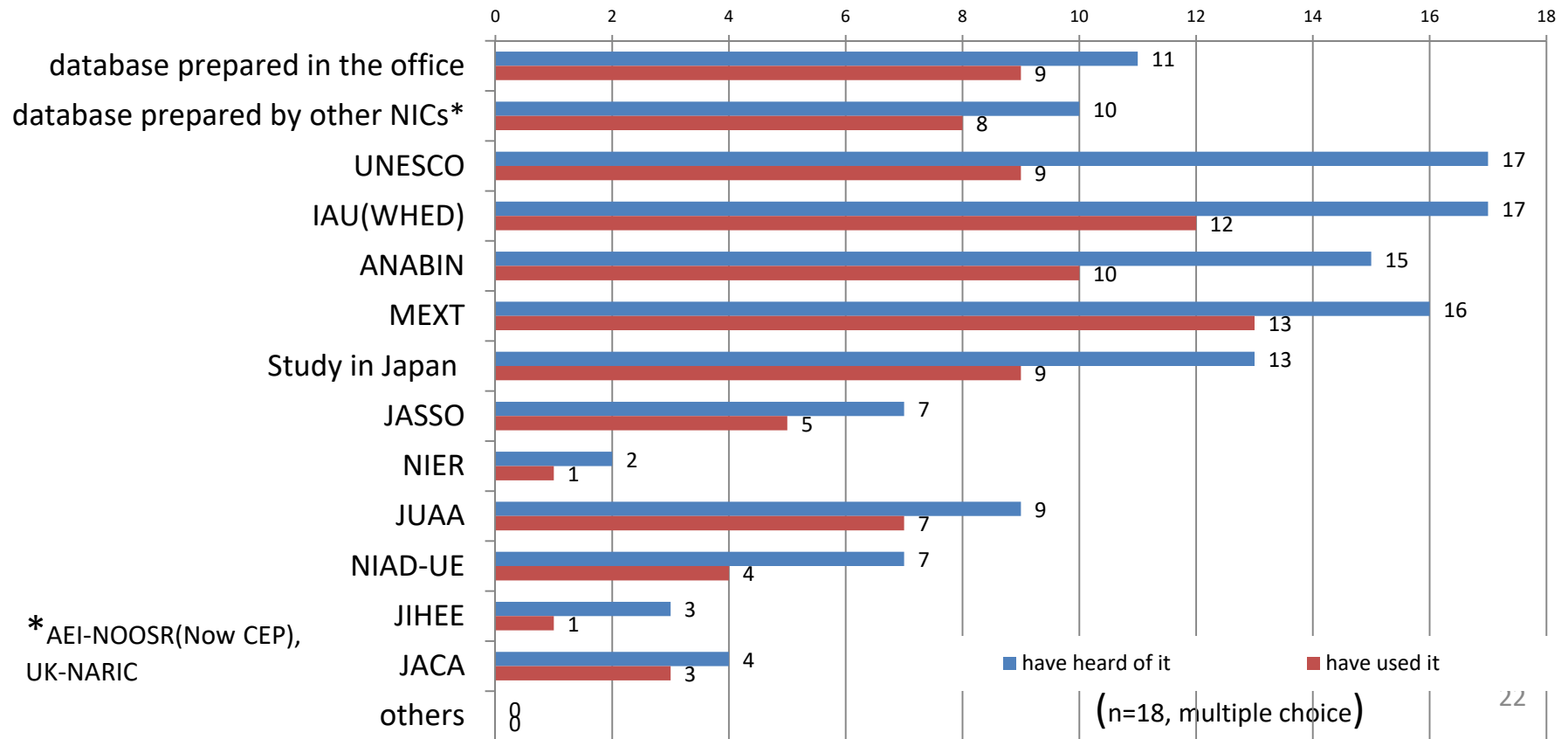
Outline of the Survey

- Online survey implemented from October 24 through November 28, 2014
- Focusing on 57 NICs in states that had ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention (ENIC/NARICs)
- 24 NICs responded:
 - Armenia, Australia, Belgium(French community), Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, San Marino, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, Ukraine and one unnamed state
- Of these, 18 NICs have dealt with Japanese credentials

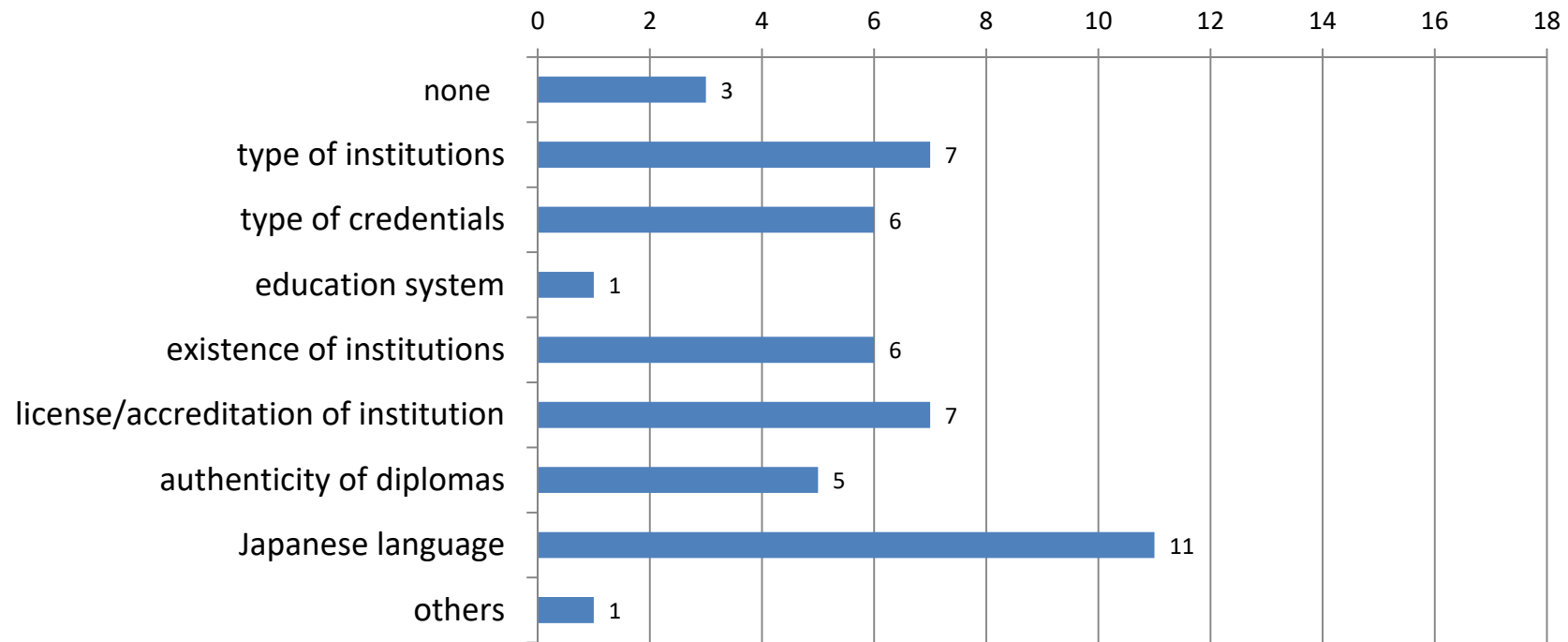
Question:
How often do you deal with Japanese credentials?

Annually	States
100+ times	UK, New Zealand
50-99	Germany
20-49	Australia
10-19	Norway, Denmark
2-9	Estonia, Finland, Greece, Poland, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Unnamed
1	Croatia, Ireland, Slovenia, Belgium(French community)

Question:
Which information sources do you rely on in assessing Japanese credentials? Name all.



Question:
Which aspects do you find difficult in assessing Japanese credentials?



(n=18, multiple choice)

For overseas NIC:

Examples of aspects found to be difficult in assessing Japanese credentials;

- The difference between current Tanki-Daigakushi(短期大学士) and Associate Degree(準学士), awarded through 2005, is not clear.
- Transcripts don't specify whether courses are of "theory" or "practice."
- Documents in Japanese and English do not always correspond.
- Admission criteria for different programs are not clear.

Findings: Needs of, and options for NIC

Based on the survey results

- Japanese higher education institutions have not been equipped with a standard process to examine the authenticity of international credentials.
- The combination of language difference and historical development of Japanese education system contributes to the difficulty of interpretation of Japanese credentials.

Conclusion and suggestions

Based on domestic survey results

- Evaluations of authenticity of foreign credentials are performed relying on skills and knowledge of individual admission officers, which are not always sufficient.
 - More information on authenticity of international credentials is needed to reduce inconsistent treatment of international qualifications.
 - NIC needs to be equipped with functions for training and guidance.

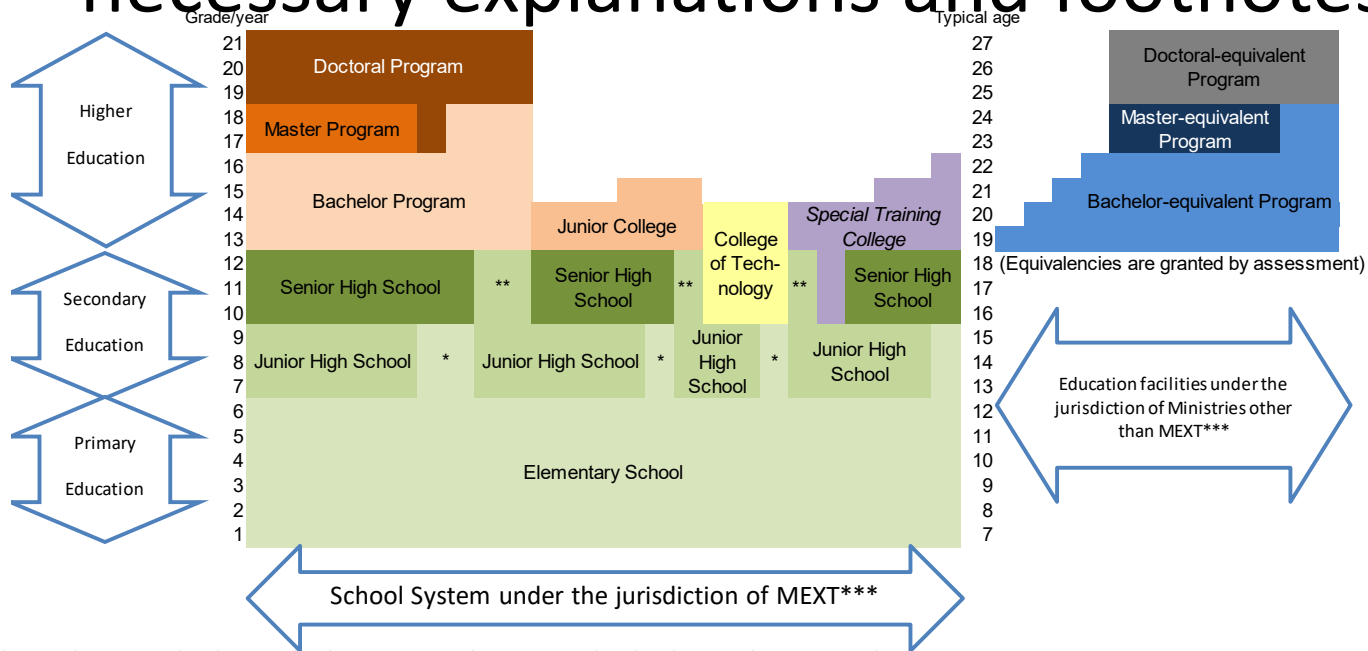
Based on international survey results

- Information on Japanese credentials can be provided more efficiently.
 - Information provision should be two-layered: a simple white list, and a detailed explanation of institutions and the diploma system, including historical development.
 - Development of document frameworks that clarify the significance of individual credentials for common use by higher education institutions in Japan.
 - Proficiency of Foreign Credential Evaluation is (almost) all about footnotes.

Challenges?

- An NIC will be established in accordance with the Tokyo convention.
 - Can it boost potential information demand domestically?
 - Can it accommodate existing information internationally?
 - Can it encourage further improvements in information reservation and provision to assist all lifelong learners?

Model of Japanese education system with necessary explanations and footnotes!



* Compulsory Education Schools provide Elementary and a Junior High School curricula successively.

** Secondary Education Schools provide Junior and Senior High School curricula successively.

*** MEXT: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology is in charge of school system that leads to academic degrees; Along with universities, NIAD-QE also have rights to confer degrees under the jurisdiction of MEXT

You can complete bachelor's program in 3 years if your performance has been recognized to be excellent enough to be admitted to a master's program.

Outside the school system under the jurisdiction of MEXT, there are various kinds of education programs that maybe deemed to be equivalent to universities.

Thank you very much for your close attention.