



Japan's Friendship Ties Program “MIRAI” Completion Report

(Budget of Fiscal 2025)

1. Background and Purpose

“Japan's Friendship Ties Programs”, the international exchange programs promoted by the Japanese Government, aim to encourage a deeper understanding of Japan's politics, economy, society, culture, history, and diplomatic policy, and to enhance an increase of support for Japan by inviting/dispatching future leaders (including online exchange and follow-up programs) in the development of bilateral and regional relations between Japan and the various nations and regions of the Asia-Pacific, North America, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean, along with in sharing information in the world. Participants of online exchange and invitation/dispatching programs are expected to share proactively Japan's foreign policies and charms of Japan through social media with the aims to strengthen information dissemination to the world and to solidify Japan's diplomatic foundation. “Japan's Friendship Ties Programs” have been launched and promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan since 2015. The European regional component of this exchange program is called “MIRAI”¹ with a feature of intellectual exchange between promising young leaders from Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus, and Japanese students and researchers of the same generation and experts.

(1) Inbound Program

In FY2025, the in-person invitation program was implemented in four groups categorized by theme and region, as outlined below.

Group Theme	Date	# of Participant
Group 1 Peacebuilding	Feb 13 – Feb 19, 2026	14 (Including 1 chaperone from RYCO)
Group 2 Diplomacy and Security Policy	Jan 14 – Jan 20, 2026	25
Group 3 SDGs Business and Innovation	Jan 14 – Jan 20, 2026	18
Group 4 Rule of Law	Jan 13 – Jan 19, 2026	12
Total		69

A Participating Countries, Number of Participants, and Visit Destinations

¹ MIRAI (Mutual-understanding, Intellectual Relations and Academic Exchange Initiative)

I Executive Summary 1. Background and Purpose

Group 1: Peacebuilding

Selected countries: Six Western Balkan countries, 14 participants

No.	Country	Number of participants	No.	Country	Number of participants
1	Albania (Including RYCO escort)*	3	4	Montenegro	1
2	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3	5	North Macedonia	2
3	Kosovo	2	6	Serbia	3
Total					14

(Visit locations: Tokyo and Hiroshima)

*Western Balkans Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO)

Group 2: Diplomacy and Security Policy

Selected countries: 22 European countries (22 nationalities), 25 participants

No.	Country	Number of participants	No.	Country	Number of participants
1	Andorra	1	12	Latvia	1
2	Austria	1	13	Lithuania	1
3	Belarus	1	14	Netherlands	2
4	Czech Republic	1	15	Norway	1
5	Estonia	1	16	Poland	1
6	Finland	1	17	Portugal	1
7	France	1	18	Romania	1
8	Germany	2	19	Slovenia	1
9	Hungary	1	20	Spain	1
10	Iceland	1	21	Sweden	1
11	Italy	2	22	United Kingdom	1
Total					25

(Visit locations: Tokyo and Yamanashi)

Group 3: SDGs Business and Innovation

Selected countries: 18 European countries (17 nationalities), 18 participants

No.	Country	Number of participants	No.	Country	Number of participants
1	Belgium	1	10	Moldova	1

I Executive Summary 1. Background and Purpose

2	Bulgaria	1	11	Monaco	1
3	Croatia	1	12	Norway	1
4	Cyprus	1	13	San Marino	1
5	Denmark	1	14	Slovakia	1
6	France	1	15	Spain	1
7	Greece	1	16	Switzerland	1
8	Ireland	1	17	Ukraine	1
9	Malta	1	18	United Kingdom	1
Total					18

(Visit locations: Tokyo, Kanagawa, and Yamanashi)

Group 4: Rule of Law

Selected countries: 8 countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus (8 nationalities), 12 participants

No.	Country	Number of participants	No.	Country	Number of participants
1	Armenia	2	5	Kyrgyz Republic	2
2	Azerbaijan	1	6	Tajikistan	1
3	Georgia	2	7	Turkmenistan	1
4	Kazakhstan	2	8	Uzbekistan	1
Total					12

(Visit locations: Tokyo and Yamanashi)

(2) Follow-up Program (Alumni Program : Online Program)

The 2025 Follow-up Program was implemented within the following three frameworks to promote their support for Japan and facilitate the expansion of networks between alumni and Japan as well as among the alumni themselves.

Theme	Number of implementations	# of Participant
MIRAI2025 Alumni Meeting with Japanese Organizations with Global Reach	1 time	28
MIRAI 2025 Follow-Up Program Online Visiting Japan Program	2 times	44
MIRAI2025 Opinion Exchange Meeting between Japan's Experts and MIRAI Alumni on MIRAI Program	1 time	22
Total	4 times	94

2. Achievements

(1) Pre-exchange Program

The following pre-exchange programs were implemented online for all participants in order to provide prior learning before in-person visits and to build cross-national networks between Japan and participating countries.

A Video distribution

An overview of the Japan's Friendship Ties Program "MIRAI", including its objectives and mission, was explained and shared in a video for MIRAI participants.

B Lecture on Understanding of Japan

This lecture was conducted online on understanding of Japan and exchange among participants for the purpose of prior learning before the visit to Japan and building a network among participants.

C Pre-departure Orientation

Two weeks prior to the visit to Japan, the necessary information for the trip was explained online.

(2) Inbound Program (In-person): Main Program

For the selection was conducted on the basis of transparency and fairness at overseas diplomatic missions of the countries and RYCO (Regional Youth Cooperation Office), and eventually, a total of 69 participants of undergraduate/graduate students and young professionals.

The visiting Japan program is 8 days and 6 nights program, participants attended relevant lectures and visited places in Japan to learn about initiatives in Japan by the theme through observations, exchanges, discussions, and cultural experiences.

At the university that they visited, participants conducted intellectual exchanges with the Japanese students of the same generation to build a network among the future leaders from Europe and Japan. Participants are expected to deepen their understanding of Japan through participation of the program, presentation of an action plan at the reporting session (presentation of their actions after return home) and share proactively information on Japan's charms after their return home through social media.

Group 1 (Peacebuilding)

The Western Balkans Youth Cooperation Organization (RYCO) cooperated in the selection of participants for this program, which targeted six countries in the Western Balkans. 13 undergraduate and graduate students studying peacebuilding who were approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were invited, as well as one supervisor from RYCO to accompany them.

Participants exchanged with Japanese students actively under the hosting of Professor Komatsu Taro, Dept. of Education, Faculty of Human Sciences at Sophia University in Tokyo. At JICA, participants learned about Japan's cooperation in the Western Balkan region and exchanged opinions with JICA officers. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the delegation paid a courtesy visit to Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs ERI Arfiya and attended a lecture on Japan's foreign policy. In Hiroshima, participants deepened their understanding of tragedy of the war and importance of peace at the atomic bomb related facilities guided by the second generation of atomic bomb survivors. They also experienced Japanese culture through Shakushi (Rice Scoop) Making and visit to historical sites such as Miyajima and Itsukushima Shrine.

On the final day, this group reported the program result. In the reporting session, the JICE certificate of completion was awarded to the participants.

Group 2 (Diplomacy and Security Policy)

This program invited 25 undergraduate/graduate students from 22 European countries, and they attended the lectures delivered by experts, visited related institutions, and exchanged views and opinions in Tokyo.

At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, participants attended a lecture on Japan's national security policy, and at the Ministry of Defense, they attended a lecture on Japan's self-defense policy. Participants also deepened their understanding of Japan through a multifaceted approach, including JICA's efforts in human security, and the situation surrounding Japanese territory and sovereignty. Through a school exchange at Keio University, they listened to a lecture on "The evolution of Japan's foreign and security policy" under the hosting of Professor HOSODA Yuichi, Faculty of Law, and Professor TSURUOKA Michito, Faculty of Policy Management, and had an intellectual exchange through exchanging views with the students of the same generation. In addition, At the Tokyo National Museum, they appreciated cultural assets such as designated national treasures and important cultural properties of Asian Regions and Japan. They walked around Senso-ji Temple and experienced powdered tea in Asakusa.

On the final day, this group along with Group 3 of SDGs Business and Innovation, and Group 4 of Rule

of Law jointly paid a courtesy call on Mr. TAGUCHI Seiichiro, Deputy Director-General / Deputy Assistant Minister, European Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and reported the program result. In the reporting session, the JICE certificate of completion was awarded to the participants.

Group 3 (Economy and Business)

This program invited 18 undergraduate/graduate students from 18 European countries. They visited Tokyo, Kanagawa, and Yamanashi, where they attended lectures by experts, visited related institutions, and exchanged views and opinions.

In Tokyo, they learned about a wide range of initiatives regarding Japan's economy and business through the visit to the Tokyo Stock Exchange, the largest stock exchange in Japan, the exchange of views at start-up companies, and strolling in Asakusa shopping street. They also learned about the activities of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's business support program for domestic and international business and were exposed to the attractiveness of Tokyo as a business city. At the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, we deepened our understanding of the Japanese government's GX (Green Transformation) policy initiatives through lectures and discussions. Through a school exchange at Keio University, participants had an intellectual exchange with students of the same generation under the hosting of Professor KANIE Norichika, Graduate School of Media and Governance, Faculty of Environment and Information Studies, Keio University. In Yamanashi, participants saw the towering Mt. Fuji and Yamanashi Prefectural Fujisan World Heritage Center to receive a lecture on Mt. Fuji, as a World Heritage and were exposed to Japan's nature and culture.

The participants deepened their interest and understanding of Japan in terms of society, policy, history, culture and discussed the attractiveness of Japan and the better future that can be created by cooperation between Japan and the world.

On the final day, participants jointly with Group 2 of Diplomacy and Security Policy, Group 5 of Environment and Green, paid a courtesy call on Mr. TAGUCHI Seiichiro, Deputy Director-General / Deputy Assistant Minister, European Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where they reported the program result. The JICE certificate of completion was awarded to the participants.

Group 4 (Rule of Law)

This program invited 12 undergraduate/graduate students and young professionals from 8 countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus under the theme of "Rule of Law". Participants visited Tokyo and Yamanashi to have exchanges, observations, and cultural experiences including lectures and exchange of opinions.

I . 2. Achievements

In Tokyo, they had a lecture and visited the Supreme Court, facilities of the Ministry of Justice, and a law firm to learn about Japan's legal system. In Tokyo, they had a lecture and visited the Supreme Court, facilities of the Ministry of Justice, and a law firm to learn about Japan's legal system. Through school exchange at Keio University under the hosting of Professor MATSUO Hiroshi, Keio University Law School, Director of Keio Institute for Global Law and Development (KEIGLAD), participants engaged in intellectual exchange with students of the same generation to build a future network between Japan and Central Asia and the Caucasus. They deepened their understanding of Japan in terms of history and culture through experiencing tea ceremony and visiting the historical temple in Asakusa.

On the final day, this group along with Group 2 of Diplomacy and Security Policy and Group 3 of SDGs Business and Innovation jointly paid a courtesy call on Mr. TAGUCHI Seichiro, Deputy Director-General / Deputy Assistant Minister, European Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and reported the program result. In the reporting session, the JICE certificate of completion was awarded to the participants.

(3) Follow-up Programs

Online Alumni Meeting with Japanese Organizations with Global Reach “Reconnecting Japan ”

	Date	Theme	Attendee
1	Dec 19 (Fri), 2025	“Reconnecting Japan” in Cooperation with the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO)	28

Follow-up Online Visiting Japan Program

	Date	Theme	Attendee
1	Dec 11 (Thu), 2025	Online Visiting Japan Program “Japanese Language Lesson”	27
2	Dec 12 (Fri), 2025	Online Visiting Japan Program “School Exchange”	17
		Total	44

Opinion Exchange Meeting between Japan's Experts and MIRAI Alumni on MIRAI

	Date	Theme	Attendee
1	Mar 17 (Tue), 2026	Opinion Exchange Meeting between Japan's Experts and MIRAI Alumni on MIRAI	22

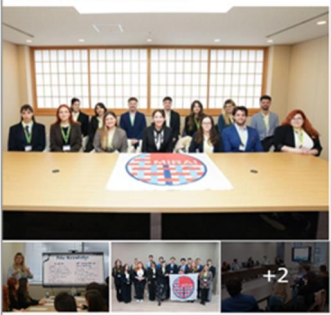
【Presenters】

- A Ms. Aikaterini GEORGARA (Greece, MIRAI 2024 Visiting Japan Program)
- B Mr. Leart AHMETI (North Macedonia, MIRAI 2025 Visiting Japan Program)
- C Ms. Silvia-Diana SCHECHTER (Romania, MIRAI 2024 Visiting Japan Program)

II. Good Practices Selected from Social Media Posts and Media Article

1. Good Practices selected from Social Media Posts

(1) Inbound (Visiting Japan Program)

Dissemination of Social Media	Text
Group1 (Peacebuilding)	
What you won't see much in the photos is the fun we had or the depth of the culture we experienced; at first glance, it may all look quite formal. Yet our cultural exchange in Japan from February 13-19 was truly life-changing. ✨ Experiencing a culture so different from your own, firsthand, shifts your perspective in ways no textbook ever could. We explored the history that shaped the country and witnessed how resilience helped it rise again. Most importantly, we gained a deeper understanding of peacebuilding by experiencing why it matters so profoundly. This is especially significant for me as a youth activist striving towards a better educational system, having in mind how peacebuilding shapes a whole nation. To share what we learned and how we came to understand Japan, luckily, we had the honor of paying a Courtesy Call to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). We also had the opportunity to meet with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) where we were able to learn more about the projects Japan implements in the Western Balkans. 🇯🇵 Grateful for the experience, the lessons, and the people who made it unforgettable. Believe me, it is hard to write everything in one post. But I know and hope that we, as Ambassadors of this program for the six countries of the WB, will be able to shape the "MIRAI" even in a small way for a better tomorrow. 🌟 #MIRAI #sharemymirai #MIRAI2025 	February 25, 2026 (LinkedIn) Graduate Student (North Macedonia) What you won't see much in the photos is the fun we had or the depth of the culture we experienced; at first glance, it may all look quite formal. Yet our cultural exchange in Japan from February 13-19 was truly life-changing. Experiencing a culture so different from your own, firsthand, shifts your perspective in ways no textbook ever could. We explored the history that shaped the country and witnessed how resilience helped it rise again. Most importantly, we gained a deeper understanding of peacebuilding by experiencing why it matters so profoundly. This is especially significant for me as a youth activist striving towards a better educational system, having in mind how peacebuilding shapes a whole nation. To share what we learned and how we came to understand Japan, luckily, we had the honor of paying a Courtesy Call to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). We also had the opportunity to meet with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) where we were able to learn more about the projects Japan implements in the Western Balkans. Grateful for the experience, the lessons, and the people who made it unforgettable. Believe me, it is hard to write everything in one post. But I know and hope that we, as Ambassadors of this program for the six countries of the WB, will be able to shape the "MIRAI" even in a small way for a better tomorrow.

II . 1 Good Practices selected from Social Media Posts
4) Follow-up Program

Group2 (Diplomacy and Security Policy)	
We began our journey at the National Museum of Territory and Sovereignty in Tokyo. We were introduced to Japan's official positions on its territorial issues, including the Northern Territories. Regardless of where one stands on these sensitive topics, hearing the Japanese perspective firsthand is essential for fruitful bilateral conversations. True diplomacy requires the ability to listen and observe as a neutral party. Understanding the host country's narrative is the first step toward mutual respect and finding proper solutions to complex regional challenges. I look forward to using this experience to further bridge gaps in understanding. #MIRAI2025 #sharemyMIRAI #Japan #Tokyo #Diplomacy #InternationalSecurity 	January 15, 2026 (Instagram) Graduate Student (Hungary) We began our journey at the National Museum of Territory and Sovereignty in Tokyo. We were introduced to Japan's official positions on its territorial issues, including the Northern Territories. Regardless of where one stands on these sensitive topics, hearing the Japanese perspective firsthand is essential for fruitful bilateral conversations. True diplomacy requires the ability to listen and observe as a neutral party. Understanding the host country's narrative is the first step toward mutual respect and finding proper solutions to complex regional challenges. I look forward to using this experience to further bridge gaps in understanding.

Group3 (SDGs Business and Innovation)	
 A day that touched my mind, my heart, and my soul. 🌸 Yesterday was more than just a program day - it was a journey inside myself. We started the day in Kamakura, visiting the Great Buddha at Kotoku-in Temple. Standing there, in silence, I felt something very deep. Fulfillment, emotional reconnection, peace, and calmness. It was not about religion - it was about presence. About stopping for a moment, breathing, and feeling whole. That calm stayed with me for the rest of the day. Later, at Keio University, we had lectures and discussions about SDGs, sustainability, and global challenges. What impressed me the most was not only the knowledge, but the way Japanese students and professors think and communicate - openly, respectfully, deeply. We didn't just talk about problems, we searched for meaning, responsibility, and real impact. I left with many thoughts about how change starts from awareness, education, and community - and how this can be applied both in Japan and in Moldova. Throughout the day, I kept thinking about something very special: how Japanese people combine hard work, punctuality, discipline, and excellence - without rushing, without chaos. Everything is done carefully, with respect for others. It feels like they have a different kind of soul - a soul filled with recognition, respect, and a deep understanding of the world and the people around them.	January 16, 2026 (Instagram) Graduate Student (Moldova) A day that touched my mind, my heart, and my soul. We started the day in Kamakura, visiting the Great Buddha at Kotoku-in Temple. Standing there, in silence, I felt fulfillment, emotional reconnection, peace, and calmness. It was not about religion - it was about presence. Later, at Keio University, we had lectures and discussions about SDGs and sustainability. What impressed me the most was not only the knowledge, but the way Japanese students and professors think and communicate - openly, respectfully, deeply. We didn't just talk about problems, we searched for meaning, responsibility, and real impact. Throughout the day, I kept thinking about how Japanese people combine hard work, punctuality, discipline, and excellence without rushing, with respect for others. After the official program, we went to Shibuya - enjoyed the food, crossed the famous Shibuya

II . 1 Good Practices selected from Social Media Posts

4) Follow-up Program

	crossing, said hello to Hachiko, and enjoyed the energy of Tokyo. Japan is the place where my soul feels happy, calm, and safe. It feels like home - just in another country.
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Group4 (Rule of Law)	
Continuing to share insights from the MIRAI Program, the following days included a series of highly informative lectures, discussions, and institutional visits in Japan, focused on the rule of law and justice systems. One of the key sessions was held at the Ministry of Justice of Japan, where discussions focused on Japan's role in upholding and promoting the rule of law internationally through the work of the International Cooperation Department (ICD) and the Research and Training Institute, particularly in the field of legal technical cooperation. Representatives shared their experience in cooperation with partner countries, including support in drafting and amending basic laws, improving legal and judicial systems, and capacity-building of legal professionals. Another important meeting took place at the Supreme Court of Japan, where we discussed the Japanese criminal justice system, including the saiban-in (lay judge) trial system, as well as administrative litigation. The discussion also addressed the constitutional role and powers of the Supreme Court, including constitutional adjudication and constitutional litigation. Additionally, we visited Keio University, one of the leading universities in Japan, where we attended a lecture on good governance, the rule of law, and global justice delivered by Professor MATSUO Hiroshi. Following a very engaging discussion, participants were kindly presented with his book, Politics, Economy and Law in Developing Asia. The program is ongoing and also includes cultural activities, which are an essential part of the MIRAI experience. I will share reflections on these activities as  #MIRAI2025 #MIRAIalumni #sharemyMIRAI #Japan #KeioUniversity #MinistryofJustice	January 17, 2026 (LinkedIn) Working Youth (Georgia) Continuing to share insights from the MIRAI program, the following days included a series of highly informative lectures, discussions, and institutional visits in Japan focused on the rule of law and justice systems. One of the key sessions was held at the Ministry of Justice of Japan, where discussions focused on Japan's roll in upholding and promoting the rule of law internationally through the work of the International Cooperation Department (ICD) and the Research and Training Institute, particularly in the field of legal technical cooperation. Representatives shared their experience in cooperation with partner countries, including support in drafting and amending basic laws, improving legal and judicial systems, and capacity-building of legal professionals. Another important meeting took place at the Supreme Court of Japan, where we discussed the Japanese criminal system, including the saiban-in (lay judge) trial system, as well as administrative litigation. The discussion also addressed the constitutional role and powers of the Supreme Cour, including constitutional adjudication and constitutional litigation. Additionally, we visited Keio University, one of the leading universities in Japan, where we attended a lecture on good governance, the rule of law, and global justice by Professor MATSUO Hiroshi. Following a very engaging discussion, participants were kindly presented with his book, Politics, Economy and Law in Developing Asia. The program is ongoing and also includes cultural activities, which are an essential part of the MIRAI experience. I will share reflections on

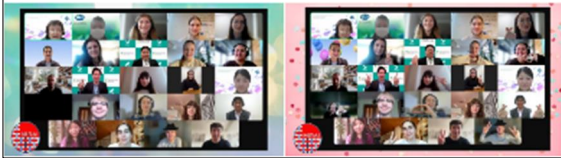
II . 1 Good Practices selected from Social Media Posts

4) Follow-up Program

	these activities as they represent an equally important dimension of mutual understanding and exchange
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(2) Follow-up Program :

A Alumni Meeting with Japanese Organizations with Global Reach

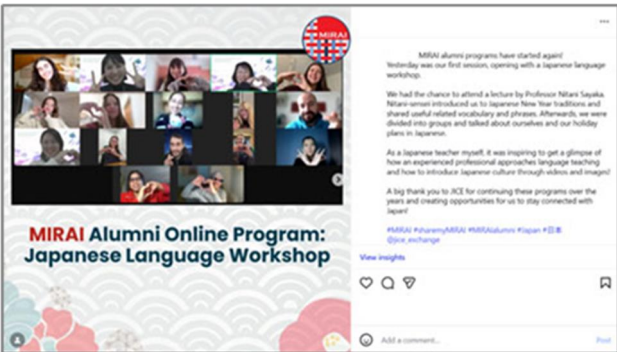
Dissemination of Social Media	Text
Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO)	
Today I had the chance to participate in the "Reconnecting Japan" online meeting, organized by Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE) in cooperation with JASSO (Japan Student Services Organization) and specifically held for MOFA MIRAI Program Alumni participants. During the session we listened to insightful lectures by Mr. Miyai Tomohiro (Deputy Director, Student Exchange Department) and Mr. Okada Takuya (Study in Japan Unit, Student Exchange Department) from JASSO. They introduced the study abroad programs in Japan offered and provided a complete overview of the Japanese higher education system, including application requirements, English and Japanese proficiency standards for admission, living costs to consider and, most importantly, fully funded scholarship opportunities in Japan for international students. We learned that Japan currently hosts over 336,000 international students with numbers steadily increasing, as well as growing employment opportunities for those who decide to stay after graduation! We also heard two inspiring personal journeys shared by Ms. Edisa Shoshi and Mr. Abdulaziz Yunusov, MEXT scholarship recipients who presented their academic paths at the University of Tokyo and Keio University. Through their experiences, Edisa-san and Abdulaziz-san explained how studying in Japan meant accessing a world-class education within an international academic environment for them, while still benefiting from extensive scholarship support. They highlighted how graduate program studies in Japan are strongly research-oriented, with students receiving constant feedback and actively participating in conferences and academic activities in the country and abroad. Listening to these presentations made me remember my own time in Japan. Thanks to one of JASSO's scholarships, I was able to attend Japanese classes for one semester at Kobe University during my Master's degree without paying any tuition fees: an opportunity that definitely shaped my academic and personal journey for the better and significantly improved my language skills. A heartfelt thank you to JASSO for giving me the opportunity to take part in the Student Exchange Support Program in Kobe: it was the most enriching experience of my life! For anyone considering an experience abroad, I strongly encourage you to learn more about the opportunities offered by JASSO. With English-taught degree programs, Japanese-language tracks and multiple scholarship options, there is a possible path for students from many different backgrounds to study in Japan and take this life-changing step. どうもありがとうございました！ 	December 19, 2025 (LinkedIn) Working Youth (Italy) Today I had the chance to participate in the online meeting, organized by Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE) in cooperation with JASSO (Japan Student Services Organization) and specifically held for MOFA MIRAI Program Alumni participants. During the session we listened to insightful lectures by Mr. Miyai Tomohiro (Deputy Director, Student Exchange Department) and Mr. Okada Takuya (Study in Japan Unit, Student Exchange Department) from December 19, 2025 (LinkedIn) Working Youth (Italy) Today I had the chance to participate in the online meeting, organized by Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE) in cooperation with JASSO (Japan Student Services Organization) and specifically held for MOFA MIRAI Program Alumni participants. During the session we listened to insightful lectures by Mr. Miyai Tomohiro (Deputy Director, Student Exchange Department) and Mr. Okada Takuya (Study in Japan Unit, Student Exchange Department) from JASSO. They introduced the study abroad programs in Japan offered and provided a complete overview of the Japanese higher education system, including application requirements, English and Japanese proficiency standards for admission, living costs to consider and, most importantly, fully funded scholarship opportunities in Japan. We learned that Japan currently hosts over 336,000 international students with numbers steadily increasing, as well as growing employment opportunities for those who decide to stay after graduation! We also heard two inspiring personal journeys shared by Ms. Edisa Shoshi and Mr. Abdulaziz Yunusov, MEXT scholarship recipients who

II . 1 Good Practices selected from Social Media Posts
4) Follow-up Program

	presented their academic paths at the University of Tokyo and Keio University. Through their experiences, Edisa-san and Abdulaziz-san explained how studying in Japan meant accessing a world-class education within an international academic environment for them, while still benefiting from extensive scholarship support. They highlighted how graduate program studies in Japan are strongly research-oriented, with students receiving constant feedback and actively participating in conferences and academic activities in the country and abroad. Listening to these presentations made me remember my own time in Japan. Thanks to one of JASSO's scholarships, I was able to attend Japanese classes for one semester at Kobe University during my Master's degree without paying any tuition fees: an opportunity that definitely shaped my academic and personal journey for the better and significantly improved my language skills. A heartfelt thank you to JASSO for giving me the opportunity to take part in the Student Exchange Support Program in Kobe: it was the most enriching experience of my life! For anyone considering an experience abroad, I strongly encourage you to learn more about the opportunities offered by JASSO. With English-taught degree programs, Japanese-language tracks and multiple scholarship options, there is a possible path for students from many different backgrounds to study in Japan and take this life-changing step. どうもありがとうございました！
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II . 1 Good Practices selected from Social Media Posts
4) Follow-up Program

B Follow-up Online Visiting Japan Program

Dissemination of Social Media	Text
Japanese Language Lesson	
	December 12, 2025 (Instagram) Working Youth (Greece) MIRAI alumni programs have started again! Yesterday was our first session, opening with a Japanese language workshop. We had the chance to attend a lecture by Professor Nitani Sayaka. Nitani-sensei introduced us to Japanese New Year traditions and shared useful related vocabulary and phrases. Afterwards, we were divided into groups and talked about ourselves and our holiday plans in Japanese. As a Japanese teacher myself, it was inspiring to get a glimpse of how an experienced professional approaches language teaching and how to introduce Japanese culture through videos and images! A big thank you for continuing these programs over the years and creating opportunities for us to stay connected with Japan!
School Exchange	
	December 24, 2025 (Instagram) Graduate Student (Italy) Last week, as part of the Mirai Alumni Program, we took part in a very engaging online exchange with students from the Nara National Institute of Higher Education and Research. We sincerely appreciate everyone involved in the program for their continued support and for providing us with such valuable opportunities even after our stay in Japan.

II . 1 Good Practices selected from Social Media Posts
4) Follow-up Program

C Japan's Experts and MIRAI Alumni on MIRAI

Dissemination of Social Media	Text
This week, I had the honour of presenting at MIRAI's online program! I was able to share how my life changed after the program, being welcomed by many new opportunities, having new insights and much more confidence! Silvia-san and Leart-san, fellow MIRAI alumni, also gave lovely presentations about their experiences and discussed how travelling to Japan as part of the program has affected them. After the presentations, professors Komatsu Taro (Sophia University) and Hashida Tsutomu (Nara International Strategy Center) shared thoughts on the program, as well as how it could further be enriched. All alumni were took part into a meaningful conversation and I hope we can all come together to bring the wonderful ideas that were mentioned to life! I wish the MIRAI program keeps evolving, bridging our countries and encouraging dialogue. Thank you to the MIRAI team for giving me this opportunity! It was a beautiful experience! #MIRAI #MIRAIalumni #sharemyMIRAI #Japan JICE's International Exchange Programs  MIRAI Alumni Online Program:	March 23, 2026 (Facebook) Working Youth (Greece) This week, I had the honour of presenting at MIRAI's online program! I was able to share how my life changed after the program, being welcomed by many new opportunities, having new insights and much more confidence! Silvia-san and Leart-san, fellow MIRAI alumni, also gave lovely presentations about their experiences and discussed how travelling to Japan as part of the program has affected them. After the presentations, professors Komatsu Taro (Sophia University) and Hashida Tsutomu (Nara International Strategy Center) shared thoughts on the program, as well as how it could further be enriched. All alumni were took part into a meaningful conversation and I hope we can all come together to bring the wonderful ideas that were mentioned to life! I wish the MIRAI program keeps evolving, bridging our countries and encouraging dialogue. Thank you to the MIRAI team for giving me this opportunity! It was a beautiful experience!

2. Good Practices selected from Media Articles

Inbound : Group1 (Peacebuilding) Publisher : Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO)	
Title : MIRAI 2025/2026 Cohort brings 13 Young Leaders to Japan for Peacebuilding Exchange	
URL: MIRAI 2025/2026 Cohort brings 13 Young Leaders to Japan for Peacebuilding Exchange – Regional Youth Cooperation Office	
 MIRAI 2025/2026 Cohort brings 13 Young Leaders to Japan for Peacebuilding Exchange WESTERN BALKANS – The sixth cycle of the youth exchange program “Western Balkans Meet Japan: A Bridge into the Future” has successfully concluded, bringing together 13 selected young representatives from the Western Balkans, accompanied by Ms. Flutura Brakaj, RYCO’s Local Program Officer, for an intensive week of institutional dialogue, peace education, and cultural immersion in Japan. Organized under the MIRAI – Japan’s Friendship Ties Program, implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) and JICE in cooperation with the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), the visit took place from 13–19 February 2026. The agenda combined high-level meetings in Tokyo with a reflective study component in Hiroshima, offering participants deeper insight into Japan’s peacebuilding legacy and societal values. During their time in Tokyo, participants engaged in an academic exchange at Sophia University, where discussions with Japanese students created space for honest conversations on regional challenges and shared global responsibilities. The cohort also met with Ms. ARFIYA Eri, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, and members of the MOFA Europe Division team, exchanging perspectives on cooperation between Japan and the Western Balkans and reflecting on the role of young leaders in promoting peace and stability. At JICA Headquarters, the group further explored Japan’s approach to development cooperation and peacebuilding in the region, connecting institutional frameworks with the realities of reconciliation processes back home. “The MIRAI journey was a truly life-changing one, as I have never returned home with a complete shift in perspective on peacebuilding, culture, society and most importantly – myself. The people I’ve met, the lessons I’ve learned and the bond I’ve formed with my fellow cohort members’ voices resonate for me, single even-coordinated that have really done for. Japan as a country is no longer a mere geographical designation, but rather a part of my life from which a new pathway is born. Thank you to the MIRAI program, to all the people behind it, and to all the people with whom I found this program.” – Ismael Halimi, MIRAI participant from Bosnia As the country’s official representative of the program, we will be involved in sharing their stories and the lessons they have learned on a long-term basis at the Western Balkans Meet Japan: A Bridge into the Future. These will provide specific feedback on the cooperation structure and effectiveness, sharing perspectives on regional challenges, development, and sustainable peace. MIRAI participants also represent an important window of opportunity for dialogue through youth in Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Osaka, and other locations with a rich history of peacebuilding in Japan and the West. “It is in Japan always seemed like a dream, out of reach, something reminiscent of a film. To actually get there and experience it through MIRAI perfectly within a week was a surreal experience after it has happened. I am always going to be grateful for the lessons I got and the knowledge gained about Japanese culture, people, educational system, food, economy, and history. I feel closer to Japan now than ever. And without any doubt, I am going to keep in my heart all the precious memories with the other participants and the organizers who had made everything possible for us.” – Ismael Halimi, MIRAI participant from Bosnia Japan has been a long time in the making. Through our exchange, cultural, social, and historical perspectives have been shared, and a deep understanding of Japan’s peacebuilding legacy has been gained. The program has provided a unique opportunity for young leaders to engage in dialogue and exchange of ideas on peacebuilding and development. Through the exchange, we hope to build a strong foundation for future cooperation and partnership between Japan and the Western Balkans. “During our trip to Japan, we experienced its traditional side of Hiroshima (Domo), but also the modern face of Tokyo and Osaka and very important aspects of its culture. Meeting with people from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan and students from Sophia University gave me a deep understanding of Japan, and I really feel like we found through Japan what we needed.” – Ismael Halimi, MIRAI participant from Bosnia With the success of this visit, the MIRAI program has provided a platform for young leaders to engage in dialogue and exchange of ideas on peacebuilding and development. Through the exchange, we hope to build a strong foundation for future cooperation and partnership between Japan and the Western Balkans. About Participants The visit was a unique opportunity for young leaders to engage in dialogue and exchange of ideas on peacebuilding and development. Through the exchange, we hope to build a strong foundation for future cooperation and partnership between Japan and the Western Balkans. The visit was a unique opportunity for young leaders to engage in dialogue and exchange of ideas on peacebuilding and development. 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shift in perspective on peacebuilding, culture, sociology and most importantly – myself. The people I've met, the lessons I've learned and the food I've eaten (of course) have opened some viewpoints for me, maybe even confirmed that hope really does last. Japan as a term is no longer a mere geographical designation, but rather a point of my life from which a new pathway is created. Thank you to the MIRAI program, to all the people behind it, and to all the people with whom I lived this program” – Ivana Vučetić, MIRAI participant from BiH

A central and deeply reflective component of the program was the visit to Hiroshima, including observation at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and a guided peace tour at the Peace Memorial Park. These visits provided space for reflection on the consequences of conflict and the responsibility of young generations in promoting dialogue, reconciliation, and sustainable peace. MIRAI participants also experienced elements of Japanese cultural heritage through visits to Miyajima Island, Itsukushima Shrine, and traditional craft activities, as well as cultural landmarks in Tokyo such as Sensoji Temple and the Imperial Palace area.

“A trip to Japan always seemed like a dream out of reach, something reminiscent to a film. To actually get there and experience it through MIRAI perfectly within a week seems unreal even now after it has happened. I am always going to be grateful for the lessons I got and for the knowledge I gained about Japanese culture, people, educational system, food, economy, and history. I feel closer to Japan more than ever. And without any doubts, I am going to keep in my heart all the precious memories with the other participants and the organizers who took such good care of us” – Hatixhe Misini, MIRAI participant from Kosovo*

Beyond the institutional agenda, the program offered a rich cultural immersion experience. Through everyday interactions, cultural visits, and exchanges with local hosts, participants experienced Japan's culture of hospitality, respect, and attention to detail. These moments went beyond observation; they fostered deeper mutual understanding and strengthened regional bonds among the group, reinforcing the values of cooperation, dialogue, and peaceful coexistence within the Western Balkans itself.

“During our trip to Japan, we experienced its traditional side at Miyajima or Senso-ji, but also the modern face of Tokyo and historical and very important aspects of Hiroshima. Meeting with people from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan and students from Sophia University gave me a deep understanding of Japan, and I surely feel like we lived through Japan at its fullness” – Aleksandar Jakovljević, MIRAI participant from Serbia

With the conclusion of this edition, the MIRAI alumni network in the Western Balkans has grown to 91 young leaders. The program's long-term impact continues beyond the visit, as alumni remain engaged in youth initiatives, intercultural dialogue, and regional cooperation efforts supported by RYCO.

Inbound : Group 2 (Diplomacy and Security Policy)	
Publisher : University of Gothenburg	
Title : Elsa sökte MIRAI-programmet och fick en fantastisk vecka i Japan (Elsa applied for the MIRAI Program and had a fantastic week in Japan)	
URL : Elsa sökte MIRAI-programmet och fick en fantastisk vecka i Japan Göteborgs universitet	

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(Following English Translated from Swedish by Copilot)

Student Elsa Wahlbeck has just returned from Tokyo, where she took part in a week-long exchange initiated by the Japanese government — the MIRAI Program. The program aims to promote future collaboration between Japan and Europe.

My name is Elsa Wahlbeck, and I am a political science student at the University of Gothenburg, currently in my final semester of the program. In mid-January 2026, I had the honor of traveling to Tokyo, the capital of Japan, to represent Sweden as part of the MIRAI Program for Europe 2025/2026. The word MIRAI stands for Mutual-understanding, Intellectual Relations and Academic Exchange Initiative, and it also means “future” in Japanese.

It is a program initiated by the Japanese government with the aim of inviting young leaders who are expected to play an active international role in the future. The purpose of the program is to deepen participants' understanding of Japan and its political priorities, in order to promote mutual understanding and lay the foundation for future friendship and cooperation between Japan and different parts of the world. I took part in the second of four groups, which focused on security policy and diplomacy. My group consisted of around 20 participants, all from different European countries.

Study Visits, Lectures, and Culture

During my stay in Japan, we participants had the opportunity to experience Japanese culture, cuisine, and major tourist attractions such as Tokyo Tower and the National Museum. We visited Mount Fuji and its cultural heritage center, where we learned about the mountain's historical significance for Buddhism in Japan. We also attended a lecture on matcha, during which we had the chance to make and drink matcha ourselves, and we visited various temples.

In addition, we made study visits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, and one of Japan's most prestigious universities, Keio University.

During the study visits, we attended several lectures that deepened our understanding of Japan's security situation, the country's contributions to global humanitarian security, its territorial disputes with neighboring countries such as South Korea, Russia, and China, as well as Japan's perspective on future cooperation with its only ally, the United States.

A recurring message throughout all the study visits was how essential Japan considers its relationship with Europe and the European Union to be for maintaining the liberal international order globally—especially in an era marked by increasing uncertainty, where more and more states

are moving away from a rules-based order.

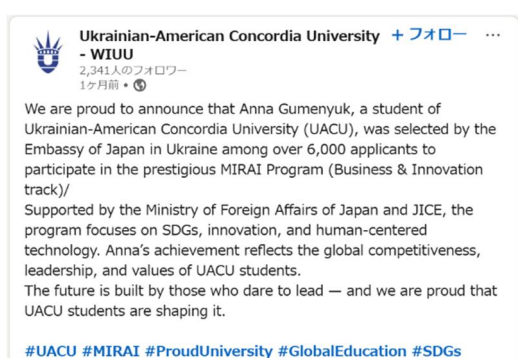
The program takes place once a year

I highly recommend anyone who has the opportunity to apply for the MIRAI Program to take the chance. It is a memorable experience and a unique opportunity to deepen your knowledge about Japan, while also forming lifelong friendships with other students from Europe and Japan. The program is held once a year, and you do not need any prior knowledge about Japan or make a significant financial commitment to participate. The Japanese government covers almost all the costs and arranges everything—flight tickets, hotel accommodation, transportation, and a well-planned schedule to ensure that participants get the most out of their week in Tokyo. All you need to do is join, enjoy, and take in all the new knowledge, impressions, and experiences.

Text: Elsa Wahlbeck, student of the Political Science Program
(in collaboration with Anna-Karin Lundell, Communications Officer at the Department of Political Science)

Inbound : Group 3 (SDGs Business and Innovation)
Publisher : Ukrainian-American Concordia University (UACU)

URL : [\(12\) 投稿 | LinkedIn](#)



We are proud to announce that Anna Gumenyuk, a student of Ukrainian-American Concordia University (UACU), was selected by the Embassy of Japan in Ukraine among over 6,000 applicants to participate in the prestigious MIRAI Program (Business & Innovation track)/ Supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and JICE, the program focuses on SDGs, innovation, and human-centered technology. Anna's achievement reflects the global competitiveness, leadership, and values of UACU students. The future is built by those who dare to lead — and we are proud that UACU students are shaping it.

Inbound : Group4 (Rule of Law)
Publisher : Nishimura & Asahi (Gaikokuho Kyodo Jigyo)

Title : Office Visit by Students and Professionals from Central Asia and Caucasus Region as part of "MIRAI" Program: Lectures on WTO and EPA/FTA and International Investment Law

URL: [Office Visit by Students and Professionals from Central Asia and Caucasus Region as part of "MIRAI" Program: Lectures on WTO and EPA/FTA and International Investment Law | News | Nishimura & Asahi](#)

Office Visit by Students and Professionals from Central Asia and Caucasus Region as part of "MIRAI" Program: Lectures on WTO and EPA/FTA and International Investment Law

Undergraduate, graduate students, and working professionals from eight countries in the Central Asia and Caucasus region visited our office in Tokyo as part of Japan's Friendship Ties Program "MIRAI," Group 4 (Rule of Law) on Jan. 19, 2025. MIRAI is an exchange program promoted by the Japanese Government, aiming to enhance interaction between people from all over the world and facilitate a better understanding of Japan.



During the visit, our lawyers gave talks on WTO and EPA/FTA as well as international investment law. The theme of these lectures were: (1) "Building a Rules-Based International Economic Order through Multiple FTAs" by Yusuke Hatakeyama and (2) "Protection of Foreign Investments and Settlement of Investment Disputes" by Motohiro Maeda. The participants asked many questions, which turned into a lively discussion.

We hope that this lecture will help deepen participants understanding of the rule of law through enhanced understanding of Japan's WTO-related and EPA/FTA-related policies, as well as the practical aspects of international investment law.

Date
2026.2.2

People

- Yukiko TOMIMATSU
- Motohiro MAEDA
- Yusuke HATAKEYAMA

Experience

- WTO / Regional Trade Agreements
- International Investment Agreements & ISDS
- Investor-State Dispute Settlement
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Pto Bano

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#MIRAI2025