1. Aims for Higher Education in the Future

Challenges

Changes in Society

World: Environmental problems, rising international tensions, advance of AI, etc.

Japan: Rapid decline in birthrate, labor shortage

Changes in Higher Education — Shift to learner-centered education

Estimated University Enrollment

627,040 ▶ 590,102 ▶ 459,757 (27% decrease)

（2021）　　（2035）　　　　（2040）

Vision for future, HR

Future Vision of Society
Sustainable and vibrant society centered on the realization of respective happiness for each individual and the well-being of society as a whole

Future Vision of Human Resource Development
People who continue to learn, who **identify** and **solve** problems in **collaboration** with others, and who are equipped with **the capability to truly accomplish their goals**

Vision of Higher Education

Improve of nation's "Collective Knowledge and Wisdom"

➢ To realize our vision for the future, it is essential to improve the nation's "Collective Knowledge and Wisdom" (number of people x ability)

➢ To improve the "Collective Knowledge and Wisdom," we must improve the quality of education and research and provide opportunities for higher education on a socially optimal scale so that all people with the desire are able to enjoy the benefits of higher education. This means achieving equal opportunities for higher education by ensuring equitable geographical and socioeconomic access.

Higher Education policy aims

Improving Quality — Improve the quality of education and research and maximize the capabilities of each and every student

Optimization of Size — Ensure necessary and optimal higher education opportunities

Ensuring Access — Achieve equitable geographical and socioeconomic opportunities for higher education

The 3 aims (values) do not always harmonize and may involve trade-offs, so selecting and adjusting values is necessary.

Due to the rapid decline in the birthrate, we must work to optimize the "scale" of higher education overall, while devising measures to ensure "access" that may be lost due to this. We must also improve the quality of education and research to compensate for the reduction in "scale" and improve the Collective Knowledge and Wisdom.

Important Points to Consider

① Education and Research

i. Develop the competencies necessary for the future leaders of society (**cross-disciplinary, integrated education**, etc.)

ii. Develop HR who will create and drive **growth fields**

Iii. Progress of **digitalization** (use of AI, etc.)

iv. Strengthen **research capabilities** amid growing international competitiveness

② Support for Students

i. Improve diversity, mobility of students (international students, working adults, students with disabilities, etc.)

ii. Enhance **financial support** for students (student learning supported by entire society)

③ Management of Universities

i. Ensure **diversity** in higher education institutions

ii. Establish **solid foundations for management** of higher education institutions (governance reform, etc.)

iii. Promote **internationalization (expand student mobility etc.)**

④ Institutions in Society

i. Strengthen linkages, collaboration with **society**

ii. Promote **regional revitalization** centering on institutions of higher education

iii. Strengthen connections with **primary and secondary education**

iv. Gain public trust through **disclosure of information**

2. Future Direction of Higher Education Policies and Specific Measures ①

(1) Further Improve the Quality of Education and Research

1 Further Promotion of Learner-centered Education

i. Improve educational content and methods to raise the quality of learning

o Create an environment in which students are able to learn independently and autonomously
➤ Review educational management guidelines ➤ Decrease numbers of concurrent courses
➤ Flexibility in quota management system to promote late specialization

o Promote quality assurance at exit points
➤ Stricter grading and graduation certification requirements ➤ Award special distinction prizes to outstanding students

o Improve university admissions selection based on high school–university articulation

o Promote distance, online education

ii. Establish a new quality assurance/improvement system

o Review university establishment standards and examinations for establishment authorization
➤ Improve the system of standards for assignment of core faculty and assistant instructors

o Review of the accreditation system
➤ Transition to a new evaluation system that evaluates educational quality on a multi-level scale, including the extent to which have students have improved their abilities while enrolled.

2 Promotion of Acceptance of Diverse Students (international students, Working Adults, etc.)

i. Promote acceptance of diverse students
o Promoting multifaceted, comprehensive student selection
o Allow greater flexibility in transferring, enrolling
➤ Review capacity management to increase transfers and enrollment
o Provide greater support to students with disabilities

ii. Expand student mobility
o Promoting acceptance of international students and dispatch of Japanese students and preparing measures for internationalization
➤ Enhance financial support ➤ Creating multicultural learning environments
➤ Improving the system for managing the admission capacity of international students
o Thoroughly ensuring and strengthening management of student's participation and preventing the outflow of technologies

iii. Expand learning opportunities for working adults
o Prepare the educational environment
➤ Develop educational programs in collaboration with industry
o Promote collaboration at the organizational level with industry, local governments, etc.

iv. Improve the quality of correspondence, distance learning courses
o Revamp correspondence courses in light of technological and other changes
➤ Study systemic improvements to enhance the quality of correspondence courses

3 Reform of Graduate School Education

i. Promotion of high-quality graduate school education
o Promote systematic organization of graduate school courses
➤ Establish integrated 5-year master's and doctoral programs (particularly in the natural sciences)
o Promote continuity and mobility from undergraduate to doctoral programs
➤ Expand integrated 5-year undergraduate and master's programs (particularly in the humanities and social sciences)

ii. Promote a wide range of career paths
o Create environments in which students can be more active in various fields, accepting a diverse range of students
➤ Allow working adults to gain master's and doctoral degrees in 1 year, with quality of degree ensured.

4 Strengthening Research Capabilities

o Building research environments to improve the quality of research
➤ Eliminate quantitative shortages and improve the quality of R&D management personnel
➤ Strengthen functions of Inter-University Research Institutes

o Reduce administrative workloads to eliminate factors deteriorating research environments
➤ Promote utilization of faculty members who focus on either research or education
➤ Review necessity of formal/official meetings

5 Promoting Information Disclosure

o Improving contents, methods of information disclosure
➤ Establish a new data platform that enables cross-sectional comparisons of information on institutions of higher education (Univ-Map [tentative])
o Promote use of nationwide student surveys

2. Future Direction of Higher Education Policies and Specific Measures ②

(2) Optimizing the Size of Higher Education Overall

1 Strengthening the Functions of Higher Educational Institutions

o Support ambitious educational and management reforms
  - ➤ Support universities that are improving quality, shifting to graduate school education, increasing numbers of international students and working adults, while downsizing to some degree
  - ➤ Enhance support for transition of faculties to growth fields such as digitalization, green technology, etc.
  - ➤ Promote upgrading of faculty, etc.

o Promote linkages among higher educations institutions
  - ➤ Consider introduction of mechanisms and support measures for closer collaboration among universities

2 Promoting Optimization of Scale of Higher Education

o Shift to stricter establishment approval
  - ➤ Tighter asset and management requirements at time of screening
  - ➤ In cases of insufficient implementation of establishment plan, reduce or cancel subsidies to private schools

o Promote reorganization, integration/consolidation
  - ➤ Ease penalty measures in cases of merger of universities with underfilled enrollments or financial problems
  - ➤ Support universities restructuring and integrating operations

o Support for downsizing
  - ➤ Establish mechanisms for facilitating reinstatement of downsized student capacity
  - ➤ Strengthen guidance to encourage prompt management decisions

o Support for withdrawal from operations
  - ➤ Ensure good learning environment for students until graduation
  - ➤ Establish methods for better management of graduates' student records
  - ➤ Relax requirements regarding attribution of residual assets

(3) Ensuring Access to Higher Education

1 Ensuring Geographical Access

i. Creating mechanisms to ensure access for each region

o Establishment of councils to ensure regional access and human resource development
  - ➤ Establish the Regional Platform for Promoting Local Revitalization with Local HEI (tentative) (Consultative body for discussions among stakeholders, including regional higher education institutions, local govts, industry, etc.)
  - ➤ Encourage establishment of departments promoting higher education in local govts
  - ➤ Strengthen the office for promoting regional universities in national govt

o Establishment of mechanisms to encourage deliberations at regional platform
  - ➤ Provision by national govt of quantitative and qualitative information on population forecasts by region & changes in industry and employment environments by field
  - ➤ Training and placement of coordinators

o Support to universities that are truly needed in the region and that are ensured a certain level of educational quality
  - ➤ Establish support measures by govt based on discussions at regional platform
  - ➤ Introduce the Organization for Promoting Research and Education (tentative) (mechanism to ensure closer collaboration among universities)

ii. Promoting regional revitalization by encouraging move from cities to regional areas

o Support for higher education institutions to promote regional revitalization
  - ➤ Study in Regions
  - ➤ Student dormitory facilities
  - ➤ Satellite campuses
  - ➤ Campus relocation

o Promotion of distance, online education
  - ➤ Share courses through inter-university collaboration

2 Ensuring Socio-Economic access

o Enhancement of individual financial support
  - ➤ New financial support system for higher education
  - ➤ Promote supports for scholarship repayment by companies

o Promoting initiatives prior to enrollment in universities, etc.
  - ➤ Push-type information dissemination
  - ➤ Promote elimination of unconscious bias
  - ➤ Promote career education

3. Roles and Collaboration Methods by Institution, Establishing Organization

(1) Role by Institution: Redefining and improving one's own role while leveraging the differences, characteristics of each institution

① Universities (undergraduate programs)	*Refer to 2. Future direction of higher education policies and specific measures
② Professional and Vocational universities / Professional and Vocational Junior Colleges	Promote professionals with practical and creative skills
③ Graduate schools / Professional Graduate Schools	Refer to 2(1) ③ Reform of graduate school education
④ Junior Colleges	Transform junior colleges themselves based on the role adapting to the changing times; improve the system based on further educational needs of students completing specialized courses
⑤ Colleges of Technology（KOSEN）	Promote upgrading, internationalization of technology college education
⑥ Professional Training Colleges	Promote practical vocational education, increase number of working adult students, international students

(2) Role by Establishing Organization: Necessity of reexamining one's **own mission**, **renewing it in line with the changing times**, and determining one's own future, based on roles and functions

① National Universities	Ensure educational opportunities to develop human resources who will lead society both locally and nationwide; implementing a wide variety of research that should be continuously conducted by the nation ▶ **Optimize undergraduate enrollment quotas at national universities** (prioritizing resources for master's and doctoral programs while also considering internationalization and ensuring regional access); **promote collaboration, reorganization/consolidation** ▶ Strengthen regions' leadership functions
② Public Universities	Conduct education and research in line with scope and situation of local government, purpose of establishment ▶ Conduct education and research according to local situation (**continuous dialogue with regional government, including review of personnel quota capacity**, avoid hasty conversion of private universities to public institutions)
③ Private Universities	Implement richly diverse education and research based on founding spirit of university ▶ **Strengthen functions through collaboration and ambitious educational and management reforms** ▶ **Promote optimization of university scale (stricter establishment approval requirements, support for reorganization/consolidation, downsizing, withdrawal from operations)**

(3) Emphasis on Measures Focusing on Functions, Characteristics: Support for boundary-crossing Initiatives across institutions leading to improvement of quality of education and research within the framework of functional differentiation, including collaboration among higher education institutions according to their respective

4．Support measures for higher education reform

① **Value** of Higher Education:	Higher education is source of national strength, and **investment in higher education is proactive investment in future**
② **Trust** in Higher Education:	Increase student satisfaction, advance educational and research activities to spur growth, **publicize information** on results and effects of education and research to society
③ **Calculating Necessary Costs:**	Necessity of clarifying costs and emphasizing necessity of costs widely to society
④ **Investment in Higher Education:**	Rather than relying solely on either **public financial support, corporate donations ,or contributions from individuals/parents**, **establish a scale and mechanism for each that will contribute to sustainable development** of higher education

Short-Term Initiatives (2-3 years)	o **Enhancement of public financial support** ➤ Secure sufficient subsidies for basic expenses ➤ Continuous review and enhancement of competitive resource allocation o Strengthen support from society ➤ Promote supports for scholarship repayment by companies ➤ Promote donations o Review burden borne by individuals, parents ➤ Consider balance between individual support and institutional subsidies regarding individual/parental burden
Long-Term Initiatives (5-10 years)	o **Clarification of educational costs and review of burden-sharing system** ➤ Consider setting minimum tuition fees and revising public support mechanisms o **Securing new funding** to advance bold investments in higher education ➤ Increase donations, review of tax system

▶ Based on 1 to 4 above, the government will **formulate Policy Package** outlining systemic reforms, financial support initiatives, and a process for the next 10 years, and promptly begin implementing specific measures

<Reference 1> Transition to New Evaluation System and Construction of a Database (image)

Current Framework

Overview of the System Review

Initiatives of Each University (Internal quality assurance)

Implementing systematic activities to improve quality

University → Self-Inspection & Evaluation → Self-Improvement → Educational Research Activities

While working to improve the current internal quality assurance system, <u>work to further improve the system</u> by linking it to and utilizing new third-party evaluations.

Third-Party Evaluation

Current Accreditation

Subject: Overall status of university education and research (evaluation by institution)

Result: Evaluates conformity with university evaluation criteria (conformity/non-conformity)

New Evaluation System

Subject: <u>Faculty / Graduate School, etc.</u>

Result: <u>Indicates the quality of education on several levels</u>
· Qualitative evaluation
· Quantitative evaluation using educational information databases

Accountability to Society

· University self-disclosure of information

· Publication of educational information by each university through university reports (*)
  * Comparison between universities is not possible.

· Publication of accreditation results by accreditation organizations

· **<u>Improvement of university-specific information disclosure</u>**

· <u>Publication of evaluation results that are easy for the public to understand</u>

· <u>Construction of a new data platform* linked to a new evaluation database</u>

* **Comparison between universities is possible**
⇒ Publish information that allows students and prospective students to understand the educational strengths of each university

· Feedback on the results of the nationwide student survey

Transitioning to a new evaluation system will reduce the burden associated with administrative procedures.

<Reference 2> Optimizing the Scale of Higher Education Institutions as a Whole (Image)
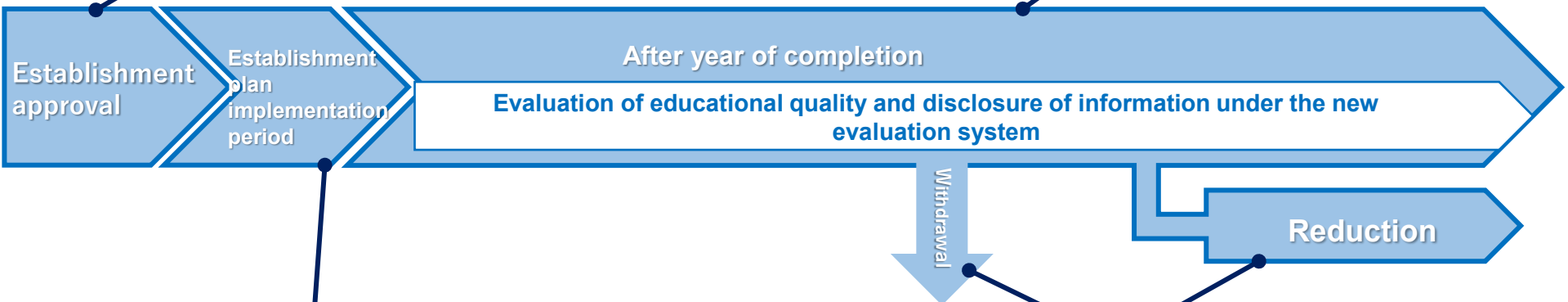
1. Shift to Stricter Establishment Approval Screening

- ◯ Improve teacher placement standards, etc.
- ◯ Stricter requirements for asset ownership, management status, etc.
- ◯ Fundamental review of risk scenarios and review processes, etc.

3. Support for ambitious Educational and Management Reforms

- ◯ Support for universities that are shifting to graduate schools, and increasing the number of international students and working adult students
- ◯ Strengthen support for universities that are taking on new challenges and reforms
- ◯ Strengthen support for management reform through collaboration between multiple universities, etc.

Establishment approval → **Establishment plan implementation period** →

After year of completion

Evaluation of educational quality and disclosure of information under the new evaluation system

Withdrawal

Reduction

2. Measures for Non-Compliance with Establishment Plans

- ◯ Reduction or non-payment of subsidies for private institutions in the event of non-compliance with the establishment plan (when the enrolment rate never reaches a certain percentage after establishment, etc.)

4. Downsizing Support, Withdrawal Support

- ◯ Establish a mechanism for temporary reductions in enrollment
- ◯ Review of indicators that serve as standards for management guidance
- ◯ Strengthen guidance on downsizing and withdrawal, making it mandatory to develop business improvement plans, etc.

\<Reference 3\> Schemes to Ensure Access to Higher Education in Regions (Image)

Establishment of Regional Platforms

To date

Regional Collaboration Platforms composed of multiple universities and local stakeholders to regularly hold dialogues and collaborate
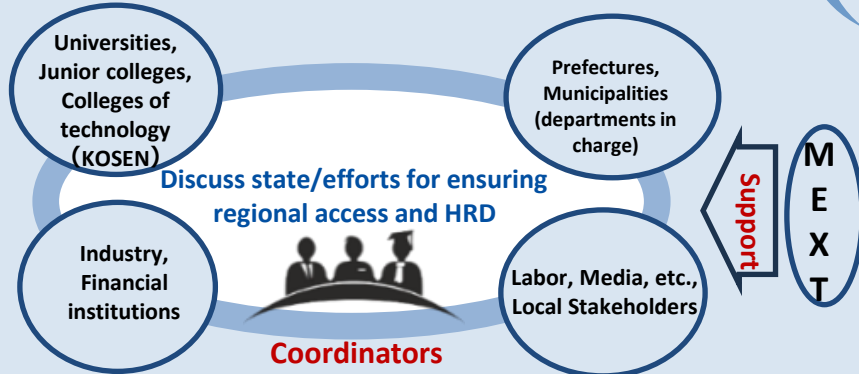※Guidelines were published by MEXT

Advanced Divergence

Going forward

Regional Platform for Promoting Local Revitalization with Local HEI (tentative)

✓ Sharing of information and common understanding throughout the region on the future local vision and the initiatives and Promoting of research and education at universities, etc.

✓ Universities, local governments, businesses, and other local stakeholders work together to **support initiatives to ensure regional access to higher education, in cooperation with the national government**.

- Universities, Junior colleges, Colleges of technology (KOSEN)
- Prefectures, Municipalities (departments in charge)
- Industry, Financial institutions
- Labor, Media, etc., Local Stakeholders

Discuss state/efforts for ensuring regional access and HRD

Coordinators

Support → M E X T

Strengthen collaboration

Strengthening of Frameworks for Regional Collaboration among Universities

To date

Initiatives of University Collaboration Promotion Corporations* with a focus on establishing joint courses

*Certified by the MEXT Minister

Update

Going forward

Regional Organization for Promoting Research and Education (tentative)

✓ As well as establishing collaborative courses, **collaboration encouraged in research and education to ensure regional access and to develop human resource, based on discussions on the Regional Platform for Promoting Local Revitalization with Local HEI.**

University A

Patterns for promoting inter-university cooperation
Cooperating joint education & research and management to ensure regional access to HEI, etc.

University B — Coordinators — Junior College C

Support

University A — University B

Patterns for promoting industry-govt-academia collaboration
In addition to the above, promoting industry-govt-academia collaboration leading to regional revitalization.

Local governments — Coordinators — Industry, financial institutions

MEXT

MEXT

- Strengthens functions as "control tower" to ensure regional access to higher education (establishment of a **"Regional University Promotion Office"** in MEXT)

- Promotes initiative to ensure regional access to higher education, human resource development, and regional revitalization through collaboration with other ministries & agencies and regional industry, government, academia, finance and other stakeholders