

### C. Illegal Gambling



**Illegal gambling** offenses are committed in so-called "casino bars" where card and roulette games are played. Many illegal bookmaking offenses related to horse and bicycle races have also been cleared.

### D. Trafficking in Persons

**Trafficking in persons** refers to crimes committed by organized criminal groups aimed at bringing foreign women or others to force them into sexual exploitation or labor. The police have strictly cracked down on traffickers in cooperation with relevant ministries and agencies. Additionally, the police are exchanging information and working with foreign authorities, foreign embassies in Japan, counseling centers for women, and NGOs in order to prevent trafficking attempts and protect foreign women suffering in trafficking cases. Since October 2007, the police have been operating the "Anonymous Report Hot Line," which receives information of crimes such as trafficking under anonymity from the public.

In 2020, a total of 55 trafficking cases were cleared, which involved sexual exploitation, forced labor and other offenses. The police arrested 58<sup>1</sup> suspects such as brokers and protected 37 victims including 30 Japanese citizens through these cases.

### E. Control of Offenses related to Employment of Foreign Workers

The number of foreign nationals overstaying beyond their authorized period of stay has been on the rise, and it is found that the way they disguise overstay has become increasingly vicious and sophisticated.

Brokers who act as recruiting agents of foreign workers and employers play a key role regarding this problem. Therefore, the police have been tightening controls not only on illegal foreign workers but also on the brokers and employers through strict applications of the relevant laws and regulations.

## 6. Countermeasures against Economic Crimes

### A. Investment Fraud and Commercial Transaction Scam

Every year, a large number of consumers and investors fall prey to sly fraud schemes such as Ponzi schemes. Illicit door-to-door sales are also an example of illicit commercial practices attempting to exploit consumers. The police are cracking down on such illegal commercial practices by requesting financial institutions to freeze the bank accounts used for receiving the proceeds of illegal transactions. In an effort to enhance the awareness of consumers and to protect them from such illicit commercial practices, the police promote public awareness through posters, leaflets and the internet.

### B. Unauthorized Medicines

There are a number of unauthorized medicines sold on the internet which may have health risks. Quite a few foreign-based websites also advertise such medicines which are unauthorized in Japan. The police are cracking down on illegal transaction advertisements and manufacturing of such products. Furthermore, the police request internet service providers to shut down websites advertising unauthorized medicines.

<sup>1</sup> This number includes not only persons arrested but also those against whom necessary investigations have been completed without detention.

**C. Loan Sharks**

Loan sharks came to be recognized as a serious social issue around 2002. The police are cracking down on loan sharks in accordance with the Program to Remedy the Multiple Debt Problem. In addition, the police are requesting financial institutions to freeze bank accounts used by loan sharks and internet service providers to shut down websites advertising illegal money lending.

**D. Intellectual Property Rights Violation**



Violation of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) continues to be an issue. Examples of IPRs violation include uploading the copyrighted works (comics, books, papers, computer programs, etc.) onto the internet without the permission of the copyright holder, and trading the counterfeit products on websites. Counterfeit products are mostly smuggled from China and other Asian countries.

The police investigate these cases and promote public awareness on IPRs protection in cooperation with relevant ministries and organizations.

In addition, the police are cracking down on theft of trade secrets.

**7. Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency and Sound Development of Youth**

Number of Juveniles Cleared for Penal Code Offenses (1949-2020)

