Video length: 18 min.

2025 October Road Traffic Law Revised Edition

Motorcycle version

# For all foreign residents

# Traffic Rules / Driver's License / Insurance

Aioi Nissay Dowa Insurance Co.,Ltd.





Shape your world

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# Introduction

For all foreign residents in Japan,

Today's presentation was created with the hope of ensuring that all foreign residents living in Japan learn about Japanese traffic rules and strive to drive safely.

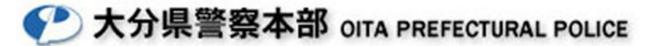
We wish you a safe, secure, and enjoyable life here in Japan!

Aioi Nissay Dowa Insurance Co.,Ltd.





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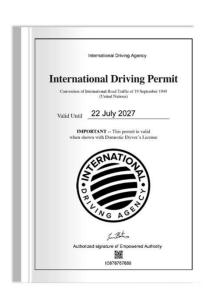
#### **Table of Contents**

- 1. Japan's traffic rules
- 2. How to drive in Japan (driver's license system, etc.)
- 3. How to respond in case of an accident, etc.
- 4. Insurance (Compulsory Automobile Liability insurance, Voluntary Insurance, etc.)
- 5. About mopeds, etc.

# 1. Traffic rules in Japan

#### 1. Driver's license

- 1) A driver's license is required to drive
- 1) International Driver's License (IDP)



2) Foreign driver's license with official Japanese translation attached



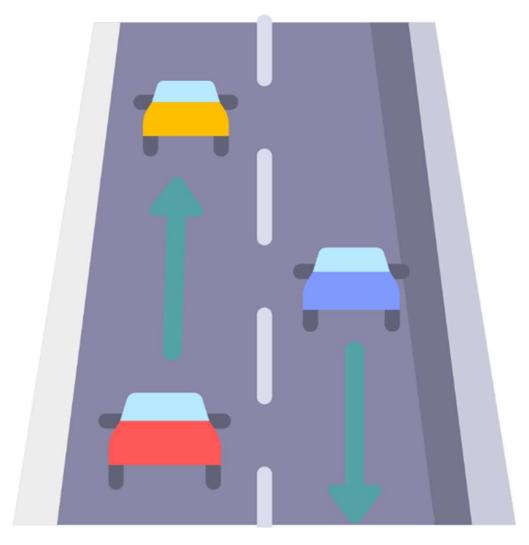
For details on driver's licenses, see slides pg.14 onwards

Source: National Police Agency HP, Traffic Bureau, "Educational Materials for Foreigners"

(https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/traffic/koutsuuannzennjyouhou.html) Aioi Nissay Dowa Insurance Co., Ltd.

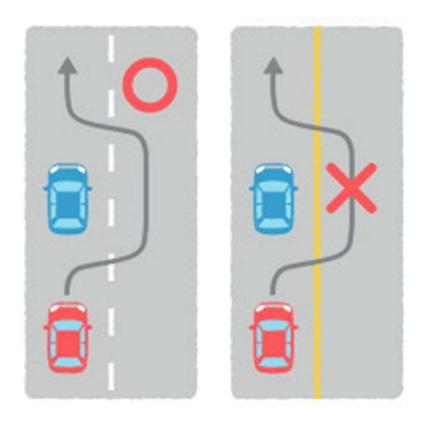
# 2) Traffic Rules

# 2-1) Japan -> left-hand traffic



#### 2: Overtaking

# 2-2) Lane Changing: Crossing over the center line is prohibited when the line is yellow.

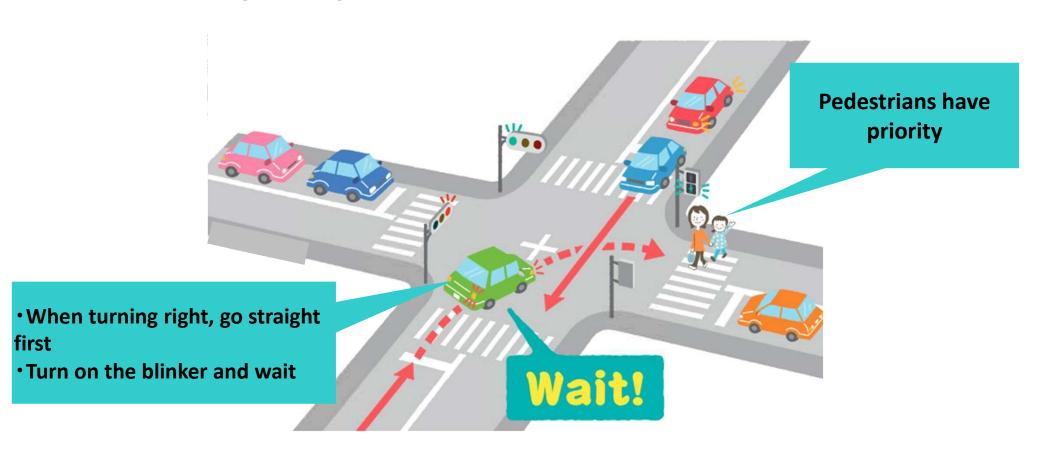


Source: National Police Agency HP, Traffic Bureau, "Educational Materials for Foreigners"

(https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/traffic/koutsuuannzennjyouhou.html) Aioi Nissay Dowa Insurance Co., Ltd.

#### 2. Overtaking

### 2-3 Driving through Intersections

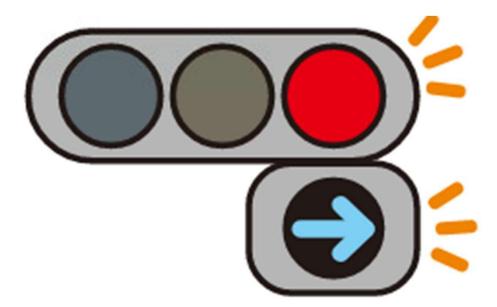


Source: National Police Agency HP, Traffic Bureau, "Educational Materials for Foreigners"

(https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/traffic/koutsuuannzennjyouhou.html) Aioi Nissay Dowa Insurance Co., Ltd.

#### 3. Traffic lights

3) Red means stop; proceed in the direction of the green arrow.



While the arrow is displayed, you can proceed in the direction of the arrow.

Source: National Police Agency HP, Traffic Bureau, "Educational Materials for Foreigners"

#### 4. Road Signs

#### 4) Please be sure to come to a complete stop



Source: National Police Agency HP, Traffic Bureau, "Educational Materials for Foreigners"

(https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/traffic/koutsuuannzennjyouhou.html) Aioi Nissay Dowa Insurance Co., Ltd.

#### 5. Other traffic signals and road signs

#### 5) Traffic signals and road signs in Japan



Detail on traffic signals and road signs in Japan Scan the two-dimensional barcode on the right (English version)



Let's learn everything we can to keep ourselves and others, safe on the road.

Source: National Police Agency HP, Traffic Bureau, "Educational Materials for Foreigners"

(https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/traffic/koutsuuannzennjyouhou.html) Aioi Nissay Dowa Insurance Co., Ltd.

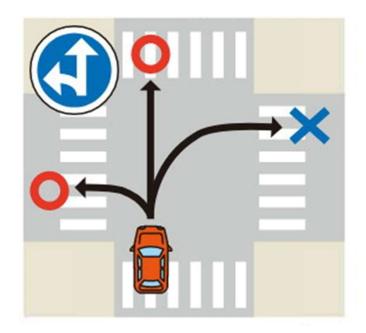
#### 6. Accident and Violation examples

# Please be especially careful when:

When making a right turn, watch out for vehicles going straight



Other than the designated direction No entry



Source: National Police Agency Website, Traffic Bureau, "Educational Materials for Foreigners"

#### 7. Other traffic rules

### **Prohibited actions while driving**



Wear your seat belt



Don't Drive and Drive (No alcohol)



Don't be on your cellphone



Don't use headphones

Source: National Police Agency Website, Traffic Bureau, "Educational Materialss for Foreigners"

(https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/traffic/koutsuuannzennjyouhou.html) Aioi Nissay Dowa Insurance Co., Ltd.

# 2. Driving in Japan Driver's license, etc.

### To drive in Japan, one of the following licenses is required:

### 1. Japanese driver's license

# 2. International driving permit based on the Convention on Road Traffic (Geneva Convention)

## 3. Foreign driver's license

Foreign driver's license (from a country or region that does not issue international driving permits and has a level equivalent to Japan)

A license issued by a country or region recognized to have an established licensing system (only those with an official Japanese translation attached, prepared by an organization specified by government ordinance)

#### To drive in Japan, one of the following licenses is required:

# 1. Japanese driver's license

# 2. International driving permit based on the Convention on Road Traffic (Geneva Convention)

## 3. Foreign driver's license

Foreign driver's license (from a country or region that does not issue international driving permits and has a level equivalent to Japan)

A license issued by a country or region recognized to have an established licensing system (only those with an official Japanese translation attached, prepared by an organization specified by government ordinance)

#### 1. Acquire a Japanese license

**★**Obtained by partial exemption from the license test (for those who have a foreign driver's license)



Those who hold a foreign driver's license are exempt from some of the driver's license tests (written and practical tests).

However, you must have

stayed in the country for a total of three months or more after receiving your foreign driver's license.

Source: National Police Agency Website "Driving in Japan"

#### **Driving in Japan**

Those who hold a license issued by a foreign administrative authority can apply for the procedure to obtain a Japanese license for vehicles that can be driven with that license, with partial exemption from the test.

It is possible to apply for the procedure to obtain a Japanese license for vehicles by partial exemption from the test.

#### **Application location**

Driver's license center, etc., under the jurisdiction of the prefectural police responsible for the place of residence in Japan

#### **Procedures**

Based on the application, confirm the knowledge necessary for driving or the skills related to driving, If it is recognized that there is no hindrance to driving, part of the license test will be exempted.

#### **Notes**

- 1. After obtaining a foreign license, you must have lived in the country for a total of three months or more.
- 2. Applications by proxy are not allowed.

#### 1. Obtaining a Japanese license

★ Method of obtaining license thorough the standard license exam (for those who do not have a foreign driver's license)



To those without a foreign driver's license: Take the regular driving license test to obtain a Japanese driver's license You need to acquire a transfer license.

#### To drive in Japan, one of the following licenses is required:

# 1. Japanese driver's license

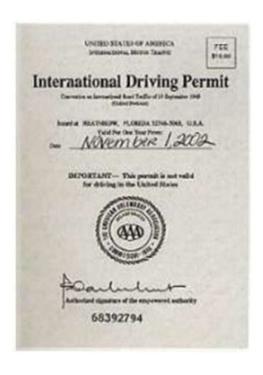
# 2. International driver's license based on the Convention on Road Traffic (Geneva Convention) International driver's license based on the Convention

3 Foreign driver's license to drive a car, etc.\*

Foreign countries or regions related to driving motor vehicles (those that do not issue international driving permits but are considered to have standards equivalent to Japan)

A license issued by a country or region recognized as having a valid licensing system system (only those with an official Japanese translation attached, prepared by an organization specified by government ordinance)

#### **★** Driving with an IDP



After landing in Japan, valid for one year, under the Geneva Convention.

Residents may drive with an IDP that conforms to the prescribed format as stipulated under:

(Article 107-2 of the Road Traffic

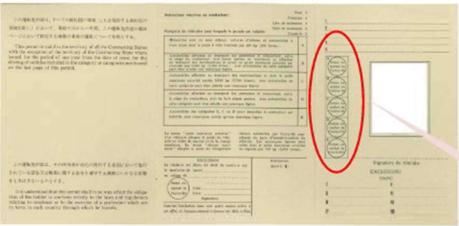
format as stipulated under:
(Article 107-2 of the Road Traffic Act) Geneva Convention, signed in Geneva on September 19,
1949

\* For countries that are parties to the Geneva Convention, see page 77

Source: National Police Agency website "Driving in Japan"

**★** Sample of an International Driving Permit (IDP):





Only vehicle categories marked with a stamp may be driven.

Source: Website of the Embassy of Japan in Laos

### **★** Vehicle categories by IDP rank

Rank	Vehicle Category under the Geneva Convention-based International Driving Permit	Vehicle Category under a Japanese Driver's License
A	Motorcycles (including those with sidecars), motorized tricycles and quadricycles for disabled persons, and motorcycles with an unladen weight not exceeding 400 kg (900 lbs).	Large motorcycles, ordinary motorcycles, and mopeds (Note) If there is no stamp for A, you cannot drive mopeds.
В	Motor vehicles used for the transport of passengers with, in addition to the driver's seat, no more than 8 seats, or motor vehicles used for the transport of goods with a maximum permissible weight not exceeding 3,500 kg (7,700 lbs). Motor vehicles in this category may tow a light trailer.	<ul> <li>Vehicles classified as ordinary motor vehicles:</li> <li>Passenger cars with, in addition to the driver's seat, up to 8 seats (total 9 persons or fewer).</li> <li>Ordinary trucks with a maximum permissible gross weight (vehicle weight + maximum load capacity) not exceeding 3.5 tons.</li> </ul>
С	Motor vehicles used for the transport of goods and having a maximum permissible weight exceeding 3,500 kg (7,700 lbs). Motor vehicles in this category may tow a light trailer.	Large trucks, medium trucks, and ordinary trucks other than those under B.
D	Motor vehicles used for the transport of passengers and having, in addition to the driver's seat, more than 8 seats. Motor vehicles in this category may tow a light trailer.	Large passenger cars, medium passenger cars, and ordinary passenger cars other than those under B.
Е	Motor vehicles in categories B, C, or D authorized to tow a trailer other than a light trailer.	Vehicles towing heavy trailers (semi-trailers).

Source: Embassy of Japan in Laos website

# Requirements for driving with an IDP

1. Within one year from the issuance of the IDP and within one year from date of arrival in Japan

2. Not in violation of the "3-month rule (Road Traffic Act Article 107-2)"

**Requirements for driving with an International Driving Permit** 

1. Within one year from the issuance of the IDP and within one year from date of arrival in Japan

2. Not in violation of the "3-month rule" (Article 107-2 of the Road Traffic Act)

Not violating

# Please be careful!

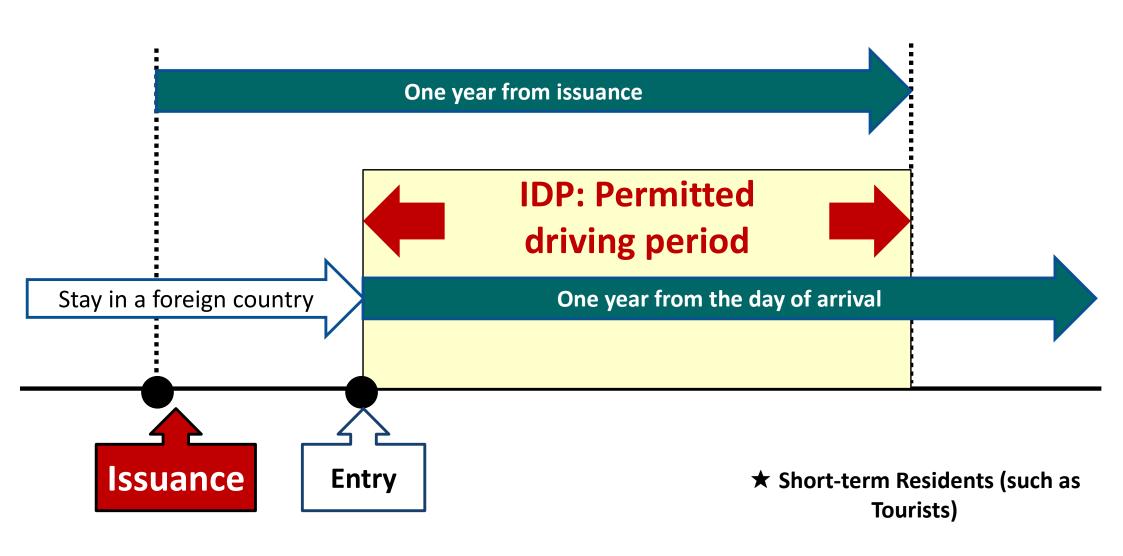
The international driving permit valid for driving in Japan must be issued by a Geneva Convention contracting country.

It must comply with the format stipulated in the convention.

\*[Reference] P.77, List

Even if it is an IDP is issued by a Geneva Convention contracting country, an IDP issued under the format based on other conventions (such as the Vienna Convention) is not valid for driving in Japan.

# 1. Within one year from issuing the IDP And within one year from the day of arrival in Japan



### **Requirements for Driving with an IDP**

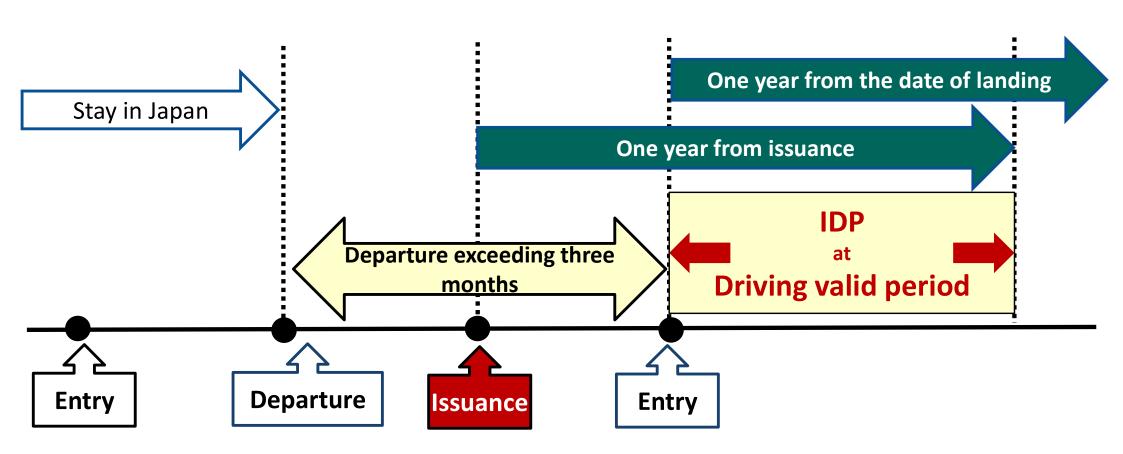
1. Within one year from the issuance of the IDP and within one year from the date of entry into Japan

2. Complying with the "3-month rule" (Road Traffic Act Article 107-2)

No violation of the above

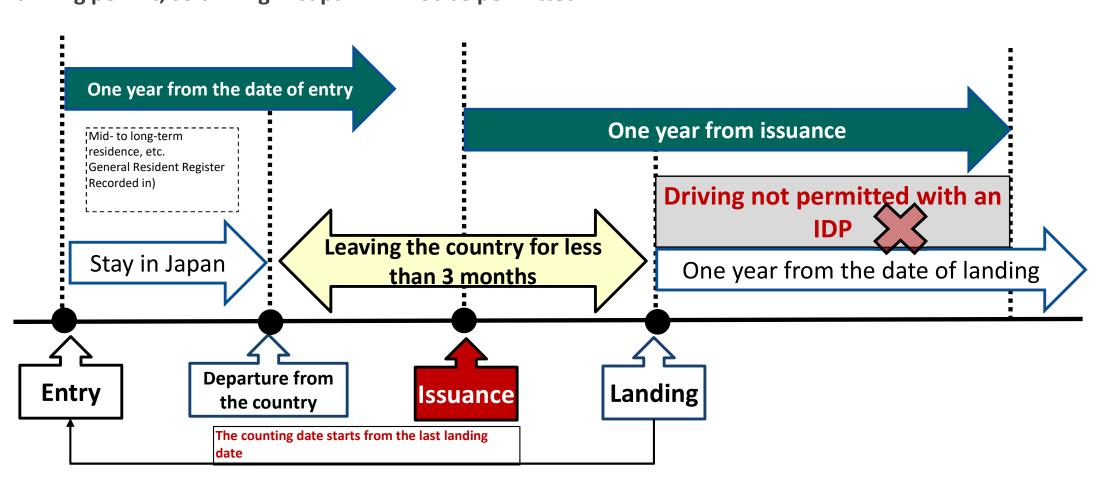
#### \* In case of re-entry after more than three months have passed since the date of departure

For individuals recorded in the General Resident Register (such as foreign residents staying mid- to long-term), if they depart Japan after confirmation of departure or receiving permission for re-entry, acquire a new international driving permit during their stay abroad exceeding three months, and then re-enter Japan, the date of such re-entry (return) will be the starting date for the validity period of the international driving permit.



#### \* If arrival occurs less than three months from the date of departure

If a person registered in the Basic Resident Register (such as foreign nationals with mid- to long-term residence status) departs Japan after confirmation of departure or receiving re-entry permission, obtains a new IDP during a stay of less than three months abroad, and then arrives in Japan, the date of such landing (return) will not be considered the starting date of the driving validity period of the international driving permit, so driving in Japan will not be permitted.



#### To drive in Japan, one of the following licenses is required:

- 1. Japanese driver's license
- 2. International driving permit based on the Convention on Road Traffic (Geneva Convention)

## 3. Foreign driver's license

Foreign driver's license (from a country or region that does not issue international driving permits and has a level equivalent to Japan)

A license issued by a country or region recognized to have an established licensing system (only those with an official Japanese translation attached, prepared by an organization specified by government ordinance)

**★** Driving with a foreign driver's license accompanied by a Japanese translation



After arriving in Japan, you can drive for one year if you have a foreign/regional driver's license with a Japanese translation\* attached.

(Article 107-2 of the Road Traffic Act)

\*Foreign/regional driver's license Driver's licenses from Switzerland,

Germany, France, Belgium, Monaco, and Taiwan: Limited to documents prepared by the consular agency of the country that issued the license, or a corporation designated by the National Public Safety Commission.

Source: National Police Agency website "Driving in Japan"

# Conversion of foreign driver's licenses Foreign license conversion (Legal revision in October 2025)

## What is foreign license conversion?

- ◆ This refers to converting a driver's license obtained abroad into a Japanese driver's license.
- ◆ The conversion requires an examination of the necessary documents and confirmation of knowledge and skills, etc.
- ◆ Also, please note that a legal revision will take place in October 2025, and some rules will be partially changed, so caution is required.

# 1 Main required documents, etc.

# \*Red text indicates revision as of October 2025

- Copy of the resident record
- (\* Regardless of the applicant's nationality, except in exceptional cases, it is necessary to attach a copy of the resident record.

Those who are staying temporarily for 3 months or less, such as for tourism, cannot obtain a license.)

- **◆** Valid foreign driver's license
- **◆** Japanese translation of a foreign driver's license
- **♦** Certificate of stay

(Proof that the foreign driver's license holder stayed in that country for a total of more than three months after obtaining the license.

Example: Passport, entry and exit records, etc.)

◆ Identity verification documents such as My Number Card and Residence Card

- 2 There will be a knowledge and skills verification.
- \* Items in red indicate changes effective from October 2025.

- **♦** "Knowledge Check"
- 50 questions
- The passing criteria for the test is 90%.
- ◆ "Skills Check"
- Verification of skills required for driving.
- The passing criteria for the test is 70%.

# 2 There are cases where the knowledge and skills tests are exempted.

**◆** Countries exempt from "Knowledge Test" and "Skills Test" (29 countries)

Iceland, Ireland, The United States of America (State of Ohio, Oregon, Colorado, Virginia, Hawaii, Maryland, Washington only), The United Kingdom, Italy, Australia, Austria, Netherlands, Canada, South Korea, Greece, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, Hungary, Finland, France, Belgium, Poland, Portugal, Monaco, Luxembourg, Taiwan.

**◆** Countries exempt from the "Skills Test"

U.S.A. (Limited to the state of Indiana)

### Types of vehicles you can drive depending on the license type

Driver's license Type	Range of vehicles that can be driven			
	[First-class moped] Displacement 50cc or less Engine displacement of 125cc or less and maximum output of 4.0 kW or less (new standard) Maximum speed 30 kilometers	[Second-class moped] Displacement 51cc to 125cc Legal speed of 60 kilometers	[Standard motorcycle] Displacement 125cc to 400cc	[Passenger Car] (Four Wheels)
License Plate	White  Oita City A 12-34	Yellow (51cc to 90cc) Pink (91cc to 125cc)  **********************************	White 大分 あ 12-34 大分 あ 12-34	Oita 300 A 12-34
Regular license	Yes	No	No	Yes
Ordinary motorcycle license	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Limited to small-sized Ordinary motorcycle license	Yes		×	×
Moped license		×	×	×

# 3. Proper response in the case of an Accident



You get in a Car Accident and...

It's not a serious injury
It's not that bad...

I'm saying it's okay. I keep telling you... Because the other party acted on their own and fell over...

Leaving the accident scene with a careless decision...

- 1. Violation of the duty to provide aid.
- 2. Violation of the duty to report.



May be labelled a

Hit and run

Violation of rescue obligation

It's not a serious

injury...

and...

Up to 10 years imprisonment
Or a fine of up to 1 million yen

35 demerit points

- License suspension
- License revoked for

3 years

Cannot be obtained

In case of a traffic accident, always

1. Dial 110 (Police) 2. Dial 119 (Emergency)

# **Proper Response:**

Police (110) and emergency (119)



Rescue of injured persons (follow fire department instructions)



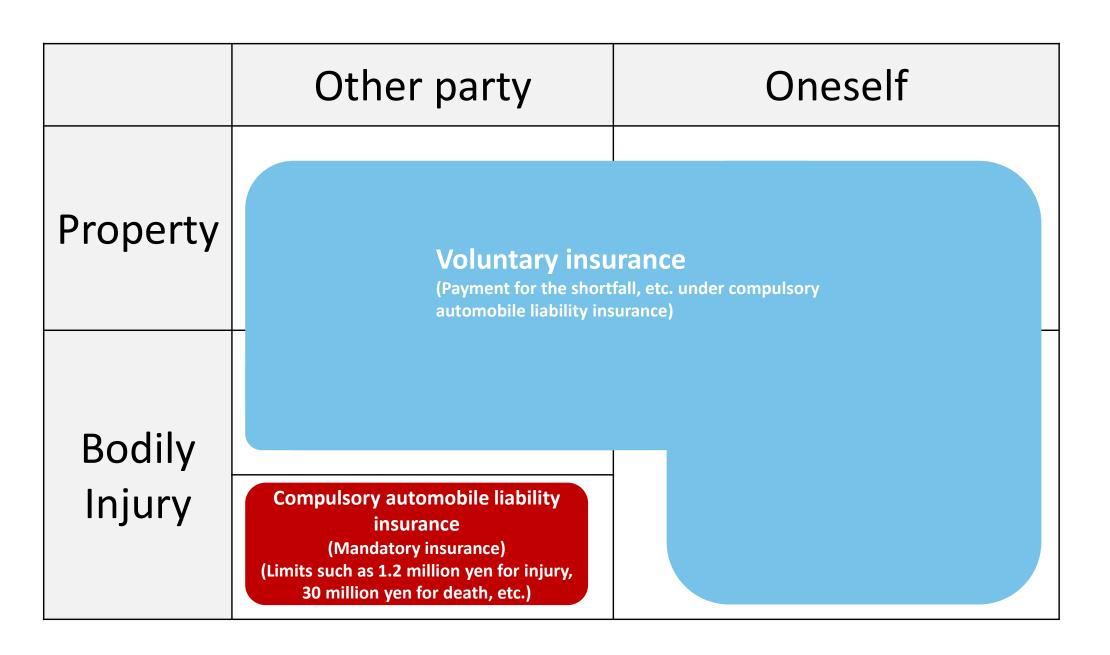
Prevent secondary damage (moving vehicles and injured persons)

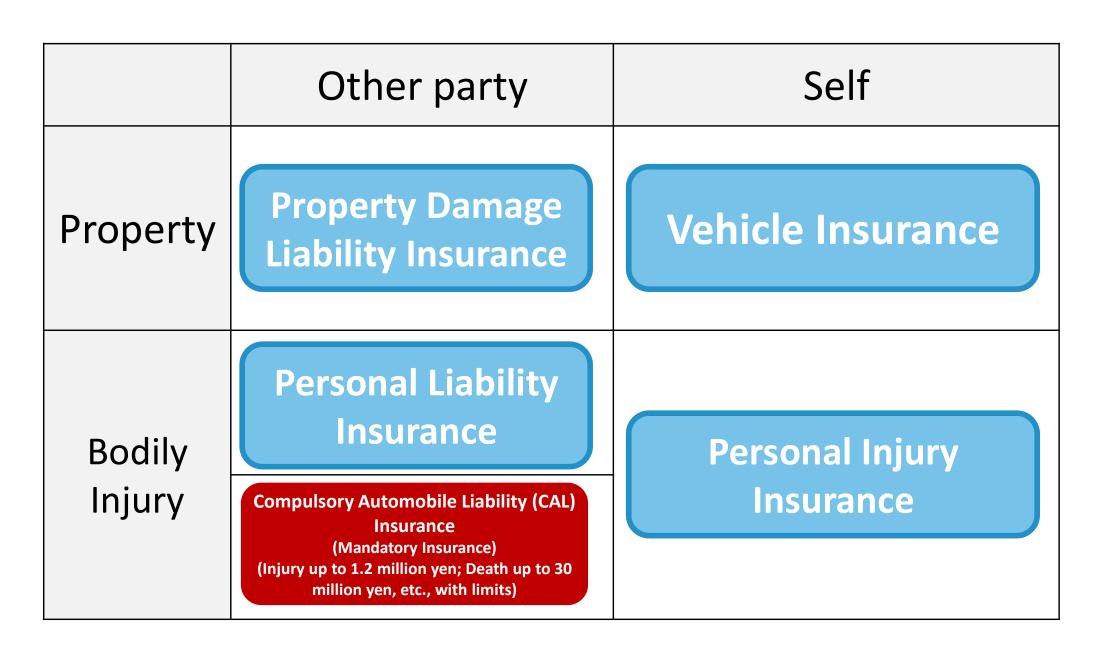


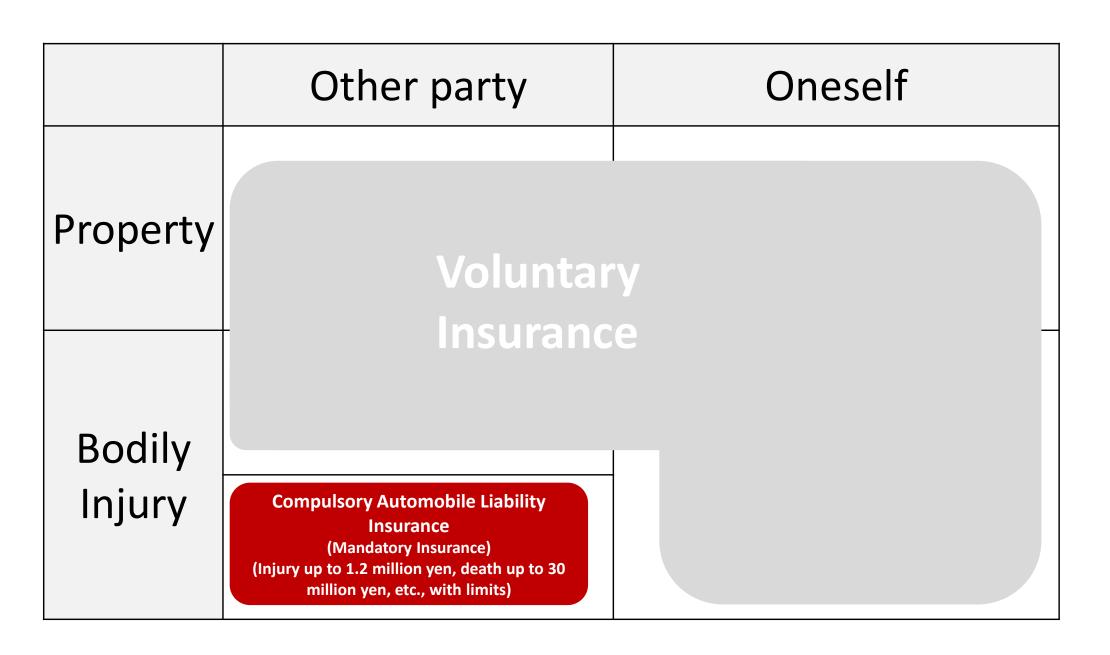
<sup>\*</sup> Notification is required even for single-vehicle accidents (property damage accidents)

# 4. Insurance Compulsory Automobile Liability (CAL) Insurance and Voluntary Insurance

	Other party	Oneself
Property		
Bodily Injury	Compulsory Automobile Liability Insurance (Mandatory Insurance) (Limits such as 1.2 million yen for injuries, 30 million yen for death, etc.)	







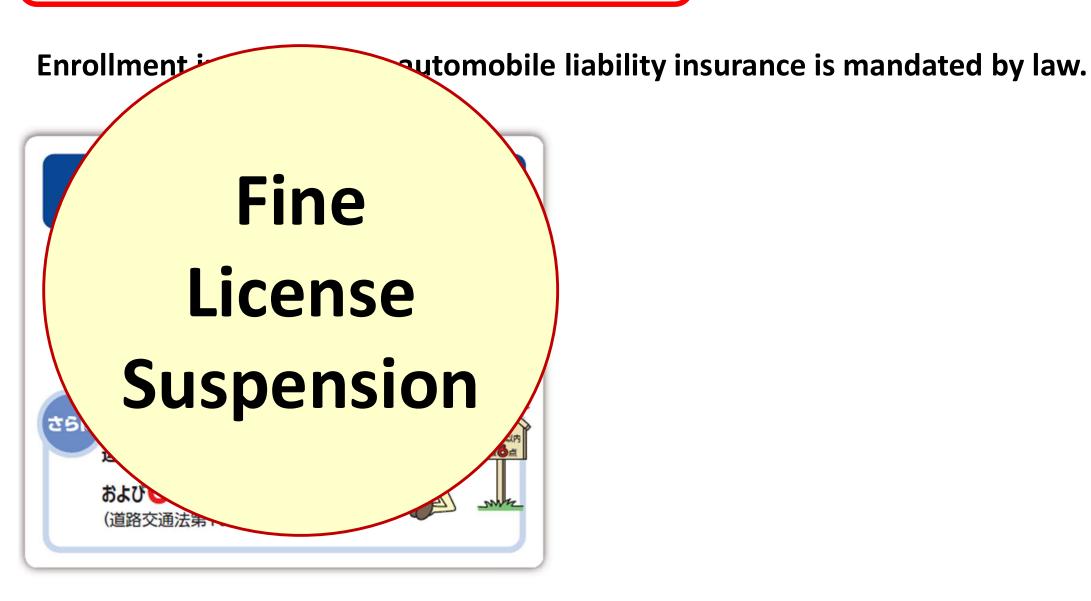
# Enrollment in Compulsory Automobile Liability Insurance is mandated by law.

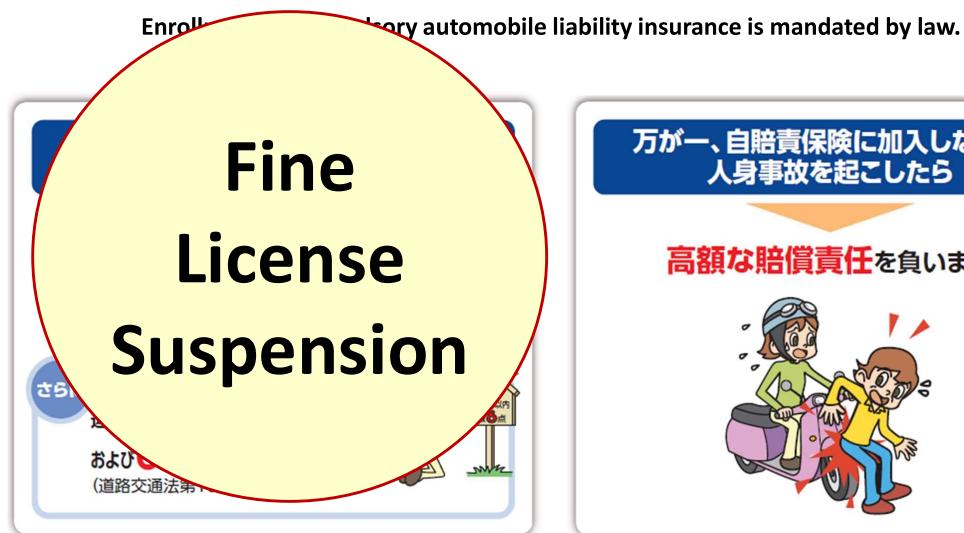




Enrollment in compulsory automobile liability insurance is mandated by law.

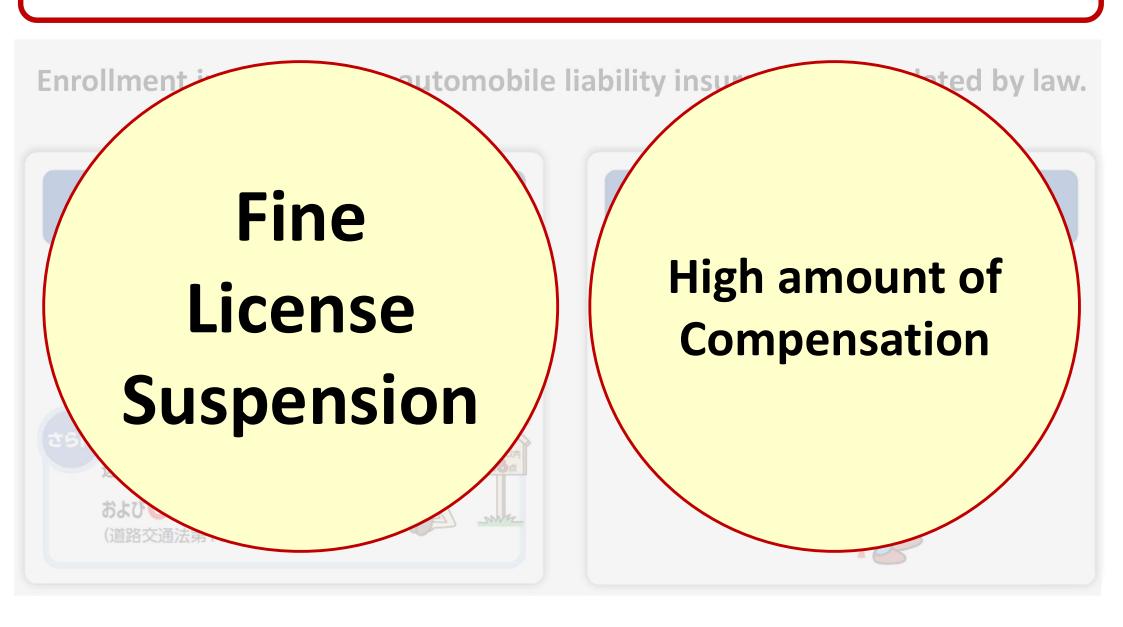








### Mandatory liability insurance (compulsory insurance)



Damages			One victim Limit per person
	Damage from injury		1.2 million yen
Permanent disability	A permanent disability that significantly impairs the nervous system functions or mental or thoracoabdominal organs and requires nursing care	When constant nursing care is required (Grade 1)	40 million yen
		When nursing care is required at any time (Grade 2)	30 million yen
	Aftereffects other than the above		(Grade 1) 30 million yen ∼(Grade 14) 750,000 yen
	Damage due to death		30 million yen

# **Voluntary Insurance**

	Other party	Oneself
Property	Liability Insurance for Property Damage	Vehicle Insurance
Bodily Injury	Liability Insurance for Bodily Injury  Mandatory Automobile Liability	Personal Injury Protection
ifijuiy	Insurance (Compulsory Insurance) (Limits such as 1.2 million yen for injury and 30 million yen for death)	

#### **Bodily injury liability insurance**



	Type of damage	Insurance payout limit
Compulsory Automobile Liability		30 million yen
Insurance Coverage	Sequelae	40 million yen
details	Injury	1.2 million yen

Bicycle rider
Medical expenses due
to injury
5 million yen

Compulsory automobile liability insurance

Medical expenses due to injury (limit)

1,200,000 yen

3.8 million yen Out-of-pocket expenses?!

#### **Bodily Injury Liability Insurance**



	Type of damage	Insurance payment limit
Compulsory automobile liability		30 million yen
insurance Coverage	Permanent disability	40 million yen
details	Injury	1.2 million yen

Bicycle rider
Medical expenses due
to injury
5 million yen

Compulsory automobile liability insurance

Medical expenses due to injury (limit)

1.2 million yen

**Bodily injury liability insurance** 

Medical expenses due to injury

3.8 million yen

## **Personal liability insurance**

Approved Damage Amount	Age Occupation		Damage
Approximately 528 million yen	41 years old	Doctor	Death
Approximately 397 million yen	21 years old	University student	Permanent disability
Approximately 382 million yen	29 years old	Company employee	Aftermath disability
Approximately 378 million yen	23 years old	23 years old Company employee Aftern	
Approximately 367 million yen	38 years old	Doctor	Death
Approximately 365 million yen	14 years old	Junior high school student	Aftereffects disability

	Other party	Oneself
Property	Liability insurance for property damage	Vehicle insurance
Bodily Injury	Liability insurance for bodily injury to others  Compulsory automobile liability insurance	Personal injury insurance

#### **Property Damage Liability Insurance**



In the case of an accident involving another party,
a responsibility ratio arises.

For example...
The other party's repair cost is 2 million yen.
Your responsibility ratio: 80%
The other party's responsibility ratio: 20%

Repair Cost for the Other Party: 2 million 
yen

**Liability Percentage** 

**80%** 



1.6 million



# Property Damage Liability Insurance

Certified Damage Amount	Court	Date of Accident	Damaged Property
3,289 million yen	Tokyo District Court	August 3, 2008	Road Restoration Costs
261.35 million yen	Kobe District Court	May 29, 1985	Cargo (kimono fabric and Western clothes)
134.8 million yen	Tokyo District Court	February 23, 1991	Store (pachinko)
120.36 million yen	Fukuoka District Court	March 1, 1975	Train, railway, house
117.98 million yen	Osaka District Court	April 19, 2007	Precision machinery equipment
113.47 million yen	Chiba District Court	September 14, 1992	Train

# The car driver

Prepare for a Traffic accident August 3, 2008

Voluntary Insurance Kimono fabrics

1 35 million Voluntary Insurance Kimono fabrics

(Personal liability, property damage liability insurance, etc.)

Please register!

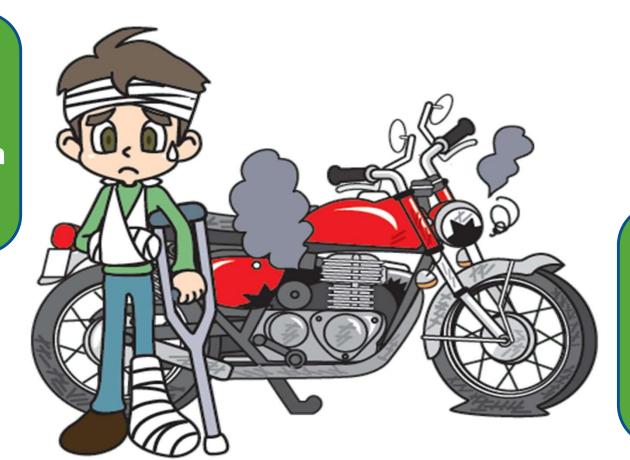
recision iviachinery Equipment

Train

	The other party	Myself
Property	Property damage liability insurance	Vehicle insurance
Bodily	Bodily injury liability insurance  Mandatory automobile liability insurance	Personal Injury Insurance

### **Personal Injury Insurance**

**Injury Compensation** 



Car Motorcycle Compensation

**Vehicle Insurance** 

## Response post police arrival (if able)

4. Check with the other party



6. Do not settle on the spot under any circumstances

7. Report to your workplace, school, or affiliated organization









# Moped (Motorized Bicycles) Rules

# First-class moped

50cc or less

**Motorized bicycle** 

**\** 

30 km/h

**Required** 

**Standard** 

**Required license** 

Driving with a four-wheel license

**Legal speed limit** 

Two-stage Right turn

# Second-class moped

51cc - 125cc

**Small limited standard** 

two-wheeler
(Standard/Large)



60 km/h

**Not required** 

# Class 1 moped 50cc or less

**Standard** 

April 1, 2025

New standards

# **Motorized bicycle**

Required license

Driving with a fourwheel license

Legal speed limit

Two-step (method)
Right turn

Total displacement of 125cc or less and

Maximum output of 4.0 kW or less

is possible, but the rules are the same.



Class 1 motorized bicycle (50cc or less + 125cc or less and maximum output of 4.0kw or less (new standard))

1. Required: Acquire a License, and a cellphone

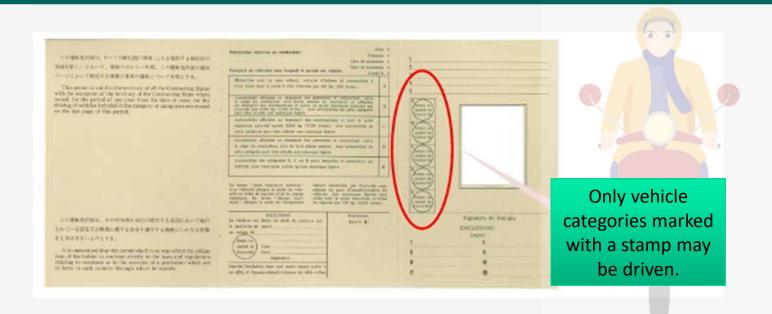
2. Required: Enroll in CAL insurance

3. Required: Wear a helmet



Class 1 Moped (50cc or less + 125cc or less and maximum output 4.0 kW or less under new standards)

# International driver's license "Rank A" Required for driving a moped



Rules for riding with two people

Class 1 Moped 50cc or less 125cc or less and Maximum output 4.0 kW or less (new standards)

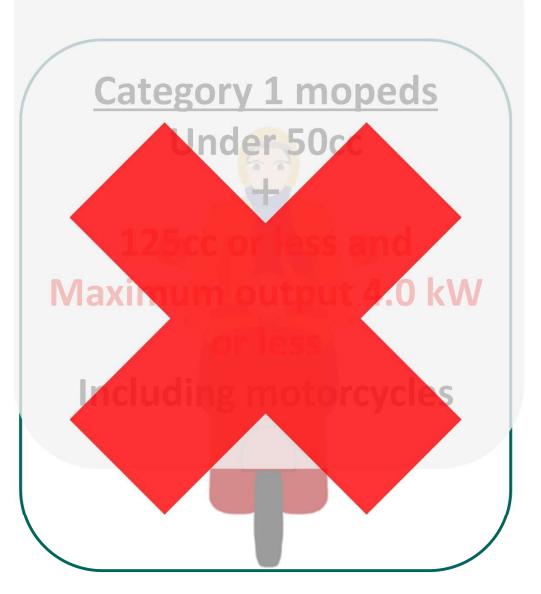
Category 2

mopeds

51cc or more

125cc or less

**Rules for Two-Person Riding** 





**Rules for Two-Person Riding** 

# Conditions for Two-Person Riding

Rules for double riding on a motorcycle

- 1. Second-class mopeds are allowed (first-class mopeds are prohibited)
- 2. There must be a rear seat
- 3. "Small-limited ordinary motorcycle, ordinary motorcycle, large motorcycle license"

  One year has passed since acquisition
- \*First-class and second-class mopeds are not allowed on highways
- \*For ordinary and large motorcycles, the driver must be 20 years or older

May drive on the highway after more than three years since obtaining the license

### Differences in Rules Between Class 1 and Class 2 Mopeds

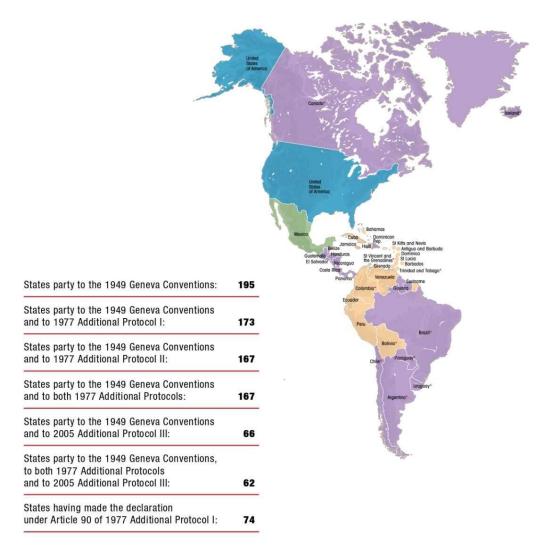
Main Differences			
	[Class 1 Moped] Engine displacement 50cc or less	[Class 2 Moped] Engine displacement 51 to 125cc	
Two-person riding	X		
Two-stage right turn	Required	Not required	
Legal speed limit	30 kilometers per hour	60 kilometers per hour	
Driving on the highway	×	×	
Driving with a moped license		×	

#### **STATES PARTY TO THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS**

#### **AND THEIR ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS**

This map shows which States were party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and to their Additional Protocols, as at 31 December 2013. It also indicates which States had made the optional declaration under Article 90 of Additional Protocol I, recognizing the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission.

N.B. The names of the countries given on this map may differ from their official names



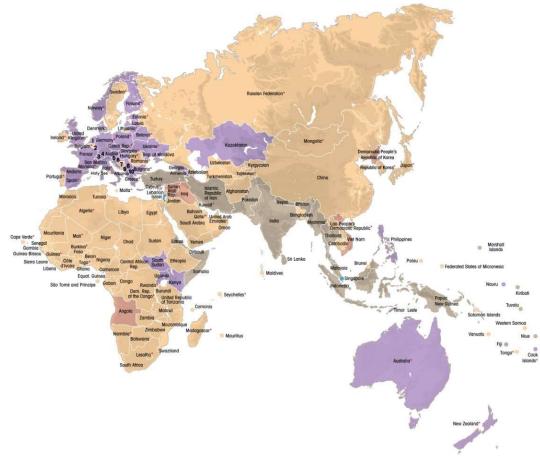


1 Netherlands\*

2 Luxembourg\*

3 Switzerland\*

4 Liechtenstein\*



5 Slovenia\*

6 Croatia\*

7 Bosnia and Herzegovina

8 Serbia\*

9 Montenegro\*

10 FYR Macedonia

States having made the declaration

under Article 90 of 1977 Additional Protocol I

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