

Japan Lowers Age of Majority to 18

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Parental consent - /pə'ren(t)l kən'sent/ a parent or guardian's explicit permission for a child to engage in one activity or the other
Example: In most states, the age is 16 with parental consent.
2. Transgender - /trans'jendər, tranz'jendər/ denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with their birth sex.
Example: LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender.
3. Dwindling - /'dwindliŋ/ gradually diminishing in size, amount, or strength.
Example: Hardly half a dozen monasteries survive, inhabited by small and ever dwindling communities.
4. Financial freedom - /fə'nan(t)SHəl 'frēdəm/ means you have enough financial resources to pay for your living expenses and allow you to afford many of your life goals
Example: There is a marked sense of financial freedom that comes from getting out of his deal.
5. Tax revenue - /taks reh·vuh·noo/ the funds collected from taxes on income and profits
Example: The central government collects the tax revenue on behalf of local authorities.



Japan's government has lowered the age at which people become adults. It is the first time since 1876 that this has happened. From April 1, 2022, teenagers will become adults at the age of 18, which is two years earlier than the age at which adulthood currently legally happens.

However, even though the age has been lowered, there are still certain things that will not change. The legal age for drinking alcohol, smoking and gambling will remain fixed at 20. The new law will enable 18-year-olds to get married without **parental consent**, and allow them to apply for loans and credit cards. **Transgender** men and women aged 18 and over will be able to apply to courts to have their gender officially recognized.

The new law has been passed in an effort to bring about social and economic change in Japan. The government hopes to see an increase in the number of young people getting married and starting families. This will help to address the nation's **dwindling** birth rate and aging population. Greater **financial freedoms** could be a boost to the economy and provide more **tax revenue**. This is vital for a government struggling to cope with increasing pension and healthcare payments.

Many of Japan's young people were more concerned about how the law would affect the traditional Coming of Age Day. This is a national holiday held in January in which 20-year-olds dress up in traditional kimonos to celebrate adulthood.

DISCUSSION

1. How did you feel when you became an adult?
2. Is it best to be an adult or a child?
3. When is the earliest someone should be allowed to marry?
4. When is the earliest someone should be allowed to get a loan?
5. What are the good and bad things about being an adult?
6. What are the dangers of an aging population?