

Religious Juridical Persons and Administration of Religious Affairs

1 Overview of the Religious Juridical Persons System

◆ Number of Religious Juridical Persons

Jurisdiction	Category	Comprehensive religious juridical persons	Single religious juridical persons	Total
	Religion			
Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology	Shinto	128	86	214
	Buddhism	154	258	412
	Christianity	60	236	296
	Other	31	76	107
	Subtotal	373	656	1,029
Prefectural governors	Shinto	7	85,298	85,305
	Buddhism	11	77,408	77,419
	Christianity	8	4,062	4,070
	Other	1	15,044	15,045
	Subtotal	27	181,812	181,839
Total		400	182,468	182,868

As of Dec.31, 2006

*under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Education, Culture, Science, and Technology:
any religious juridical person whose precinct buildings are in multiple prefectures.
Under the jurisdiction of a prefectural governor:
any religious juridical person whose precinct buildings are in only a single prefecture.

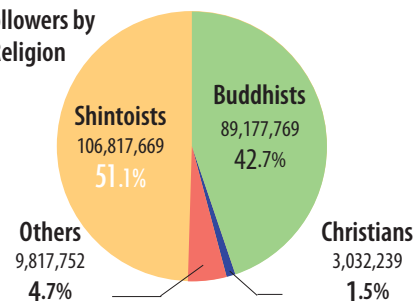
In Japan, a diverse range of religious activities are carried out by a variety of religious associations, including religious associations of various sizes such as Shinto shrines, Buddhist temples, and Christian churches as well as comprehensive religious associations such as religious Shinto denominations, Buddhist denominations, and Christian denominations. Among these religious associations, approximately 183,000 are incorporated as religious juridical persons in accordance with the Religious Juridical Persons Law.

In order to ensure the freedom and autonomy of activities by religious groups on the basis of freedom of religion and principle of the separation of religion and government guaranteed by the Constitution, the religious juridical persons system aims to secure a foundation for the administration of the property and organized structure of religious associations by granting them the status of corporate entities.

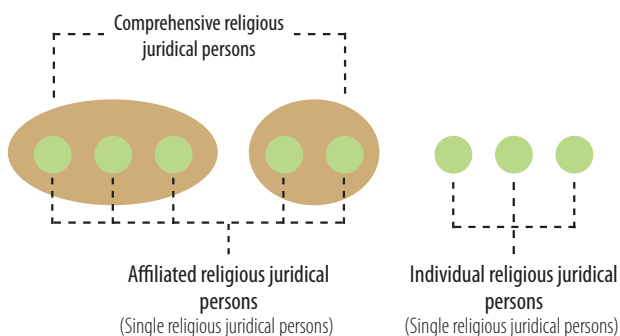
◆ Number of Followers by classification of Religion

As of Dec. 31, 2006

*The criteria for determining religious affiliation vary with the religious group.



◆ Category of Religious Juridical Persons



- Comprehensive religious juridical persons
Shinto denominations, Buddhist denominations, or Christian denominations that contain single religious juridical persons
- Single religious juridical persons
Shinto shrines, Buddhist temples, Christian churches, and other corporate religious entities equipped with facilities for worship.
- Affiliated religious juridical persons
A religious juridical person that is under the coverage of another religious juridical person.
- Individual religious juridical persons:
A religious juridical person that is not under the coverage of another religious juridical person.

2 Administrations of Religious Affairs

The Agency for Cultural Affairs carries out the following activities to ensure both the appropriate application of the religious juridical persons system and the appropriate management and operation of religious juridical persons.

1. Approval of religious juridical persons

As the competent authority stipulated in the Religious Juridical Persons Law, the Agency for Cultural Affairs approves various aspects of religious juridical persons,

including their incorporation, amendments to their rules of incorporation, mergers, or voluntary dissolution.

2. Guidance for the management and operation of religious juridical persons

The Agency for Cultural Affairs provides guidance and advice on the administration of religious affairs at the prefectural level; holds training courses for prefectural supervisory staff in charge of religious affairs; offers practical workshops and other lectures for religious juridical persons; produces manuals and videotapes, and so forth.

The Agency for Cultural Affairs is also striving to widely ensure that all religious juridical persons submit copies of their office documentation for review.

In addition, as regards so-called inactive religious juridical persons, the Agency promotes the resolution of their inactive state through merger and dismissal.



A lecture for leaders of religious juridical persons

3. Collection and production of materials on religion

In addition to collecting statistical data concerning religion, the Agency for Cultural Affairs also compiles and publishes the annual “Religion Yearbook” and other publications.



The “Religion Yearbook” and other publications

4. The Religious Juridical Persons Council

To endure the freedom of religious juridical persons and duly consider their distinctive characteristics from a religious perspective, the Religious Juridical Persons Council was established as an advisory organ of the Minister of Education, Culture, Science, and Technology.