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External Shocks Looming Over Inbound Tourism

Performance remains solid despite the decline in Chinese tourists, but caution is advised regarding the impact of escalating tensions in the Middle East

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Summary

- In response to the Chinese government's request to refrain from travel, which began in the fall of 2025, the number of Chinese visitors to Japan has decreased. The magnitude of this decline is comparable to that seen in the fall of 2012, when the Senkaku Islands were nationalized. On the other hand, the number of visitors from Hong Kong, Taiwan, North America, and South Korea has remained steady, so the overall inbound tourism market has not lost its momentum.
- The number of foreign travelers from countries and regions that send large numbers of visitors to Japan is generally on an upward trend. While the proportion of travelers choosing Japan as a destination has declined in mainland China due to requests to refrain from travel to Japan, it remains stable at a high level in South Korea and Taiwan, and is on the rise in the United States.
- Looking ahead, the number of visitors to Japan from mainland China may recover more slowly than expected if the deterioration in Japan-China relations persists. The number of visitors from South Korea is expected to be sluggish in 2026 but is projected to begin increasing in 2027. On the other hand, the number of visitors from Taiwan and the United States is expected to show steady growth in both 2026 and 2027. However, caution is warranted regarding the possibility that rising crude oil prices due to tensions in the Middle East and a slowdown in the global economy could dampen visitor numbers.