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# Guest workers in Japan

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# Guest workers in Japan

## **Abstract**

Since Japan first began to industrialise in the mid-nineteenth century, more than one million people have emigrated to various countries throughout the world, including the United States, Central and South America and Australia. Government policies actively encouraged emigration especially before and shortly after World War Two because, despite rapid urbanisation, Japan could not afford to maintain its steadily increasing population. The Japanese government also set out to establish Japanese colonies in both Korea and China.



THE CENTRE FOR  
MULTICULTURAL STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

Guest Workers in Japan

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*Occasional Paper No. 21*

## **GUEST WORKERS IN JAPAN**

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The speaker has been temporarily posted as a special advisor to the Japanese Embassy in Canberra. This paper does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of either the Japanese Embassy or the Japanese Department of Foreign Affairs.



## **1. A SHORT HISTORY OF JAPANESE MIGRATION POLICIES**

Since Japan first began to industrialise in the mid-nineteenth century, more than one million people have emigrated to various countries throughout the world, including the United States, Central and South America and Australia. Government policies actively encouraged emigration especially before and shortly after World War Two because, despite rapid urbanisation, Japan could not afford to maintain its steadily increasing population. The Japanese government also set out to establish Japanese colonies in both Korea and China.

Despite this willingness to promote emigration in the past, the Japanese government has continually maintained a restrictive immigration policy by consistently refusing to allow immigrants to enter Japan. They argue that a restrictive immigration policy is necessary for a geographically small country with a population of 120 million. However, this policy demonstrates an ideological unwillingness to accept culturally different people of any kind. Basically, the Japanese are proud of their traditionally 99 per cent homogenous population and as a consequence they are reluctant to receive even Indo-Chinese refugees.

Korea was made a special case after annexation, when Koreans were allowed to enter Japan. After World War Two the Japanese government once more considered the possibility of relaxing its immigration policies to allow the recruitment of guest workers by the rapidly expanding textile and manufacturing industries. However, the baby-boom of the 1950s made this unnecessary. Instead they were faced with the problem of a population explosion. To alleviate population pressure both the Japanese government and employers encouraged rural workers to emigrate. Government migration programs sent more than 500,000 Japanese principally to South American countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay and Peru.

Unlike the European countries therefore, which were keen to recruit guestworkers, or Australia with its massive post-war immigration program, from 1960-1975 the Japanese government, with the backing of Japanese industry, worked towards developing a technology which would reduce the demand for unskilled workers in manufacturing industries, thus removing any need for immigration or guest worker programs. The government had already stopped its organised mass-emigration programs just after the wave of strong demand for industrial workers in the late 1950s. By the mid 1980s the Emigration Office in the Immigration Section of the Department of Foreign Affairs had been abolished altogether.

By the mid 1980s the government became aware that the labour market was becoming internationalised or globalised. During this decade the living standards of ordinary citizens rose rapidly and the Japanese yen appreciated sharply. In 1985 for example, GNP per capita in Japan was US \$12,850; compared to US \$2,350 in Korea; US \$570 in the Phillipines; US \$160 in Bangladesh; and US \$300 in China. Furthermore, while one Australian dollar was equivalent to 400 yen in the 1960s, it was worth only 120 yen by 1990.

It is not surprising therefore that, as one of the world's wealthiest countries, Japan began to attract both legal and illegal guest workers. In 1988 for example, the number of legal guest workers was 81,407, 85 per cent of whom were classified as entertainers such as singers, orchestra musicians, dancers and sports professionals. The number of legal guest workers staying in Japan on a long term basis (ie: more than 6 months) was 39,589, about 50 per cent of whom were entertainers (Table 1).

**Table 1: Arrivals of Foreign Temporary Workers in Japan, 1980-1988.**

Purpose of Entry	1980	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Businessmen	7,244	6,887	6,826	6,773	6,177	6,141
Category 4-1-5		(5,943)				(7,638)
Academics	277	336	310	333	350	405
Category 4-1-7		(1,007)				(1,890)
Entertainers	20,580	32,952	34,569	44,989	59,693	71,062
Category 4-1-9		(7,346)				(14,792)
Technicians	20	10	13	18	24	19
Category 4-1-12		(13)				(22)
Skilled Workers	475	511	498	552	465	480
Category 4-1-13		(1,336)				(1,723)
Special Visa	1,706	2,079	1,778	2,071	2,474	3,336
Category 4-1-16-3						
Language Teachers		1,196	1,464	1,355	1,718	2,032
		(1,799)				(7,252)
Employment	1,706	883	314	716	756	1,304
		(3,004)				(6,276)
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,302</b>	<b>42,775</b>	<b>43,994</b>	<b>54,736</b>	<b>69,183</b>	<b>81,407</b>
		(20,478)				(39,583)

(Figures in brackets): Foreigners staying in Japan  
(Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice)

The Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice statistics show an increase in illegal workers from 2339 in 1983 to 14,316 in 1988. Although many are compulsorily deported, clearly the rate of increase is still exceptionally high. In 1988 the number of guest workers deported for immigration violations was 17,157. It is estimated that in 1990 the number of illegal guest workers will exceed 20,000.

While Japan has never been willing to accept unskilled guest workers it has, since the modernisation of Japanese society and industry in the mid nineteenth century, been ready to accept guest workers with skills or professional qualifications. For example, many Europeans and Americans were recruited by both the Tokugawa Shogun government and the Japanese Meiji government to assist in the modernisation of Japanese society although they were not permitted to stay permanently.

For this reason the Japanese Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act actually permits a small number of professional and skilled guest workers to enter Japan. However, since the end of World War Two the government has been under increasing pressure to open up its labour market to unskilled guest workers.

## **2. WHO ARE THESE UNSKILLED GUEST WORKERS?**

### **Female Guest Workers**

From the mid 1980s the media began reporting the exploitation of illegal guest workers by both employers and recruiters. Many of them were young female workers, mainly from such countries as Pakistan, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Korea (Table 2). They are recruited as disco-dancers, waitresses, and hostesses at second and third class restaurants, pubs, motels and hotels. Sometimes they are forced to become prostitutes at massage parlours (Table 3). As any form of prostitution is prohibited by Japanese law, the recruitment of prostitutes is often carried out by the Yakuza groups, the Japanese organised crime syndicates.



**Table 2: Nationality of Illegal Foreign Workers, Jan-June, 1989**

		per cent
Pakistan	2,246	(24.2)
Philippines	2,107	(22.8)
Bangladesh	1,695	(18.2)
Korea	1,345	(14.4)
Malaysia	706	(7.6)
Thailand	628	(6.7)
China	292	(3.1)
India	117	(1.3)

(Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice)

Note: These figures refer to illegal workers detected by the authorities, and do not provide any indication of the total number of illegal workers.

**Table 3: Job Classification of Illegal Foreign Workers in Japan (Female, 1988)**

		per cent
Hostesses and Barmaids	4,359	(81.0)
Stripteasers	205	(3.8)
Production Workers	165	(3.1)
Prostitutes	140	(2.6)
Miscellaneous Workers	120	(2.2)
Shop Assistants	105	(1.9)
Others	291	(5.4)
Total	5,385	

(Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice)

The reasons unskilled female guest workers can obtain work in Japan are easily identifiable. Firstly the female population is declining. Secondly more young Japanese women are becoming highly educated and consequently tend to avoid such low-status work. Thirdly the development of the welfare system means the pressure to accept undesirable jobs is reduced. As a result employers in these areas are increasingly reliant

on female guest workers from developing countries who are recruited as cheap labour. There are several 'push factors' in developing countries which induce these young women to enter Japan illegally to work.

Technically speaking many of them are not illegal guest workers when they first arrive. As the Japanese government will issue skilled professionals a work permit allowing a stay of up to three years, many young women prior to applying for a work permit enrol in professional dancing or music schools to gain the necessary certification, thus satisfying this requirement. Japanese Embassies and Consulates in Asian countries are empowered to issue these permits. For example, in Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines, a Certificate of Preclearance for Public Entertainment allows such women to pose as professional dancers and musicians without actual experience. Many guest workers tend to overstay their permits. The reasons are two-fold. Firstly they need the money and want to stay as long as possible. Secondly employers encourage them to stay thus saving money on new recruitments. As a result they become illegal guest workers and many who enter the country find employment outside the restrictions of their permits.

### **Male Guest Workers**

Of course, not all guest workers in Japan are necessarily female disco dancers or hostesses. Recently the number of male guest workers has also been increasing rapidly. (Table 4) As with their female counterparts, they are also mainly from Bangladesh, the Philippines, Pakistan and Korea. They are usually unskilled manual labourers recruited by the construction industry and small manufacturing companies. According to recent statistics 24.6 per cent of illegal male guest workers identified by the Ministry of Justice were recruited by the construction industry and another 39 per cent were recruited by the manufacturing sector (Table 4).

**Table 4: Job Classification of Illegal Foreign Workers in Japan (Male, 1988)**

		per cent
Construction Workers	3,807	(42.6)
Production Workers	3,486	(39.0)
Miscellaneous Workers	765	(8.6)
Shop Assistants	283	(3.2)
Waiters	170	(1.9)
Cooks	115	(1.3)
Others	303	(3.4)
Total	8,929	

(Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice)

The Japanese government does not permit unskilled guest workers to enter freely into the Japanese labour market, the exception being young trainees recruited by Japanese companies overseas and sent to Japan for education and training. They usually obtain 'Special Visas' for students, trainees and persons joining families already in Japan. Permit holders are not allowed to change jobs during their stay.

The reasons male guest workers can obtain work in Japan are very similar to those of their female counterparts. Firstly the young male population is declining. Secondly young Japanese males tend to be more highly educated and avoid undesirable and low-paid jobs. Thirdly the wage rates expected by young Japanese employees are considered too high by sub-contract companies and small manufacturing companies which rely instead on poorly paid, illegal guest workers with Short Term Stay Visas, rather than adopt high technology equipment.

A Short-Term Stay Visa is only issued for sight-seeing, visiting relatives and so on. Those wishing to work in Japan need a Posting Visa or a Working Visa. Posting Visas are issued to those intending to engage in commercial business (foreign trade and business management), religious activities, and journalism. Work Visas are issued to visiting academics, entertainers, specialist technicians, foreign language teachers and other specialised workers. They can stay in Japan for up to 3 years with the possibility of an extension. Unlike female guest workers, male guest workers therefore are illegal workers from the outset.

Illegal male guest workers are exploited by both employers and recruiters. However, despite low wages and appalling working conditions many are still willing to become guest workers. In the construction industry many are reportedly employed in remote areas and are therefore not easily detected by the police. In fact, the Japanese government has been approached both formally and informally by the governments of Korea and China for example, to accept unskilled guest workers into the workforce.

### **Students at Japanese Language Schools**

The third category of illegal guest workers are students. In 1988 there were 33,522 overseas students in Japan, some attending Japanese universities, but the majority at private Japanese language schools. It is those who attend the language schools who have caused the most problems. 85 per cent of these students come from China. It is widely recognised that they come to Japan, not because they want to study Japanese,

but because they want to earn money or use Japan as a springboard from which to emigrate to a third country as political refugees.

A recent study of overseas students revealed that while 10 per cent wish to emigrate to a third country, 43.7 per cent intended staying in Japan after completing their language courses. Only 32.5 per cent of Chinese students intend returning home. This number has increased since the Tianenmen Square massacre of June 1989. Some Chinese university students who successfully receive scholarships in advance go back to China with the money without completing their courses. More recently however, Japanese universities have been under pressure to provide more assistance for Chinese students.

While sponsored students are not usually allowed to work, overseas private students are permitted to do so for up to 20 hours a week in order to support themselves and pay tuition fees. However many private Chinese students are working far above the legally permitted limit. It is often reported that Chinese and Korean students employed as unskilled labourers and shop assistants work for more than 40 hours per week and therefore cannot attend their schools and universities. Some Japanese language schools actually exploit their students by functioning as illegal recruiters who help Chinese students to find illegal work.

Compared to Japanese workers, their working conditions are very poor, yet despite this Chinese students are keen to stay in Japan. This is because their pay for one month as an unskilled worker in Tokyo is equivalent to one year's wage of a high ranking Chinese government official.

In summary, three categories of illegal guest workers can be readily identified:

1. Female entertainers;
2. Male unskilled labourers employed in the construction and manufacturing industries;
3. Overseas students who work for more than the permitted 20 hours per week.

As the number of temporary work permits issued each year is limited while the demand for their labour is rising, many guest workers are entering illegally. Estimates on the numbers vary. The Ministry of Justice put the figure at 107,000 by the end of the 1980s but others maintain that that figure is grossly underestimated and the actual figure is closer to 300,000. A reasonable estimate of the number of these illegal guest workers is from 100,000 to 150,000 in the late 1980s and this number is rapidly increasing.

As one of the world's most affluent societies, Japan is under great pressure to open its commodity and labour markets to both overseas competitors and guest workers. While this number may seem very small when compared with the number of migrants and refugees arriving in Australia, in Japanese historical and cultural terms it is seen as a social problem.

### **3. THE GREAT DEBATE IN THE LATE 1980S**

In the late 1980s a lively debate on the issue of guest workers in Japan was stimulated by media reports on both illegal guest workers in particular and foreigners in general.

#### **Arguments used by the supporters of guest worker programs**

Firstly supporters of the guest worker programs argue that as one of the world's affluent societies, Japan has obligations to accept guest workers, especially those from developing countries, as a means of foreign aid. Critics maintain that Japan has only increased its foreign aid in order to compensate for its failure to take Indo-Chinese refugees and Asian guest workers. They insist that Japan's foreign aid programs should be based solely on humanitarian considerations. They argue that accepting guest workers could alleviate social problems in developing countries caused by high unemployment.

Secondly, they argue that Japan should become more internationalised. In a world where global mobilisation of investment; technological transfer; world-wide commodity trade and globalisation of human resources such as migrants, refugees and guest workers have already taken place; they argue that Japan can no longer resist these global changes. In fact, it is economically, politically and historically unavoidable. Japan would therefore become an active participant in the globalisation of the world. Accepting refugees and guest workers is just one way to show firm Japanese commitment to such internationalisation.

Thirdly they argue that Japan must overcome its ethnocentric and closed-minded attitudes to foreigners by accepting people from different cultures. Japan would benefit from their influence and develop a more creative culture.

Fourthly, employer groups are strong supporters of strictly controlled guest worker programs. Larger companies argue that the labour market should be opened up for skilled and professional workers first. Representatives of the construction industry and

small manufacturing companies argue in favour of unskilled guest worker programs, because they recruit workers from Asian countries. Employers insist that the government set up a surveillance organisation based on the West German model to control the flow of guest workers (Table 5).

**Table 5: Opinions from government and private sector.**

<b>Labour Ministry</b>	Prudence is necessary in accepting unskilled workers from abroad: on the other hand, professionals and people with expertise should be accepted, and regulations to facilitate these skilled workers should be established as soon as possible.	<b>Keizai Doyukai</b> (Japan Association of Corporate Executives)	Specialists should be recruited from abroad, unskilled workers need guidance and job training before working in Japan.
<b>Justice Ministry</b>	A cautious approach is essential in discussing the question of unskilled foreign workers. For the time being, the present policy of barring such workers should be maintained.	<b>Rengo</b> (Japanese Private Sector Trade Union Confederation)	Only specialists and technical workers from abroad should be accepted.
<b>Foreign Ministry</b>	This issue should be dealt with from the viewpoint of international cooperation and as part of the nation's efforts to internationalise. A long-range approach will be required in addition to an overall, fundamental review of, and revision to, the nation's legal system, social institutions and many other factors including the attitudes of Japanese to foreign workers.	<b>Sohyo</b> (General Council of Trade Unions of Japan)	Certain government controls need to be exercised to restrict the number of foreign workers and professional fields. Legislation pertaining to the employment of foreigners is required in addition to the revision to the Immigration Control Law. Introduction of a new work permit system is also necessary.
<b>Economic Planning Agency</b>	Integration of unskilled foreign workers would be very difficult under the present circumstances in the absence of a national consensus. The "qualitative" aspect of foreign workers is more important than the "quantitative" aspect. The "cost" of accepting such workers, must be considered beforehand, employment contracts should be relatively short - between six months and two years - and permanent residence should not be permitted.	<b>Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry</b>	Regulations for foreign workers in specialist fields should be eased, the question of unskilled workers should be studied in the context of the socioeconomic impact of such a move.

(Japan Times Weekly Overseas Edition, July 1, 1989)

### **Arguments used by the opponents of guest worker programs**

Firstly the opponents of guest worker programs argue that because of overpopulation, Japan cannot accept guest workers who are likely to want to stay permanently. They



often point out that the guest worker programs in such countries as West Germany, France and Switzerland have left a legacy of permanent settlers, whose families are still growing despite the termination of these schemes in the 1970s.

Secondly they argue that the economic benefits of guest worker programs in Europe in the 1950s and 1960s have been outweighed by the enormous social costs. Controlling ethnic conflict, the problem of integrating minority groups into the host society, together with social costs such as housing, language education, and social services would put too great a strain on taxpayers.

Thirdly they argue that the presence of culturally different people is the main cause of social disintegration resulting in the racial disturbances already suffered by some European countries. A stable society cannot be achieved with a diverse population. As Japanese traditionally regard themselves as an homogenous society, minority groups have already suffered greatly from discrimination. They worry that traditional Japanese culture will be destroyed by the introduction of other cultures. For this reason they do not want guest workers living in Japan.

Though Japan is a signatory country to the United Nations Convention on Anti-discrimination and has a Constitution which prohibits discrimination and protects basic human rights, minorities in Japan face strong discrimination. The fact that more than half of the Indo-Chinese refugees who have arrived in Japan have already migrated to third countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia, testifies to this.

Fourthly they argue that technological innovation, such as the introduction of robots, or at least highly mechanised automatic equipment, factory automation and office automation can solve the problems of unskilled labour shortages in the manufacturing and construction industries. Labour intensive industries, they believe, should be transferred to developing countries where unskilled workers as cheap labour are readily available.

Fifthly they argue that the Japanese government should increase foreign aid to improve living conditions and job opportunities by assisting developing countries to industrialise. This would remove 'push factors' encouraging the guest worker problem. Guest worker programs could merely become an excuse not to improve foreign aid.

Sixthly they argue that it enables capitalists to maintain a dual labour market system in which a primary labour market for wealth mainstream workers is paralleled by a

secondary labour market for poor and culturally different migrants, refugees and guest workers. This secondary market not only maximises profits but also divides the labour movement. For this reason it is not surprising that guest worker programs are bitterly opposed by many union officials as this ensures that wage levels for all workers remain low.

Seventhly they argue that with 1,500,000 unemployed, including aged unemployed, the construction and manufacturing industries should recruit Japanese people rather than cheap foreign labour.

#### **4. GUEST WORKER POLICIES IN JAPAN**

##### **The New Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act**

Increasing pressure-groups within Japan forced the government in late 1989 to clarify its policies on guest workers with the result that amendments were made to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and visa application procedures.

Prior to these amendments, various committees were established by the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Labour to debate the issues. Academics, researchers, union officials and high ranking public servants all engaged in intensive and serious debate producing reports of their findings for public discussion.

As a result, the Japanese government decided to no longer accept unskilled guest workers and introduced a fine for employers who continue to recruit illegally. The amendment was submitted by the Ministry of Justice and was passed by the Diet in late 1989.

The new law took effect on the 1st June, 1990. In its provisions the employers or recruiters (both inside and outside Japan) of illegal guest workers are likely to face up to three years imprisonment or a fine of up to two million yen (A\$18,000). The Act also specifies that all foreigners permitted to work require Labour Certificates and passports showing visa status are to be stamped in the Japanese language to facilitate checking by officials.

On the other hand, the Act has broadened job classifications to permit new categories of temporary workers as Table 6 shows.

**Table 6: Existing Job Classifications**

- 
1. Persons engaging in commercial business.
    - (a) persons to be posted by a foreign trade company
    - (b) persons engaging in management of business or capital investment.
  2. Missionaries or long term assignments who are posted by a foreign religious organisation
  3. News reporters on long-term assignments who are posted by a foreign organisation
  4. Employment invited by a Japanese company
  5. Teachers of foreign languages
  6. Entertainers such as singers, musicians, dancers, professional sportspersons or athletes etc.
  7. Private employees such as cooks, maidservants, drivers
  8. Academics engaging in research or teaching at universities or junior colleges
  9. Technicians hired by a Japanese organisation to provide special or advanced industrial technology
  10. Skilled labourers such as cooks, cake confectioners, etc.
  11. Students at junior colleges and universities
  12. Students at schools other than junior colleges and universities
  13. Trainees in industrial technology
  14. Persons engaging in cultural activities and in academic and advanced scientific study at universities or research institutions
  15. Persons who are not included in any of the abovementioned.
- 

**Newly Admitted Jobs from the 1st June, 1990**

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1. Lawyers and accountants
  2. Doctors and dentists
  3. Researchers hired by a Japanese organisation
  4. Teachers other than language teachers at all levels
  5. Professionals with tertiary qualifications hired by a Japanese organisation
  6. Employees transferred by a Japanese company overseas
  7. Persons engaging in cultural, academic and scientific activities or research activities without payment
  8. Students at high schools, other technical colleges and special schools.
- 

The Japanese government refused to introduce an unskilled guest worker scheme. The amendment was passed instead purely to reduce complaints from highly professional and skilled workers from overseas countries who intend to work in Japan full-time. However, the imposition of fines to discourage employers does not solve the problem of illegal unskilled guest workers. Consequently it is expected that the number of illegal workers will increase rapidly.

### **Future Directions**

Despite strong pressure for a strictly controlled guest worker scheme on the premise that guest workers have already made themselves indispensable to many restaurants, pubs, hotels and motels, it is unlikely in the short term that the Japanese government will amend its Immigration Control Act of permit the entry of unskilled guest workers.

However, employer groups are pushing for the government to allow trainees employed by Japanese companies overseas to enter Japan more easily.

For example, Keizai Doyuukai, a consortium of top businessmen, has proposed that Japan accept a small number of unskilled guest workers as trainees in industries suffering acute labour shortages, with the assurance that they will return home once their jobs are completed. The consortium believes that this would be a step towards internationalisation without flooding Japan with unskilled guest workers and regard it as a foreign aid program designed to demonstrate Japan's willingness to assist developing countries.

In the past, the Japanese government encouraged emigration to other countries because, as a developing country Japan could not sustain a large population. Now there is a reversal of this situation with Japan as a developed country, unwilling to accept unskilled guest workers from developing countries. These guest workers are keen to enter Japan for the very same reasons that Japanese ancestors emigrated to developed countries in the past.

In terms of world opinion, the total exclusion of unskilled guest workers and their families is no longer an option. According to the Japan Times Weekly (13th January 1990), in fact even domestic polls on this issue indicate a growing number of Japanese are in favour of a limited acceptance of unskilled guest workers. Clearly the debate on this subject will continue into the 1990s.

## 5. MULTICULTURAL JAPAN?

The debate should not only address the issue of unskilled guest workers entering Japan, but should also consider the wider issue of racial and ethnic relations in a traditionally homogenous population. Even with the existing strict ban in force, the number of illegal guest workers from the developing countries of Asia has reached 100,000 according to government estimates, although private estimates put this number as high as 300,000. Japanese society has already reached the point where it is no longer able to ignore the presence of people from different cultures.

Apart from legal and illegal guest workers, there are other groups of foreigners living in Japan. The number of Indo-Chinese refugees is gradually increasing, being at present 16,185, of which 6,282 have decided to settle permanently. The Ministry of Education estimates that there will be over 100,000 overseas students by the year 2000.

As well as these new settlers, old minorities such as the Koreans and the Chinese cannot be ignored. The Koreans in Japan are mainly the first and second generations of colonial workers sent to Japan as cheap labour before World War Two. In the immediate post-war period there were about two million Koreans living in Japan. Since then, many have returned to North and South Korea, but about 700,000 still remain. In spite of the fact that many of these have become Japanese citizens, they are still regarded as foreigners or aliens (gaijin or gaikokujin).

Currently there are 922,750 foreigners, including temporary but long term visitors, living in Japan (Table 7). Though the extent of multiculturalism in Japan is minimal compared with that of Australia or the United States, nevertheless, the Japanese government needs to develop, or at least clarify, its policies regarding racial and ethnic groups. The traditional assimilationist approach, which the government has adopted so far as a means of social integration, is no longer acceptable by world opinion.

**Table 7: Foreigners living in Japan \***

Nth. & Sth. Korea	677,140
China	128,269
US	32,766
Philippines	32,185
Britain	8,523
Thailand	5,277
Vietnam	4,763
Brazil	4,159
Malaysia	3,542
Canada	3,510
West Germany	3,222
France	2,744
India	2,730
Australia	2,585
Indonesia	2,379
Bangladesh	2,130
Pakistan	2,063
No nationality	1,658
Singapore	1,084
Cambodia	1,021
<b>Total</b>	<b>922,750</b>

\* Major nationalities living in Japan at end 1988.  
(Australian Financial Review, Oct. 30, 1989)

Theoretically speaking, there are several approaches to the problems of racial and ethnic groups. These are as follows:

1. The racist approach
2. The assimilationist approach
3. The integrationist approach based on the melting-pot hypothesis
4. The cultural pluralist approach (Liberal Pluralism)
5. The structural pluralist approach (Corporate Pluralism).

The first three approaches are based on the mono-cultural approach to racial and ethnic groups, the last two, which are mainly based on the M.M. Gordon's analysis, are likely to allow cultural and structural diversity within Japanese society.

The cultural pluralist approach usually allows ethnic minorities to preserve their own language and culture in their own communities, but not in public places, such as schools and the workplace. Discrimination against them by the host society is forbidden. The structural pluralist approach differs in that the government not only implements a range of affirmative acting programs to assist ethnic minorities to participate in society, but also allocates funds to those communities wishing to maintain their language and culture.

Recent studies in advanced industrial countries show that social integration policies based on mono-cultural approach tend to produce ethnic antagonism and conflict. Like Australia, many other Western countries have recently adopted pluralist approaches to race and ethnic group relations. Not all Australians are convinced of the effectiveness of the pluralist approach to multiculturalism however, and consequently there is an on-going debate on government policies concerning immigration and ethnic affairs.

However, there is growing evidence that, in the long-term, pluralist approaches are more effective than mono-cultural ones. While an extreme pluralist approach would cause social division, it is undeniable that the implementation of a carefully organised pluralist approach is worth trying in order to achieve social stability.

As Japan becomes an increasingly multicultural society, the government needs to seriously consider formulating policies not only for immigration and refugee affairs, but also for race and ethnic group relations.



## APPENDIX: DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND

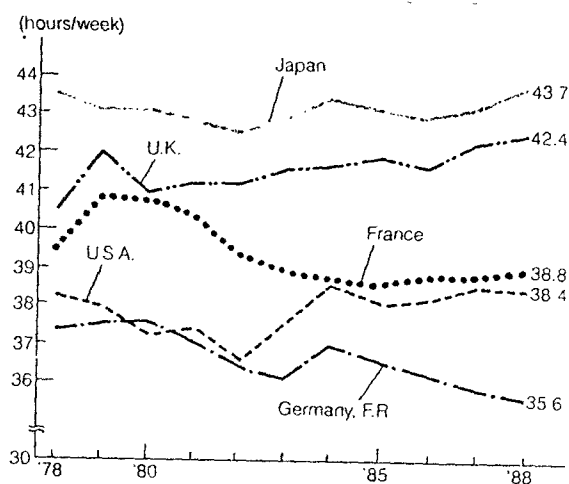
8-1 Hourly Wages in Manufacturing Industry (1970, 1987)

	Unit	Hourly Wages (National Currency/Hour)		US\$/Hour <sup>a)</sup>	Index (Japan =100)
		1970	1987		
U.S.A.	(US\$)	3.35	9.91	9.91	95
Canada	(C\$)	3.01	12.24	9.23	89
<b>Japan</b>	<b>(Yen)</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>1,505</b>	<b>10.41<sup>b)</sup></b>	<b>100</b>
Sweden	(S Krone)	12.17	56.43	8.90	85
Germany, F.R.	(D. Mark)	5.96	17.53	9.75	94
Netherlands	(N Guilder)	4.82	16.91 <sup>c)</sup>	6.90	66
Belgium	(B Franc)	—	302.00	8.09	78
Italy	(Lira)	635	9,451 <sup>c)</sup>	5.38	52
U.K.	(Pound)	0.55	4.23	6.93	67
Ireland	(I Pound)	0.42	4.70	6.99	67
New Zealand	(NZ\$)	—	10.01 <sup>d)</sup>	5.24	50
France	(F. Franc)	5.92	40.97	6.82	66

a) US dollar figures are calculated according to the annual average exchange rates of the IMF, *International Financial Statistics*. b) US\$1 00=Y¥44 64 c) 1984, d) 1986

Source: ILO, *Bulletin of Labour Statistics*, 1989-1; Ministry of Labour, Japan

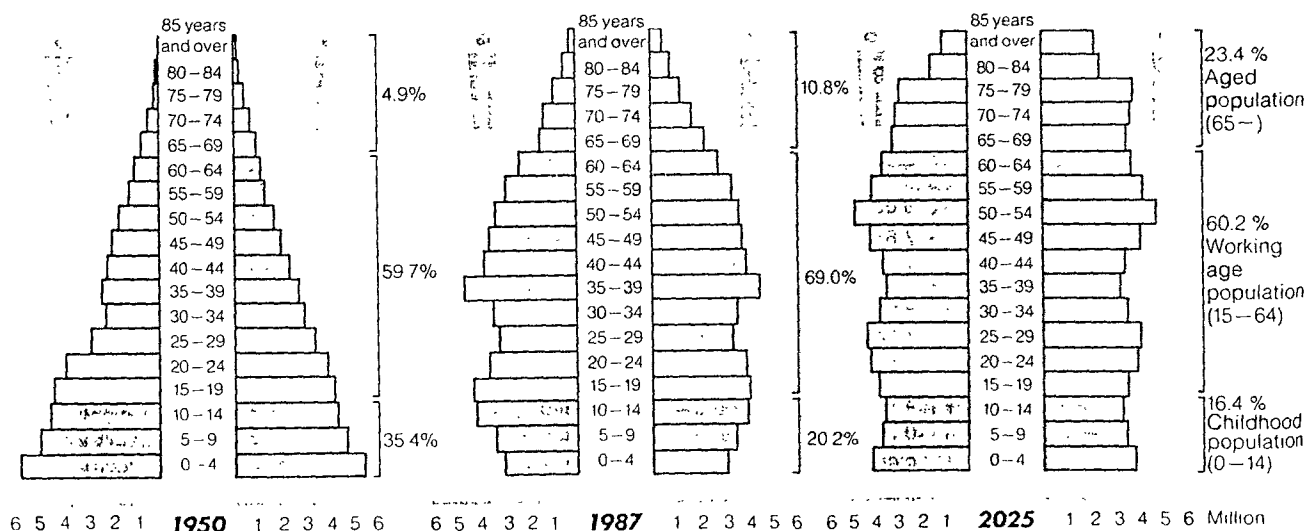
8-2 Trends in Hours (Actual) Worked in Manufacturing Industry (1978—1988)<sup>a)</sup>



a) Production workers only

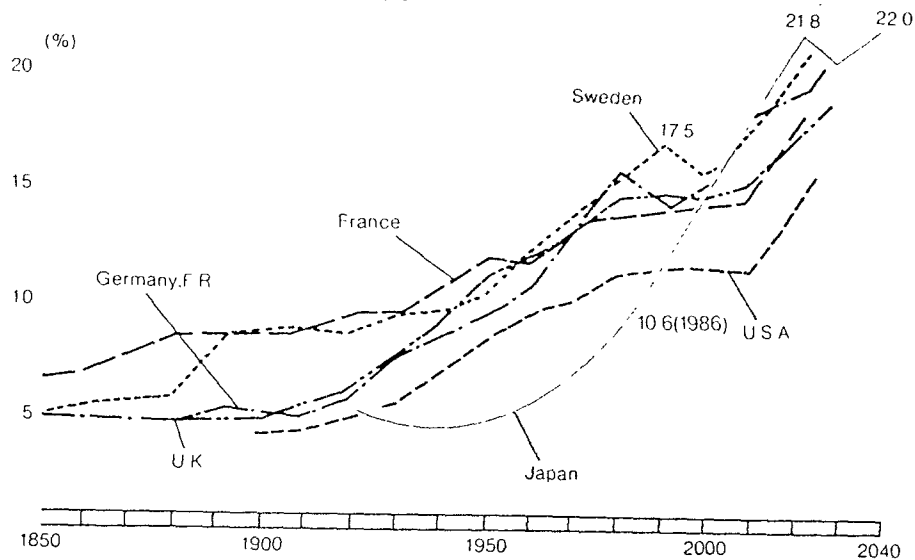
Source: Bank of Japan, *Comparative International Statistics*, 1989

### (3) Changes in the Population Pyramid



Sources: Management and Coordination Agency, *Statistics of Japan*, 1988. Ministry of Health and Welfare, *Estimates of Future Population*.

(4) Ratio of Persons 65 Years Old and Over



12

1-11 GNP, GNP Per Capita (1987), and Growth Rate of GNP (1984—1988)<sup>a)</sup>

	GNP (Nominal) <sup>a)</sup>		Annual Growth Rate (Real)			GNP (Nominal) <sup>b)</sup>		Annual Growth Rate (Real)	
	(US\$ billion)	Per Capita (US\$)	1988	1984—88		(US\$ billion)	Per Capita (US\$)	1988	1984—88
U.S.A.	4,527	18,570	4.4%	4.2%	Switzerland	171	26,161	3.0%	2.3% <sup>e)</sup>
<b>Japan</b>	<b>2,387</b>	<b>19,553</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>4.5</b>	Sweden	159	18,874	2.1	2.4 <sup>e)</sup>
Germany, F.R.	1,124	18,373	3.4	2.5	Mexico	140	1,725	-3.7 <sup>e)</sup>	-0.7 <sup>f)</sup>
France	877	15,759	3.5	2.2	Belgium	139	13,997	4.2	1.5 <sup>c)</sup>
Italy	751	13,089	3.9	2.9	Korea, Rep. of	131	3,121	12.2	10.5 <sup>c)</sup>
U.K.	689	12,107	2.8	3.3	Taiwan	97	4,946	7.3	8.9 <sup>c)</sup>
Canada	411	16,020	4.5	4.2 <sup>c)</sup>	Saudi Arabia	71	5,251	4.6 <sup>d)</sup>	-3.7 <sup>c)</sup>
Brazil	326	2,305	2.9 <sup>d)</sup>	4.4 <sup>c)</sup>	Indonesia	70	409	4~5	4.1 <sup>c)</sup>
Spain	289	7,449	5.0	2.9 <sup>c)</sup>	Thailand	48	887	11.0	5.9 <sup>c)</sup>
India	224	287	4.4 <sup>c)</sup>	5.5 <sup>c)</sup>	Hong Kong	47	8,418	7.4	8.4
Netherlands	213	14,541	2.7	2.1 <sup>c)</sup>	Philippines	34	598	6.7	0.5
Australia	205	12,590	3.8	4.1 <sup>c)</sup>	Malaysia	32	1,932	8.1	3.8 <sup>c)</sup>

a) All figures used for U.S.A., Japan, U.K. and Germany, F.R. are GNP based. All other countries are GDP based except France and Italy. As for France and Italy, nominal GNP figures are GNP based while annual real growth rates are GDP based. b) U.S. dollar figures are calculated according to the annual exchange rates of the IMF, *International Financial Statistics*. c) 1983—1987. d) 1987. e) 1986. f) 1982—1986.  
Source: Bank of Japan, *Comparative International Statistics*, 1989, Economic Planning Agency, Japan

1-1

# 1-1 Population, Area, and Population Density (1988)

	Population					Area					Density (A/B) (Population per km (100 acre
	Mid-year Estimates (A) 1988		Forecast for Year 2000 <sup>a)</sup>		Increase from 1970 to 1988 (%)	Total Area (B) 1986		Land Use (%)			
	(millions)	(%)	(millions)	(%)		(1,000 km <sup>2</sup> ) <sup>b)</sup>	(%)	Agricultural Area	Forest and Woodland	Other Area	
Japan	122.61	2.5	129.11	2.1	18.6	378	0.3	14.2	66.7	18.7	324 (1.
U.S.A.	246.33	4.9	266.19	4.3	20.1	9,373	7.0	46.1	28.3	23.4	26 (
Canada	25.95	0.5	28.51	0.5	21.7	9,976	7.4	7.8	35.3	49.3	3
Germany, F.R.	61.20	1.2	59.82	1.0	0.9	249	0.2	48.3	29.5	20.5	246 (
Italy	57.44	1.1	57.88	0.9	6.7	301	0.2	56.8	22.3	18.4	191 (
U.K.	57.08	1.1	57.51	0.9	2.3	245	0.2	74.1	9.4	15.1	233 (
France	55.87	1.1	58.20	0.9	10.0	547	0.4	56.9	26.7	16.1	102 (
Spain	39.05	0.8	40.81	0.7	15.7	505	0.4	60.9	30.9	7.1	77 (
EC <sup>d)</sup>	324.78	6.5	329.83	5.3	7.1	2,258	1.7	59.2	24.2	15.1	144 (
U.S.S.R.	283.68	5.7	307.74	4.9	16.9	22,402	16.7	27.1	42.1	30.2	13
Australia	16.53	0.3	18.61	0.3	31.7	7,687	5.7	63.1	13.8	22.1	2 (
New Zealand	3.29	0.1	3.63	0.1	16.7	269	0.2	53.6	26.8	19.6	12
China	1,104.00	22.1	1,285.90	20.6	32.9	9,597	7.2	43.4	12.2	41.5	115 (4
India	796.60	15.9	1,042.53	16.7	43.6	3,288	2.5	55.0	20.5	14.9	242 (9
Indonesia	174.95	3.5	208.33	3.3	48.4	1,905	1.4	17.3	63.8	13.9	92 (3
Bangladesh	104.53	2.1	150.59	2.4	56.8	144	0.1	67.8	14.7	10.4	726 (29
Pakistan	105.41	2.1	162.47	2.6	60.4	796	0.6	32.3	4.0	60.5	132 (5
Philippines	58.72	1.2	77.45	1.2	56.4	300	0.2	30.3	37.2	31.8	196 (7
Thailand	54.54	1.1	63.67	1.0	50.0	514	0.4	40.0	28.8	30.6	106 (4
Turkey	52.42	1.0	66.62	1.1	48.4	781	0.6	46.6	25.9	26.3	67 (2
Korea, Rep. of	41.97	0.8	48.01	0.8	31.5	98	0.1	22.6	66.1	11.0	428 (17
Brazil	144.43	2.9	179.49	2.9	50.7	8,512	6.4	28.6	65.8	4.8	17 (
Mexico	82.73	1.7	107.23	1.7	61.6	1,973	1.5	50.3	22.6	24.5	42 (1
Argentina	31.96	0.6	36.24	0.6	33.4	2,767	2.1	64.5	21.5	12.8	12 (
Nigeria	105.47	2.1	159.15	2.5	84.3	924	0.7	56.6	15.8	26.1	114 (4
Egypt	51.90	1.0	66.71	1.1	57.0	1,001	0.7	2.5	0.0	96.8	52 (2
World, total	5,112.00	100.0	6,250.40	100.0	38.4	133,906	100.0	35.0	30.5	32.2	37 (11

a) Based on U.N. World Population Prospects, Estimates and Projections as Assessed in 1988 b) 1 000 km<sup>2</sup> = 386.1 mile<sup>2</sup> c) 1 km<sup>2</sup> = 247.11 acres d) Twelve countries (See P. 5)

Source: U.N., Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, FAO Production Yearbook, 1987, Prime Minister's Office, Japan

(10) Enrolled Students / Pupils and Ratios of Those Entering Higher Institutions

	Enrolled students/pupils (1,000)									Ratio of those entering higher institutions (%)				
	Elementary schools	Lower secondary schools	Upper secondary schools	Technical colleges	Special training schools <sup>1)</sup>	Miscellaneous schools <sup>2)</sup>	Junior colleges	Universities/colleges	Graduate schools	Lower secondary schools <sup>3)</sup>	Upper secondary schools	Technical colleges	Junior colleges	Universities/colleges <sup>4)</sup>
1965	9,776	5,956	5,074	—	—	1,383	148	938	28	70.6	25.4	—	4.6	4.9
1970	9,493	4,717	4,232	44	—	1,353	263	1,407	41	82.1	24.2	2.1	4.7	4.5
1975	10,365	4,762	4,333	48	—	1,205	354	1,734	48	91.9	34.2	4.8	3.7	4.9
1980	11,827	5,094	4,622	46	433	724	371	1,835	54	94.2	31.9	8.3	3.2	4.4
1984	11,464	5,829	4,892	48	537	579	382	1,843	66	93.9	29.6	9.4	2.8	5.7
1985	11,095	5,990	5,178	48	538	530	371	1,849	70	93.8	30.5	9.6	3.0	5.9
1986	10,665	6,106	5,259	49	588	483	396	1,880	74	93.8	30.3	9.4	3.1	6.2
1987	10,226	6,081	5,375	50	653	466	437	1,934	79	93.9	31.0	9.5	3.2	6.4

Source: Ministry of Education, *Basic Statistical Survey on School*.

Notes: 1) The special training school system was established in 1976. These schools must fulfil the following requirements:

a) The minimum term of study is one year.

b) A certain number of classes must be offered.

c) Over 40 students must be accommodated regularly. The majority of these students are enrolled in curriculums in medical science, technology and home economics.

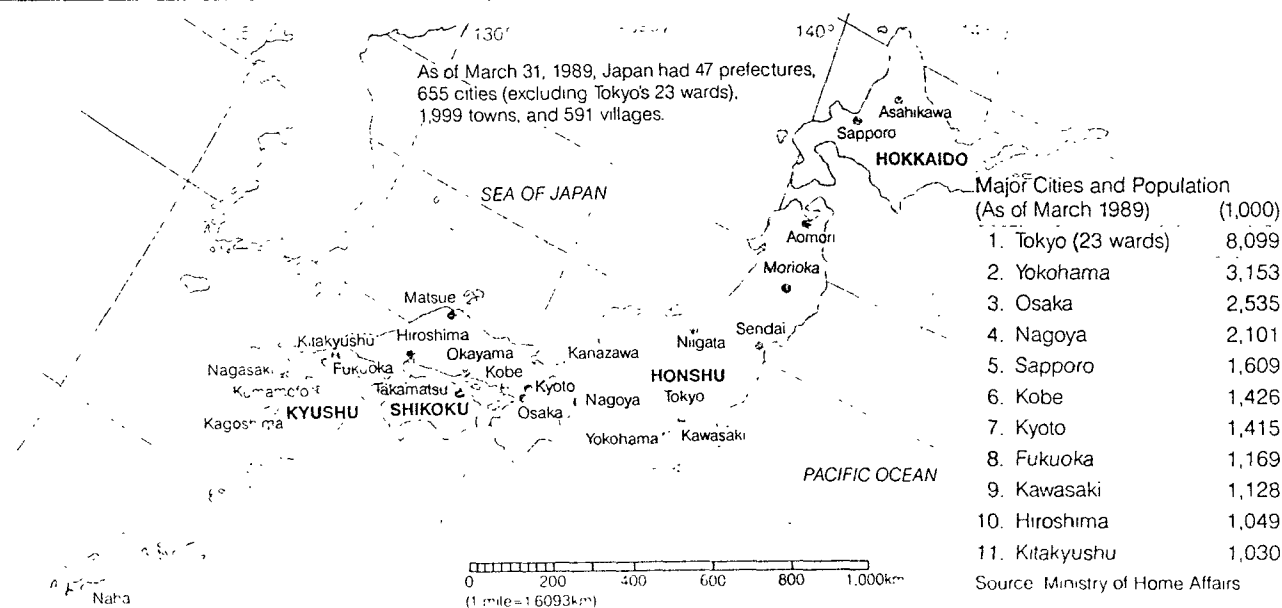
2) Miscellaneous schools are those which cannot meet the requirements for special training schools. As of 1986, Yobi-Ko (Preparatory schools: total of 145,000 students) ranked first in the number of students, second in number were automobile driving schools (87,000 students) and third were schools for foreigners (36,000 students).

3) Indicates the ratio of those entering upper secondary schools and technical colleges.

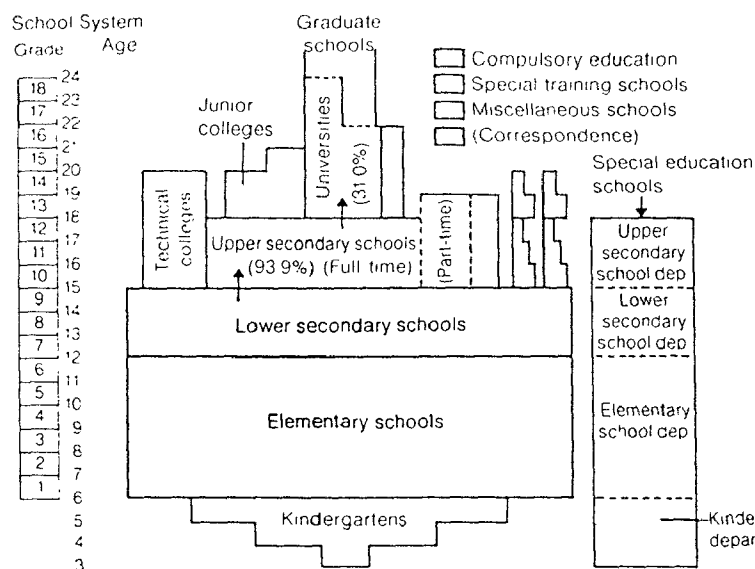
4) Indicates the ratio of those entering graduate schools.

Appendix:

V. Map of Japan with Major Cities



# (9) Education System



Compulsory education comprises 9 years (6 years of elementary school and 3 years of lower secondary school)  
 Higher education: comprises upper secondary school (3 years), universities (4 years), junior colleges (2 years) and technical colleges (5 years)  
 Special education school: for physically and/or mentally handicapped  
 Special training schools and miscellaneous schools provide vocational and practical trainings.  
 Kindergarten: for pre-school children

Source: Ministry of Education, *Basic Statistical Survey on School 1987*.

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage of those who go to upper secondary schools and universities (including junior colleges), respectively

## 11-20 Public and Private Schools in Japan: Number and Enrollment (As of May 1, 1988)

	Schools				Teachers (1,000)	Students (1,000)
	Total	National	Public	Private		
Elementary schools (6 years)-	24,901	73	24,658	170	449	9,873
Junior high schools (3 years)-	11,266	78	10,585	603	304	5,896
Senior high schools	5,512	17	4,189	1,306	337	5,533
Universities	490	95	38	357	202	1,995
Junior colleges	571	40	54	477	51	450
Technical colleges	62	54	4	4	6	51
Special schools <sup>a</sup>	931	45	869	17	43	96
Training schools	3,191	172	177	2,842	116	700
Miscellaneous	3,685	7	92	3,586	46	452
Kindergartens	15,115	48	6,251	8,816	108	2,042
<b>Total</b>	<b>65,724</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>46,917</b>	<b>18,178</b>	<b>1,664</b>	<b>27,087</b>

a) Compulsory education is 9 years of elementary school and junior high school

b) For the physically and mentally handicapped

Source: Ministry of Education, Japan, *Statistical Abstract of Education, Science & Culture* 1989

# 11-21 Advancement Rate to Higher Education

	Year	Percentage of Relevant Age Group <sup>a)</sup>		
		Total	Male	Female
U.S.A. <sup>b)</sup>	1985	43.8	41.6	46.1
Japan <sup>c)</sup>	1987	36.9	38.2	35.4
France <sup>d)</sup>	1986	31.9	26.9	37.2
Germany (F.R.G.) <sup>e)</sup>	1985	19.7	23.0	16.2
U.K. <sup>f)</sup>	1985	22.9	24.8	20.8

(Ref.) Rate of junior high school graduates continuing on to senior high school (%)

Japan	1988	94.1	92.9	95.3
-------	------	------	------	------

a) Percent of equivalent age population. b) Figures based on new entrants at 4-year and 2-year colleges (fulltime only). c) Figures based on new entrants at university level, junior college level, and senior level of colleges of technology. d) Figures based on qualified students to enter higher education (university level). e) Figures based on new entrants at higher education. f) Source: Ministry of Education, Japan.

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## 8-4 Size of Firm and Average Annual Wage in the Private Sector in Japan (1987)<sup>a)</sup>

	Male		Female		Average No. of Years Employed	
	Monthly Wage Total (¥1,000)	Annual Total <sup>b)</sup> (¥1,000)	Monthly Wage Total (¥1,000)	Annual Total <sup>b)</sup> (¥1,000)	Male	Female
Individual Enterprises	2,874	3,201	1,566	1,838	11.6	11.2
Capitalization:						
Under ¥10 million	3,534	4,012	1,821	2,066	10.5	8.6
¥10 million—	3,520	4,255	1,726	2,073	10.6	7.1
¥50 million—	3,465	4,399	1,630	2,046	11.0	6.2
¥100 million—	3,650	4,847	1,734	2,258	12.8	6.2
¥1,000 million—	4,143	5,758	2,015	2,779	16.3	7.5
Total	3,717	4,747	1,800	2,236	12.6	7.4
Other Legal Entities	3,402	4,081	1,925	2,349	11.5	9.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,603</b>	<b>4,521</b>	<b>1,788</b>	<b>2,190</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>8.5</b>

a) Labor force coverage: full-time employees at private establishments. In 1987 the labor force so defined was 37.67 million people. b) Monthly Wage Total and Total Bonus. c) *Kabushiki-kaisha* or limited liability establishments.

Source: National Tax Administration Agency, Japan.



(34) Monthly Hours Worked by Size of Establishment

(Hours)

Year	500 employees or more	100 — 499	30 — 99	5 — 29
1960	198.7	202.7	207.0	214.5
1965	188.4	193.7	196.2	201.5
1970	185.5	187.1	190.2	195.8
1975	166.3	172.3	177.0	183.1
1980	174.5	175.3	180.5	185.2
1982	172.9	175.6	178.8	185.2
1983	173.5	175.9	178.6	183.3
1984	176.3	176.5	180.2	183.7
1985	175.4	177.1	179.1	181.6
1986	173.4	176.4	179.5	181.9
1987	173.9	177.4	180.7	182.0
1988	176.0	177.7	179.4	181.9

Source: Ministry of Labor, *Handbook of Labor Statistics*.

Notes: Survey was conducted on regular employees of all industries excluding services  
Numbers of 1960 and 1965 include all industries.

(38) Average Holidays Excluding Weekly Days-Off

Size of firm	Total holidays		National holidays		Year-end and new year		Summer season		Other holidays	
	Enforcement rate (%)	Average days (days)	Enforcement rate (%)	Average days (days)	Enforcement rate (%)	Average days (days)	Enforcement rate (%)	Average days (days)	Enforcement rate (%)	Average days (days)
Total										
1980	96.9	16.8	92.8	9.7	93.3	4.3	72.1	3.2	35.1	2.7
1987	95.4	17.3	92.2	10.2	91.9	4.1	82.3	3.2	37.2	2.0
1,000 employees or more										
1980	98.7	16.9	94.7	10.5	95.3	3.7	53.1	3.2	56.9	2.6
1987	97.7	17.6	95.1	10.7	94.4	3.6	66.6	3.6	59.8	2.0
100 — 999										
1980	97.0	17.3	93.5	10.2	92.9	4.2	68.8	3.3	41.6	2.7
1987	96.4	18.0	94.0	10.6	93.6	4.0	81.1	3.4	43.6	2.0
30 — 99										
1980	96.7	16.5	92.4	9.4	93.4	4.4	74.0	3.1	31.9	2.7
1987	95.0	17.1	91.4	10.0	91.1	4.1	83.3	3.2	34.0	2.0

Source: Ministry of Labor, *General Survey on Wages and Working Hours System*

Notes: 1) "Enforcement rate" is the ratio of enterprises which enforce holidays other than the usual weekly days-off to total enterprises

2) Only enterprises that enforce holidays other than weekly days-off are included in the calculations of "Average days"

3) "Average days" only applies to enterprises that enforce their workers to take vacation according to each of the above categories

4) "Other holidays" are holidays such as, anniversary of establishment, regional festivals, May Day, etc

5) "Year-end and new year holidays" does not include January 1st

4

(39) Office Automation (OA) by Type of Equipment								(1986) (%)
Size of establishment	General-purpose computers	Office computers	Facsimile	Word processors	On-line terminals	Micro-film system	Audio input / output device	Computer aided design system (CAD)
Total	40.5 (47.1)	69.4 (74.8)	82.8 (85.8)	74.0 (80.4)	42.5 (53.1)	8.7 (14.6)	1.2 (6.1)	8.7 (16.3)
1,000 employees or more	90.0 (92.1)	88.1 (90.5)	97.5 (98.4)	98.4 (98.7)	87.1 (92.2)	40.9 (52.0)	5.2 (22.9)	35.7 (46.2)
300 — 999	64.1 (71.3)	76.2 (80.3)	91.9 (94.1)	86.9 (90.8)	63.9 (75.2)	11.6 (18.9)	0.8 (8.3)	15.3 (24.0)
100 — 299	29.4 (36.2)	65.7 (74.7)	79.0 (82.3)	68.2 (75.8)	32.4 (43.4)	4.8 (9.8)	0.8 (3.8)	4.3 (11.3)

Source: Ministry of Labor, *Survey on the Influence of Technological Innovation upon Employment, 1986*.

Notes: Percentages in parentheses show the introduction rate of each equipment planned within five years.

Firms surveyed are 2,500 private firms with 100 regular employees or more.

(27) Nominal Wage (Production workers in manufacturing industries, 1987)

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	Unit	Actual amount	Exchange rate based yen <sup>1)</sup>	Ratio	
Japan	Month	313,170 (Yen)	—	100	Total cash earnings of regular production employees (including bonus, establishment with 30 employees and more).
	Week	72,270	—		
	Hour	1,749	—		
United States	Hour	9.91 (Dollars)	1,433	82	
United Kingdom	Hour	4.227 (Pounds)	999	57	October.
Germany, Fed. Rep.	Hour	17.53 (Mark)	1,411	81	Family allowance paid directly by employer is included.
France	Hour	40.97 (Francs)	986	56	
Italy <sup>2)</sup>	Hour	9,451 (Lire)	1,055	60	Wage in kind is included.
Canada	Hour	12.24 (C. Dollars)	1,335	76	

Sources: Japan: Ministry of Labor, *Monthly Labor Survey*, other countries: ILO, *Bulletin of Labour Statistics, 1989—1*.

Notes: 1) Exchange rate is average for 1987 of IMF "International Financial Statistics" (1 dollar = 144.64 yen, 1 pound = 237.0 yen, 1 mark = 80.47 yen, 1 Francs = 24.06 yen, 1 Lire = 0.11 yen, 1 Canadian dollar = 109.07 yen)

2) Figures for 1986

# 8-9 Unemployment: Number and Rate (1983—1989)

	Japan	U.S.A.	Germany, F.R.	France	U.K.
Number (1,000)	1983	1,560	10,717	2,258	2,042
	1984	1,610	8,539	2,266	2,310
	1985	1,560	8,312	2,304	2,394
	1986	1,670	8,237	2,228	2,517
	1987	1,730	7,425	2,229	2,836
	1988	1,550	6,701	2,242	2,563
	1989 May	1,500	6,395 <sup>a)</sup>	1,948	2,517 <sup>a)</sup>
Rate (%)	1983	2.6	9.7	9.1	9.0
	1984	2.7	7.5	9.1	10.2
	1985	2.6	7.2	9.3	10.2
	1986	2.8	7.0	9.0	10.4
	1987	2.8	6.2	8.9	10.5
	1988	2.5	5.5	8.7	10.1
	1989 May	2.4	5.2 <sup>a)</sup>	7.6	9.5 <sup>a)</sup>

a) Seasonally adjusted

Source: Bank of Japan, *Comparative International Statistics*, 1989, Economic Statistics Monthly

# 8-10 Unemployment Rates by Age Group (1987)<sup>a)</sup>

Age Group	Japan (%)	U.S.A. (%)	Germany, F.R. <sup>b)</sup> (%)
15—19	9.3	17.8 <sup>c)</sup>	5.3
20—24	4.3	9.9	7.9
25—44	2.2	5.3	5.9
45—54	2.0	4.2	5.0
55—59	4.0	3.8	9.1
60—	4.6	3.2	6.8 <sup>d)</sup>
Total	2.8	6.1	6.1
Unemployed Male, total (1,000)	1,040	4,101	1,082

a) Unemployment rate=unemployed – economically active population b) 1986. c) 16—19 years old  
d) 60—64 years old.

Source: ILO, *Yearbook of Labour Statistics*, 1988.

Note: The definition of unemployed persons and the method of surveying unemployment differ by country, making exact international comparison difficult