

Japan's International Migration and its Impacts on Population Projections for Japan

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In this paper, the trends of international migrations for Japan were analyzed and determinants of their changes were discussed. In the international migration, different trends are observed respectively for the migration of the foreigners and of the Japanese. After 1970s number of immigrants has exceeded emigrants for foreigners and emigrants have exceeded immigrants for Japanese. For foreigner, the immigration from the countries like China, Brazil and Philippine is dominant and the population of those nationalities are increasing. For Japanese the characteristics vary by the country of the residence. Net emigration to North America and the Western Europe is rather stable so far, and in addition to that, number of emigrants to Asian countries, in particular to China increase rapidly. As a result, Japanese population residing abroad longer are in an increase trend. It is necessary to consider various socio-economic disruptors when the assumption of international migration for population projection is set although some regularity is found in the long term trends of entry and departure respectively for Japanese and foreigners.

This paper also analyzed the influences of international migration on total population and on labor force, population aging in the future. The whole international migration has an influence to relax population decline, but accelerate population decline when only Japanese migration was assumed (foreigners were not assumed to emigrate nor immigrate). Under that assumption, 1.71 million were fewer than projected population without migration in 2055. On the contrary, the assumption that international migration was foreigners only (Japanese were not assumed to emigrate nor immigrate,) has an effect to relax depopulation and results in 5.3 million more than zero-migration population in 2055. International migration occurs intensively at the 15-64 age group and so that, the migration pattern of those age group reflect on the changes of whole population. Comparing to zero-migration population, the percentage of population aged 0-14 has not shown a major difference but the gaps have observed distinctively at age group of 15-64 and of 65 and over. International migration as a whole has an effect to control population aging and in particular when the migration merely for foreigners were assumed, the effect to ease population aging was the most influential.