

Estimation of the Population with Foreign Connections in Japan

HAYASHI Reiko

In Japan, "foreigners" are formally defined as individuals holding foreign nationality. However, with the rising number of foreigners, the population with foreign connections is also increasing. This includes, for example, the children holding a Japanese nationality with a Japanese parent and a foreign parent, or those who have acquired Japanese nationality through naturalization. Using the "National Survey on Migration", which has been conducted approximately every five years since 1976 by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (IPSS), this paper attempts to categorize and estimate the population with foreign connections.

From 1976 to 2023, the proportion of the foreign-born population first declined and then rose. This trend was initially heavily influenced by individuals born in former Japanese overseas territories just before the end of World War II. On the other hand, in recent years, it has been driven by the increase in foreign nationals. In this study, we defined three categories for the population with foreign connections: "population with foreign roots", "population living in mixed nationality households", and "population with experience living abroad". Based on these definitions, the size of each category was calculated to be 1.76 times, 1.58 times, and 3.77 times larger than the size of foreign nationals, respectively. It is evident that a diverse population with various foreign connections firmly exists within Japanese society.

Keywords: foreigners, Japanese, nationality