Japanese Internal Migration

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1. Introduction

Japanese internal migration started with industrial revolution in Meiji period. Main flows, excluding early 1940s, were from rural areas to urban areas (major municipalities zones). From the begining the dominant cities of population concentration were Tokyo and Osaka. This tendency continued till the end of 1950s. There was a shift in migration patterns in 1960s, characterized by: a) increase in migration rates from 3 major cities zones (Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya) to non urban zones b) inter big cities areas migration numbers grew, c) inter-prefectural migration flows grew. In mid 1970s internal migration reached balance, in particular this among big cities zones and non-urban zones. Furthermore, in the begining of 1980s the increase in big cities zones influxes was recorded again (Kurota, 1976: 61-63).

In 2005 almost 50% of Japanese population resided in 3 major cities zones while other regions accounted for 49.8% of total polulation. According to the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, by 2035 year 3 big municipalities areas would occupy 53.2% of total population and their working age population will account for 54.7% of total population.[1]

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[1] http://www.ipss.go.jp/syoushika/tohkei/suikei07/suikei.html Access: 28.04.2011.

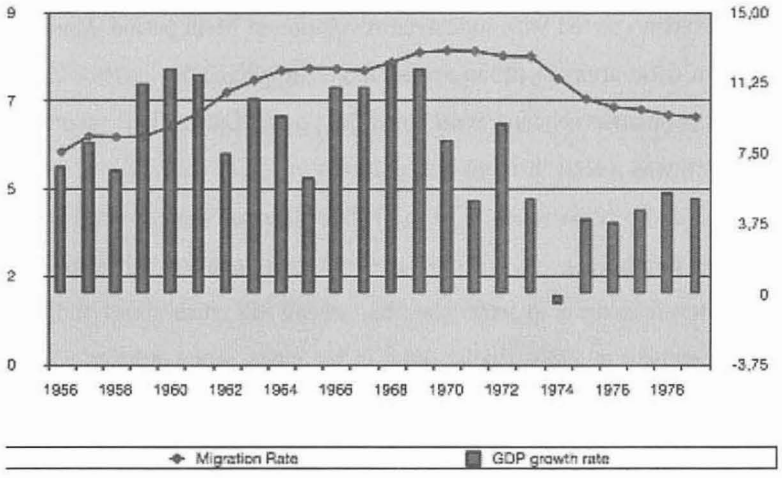
2. Japanese internal migration before 1973

In late 1940s and 1950s Japanese population concentrated mainly in Tokyo and Osaka, which means that it was attracted by big cities and their suburbs, mainly due to high economic growth at that time. During this time bipolarization of the center urban areas, in particular Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya and non-urban areas begun to be present. Ishikawa (1995) points out that intensive migration before 1973 constituted important factor of successful modernization and industralization in Japan (Ishikawa, 1995: 52).

First change in migration patterns took place in the end of 1960s, when, as it was mentioned before, migration flows multi-channelization (*maruchichaneruka*) phenomenon was observed (after Kurota, 1976: 61-65). Another important new tendencies manifested by a rise *U-turn* (migration back to origins, finding job there) and *J-turn* (migration to other places than suburbs, f.e. to rural areas) migration (Ishikawa, 1995: 53).

After 1970 high migration flows started to decrease, nevertheless 3 big cities zones were invariably the most popular destination locations. Looking at the annual economic growth rate and migration rates it may be assumed that there is a strong relation between economic growth and migration into big cities areas (see: Graph 1.).

Graph 1. Japanese annual economic growth rate and internal migration rate (%)



Source: GDP Growth Rate published by Cabinet Office, Government Japan, in 68 SNA. Number of Internal Migrants 1954-2004 published by MIC, Statistics Bureau. Own elaboration.

In the period from 1950s to 1970s population of Japan increased from 84,110 millions to 104,670

millions, meaning increase by 24.4 % of the population. Working age population recorded growth from 50,170 millions to 72,120 millions of people, which accounted for 43.8% growth in this group. In turn, labor force in the years between 1953 and 1973 increased from 39,890 millions to the level of 52,890 millions of peolpe, constituting 32.6% increase in this group.[2]

In the begining of 1970s there was a second shift in migration factors, attracting and repelling agents become more differenciated and complicated, which manifested itself in U-turn, J-turn and *I-turn* (city-born people migrate to rural areas) migration flows. With reference to studies by Ishikawa (1995), before 1973 the most important factors of Japanese internal migration were distance, income-gap, employment posibilities, age and education level (Ishikawa, 1995: 65-89).

3. Japanese internal migration after 1973

The first oil shock in 1973 caused recession in Japan and subsequently the migration flows decreased. During that time migration pattern known from 1950s and 1960s collapsed.

In early 1970s rapid dcrease in in-migration to the regional bloc took place, that is in 1970, there was 410 thousads of people inflow into 3 big cities zones and then in the period from 1971 to 1975 those numbers diminished as follow: 307 thousands - 227 thousands - 136 thousands - 52 thousands - 21 thousands and finally in 1976 the regional bloc became out-migration zone at the level of 10 thousands of people outflow.[3]

In late 1970s migration between urban and non-urban areas was almost balanced. However, with the begining of 1980s migration flows augmented again. Demographic transition was accoplished in Japan in the end of 1970s (Ishikawa, 1995: 53). In the begining of 1970s the phenomenon of suburbanization continued in Ibaraki, Shiga and those prefectures recorded increased in-migration, besides in all other prefectures migration flows were close to 0. During 1980s the most intesive in-migration fluxes were registered in: Saitama, Chiba, Kanagawa, Shiga and Nara.[4]

According to Yorimitsu (1987) remarks, the 1985 Population Census Data and the fact that the decline in birth rates and the reduction of rural and urban deviations in birth rates were recorded during 1980s, prove that internal migration in Japan came to be the major determinent of population growth in each region (Yorimitsu, 1987: 22).

Summing up the following trends of net migration of each prefecture from 1955 to 1985 may be observed:

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2 Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) , Statistics Bureau, Labor Force Survey.

3 Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) , Statistics Bureau, Labor Force Survey.

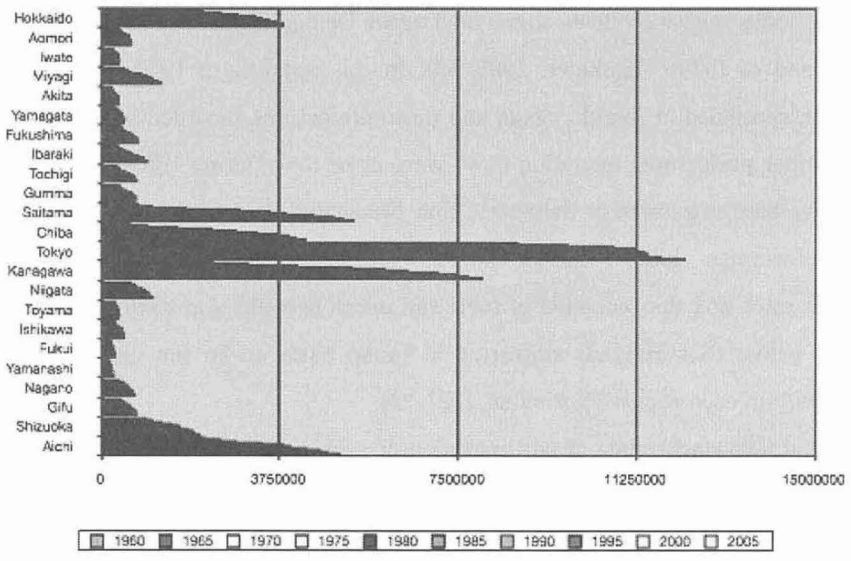
4 MIC, Statistical Bureau.

- prefectures continuing to show a net gain - Saitama, Kanagawa
- prefectures continuing to show a net loss - Aomori, Iwate, Akita, Yamagata, Fukushima, Niigata. Toyama, Fukui, Wakayama, Shimane. Yamaguchi, Tokushima, Ehime, Saga, Nagasaki
- prefectures which showed a change from net gain to net loss - Osaka, Hyogo
- prefectures which showed a change from net loss to net gain - Ibaraki, Chiba, Yamanashi. Shiga, Nara
- prefectures which showed a repeated change between gain and loss - Hokkaido, Miyagi, Tochigi, Gunma, Tokyo, Ishikawa, Nagano, Gifu, Shizuoka, Aichi, Mie, Kyoto, Tottori, Okayama, Hiroshima, Kagawa, Kochi, Fukuoka, Kumamoto, Oita, Miyazaki, Kagoshima, Okinawa (Yorimitsu, 1987: 25).

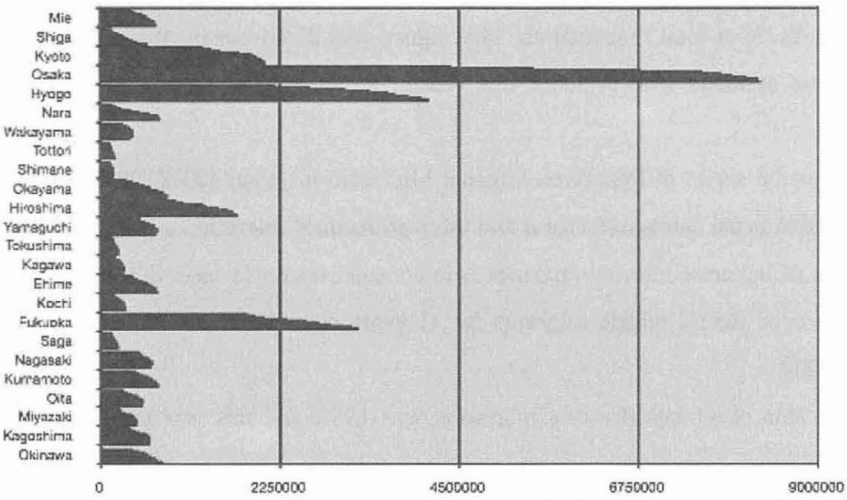
4. Migrants destinations

In post-war Japan, during high economic growth period in 1950s and 1960s, there was a rapid grow in migrants influx to 3 major cities zones. Tokyo zone, except for 1994, was in constant in-migration, Osaka area in 1950s and 1960s was also in-migration zone, however from the begining of 1970 in-migration dynamics decreased and from 1974 became out-migration zone. Recently Nagoya area has recorded increase in in-migration flows. In the terms of prefectures, there were 11 in-migration zones with big center cities: Saitama, Chiba, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Gifu, Aichi, Shiga, Kyoto, Osaka, Hyogo, Nara. People migrated toward those destination to settle up in the suburbs (see: Graph 2.).[5]

Graph 2. Population density in Japan (persons, millions)



[5] National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Department of Population Structure Research.



Source: Data on Population Density 1898-2005 released by MIC, Statistics Bureau. Own elaboration.

5. Japanese internal migration after bubble economy

With reference to the The Fourth Migration Survey conducted on July 1, 1996, which describes trends in Japanese internal migration during the years from 1991 to 1996, people who lived at a different residence five years earlier (in 1991) accounted for 22.2 % of all respondents. The rate was lower than the rate in the previous survey - 26.7% for the period 1986-1991. The mobility was highest for the group of people aged 25-29, which constituted 49.5% of total migrants. Both, intra-municipality migration and inter-prefectural migration decreased in the period from 1991 to 1996.

The survey reveals that in the years in question people moved on average 3.12 times in their lifetime and the number of prefectures where respondents have ever resided was 2.13 on average. Very interesting in the case of Japan is the fact that the average number of moves was highest among those in their fifties, who were in their adolescence at the time of Japan's high economic growth, while the number of the older generation was a little less.[6]

According to the reasons for move, most frequently-mentioned causes of migration was "moved with parents/spouse" (30.1 %), followed by housing-related reason (22.4 %), job-related reason (17.2 %), and marriage/divorce (16.4 %). The beforementioned reasons for migration were the same as those published in the The Third Migration Survey. With reference to the results of The Fourth Survey, 1996, 6.2 % of respondents aged 65 years and over lived in a different residence from the one in 1991. Moreover, the percentage of those who selected "to live with/near a child" as their push factor for migration was especially high among movers aged 75 years and over and

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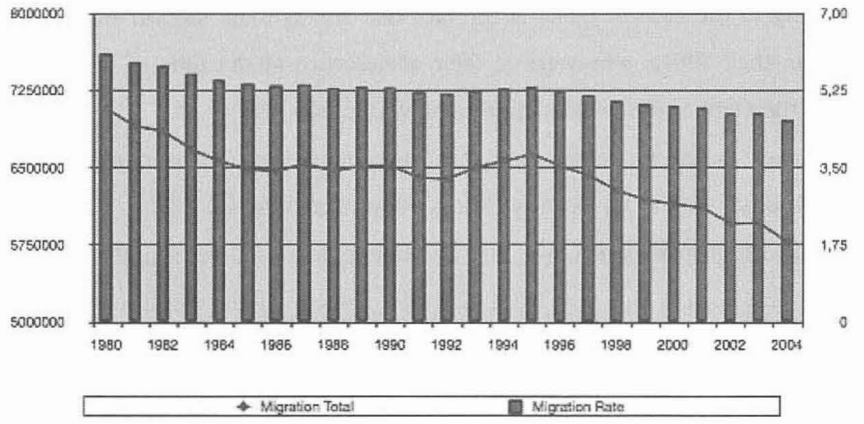
[6] *The Fourth Migration Survey, 1996*, Source: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

accounted for 32.3% of total respondents. That figure was 21.3% among those aged 65 to 74 years. The proportion of those who selected this reason for moving increased as the age of movers increased.

With regard to the series of Report on Internal Migration in Japan (2002-2009)[7], which inform on the situation of internal, intra-prefectural and inter-prefectural migration in Japan:

- the number of Japanese internal migrants is in constant decrease (see: Graph 3.)
- it has been over than 6 million migrants for 41 years since 1961, but these records fell below 6 million in 2002
- in 2009 the rate of inter-prefectural migration was 1.96% and this was the lowest record in the past
- in 2009 the rate of intra-prefectural migrantion was 2.25%, a decrease for 6 straight years
- in 2009 the decrease range of net-migration in Tokyo area has expanded to over 20 thousands, a first increase in 22 years since 1987
- the highest plus net-migration showed the following prefectures: in 2004 Tokyo, Kanagawa, Okinawa; in 2005 and 2006 Tokyo, Aichi and Kanagawa; in 2007 and 2008 Tokyo, Kanagawa and Chiba; in 2009 Tokyo, Chiba and Kanagawa.
- the highest minus net-migration showed the aftermentioned prefectures: in 2004 Aomori, Nagasaki, Nara; in 2005 Nagasaki, Aomori and Iwate, in 2006 and 2007 Aomori, Nagasaki, Akita; in 2008 Hokkaido, Aomori, Nagasaki; in 2009 Hokkaido, Fukushima and Aomori
- the 3 major metropolitan zones were Tokyo are, Nagoya area and Osaka area.

Graph 3. Recent Internal Migration in Japan



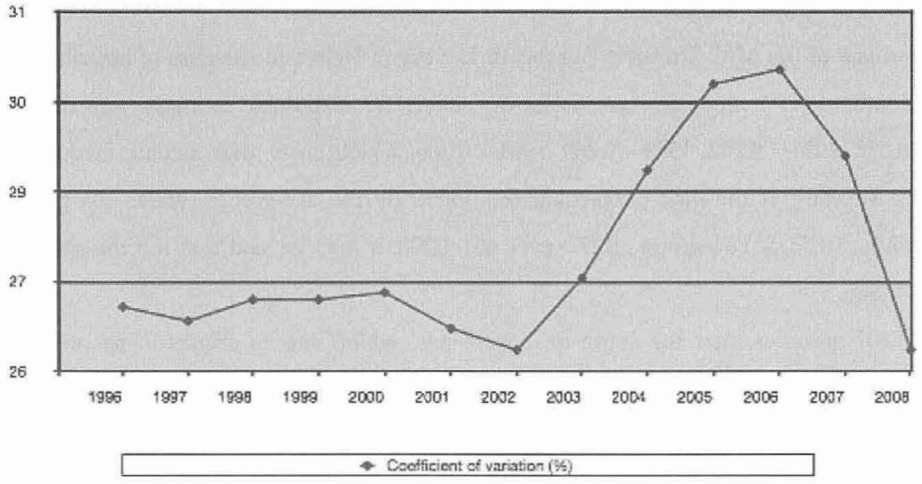
[7] *Report on the International Migration in Japan: Summary of Results in 2002*, Released on March 14, 2003 by Statistics Bureau of Japan.

Source: Number of Internal Migrants 1954-2004 published by MIC, Statistics Bureau. Own elaboration.

6. Income-gap in Japan

From 1955 to 2005 income-gap per capita was almost at the same level as migration flows to 3 major municipalities zones. After 1970 economic inequalities between cities and other regions shrank, nevertheless further increase in income-gap after 2003 was recorded (see: Graph 4.)

Graph 4. Income inequalities in Japan 1997-2008 (coefficient of variation)



Source: Data on *Hitoriatari kenmin shotoku* (Income per capita) 1996-2008, published by Cabinet Office, Government of Japan in *Kokumin keizai keisan*. Own elaboration (the coefficient of variation was calculated on the basis of top 5 and bottom 5 prefectures' income per capita).

However, since 1980 income gap in Japan has been growing, the core of this problem is considered to be the aging society phenomenon. Nevertheless, after 2002 the income gap became particularly visible in intra-age groups. The word: *kakusa shakai* (unequal society) has became popular since 2006, the year when it was ranked in top-ten of the 2006 buzzwords contest (*ryukogo daisho*).

In recent times there was a change in the structure of Japanese households. Till 1980s, 25% of the familes had 4 members, while nowadays this group account for 15 % of all households. In turn, 1 person households constitute 15% of households, 2 persons families almost 30% of total units. This shift in families structure slowered the progress of *inequalitization* (*fubyodoka*), yet, after 1990s the trend of growing inequalities did not change. In Japan low income groups, in particular those represented by males, experience further drop in salaries. This situation is compared to the situation in the United States of America, where the main reasons for income inequalities is said to

be in further increase in earnings in high income group (Otake, 2007: 2).

As it was mentioned above, the main cause of progressing inequalities in Japan is in the phenomenon of aging polpulation. Intra-age group income gap take off in people 40s, when inequalities in promotion become clear. Income inequalities in intra-age groups, excluding senior age group, expanded in the period from 1999 to 2004. Moreover, from 1999 there also have been obsereved inequalities in consumption expenditures across Japan. The author claim that not safetynet but tightening of regulation may act as countermeasure against inequalities in Japan. This common sense of income gap among Japanese society is also caused by the gap of the actual determinants of income and its value judgement (Otake, 2007: 5).

With reference to the MIC Statistics Bureau, in 11 year of Heisei, in the data of households of more than 1 member and 1 member households, Gini index for disposable earnings was ranked at the level of 0.273. 1984 - 0.252, 1989 - 0.260, 1994 - 0.265, which show that income inequalities were expanding. Looking at the data concerning Gini index by the age-groups, under 30s group - 0.222, 30~49 group - 0.235, 50~64 group - 0.277, over 65 - 0.308, it may be said that income gap is growing along with age.

Otake (2000) assumes, that the sense of income gap, which has its origins in people`s sensation, began in the period of bubble burst, when the highest earnings were recorded in financial sector. He suggests that Japanese companies should transfer from wage system (*chingin seido*) and seniority system (*nenkojoretsu*) to the current operating performance concept (*gyosekishugi*) . Furthermore, that they might diminish the number of full-fledged employees (*seishain*) and create more possibilities for part-time (*pato*) and temporary (*haken*) workers to restore Japanese economy. At these times those two latter workers groups make income gap spread.[8]

Nowadays, the fact that many housewives have entered the labor market also contributes to the growing income gap in society. On the other hand the group of single mothers expanded considerably. This group may be responsible for almost 40% of income gap growth from 1979 to 1996.[9]

Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare calculates and publishes Gini index for Japan in survey on income redistribution (*shotoku saibunpu chosa*) . In these statistics pretax income values are adequate to be compared with other developed countries Gini index levels, among which Japan is in the middle rank. According to the intra-age group income inequalities Otake (2000) states: *If*

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[8] http://www.iser.osaka-u.ac.jp/~ohtake/paper/shotokukakusa.html Access: 11.03.2011.

[9] MIC, Statistics Bureau.

the society keeps aging, the level of inequalities in the whole economy will continue to rise. If the changes in the population characteristic are the source of growing inequality, we can call it a "seeming inequality growth".[10]

Summing up, the main causes for the expanding income gap may be seen in: part-time workers low wages and lack of career opportunities, aging society phenomenon and change in households structure.

7. Japanese internal migration and economic growth

Population growth in Japan achieved high rates in prosperity period (*Jimmu keiki* 12.1954 - 06.1957, *Iwato keiki* 07.1958 - 12.1961, Games of the XVIII Olympiad in Tokyo 1964, *Izanagi keiki* 11.1965 - 7.1970) . During the time from 1953 to 1973 there was a working population bonus period and dynamic migration helped in maintening high economic growth in Japan. The first oil shock in 1973 slowed down the economy and in-migration to 3 major cities zones decreased.

In that period people were prone to migrate to regions of high productivity, which is considered to be important for sustaining high economic growth. Harada and Yoshioka (2004) state: *Before 1970s, Japanese economy propelled growth and people migration, responding to the technical gap between Japan and Western countries. A lot was invested in private as well as public capital* (after Nawata, 2008: 25).

Excluding 1976 year and period from 1993 to 1995 regional bloc was recorded as an in-migration zone. In-migration numbers were especially high in late 1950s and in 1960s. Tokyo zone, except for 1994 witnessed constant in-migration, Osaka area also constituted in-migration zone in the period from 1950 to 1960, nevertheless after a rapid decrease in migration propesity in early 1970s the city became out-migration zone from begining of 1974. The meaning of Tokyo area as a destination place has remained important for years and as consequence of the shift in migration patterns Nagoya and its suburbs has become more and more attractive location for Japansese migrants.

Summing up, the most intesive migration period in post-war Japan falls on high economic growth time, *Jinmu keiki, Iwato keiki*, Olympic Games and *Izanagi keiki*.

GDP growth rate during 1970-1975 presented the following levels: 8.2%, 5.0%, 9.1%, 5.1%, 1.2%, -0.5%, 4.0%, which meant a sharp downturn in economic performance and the end of high economic growth era in Japan.[11] Another reason for the drop in migration rates till the early 1970s was the

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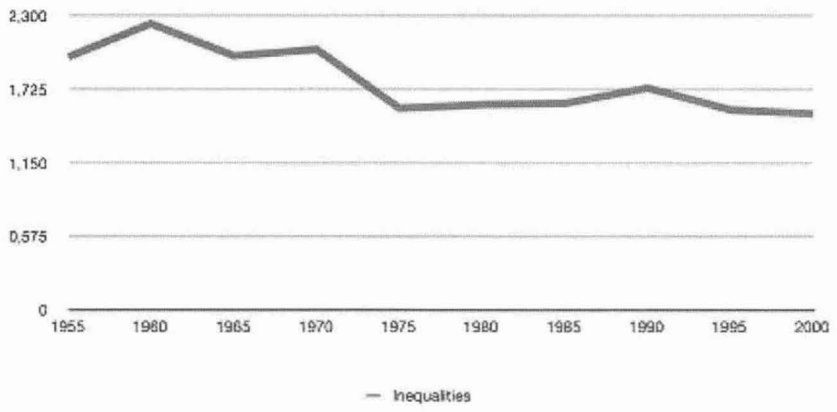
[10] http://www.iser.osaka-u.ac.jp/~ohtake/paper/shotokukakusa.html Access: 11.03.2011.

[11] GDP Growth Rate published by Cabinet Office, Government Japan, in 68 SNA.

fact of diminishing regional income inequalities (see: Graph 5.).

In the years from 1970 to 1975 the followng falls in income gap levels were recorded: 2.04-fold - 1.93-fold - 1.85-fold - 1.80-fold - 1.63-fold - 1.58-fold. Labor productivity increased in 3 big cities zones by 1.9-fold from 1970 to 1975, at the same time in other regions labor productivity increased by 2.2-fold. It may be assumed that early 1970s put an end to the circle: labor productivity inequalities - income gap - in-migration to 3 big cities zones (after Nawata, 2008: 27).

Graph 5. Economic inequalities in Japan (1955 - 2000)



Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism estimations (calculated on the basis of top 5 and bottom 5 prefectures` income per capita average differences).

Comprehensive National Development Plan (1962-) (*zenkokusogokaihatsukeikaku*) and the following: 1969 - *shinzenso*, 1977 - *sanzenso*, 1987 - *yozensho*, allowed for considerable public investments. The wave of industrialization came from 3 big cities zone to the other regions, due to the lower level of wages firms continued to locate factories in the other regions. Gravity force of regional manufacturing industry increased since late 1960s (Nawata, 2008: 28). Manufacturing industry of 3 big cities zones and its share in the perspective of total regions achieved peak in 1965 with 66.6% share, then in 1990 it was at the level of 58.0% share. Other regions zones recorded growth in this share from 33.4 % to 42.0 %. Looking at the breakdown of 3 big cities zones, Tokyo zone share shrank slightly from 33.9% in 1965 to 29.0% in 1990. Osaka area share accounted for 23.3% in 1955 and 15.7 % in 1990. Contraction of Osaka`s share could be caused by the curbing of the factory location investments toward capital zone and Kinki area. The phenomenon of the diminishing

income gap between provinces and cities began in mid-1960s.[12]

In the years from 1970 to 1980, there was a 5-fold icrease in public works costs. In 1980, higher in-migration rates to 3 big cities zones returned and public works spread as well. Drop in in-migration rates during 1970s falls on *nippon retto kaizou bumu*[13] (*Japanese archipelag reconstruction boom*) period (after Nawata, 2008: 29). On the other hand, generation *dankai*[14], which supplied a lot migration to big cities retired during 1970s and might be another factor of decreasing migration rates.

According to *Toshikoyo-to toshikino-ni kakaru senryakukadai-no kennkyu* (Rodoseisaku kennkyu. Kennkyukiko, 2007) population share augmented in: Tokyo area with Kanagawa, Chiba and Saitama, Aichi, Shiga, Hyogo, Fukuoka, Okinawa (Nawata, 2008: 32)

Nowadays, trend in migration rates is in decrease, nevertheless Tokyo area and Aichi area population share is in constant increase. In regional bloc the most attractive locations for migratns are the following cities: Sapporo, Sendai, Fukuoka..[15]

8. Change in factors featuring Japanese demography

Facts such as demographic transition, suburbanization, population concentration in major municipalities, J-turn, U-turn, I-turn and aging society constituted importanat factors featuring Japanese demography.

In 1950s the size of population of Kyushu, Okinawa and Kinki was almost the same as the the size of population of Tohoku. After 1970, population still grew in south Kanto and Kinki (Kanto population increased from 15.5% to 23.0% of the total population, Kinki from 13.8% to 16.6% of the total population), however on the other hand in Tohoku, Kyushu, Chugoku and Shikoku population decreased.[16] The most common interpretation of this phenomenon is that in this period economic growth in Japan was high and people migrated to places, where they had access to the bigger market.

As to the statistics concerning the group of working age population against total population, in 2005 regional bloc accounted for 50.2% of the total population. This trend was expected to remain stable from that time on. From 1950 to 2005, in 55 years, population of Japan increased by 43,650 millions,

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[12] MIC, Statistics Bureau.

[13] Tanaka speech in 1972, just before he became prime minister, concerning development plan for Japan.

[14] Generation born during the first baby boom or shortly after the Second World War in Japan.

[15] National Institute of Population and Social Security.

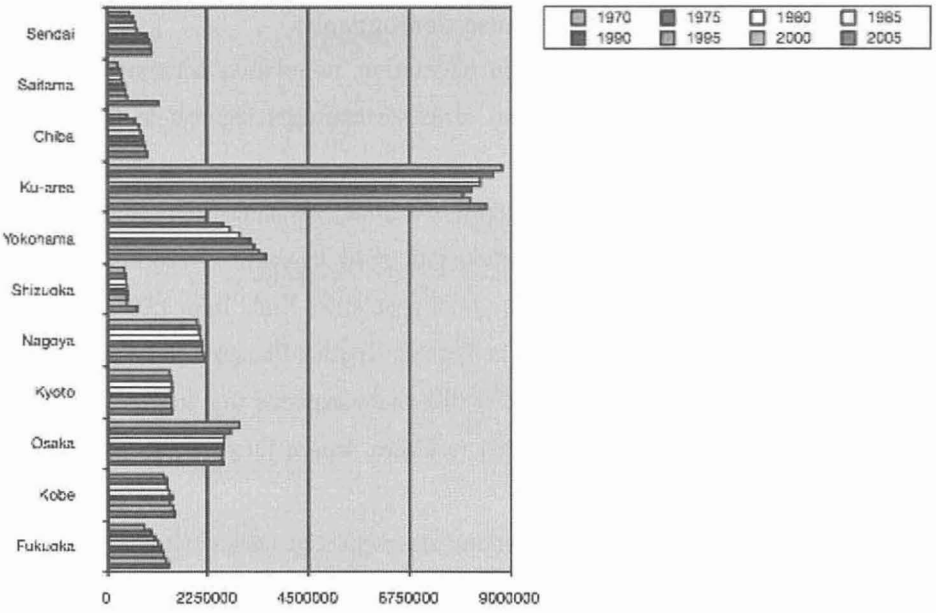
[16] MIC, Statistics Bureau, Population Census.

however, 80% of this growth took place in 3 big cities zones, more precisely this number equaled to 34,970 millions of people (see: Graph 6.).[17]

National Institute of Population and Social Security Research forecasts that in 2035, 3 big cities zones would account for 53.7% of the total population and 54.7% of the working age population.

According to Malmberg, Japan was the first Asian country to complete the demographic transition and to reach the old age phase (in the late 1980s) . Growth in the child group was present up to 1950, when it was suddenly stoped and then turned backward. Increase in the young adult group had its begining in the end of the 19th century, however it was the most dynamic in the 1920s and between 1940 and 1950. This group's growth was stable up to 1970 when suddenly stopped. The middle age group started growing slowly in the early 1900s and accelerated after 1940. The period of the largest increase was between 1960 and 1990, nevertheless thereafter, it was halted. Finally, growth in the old age group has almost entirely been a post-1950 phenomenon (after Malmberg, 2006: 63).

Graph 6. Population of cities in Japan (1975-2005)



Source: Population of Cities (1920-2005) published by MIC, Statistics Bureau. Own elaboration.

In the 1950s only one in twelve Japanese was above 60 years of age. Since then the number of old aged people has grown rapidly. In contrast, after 2005, almost one in three Japanese is above 60

[17] Population of Cities (1920-2005) published by MIC, Statistics Bureau.

years of age. Japanese economic, social and political development since the late 19th century has been strongly influenced by the age transition. Indutrialization in Japan, as in other developed countries, falls on the priod from 1920 to 1969, when the big minicipalities areas tripled their population (Malmberg, 2006: 65).

9. Internal migration and labor market

In mid-1990s due to the financial crisis more non-regular system (*pato, haken* etc.) job places were created, mainly in services sector. This situation made visible the demand-supply mismatch in the Japanese labor market. After 2000 there was a growth in independent contract workers (*ukeoi*) and dispatchers (*haken*), caused by regression in manufacturing industry. Around 2003, Japanese economy showed signs of slight recovery and during that time non-regular workes acounted for one third of all workers. Nevertheless, at the same time earnings per capita level decreased.

The Japanese economy has recorded positive growth since the second half of 2002. The expectation for its recovery led to improvement of stock prices, which contributed to stabilization of financial sector. Outward direct investment to Asia, especially to China, continued to grow and expansion of export to China and the other Asian economies as well as domestic capital formation especially in electronics industry has offset negative deflationary pressures. The deflation has not yet been overcome, as consumer price index has been declining for more than five years (after Iguchi, 2004: 339).

The labor market situation in Japan remained behind the recovery in its economy. The unemployment rate was over 5 % and the number of unemployed amounts to around 3.5 millions. However, employment adjustment in enterprises peaked in the first half of 2003. Although real wages were declining, there were signs of recovery such as increase in bonus payment in summer 2003 (after Iguchi, 2004: 343).

In 2008 more drastic job cuts, in particular in manufacturing sector, where recorded. Dispatched workers were cancelled or had their contract not renewed. Shift in Japanese employment system may have its origins in economic globalization phenomenon under which more and more companies face uncertainty as to the future demand for their products. In Japan this incertitude is concentrated in export-oriented industries (automobile industry) and electrical and electronics sector. This means that companies belonging to the abovementioned sectors had been increasing their proportion of non-regular workers simply to avoid fixed labor costs (Tsuru, 2009).

10. International migration

Iguchi (2006) notes that the number of foreign workers in Japan has been growing rapidly, when the number of foreign workers including those who obtained ordinary permanent resident statuses are taken under consideration. With reference to the Ministry of Justice statistics it has reached 900 thousand. Worth mentioning seems to be the fact that foreign students, who graduated from Japanese universities and changed status of residence for working, has reached 5 thousand persons per year (Iguchi, 2006: 2).

After the Plaza Agreement of 1985 the appreciation of the Japanese yen against the United States dollar had acted as a pull factor for many foreigners to come to Japan. However, vagueness of that time regulation toward foreign workers led the Government to review the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in 1989 for the first time in 38 years. The revised Act amended Japan's immigration law in several ways. It expanded the categories of foreign workers, more precisely added 10 new categories, who would be eligible for entering and residing in Japan, but also limited legal admission to foreigners who possessed specialized skills or knowledge that nationals could not provide. In 1994, the law was further expanded, by adding more jobs that would fall into the skilled professions categories that foreigners could apply for. Moreover the Government made it clear that Japan would keep entry prohibition of unskilled migrant workers in view of the long-term adverse effects on the domestic market and on the society (Art. 2-2, 7).

The total number of resident foreign nationals working in Japan rose from 181,806 in 2006 to 215,676 in 2009, and they have been engaged in a wide range of economic activities in the country.

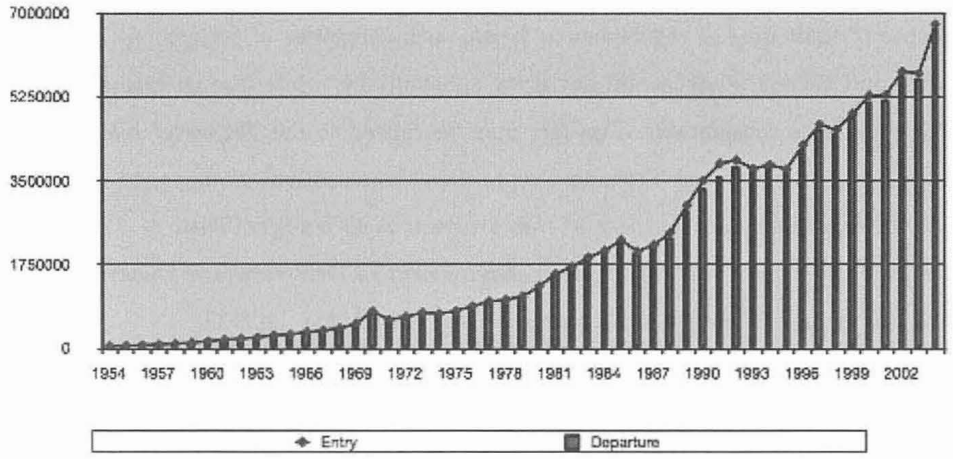
The number of specialists involved in humanities and international services, entertainers, foreign engineers and technical workers showed large increases during that period. Most foreign entertainers, engineers and technical workers were nationals of Asian countries.[18]

The admission of foreigners through expanded categories of skilled professions was sufficient to cope with the persistent labour shortages in labour-intensive industries or menial jobs that educated young Japanese were unwilling to take. Increasingly, acute demand for unskilled manpower has been met by three sources of foreign workers legally admitted to Japan: (a) Descendants of Japanese from Latin America, (b) foreign-job trainees and (c) foreign students working part-time. Furthermore, the new Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act of Japan of 1989 for the first time established the admission status of the second- and third- generation descendants of Japanese emigrants and authorized them to reside in Japan as long-term residents or spouses or

[18] Ministry of Justice, *Torokugaikokujin tokei*, 2006, 2009.

children of Japanese. Many of those Japanese descendants from Latin America take up unskilled jobs in manufacturing or construction companies located in industrial cities (after UN, 2003: 73).
It may be stated that with increasing inflows of foreign nationals, ethnic homogeneity is no longer a demographic feature of Japan.

Graph 7. Foreigners in Japan by entry and departure (1954-2002)



Source: Foreigners who Legally Entered and Departed from Japan by Nationality (1954-2004), MIC, Statistics Bureau. Own elaboration.

Since the late 1980s, the stock of foreign population in Japan had grown rapidly, gaining about 700 thousands resident foreigners between 1985 and 1999. This group accounted for 1.23 % of the population in Japan in 1999. In recent years the largest migration inflow into Japan was that from neighbouring Asian countries such as China, the Philippines and Thailand as well as that from Latin America, in particular Brazil and Peru and finally that from United States of America.
According to Iguchi (2004) international migration and migration policy in Japan have been characterized by some elements as (after Iguchi, 2004: 339):

- the inflow of foreign nationals has been increasing since 2002 after the drop in 2001 (see: Graph 7.) irrespective of some risks after the Iraq War and SARS
- the number of foreign workers in Japan and those who acquired permanent resident status is also at constant increase
- the crimes of foreigners are growing, where more than half of them had been overstaying
- problems of education and unemployment for foreign youths are becoming more serious

- the number of students accepted by Japan reached its target of 100 thousand in 2003
- the Japan Employers Federation published its intermediate report on foreign workers' policy and it stimulates further discussions
- the consultation on movement of natural persons within the future framework of "Economic Partnership Agreement" especially with Thailand and the Philippines has started

Recently, Japan is experiencing enormous pressure of intraregional migration in East Asia, which may steem from the international tourism and developing regional economic integration. In consequence of tightening of regulations in Japan, such categories of occupations as entertainers, pre-college and college students did not grow substantially, while foreign trainees continue to increase in numbers considerably. This fact may be related to the *Technical Intern Traineeship Program* (Japan International Training Cooperation Organization) is managed on the basis of bilateral arrangements. *The purpose of this program is to transfer Skills to Technical Intern Trainees who will form a basis of economic development in their respective countries and play an important role in Japan's international cooperation and contribution* (JITCO).

With reference to Iguchi (2006) , the first priority for migration policy may be to reorganize the legal system on *entry, stay and work* concerning the fact that the more and more foreigners are staying in Japan for long-term or with permanent residence status in municipalities. The second priority may be to put into words strategies for East Asia to develop human resources and to make the movement of persons more flexible. It is an important task for the East Asia Community (EAC, Japanese intellectual policy platform) members to create effective cooperation in this field. The naturalization of foreigners reaches almost 17 thousands cases per year and it does not influence much on the trends in Japanese population (after Iguchi, 2006: 3).

11. Conclusions

In Japan internal migration on a larger scale began with industrialization process in Meiji era. The main recorded migration flows were from rural areas to urban ones. In particular, the most important destinations were Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya and those cities areas seem to be the most attractive for migrats at present time. Almost half of population and nearly half of working age polpulation in Japan live in major urban areas.

Analysis of Japanese statistical data show some similarities in people`s propensity toward migration, annual economic growth rate and regional income disparities. However, recently, there has been a lot of discussion about growing inequalities in job opportunities and social promotion stemming

from the expanding share of non-regular workers. This may mean that bipolarization of level of living in Japan will appear, unless a new approach (legal and social) towards non-regular workers is taken.

In the end, facing abovementioned problems and aging society phenomenon, internal migration flows as well as foreign influxes into Japan, might grow in significance.

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