

# Labor Force Issues in Japan

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# Overview

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- Current situation of Japan
- Suggestions to help this situation
- What Japan can do to regulate it
- How this affects me

# Current Situation

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- Very few foreigners live in Japan, about 1.9% of total 128 million population, including (Korean and Chinese)
- Aging population of Japan has grown
- However, fertility rates is really low
- More youth are getting an education, making unskilled labor work undesirable
- This combined adheres to Japan's shortage in its labor force

# One Solution

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- ❖ One way to fix current situation is higher foreign workers
- ❖ Unskilled labor immigrants can do jobs educated Japanese do not want to do
- ❖ Fixing labor shortage also would boost Japan's economy and long term economic growth

# However,

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- Currently no current policy to welcome foreign workers
- Last act that allowed was Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in 1990
- Currently, Japan's society is not keen with this idea
- Conservative lawmakers highly oppose to accept foreign workers
- Culture norm would have to be changed/educated of foreign workers

# Regulating

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- If this happens, steps to regulate this procedure would have to occur
- Unskilled foreign labor workers should be educated in Japan culture, language, etc.
- Japanese society would have to be educated as well, to help foreign immigrants feel welcomed
- Regulation also means following up on families, make sure labor immigrants are working (no other family members invited to live and not work, this doesn't help economy)

# Seems possible in the Near Future

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- One program is taking place currently in Japan
- 1993, Traditional Trainee Program implemented
- Program allowed certain workers who stayed for 9 month training program to stay for 2 years instead of 1. (Normal working visa)
- However, if by 2 years passed evaluation skills test, then status could change to “technical interns” and have full rights under Japanese labor laws
- As successful as this is, unfortunately, it’s a lot of work. Many companies do not partake in this trainee program
- It has shown success to these trainees successfully emerging with Japanese society

# How this affects me

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- Currently, I studied abroad in Chuo University for past year
- With current state, foreigners are not welcomed everywhere in Japan
- If, like me, foreigners wants to live here, society should be more accepting
- Makes everyone feel comfortable in the long run



# Resources

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1. The Course Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/globalmigrationandlabourissues/regional-views/the-asia-pacific-region>
  - Reluctant hosts: [http://migration.ucdavis.edu/rs/more.php?id=39\\_0\\_3\\_0](http://migration.ucdavis.edu/rs/more.php?id=39_0_3_0)
  - Japan Today: <http://www.japantoday.com/category/opinions/view/why-are-japanese-averse-to-immigration>
2. International Organization for Migration – Japan: <https://www.iom.int/cms/japan>
3. The Japan Times-Japan may boost immigrant numbers:  
<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/03/14/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-may-boost-immigrant-numbers/#.U56cXo2SxIU>