

JSPS Summer Fellowship: a way to taste Japan and want it more and more...

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JAPAN

The role of policy entrepreneurs at the local and national levels in immigration policy-making in Japan

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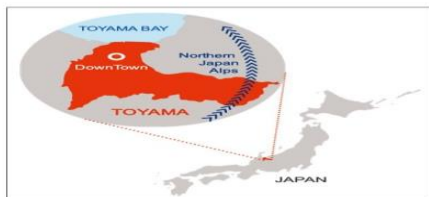
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Abstract

Issues surrounding migration and labour shortage, for example immigration quotas, highly-skilled migration, student migration, undocumented migration, migrant integration that coalesce around cultural/national identity are increasingly discussed in both the academic and policy contexts. My PhD doctoral research at the University of Birmingham looks at the role of intra-state actors in the processes of immigration policy-making. It aims to analyse how states address the contemporary immigration problems deriving from the rising role of new actors, through a comparison of different state models and decision-making cultures. At the University of Toyama, I plan to explore the role of policy entrepreneurial activity in immigration policy-making at the local and national levels. This can not only shed a great deal of light on the nuanced and multi-layered environment of immigration policy-making, but also point to the challenges that local communities are facing in the implementation of immigration policy objectives. Although, the role of 'policy entrepreneurs' has been broadly recognised in the contexts of environmental policy-making (Braun, 2009; Huitema and Meijerink, 2009; Meijerink and Huitema, 2010; Jordan and Huitema, 2014), it is still a rather unexplored concept in migration research (Paquet, 2015). Therefore, this research project addresses a clear gap within migration literature.

Introduction

The primary aim of this research is to outline the main characteristics of entrepreneurial activity in immigration policy field in Japan; describe the various tools available to the policy entrepreneur and propose a model for successful and effective policy entrepreneurial activity in the migration policy field.



Toyama is the leading industrial prefecture on the Japan Sea coast. The Centre for Far Eastern Studies (CFES) at the University of Toyama is one of the leading research institutions in Japan focusing on the role of migration in socio-economic development of states. It focuses on interdisciplinary studies of economy, society and environment in Northeast Asia, a region that is of key importance to the immigration policy of Japan. The Centre's goal is to pursue the way economic development of this region can be accompanied by social stability, i.e., the ways of sustainable development of the region. Northeast Asia, which the Centre concentrates on, consists of north-eastern district of China, the Korean peninsula, the Far East of Russia and Japan.

Methods

In order to research the role of policy entrepreneurs and expert knowledge in immigration policy-making in Japan, this project will primarily focus on the most recent developments, including the formulation of the 5th edition of the 'Basic Immigration Policy Plan' introduced in early September 2015. The data collection process includes qualitative in-depth interviews, supplemented by observations of local actors working in the field of immigration, meetings and immigration-related gatherings in Toyama Prefecture and other parts of Japan. Subsequently, the researcher will conduct documentary analysis of a selection of official state documents on immigration, interest group reports, articles and position papers written by the policy entrepreneur, speeches, and studies from various research organizations. This will be done in order to identify some specific local and national policy-entrepreneurial activities and explore the complexity and comprehensiveness of policy entrepreneurs' actions. This research will also explore the role of internal factors, like for instance population decline (Akashi, 2014) and the demographic pressure (Vogt 2015), that can influence the role of intra-state actors (policy entrepreneurs) in immigration policy-making.

Goals of the Project

This research project strives to generate valuable insights which, among others, can be used to:

- explain the contemporary developments in immigration policy-making in Japan both at the local and national levels;
- explore the role of policy entrepreneurs and expert knowledge in contemporary immigration policy context and how this influence differs in various local contexts;
- suggest and illustrate ways in which Japan can improve the processes of immigration policy-making.

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Policy Entrepreneur

- Individual willing to use their own personal resources or expertise, persistence, and skill to achieve certain policies they favor [Weissert, 1991: 214].
- Autonomous actions of bureaucrats that bring about policy change and can be divided into: classical entrepreneurs, policy puzzlers and diagonal innovators [Paquet, 2015: 1815].

Political Entrepreneur

- Individuals whose creative acts have transformative effects on politics, policies or institutions [Sheingate, 2003].
- Individuals who change the direction and flow of politics [Schneider and Teske, 1997].

Institutional Entrepreneur

- The behaviour of institutional entrepreneurs deviates from the established institutional norms and routines and their actions may eventually change the institutional arrangements [Garud et al 2007].

In order to identify and classify the entrepreneurial activities in immigration policy-making at the local and national levels this research will use the criteria proposed by Roberts and King, (1991: 158-159):

- idea generation activities
- problem framing activities
- dissemination activities, strategic activities
- demonstration project activities
- activities cultivating bureaucratic insiders and advocates
- collaborative activities with high profile elite groups
- activities enlisting support from elected officials
- lobbying activities
- activities attracting media attention and support
- administrative and evaluative activities.



Orientation week in Sokendai

- Very intensive and enjoyable week
- Networking
- Language classes
- Cultural experiences



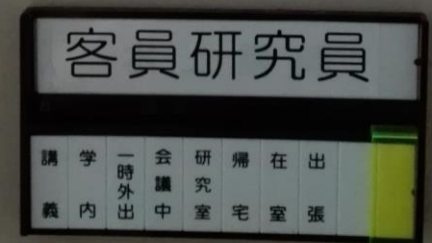
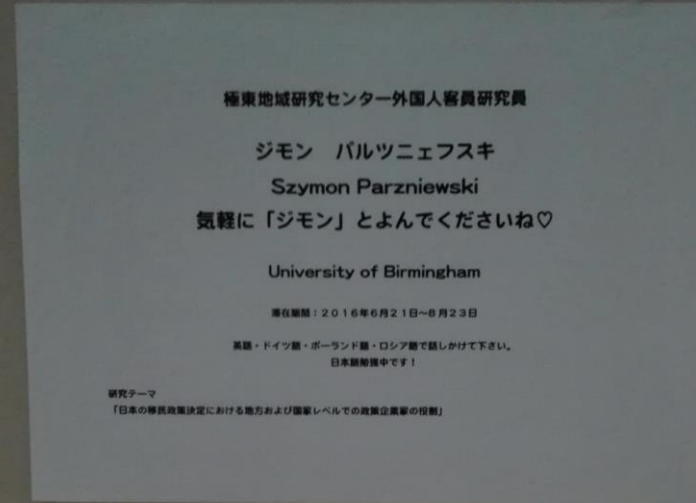
Weekend Homestay

- ❑ Various families
- ❑ Household customs
- ❑ A small gift for your host
- ❑ Communication and activities



Research at the Host Institution

- Research culture and etiquette
- Working time, punctuality
- Community activities, seminars
- Your supervisor in Japan



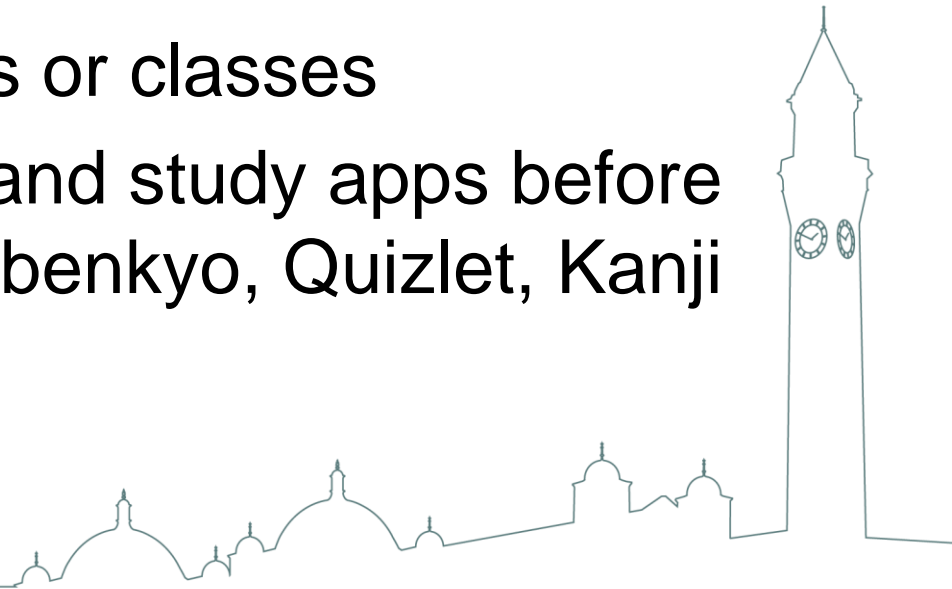
Preparations for your visit

- ❑ Read carefully all prep. materials
- ❑ 2 bags (one smaller for Sokendai and one bigger for the whole stay)
- ❑ Weather hot and humid, rainy season June/July
- ❑ Gifts for the host family and your host supervisor
- ❑ Money and research funds
- ❑ Business cards
- ❑ Poster and abstract



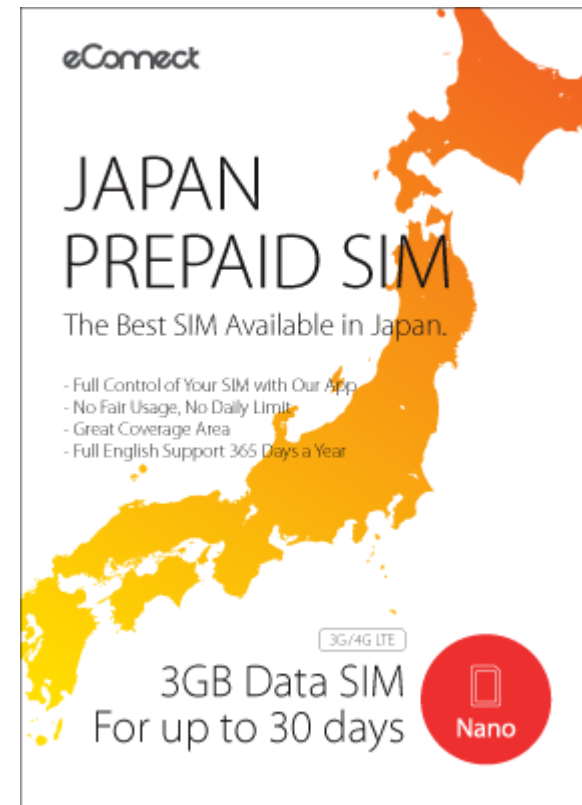
Language and culture

- ❑ Make sure you are allocated to the right language group in Sokkendai
- ❑ Learn some basic phrases
- ❑ Do not panic – kindness, simple gestures and body language also work
- ❑ Local language activities or classes
- ❑ App dictionaries, maps and study apps before you go (Memory Hint, Obenkyo, Quizlet, Kanji Connect, Memrise)



Wi-Fi

- ❑ Wi-Fi access can prove sometimes a bit challenging
- ❑ You might need extra paperwork for Wi-Fi at uni, flats/rooms have normally LAN
- ❑ Metro stations, café, Starbucks
- ❑ Portable hotspots and Japanese SIM to pre-order, for instance:
www.econnectjapan.com



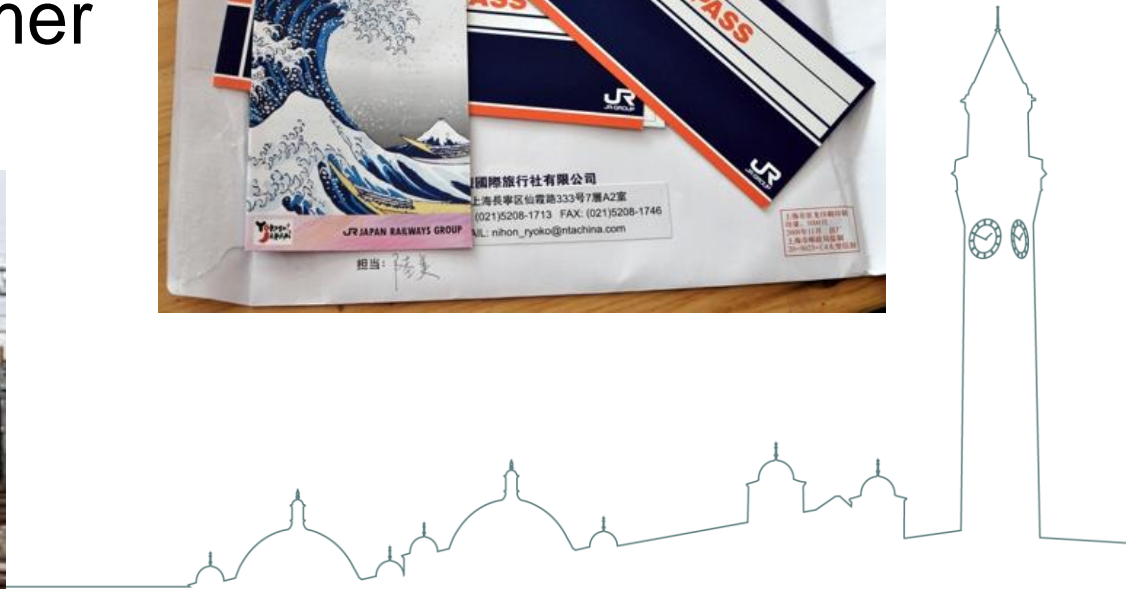
Recycling

- It varies depending on the region
- Many places and explanation sheets and marking signs in English
- If not clear, ask for help.



Travel

- ❑ Campuses close for holiday in August
- ❑ Plan research trips, give seminars or lectures at other universities and/or participate in summer research schools



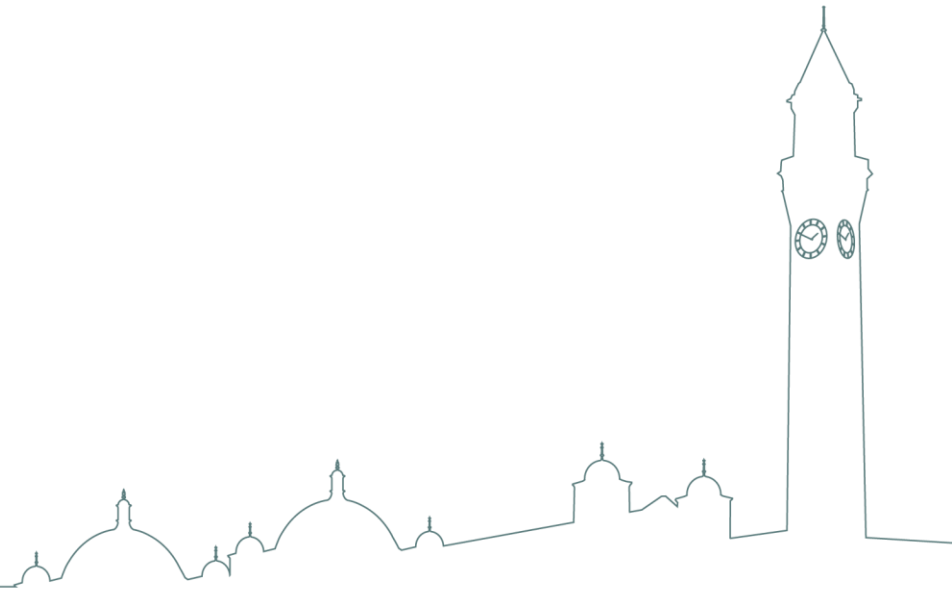
Local festivals



Food

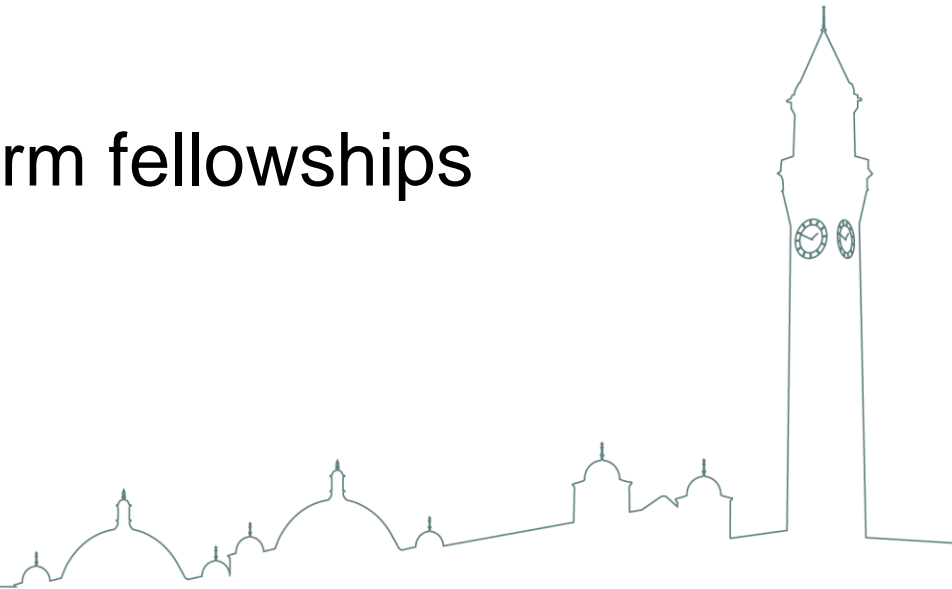


Onsen



JSPS Alumni Association

- ❑ Stay connected and share experiences with other fellows
- ❑ Join alumni events
- ❑ Information about other funding opportunities, research collaborations and contacts in Japan
- ❑ JSPS short- and long-term fellowships



Keep your eyes, ears and nose
open. Enjoy!

