Charting *Tabunka Kyōsei*: An Assessment of Municipal-Level "Multicultural Coexistence" and Immigrant Integration Efforts in Japan

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In the midst of rapid social aging, Japan has turned to increased immigration as a means of mitigating the variety of problems its changing demographics brings. While increased immigration is often touted for its economic benefits, comparatively little consideration has been given to how immigrants are integrated once they arrive in Japan. This study is the first of its kind to consider wide-scale municipal integration activities, looking to Japan's largest 106 cities. By focusing on the implementation and quality of multicultural coexistence (tabunka kyōsei) and internationalization plans, we find that city-level efforts remain generally lacking. Only a slim majority of Japan's largest cities have adopted a multicultural plan, and there is considerable variability in plan quality, driven primarily by foreign and elderly population size. Even by this basic metric integration activities in Japanese municipalities remain limited. As Japan's foreign population continues to grow, additional city efforts toward integration will likely prove necessary.

Keywords: immigrant integration; migration; Japan; social aging; assimilation

Introduction

The question of how to incorporate immigrants is an old one. For countries like the United States, Canada, and Australia with long histories of immigration, the absorption of migrant groups into society has been fundamental to the formation of their national identities. However, newer countries of immigration are facing largely unprecedented questions of how to integrate growing foreign populations into mainstream society. What actions can national and local governments take to ensure foreign residents are able to gainfully contribute to their new country of residence? How can government ensure harmonious relations between immigrant and native populations? Such notions of immigrant integration are where this article focuses its attention, looking at city-level efforts in Japan.

Japan is considered a new country of immigration, often noted for its homogeneity and historic isolation (Dale 1986). Immigration has existed in a narrow capacity in Japan for a considerable period of time, but economic realities have forced a gradual opening in Japan's immigration regime since the early 1990s. Where the vast majority of Japan's postwar immigrant population were former colonial subjects, mainly from Korea and Taiwan, who largely blended into Japanese society, post-1990 "newcomer" immigrants have embodied much higher levels of ethnic and cultural diversity, often demonstrating lower levels of Japanese cultural and linguistic proficiency (Machimura 2000). This makes Japan one of the more recent countries to deal with migration and questions of integration. To say that the Japanese response to an increased foreign presence is still evolving is perhaps an understatement, as the pros and cons of increased immigration are often debated, and policy continues to advance only incrementally.

Although Japan does not have a history of large-scale immigration, demographic factors appear to be forcing the country to increasingly open itself to foreign residents. With long life expectancies and a very low birthrate, Japan is experiencing significant population aging. Immigration has been touted as a means of mitigating some of the problems associated with a rapidly aging population, such as contributing tax revenue, propping up the pension system, filling labor shortages, and potentially increasing the birth rate. Still, the public remains generally unreceptive to large-scale increases in immigration (Nagayoshi 2008; Green 2017) and the national government has noted that it has no official "immigration policy" in place (Murai 2016).

Despite public hesitancy and no official immigration plan, Japan's newcomer foreign population has grown at a steady rate since the 1990s and is expected to continue doing so, particularly as the native population continues to age. The national government may not have an explicit immigration agenda per se, but it actively recruits foreign students, trainees, and highly skilled workers, and implemented a major initiative in 2019 that opened up recruitment for both skilled and unskilled workers across a variety of different employment categories (Yamashita 2019).

As Japan's foreign population grows, it is necessary to consider how immigrants have been incorporated into Japanese society thus far, and what immigrant integration efforts may look like going forward. This article will outline immigrant integration efforts throughout Japan's largest cities, using their published "multicultural coexistence" and "internationalization" plans (the combination of multicultural coexistence and internationalization plans are referred to hereafter as "multicultural plans"). Multicultural plans will be indexed and compared against city demographic data, helping to shed light on the specific factors that are associated with higher and lower levels of immigrant outreach.

By evaluating multicultural plans, we can gain a better understanding of what immigrant outreach at the local level looks like in Japan. Do cities have a coherent, readily available plan that outlines integration priorities? What kind of variation exists across city plans? Do local governments engage in greater or lesser degrees of immigrant outreach and integrative activities? What factors ultimately drive integration efforts in Japan? This article seeks to provide the initial answers to such questions.

In studying local immigrant integration efforts in Japan through cities' multicultural plans, this article contributes to the growing body of research on immigrant reception in both Japan and other new countries of immigration. As for the relatively few studies concerned with Japan, many look at either central government initiatives or focus almost exclusively on Tokyo, typically arguing that Japan does little to address its immigrant population. In presenting a more novel methodology, this study is the first of its kind to offer a wider perspective of immigrant integration in Japan, focusing on the largest cities in the country. As the issues of new immigrant admissions, integration and an aging society are not unique solely to Japan, other new countries of immigration can learn from Japan's immigrant integration experiences as outlined in this article.

Based on the data collected, this study finds that a little more than half of Japan's largest municipalities have a multicultural plan in place. City size,

economic concerns, as well as the proportion of the elderly population all seem to drive the decision to adopt a multicultural plan. Likewise, foreign population size and the aging populace appear to drive the relative levels of immigrant outreach in cities, as espoused by the multicultural plans. We are able to conclude that while large cities concerned with ailing economies and a graying population are perhaps the most likely to engage in immigrant outreach, such outreach initiatives, and consequently immigrant integration efforts as a whole, remain at a surprisingly low level in Japan. As Japan's foreign population grows, it is reasonable to expect an increase in the number of cities adopting multicultural plans, but greater efforts will need to be made for such plans to point toward higher levels of immigrant integration.

This analysis provides both a snapshot of immigrant integration on the cusp of rapid social aging, and points out a likely path for future integration efforts across municipalities in Japan. We begin by discussing immigrant outreach activities thus far at the national and local levels in Japan, and then move on to a discussion of the methodology used for this study. After presenting our results, we then discuss the study's implications.

Immigrant Integration

The earliest national policies approaching immigrant integration revolve around the Japanese national government signing onto a number of international conventions, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both endorsed by Japan in 1979, as well as the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, endorsed in 1981 (MOFA 1999). These conventions, along with endorsement of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1995, served to officially prohibit racial and ethnic discrimination across the country. However, these statutes remain largely unenforced outside of the government sector. Discrimination remains in areas such as private housing and employment, currently with little legal recourse (Repeta 2009).

During the 1980s, the national government also began promoting sister city arrangements between Japanese cities and municipalities abroad. The formation of city-level "international affairs bureaus" was encouraged by the national government, mainly to promote economic development (Kashiwazaki 2011). Around this time, cities began to establish and implement "internationalization" (*kokusaika*) plans, public documents used

to outline and publicize official municipal efforts at courting sister city arrangements, international exchange, and promoting international business and tourism (Kashiwazaki 2016). Such efforts are notable for their heretofore unprecedented emphasis on internationalization in Japan. City bureaus and internationalization plans have since played a major role in city-level integration initiatives since the 1980s.

With the 1990 revision to the Immigration Control and Refugee Act, the national government fundamentally changed Japan's immigration system. A relatively large number of new immigrants entered the country, creating a much stronger need for basic immigrant-oriented services, particularly in major hub cities. Figure 1 below outlines the changes to Japan's immigrant population, where as of 2020, the immigrant population stood at 2.8 million people, or 2.3% of Japan's total population (MOJ 2021).

As immigrant populations grew in urban areas, cities began to establish plans in order to deal with the influx. These "multicultural coexistence" (*tabunka kyōsei*) plans differed from the previous internationalization plans in that emphasis was placed squarely on addressing immigrant communities
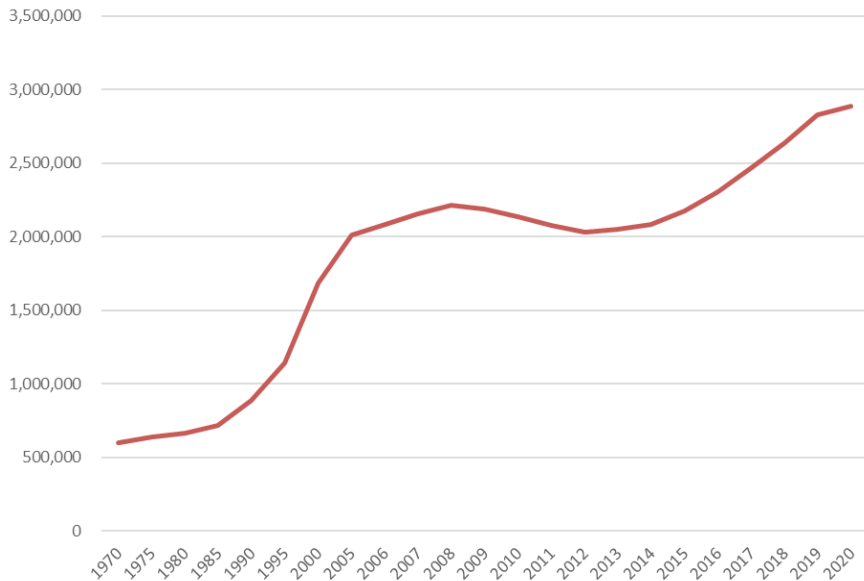

Fig. 1.—Foreign Population of Japan, 1970-2020

Sources: Compiled from Statistics Japan (2021) and MOJ (2021).

living in the municipality, outlining the types of services available to them and noting important goals or milestones as cities developed their multicultural policies. Osaka City (1998) was one of the first cities to establish a multicultural coexistence plan, followed by a number of other large cities in the early 2000s, including Yokkaichi (2004) and Kawasaki (2005).

Although piecemeal efforts were made by local governments and grassroots organizations to try and integrate newcomer foreign residents in some capacity, the national government did not begin taking up integration issues again until the mid-2000s, largely due to the grassroots efforts of local communities, foreign residents, and nongovernmental organizations pressuring the government. The national government implemented the Multicultural Coexistence Advancement Plan in 2006, and subsequently established a number of advisory services (Sugisawa 2013). The Multicultural Advancement Plan borrowed heavily from earlier municipal efforts, calling upon cities to implement their own "multicultural coexistence" plans that could help improve relations between Japanese and foreign residents. Such plans, while encouraged by the national government, have remained purely voluntary. The national government additionally offers various resources to local governments, including translation services, multilingual guidebook templates, Japanese as a second language materials, and grant programs to support city efforts (Aiden 2011).

Whereas the national government has not addressed immigrant integration in any significant capacity until only recently, local governments have had greater levels of involvement. However, the efficacy of actual local-level immigrant integration remains questionable. Nagy (2013), for example, argues that local integration policies are mainly service-based and not truly integrative. Sugisawa (2013) notes that local integration policies are largely ad hoc, without an over-arching purpose or goal, merely trying to address problems as they occur. Takenoshita (2015) likewise suggests that most local efforts are largely oriented around information provision, giving foreign residents a baseline level of information but falling well short of taking action to make them active participants in the local community.

Methodologies examining immigrant integration efforts in Japan have varied, where case studies focusing on single municipalities are perhaps the most common (for example see Flowers 2012 and Nagy 2013), while others have analyzed official government documents addressing multiculturalism (Nakamatsu 2014; Shiobara 2020) or city international centers as a proxy for integration (Kim and Streich 2020). Other studies come close to the methodology for this paper. For example, Abe (2007) conducted a survey of

all Japanese municipalities, although her analysis is qualitative, and she is less concerned about factors motivating outreach. Aiden (2011) analyzes city multicultural plans, but only looks at a small number of case studies. Ohtsuki (2018) is similarly interested in what determines Japanese openness to multiculturalism, but has a sample concentrated in Tokyo. To the author's knowledge, no studies have quantitatively examined multicultural outreach in Japan, and none have used a national sample. Although the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication published a "best practices" casebook in 2015 (MIC 2015), we currently do not have an understanding of what more typical multicultural coexistence efforts look like across municipalities in Japan, nor can we say what factors inspire them to be more or less detailed. This is a gap in which this article looks to make a contribution.

This study does not aim to answer the question of whether immigrant integration efforts thus far in Japan have been more or less effective. Rather, we are first looking for a better understanding of what immigrant outreach looks like in Japan, as well as the factors that influence cities to provide higher levels of services for foreign residents. A good place to understand such efforts is through city multicultural coexistence and internationalization plans. These documents are publicly available and outline city actions, priorities, and in many cases future plans for immigrant integration in their jurisdictions. While the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has promoted the implementation of multicultural coexistence plans, their adoption across municipalities is not uniform, nor is their content. It is the author's contention that such plans reflect the integration priorities, or lack thereof, across different cities. This variation in the propensity to adopt a multicultural plan and the contents of multicultural plans is where we next turn our attention.

Hypotheses

As a means of assessing basic immigrant integration levels in Japan, this paper seeks to answer two main questions: what factors lead cities to adopt multicultural coexistence plans, and what factors influence the level of detail for such plans? These questions lead to two primary hypotheses:

H1: Population, economic, and aging factors influence whether cities have a multicultural plan.

H2: Population, economic, and aging factors Should be "influence relative levels of immigrant outreach".

The selection of population, economic, and aging dimensions across cities as independent variables is based on what appear to be some of the pervasive factors motivating change in local government immigrant outreach. In terms of population, the goal is to see whether city size, total population or immigrant concentration are associated with likelihood of city multicultural plan adoption. Migration literature is often interested in the incorporation strategies of large cities, and many studies have compared the relative levels of immigrant integration across cities of various sizes and immigrant populations (see Tossutti 2012, and de Graauw and Vermeulen 2016, for example). Economic motivations for immigrant outreach are commonly noted in the literature, where some cities see courting increased diversity as a way to encourage economic growth (Hadj-Abdou 2014; Søholt 2018). Finally, as noted above, population aging is playing a growing role in government decision making. In addition to attempts at promoting pro-natalist policies, increased immigration has been suggested as a means of addressing demographic shortcomings in Japan (Takenaka 2012; Liu-Farrer 2020). The third category of independent variables specifically looks at measures of population aging to see if cities with aging or shrinking populations elicit different levels of outreach to foreign residents.

Because the existing literature has not yet established exactly what leads cities to adopt a multicultural or internationalization plan, the range of possible influencing factors is intentionally kept fairly open, and we do not specify a positive or negative association for specific factors. Instead, this article works as more of an exploratory study, aiming to understand broadly what influences multiculturalism and immigrant outreach in Japan.

Methodology

To test our hypotheses, we take a detailed look at municipal multicultural coexistence and internationalization plans. Because Japan has over 1700 municipalities, many with fairly small foreign populations, we limit the field of this study to Japan's largest cities. More precisely, we focus exclusively on Japan's ordinance-designated, core and former special cities. Ordinance-designated cities consist of Japan's largest municipalities, having populations of at least 500,000 people, are divided into administrative "wards" (*ku*) and have a special designation from the national government. As of 2020, there are 20 such cities, as well as the Tokyo metropolis. At the next highest level of cities are the "core cities," which are municipalities with populations of over

300,000 that also receive a special designation from the national government. There are 60 core cities as of 2020. The third category of cities included in this analysis, known as "special cities," were a government designation through 2015, after which it was suspended. Some cities had their designation changed to core city status, while others are simply "former" special cities. This analysis includes the 25 remaining former special cities (MIC 2020).

By narrowing the focus to Japan's largest municipalities—106 in this case, including Tokyo, the ordinance-designated, core, and former special cities—we are able to capture the majority of Japan's domestic and foreign populations. This grouping of cities encompasses 52% of Japan's total population, as well as 59% of Japan's foreign population as of 2019. Tokyo also presents a somewhat unique case, where some of the city's 23 wards themselves have populations larger than other major cities and its economic, social, and demographic profile potentially make it an extreme outlier compared to the rest of the country. In this instance we have opted to include Tokyo's 23 wards as a single city, with ranking equivalent to that of an ordinance-designated city.

Adopting a Multicultural Plan

The hypotheses ask two primary questions: what factors lead to the adoption of a multicultural coexistence or internationalization plan, and what factors influence greater or lesser degrees of outreach as specified in city plans? To answer the first question, the author accessed all available plans for each ordinance-designated, core, and former special city to create a binary "multicultural plan" dependent variable. Multicultural plans were accessed through the internet, by running searches for terms such as "*Aomori-shi tabunka kyōsei suishin puran*" (Aomori city multicultural coexistence plan) and "*Aomori-shi kokusaika*" (Internationalization in Aomori city). If no plan was readily accessible via basic searches, the author then went to city websites, checking their bureaus in charge of international issues, as well as official city reports and policies. Appendix A has a full listing of city websites with multicultural plans included in this analysis. Multicultural plan data were gathered between September 2018 and October 2020, updating when appropriate if a new multicultural plan was issued by the municipality.

Independent variables include a host of population, economic, and aging indicators at the city level. For population indicators we include city status—that is, whether it is an ordinance-designated, core, or former special city—

the foreign population percentage, the percent change in the foreign population from 2006 to 2019, and the percent change in the total population for the same period. Note that the foreign population counts all foreign residents registered with their respective municipalities. This excludes short-term visitors such as tourists, and "naturalized" foreign-born individuals who have acquired Japanese citizenship. The analysis does include all categories of immigrants on resident visas, including foreign spouses, individuals on various types of work visas, permanent residents, and "special permanent residents," that is, ethnic Korean and Chinese nationals who have maintained foreign residency since Japan's colonial era.

These variables are included to determine whether city status has an effect on the propensity to adopt a multicultural plan, as well as whether foreign population size, or changes in both the foreign population and total population have any association with adopting a multicultural plan. Sources used for independent variables are additionally noted in Appendix A. Based on the inclusion of these variables, we can add a sub-hypothesis to H1:

H1A: Cities with larger populations are more likely to adopt a multicultural plan.

Economic indicators include city taxable income for 2018 (the most recent year available at the time of writing), the number of businesses in the city for 2016, the percent change in the number of businesses from 2001 to 2016, the number of employed people in 2016 per 100,000 people, and the percent change in the number of employed people from 2006 to 2016. These variables are included to test whether there is any association between city economics and the likelihood of multicultural plan adoption, where perhaps cities with more advanced economies would be more open to foreign residents and thus more likely to adopt multicultural plans.

H1B: Cities with more advanced economies are more likely to adopt a multicultural plan.

Aging indicators include the percentage of the population over 65 years old, the rate of change in the elderly population from 2001 to 2019, and the change in the number of preschools and elementary schools in the city over the same period of time. Because the aging population is a significant issue in Japan, it is possible that municipalities experiencing social aging are more likely to try to create favorable conditions for their foreign residents to compensate. The school change variables attempt to measure the same phenomena, where cities with graying populations are more likely to shutter preschools and elementary schools.

H1C: Cities with larger elderly populations are more likely to adopt a

multicultural plan.

Table 1 below provides a full listing of independent and dependent variables. Each set of indicators will be compared against the number of adopted multicultural coexistence and internationalization plans across Japan

TABLE 1
VARIABLE DESCRIPTIONS

Dependent variables	Definition
Multicultural Plan	1= existence of a multicultural cooperation or internationalization plan. 0= otherwise
Plan Total	Iterative score of plan assessment. 0= no immigrant outreach, 21= considerable immigrant outreach
Independent variables	Definition
Ordinance designated city	1= ordinance designated city status, 0= otherwise
Core city	1= core city status, 0= otherwise
Special city	1= former special city status, 0= otherwise
Population change 2006-19	Percent change in the total population, 2006 to 2019
Foreign %, 2019	Percentage of the population with foreign nationality, 2019
Foreign population change, 2006-19	Percent change in the foreign population, 2006 to 2019
Income 2018	City taxable income (unit= millions of yen), 2018
Businesses 2016	Number of businesses registered in the city, 2016
Business change 2001-16	Change in the number of businesses registered in the city, 2001 to 2016
Employment 2016, per 100k	Number of employed people in the city per 100,000 residents, 2016
Employment change 2009-16	Change in the number of employed people, 2009 to 2016
Over 65, 2019	Percentage of the city population over 65 years old, 2019
Over 65, 2001-19	Change in the percentage of the city population over 65 years old, 2001 to 2019
Preschool change, 2001-19	Change in the number of city preschools, 2001 to 2019
Elementary change, 2001-19	Change in the number of city elementary schools, 2001 to 2019

using a probit analysis. Probits will include models of each subcategory's association with creating a multicultural plan, as well as a full model incorporating most variables from each subcategory.

Influences on Multicultural Plans

Where the first research question looks to what factors influence the likelihood of cities to adopt a multicultural plan, the second question is concerned with what factors influence city plans. Independent variables are unchanged and again divided between population, economic, and aging indicators. As the inclusion of the independent variables follows the same logic, we can create similar sub-hypotheses for H2.

   H2A: Cities with larger populations will have a more detailed multicultural plan.

   H2B: Cities with more advanced economies will have a more detailed multicultural plan.

   H2C: Cities with larger elderly populations will have a more detailed multicultural plan.

   Although independent variables are largely unchanged in analyzing the factors that influence multicultural plans, the construction of the dependent variable is considerably more complicated. To understand where multicultural plans place their emphases, the author conducted a content analysis on all available multicultural plans, pulling out key indicators as they relate to foreign residents. The author settled on a total of 21 indicators, including factors such as offering multilingual consultations, Japanese language classes, educational support for children, information on the health insurance system, disaster planning information targeting foreign residents, and promoting collaboration with local nongovernmental organizations.

   Indicators derived from the content analysis represent common outreach activities across Japanese cities. They are not necessarily measuring new or novel approaches. Likewise, the criteria to satisfy any single indicator was kept intentionally simple: if the city plan addressed the indicator in some basic capacity, they were given credit for it. Scores were either "0" for no evidence of the indicator, or "1" if that indicator was satisfied. From there, the author could obtain average levels of outreach across the 21 indicators and use the independent variables to test for factors that influence the levels of outreach. A discussion of these tests follows.

Results

To begin, it is necessary to discuss what the average distribution of variables looks like. Table 2 below lists the descriptive statistics for all variables included in this analysis.

    Of the cities sampled, 52% (55 out of 106) had implemented either a

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Dependent variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Obs
Multicultural Plan	0.52	0.50	0	1	106
Plan Total	12.87	5.04	1	21	55
Independent variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Obs
Ordinance designated city	0.20	0.40	0	1	106
Core city	0.57	0.50	0	1	106
Special city	0.24	0.43	0	1	106
Population change 2006-19	3.32	9.23	-12.13	66.66	106
Foreign %, 2019	1.93	1.28	0.37	6.27	106
Foreign population change, 2006-19	34.71	33.61	-19.84	169.98	106
Income 2018	994.07	1801.19	228	16344	106
Businesses 2016	29,248.59	66,510.18	5698	650,000	106
Business change 2001-16	-7.43	15.54	-59.22	52.33	106
Employment 2016, per 100k	43679	10,707.25	23,130.26	88,562.26	106
Employment change 2009-16	-2.55	3.66	-11.24	6.5	106
Over 65, 2019	26.81	2.89	19.07	34.59	106
Over 65, 2001-19	92.87	33.96	34.35	201.32	106
Preschool change, 2001-19	-19.62	17.08	-64.71	26.92	106
Elementary change, 2001-19	9.09	21.04	-19.44	81.25	106

multicultural coexistence or internationalization plan. Of those 55, the average score was 12.87 out of a maximum of 21 points, with a standard deviation of 5.04. A slim majority of Japan's largest cities had either implemented or made publicly available some kind of multicultural plan. It is also worth noting that 95% of ordinance-designated cities (20 out of 21), 43% of core cities (26 out of 60) and 36% of former special cities (9 out of 25) had implemented a multicultural plan. In terms of scoring, most of the cities with multicultural plans were concentrated toward the center, with a reasonable level of variability.

Looking to the independent variables, we limit ourselves to the interesting findings here. With the population variables we can see that the sample has had an average population growth of 3.32% between 2006 and 2019, with a range of -12.13% growth up to 66.66%. The mean foreign population size for these cities was 1.91%, with a range of 0.37% (Asahikawa city) through 6.27% (Kawaguchi city). However, most cities have experienced significant growth in their foreign populations, showing an average of 35% growth between 2006 and 2019. For economic variables, there appears to be a decrease both in the number of businesses and employment in sampled cities, with an average decrease of 7.43% in the number of businesses, and an average 2.55% decrease in employment levels. Economic prospects thus look rather negative, which is perhaps in keeping with longstanding economic stagnation in Japan and its shrinking labor force. For aging variables, there has been a large growth in the elderly population, increasing 93% on average in sampled cities. The number of preschools has been shrinking, although there has been a small increase in the number of elementary schools on average.

Next, we will test to see what factors influence the adoption of a multicultural plan through the probit analysis, before moving on to discuss how these factors are associated with different parts of multicultural plan outreach in the regression models.

Probit Analysis

In assessing what factors influence a city's adoption of a multicultural plan, the author ran four separate probit models. Table 3 shows the probit results with variables divided across the population, economic and aging subcategories, while Table 4 uses a combined model to examine the iterative effect of all variables.

Looking first to the population associations in Table 3, city status has a

TABLE 3
PROBIT – POPULATION, ECONOMIC & AGING ASSOCIATIONS

Population Associations		Economic Associations		Aging Associations	
Constant	-1.34 (0.43)	Constant	-3.26*** (1.00)	Constant	4.86*** (1.57)
Ordinance designated	2.42*** (0.63)	Income 2018	0.00*** (0.00)	Over 65	-0.18** (0.05)
Core city	0.69** (0.34)	Business change 01-16	-0.01 (0.01)	Over 65, change 01-19	-0.00 (0.00)
Pop change 06-19	0.02 (0.03)	Businesses 2016	-0.00*** (0.00)	Preschool change, 01-19	-0.01 (0.01)
Foreign %, 2019	0.18 (0.14)	Employed 2016 per 100k	0.00** (0.00)	Elementary change, 01-19	-0.02** (0.01)
Foreign pop change, 06-19	-0.01* (0.00)	Employed 06-16	-0.07 (0.04)		
N	106	N	106	N	106
Pseudo R2	0.2542	Pseudo R2	0.2233	Pseudo R2	0.1464

* =statistical significance at 10% (90% confidence level)
** =statistical significance at 5% (95% confidence level)
*** =statistical significance at 1% (99% confidence level)

positive and significant association, where both ordinance-designated cities and core cities are significantly more likely to adopt a multicultural plan compared to the special city baseline. The only other variable that exhibits a significant association is the change in the foreign population variable, with a negative association significant at the 90% confidence level. With the economic associations, per capita income, and the number of employed people are both positively associated with the likelihood of having a multicultural plan, while the number of businesses has a negative relationship. For aging associations, the proportion of the elderly population has a significant negative relationship with the likelihood of having a multicultural plan. That is, cities with smaller elderly populations are more

TABLE 4
PROBIT – FULL MODEL

Constant	0.24
	(2.62)
Ordinance designated	1.35*
	(0.74)
Core city	0.50
	(0.40)
Foreign %, 2019	0.10
	(0.15)
Foreign pop change, 06-19	-0.01**
	(0.00)
Income 2018	0.00
	(0.00)
Business change, 01-16	-0.02*
	(0.01)
Businesses 2016	-0.00
	(0.00)
Employed 2016 per 100k	0.00*
	(0.00)
Over 65	-0.10
	(0.07)
Over 65 change, 01-19	0.00
	(0.01)
Elementary change, 01-19	-0.02*
	(0.01)
N	106
Pseudo R2	0.3222

* =statistical significance at 10% (90% confidence level)
** =statistical significance at 5% (95% confidence level)
*** =statistical significance at 1% (99% confidence level)

likely to adopt a multicultural plan. There is also a negative association with the number of elementary schools and the adoption of a multicultural plan.

Moving to the full model in Table 4, some change in associations is evident. Core city status, income, and the proportion of the elderly population all lose statistical significance in this model, while the change in number of businesses from 2001 to 2016 gained significance. Pseudo R-squared for the total model is 0.3222, implying that this combination of variables has reasonable explanatory power. Ordinance-designated city status

and the number of employed people in the city have a positive association, while the change in the foreign population size, change in the number of businesses, and change in the number of elementary schools have significant negative associations. Implications for these findings will be discussed after a review of the regression analysis results.

Regression Analysis

Where the probit analysis was used to understand what factors lead cities to adopt multicultural plans, the regression analysis is concerned with what factors potentially influence the content of multicultural plans. Independent

TABLE 5
REGRESSION – POPULATION, ECONOMIC & AGING ASSOCIATIONS

Population Associations		Economic Associations		Aging Associations	
Constant	7.74*** (1.86)	Constant	10.86*** (4.20)	Constant	21.64** (8.31)
Ordinance designated	0.98 (1.81)	Income 2018	0.00 (0.00)	Over 65	-0.31 (0.31)
Core city	-0.30 (1.76)	Business change 01-16	0.05 (0.05)	Over 65, change 01-19	-0.04 (0.02)
Pop change 06-19	-0.05 (0.06)	Businesses 2016	-0.00 (0.00)	Preschool change, 01-19	0.01 (0.05)
Foreign %, 2019	2.25*** (0.46)	Employed 2016 per 100k	0.00 (0.00)	Elementary change, 01-19	-0.05 (0.06)
Foreign pop change, 06-19	0.00 (0.02)	Employed 06-16	0.26 (0.28)		
N	55	N	55	N	55
R2	0.3521	R2	0.1137	R2	0.0598

* =statistical significance at 10% (90% confidence level)
** =statistical significance at 5% (95% confidence level)
*** =statistical significance at 1% (99% confidence level)

TABLE 6
REGRESSION – FULL MODEL

Constant	-9.49 (10.29)
Ordinance designated	0.92 (1.58)
Foreign %, 2019	2.69*** (0.58)
Foreign pop change, 06-19	0.00 (0.02)
Income 2018	0.00 (0.00)
Business change, 01-16	0.07 (0.05)
Businesses 2016	-0.00 (0.00)
Employed 2016 per 100k	0.00 (0.00)
Over 65	0.56* (0.32)
Over 65 change, 01-19	0.00 (0.02)
Elementary change, 01-19	-0.01 (0.05)
N	55
R2	0.4120

* =statistical significance at 10% (90% confidence level)
** =statistical significance at 5% (95% confidence level)
*** =statistical significance at 1% (99% confidence level)

variables were broken up again according to population, economic, and aging dimensions, then combined in a final iterative model. Table 5 provides the separate population, economic, and aging models, and Table 6 gives the full model with all relevant variables. All regression models use the smaller sample size of 55 cities, encompassing only those cities that had a multicultural plan included in this analysis.

According to Table 5, the only significant result we can see is a strong, positive association between foreign population size and multicultural plan assessment. Incorporating the full model in Table 6, foreign population size retains statistical significance, and the proportion of the elderly population

gains statistical significance at the 90% confidence level. It appears that foreign population size is the single largest determinant of immigrant outreach in the cities sampled, while the elderly population size also plays a perhaps somewhat diminished role.

Discussion

Having run several probits on the likelihood of cities to adopt multicultural plans and a series of regressions to determine what influences the content of city plans, we can make a few broad conclusions. For one, there are a number of factors that prove significant in influencing the likelihood of adopting a multicultural plan compared to the number of factors that influence plan content. This is likely a function of the reduced sample size, where there were 106 cities tested for having a multicultural plan, but assessment of the plans was only possible for 55 of those cities. It is also possible that there may not be enough variation across cities to warrant any major differences, with the exception of foreign population and potentially the elderly population size.

Looking to the probit analysis first, city size appears to be a clear influencing factor, where Japan's largest cities are more apt to adopt a multicultural plan, providing some evidence in support for *H1A*, that cities with larger populations are more likely to adopt a multicultural plan. This is perhaps due to larger cities having a greater amount of resources, but also typically hosting larger foreign populations. The foreign population variables were not significant here, and in fact, foreign growth appeared to have a negative effect, but there could also be some multicollinearity between city size and foreign population size since most immigrants congregate in Japan's largest cities. Nonetheless, foreign population size is perhaps an avenue that merits further consideration, particularly given its strong association with plan details as shown in the regression analysis.

Economics also seems to play a role in whether cities adopt a multicultural plan. In terms of *H1B*, that more advanced economies are more likely to adopt a multicultural plan, we have inconsistent evidence both supporting and contradicting the hypothesis. Income, businesses, and employment were significant in the first model, while the change in businesses and employment were significant in the full model. Aside from the employment rate, it is difficult to parse exactly what economic aspects have a significant impact on multicultural plan adoption in this analysis, but at a minimum, the economic connection cannot be overlooked. Economics, be it the number of businesses,

the change in businesses, income, or some other aspect, appears to motivate cities to adopt multicultural plans. Because immigration to Japan is primarily motivated by immigrants' economic contributions, cities with high employment and a shrinking number of businesses may be looking to immigrants as an alternative source of labor and potentially as a source of innovation.

Aging appears to be a motivation for implementing a multicultural plan as well, at least to some extent. While the "over 65" variable has a negative association in the single model, it lost statistical significance in the full probit. At the same time, the change in the number of elementary schools was significant throughout, showing that cities with shrinking numbers of elementary schools were more likely to adopt a multicultural plan. This could be initially seen as contradictory evidence for *H1C*, that a larger elderly population will motivate cities to adopt a multicultural plan. However, with the introduction of the full model it appears that the other variables, most likely the economic variables, accounted for the negative association shown with a higher elderly population. Still, the retention of significance in the shrinking number of schools implies a graying population likely has some indirect influence on immigrant outreach and adopting a multicultural plan.

Regression results are perhaps less striking, but underscore similar points: that a growing foreign population, along with an aging population, elicits comparatively higher levels of outreach as outlined in city multicultural plans. While we do not have evidence that overall population size affects the quality of multicultural plans, as proposed in *H2A*, foreign population size is the single strongest predictor of a detailed multicultural plan. Cities with larger foreign populations appear to be the most involved in immigrant outreach activities. Interestingly, while there is strong evidence of an economic association in the probit analysis, which points to a connection between city economics and the likelihood of adopting a multicultural plan, there was no discernable association between economics and plan breadth. We thus find no evidence to support *H2B*, that city economics influence the detail of multicultural plans. However, while there was no apparent economic association with multicultural plan quality, we do have some evidence supporting *H2C*, that a larger elderly population could inspire higher levels of city outreach.

To summarize, we find that larger cities, foreign population size, city economics, and elderly population size influence the likelihood of cities to adopt a multicultural plan. Additionally, foreign and elderly population size exert the strongest influence over the contents of multicultural plans, where

cities with larger foreign and elderly populations are more likely to engage in a broader range of outreach activities. The corollary to these findings is that cities with smaller foreign populations and less severe social aging are less likely to have multicultural plans. Those smaller cities that do adopt plans will likely have a lower level of detail and outreach.

What does this tell us about immigrant integration in Japan? For one, immigrant outreach likely remains on the backburner for many of Japan's cities. This sample focused on Japan's largest cities, and only a slim majority adopted some kind of multicultural plan. It is possible that the ratio of smaller cities adopting such plans is considerably lower still. However, we can also discern that there is some tipping point where municipalities will be more likely to adopt a multicultural plan, perhaps being motivated in some capacity by the combination of a growing foreign population, city economics, and their aging demographics. As the Japanese populace continues to age and the foreign population grows, it is reasonable to expect that other cities will adopt similar multicultural guidelines.

There is some variation in the quality of immigrant outreach across Japan's largest cities, with some cities making comparatively greater outreach efforts. Cities with larger foreign and elderly populations appear to be the most highly motivated to try to integrate their foreign residents, rising above even economic concerns. More so than considerations over immigrant contributions to the local economy, a conspicuously large foreign population, and, perhaps to a lesser extent, a conspicuously aging native population, appear to be significant drivers of local immigrant outreach. Japan thus seems to be more concerned with the social aspects of integration rather than the economic ones.

While this study endeavors to better understand immigrant outreach in Japan, there are some limitations worth noting. Perhaps most significantly, this article only catalogs official immigrant outreach and integration activities as espoused in city multicultural plans. It does not assess the quality of such activities, nor does it go beyond the policies outlined in the multicultural plans. It is possible, for example, that activities discussed in city plans could be operating at a greater or lesser level of quality than officially noted. It is equally possible that cities could be taking action outside of what is outlined in their official policies, or that they are taking outreach actions even if they have not implemented a formal multicultural plan. Along the same lines, one could perhaps question the extent to which multicultural plans truly demonstrate immigrant integration. The plans do outline city policies for addressing their foreign populations, but are they more concerned with

appeasing Japanese residents rather than assisting foreign residents and guaranteeing their rights? These limitations are valid, but a study of available multicultural plans still has value in being able to systematically assess a viable policy document in use across much of the country, particularly when this type of analysis has yet to be undertaken in Japan.

By the same token, this study only looks to Japan's largest cities. While the sample does cover cities housing the majority of foreign residents in Japan, a sizable minority live in smaller cities. This study does not capture whether or to what extent smaller cities might also be implementing multicultural plans. Some rural cities have a relatively high number of foreign spouses, for example, or may be sensitive to populations of long-term former colonial migrants. Future research could extend the analysis further to Japan's smaller or more rural cities.

An additional limitation worth noting is that this study does not incorporate political variables such as local voting patterns, predominant political parties or prevailing ideologies. Rather, this study has limited its scope to focus on relatively narrow population, economic, and aging indicators and how they influence multicultural outreach. It is possible that political concerns, as well as other factors not considered here, can have some influence on local integration efforts. These additional factors potentially influencing immigrant integration in Japan are worth future study.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to outline municipal immigrant outreach efforts across Japan, looking at the likelihood of adopting a multicultural plan and the quality of such plans in Japan's largest cities. Results indicate that a slim majority of cities have adopted multicultural plans, with city size, economic conditions, and social aging all factoring into the likelihood of plan adoption. Of those cities that have adopted multicultural plans, foreign population size holds the largest influence over plan quality, while the elderly population size also has a significant association.

As a measure of immigrant integration, this study finds that many of Japan's large cities are not taking broad action to integrate their foreign populations. Only Japan's largest cities appear to have adopted a multicultural plan, and plan quality can vary considerably. Even by the simplistic measures of immigrant integration employed in this study, which are numerical measures that do not assess the quality of outreach activities, many cities

come up short. While we can perhaps expect more Japanese cities to adopt multicultural policies and plans in the future as the native population ages and the foreign population grows, integration efforts will need further consideration if the foreign population is to be viably incorporated into Japanese society.

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Appendix A:
City Multicultural Plans & Independent Variable Sources

City Multicultural Plans

- Akashi - https://www.city.akashi.lg.jp/community/jinken_ka/shise/gyose/kekaku/documents/h29keikaku.pdf
- Akita - https://www.city.akita.lg.jp/shisei/kokusaikoryu/1011543/1003028.html
- Chiba - http://www.ccia-chiba.or.jp/images/file/disclosure/2012kyosei001.pdf
- Fuji - http://www.city.fuji.shizuoka.jp/machi/c1104/rn2ola000000hyeu.html
- Fukui - https://www.city.fukui.lg.jp/kurasi/mati/international/tabunkaplan2.html
- Fukuyama - http://www.city.fukuyama.hiroshima.jp/uploaded/attachment/5510.pdf
- Gifu - http://www.city.gifu.lg.jp/23330.htm
- Hachioji - http://www.city.hachioji.tokyo.jp/kurashi/shimin/004/002/tabunkakyouseisuisinpuran/p023108.html
- Hamamatsu - http://www.city.hamamatsu.shizuoka.jp/kokusai/kokusai/documents/iccvision-jp.pdf
- Higashi Osaka - https://www.city.higashiosaka.lg.jp/0000005122.html
- Himeji - http://www.city.himeji.lg.jp/var/rev0/0107/7069/201732919349.pdf
- Hiroshima - http://www.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/www/contents/1145854476369/index.html
- Ibaraki - https://www.city.ibaraki.osaka.jp/material/files/group/8/jinken_keikaku_2.pdf
- Iwaki - http://www.city.iwaki.lg.jp/www/contents/1570495075236/simple/20191008-3-3.pdf
- Kanazawa - http://www4.city.kanazawa.lg.jp/data/open/cnt/3/11154/6/kokusaikouryusenryakuplan.pdf
- Kazugai - https://www.city.kasugai.lg.jp/_res/projects/default_project/_page_/001/005/931/no2tabunkaplan2.pdf
- Kawagoe - http://www.city.kawagoe.saitama.jp/shisei/ikenkobo/ikenkobo_kako/ikenkobo_h22/boshu/22-19_boshu.files/kokusaikasoan.pdf
- Kawaguchi - https://www.city.kawaguchi.lg.jp/soshiki/01060/020/4/3583.html
- Kawasaki - http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/250/cmsfiles/contents/0000040/40959/tabunkashishin2015.pdf
- Kitakyushu - http://www.city.kitakyushu.lg.jp/files/000731844.pdf
- Kobe - http://www.city.kobe.lg.jp/information/project/international/promote/img/kokusai_kouryuu_taikou.pdf
- Kofu - https://www.city.kofu.yamanashi.jp/shimin/shise/shisaku/kurashi/kyose.

html

- Kumamoto - https://www.city.kumamoto.jp/common/UploadFileDsp.aspx?c_id=5&id=1647&sub_id=1&flid=8685
- Kyoto - http://www.city.kyoto.lg.jp/sogo/page/0000164035.html
- Matsumoto - https://www.city.matsumoto.nagano.jp/smph/kurasi/tiiki/jinken/jinken/kyosei.html
- Mito - https://mitoic.or.jp/en/about/pdf/jigyou-keikaku_H28.pdf
- Morioka - http://www.city.morioka.iwate.jp/_res/projects/default_project/_page_/001/010/039/shishin.pdf
- Nagaoka - http://www.city.nagaoka.niigata.jp/kurashi/cate13/chikyuhiroba/vision.html
- Nagasaki - http://www.city.nagasaki.lg.jp/syokai/730000/731000/p000297.html (under section A4)
- Nagoya - http://www.city.nagoya.jp/kankobunkakoryu/cmsfiles/contents/0000092/92013/2honpen.pdf
- Niigata - http://www.city.niigata.lg.jp/shisei/kokusai/index.files/taiko2015.pdf
- Oita - http://www.city.oita.oita.jp/o017/shisejoho/kokusaikoryu/ 1465519952982.html
- Okayama - http://www.city.okayama.jp/contents/000191360.pdf
- Okazaki - http://www.city.okazaki.lg.jp/1300/1303/1321/p012664.html
- Osaka - http://www.city.osaka.lg.jp/shimin/cmsfiles/contents/ 0000270/270449/sisin.pdf
- Otsu - http://www.city.otsu.lg.jp/shisei/keikaku/manabi/1390491563907.html
- Sagamihara - www.city.sagamihara.kanagawa.jp/area/plan/kokusaiplan.pdf
- Saitama - http://www.city.saitama.jp/006/007/004/008/p035428_d/fil/kokusaika-kihon-keikaku.pdf
- Sakai - http://www.city.sakai.lg.jp/shisei/kokusai/suishin/kokusai/kokusaikakeikaku/purankaiteihan.files/mokujihonbun.pdf
- Sapporo - http://www.city.sapporo.jp/kokusai/strategy.html
- Sendai - https://www.city.sendai.jp/koryu/foreignlanguage/jp/sekatsu/documents/basic_research_into_the_promotion_of_multiculturalism_ 2010full_version.pdf
- Shizuoka - http://www.city.shizuoka.jp/000690948.pdf
- Suita - http://www.city.suita.osaka.jp/home/soshiki/div-toshimiryoku/bunspo/_70466/_85823/_87137.html
- Takatsuki - http://www.city.takatsuki.osaka.jp/kakuka/shimin/jinkenda/publiccomment/kako_public/tabunka_iken.html
- Tokyo metro - http://www.metro.tokyo.jp/INET/KEIKAKU/2016/02/DATA/70q2g101.pdf
- Tottori - http://www.city.tottori.lg.jp/www/contents/1447889859846/activesqr/common/other/56f379f2002.pdf
- Toyohashi - http://www.city.toyohashi.lg.jp/15617.htm
- Toyonaka - https://www.city.toyonaka.osaka.jp/jinken_gakushu/kokusai/

tabunkakyousei.files/tabunkakyouseishishin.pdf
- Toyota - http://www.city.toyota.aichi.jp/shisei/kokusaikoryu/1004853.html
- Tsukubai - http://www.city.tsukuba.lg.jp/shisei/torikumi/kokusai/1001939.html
- Utsunomiya - http://www.city.utsunomiya.tochigi.jp/shisei/koryu/kokusaikoryu/1011915.html
- Yao - https://www.city.yao.osaka.jp/cmsfiles/contents/0000025/25087/keikaku.pdf
- Yokkaichi - http://www.city.yokkaichi.lg.jp/www/contents/1490616597743/index.html
- Yokohama - http://www.city.yokohama.lg.jp/kokusai/multiculture/machishishin.pdf

Independent Variable Sources

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https://www.e-stat.go.jp/stat-search/files?page=1&layout=datalist&toukei=00200241&tstat=000001039591&cycle=7&year=20060&month=0&tclass1=000001039601

- Foreign population, 2019
Ministry of Internal Affairs & Communications. 2020. "Foreign residents by city, ward, town, village, nationality and region" [*Shikuchōson Betsukokuseki Chiikibetsu Zairyū Gaikokujin*].
https://www.e-stat.go.jp/stat-search/files?page=1&layout=datalist&toukei=00250012&tstat=000001018034&cycle=1&year=20190&month=12040606&tclass1=000001060399

- Total population, 2019
Ministry of Internal Affairs & Communications. 2020. "Population, population movement and number of households by city" [*Shikuchōson Betsujinkō, Jinkō Dōtai oyobi Setai-sū*].
https://www.e-stat.go.jp/stat-search/files?page=1&layout=datalist&toukei=00200241&tstat=000001039591&cycle=7&year=20190&month=0&tclass1=000001039601&result_back=1

● Income 2018, Businesses 2016, Business change 2001-16, Employment 2016 per 100k, Employment change 2009-16, Over 65 2019, Over 65 2001-19, Preschool change 2001-19, Elementary school change 2001-19

Ministry of Internal Affairs & Communications. 2020. "Statistical Examination of Prefectures and Municipalities" [*Tōkei de miru Todōfuken Shikuchōson no Sugata*]. http://www.stat.go.jp/data/ssds/index.html