

Japan

Ethnicity in Japan

Power relations

1945-51: Japan is occupied by the US and run by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) (the choice of 'senior part' reflects the occupation arrangement). Koreans and Taiwanese/Chinese have access to executive power blocked due to non-Japanese citizen status. Ainu and Burakumin are discriminated against in social realms, but are not actively pursuing executive power. Okinawa is controlled by the US.

1952-1971: US occupation ends, but there is little change in the configuration of ethnic group access to executive power.

1972-1983: In 1972, Okinawa becomes part of Japan again. During this period there is a rise in ethnicity-based political organizations of Ainu, Koreans, and Burakumin that make claims mainly for social and economic rights (and some local voting rights) rather than control of the executive.

1984-2005: In 1984, the Hokkaido Utari Association demands recognition of Ainu claims to Hokkaido. Increase in labor migration from China as well as Korea. However, in the case of Koreans, naturalization keeps the total population fairly constant. Overall numbers of Chinese rise. By this time, most Koreans and Chinese residents are second or third-generation, and therefore were not stripped of national voting rights and access to executive power (as were the former colonial subjects).

2006-2009: Former colonial subjects, such as the Koreans and the Taiwanese, are currently either naturalized Japanese citizens or hold "special permanent resident" status (Tokubetsu Eijyu Sha). According to statistics from Japan's national Immigration Bureau, the special permanent residents consist of 0.3 % of total national population (2007). The official legal interpretation of the Japanese national government between 2006 and 2009 on the Nationality Act, particularly the status of the special permanent residents, is that special permanent residents do not hold voting rights or have the right to serve in public administration. The term "special" is a marker to identify their difference from other permanent residents as subjects of former colonies. However, this discursive marker did not provide them with any legally equal status as Japanese citizens. Once the special permanent residents decide to be naturalized, they become legally invisible and are absorbed into the dominant "Japanese" category. The Okinawans stayed dominant in the Okinawa prefecture and held de facto regional autonomy in the prefecture. On June 6, 2008, the national Diet passed a bill to demand the national administrative branch officially recognize the Ainu's indigenous status in Hokkaido and in northern Japan. The Burakumin are considered in Japan as Japanese. Burakumin-related discrimination is seen primarily as class/occupation based discrimination (those who engaged in "blood" relation occupations such as butchers, shoe makers (leather), armor makers, etc.) than as a racial issue.

2010-2013: There has been a decline in the total population of the Japanese and the Korean nationals with the "special permanent resident" status (Tokubetsu Eijyu Sha). There has not been any official population statistics on Burakumin since 1993 and on Ainu since 2006.

Political status of ethnic groups in Japan

From 1952 until 1958

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Japanese	0.973	MONOPOLY
Okinawans	0.008	IRRELEVANT
Burakumin	0.008	IRRELEVANT
Koreans	0.006	DISCRIMINATED
Ainu	2.0×10^{-4}	IRRELEVANT

From 1959 until 1971

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Japanese	0.973	MONOPOLY
Okinawans	0.008	IRRELEVANT
Burakumin	0.008	IRRELEVANT
Koreans	0.006	POWERLESS
Ainu	2.0×10^{-4}	IRRELEVANT

From 1972 until 1983

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Japanese	0.973	MONOPOLY
Burakumin	0.008	POWERLESS
Okinawans	0.008	IRRELEVANT
Koreans	0.006	POWERLESS
Ainu	2.0×10^{-4}	IRRELEVANT

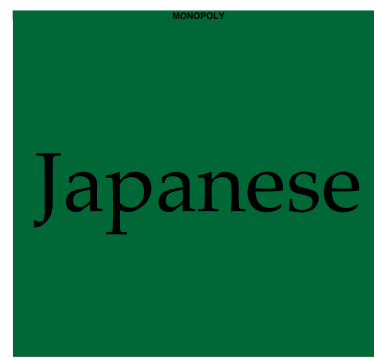


Figure 397: Political status of ethnic groups in Japan during 1952-1958.

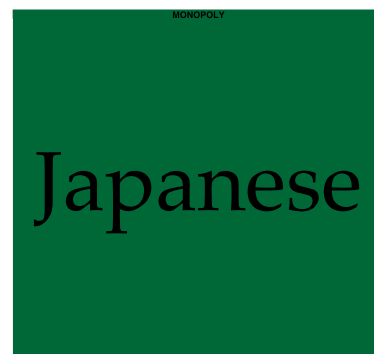


Figure 398: Political status of ethnic groups in Japan during 1959-1971.

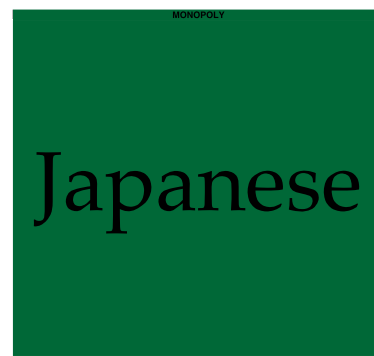


Figure 399: Political status of ethnic groups in Japan during 1972-1983.

From 1984 until 1996

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Japanese	0.973	MONOPOLY
Okinawans	0.008	POWERLESS
Burakumin	0.008	IRRELEVANT
Koreans	0.006	POWERLESS
Ainu	2.0×10^{-4}	DISCRIMINATED

From 1997 until 2009

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Japanese	0.9798	MONOPOLY
Okinawans	0.01	POWERLESS
Burakumin	0.007	IRRELEVANT
Koreans	0.003	POWERLESS
Ainu	2.0×10^{-4}	IRRELEVANT

From 2010 until 2013

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Japanese	0.9808	MONOPOLY
Okinawans	0.01	POWERLESS
Burakumin	0.007	IRRELEVANT
Koreans	0.002	POWERLESS
Ainu	2.0×10^{-4}	IRRELEVANT

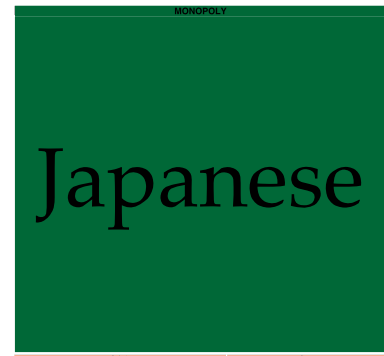


Figure 400: Political status of ethnic groups in Japan during 1984-1996.

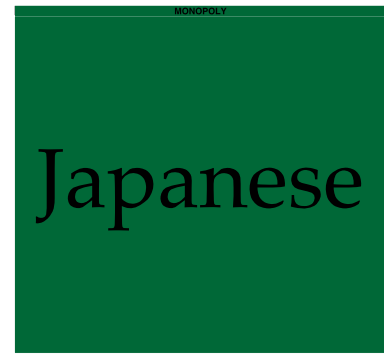


Figure 401: Political status of ethnic groups in Japan during 1997-2009.

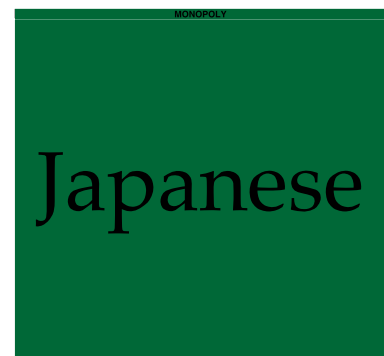


Figure 402: Political status of ethnic groups in Japan during 2010-2013.

Geographical coverage of ethnic groups in Japan

From 1952 until 2013

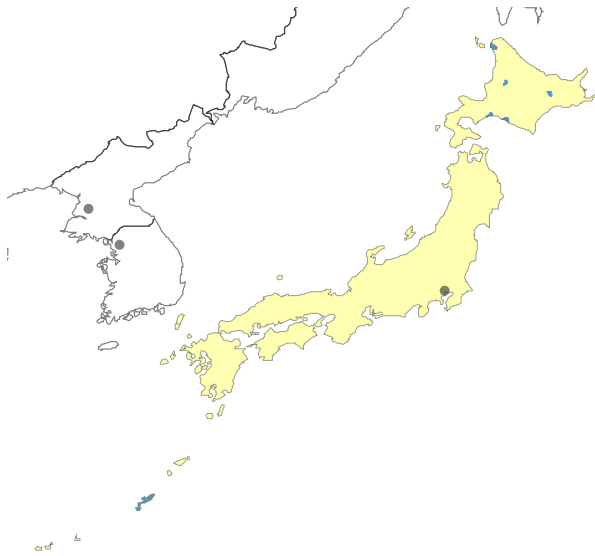


Figure 403: Map of ethnic groups in Japan during 2010-2013.

Group name	Area in km ²	Type
Japanese	369 454	Statewide
Ainu	1579	Regionally based
Burakumin	1263	Regionally based
Okinawans		Dispersed
Koreans		Urban

Table 120: List of ethnic groups in Japan during 1952-2013.