

## Anexo I. Registro del Título del Trabajo Fin de Grado (TFG)

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PROGRAMA: E6

GRUPO:

FECHA:

**Director Asignado:** Meseguer Yebra, Covadonga

**Título provisional del TFG:**

Why is Immigration Policy in Japan failing? An Economic and Cultural Overview

**ADJUNTAR PROPUESTA (máximo 4 páginas: Índice provisional, objetivos, metodología y bibliografía)**

**INDEX (provisional):**

### 1. Introduction

- Why is this important – what is the need
- Explanation of the economic and cultural variables
- Historic background on cultural roots: sakoku period → Link with the present

### 2. Background: Japan's Postwar Immigration Paradigm

- The “no-immigration principle” and guest-worker exception → **Japan's long-standing state ideology** that “*Japan is not and should not be a country of immigration.*” (*ideology, not a state law*)
- 1980s labour shortage and the emergence of the *Technical Intern Training Program (TITP)* → “Training” scheme for low-skill labor → “The Japanese government passed an amendment to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in June 2024, with the primary goal of replacing the controversial Technical Intern Training Program with a new foreign worker program.”
- Setting the stage for the 1990 reform

### 3. The 1990 Immigration Control Act Reform (Hayashi & C Prescott, 2002) → *What made Japan change its immigration policy?*

**Economic dimension:**

- The rise of *Nikkeijin* (descendants of Japanese emigrants) as a labor source → Visa system allowing descendants of Japanese abroad to work

**Cultural dimension:**

- Ethnic return migration as a “culturally acceptable” form of immigration
- Preservation of homogeneity narrative

#### **4. The 2000s: Consolidation and Contradictions → “Financing consumption in an aging Japan: The role of foreign capital inflows and immigration” (Dekle, 2004)**

##### **Economic:**

- Expansion of the TITP and reliance on foreign trainees
- Hidden dependence on foreign labor in aging industries

##### **Cultural:**

- Public discourse of “temporary migration”

#### **5. The 2018 Reform: Controlled Opening**

##### **Economic:**

- Creation of *Specified Skilled Worker (SSW)* visas

##### **Cultural:**

- Persistence of the “no-immigration” rhetoric

#### **6. The 2020s: From Technical Interns to Integration Debate**

##### **Economic:**

- Discussion about replacing the TITP system
- Structural dependence on migrant labor post-COVID-19

##### **Cultural:**

- Slow recognition of multicultural coexistence (*tabunka kyōsei*)
- Local integration initiatives and challenges to identity narratives

#### **7. Comparative Reflection**

- Japan’s incremental model vs. Western immigration systems → Germany
- How economic necessity and cultural resistance interact → “loss of identity to economic growth”

#### **8. Conclusion**

- Summary of patterns and continuities since 1990
- The ongoing tension between economic pragmatism and cultural closure
- Future prospects for immigration in Japan

## GOALS:

This paper seeks to explore one of Japan's most urgent demographic challenges: population decline. Japan's population is aging at an unprecedented rate for a developed nation, raising profound social and economic implications. To better understand the policy responses to this issue, this study examines key questions such as: What are the main drivers of change in Japan's immigration policy? How did the arrival of *Nikkeijin* shape Japan's labor market and cultural landscape? Was the 2018 immigration reform effective in addressing labor shortages? To what extent does Japan's cultural framework hinder integration? Is Western-style economic liberalization the only viable model for success? And, ultimately, why does Japan appear to struggle where countries like Germany have managed to adapt more effectively?

## METHODOLOGY:

To achieve the objectives of this paper, Japan's immigration policy will be analyzed through two key variables: economic and cultural. In order to trace the roots of the issue, a brief historical overview of Japan's immigration policy—from the introduction of the *Nikkeijin* system in the early 1990s to the present—will be conducted.

The theoretical framework will adopt a contemporary historical approach, identifying and examining these two variables to assess how immigration policy has evolved and what impact it has produced. The analysis of immigration reforms and their timeline will focus on the economic dimension, evaluating the outcomes, benefits, and drawbacks of each policy. From a cultural standpoint, the level of success will be measured by how effectively immigrants have been able to integrate into Japanese society—drawing, for instance, on studies such as *“Integration Policy Towards Migrants in Japan with a Focus on Language”* (2016).

→ **Cultural Variables: How non-Japanese are treated (Labour segmentation). Expectations of of Japanese language proficiency. Integration...**

→ **Economic Variables: migration is employer-driven (all migrants are required to hold a job offer from a Japanese employer). Restrictive labour immigration policy (Labour shortages) ...**

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**Firma del estudiante**



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