Toyama’s Inbound Tourism: A quantitative analysis of its tourism infrastructure

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Abstract
Japan’s inbound tourism seriously lags behind its outbound. Inbound tourism contributes not only to the economy but to the better international understanding of Japan. Toyama prefecture receives 0.6% of the total foreign visitors to Japan. Analyzing this share from accessibility, amount of tourism assets, and extent of the tourism infrastructure, it is revealed that Toyama has a reasonable share in terms of accessibility and infrastructure, but is underrated for its tourism assets. It is also revealed that the quantitative extent of tourism infrastructure of a prefecture has a very positive correlation with inbound tourism. Therefore, for a prefecture like Toyama, which has tourism asset potential, inbound tourism can be enlarged by expanding the tourism infrastructure.

KEYWORDS
tourism, inbound, infrastructure, tourism assets

1. Foreign Tourists to Japan

1.1 Volume
Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi convened in January 2003, the Japan Travel Advisory Council. This is an eleven-member group that is assigned the task of studying "from a broad perspective, the basic modalities of Japan as a tourism-based country." Obviously the council was brought about as one of the tools to revitalize the long-staggering Japanese economy, as it is widely understood that tourism promotion contributes considerably to economy including expansion of employment. However, it must be noted that the focal point of the purpose of the council lies on the inbound tourism. This is clearly seen in the council’s very first statement that refers to the statistics of Japan’s unbalanced international tourism: while more than 16 million Japanese tourists travel abroad, only around 5 million foreigners visit Japan every year.

The unbalance is apparent in Fig. 1, which shows the change of the number of annual inbound and outbound tourists. The two numbers are generally increasing, but the growth rate is quite different.

In the 60s, Japan’s inbound traffic showed a constant increase. These were the years when the number of annual inbound was greater than the outbound. When in 1970 the World Expo was held
in Osaka, the number reached 854,419, marking an increase over previous year of 40.4%. This growth continued into the 70s, however, the negative effect of the so-called first oil shock in 1974 brought about a tremendous price hike of international airfares followed by airlines' cutback on number of flights to save on high priced fuel, all combining to discourage international air travel. That year, the inbound travelers recorded a minus growth of 2.6%. Then from the late 70s the number starts to show a rapid upward trend supported by the economic development of the Asian countries. In 1979, Taiwan lifted the ban on overseas travel. The two millionth inbound tourist to Japan arrived for the first time in 1984. The Tsukuba World Expo of 1985 attracted more international pleasure visitors as well as business visitors. Korea liberalized overseas travel in 1989, when the growth of Korean inbound tourists recorded 78.7%.

However, the 90s showed a sharp contrast. The Gulf War broke out in 1991, followed by appreciation of Japanese Yen currency. The expensive exchange rate raised the travel costs in Japan. The immigration restrictions were tightened as a countermeasure for the increasing illegal workers from Asian countries. In 1995, the disastrous great earthquake of Hanshin and Awaji shattered the tourism traffic. This year the inbound statistics show a minus growth of 3.5%.

Asian economic crisis of 1997 did not have a fatal impact on tourism to Japan, as the number started to grow again, and the total number exceeded four million that year. Towards the end of the 90s and onto the 21st century, backed by the economic recovery of the United States as well as the Asian nations, the inbound traffic is on the gradual rise. The most recent statistics show about 5 million foreigners came to Japan in 2002, either on business, pleasure or any other purposes including watching the Soccer World Cup games.

As clearly seen from the graph, the number of foreigners has grown but very gradually, while the number of Japanese tourists has shown a sharp increase, creating a large gap between the two international exchanges.

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**Fig. 1 Annual Inbound and Outbound travelers**

Source: Japan National Tourist Organization
1.2 Position of Japanese inbound traffic in the world

The annual Japanese outbound traffic of approximately 16 million ranks 10th in the world, according to a survey by World Tourism Organization. The top tourist exporters are Germany, the United States, Poland and the United Kingdom. Considering that Japan is an island country, like the United Kingdom, the significance of ranking at the 10th position is even greater: it takes a greater effort for Japanese tourists to even visit its nearest neighbor, Korea, than, French tourists to visit Belgium, or Malaysian tourists to visit Thailand. Japanese are ardent and frequent overseas travelers.

Now, how does the 5-million inbound rank? Here we will witness a shocking contrast. The world's largest importer of international tourists is France, according to 1999 survey by WTO. It is followed by the United States, Spain, Italy, China and the United Kingdom. Japan can be found far down at the 35th position. This ranking is lower than our neighbor Korea or very small country of Macau. Japan's figure is similar to those of Morocco, Croatia or Rumania. Supposing that it is worthy of number of inbound tourists received by around 10th rank, it would be visited by nearly 20 million tourists. However, as we have seen, the number is its one fifth, or less than quarter of Japan's outbound number. This imbalance is considerable. As far as inbound tourism is concerned, Japan is still at its developing stage.

The reason for Japan's small inbound tourism compared to outbound has been often attributed to two reasons: high price and lack of English information. However, it has recently been discussed that further efforts should be made in areas other than prices and English communication. Hence the government in 2001 established a working group, Kanko Sangyo Shinko Forum, to announce an inbound promotion policy "Shin Welcome Plan 21." In this plan, the number of foreign visitors to Japan will reach 8 million by 2007. The Prime Minister's new task force, Kanko Rikkoku
Kondankai, or Japan Tourism Advisory Council, works in line with the plan. The target is 10 million inbound tourists by year 2010.

The Shin Welcome Plan 21 introduced new travel routes designed for foreign tourists, called for discounted admission at places of interest or accommodations and transportation, upgrade of internet information, and support to film commissions, along with other promotional measures. And under the Kanko Rikkoku Kodo Keikaku, the related ministries are to take various actions set under its objectives. Such actions include i) enhancing the charms of Japan, and knowing them, ii) advertising the touristic Japan brand, iii) promoting the related industry.

1.3 Impact of inbound tourism

Tourism covers a wide range of industry. The tourism service providers consist of travel facilities industries, tourism assets, traditional culture, history, climate, cultural assets, natural environment, local industry, traditional performing arts, custom, local community and its inhabitants, transportation gateways, and transportation. Among the travel facilities industries are accommodations, food and beverages, entertainment, shopping, display facilities such as museums, and travel agents. The economic activities of these industries play an important role in nation's total economy.

For many countries in the world, tourism is one of the largest economies. A 2000 WTO survey shows that out of 200 nations, almost sixty countries yield US$1 billion from international tourism. Tourism accounts for approximately 10% of employment and GDP. It is expected to be the leading industry for 21st century.

As for Japan, JNTO estimates that 4.5 million inbound tourists in 1999 created a pre-tour expenditure of 717 billion yen and a direct spending at destination of 651 billion yen, as well as production inducement of 3.7 trillion yen and 214,000 employments.

![International Tourism Balance](image)
However, Ministry of Land Infrastructure and Transport reports that the Japanese international tourism receipts account for a mere 1% of total export receipts and that the balance has been in the red for many years. The 2001 deficit of Japanese international tourism is as large as 40% of total export gain. The Ministry continues to point out that as Japan’s population growth slows down and population ages, the inbound tourism will contribute considerably to the creation of economic demand unaffected by the changes in the population. Furthermore, as Japan’s product import rises the gain from the trade will diminish. Like in the post war developing decades when Japan desperately needed foreign money, a contribution from the tourism receipts is now expected again.

Economic impact aside, the inbound tourism has a more significant influence to Japan. It has even greater contribution in the cultural and social aspect. By traveling to foreign countries, the travelers will come to further appreciate the culture and characteristics of the society. The United Nation was early to notice this important asset of international tourism. In 1967, it designated the year a “Year of International Tourism,” under the slogan “Tourism, passport to peace.” It fully realized that exchange of people through international tourism will bring about international understanding, and will work to alleviate economic and political confrontations over the border.

According to JNTO survey of foreign visitors to Japan, their image of Japan changes drastically before and after taking the trip to Japan.

Before the trip, the images they had on Japan were in following order:
1. Japan is a modern, industrialized country. (86%)
2. It has a unique tradition and culture. (81%)
3. It is an efficient and organized country. (78%)
4. It is safe and clean. (77%)
5. Japanese people are hard working and energetic. (76%)
6. It has a beautiful nature. (68%)
7. Its quality of life and education is high. (67%)
8. Japanese people are friendly and kind. (63%)

After the trip, this ranking changes to the following order:
1. Japanese people are friendly and kind. (86%)
2. It is safe and clean. (86%)
3. It is a modern and industrialized country. (83%)
4. It has unique tradition and culture. (78%)
5. It has a beautiful nature. (74%)
6. It is an efficient and organized country. (72%)
7. Japanese people are hard working and energetic. (72%)
8. Its quality of life and education is high. (61%)

After traveling to Japan, almost all the travelers to Japan felt the hospitality of the Japanese people. It is important to notice the increase of 25 percentage points in the ratio of people who felt Japanese people are friendly and kind. The Japanese people should be more proud of this precious asset they have, and should be aware of the importance to increase the number of foreign tourists. The inbound tourism itself can change the negative images of Japan such as high-priced, closed to
outsiders, or country based on manufacturing.

Such non-economical effect of Japanese inbound tourism has been cited since when the industrialization of Japan was achieved. Already in 1981 white paper of Ministry of Transport (former body of now Ministry of Land Infrastructure and Transport), it points out that inbound tourism will improve the image of the country, and will promote the international understanding.

2. Toyama Prefecture’s Inbound Tourism

We have seen in Chapter 1, the condition of Japanese inbound tourism as a whole. Then, what are the situations of Toyama Prefecture?

2.1 Inbound statistics of Toyama Prefecture

The data of volume of international tourism is not easily retrieved. In case of island nation like Japan, anyone who crosses the border can be identified and counted by strict immigration procedures at airports or seaports. However, such nations whose boundaries are all waters are very few. In most other cases, where borders are on land, and thus strict border checks are not practical, the movement of people over the border is taken from other sources. Even in case of border immigration check, the data collected from the travelers are recently limited. Until June 2002, Japanese overseas travelers had to submit an immigration card which contained information such as visiting overseas countries or purpose of travel. But from July, the checks are done by passport only, losing the opportunity of retrieving such significant data. Presently, the data on international movement is either taken from border checks or numbers given from accommodation facilities. Strictly speaking, not all foreign travelers use accommodations such as hotels. Some may stay at homes of their friends or relatives. Such data therefore are not accurate. However, in most travel statistics, data taken from accommodations facilities are widely used.

In Toyama Prefecture, the data of foreigners staying at accommodation facilities are indeed

![Fig. 4 Number of foreigners staying in ryokans and hotels in Toyama.](source)
available. However, the data is still new: the figures are available from 1999 onwards only, and the scope of survey is not the same in each year\textsuperscript{11}. The graph shows a general upward trend. The growth rate of 2002 is over thirty percent representing the temporary increase of inbound tourism created by the Soccer World Cup Games. The data is presently the sole information on Toyama’s inbound tourism. It is hoped that this data is enriched and widened to the future for the advantage of the tourism industry of Toyama.

Strict credibility of this data aside, statistically in 2002, Toyama Prefecture hosted in its accommodation facilities 28,259 foreigners. In the JNTO data of 2002 visitor arrival of 5,238,963, this prefectoral volume accounts for 0.54%. The ratio taken from the same source for 2001 comes to 0.44%. One out of every 200 foreign tourists visits Toyama.

Another data source of relatively smaller importance is the arrival data of foreigners at Toyama airport. According to Statistics on Tourism for Japan by JNTO, in 2001, 9,588 foreigners arrived in Toyama airport. Assuming that all arriving foreigners stayed at least one night in accommodations in Toyama, this figure leads us to recognize that some 12,000 foreign visitors traveled to Toyama from other ports. In other words, they visited Toyama with a specific reason.

2.2 Statistics from JNTO survey

To analyze the where inbound tourists visited within the country, Japan National Tourist Organization annually conducts a Survey of Overseas Visitors to Japan\textsuperscript{12}. One of the indicators used in this survey to show where foreign travelers visited in Japan is the “visit ratio.” A visit ratio of a place is drawn by dividing the number of travelers that visited the place by the total number of travelers interviewed.

The prefecture that scored highest was naturally Tokyo with a visit ratio of 56.5. More than half of foreign visitors to Japan visited Tokyo. Tokyo is followed by Osaka (25.2), Kyoto (15.8), Kanagawa (15.6), Chiba (11.2) and Aichi (10.0).

Toyama Prefecture ranks 36th along with Ehime at visit ratio of 0.6. In 2001, 4.7 million foreigners visited Japan. When we apply the visit rate of 0.6 to this figure, the theoretical number of inbound tourists to Toyama comes to 28,632. This number of tourists falls in the similar volume drawn from the survey by the Toyama prefecture. In 2001, approximately 21,000 foreigners stayed in accommodations throughout the prefecture. For 2002, the figure was a little over 28,000. Therefore, it is appropriate to conclude that the annual inbound tourists to Toyama is about 20,000 to 30,000.

3. Position of Toyama Prefecture as an Inbound Tourist Destination

Having seen that Toyama prefecture attracts a little over half a percent of total foreign tourists to Japan, in this chapter, I will discuss this share from three key factors in tourism; namely access, tourism asset and tourism infrastructure. The discussion will be targeted in the direction that whether the factors are worthy of the share of visitors Toyama is receiving.

3.1 Toyama’s visit ratio and accessibility
No matter how rich the tourism asset of the destination, tourists will not visit it unless it can be comfortably accessed. The actual tourist activity is generally bound by limitations of time and finance. Therefore, development of expressways, or speeding up of transportation vehicles that improve time/distance factor are crucial to the demand for tourist destinations.13

When we assess the accessibility of local tourist destinations within a country in terms of international tourism, the accessibility can be judged by the time or distance required from the port of entry. In the 2001 Ministry of Justice Survey, the most used port of entry was Narita airport with a share of 51.5%, followed by Kansai Airport with 22.0%. Fukuoka and Nagoya Airports contributed about 5% respectively.

It is quite obvious from Table 1 that the prefectural destinations with a visit ratio greater than 5.0 are those where ports of entry are located, or traveling time to the destination from the city of port is less than one hour. Nara is a fraction below 5.0, however, it can be included in this category. The destinations in this category are visited as the tourists are already there because of the port, or can be visited casually in a half-day tour.

Table 1 Visit Ratio Ranking 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefecture</th>
<th>Vr*</th>
<th>Prefecture</th>
<th>Vr</th>
<th>Prefecture</th>
<th>Vr</th>
<th>Prefecture</th>
<th>Vr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>Okinawa</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Kagoshima</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Ehime</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osaka</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>Tochigi</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Wakayama</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Kagawa</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyoto</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>Hokkaido</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Gumma</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Iwate</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanagawa</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>Shizuoka</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Niigata</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Fukui</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiba</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>Oita</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Miyazaki</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>Saga</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aichi</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>Kumamoto</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Yamaguchi</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>Akita</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fukuoka</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Nagano</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Fukushima</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>Yamagata</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>Hyogo</td>
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<td>Ibaragi</td>
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<td>Aomori</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Kochi</td>
<td>0.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nara</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Saitama</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>Ishikawa</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Tokushima</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yamanashi</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Gifu</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Okayama</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Tottori</td>
<td>0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hiroshima</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Mie</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Shiga</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Shimane</td>
<td>0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nagasaki</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Miyagi</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Toyama</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*visit ratio

Source: Survey of Overseas Visitors to Japan 2001-2002, JNTO

The prefectures with visit ratio between 3.0 and 5 have distance greater than two hours from the port of entry, but have important international attractions as a destination. The travelers willingly allow longer traveling time to reach such destinations. These prefectures are Yamanashi, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Tochigi. Yamanashi has Mt. Fuji, and Tochigi has Nikko, while Hiroshima and Nagasaki are internationally known cities by their names.

Nineteen prefectural destinations have visit ratio of smaller than 1.0. It is interesting to note that the distances to most of the prefectural capitals from either Tokyo or Osaka are generally greater than three hours. In contrast, with possible exception of Saitama, Shiga, and Wakayama, all prefectural destinations with time distance of approximately one hour, or a distance that can be
covered by a half-day tour from the two entry ports, have visit ratio greater than 3. Toyama with visit ratio of 0.6 requires approximately three and a half hours from both Tokyo and Osaka. Ehime, which has visit ratio same as Toyama has a time distance of approximately three hours from Osaka. All four prefecture of Shikoku Island are ranked in the last eleven prefectures, which consist of destinations with time distance of three or four hours from the entry ports. Also ranked in this low category are the three Hokuriku prefectures, and northern Tohoku prefectures.

It therefore is obvious from these studies that the time distance from the entry ports is one of the determining factors of visit ratio. Influence of geographical factor is dominantly evident in the visit ratio ranking. And, it can be said that Toyama is ranked appropriately according to the rule.

3.2 Tourism asset of Toyama

Are the tourism assets of Toyama worthy of visit ratio ranking of 0.6? In this section, I will evaluate what Toyama has to attract the tourists by using the criteria by Japan Travel Bureau Foundation. JTBF evaluates over 2,000 tourism assets in Japan, and ranks them in four categories; Super A, A, B and C grades. Super A grade assets are those that represent Japan internationally, and are foundations of image building. A grades are those that follow super A, and attracts tourists nation wide. In these two top rankings are about 400 tourism assets.

Prefectures with most Super A and A grades are Hokkaido and Kyoto with 44 assets. They are followed by Tokyo (22), Nagano (21) and Okinawa (18). Toyama has 12 assets in these categories, and is ranked in 10th position tied with Gifu.

As the grade criteria suggests, the assets in Super A grade are those that can attract international visitors. Only 35 assets are listed in the Super A grade in 26 prefectures. The remaining 27 prefectures have no tourism assets that visitors from foreign countries will come to Japan to visit them. Some prefectures have two or more super A grades: they are Hokkaido, Aomori, Tochigi, Mie, Kyoto, Nara, Hiroshima and Toyama. The Kurobe Gorge and Kumonotaira were selected as super A grade tourism assets, in Toyama.

![Number of Super A and A Grade Assets](image)

**Fig. 5 Number of Super A and A Grade Touristic Assets**

*Source: Japan Travel Bureau Foundation*
However, among the ten top prefectures with super A and A grade assets, Toyama has the lowest visit ratio. Among the eight prefectures that have two or more Super A grades, Toyama, together with Aomori, has extremely low visit ratio.

This evaluation suggests that, for its tourism assets, Toyama is receiving comparatively less international visitors. Gifu Prefecture, which also has 12 assets has visit ratio of 1.6, more than twice greater than Toyama’s 0.6, and Niigata, which has a fewer 10 assets, has 1.0.

3.3 Tourism Industry Infrastructure in Toyama

The Japanese Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications conducts a national survey of establishment and enterprise census every five years. Its latest result is available from 2001. This survey reveals the number of enterprises as well as number of jobs at enterprises in industries. The industries are classified according to Japan’s New Industrial Classifications. In this classification, the nation’s industry is divided into 18 major categories which are further divided into smaller sub categories.

Unfortunately the tourism industry per se does not have a position in this classification. This can be considered quite natural, as tourism industry is a collective entity widely made up from various independent industries. Tourism is a service activity comprising of transportation, accommodations, food and beverages, distribution that includes travel souvenir retailing, cultural business management including museums, and travel companies that coordinate these businesses. Therefore, to measure the size of tourism in this survey, the figures of these independent industries should be added up.

In this paper, I will measure the size of tourism infrastructure by the number of enterprises in the tourism industry. Unfortunately, not all statistics of related businesses are available in the survey. Therefore, the figures drawn from this study do not strictly reflect the size of the total tourism industry. However, it will sufficiently serve as an indicator of the size of tourism industry in a prefecture.

The figures of the number of enterprises are taken from following sub categories:
403 Contracted omnibus operator
451 Travel agency
751 Hotels
767 Public gardens and amusement parks
794 Automobile rental

In 2001, Toyama had 786 enterprises including 8 tour bus companies, 553 hotels or ryokans, and 41 rental car company offices.

It is very important to note here that these tourism related industries are not catering to visitors from overseas only. On the contrary, for the majority, their businesses are almost solely targeted to the domestic travel market. This comes as quite natural when one sees the figures of domestic travelers. According to 2002 White Paper on Tourism, Ministry of Land Infrastructure and Transport, approximately 193 million people engaged in a trip longer than overnight. The foreign inbound travelers of less than five million per year account for a mere 2.3% of total travelers.
Table 2 Number of Enterprises in the Tourism Industry 2001
Selected Prefectures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>403</th>
<th>451</th>
<th>751</th>
<th>767</th>
<th>794</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Nagano</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>4912</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>5,324</td>
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<td>423</td>
<td>3231</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>4,235</td>
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<td>Gifu</td>
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<td>1159</td>
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<td>Mie</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>1,097</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1,383</td>
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<td>857</td>
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<td>Aomori</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>41</td>
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<td>154</td>
<td>712</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>66</td>
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<td>Ehime</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>863</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toyama</td>
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<td>553</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>408</td>
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<td>525</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Japanese Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, National Survey of Establishment and Enterprise census
In spite of this fact, there exists a close relationship between the number of these enterprises and the number of foreign visitors.

The prefectures are selected from those that have contrasted visit ratio with Toyama. Hokkaido and Nagano have ratio around four times greater than Toyama. Gifu is three times, Mie and Miyagi have two times greater ratio. Okayama, Aomori, Ehime have ratios same or similar to Toyama, and Iwate and Tottori have smaller value.

Toyama’s 786 enterprises are ranked along with Kagawa (638) and Ehime (863), whose visit ratios are 0.5 and 0.6 respectively. In this respect, Toyama is ranked reasonably. Or in other words, it is receiving inbound tourists justified by the tourism infrastructure.

Also evident from Fig. 6 is that visit ratio and the number of tourism businesses have a close relationship. In fact the correlation coefficient of these two values is as high as 0.88. What this relationship teaches us is that where there are more tourism businesses, more foreign tourists will visit there.

4. Tourism infrastructure and inbound tourism

The Prime Minister’s Action Plan for the Country Based on Tourism calls for the following measures: i) establishing national charm, ii) transmission of Japan brand, iii) environmental development to accentuate charm. In these measures, it is required that Japan would, “comprehensively develop its soft and hard infrastructure,” and that “the tourism business should be viewed as an industry, and (its) international competitiveness must be strengthened.”

On the other hand, Toyama Prefecture’s Tourism Strategy Conference proposed a tourism strategy for the 21st century. The Proposal stresses the importance of inbound tourism for Toyama Prefecture. To enhance international tourism exchange (or, to increase inbound travelers), the prefecture is required to i) strengthen public relation activities to the East Asian countries, ii) encourage promotion of inbound tourism products, iii) enrich receiving facilities and services, which are guidebooks, signboards, tourist information offices, volunteer guides, education of employees, or low-priced accommodations.

Here, in nation’s and prefecture’s measures to promote inbound tourists, the qualitative side of the facilities and services is mainly discussed. However, it is suggested from our previous studies that, in case of Toyama Prefecture, quantity could play a more important role.

Toyama prefecture receives about 0.6% of the total inbound tourists. The prefectural share, to some extent, is dominated by the distance from international gateway cities. Toyama is accordingly ranked among the prefectures farthest from such gateways. However, tourism assets of Toyama are richer than those ranked nearby. Toyama has more visits of interests with magnetism than its ranking neighbors. And, when we measure its infrastructure, we learned it had number of accommodation or transportation facilities that prefectures with similar inbound share had. In other words, Toyama’s tourism infrastructure is poor for its tourism assets. We also saw that, at least in the prefectures with lower visit ratios, quantity of tourism infrastructure has a very close correlation with the visit ratio.

Japan’s international tourism currently sees a great imbalance: the volume of outbound is about
three times the volume of inbound. The government is determined to make efforts to increase the number of inbound tourists for both economical and social reasons. Thus it is urging the nation to realize its attractions and will strengthen international publicity. Toyama prefecture is trying to enrich the quality of its tourism assets and their peripheral services. However, we must not forget the effect of the quantity factor of the tourism enterprises. We have witnessed the movement of foreign tourists to prefectures with greater number of tourist industry. The reason for this relationship is yet to be studied, however, it is assumed that the greater number of businesses bring about greater amount of publicity for the inbound. Or, the greater number calls for more competition within the industry, hence the businesses are forced to widen the market to inbound travelers. It maybe another proof that foreign tourists visit places where domestic tourists visit.

For the promotion of inbound tourism, while national and local focuses are on the qualitative factors, the implementation of promotional measures to increase the volume of the tourism industry must not be overlooked.
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http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/policy/kankou/konkyo_e.html

2. In travel terminology, a country’s “inbound” refers to visiting foreign tourists, while “outbound” is own travelers visiting overseas countries.

3. According to JNTO statistics, 5,238,963 foreigners visited Japan in 2002. This is 9.8% greater than the previous year, and first time the number exceeded 5 million.


5. Tourism Based Nation Action Plan


9. WTO’s declaration in 2001 (Seoul, Korea) states “we recognize and respect the uniqueness and diversity of histories, cultures, religions, and ideologies and the ethical beliefs of each nation, region, and society and comply with their customs and traditions.”

10. In this year’s white paper, similar survey of changes of images is carried out. Items such as “country of geisha,” “unreasonable country,” or _unfriendly to foreigners_ are among the pre-visit ranking.


12. Overseas visitors departing Japan are interviewed as to information such as places visited, length of stay. The samples counted were 4,109 in 2002 survey.


17. *Toyama-ken kanko senryaku kaigi*


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富山県のインバウンド観光
－観光産業インフラの数量的分析－
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日本のインバウンド観光はアウトバウンドに比べると大きく遅れをとっている。インバウンド観光は経済的に貢献するだけでなく、日本に対する国際理解にも大きく貢献する。富山県への訪日外客数は全体の0.6％にすぎない。これをアクセス、観光資源、観光産業インフラの観点から分析すると、アクセスとインフラの規模においてはこのシェアはほぼ妥当だが、観光資源的には過少評価されていることがわかる。また、インフラの規模と訪日外客数には明らかな相関関係が見られる。富山県のような観光資源が豊かな県にとっては、インフラの量的拡大もインバウンド観光の促進には有効である。

キーワード：観光、インバウンド、観光産業インフラ、観光資源