

Abstract

The three-year-long COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped people's work activities and daily lives. Who are leaving metropolitan areas (MAs) in this context? This paper utilizes Japanese government survey data and binary logit models for analysis. Our results unveil that the migration involved in leaving MAs is associated with lower infection risks in destination prefectures, but not with regional unemployment rates or individuals' telework utilization frequencies. Factors influencing *migration intention* differ distinctly from those driving *migration action*. These findings can guide local governments in developing effective population-attracting policies.

Keywords: leaving metropolitan areas; migration decision; Japan; the post-COVID-19 era