

LIVING- AND SETTLING CONDITIONS FOR INHABITANTS IN RURAL AREAS – KAWAI-MURA, JAPAN AND HÁJ, SLOVAKIA

Koji Kobayashi

Faculty of Education Gifu University, Japan

Abstract: In this paper I try to compare living conditions and settling conditions in a rural area in Japan and Slovakia. What are the similarities and differences in in-and out migrations between the Japanese and Slovak rural inhabitants? Are they satisfied with their living environments? What conditions do they think important for them to keep living in their own village? Are there any differences in their settling orientation in their village? What policies or what means should be taken by the local government to realize sustainable development in the rural area in Japan and Slovakia?

Key words: rural area, Kawai-Mura, Háj, in- and out-migration, living environment, settling conditions

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important themes in the 21st century is to realize sustainable regional development. In rural areas today, it has become important to maintain and develop their multiple functions (The Ministry of the Environment of Japan 2000, Environmental Policy Bureau 2001, Heikki, Roser, Bradley 2002). In this paper, I would like to find the actual living conditions and settling conditions in rural areas in Japan and Slovakia. I am going to compare in- and out-migration, living environments, settling orientation of the inhabitants and necessary settling policy of the local government in two countries.

Our research was carried out in rural areas in both countries: Kawai-Mura Japan, and Háj, Slovakia. Kawai-Mura and three other neighboring municipalities were merged into a new city, Hida-Shi with a population of 30,000 in February 1 2004. I am going to deal with former Kawai-Mura, before the merger.

Both Kawai-Mura and Háj have typical characteristics as a rural area in each country. Kawai-Mura has the following four characteristics:

1. Population has been decreasing (the ratio of the population increases from 1995 – 2000 was 1.1% in Japan and –1.9% in Kawai-Mura respectively).
2. The ratio of the working population engaged in the primary industrial sector is higher than other regions (the ratio of the working population in the primary industrial sector in 2000 was 5.0% in Japan and 16.4% in Kawai-Mura) respectively.
3. The ration of the elderly people (65+) is higher (the ration of the elderly population (65+) in the total population was 18.5% (2001) in Japan and 29.7% (2000) in Kawai-Mura).
4. Commuting to the central city is rather difficult (Yamamoto and others, 1987, Nagoya Daitoshiken Kennkyukai, 1993, Fujita, 1998, Kobayashi, 2002, The Ministry of Agriculture 2005).

In Háj there are four characteristics:

1. There has been a tendency of decline in population; however, the ration of decline is low.
2. The ration of the working population engaged in the primary industrial sector is higher than other regions.
3. The ration of unemployment is high.
4. Commuting to the central city is rather difficult (Turnock 2003, Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic and Slovak Environmental Agency 2002).

Tab. 1 shows some indexes reflecting these characteristics.

Table 1 Main Indicators of Kawai-Mura and Háj

Main indicator	Former Kawai-Mura	Háj
Above sea level	455 m	510 m
Annual average temperatur	10.3 °C	7.5 °C
Population (2001)	1379	485
Working population	896 (2000)	237(2001)
Primary sector (%)	16.4	19.6
Secondary sector (%)	43.6	21.9
Tertiary sector (%)	40.0	58.5
Rate of unemployment (%)	9.9% (2000)	24.9% (2001)
Neighboring centers (populatin, distance from Former Kawai-Mura (Háj))	Former Furukawa-Machi (17 000, 10 km), Takayama-Shi (66 000, 24 km)	Turčianske Teplice, (7 000, 2 km), Martin (61 000, 20 km)

Kawai-Mura is located in the northwestern edge of Gifu-Prefecture. Odori River and Inagoe River join Miya River near Tsunokawa, which is the central settlement of Kawai-Mura (Fig. 1). Odori River runs from southwest to northeast. Route No 8 runs along it. Inagoe River runs from south to north. Settlements are located along these rivers. The elevation of Tsunokawa, which is the lowest in all settlements, is 450 m a. s. l., and, that of the villages located at the western end, which is the highest, is 800 m a. s. l.

Kawai-Mura has heavy snow. The average amount of annual snowfall in the nearest 10 years is 621 mm. National Highway No 360 from Kawai-Mura to Shirakawa-Mura is closed half of the year, from November to May. The center city of the region Takayama-Shi with a population of 66 000 is 24 km far from Kawai-Mura.

Háj is located in the basin of Turčianska kotlina which occupies the central part of Slovakia (Fig. 2). In the north of the basin, there is a main city Martin with a population of 61 000. Turčianske Teplice is about 20 km south from Martin. It has a population of 21 000.

Háj is located 2 km east from Turčianske Teplice. The elevation of Háj is 510 m a. s. l. Landscape of Háj is characterized by the striped cultivated land crossing the road at right angles ¹⁾ (Fig. 3).

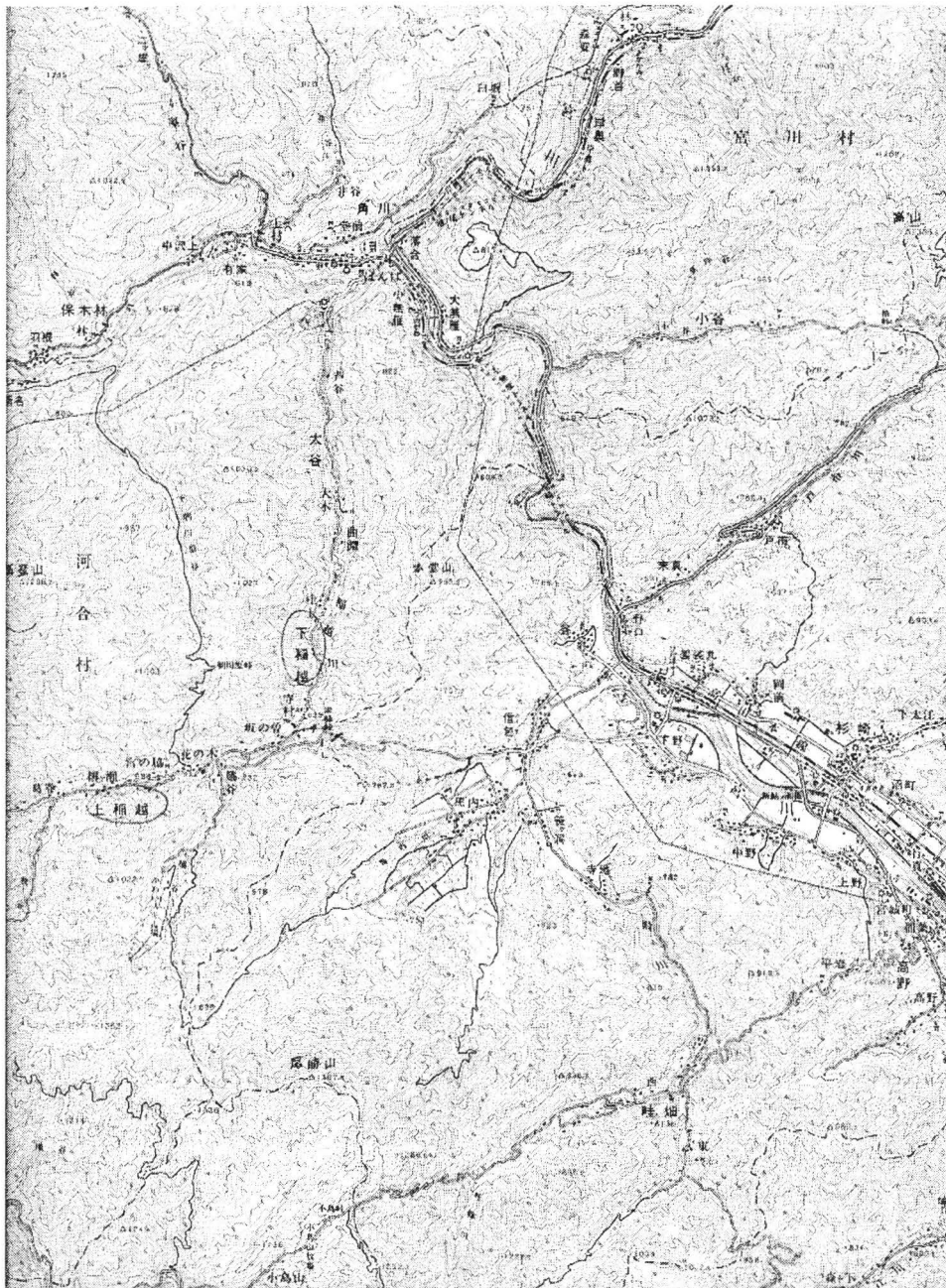


Figure 1 Kawai-Mura and neighboring area

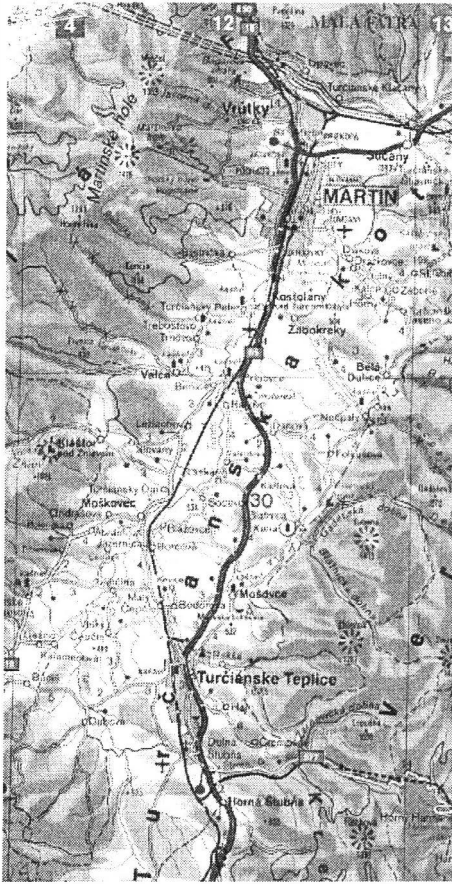


Figure 2 Martin, Turčianske Teplice and Háj



Figure 3 Háj

The followings are some comparisons between Kawai-Mura and Háj. The elevations of both villages are similar. Kawai-Mura has a population of 1 379 (2001), Háj 485 (2001). While the population of Kawai-Mura has decreased, that of Háj has been stable since 1980.

The ratio of the working population by industrial sector differs between Kawai-Mura and Háj. The ratio of the working population in the primary sector in Kawai-Mura and Háj is almost similar: 16.4% in Kawai-Mura, 19.6% in Háj. However, the ratio of the working population in the secondary and tertiary sector differs considerably. The ratio of the working population in the secondary sector of Kawai-Mura is higher than that of Háj: Kawai-Mura 43.6%, Háj 21.9%

Conversely, the ratio of the tertiary sector is higher in Háj than Kawai-Mura: Háj 58.5%, Kawai-Mura 40.0%. The unemployment rate between them is quite different. It is higher in Háj than Kawai-Mura: 24.9% in Háj 2001, and 9.9% in Kawai-Mura 2000.

Location of neighboring town or city is similar. Both villages are 20 – 24 km far from regional centers Takayama-Shi and Martin. Kawai-Mura and Háj both have a relatively large town near them: Kokufu-Cho and Turčianske Teplice. These cities and towns constitute a life space for the inhabitants of both villages.

Our method of research is as follows: we conducted field survey using questionnaire in both villages. Our questionnaire items are basically the same. We made the questionnaire in Japanese, which was carefully translated in Slovak language by the joint researchers in Comenius University in Bratislava. We handed out questionnaires to 60 households, which were chosen by random sampling in Kawai-Mura. We got 55 answers (91.7%). On the other hand, our joint researchers in Comenius University handed questionnaires to 100 households in Háj, which were nearly the whole households in Háj. They got 93 answers (93.0%). Our research by questionnaire was conducted from 2003 and 2004 in both countries. In both villages we interviewed several officials in the local government and conducted landscape/land use survey. Besides, we used various materials such as statistics and maps in both villages ²⁾.

2. IN- AND OUT- MIGRATION

According to Table 2, there are 21 inhabitants who had experience to live outside Kawai-Mura more than one year (38.2%). In Háj, there are 55 inhabitants (39.1%). Table 3 shows the number of times of living outside their own village over one year. The ratio of inhabitants who have experienced out-migration 2 times and over is 18.5% in Kawai-Mura and 41.8% in Háj.

Table 2 Experience of staying outside Former Kawai-Mura (Háj) for one year and over

	Former Kawai-Mura	Háj
Yes	21 (38.2%)	55 (59.1%)
No	30 (54.5%)	38 (40.9%)
No answer	4 (7.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Total	55 (100%)	93 (100%)

Table 3 Experience of staying outside and over for one year and over

	Former Kawai-Mura	Háj
Yes	21 (38.2%)	55 (59.1%)
No	30 (54.5%)	38 (40.9%)
No answer	4 (7.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Total	55 (100%)	93 (100%)

Main reasons why the ratio is higher in Háj than in Kawai-Mura might be:

1. worse economic condition in Háj and,
2. young men's military service (There is no military service in Japan).

Figure 4 shows five cases of out-migration. In all cases, they have experienced out-migration two times and over. Three persons out of five have out-migrated outside Gifu-Prefecture. Main reasons of their out-migration have been „study“ and „work“. I would like to examine the case of Mr. A and Mrs. C.

Mr. A (male, 29 years old)

Mr. A out-migrated to Nagoya-Shi to study in 1995. He returned to Kawai-Mura in 1998 to work for a construction company. Soon he left Kawai-Mura to find a new job in

Osaka-Shi in 1998. He came back again to Kawai-Mura to work for a food processing factory in 2001.

Mrs. C (female, 30 years old)

Mrs. C out-migrated to Nagoya-Shi to study in 1993. After several months she moved to Kariya-Shi, 25 km south from Nagoya-Shi. In 1995 she returned to Kawai-Mura.

Several months later she left Kawai-Mura to Nagoya-Shi to work for a company again. After several years she moved to Tokorozawa-Shi, Saitama Prefecture near Tokyo. In 2003, she moved to Nerima-Ku Tokyo to work for another company.

A (Male, 29 years old) May, 1995: Kawai-Mura → Nagoya-Shi March, 1998: Nagoya-Shi → Kawai-Mura June, 1999: Kawai-Mura → Osaka-Shi March, 2001: Osaka-Shi → Kawai-Mura
B (Female, 39 years old) December, 1993: Takayama-Shi → Kawai-Mura February, 1997: Kawai-Mura → Takayama-Shi March, 2000: Takayama-Shi → Kawai-Mura
C (Female, 30 years old) April, 1993: Kawai-Mura → Nagoya-Shi August, 1995: Kariya-Shi (Aichi-Prefecture) → Kawai-Mura November, 1995: Kawai-Mura → Nagoya-Shi January, 2003: Tokorozawa-Shi (Saitama-Prefecture) → Kawai-Mura October, 2003: Kawai-Mura → Nerima-Ku (Tokyo-To)
D (Male, 31 years old) June, 1992: Kawai-Mura → Kanazawa-Shi (Ishikawa-Prefecture) March, 1996: Nonomura-Shi (Ishikawa-Prefecture) → Kawai-Mura March, 1998: Kawai-Mura → Toyonaka-Shi (Osaka-Fu) June, 1998: Osaka-Shi → Kawai-Mura June, 1999: Kawai-Mura → Osaka-Shi March, 2000: Osaka-Shi → Kawai-Mura
E (Male, 46 years old) March, 1997: Kawai-Mura → Gujohachiman-cho (Gifu-Prefecture) June, 2001: Gifu-Shi → Kawai-Mura August, 2001: Kawai-Mura → Gifu-Shi July, 2002: Ena-Shi (Gifu-Prefecture) → Kawai-Mura September, 2002: Kawai-Mura → Ena-Shi (Gifu-Prefecture) April, 2003: Ena-Shi (Gifu-Prefecture) → Kawai-Mura

Figure 4 Examples of in-and out migration in Kawai-Mura

Source: Questionnaire

On the other hand, housing condition and military service are the main reasons of out-migration in Háj (Fig. 5). Case of Mr. C and of Mrs. E would be good examples.

<p>F (Female, 64 years old) Háj → Mošovce marriage Mošovce → Háj housing condition</p> <p>G (Male, 33 years old) Diviaky → Háj Háj → Turčianske Teplice Turčianske Teplice → Háj housing condition</p> <p>H (Male, 53 years old) Háj → Rimavská Sobota study Rimavská Sobota → Háj Háj → Tachov (Czechia) military service Tachov → Háj</p> <p>I (Male, 53 years old) Háj → Trnava study Trnava → Háj Háj → Liptovský Mikuláš Liptovský Mikuláš → Háj</p> <p>J (Female, 29 years old) Háj → Diviacka Nová Ves marriage Diviacka Nová Ves → Háj housing condition Háj → Turčianske Teplice housing condition Turčianske Teplice → Háj housing condition</p>

Figure 5 Examples of i-and out migration in Háj

Source: Questionnaire

Mr. C (male, 53 years old)

Mr. C was born in Háj. He out-migrated to Rimavská Sobota, southern Slovakia to get special skill. After several years he came back to Háj. He out-migrated to Tachov, Czechia to carry out his military service. After finishing it he came back to Háj to work for the food processing factory near Háj. Five years ago he lost his job. He has been searching a new job for five years.

Mrs. E (female, 29 years old)

Mrs. E was born in Háj. She out-migrated to Diviacka Nová Ves, which is 30 km far from Háj in the southwestern direct on. The reason of her out-migration was marriage. Then she moved to Háj, and then, to Turčianske Teplice and again, to Háj. The reason of her last three moves is „looking for a good housing condition“.

Table 4 shows the total times of in- and out-migration from 1992 to 2002 in Kawai-Mura. Not a few persons have experienced return migration two times and more (Kobayashi and Takimura 2002).³⁾

We asked them if they had any plan of out-migration in the nearest 3 years. While so few inhabitants in Kawai-Mura have such plan, about 10% of the inhabitants in Háj have their plan to move (Tab. 5).

Table 4 Times of out- and in-migration in Kawai-Mura during 1992 – 2002

Times	Total times of out-and in-migration
1	523 (71.3)
2	320 (21.8)
3	105 (4.8)
4	36 (1.2)
5	25 (0.7)
6	12 (0.3)
Total	1021 (100.0%)

Source: Survey by Kawai-Mura

Table 5 Plan of out-migration from Kawai-Mura and Háj within 3 years

Plan for out-migration within 3 years	Kawai-Mura	Háj
Yes	1 (1.8)	9 (9.7)
No	54 (98.2)	80 (86.0)
Do not know	0 (0.0)	4 (4.3)
Total	55 (100.0%)	93 (100.0%)

Source: Questionnaire

3. LIVING ENVIRONMENTS AND SETTLING CONDITIONS

Table 6 shows the average score of inhabitants' satisfaction for their living environments. Score 1 means „very satisfied“, while score 5 means „very unsatisfied“. The lower the score, degree of inhabitants' satisfaction is higher. We might point out the followings:

1. Generally, inhabitants of Kawai-Mura are more satisfied with their living environments than those of Háj.
2. Inhabitants in both areas are not satisfied with working place, working opportunity and shopping.
3. In Háj, they showed very high score of satisfaction with the natural environment. On the other hand, they are quite unsatisfied with cultural facilities, sport facilities and parks. They are also unsatisfied with medicine and health.

Table 6 Score of satisfaction of living conditions in Kawai-Mura and Háj

Items	Kawai-Mura	Háj
Employment	3.6	4.3
Shopping	3.6	3.8
Roads and traffic	3.0	3.3
Cultural and sports facilities, Parks	0.9	3.8
Medical health care	2.8	3.6
Garbage disposal	2.8	–
Natural environment	2.8	1.4
Education	2.5	2.4
Welfare service for the elderly	2.5	3.1
Kindergarten, Day nursery after school	2.3	3.4

Source: Questionnaire

Table 7 shows a necessary policy for people to settle in their own village. Their answers almost correspond to their living environments with low score of satisfaction.

In Kawai-Mura (1) working place and working opportunity, (2) removal of snow from roofs and roads, and (3) good roads and smooth traffic are the main themes they need improvement. Removal of snow from „roof and roads“ was added in the interviews to inhabitants.

Inhabitants in Háj need improvement in (1) housing, (2) preservation of natural environment, (3) road and traffic, and (4) commercial facilities and services. Inhabitants in Háj are quite satisfied with the natural environment, at the same time, they think the most necessary policy must be its preservation. They seem to love and to be proud of the good natural environments.

Table 7 Necessary measures to keep living in Kawai-Mura and Háj

Items	Kawai-Mura*	Háj*
Employment	48 (87.3%)	42 (45.2%)
Removal of snow from roofs and roads	42 (76.4%)	–
Roads and traffic conditions	30 (54.5%)	52 (55.9%)
Commercial and service facilities	22 (40.0%)	48 (51.6%)
Medical health service	19 (34.5%)	17 (18.3%)
Welfare service to the handicapped and the elderly	11 (20.0%)	8 (8.6%)
Reform of houses	8 (14.5%)	85 (91.4%)
Cultural and sports facilities, Parks	8 (14.5%)	11 (11.8%)
Preservation of natural environment	7 (12.7%)	81 (87.1%)
Education	5 (9.1%)	6 (6.5%)
Kindergartens, Day nursery after school	5 (9.1%)	8 (8.6%)
IT network such as internet	4 (7.3%)	13 (14.0%)
Others	8 (14.5%)	3 (3.2%)

* plural answers

Source: Questionnaire

In Kawai-Mura, a new health and welfare facility and leisure facility were built recently. The facility is the very center of supplying various health and welfare services to all inhabitants in Kawai-Mura. In the latter facility, leisure facility, there are hot spring, a sauna, a restaurant, a gymnasium and a conference room. People often use these facilities. These two facilities also have supplied important working opportunities to the inhabitants.

In Háj, also, people think it important to improve in education and welfare services. In both areas, it has become more important for the local government to create good services to inhabitants.

Table 8 shows orientation of settling in their own village. More than half respondents in both villages hope to keep living in their own village. On the other hand, more than 30% of all respondents chose „I don't know where to live“. It means that about 40% of respondents chose „I don't know where to live“ or „I do not want to live here“. Taking into these answers into consideration, we might say that out-migration from Kawai-Mura and Háj would continue. Again, it is important for the local government to carry out a regional development policy which meets various kinds of need of inhabitants.

Table 8 Preference to keep living in Kawai-Mura and Háj

Preference to keep live in Kawai-Mura or Háj	Kawai-Mura	Háj
I want to live here	30 (54.5%)	53 (57.0%)
I don't want to live here	3 (5.5%)	6 (6.5%)
I don't know	21 (38.2%)	30 (32.2%)
No answer	1 (1.8%)	4 (4.3%)
Total	55 (100.0%)	93 (100.0%)

Source: Questionnaire

4. CONCLUSION

Finally, I would like to mention a development policy of a rural area. Figure 6 shows a relation between a rural village and its surrounding towns or cities which have influence upon it. The figure will help us to understand not only present condition or problems but also necessary policies to be carried out.

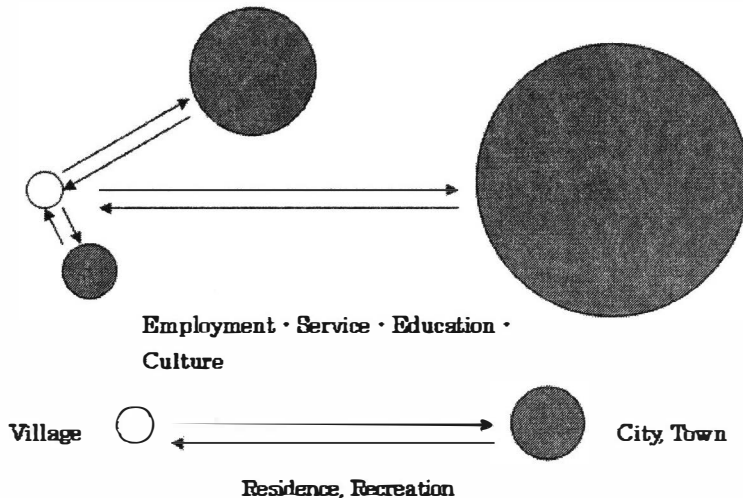


Figure 6 Relation of rural area to urban area

To develop a rural area in relation to its neighboring towns or cities, two policies would be necessary.

1. A rural village, surrounding towns or cities have their own functions. These functions should be specific each other. Functions of each center should be carefully kept. Main functions of a rural center are, for example, housing and recreation. Those of towns or cities are, for example, housing, industry, commerce or services, education and culture. These functions will be shared, according to the population they have.
2. Improvement of the access to each center is important. If these policies will be carried out to some extent, rural inhabitants will be able to enjoy various benefits of neighboring towns and cities. It will keep them to get new working opportunities which will contribute to their settling in their own rural village.

I have briefly discussed the living and settling conditions in Kawai-Mura and Háj, where I found not only similarities but also differences. I would like to deal with specific conditions and problems in relation to the total development policy of a whole area.

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Note

- ¹⁾ Data in Háj – Obec Háj, Wander Karte of Turčianske Teplice.
- ²⁾ In our research using questionnaire, many people helped us. In Háj, Prof. Dr. J. Mládek, young colleagues and students in the Department of Demogeography in Comenius University made great efforts to carry out the research for us. In Kawai-Mura, officials in the local government especially Mr. H. Matsuba, was kind to help us.
- ³⁾ I call this type of repeated in-and out migration „W turn“ (Kobayashi et al. 2002).

Životné a bytové podmienky obyvateľov vidieckych oblastí na príklade obcí Kawai-Mura v Japonsku a Háj na Slovensku

Resume

Jednou z páľčivých tém 21. storočia je trvalo udržateľný rozvoj regiónov. V súčasnosti je dôležité zachovať a rozvíjať multifunkčnosť vidieckych oblastí.

Vidiecke sídla v okolí miest majú svoje vlastné funkcie, ktoré môžu byť pre každú z nich špecifické. Hlavné funkcie vidieckych centier, akými sú napr. bývanie a rekreácia, by sa mali zachovať, podobne ako v mestách, resp. veľkomestách sídelné funkcie, priemysel, obchod, služby, vzdelávanie alebo kultúra. Tieto funkcie sa zdieľajú v závislosti od populácie, ktorá v nich žije.

Príspevok je venovaný súčasným podmienkam života a bývania obyvateľov vidieckych oblastí v Japonsku a na Slovensku. Porovnávam v ňom vonkajšiu a vnútornú migráciu, podmienky životného prostredia, bytovú orientáciu obyvateľov, ako aj bytovú politiku miestnych samospráv oboch štátov.

Oblasťou výskumu boli vidiecke obce Kawai-Mura v Japonsku a Háj na Slovensku a výsledky sa dajú zhrnúť do nasledujúcich bodov:

1. Percento obyvateľov, ktorí bývali viac ako rok mimo rodnej obce je vyššie v obci Háj než Kawai-Mura. V oboch obciach viacero obyvateľov migrovalo a vrátilo sa späť do obce viac ako dvakrát.
2. Obyvatelia Kawai-Mura sú viac spokojní s podmienkami životného prostredia ako obyvatelia obce Háj.
3. Čo sa týka bytovej orientácie, asi viac ako polovica respondentov by chcela ostať bývať v rodnej obci. V oboch skúmaných regiónoch viac ako 30% celkového počtu respondentov „nevie, kde má bývať“. Ak zarátame tých, ktorí „nechcú bývať v rodnej obci“, celkový percentuálny podiel je 40%.
4. Na uskutočnenie trvalo udržateľného rozvoja je nutné uplatnenie nasledovnej politiky:
 - a) Treba rozvíjať urbánne funkcie susedných mestečiek a miest, ktoré môžu poskytnúť životný priestor vidieckym obyvateľom.
 - b) Zároveň treba zvýšiť dostupnosť ku každému takému mestskému centru. Uplatnenie tejto politiky vytvorí nové pracovné príležitosti pre populáciu vidieka a prispieje k tomu, že ostanú bývať v rodnej obci.

地域住民の生活実態と定住条件—岐阜県・旧河合村とスロヴァキア・ハイとの比較—

小林 浩二

本稿では、岐阜県、旧河合村とスロヴァキア、ハイの農村地域を研究対象地域にして、地域住民の生活実態と定住条件、具体的には、人口移動、生活環境、定住志向を明らかにした。併せて、定住のために必要な施策について言及した。明らかになったことは、つぎの4点にまとめることができるだろう。

- 1) 他の地域に1年以上居住（転出）した人の割合は、ハイの方が旧河合村よりも高い。旧河合村、ハイとも、複数回転出した人がかなりの割合にのぼっている。
- 2) 生活環境の満足度をみると、旧河合村の方がハイよりもはるかに高い。
- 3) 定住志向をみると、旧河合村、ハイとも「住み続けたい」と回答した人が過半数を占めているが、「わからない」と回答した人が、両地域とも3割に達している。「住み続けたくない」を合わせると4割に達している。
- 4) 農村地域の発展策として、日常圏に含まれる都市、町の機能を発展・拡充するとともに、そこまでのアクセスを改善することが必要である。こうした施策が、農村地域住民の雇用の確保と生活の質の向上につながり、定住に結びつくのではあるまいか。