

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)
DIJ Social Science Study Group



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**Logics of Liberalization: Tracing Japan's Trajectory of
Socio-Economic Institutional Change**

In this presentation, I aim to analyse how Japan has (and has not) liberalized its socio-economic institutions since the 1980s until the early 2010s.

While existing research has provided accounts of specific fields like labour, trade or financial markets, there is so far no comprehensive longitudinal analysis of change and variation of change across and between socio-economic institutions.

Drawing on a newly collected database of reform measures ranging from finance to product markets and from labour to social security, I trace Japan's trajectory of liberalizing and deliberalizing change from early occurrences in the 1980s to "waves" of liberalization under the Hashimoto and the Koizumi administration.

Furthermore, I attempt to relate my empirical findings to existing theories of *why* change has occurred in such a way. While class and party politics seem to be important parts of an explanation, I suggest that the key to understanding Japan's "logic of liberalization" lies with the relationship between the productive system and the livelihood security system.

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The DIJ Social Science Study Group is organized by
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