

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S SHIFTING HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

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### [SYNOPSIS]

The housing system in postwar Japan has consistently driven the growth of the owner-occupied housing sector, where many people have followed a conventional life-course in terms of ascending the housing ladder towards home ownership. Since the 1990s, however, a more insecure economy combined with the reorientation of housing and social policies has led to divergence in young people's housing pathways. There has been a notable increase in young adults who live in their parents' homes for longer periods while young independent households have found it difficult to secure adequate, affordable rental housing. Many households have delayed entering the owner-occupied housing market and increasing numbers of single-person households in particular have tended to remain in the rented housing sector. An apparent decline in the cycle where many people have successively followed conventional housing paths has meant new challenges to the traditional organization of the housing ladder system. This article explores young people's shifting housing opportunities in Japan with a particular focus on the differentiation of housing trajectories between 'parental home dwellers', 'single people' and 'family-formers'. Many family-formers have climbed up the housing ladder towards home ownership relatively smoothly, but they have been on the decrease. Increasing numbers of parental home dwellers and single people have been living outside the housing ladder system. Empirical evidence illustrating this differentiation was obtained by re-calculating the micro-data from the Housing and Land Survey, the National Survey of Family Income and Expenditure, and the Population Census as well as various other statistics.