

# Thoughts that cross borders

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## The Northern Territories

(Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan, and the Habomai Islands) are located northeast of Hokkaido, facing the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Okhotsk.

Despite its cold climate, the region has rich fishing grounds, especially abundant in salmon, and trout.

The area around the Northern Territories is rich in nutrients due to the intersection of cold and warm currents, and is important to Japan and Russia as a good fishing ground for many kind of fish. In terms of industry, fishing is the main source of income, especially for salmon and trout for both countries. Japan currently pays an entry fee to Russia for fishing, but it is said that if Japan were allowed to fish freely, the price of fish would be cut in half.

The seabed is also believed to contain natural gas, oil, and other resources, but since development of these resources is not currently underway, their future economic value is also anticipated.

The fishery and natural resources of the Northern Territories have important implications for the local economy and for the energy strategy of Japan as a whole.

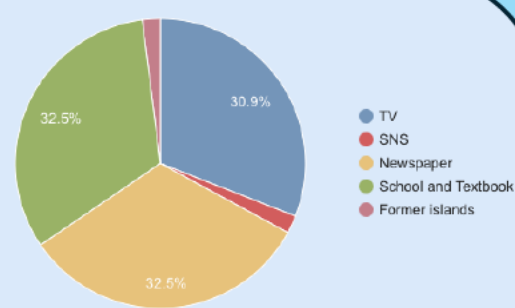
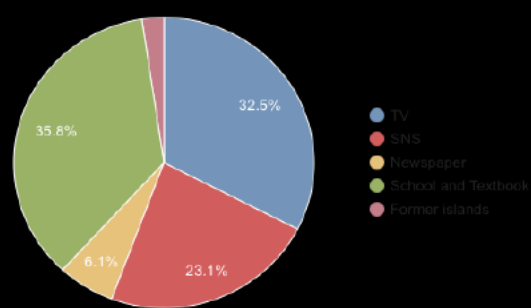


**The present situation** Today, Russia still controls the Northern Territories and Russian citizens live there.

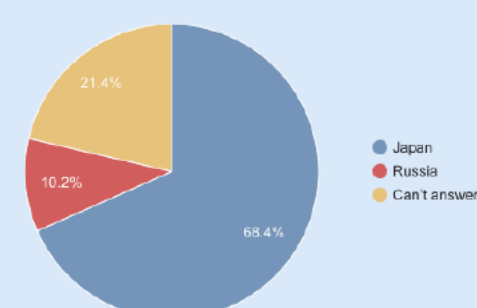
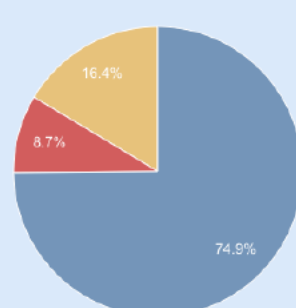
Russia is insisting on the legitimacy of the territory, strengthening its military bases, and economically governing it as part of its own country. This issue is also an obstacle to the conclusion of a peace treaty between the two countries. Japan continues to pursue diplomatic negotiations to conclude a peace treaty to reclaim the territory, but many problems, including the continued suspension of visa-free travel that has been in place in recent years.

## The north territories's history

The Northern Territories ("Etorofu", Kunashiri, Shikotan, and Habomai Islands) were lived by Japanese since the Edo period and were confirmed as Japanese territory in the Russo-Japanese Treaty of Amity in 1855. However, in 1945, at the end of World War II, Russia declared war on Japan and occupied the four Northern Territories. Later, in the San Francisco Peace Treaty (1951), Japan declared its renunciation of South Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, but there was a problem here. Japan claimed that the Kuril Islands did not include the Northern Territories, and that Russian held should have the chain of islands between the Nemuro Strait east of the main island of Hokkaido and the Kuril Strait south of the Kamchatka Peninsula, However Russia's claim was that the Kuril Islands included the Northern Territories and that the Northern Territories belonged to Russia. The diet wags of thinking between these two counties led to territorial dispute.



In Hokkaido and Hokkaido, there were more high school students in Hokkaido who got information from newspapers compared to high school students outside Hokkaido. As a result, it can be expected that newspapers in Hokkaido have the content of the Northern Territory, but the newspapers of prefectures other than Hokkaido have less content of the Northern Territories. In order to let more people know about the Northern Territory, I would like to increase the amount of information published in the newspaper.



Many people think that the Northern Territories, both in Hokkaido and outside Hokkaido, belong to Japan, but there are also minorities who believe that they belong to Russia. We want to find a solution that both countries are satisfied with.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it is necessary to strongly insist on Russia that it is a land unique to Japan, and to increase the opportunities for each citizen in Japan to deeply understand the problem. It is also necessary to prepare many opportunities for discussion for a peaceful solution



## References

<https://www.hoppou.go.jp/index.html>