

Automobile law in Japan has improved air quality

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A law passed in Japan in 1992 aimed to improve urban air quality by banning vehicles that violated certain emission standards from being registered in designated areas. A new study published in *Contemporary Economic Policy* provides evidence that the intervention reduced emissions, contributing to air quality improvements in metropolitan regions.

The law has been controversial because of its expense to owners of non-compliant vehicles and because of its unclear benefit. The study suggests that the law led to a 3% to 6% reduction in the monthly average ambient concentration of nitrogen dioxide over more than two decades, yielding benefits equal to about US \$104 million as a result of reduced mortality from [asthma](#).

"Japan's automobile law seems to work well, but to formally evaluate the validity of the law, full cost-benefit analyses would need to be undertaken," said corresponding author Shuhei Nishitatano, Ph.D., of Kwansei Gakuin University.

More information: Shuhei Nishitatano et al, HAVE VEHICLE REGISTRATION RESTRICTIONS IMPROVED URBAN AIR QUALITY IN JAPAN?, *Contemporary Economic Policy* (2020). [DOI: 10.1111/coep.12457](#)

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