


Japanese Studies by the Numbers: Data-driven Approaches to the Future of the Field

(post-conference adapted slides)



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The Past (Reflections)

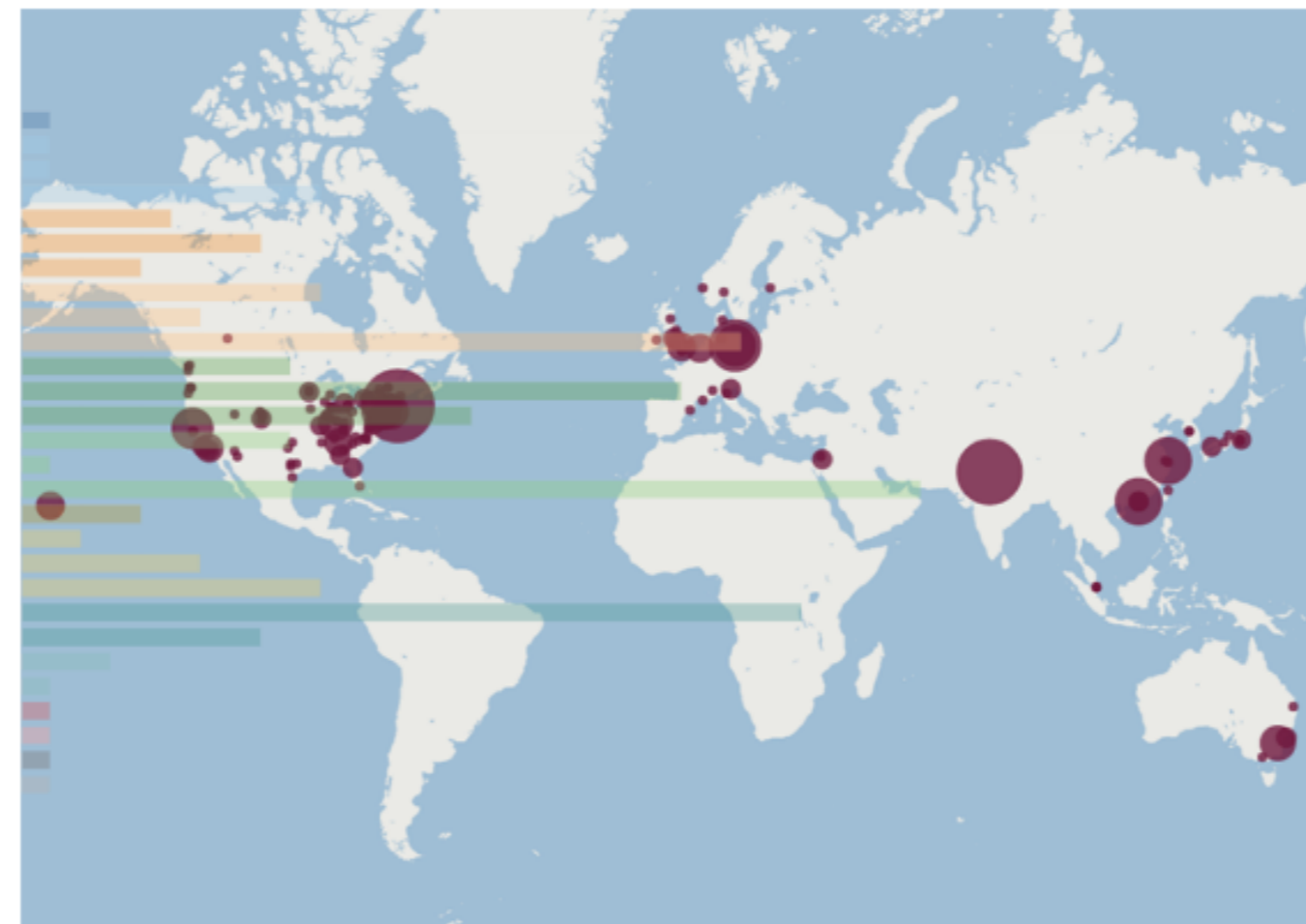
2019 – “Death of Japanese Studies,” Association for Asian Studies

2020 – Virtual Roundtable: “The ‘Rebirth’ of Japanese Studies”

Virtual Roundtable: The “Rebirth” of Japanese Studies

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) 2020 conference was cancelled. I organized the roundtable session on *The “Rebirth” of Japanese Studies*, which participants looked forward to as a way to prompt important conversations on the state of the Japan Studies field at present as well as its future directions. These dialogues are urgent perhaps now more than ever.

I have made this page as a sort of “virtual roundtable” that showcases comments from some of the original discussants. It also provides a space for discussion and engagement with others in the field. As



For further detail below, **written submissions on the roundtable’s topics will be allowed for 2-3 limited periods and** although we cannot recreate the dynamic environment of face-to-face discussion, I hope that through this

41 writers

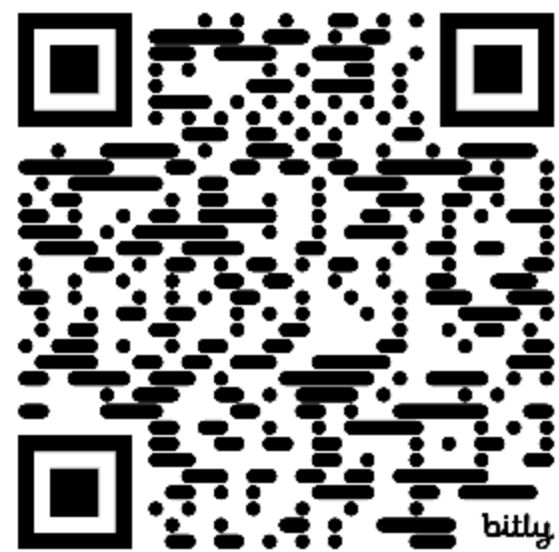
30 white

17 women

2 Japanese/Jpn American

34 in Anglophone contexts

7 in Japan (not Japanese)



Scan QR code to visit virtual roundtable

Past to Present (Overview)



"almost total absence of a professional field of Japanese studies in the United States in 1934 or even in 1945."

-- *SSRC-ACLS Joint Committee on Japanese Studies report, 1970*

late 1940s~'50s – PhDs served in war or Occupation (or both)

1947 – Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan established

1951 – Fulbright agreement includes Japan

1956 – *Far Eastern Quarterly* renamed *The Journal of Asian Studies*

late 1950s – expanded support from Ford Foundation

1958 – National Defense Education Act promotes internationalization

Past to Present (Overview)

1960s – reports on the state of the field in US; expansion; institutional & government support

1962 – U.S.-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON) founded

1963 – Association of Teachers of Japanese formed

Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Study founded

1968 – approximately 1,615,238 volumes in Japanese in American libraries

13 university libraries 20,000+ vols

25 other universities <20,000 vols

110 professional librarians; 50 working at LOC

1970s – large growth in undergraduate programs & exchange programs

1973 – CULCON report finds ~846 Japan specialists

1975 – 69 institutions have 4+ specialists

1975 – Japan-US Friendship Commission (JUSFC) established

1980s – Japan Foundation major source of support

1982–83 – JF commissions another survey

~20% increase in faculty, language courses, enrollments, library holdings (across board)

“...as a late addition to the curriculum of American higher education, and hence the most likely to be discontinued in times of financial hardship, **the fact that Japanese studies is holding its own is a noteworthy achievement.**”

*John W. Hall, Chairman,
SSRC-ACLS Joint Committee*

“Another feature of the Japanese studies field documented by the 1983 survey is its **dispersion, or lateral spread**. Educational programs on Japan are now available in **nearly every state** in the Union. Recent hirings of Japanese specialists by colleges and universities outside the traditional area studies centers have increased the representation of Japanese specialists on faculties in Midwestern, Southern, and Rocky Mountain states. **Grants for expansion of library holdings have similarly increased the accessibility** of materials on Japan throughout the country. The Regional Seminar Program funded by the Japan Foundation and sponsored by the Joint Committee on Japanese Studies **supports seminars in various areas of the country that do not have major centers of Japanese studies**, and makes it possible for Japan specialists at smaller institutions to maintain scholarly contacts with their colleagues.”

Past to Present (Overview)

Late 1980s – specialists more integrated into disciplinary departments

1990s – “interdependency and globalization”

1995 – “in 1970 there were 408 specialists, by 1995 that number had quadrupled”

1996 – Japan Foundation report on Japanese Studies in the US

Japan Studies not obscure or isolated

2000s – post-911 environment

2007/2009 – global financial crisis

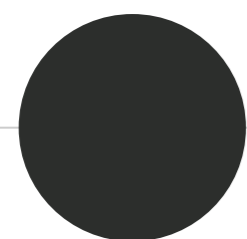
2016 – Trump pt 0

2020 – COVID crisis begins; Trump pt 1

2022 – significant decline for yen

2022 – Trump pt 2

2024/2025 – ? 🔥 ? 🔥 ?



Where are we now? What's next?

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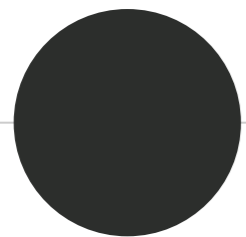
East Asia-related Job Market Data Reports and Visualizations

Since 2019 I have been compiling information on academic-oriented job postings related to East Asia. I collect job advertisements throughout the year (summarizing the latest ads on Twitter on the weekends) and each July I present visualizations of and reflections on the data in the form of annual reports.

While my data gathering is in progress, I upload the current postings in the form of open access, searchable tables that job seekers can use.

These tables also include keywords by which users can filter entries as well as links to the job advertisements. The table below provides links to both annual reports and data in progress filter tables.

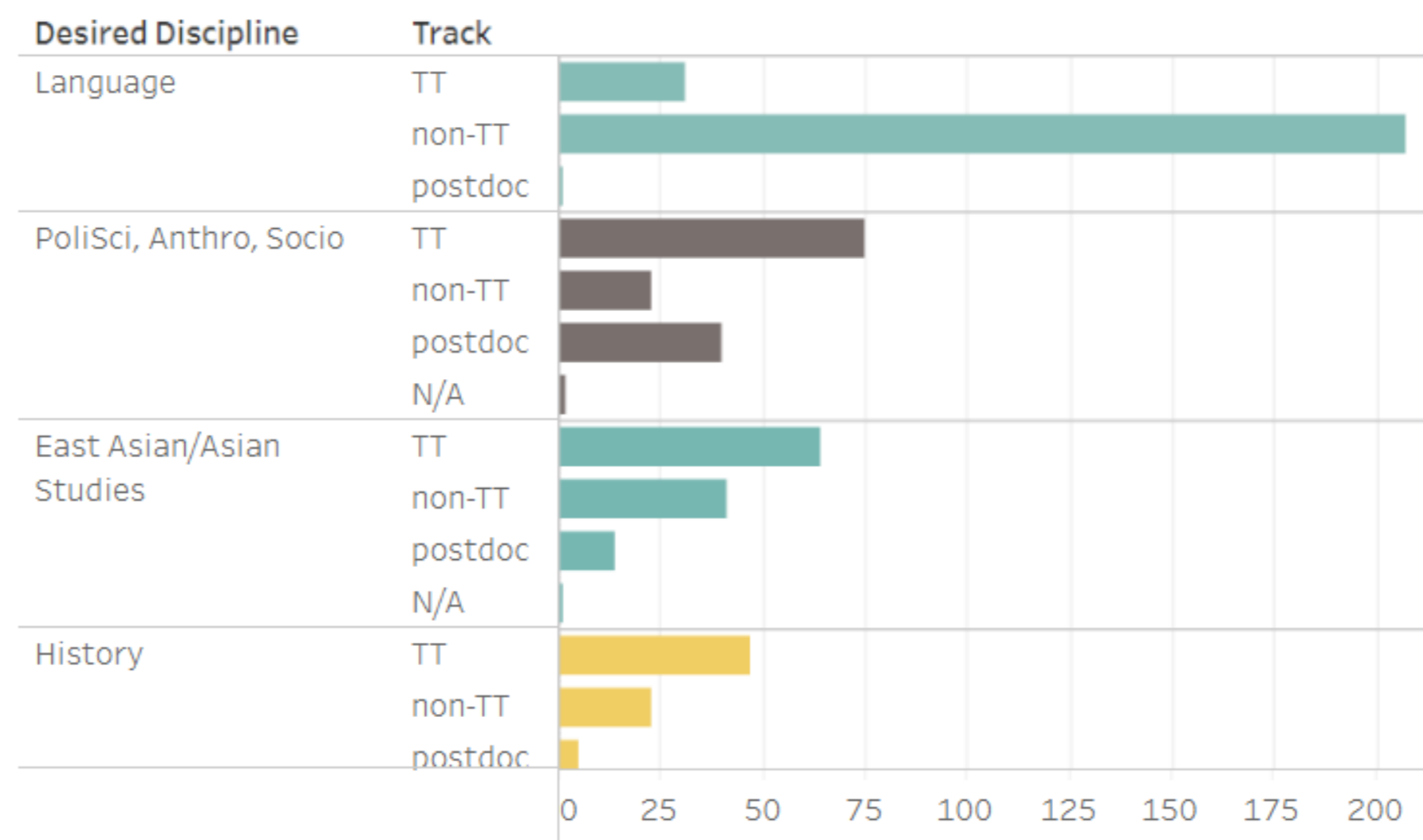




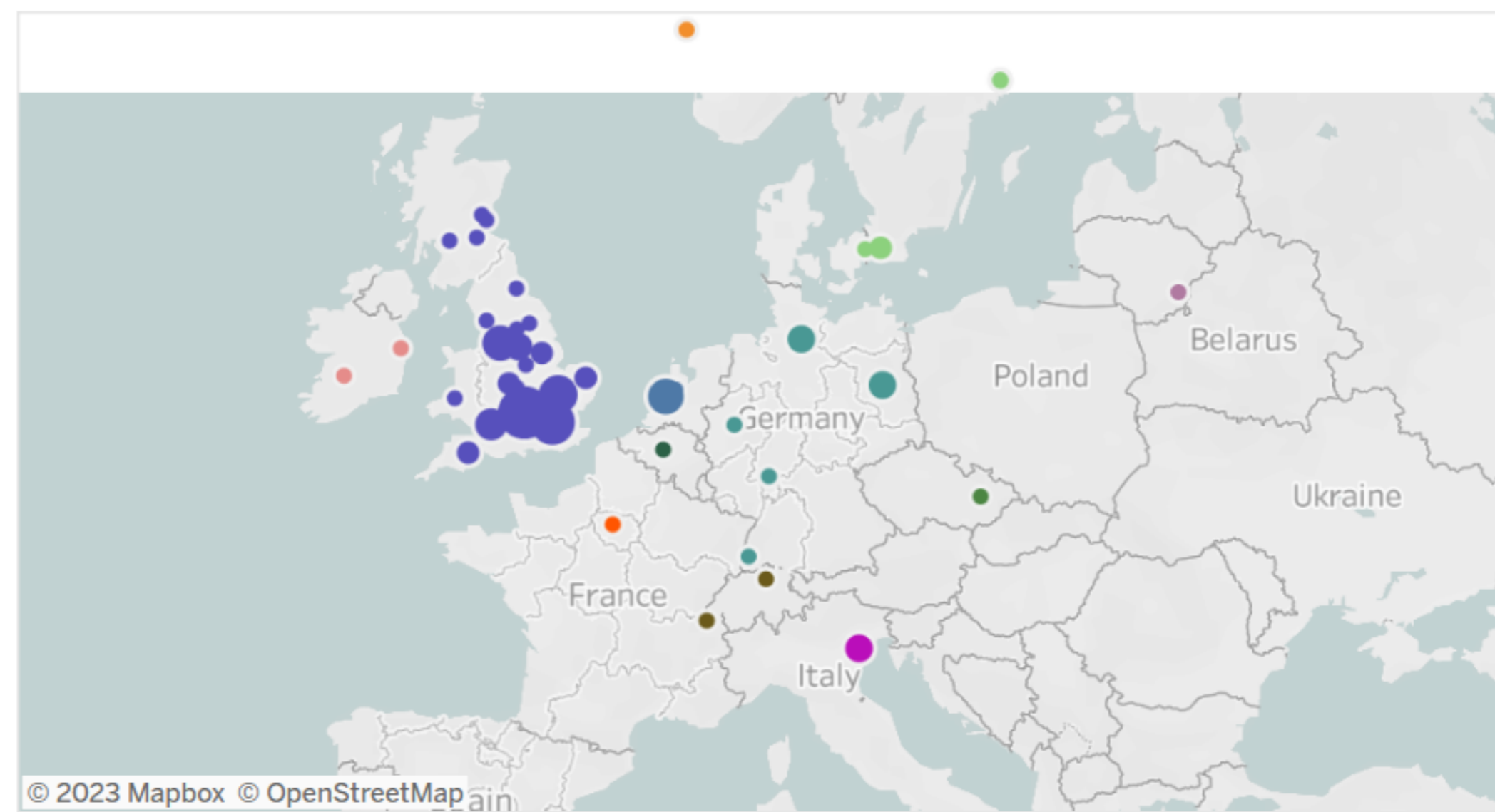
Data Categories

- Location
- Continental Region
- Desired Region
- Desired Discipline
- Period
- Track
- School Type
- Public/Private

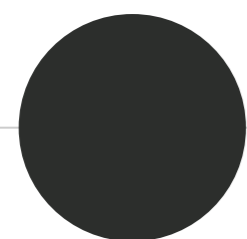
East Asia-related Job Advertisements [2022-2023] by Desired Discipline, Track, & Location



Track	Count	Location	Count
TT	352	Australia	6
non-TT	361	Belgium	1
postdoc	164	Canada	17
N/A	134	China	90
Total	1,011	Czech Republic	1
		Denmark	1
		Egypt	1
		France	1
		Germany	11
		Hong Kong	65
		Inner Mongolia	11
		Ireland	2
		Israel	5
		Italy	3
		Japan	154
		Kazakhstan	3
		Lithuania	1
		Malaysia	1
		Morocco	1
		Netherlands	6
		New Zealand	1
		Norway	1
		Singapore	15
		South Korea	15
		Sweden	4
		Switzerland	2
		Taiwan	14
		United Arab Emirates	1
		United Kingdom	70
		United States	496
		Vietnam	2
		N/A	9



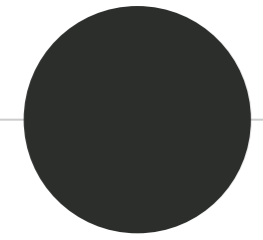
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Data Sources

AAS job board
Academic Jobs wiki
American Association of Teachers of Japanese
American Association of Teachers of Korean
American Historical Association
Chinese Language Teachers Association, USA
Council on East Asian Libraries
Chronicle of Higher Education
HigherEd Jobs
H-Asia listservs
H-Net job board
jobs.ac.uk
jRec-in Portal
University Affairs
University Vacancies Ireland
Community submissions to a Google Form
Miscellaneous postings circulated by mailing lists

Anthropology Careers & Employment
Association for Korean Studies in Europe
China Foreigner Jobs
China University Jobs
Galaxie des personnels du supérieur
Association Française d'Études Chinoises
Société française des études japonaises
CNRS boards
Chinese Studies Association of Australia



Caveats

North America

- Most accurate data
- Most widely advertised posts
- Most detailed ads

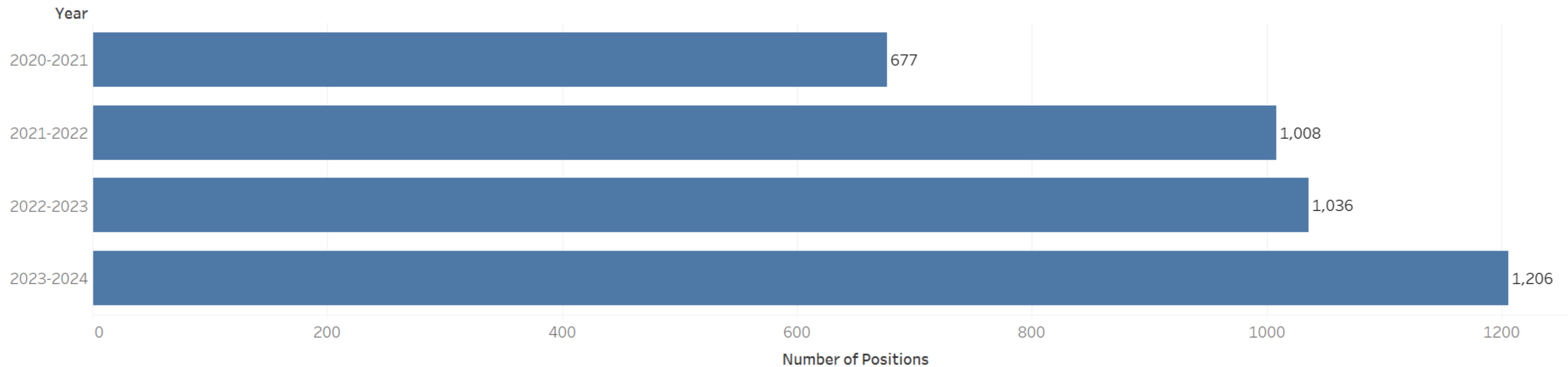
Europe

- Highly multilingual ads
- Decentralized posting outside the UK

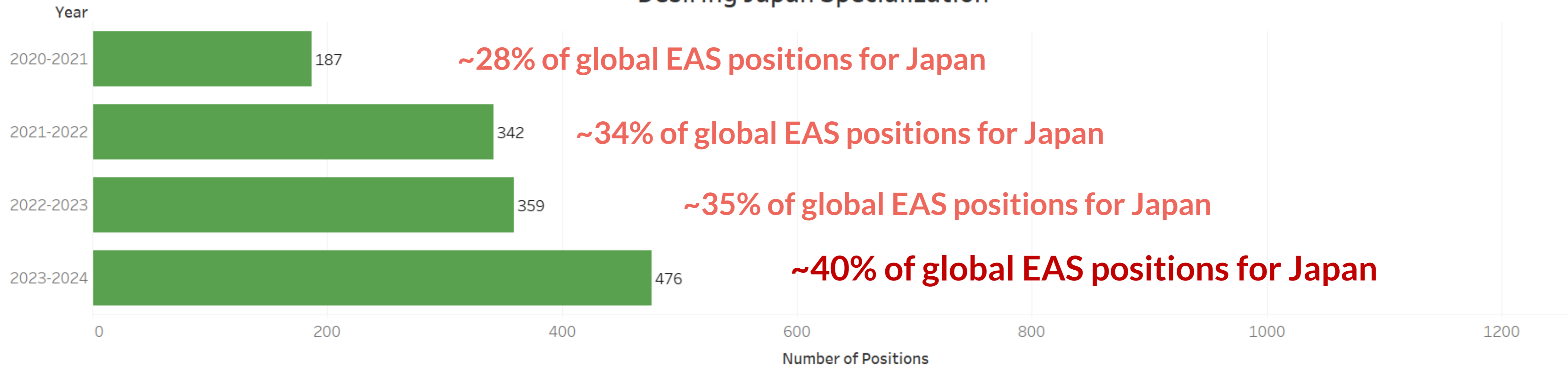
Asia

- Bias toward advertisements in Japan (for Japan)
- Posts in China & Korea mostly circulate internally, in their languages

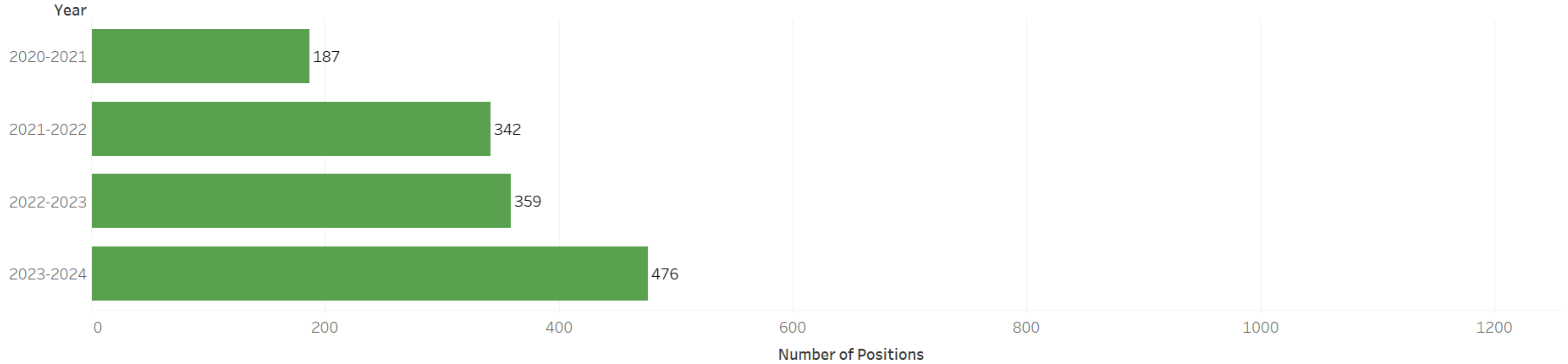
East Asia-related Job Advertisements [2020-2024] All Desired Regions



East Asia-related Job Advertisements [2020-2024] Desiring Japan Specialization



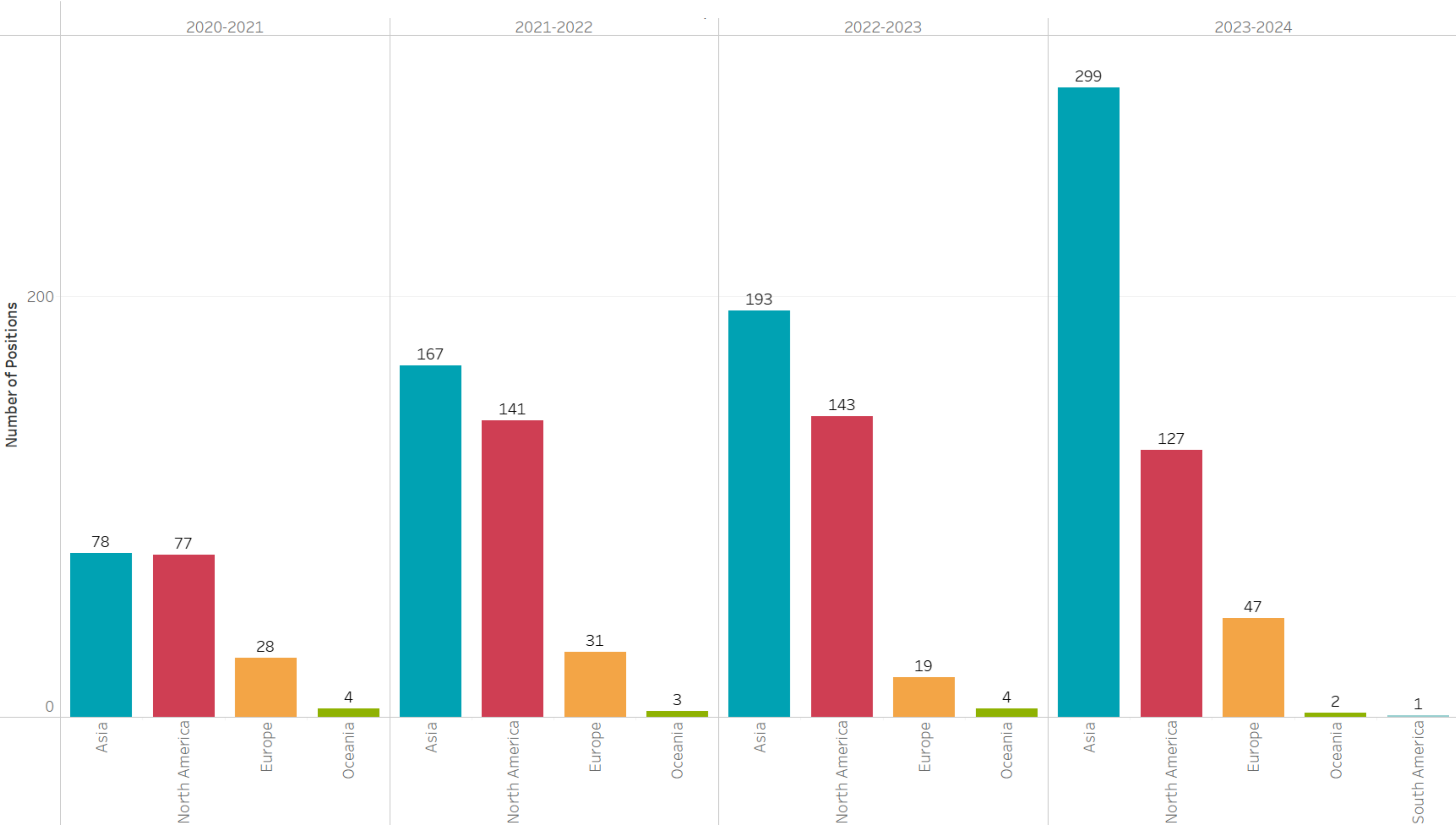
East Asia-related Job Advertisements [2020-2024] Desiring Japan Specialization



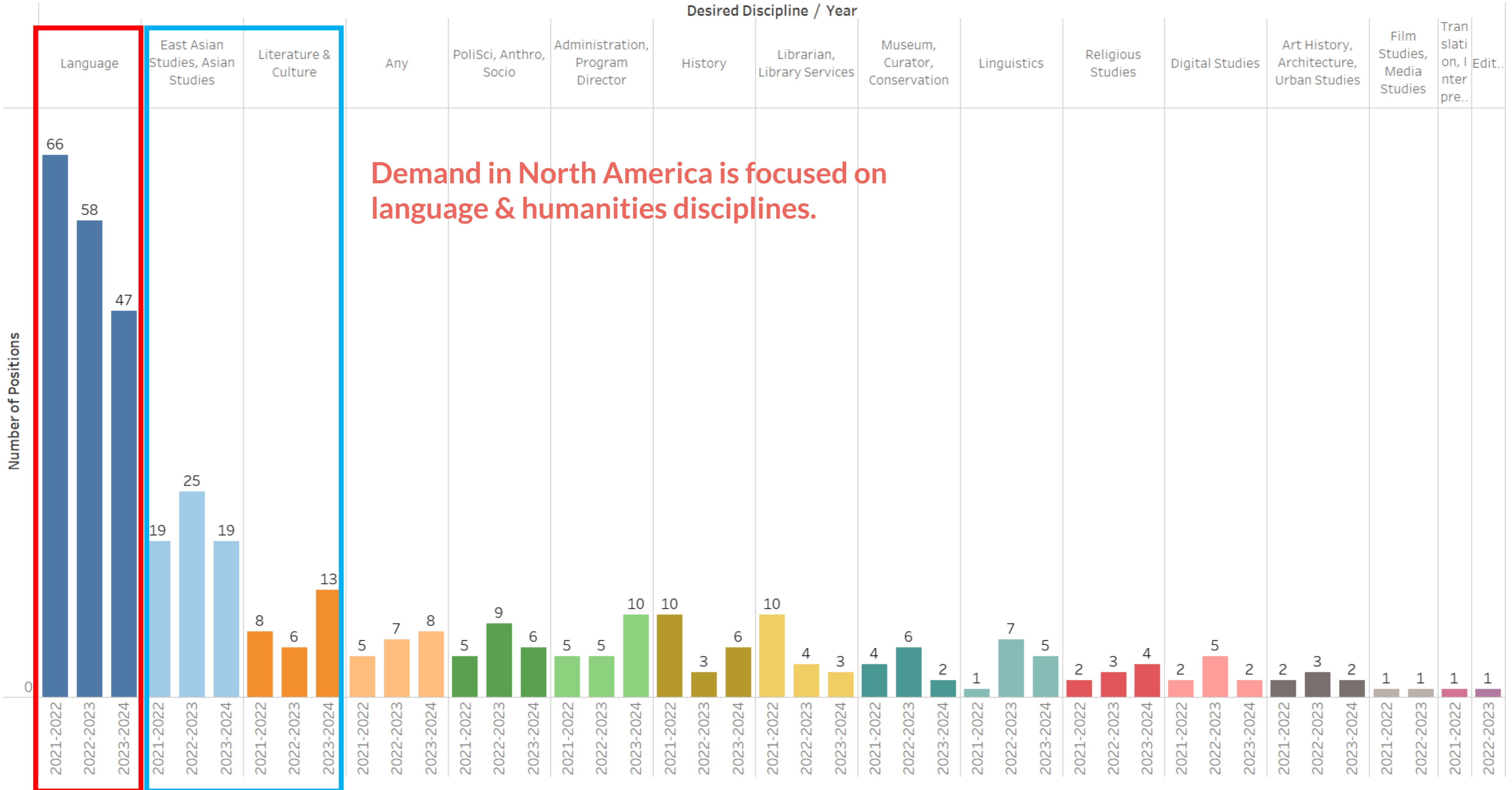
East Asia-related Job Advertisements [2020-2024] Desiring Japan Specialization in North America



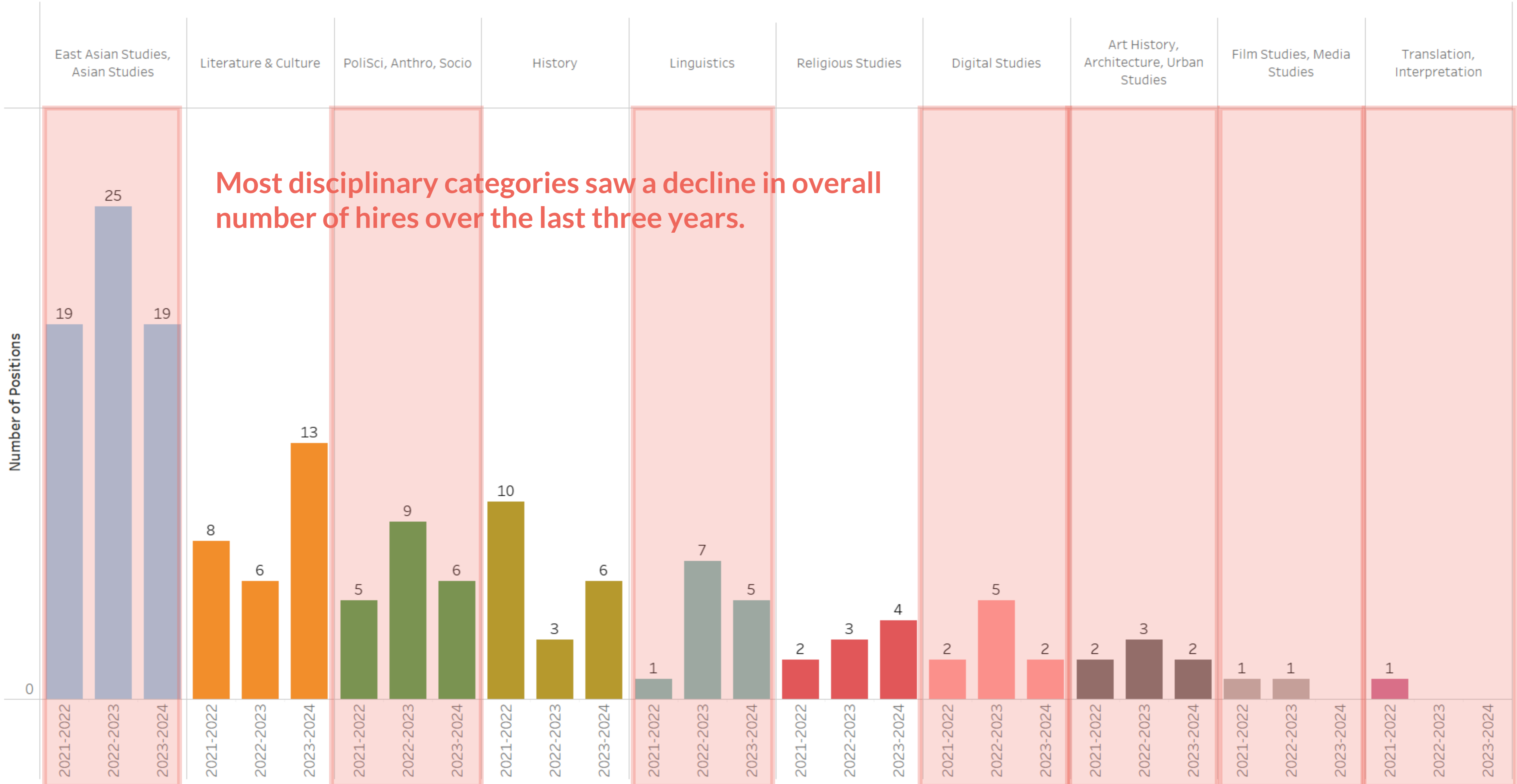
East Asia-related Job Advertisements [2020-2024] Desiring Japan Specialization by Cycle & Continental Region



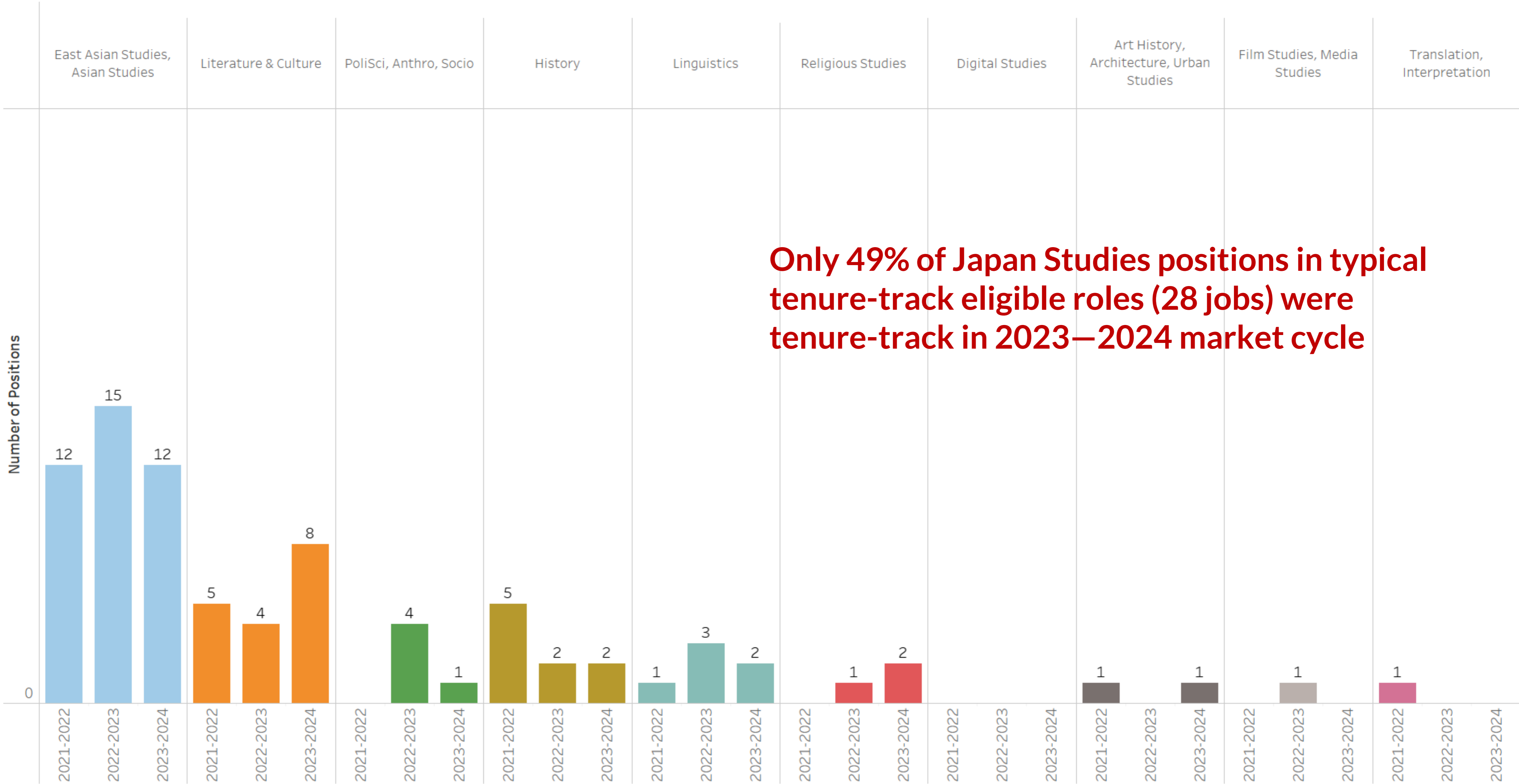
Job Advertisements in Japan Studies [2021-2024] in North America by Discipline



Selected Humanities Job Advertisements in Japan Studies [2021-2024] in North America by Discipline

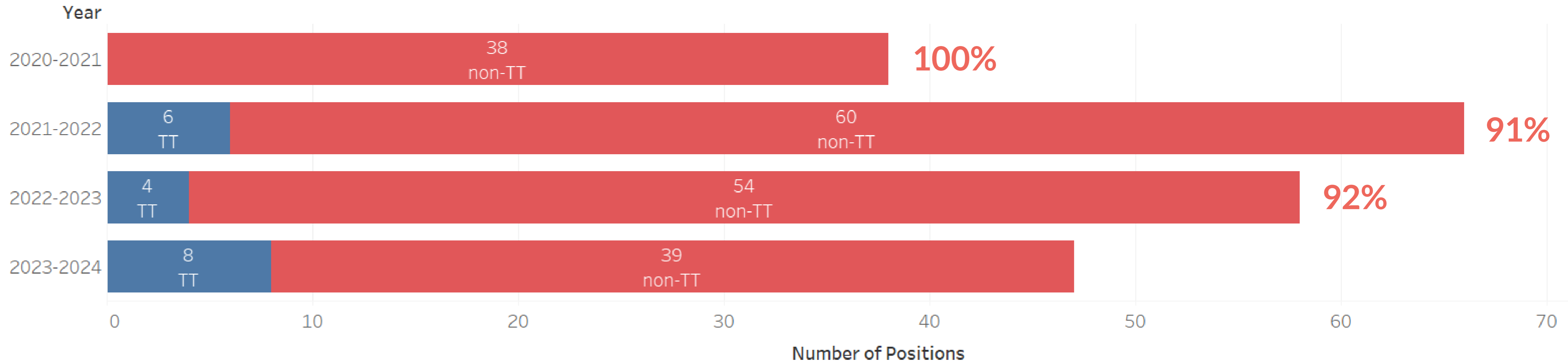


Selected Humanities Job Advertisements in Japan Studies [2021-2024] in North America by Discipline (Tenure Track)



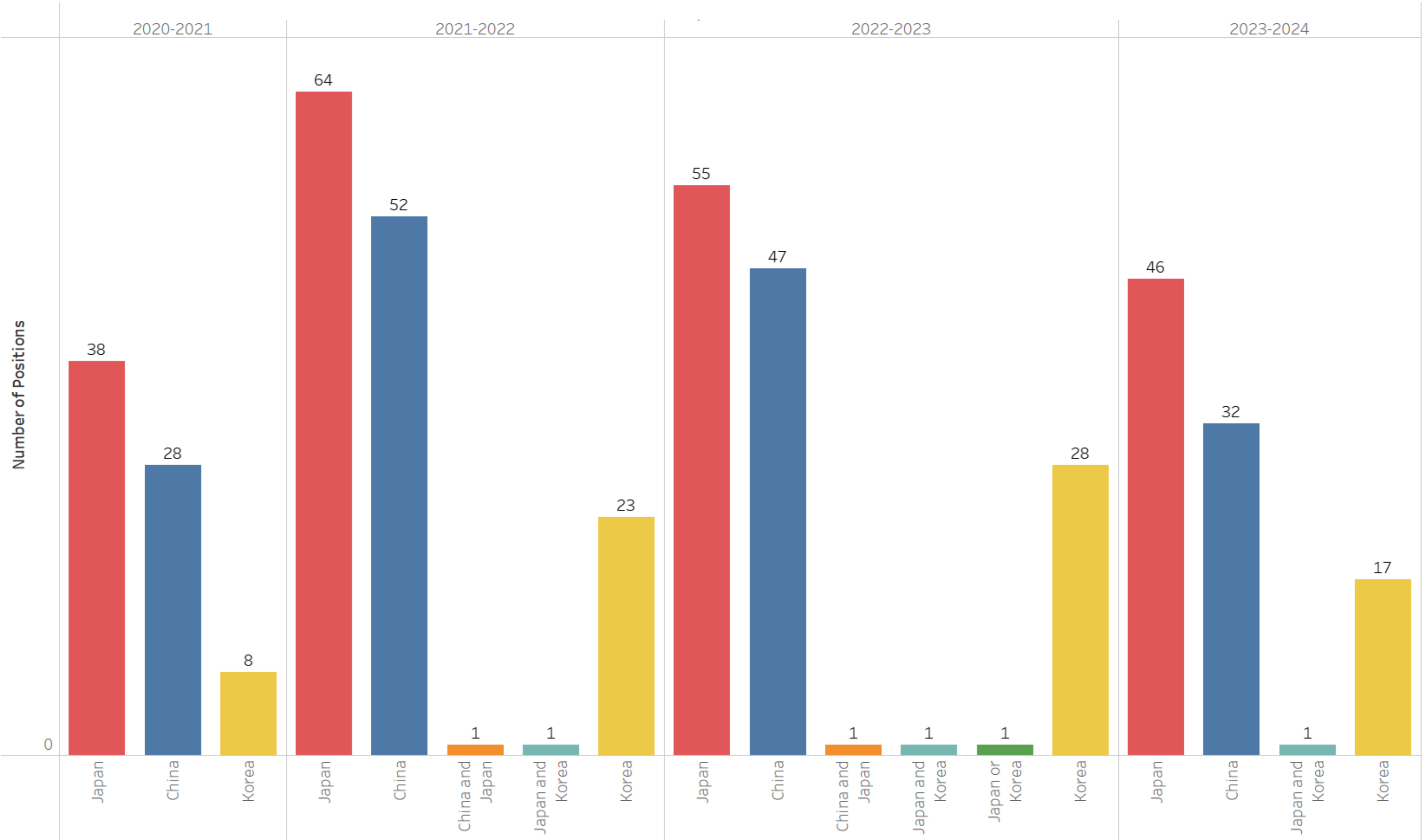
Only 49% of Japan Studies positions in typical tenure-track eligible roles (28 jobs) were tenure-track in 2023–2024 market cycle

Japanese Language Job Advertisements [2020-2024] in North America by Hiring Cycle & Track

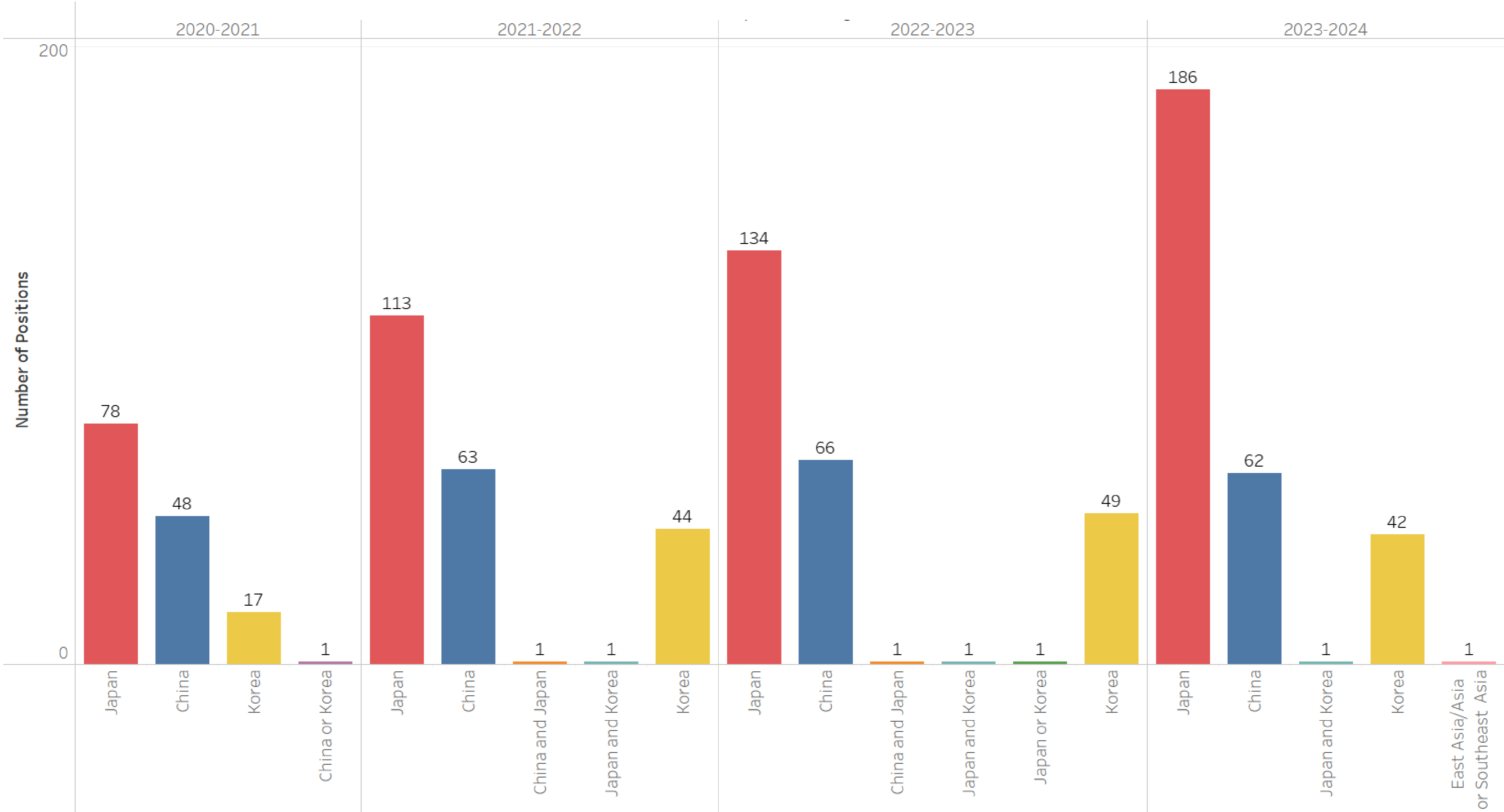


**83% of Japanese language were contingent in 2023–2024 market cycle
(NOT including adjuncting—data is for positions with at least 1 year term)**

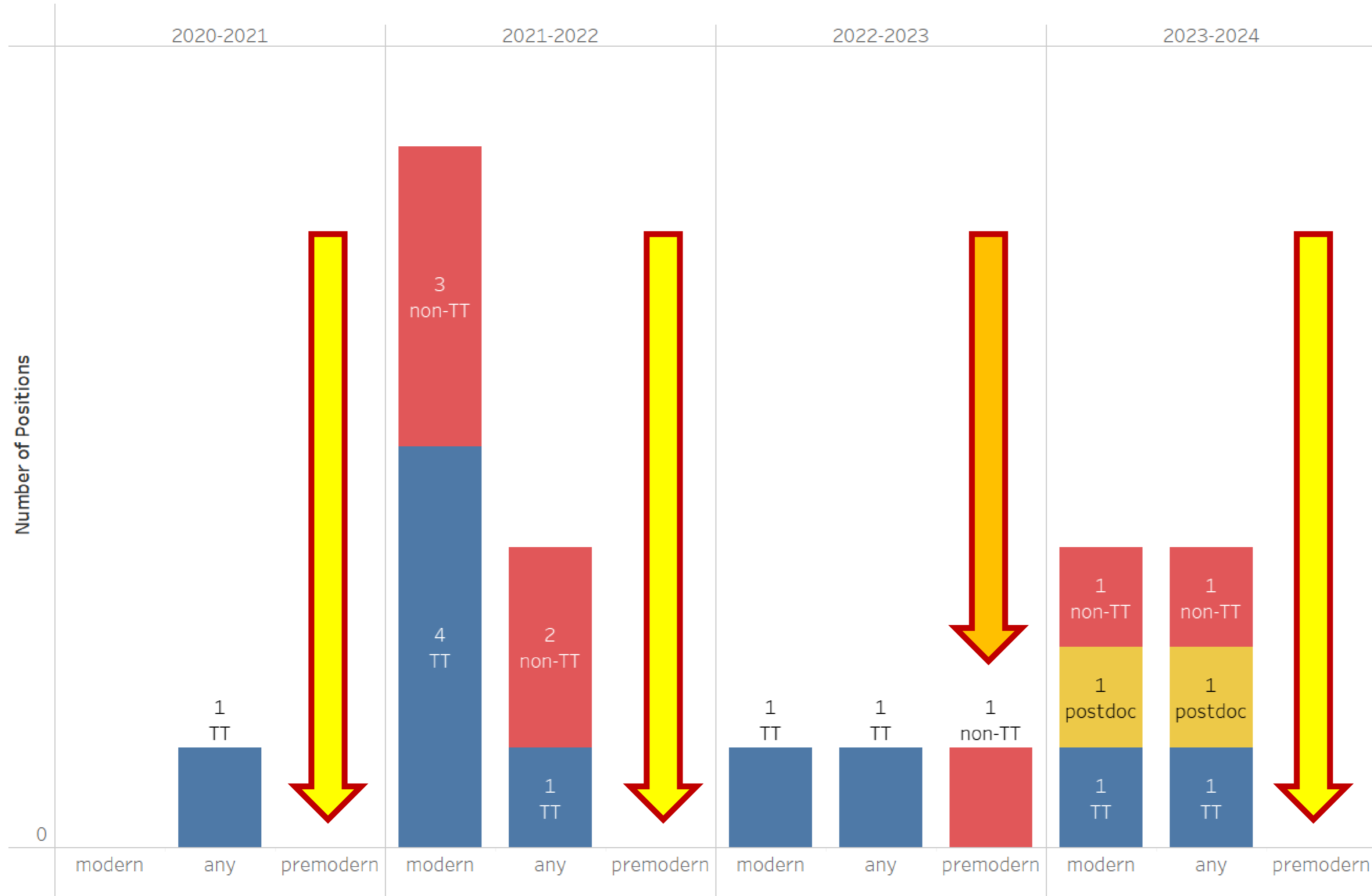
Job Advertisements in East Asian Languages [2020-2024] by Desired Language



Job Advertisements in East Asian Languages [2020-2024] Globally by Desired Language



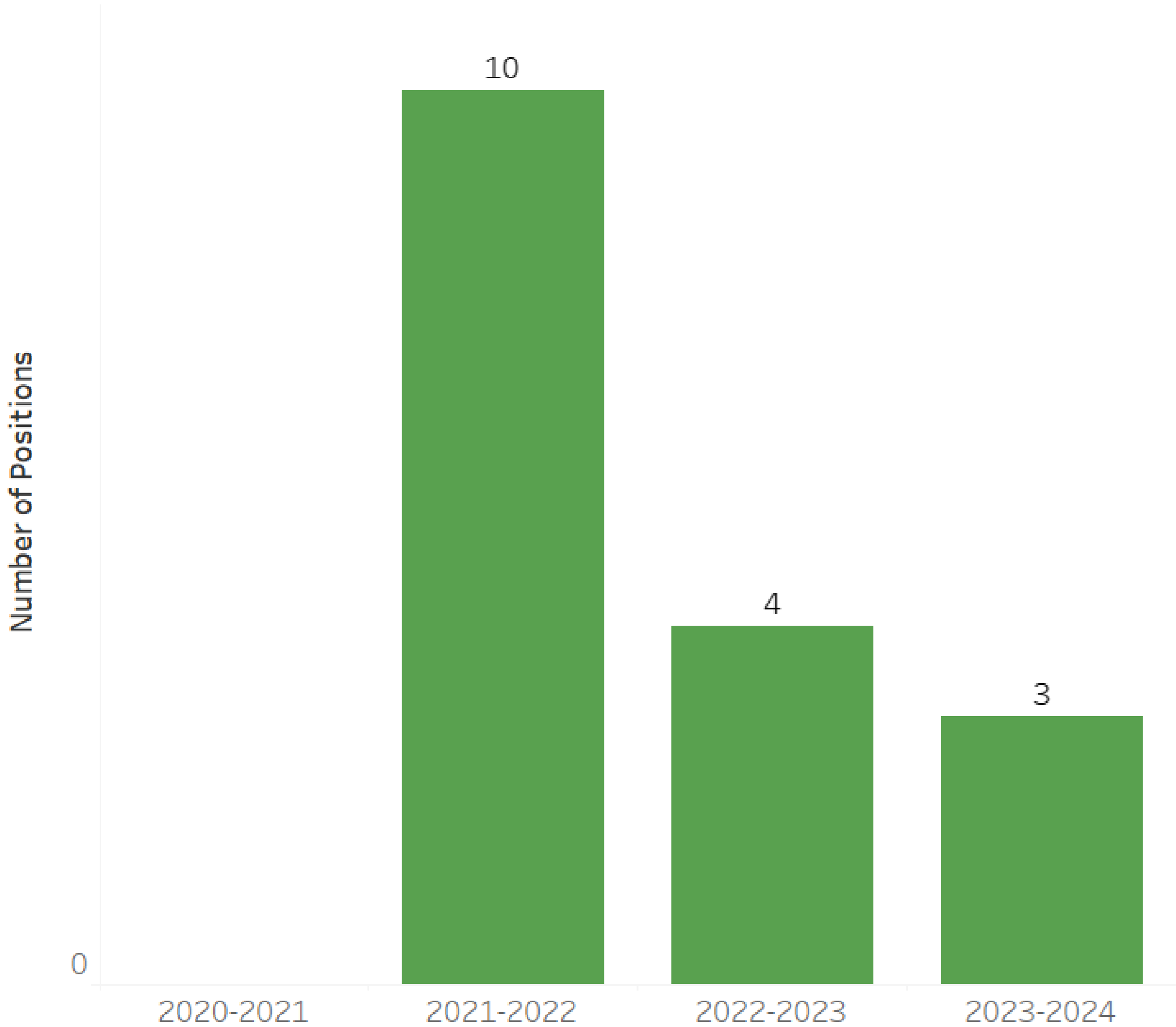
Job Advertisements in Japanese History [2021-2024] in North America by Time Period & Track



What happens to the field
(library collections?
special collections?
digitization projects?
student training?)
when entire
disciplines or
subfields disappear?

Job Advertisements in Japanese Library Services [2020-2024]

Year



What data would benefit library and information specialists in thinking about future support for Japan Studies?

- corporatization of academia
- higher-level intervention (content & funding)
- devaluing of the humanities
- devaluing of experience & materiality in favor of virtuality



No longer sustaining methods-based courses (supported by librarians)



Growing demand for digital skills for faculty, students, AND library specialists (without necessary training support)



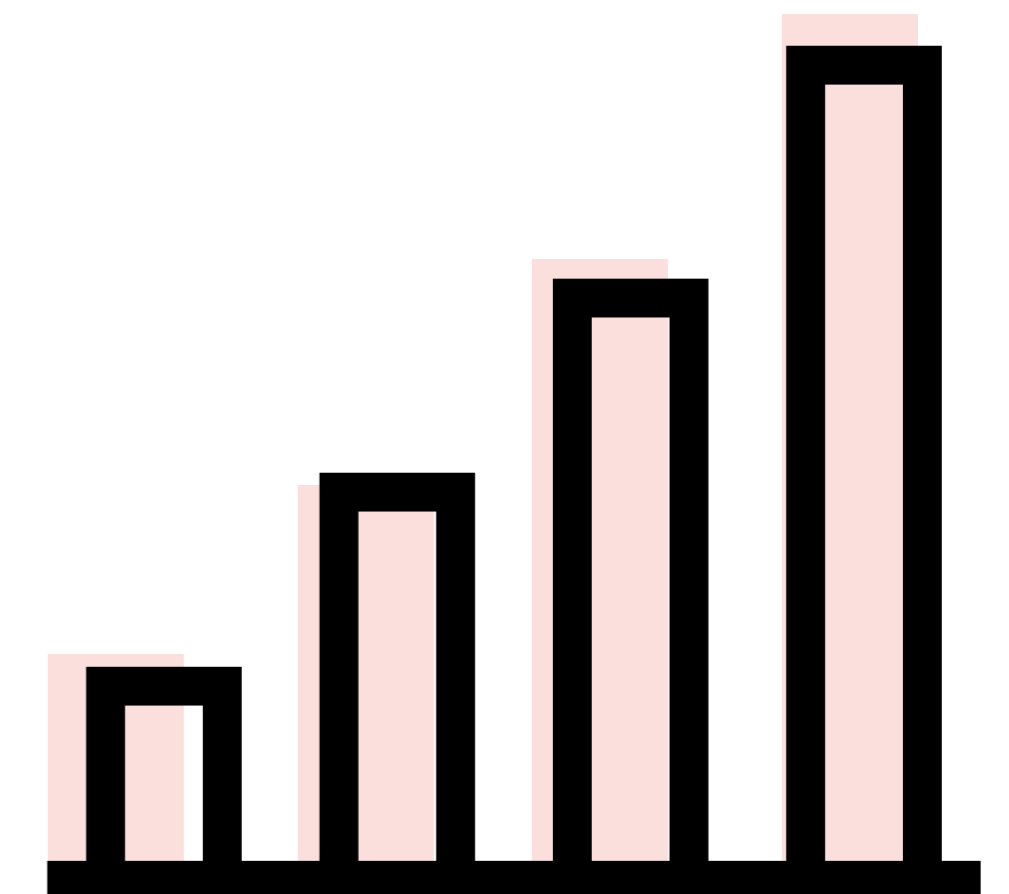
Reward structures for innovative work have not caught up with demands

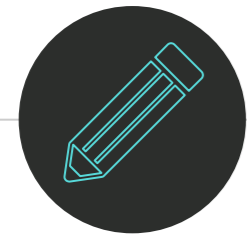
Where can we intervene?

Who is “we”?

- **Library & Information Specialists**
 - educate colleagues & students about the importance of metrics for reporting/grants
 - mobilize that data for advocacy
- **Faculty/Admin**
 - educate themselves, actively seek outreach & collaboration
- **Students**
 - be proactive in measures of support
- **Institutional Supporters**
 - find means of support, collaboration, institutional intervention
 - make the most of being an outside influence

In a metrics-driven infrastructure, we must think with strategic metrics





Where might we look to?

- Japan Foundation
 - U.S. Japan Council
 - Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission
 - CULCON
 - Nippon Foundation
 - United States-Japan Bridging Foundation
 - Japan Societies
 - Tateuchi Foundation
 - Toshiba International Foundation
 - Japan Center for International Exchange
 - Daiwa Foundation
 - Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Global
 - CIES (Comparative & International Education Society)
-
- government offices
 - individual companies
 - local business alliances
 - academic institutions

Japan Past & Present is a global information hub and repository that promotes research and teaching in the Japanese humanities across disciplinary, temporal, and geographic borders



Some interventions & strategic support taking place through organizations like JPP, but we should not dismiss the importance of our institutions and local communities either!

<https://japanpastandpresent.org/>



Collaboratives



Shared Problems Need Shared Solutions

- shared understanding and recognition of the issues
- brainstorm problem solving as a community
- think beyond and within our individual institutions
- leverage (international) expertise & connections
- develop strategic (and creative) goals
- think long-term about sustainability, equity, changing nature of academia

Thank you!

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