

A cross-national research on the role of city-planner of municipal authorities in Japan and Germany

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[Synopsis]

The purpose of this research is to conduct the cross-national research on the expertise and profession of city-planner of municipal authorities in order to discuss the role of urban planners of municipal authorities in the coming age of decentralization of administration in Japan. Germany is the object country to be compared with Japan since the long tradition of local autonomy has been observed in Germany and also every local municipality has maintained its own planning culture there. As for the research in Germany, we conducted surveys through questionnaires to the planners in the local authorities and interviews with the heads of the city planning departments in 5 cities (Bochum, Dortmund, Duisburg, Muenster, Hannover). The results of our research clarified five issues; the general status of the German urban planners, professional education, training and qualification in universities and the nation-wide system, personnel management and open recruitment system concerning urban planners in local authorities, the actual practice of German urban planners' career building, and opinions of urban planners about the shifts in the future direction of German planning culture and urban planners' profession. In Japan, we conducted surveys about the details of personnel transfers through questionnaires to the planners and in the local authorities and interviews with the heads of the city planning departments of 3 prefectures and 42 municipalities in Kanto area. The results in Japan clarified the following points; 1) personnel transfers affect much both the range of specialty and the future orientation of planning officials' career building. 2) current common practice of personnel management based on the categories of administrators and technical officials of civil engineering and architecture do not always promote the city planning oriented talent, especially for planning sections. 3) The latter point is particularly observed in small size municipalities.