

How can we make incentives to promote migration to Residential Attracted areas in the Location Normalization Plan?

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[SYNOPSIS]

As Japan's population continues to decline, it is an important and urgent issue to streamline urban areas that have become bloated during Japan's rapid economic growth to an appropriate size in line with the current population structure. In response, in 2014, the Location Normalization Plan was enacted, and each municipality is designating residential zones while, at the same time, the shift to a more compact regional structure is underway. However, the Location Normalization plan does not allow for the forced relocation of people outside the residential attractive area. Therefore, it is crucial to smoothly convert to a compact regional structure based on the voluntary migration of residents before the living environment outside of the residential zones deteriorates. To this end, it is necessary to clarify the incentives and hurdles to induce migration from the psychological aspect, incorporating perspectives such as behavioral economics and the living environment factors and regional characteristics of the residential attractive areas discussed so far.

In this paper, first, we analyzed the time it takes for the population to reach zero in urbanization-promoting areas that have been excluded from the residential attracting area. We assumed multiple generations to be the target of the migration promotion policy and considered the differences in each scenario. Second, we conducted a questionnaire survey analysis of Kansai region residents living in urbanized areas outside of these residential attracting areas. In addition to resident attributes and residential area evaluation, questions from behavioral economics and other perspectives were included in the survey.

As a result, it was found that more than 100 years are needed before the natural withdrawal of target areas and that migration policies targeting the pre- and post-retirement generations are the most effective. In addition, psychological incentives could be provided by accompanying environmental improvements and nudges in the residential attracting area per their lifestyle preferences.