

Demographic Analysis of Population Change in the Pre-merger Municipality Area around the Period of the "Big Merger of Heisei"

Shiro KOIKE and Masakazu YAMAUCHI

Although some research indicates the influence that the so-called "Big Merger of Heisei" had on population distribution or migration, analyses of these from a demographical viewpoint have hitherto been insufficient. The merger involved two municipalities, each of which originally had its own administrative center and public offices. This paper examines the population change during the period 1980-2010 in the two areas affected, one of which retained the administrative and public offices (the "Central Area") and the other which did not (the "Periphery Area"), focusing on the municipalities in the non-metropolitan area which experienced the "big merger of Heisei". As population change is caused by two demographic factors, namely natural increase and social increase, the population increase rate of each period is divided into a natural increase rate and a social increase rate, and they are further subdivided into changes of population composition and changes in the rate of population dynamics using a standardization method.

Although the difference in the population increase rate and changes of migration trends between the "Central Area" and the "Periphery Area" have tended to increase recently, as pointed out by previous studies, migration trend changes between them have remained almost the same since 1980s. From a long-term viewpoint, the increasing difference of population increase rate between the two areas is brought about by the rapid fall in the natural increase rate of the "Periphery Area", due to a relatively aging population.