

## **Introduction to Special Feature on “International Migration and Social Policies”**

The volume 4 of the *Japanese Journal of Population* features articles written for the FY2004-2006 Research Project on the Linkage between International Migration Policy and Social Security Policy in Light of Population Decline (Principal Investigator: Dr. Yoshimi CHITOSE) funded by a Scientific Grant from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (H16-Seisaku-022). This is the first time this journal features the results of this research project, though the Volume 2, No.1 included papers on international migration contributed by foreign keynote speakers at the Eighth Welfare Policy Seminar on “Population Decline and Immigration Policies: Japan’s Choice” held on December 16, 2003.

Among the four articles from the research project, the first one by TAKENOSHITA and the second one by KOJIMA present the analysis results of microdata from Iwata City’s 2004 survey of Brazilians. On the other hand, the third article by CHITOSE is based on the analysis of macro-data from the Statistics of Foreigners Registered in Japan. The fourth article by KOJIMA is also based on the analysis of macro-data from the same registration statistics and the Population Census as well as the micro-data from the 2000 Census (through the courtesy of the Statistics Bureau). All the four articles try to derive some implications for social policies to assist international migrants and their family.

This special feature is meaningful in relation to the two contributed papers by SUZUKI and by SATO and IWASAWA on Japan’s fertility because Japan is now facing the population decline caused mainly by fertility decline, but also partly by the negative net migration, particularly that of Japanese males. At the same time, international marriages now represent more than 5% of total number of marriages in Japan. Even though Japan is virtually becoming a multicultural society with many Japanese Brazilians and intermarried spouses who are likely to stay here more or less permanently, the central government does not have any systematic integration policy while the local governments with a high concentration of foreign residents are struggling to assist them with social programs. Thus, the research project has a purpose to derive social policy implications for the central government as well as local governments.