

Diversification of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children —Evaluation of the First-Term Action Plan and the Analysis of Patterns of Policy Diffusion —

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The purposes of this paper are to evaluate the first-term action plan based on the Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children and to analyze diffusion and policy effects on municipal policy outputs. Finally, it outlines the directionality of measures to cope with a low birth rate in the future.

In relation to the Seminar for Consideration of a Low Birth Rate Society, an investigation called the Survey on the First-Term Action Plan Based on the Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children for Municipal Governments (2010) was carried out. Using the outcomes of this survey, the author analyzed: (1) the execution rate for measures by population size; (2) municipal government personnel evaluation measures; (3) creation of a map showing the degrees of progress and adoption for each measure; (4) diffusion distribution using an S-shaped adoption curve; (5) diffusion and policy effects on municipal policy outputs; (6) the basics of the problem of insufficient nursery school places for children; and (7) the directionality of the second-term action plan.

The results indicated that municipal governments need more funding and revenue authority to cope with regional diversity. Demand for childcare tends to be concentrated in urban areas, while in rural areas, settlement measures are desired. An even more important consideration is the revival of regional communities to realize cooperation among residents, low-cost childcare and stronger ties in such areas. The analysis of diffusion effects confirmed the diversity of municipal policies, and it is hoped that this trend will continue.