

Population Projections Using Marital Status Multistate Life Tables

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Marital status is one of the most basic characteristics of a population, and it is an indispensable factor for projecting populations by marital status. This study seeks to project populations by single age and marital status for each year from 2021 to 2070 in Japan, based on the projected marital status multistate life tables, making them consistent with the country's official population projections in 2023 and the official household projections in 2024, both conducted by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

According to this projection of Japan's population by marital status, the proportion of never-married persons in old age is estimated to increase rapidly. In 2070, the proportion never married in a population aged 65 and over is projected to reach 23.9% for males and 18.0% for females, and the corresponding proportions are projected to reach 23.1% for males and 17.5% for females among those aged 75 and over. These rapid increases of the proportion never married in old age suggest rapid increases in the future of the elderly without support and care from a spouse and offspring. Future policies for elderly support and care need to be assessed carefully based on long-term projections of changes in basic features of the elderly population. While declining marriages are usually considered as challenges associated with young men and women, increasing non-marriage among the elderly will also pose serious challenges to the society.

Keywords: multistate life tables, marital status, population projections, increasing non-marriage