



KRIHS Policy Brief

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Changes in the space structure of national land and challenges, in the era of low birth rate and population aging

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1> Population reduction and demographic changes due to low fertility rate and population aging brought on changes in national land space.

2> Over the last 40 years, population has increased in the capital area, metropolitan cities and surrounding areas, while most towns and villages in provinces saw population reduction, whereby demographic polarization deteriorated between central and peripheral areas.

* The ratio of Seoul and metropolitan cities to national total has increased from 39.5% in 1975 to 44.9% in 2015, and that of the capital area went up from 31.5% to 49.5% during the same period.

3> As population increased in cities and counties adjacent to the capital area, the boundary of the capital area has expanded.

4> Large cities grew into metropolitan areas as their population moved to surrounding areas.

5> Population increased in areas designated as innovative cities and industrial complexes by the government, and their surrounding areas.



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Policy proposals

- ① Establish a network city system to connect large cities and small and medium-sized cities in provinces with surrounding areas, and introduce a broad planning system to set the wide boundary of areas for space planning with flexibility and establish plans accordingly.
- ② Promote compact regional regeneration for the efficient utilization and operation of public facilities and infrastructure in preparation for population reduction in rural areas and small cities in provinces
- ③ Set minimum standards for essential infrastructure in the living environment such as transportation, medical care, education facilities in order to remove blind spots in provision of basic services in declining cities and areas with population reduction