

“Total Population of Japan” is decreasing

The “Total Population of Japan” can be found in population census released by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. The population census is conducted every 5 years. It covers 17 categories such as (i) Name, (ii) Gender, (iii) Year and month of birth, (iv) Marital status, (v) Nationality, (vi) Employment status, (vii) Household type. The population census result is released in order of (1) Preliminary tabulation, (2) Finalized tabulation and (3) Detailed sample tabulation. Meanwhile, finalized tabulation on the total population was released in October 2016, almost 1 year after census was conducted.

Point 1

Total population declined for the first time since the census started **Only Japan’s population declined amongst top 20 populated nations worldwide**

- The “total population of Japan (including foreigners)” as of 1st October 2015, was approx.127.10 million according to the latest population census released in October. Compared to the previous census conducted in 2010, the population decreased by 963,000 (-0.8% or average annual rate of -0.15%). This is the first time population decreased since the census started in year 1920. For the same period, only Japan’s population declined amongst top 20 populated nations in the world.

Point 2

Percentage of 65 years old and over increased to 26.6% **While decrease in younger generation’s population negatively attributed to decline in total population of Japan**

- Percentage of each age group of the “total population of Japan” are (i) the population under 15 years old was 12.6% (previous census:13.2%), (ii) those aged 15 to 64 was 60.7% (ditto: 63.8%), and (iii) those aged 65 years old and over was 26.6% (ditto: 23.0%). Ratio of the population under 15 years old renewed record low and that of aged 65 and over renewed historical high since the census started.
- Main reason of decreasing “total population of Japan” seems to be decline in younger population, while population of active seniors increased due to life-span extension.

In order to stop population decline, it is essential to improve environment for marriage and childbearing

- Percentage of unmarried people, which is deemed to be a reason for declining birthrate, had been significantly increasing since 1980, however, in year 2015 it declined by 0.2% from the previous census to 27.3%. Recent moderate economic growth and employment environment improvement seemed to have led people to consider marriage. Meanwhile, aggregate birth rate of women aged 15 to 49 (total fertility rate) was 1.46, gradually rising from the bottom of 1.26 in year 2005. However, remarkable improvement of birth rate will be difficult to achieve if the ratio of unmarried people remains high. Although various psychological factors influence marriage and childbearing, we believe improvement in current labor conditions and elimination of future uncertainty will be effective. In order to stop decline in population, a source of labor and consumption, it is essential to implement comprehensive countermeasures to the falling birth rate such as (i) marriage encouragement and (ii) improvement in environment to bear and raise children.

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