

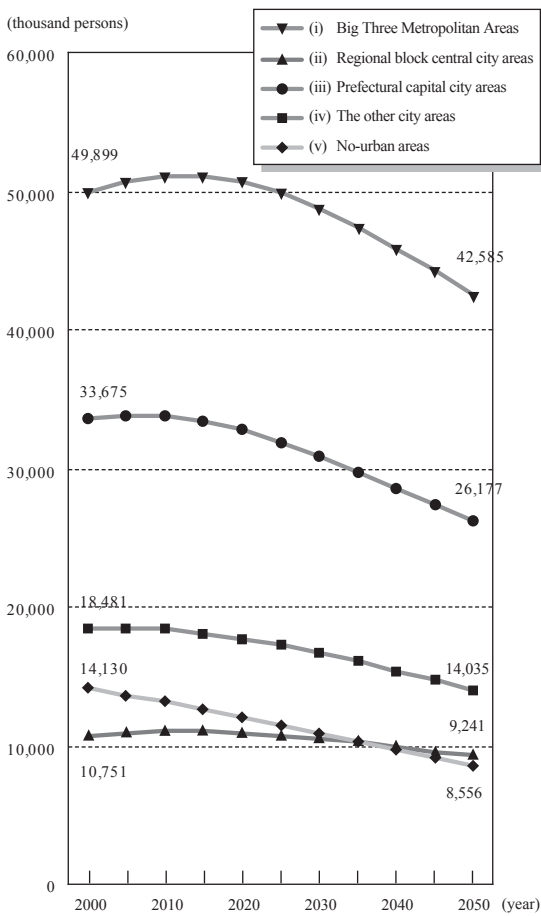
Chapter 3: Relations between East Asia and Regions within Japan

[Changing population structure of Japan]

Changes in Japan's industrial structure once triggered rural-to-urban migration. A large scale of migration to the Big Three Metropolitan Areas occurred during the era of rapid economic growth. After the era such migration is on the wane and Japanese people seem to have settled down geographically.

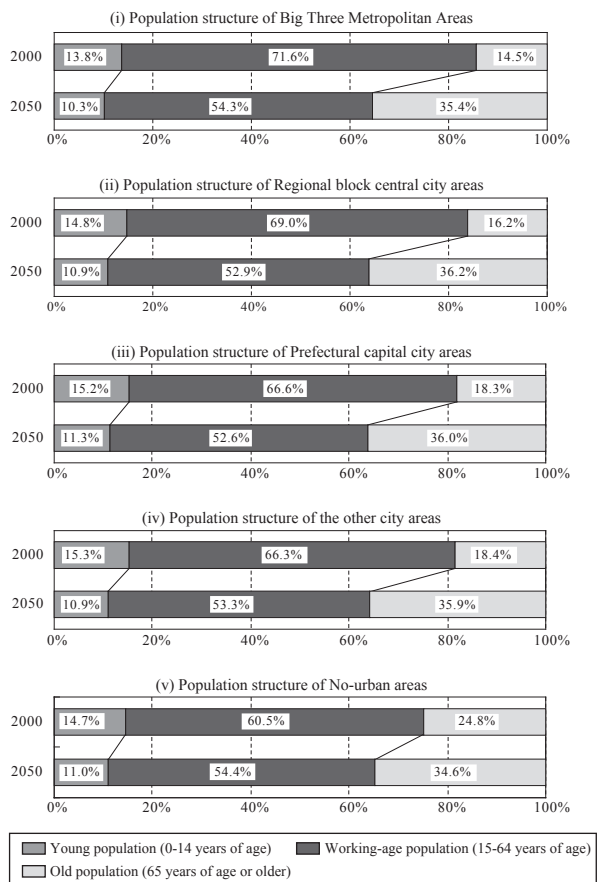
Although the trend of a dwindling birthrate and an aging population is expected to continue, the changing pattern of the population scale and structure varies according to the scale of the urban area in question. For example, The population tends to be aging more rapidly in larger urban areas.

< Expected changes in population by scale of urban area >



Source: MLIT

< Expected changes in population structure by scale of urban area >



Source: MLIT

[Formation of regional blocks in Japan and their relations with East Asia]

○ Formation of regional blocks

As the nation's population is increasingly settling down geographically, large-scale socioeconomic blocks are being formed thanks in part to the development of regional transportation networks. This trend is indicated by the fact that to the total flows of people beyond prefectural borders, the percentage of the flows of people to the prefecture within the regional block is higher than before.