

SPECIAL ACT ON SUPPORT FOR DEPOPULATION REGIONS

Act No. 18877, Jun. 10, 2022

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1 (Purpose)

The purpose of this Act is to improve the settlement conditions of depopulation regions and to promote regional vitality in order to contribute to balanced national development, by establishing the system for autonomous and leading regional development of local governments and customized comprehensive support for regions at the State level to respond to a crisis of depopulation and by prescribing measures for promoting connection and cooperation between local governments and between the State and local governments and special cases, etc. on depopulation regions.

Article 2 (Definitions)

The terms used in this Act are defined as follows:

1. The term "depopulation region" means a region designated pursuant to subparagraph 9 of Article 2 of the Special Act on Balanced National Development;
2. The term "living population" means any of the following persons who reside or stay in a specific region while engaging in livelihood:
 - (a) Persons registered as a resident pursuant to Article 6 (1) of the Resident Registration Act;
 - (b) Persons visiting and staying in a specific region for the purposes of commuting to work or school, tourism, recreation, business, regular exchanges, etc., who meet the requirements prescribed by Presidential Decree;
 - (c) Foreigners who meet the requirements prescribed by Presidential Decree.

Article 3 (Responsibilities of the State and Local Governments)

(1) A City/Do having jurisdiction over a depopulation region or a Si/Gun/Gu (a Gu refers to an autonomous Gu; and a City/Do and a Si/Gun/Gu are referred to as "local government") belonging to a depopulation region shall promote the specialized development suitable for the conditions and characteristics of depopulation regions, by formulating region-driven Si/Gun/Gu master plans and

implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 6 and City/Do master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 7 and by promoting policy measures therefor.

(2) In order to enhance the population vitality in depopulation regions and to achieve sustainable development, the State shall secure necessary budget based on inter-ministerial connection and shall formulate and promote a comprehensive support plan and policy measures.

(3) A local government shall promote connection and cooperation for the provision of resident services, development of the local economy, etc. beyond administrative districts, in order to facilitate the implementation of Si/Gun/Gu master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 6 and City/Do master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 7.

(4) The State shall make necessary efforts, such as establishing a system for cooperation with local governments and the private sector, to efficiently conduct policy measures under the national master plan for responding to depopulation regions.

Article 4 (Relationship Other Statutes)

(1) With respect to special cases on support for and regulations on depopulation regions, this Act shall prevail over other statutes: Provided, That where other statutes have provisions more relaxed than special cases on restrictions under this Act, such statutes shall apply.

(2) The Si/Gun/Gu master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 6, the City/Do master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 7, and the national master plan and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 8 shall be in harmony with the following plans:

1. A five-year balanced national development plan under Article 4 of the Special Act on Balanced National Development;
2. A master plan for the improvement of quality of life of farmers and fishers and for the regional development of agricultural and fishing villages under Article 5 of the Special Act on Quality Improvement of Life of Farmers and Fishers and Development Promotion of Agricultural and Fishing Villages;
3. A basic plan on low birth rates in an aging society under Article 20 of the Framework Act on Low Birthrate in an Aging Society;
4. A regional development plan under Article 7 of the Regional Development Assistance Act;
5. A comprehensive national land plan under Article 6 of the Framework Act on the National Land;
6. A metropolitan plan under Article 11 of the National Land Planning and Utilization Act and an urban or Gun master plan under Article 18 of that Act;
7. A basic plan for the development of fishing villages and fishery harbors under Article 4 of the Fishing Villages and Fishery Harbors Act.

CHAPTER II FORMULATION OF REGION-DRIVEN PLANS FOR RESPONDING TO DEPOPULATION REGIONS

Article 5 (Principles of Formulation of Plans)

(1) The City/Do master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 7 shall be formulated based on the Si/Gun/Gu master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 6, and the national master plan and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 8 shall be formulated based on the City/Do master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 7.

(2) A local government shall determine the tasks to be mainly promoted and the priority thereof when formulating Si/Gun/Gu master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 6 and City/Do master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 7, and shall sufficient participation and the private sector, such as local residents and experts.

(3) A local government shall endeavor to and stably secure the financial resources necessary for the implementation of Si/Gun/Gu master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 6 and City/Do master plans and implementation plans for responding to depopulation regions under Article 7.

Article 6 (Si/Gun/Gu Master Plans and Implementation Plans for Responding to Depopulation Regions)

(1) The head of a Si/Gun/Gu (the head of a Gu refers to the head of an autonomous Gu; hereinafter the same shall apply) in a depopulation region shall formulate a five-year Si/Gun/Gu master plan for responding to depopulation regions (hereinafter referred to as "Si/Gun/Gu master plan"), in consultation with the Mayor/Do Governor.

(2) A Si/Gun/Gu master plan shall be formulated in consideration of the following matters:

1. Matters regarding the increase or decrease of population, population structure, changes in population movement, etc. in the relevant region;
2. Basic concepts and strategies for responding to depopulation in a Si/Gun/Gu, which reflect the regional characteristics;
3. Matters regarding key tasks to be preferentially promoted according to a Si/Gun/Gu strategy;
4. Measures to connect with financial support, such as financial support provided by a City/Do and projects subsidized by the National Treasury;
5. Matters regarding agreements concluded between the State and local governments under Article 10;
6. Matters regarding the promotion of connection and cooperation in the living zones under Article 11;

7. Matters regarding the expansion of the living population of a Si/Gun/Gu under Article 15;
 8. Matters regarding the calculation of financial resources necessary for the implementation of a Si/Gun/Gu master plan and an annual plan for securing such financial resources;
 9. Other matters necessary for responding to a crisis of depopulation in a Si/Gun/Gu.
- (3) Where the head of a Si/Gun/Gu intends to formulate or modify a Si/Gun/Gu master plan, he or she shall hear the opinions of residents and refer it to a Si/Gun/Gu committee for responding to depopulation regions under Article 9 for deliberation: Provided, That the same shall not apply to modification of minor matters prescribed by Presidential Decree.
- (4) The head of a Si/Gun/Gu shall notify the competent Mayor/Do Governor of a Si/Gun/Gu master plan formulated pursuant to paragraph (1).
- (5) The head of a Si/Gun/Gu shall formulate and implement an annual implementation plan to implement a Si/Gun/Gu master plan.
- (6) Where the head of a Si/Gun/Gu formulates an annual implementation plan under paragraph (5), paragraph (3) shall apply mutatis mutandis to the procedures therefor.
- (7) Except as provided in paragraphs (1) through (6), matters necessary for the procedures, etc. for formulating Si/Gun/Gu master plans and implementation plans shall be prescribed by Presidential Decree.

Article 7 (City/Do Master Plans and Implementation Plans for Responding to Depopulation Regions)

- (1) A Mayor/Do Governor having jurisdiction over a depopulation region shall formulate a five-year City/Do master plan for responding to depopulation regions (hereinafter referred to as "City/Do master plan"), in consultation with the head of a Si/Gun/Gu in the depopulation region and the head of the relevant central administrative agency.
- (2) A City/Do master plan shall be formulated in consideration of the following matters:
1. Matters regarding the increase or decrease of population, population structure, changes in population movement, etc. in a City/Do;
 2. Basic concepts and strategies for providing support for depopulation regions in a City/Do;
 3. Matters regarding the efficient connection and coordination between Si/Gun/Gu master plans in the competent depopulation regions;
 4. Matters regarding agreements concluded between the State and local governments under Article 10 and measures for mutual cooperation between local governments (referring to a local government under Article 2 of the Local Autonomy Act) beyond the boundaries of Cities/Dos;
 5. Matters regarding support for connection and cooperation in the living zones between the competent Sis/Guns/Gus under Article 11;
 6. Matters regarding the expansion of the living population of a City/Do under Article 15;
 7. Matters regarding the calculation of financial resources necessary for the implementation of a City/Do master plan and the annual securement of such financial resources;

8. Other matters necessary for responding to a crisis of depopulation in a City/Do.
- (3) Where the Mayor/Do Governor intends to formulate or modify a City/Do master plan, he or she shall hear the opinions of residents and refer it to a City/Do committee for responding to depopulation regions under Article 9 for deliberation: Provided, That the same shall not apply to modification of minor matters prescribed by Presidential Decree.
- (4) The Mayor/Do Governor shall notify the Minister of the Interior and Safety of a City/Do master plan formulated pursuant to paragraph (1).
- (5) The Mayor/Do Governor shall formulate and implement an annual implementation plan to implement a City/Do master plan.
- (6) Where the Mayor/Do Governor formulates an annual implementation plan under paragraph (5), paragraph (3) shall apply mutatis mutandis to the procedures therefor.
- (7) Except as provided in paragraphs (1) through (6), matters necessary for the procedures, etc. for formulating City/Do master plans and implementation plans shall be prescribed by Presidential Decree.

Article 8 (National Master Plan and Implementation Plans for Responding to Depopulation Regions)

- (1) The Minister of the Interior and Safety shall formulate and implement the national master plan for responding to depopulation regions (hereinafter referred to as "national master plan") every five years, in order to provide support for depopulation regions and for the formulation and promotion of a City/Do master plan and a Si/Gun/Gu master plan.
- (2) The national master plan shall include the following matters:
1. Basic concepts and strategies for providing support for depopulation regions;
 2. Matters regarding the provision of support for a City/Do master plan and a Si/Gun/Gu master plan;
 3. Matters regarding customized support policy measures and special cases for depopulation regions;
 4. Matters regarding the calculation and procurement of financial resources necessary for the promotion of the national master plan and annual allocation thereof;
 5. Matters regarding the provision of support for depopulation regions and performance evaluation thereof;
 6. Other matters necessary for providing support for depopulation regions.
- (3) Where the Minister of the Interior and Safety intends to formulate or modify the national master plan under paragraph (1), he or she shall have consultation with the head of the relevant central administrative agency and refer it to the Presidential Committee for Balanced National Development under Article 22 of the Special Act on Balanced National Development for deliberation: Provided, That the same shall not apply to modification of minor matters prescribed by Presidential Decree.
- (4) The Minister of the Interior and Safety shall notify the heads of the relevant central administrative agencies and the heads of local governments of the national master plan formulated or modified pursuant to paragraphs (1) through (3).

(5) The Minister of the Interior and Safety shall formulate an annual implementation plan to implement the national master plan.

(6) Where the Minister of the Interior and Safety formulates an annual implementation plan pursuant to paragraph (5), paragraph (3) shall apply mutatis mutandis to the procedures therefor.

(7) Except as provided in paragraphs (1) through (6), matters necessary for the procedures, etc. for formulating the national master plan and implementation plans shall be prescribed by Presidential Decree.

Article 9 (Establishment of Si/Gun/Gu and City/Do Committees for Responding to Depopulation Regions)

(1) A Si/Gun/Gu committee for responding to depopulation regions (hereinafter referred to as "Si/Gun/Gu committee") may be established under the jurisdiction of the head of a Si/Gun/Gu, and a City/Do committee for responding to depopulation regions (hereinafter referred to as "City/Do committee") may be established under the jurisdiction of the Mayor/Do Governor, as prescribed by municipal ordinance, in order to deliberate on the following matters regarding response to a crisis of depopulation regions:

1. Formulation and modification of Si/Gun/Gu master plans and implementation plans under Article 6 and City/Do master plans and implementation plans under Article 7;
2. Matters regarding the inspection and evaluation of the implementation results of Si/Gun/Gu master plans and implementation plans and City/Do master plans and implementation plans under Article 32;
3. Matters regarding the promotion of cooperation between local governments and between the State and local governments to respond to a crisis of depopulation;
4. Research and consulting services on policy measures for the promotion of population inflow and the prevention of population outflow;
5. Other activities to respond to a crisis of depopulation, which are prescribed by municipal ordinance.

(2) The members of a Si/Gun/Gu committee and a City/Do committee shall be appointed or commissioned by the head of a local government from among the following persons who have relevant expertise, regional representativeness, and political neutrality, and the chairperson shall be elected among and by members:

1. Persons recommended by the head of a local government or the chairperson of a local council;
2. Persons recommended by universities or colleges, research institutes, enterprises, public institutions, and non-profit organizations;
3. Other persons who have expertise and experience necessary for responding to depopulation.

(3) A City/Do and a Si/Gun/Gu may require a City/Do regional innovation council and a Si/Gun/Gu regional innovation council under Articles 28 and 29 of the Special Act on Balanced National Development or other committees of a similar nature to perform the functions of a City/Do committee and a Si/Gun/Gu committee, as prescribed by municipal ordinance.

(4) Except as provided in paragraphs (1) through (3), matters necessary for the organization and operation of a Si/Gun/Gu committee and a City/Do committee shall be prescribed by municipal ordinance.

CHAPTER III STRENGTHENING COOPERATION BETWEEN THE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Article 10 (Conclusion of Agreement between the State and Local Governments)

- (1) The State and local governments may conclude a regional development investment agreement, etc. under the Special Act on Balanced National Development (hereinafter referred to as "agreement"), where they jointly promote policy measures or the State's support is required to facilitate the implementation of the national master plan, a City/Do master plan, or a Si/Gun/Gu master plan.
- (2) In order to facilitate the procedures for concluding an agreement under paragraph (1), the Mayor/Do Governor may conclude an agreement with the State, putting together the plans of the competent Si/Gun/Gu.
- (3) The State and local governments shall make efforts, such as stable setting of the budget and improvement of regulations, in order to promote the plans under the agreement.
- (4) Except as provided in paragraphs (1) through (3), matters necessary for the scope and conclusion of an agreement, the provision of support, etc. shall be prescribed by Presidential Decree.

Article 11 (Promotion of Connection and Cooperation in Living Zones)

- (1) A local government may set a zone for improvement, etc. of the living convenience of residents in depopulation regions (hereinafter referred to as "living zone") after consultation with other local governments (referring to local governments under Article 2 of the Local Autonomy Act).
- (2) A local government may organize a special-purpose local government under Article 2 (3) of the Local Autonomy Act, an administrative consultative council under Article 169 of that Act, or a local government association, etc. under Article 176 of that Act after consultation with other local governments (referring to local governments under Article 2 of the Local Autonomy Act) for improvement, etc. of the living convenience of residents in depopulation regions.
- (3) The Minister of the Interior and Safety and the Mayor/Do Governor may make recommendations and provide support to invigorate the organization for a living zone under paragraph (1).
- (4) A local government which has set a living zone may prepare measures for connection and cooperation, such as joint use of facilities and public services in each living zone, and may reflect such measures in a City/Do master plan and a Si/Gun/Gu master plan.
- (5) The State may preferentially support the establishment of facilities and the operation of services, such as jobs, education, medical services, environment, welfare, culture, and transportation, in order to promote projects for connection and cooperation by local governments that have set the living zones.

Article 12 (Facilitation of Exchange and Cooperation with Cities)

The State and local governments may preferentially promote and support the following policy measures in order to facilitate smooth exchange between cities and agricultural and fishing villages within a depopulation region:

1. Projects and programs to facilitate exchange between cities and agricultural and fishing villages;
2. Support for experiential and recreational activities in agricultural and fishing villages, and activities for local resource surveys;
3. Other various activities for exchange between cities and agricultural and fishing villages within a depopulation region.

CHAPTER IV CUSTOMOIZED SUPPORT REFLECTING REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Article 13 (Principles of the State's Support)

(1) The State shall comprehensively support the relevant policies for local governments based on cooperation and connection among the central administrative agencies.

(2) In promoting the competent policies or projects, a central administrative agency shall prepare support measures, such as preferentially allocating part of a project for public invitation to depopulation regions or designing customized projects for depopulation regions, in order to give preferential consideration to such depopulation regions.

(3) The State may provide preferential or differential support to depopulation regions according to the level of depopulation crisis.

Article 14 (Support for Local Subsidies)

The Minister of the Interior and Safety may specially grant local subsidies under the Local Subsidy Act to depopulation regions, as prescribed by Presidential Decree.

Article 15 (Support for Expansion of Living Population)

(1) The State and local governments may formulate and implement support policy measures, etc. necessary to expand the living population in depopulation regions.

(2) A local government may apply the policy measures prescribed in this Act to the living population, as prescribed by municipal ordinance.

Article 16 (Strengthening Capabilities of Residents and Regions)

(1) The State and local governments may promote policy measures on the following matters to strengthen the capabilities of local residents and communities, in consideration of regional conditions and characteristics:

1. Matters regarding the vitalization of industry-academia-research cooperation;
 2. Matters regarding the fostering of professional human resources to strengthen the capabilities of local communities;
 3. Matters regarding the facilitation of exchange and cooperation among universities or colleges, enterprises, research institutes, non-profit organizations, local governments, etc.;
 4. Other matters necessary to strengthen the capabilities of local communities.
- (2) A local government may provide administrative and financial support to organizations, corporations, etc., including social enterprises, cooperatives, and community companies, which promote policy measures under paragraph (1).
- (3) In providing support under paragraph (2), a local government may select and support entities eligible for preferential support, taking into account the level of participation of residents in the relevant region.

Article 17 (Support for Settlement of Youth and Middle-Aged)

- (1) In order to increase jobs for youths, middle-aged persons, etc. in depopulation regions and facilitate their settlement, the State and local governments may preferentially support the following projects:
1. A project for providing a specific amount of wages for a specific period when a person is employed in a place of business located in a depopulation region or for providing information for job placement;
 2. A project for providing expenses, technologies, and consulting services necessary for business start-ups when a person starts up a new business in a depopulation region;
 3. A project for providing houses for a specific period or expenses incurred in repairing or leasing houses when a person resides in a depopulation region;
 4. A project for supporting employment and settlement for persons with disabilities, persons of distinguished service to the State, residents escaping from North Korea, etc. in a depopulation region;
 5. Other projects deemed necessary to support the settlement of youths, middle-aged persons, etc. in a depopulation region.
- (2) The State may provide local governments with financial support necessary to conduct the projects referred to in the subparagraphs of paragraph (1) and may relax regulations thereon.

Article 18 (Improvement of Living Environment and Landscape)

- (1) The State and local governments may preferentially support the installation of welfare and convenience facilities, etc. including welfare facilities for senior citizens, in order to improve the living environment in a depopulation region.
- (2) The State and local governments may support the installation and use of facilities for preventing disasters, catastrophes, crimes, etc. in a depopulation region.
- (3) The State and local governments may preferentially support policy measures for improving the landscape and environment of a depopulation region.

Article 19 (Utilization of Information and Communications Technology)

- (1) The State and local governments shall endeavor to provide a depopulation region with administrative services based on information and communications technology related to health, safety, and convenience.
- (2) The State and local governments may preferentially support projects, such as digital conversion, proliferation of smart cities, and IoT, to provide support for information-poor groups in a depopulation region.

Article 20 (Connection with Local Extinction Response Fund)

When the head of a local government formulates a City/Do master plan or a Si/Gun/Gu master plan, he or she shall ensure that such plan is connected to an investment plan for local extinction response, etc. which utilizes subsidies granted from the local extinction response funds under the Framework Act on the Management of Local Government Funds.

CHAPTER V SPECIAL CASES CONCERNING DEPOPULATION REGIONS

Article 21 (Expansion of Child Care Infrastructure)

- (1) The State and local governments may preferentially establish national or public child care centers in a depopulation region pursuant to Article 12 of the Child Care Act.
- (2) The State and local governments may convert a private child care center or home-based child care center into a national or public child care center in a depopulation region by means of contributed acceptance or gratuitous lease, as determined by the Minister of Health and Welfare.
- (3) The State and local governments may provide administrative and financial support to improve the environment of child care centers located in a depopulation region, as determined by the Minister of Health and Welfare.

Article 22 (Expansion of Educational Infrastructure)

- (1) The superintendent of education may integrate and operate facilities, equipment, teachers, etc. of kindergartens defined in subparagraph 2 of Article 2 of the Early Childhood Education Act (hereinafter referred to as "kindergarten") and schools defined in Article 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (hereinafter referred to as "school") in a depopulation region, as prescribed by Presidential Decree. In such cases, the State and local governments may subsidize expenses necessary to secure the right to education of young children and students.
- (2) Where the superintendent of education intends to close a public kindergarten prescribed in subparagraph 2 of Article 7 of the Early Childhood Education and a public school prescribed in subparagraph 2 of Article 3 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or any branch thereof, among

public kindergartens and schools in a depopulation region, he or she may hear opinions of the head of the relevant Si/Gun/Gu.

(3) Notwithstanding Article 11 (8) of the Local Education Subsidy Act, the head of a Si/Gun/Gu in a depopulation region may subsidize education expenses incurred in kindergartens and schools under his or her jurisdiction.

(4) The Minister of Education may grant subsidies under the Local Education Subsidy Act to improve the educational conditions and to operate the curricula of kindergartens and schools within a depopulation region, as prescribed by Presidential Decree.

(5) A school in a depopulation region may operate subjects and special or aptitude programs (including programs focusing on child care activities, in cases of an elementary school) other than the regular curricula, and a kindergarten may operate after school programs under subparagraph 6 of Article 2 of the Early Childhood Education Act. In such cases, the superintendent of education may preferentially provide administrative and financial support.

(6) Notwithstanding Article 4 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the superintendent of education may determine special cases concerning the standards for establishment of schools and authorization thereof, with respect to schools within a depopulation region (excluding private schools under subparagraph 3 of Article 3 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act), as prescribed by Presidential Decree.

(7) The Minister of Education and the heads of local governments may establish and promote a lifelong education project under subparagraph 4 of Article 2 of the Lifelong Education Act in a depopulation region and may provide administrative and financial support necessary therefor, with regard to the following matters:

1. Creation of learning-based jobs;
2. Connection between employment and welfare;
3. Pending issues of the relevant region.

(8) The State and local governments shall have educational facilities (referring to educational facilities under subparagraph 1 of Article 2 of the Act on the Safety and Maintenance of Educational Facilities), such as universities or colleges, properly established and attracted in a depopulation region.

(9) The State and local governments may preferentially provide administrative or financial support to a person who intends to establish educational facilities, such as universities or colleges, in a depopulation region pursuant to paragraph (8) or to relocate educational facilities such as universities or colleges, which are established in an area outside a depopulation region, into the depopulation region.

(10) The State and local governments may provide local universities or colleges prescribed in subparagraph 1 of Article 2 of the Act on the Development of Local Universities and Colleges and Regional Human Resources within a depopulation region (hereinafter referred to as "local university or college") with support greater than support prescribed in Article 16 of that Act.

(11) Where the State and local governments provide support prescribed in Articles 11 through 14 of the Act on the Development of Local Universities and Colleges and Regional Human Resources, to students or graduates of local universities or colleges located in a depopulation region among human resources for balanced regional development defined in subparagraph 2 of Article 2 of that Act, they shall endeavor to strengthen the relevant support.

(12) Where the Minister of Education formulates a master plan for financial support for higher education and a support plan therefor under Article 7-2 (1) of the Higher Education Act, he or she shall include a plan for support or subsidization for universities or colleges located in a depopulation region.

Article 23 (Expansion of Medical Infrastructure)

(1) In order to improve the health of residents in a depopulation region and to prevent and treat chronic illnesses of senior citizens, the State and local governments may perform a project to visit the place of residence of persons, etc. who have difficulty in directly using medical institutions to provide medical treatment, etc., and may provide necessary administrative and financial support.

(2) The State and local governments may conclude business agreements with medical institutions under Article 3 of the Medical Service Act (hereinafter referred to as "medical institution") in order to perform the project under paragraph (1).

(3) The State and local governments shall establish and implement policy measures necessary to establish medical institutions and to secure medical personnel (referring to medical personnel defined in Article 2 of the Medical Service Act) in order to improve the conditions of health and medical services in a depopulation region, and shall endeavor to strengthen cooperation among regional healthcare institutions (referring to a regional healthcare institution defined in subparagraph 1 of Article 2 of the Regional Public Health Act).

(4) The State and local governments may designate medical institutions capable of providing essential medical services by satisfying the standards set by the State or local governments, such as medical facilities, human resources, and quality of medical services, to ensure the performance of essential medical services directly linked to lives, such as emergency, cardiovascular, or cerebrovascular cases, and may subsidize or support expenses incurred in expanding medical facilities and medical personnel and improving the quality of medical services.

(5) The Mayor/Do Governor may designate a central medical institution for an area lacking medical services, among the medical institutions located in a depopulation region which is an area lacking medical services under the Public Health and Medical Services Act, and may preferentially provide support therefor.

Article 24 (Expansion of Residential and Transportation Infrastructure)

(1) The State and local governments may preferentially supply public rental housing to persons who relocate to depopulation regions, as prescribed by the Special Act on Public Housing.

(2) In order to improve the living conditions of residents residing in a depopulation region, the State and local governments may partially subsidize expenses incurred in house construction, remodeling, repair, etc. for the improvement of old houses.

(3) Notwithstanding the Public Property and Commodity Management Act, local governments may preferentially sell public land to persons who relocate from the Seoul Metropolitan area (excluding a depopulation region) to a depopulation region for residential purposes, as prescribed by Presidential Decree.

(4) The State and local governments may preferentially support the establishment, maintenance, and repair of infrastructure defined in subparagraph 1 of Article 2 of the Act on Public-Private Partnerships in Infrastructure in a depopulation region.

(5) The State and local governments may fully or partially subsidize freight charges and fees for residents of islands and their vehicles that use coastal passenger ships under the Marine Transportation Act, within the budget, in order to improve the transportation convenience for islands within a depopulation region.

(6) The State and local governments may provide transportation services suitable for the relevant region for the transportation convenience of residents in a depopulation region who are unable to use public transportation or vulnerable public transportation.

Article 25 (Expansion of Cultural Infrastructure)

(1) In a depopulation region, a small library (referring to a library under Article 4 (2) 1 (a) of the Libraries Act) may be established in a detached house prescribed in Article 2 (2) 1 of the Building Act.

(2) Notwithstanding Articles 6 and 16 of the Museum and Art Gallery Support Act, the operation, etc. of curators may be otherwise prescribed by Presidential Decree, with respect to persons who establish and operate a museum or art gallery in a depopulation region.

(3) The State and local governments may provide necessary administrative and financial support to a person who intends to install cultural, tourism, or sports facilities in a depopulation region or to relocate facilities, which are installed in an area outside a depopulation region, to a depopulation region, as prescribed by Presidential Decree.

(4) The State and local governments shall endeavor to secure an opportunity for enjoyment of culture for persons residing in a depopulation region, and may directly provide an opportunity for enjoyment of culture through cultural performances on tour, exhibitions, etc. or partially subsidize expenses incurred in promoting enjoyment of culture.

(5) In order to invigorate cultural, artistic, or tourism projects in a depopulation region, the Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism may provide necessary financial support to local governments or the implementers of the relevant projects.

Article 26 (Special Cases concerning the Immigration Act)

(1) Upon request from the head of a local government having jurisdiction over a depopulation region, the Minister of Justice may otherwise determine the requirements for procedures for issuance of visas, change of the status of stay, extension of the period of stay, etc., with respect to persons who have the status of stay prescribed by Presidential Decree, from among foreigners who are staying or intend to stay in a depopulation region, notwithstanding Articles 8 and 10 of the Immigration Act.

(2) Upon request from the head of a local government having jurisdiction over a depopulation region, the Minister of Justice shall devise policy measures relating to the following matters:

1. Guarantee of accessibility to treat the affairs of civil petitions under the Immigration Act, the Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans, and the Nationality Act;
2. Matters regarding the provision of social integration education, support for social adaptation, improvement of mutual understanding of Korean nationals and foreigners, etc. under the Immigration Act, the Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans, and the Framework Act on Treatment of Foreigners Residing in the Republic of Korea;
3. Other matters necessary for social integration of foreigners staying in a depopulation region.

Article 27 (Maintenance and Utilization of Dilapidated and Idle Facilities)

(1) The State and local governments shall periodically inspect the actual conditions of management, including the status of dilapidated and idle facilities in a depopulation region.

(2) A local government shall prepare support and policy measures necessary to promote the combined utilization of dilapidated and idle facilities, and may expand the scope of utilization thereof to promote the utilization of such dilapidated and idle facilities. In such cases, the scope of and procedures for utilizing dilapidated and idle facilities shall be prescribed by ordinance of a local government.

Article 28 (Support for Industrial Complex)

In order to create a specialized industrial complex linked to local industries and improve the vitality of industrial complexes through the influx of employees, the State and local governments may provide an industrial complex within a depopulation region with administrative and financial support regarding the following matters:

1. Support for creating industrial complexes, such as expenses and infrastructure, under Articles 28 and 29 of the Industrial Sites and Development Act;
2. Support for reducing or exempting rental charges for industrial sites that a person falling under Article 16 (1) 1 or 2 of the Industrial Sites and Development Act leases to small or medium enterprises;
3. Support for developing markets of occupant enterprises, etc. in industrial complexes;
4. Support for improving the living conditions of employees;
5. Support for increasing employment of employees for occupant enterprises, etc. in industrial complexes.

CHAPTER VI SURVEY, SUPPORT, AND MANAGEMENT FOR DEPOPULATION REGIONS

Article 29 (Fact-Finding Surveys)

(1) If necessary to formulate or modify the national master plan, a City/Do master plan, or a Si/Gun/Gu master plan, the Minister of the Interior and Safety and the head of a local government may survey the population and economic, social and cultural conditions of the relevant region, and other matters prescribed by Presidential Decree.

(2) The Minister of the Interior and Safety and the head of a local government may request the head of a relevant central administrative agency, the head of a public institution under Article 4 of the Act on the Management of Public Institutions, and the head of any other agency prescribed by Presidential Decree to submit data necessary to conduct a fact-finding survey under paragraph (1). In such cases, the head of an agency upon receipt of a request shall comply therewith, unless there is a compelling reason not to do so.

(3) If necessary to efficiently conduct a fact-finding survey, the Minister of the Interior and Safety and the head of a local government may entrust the surveys under paragraph (1) to a center for responding to depopulation regions under Article 30 or a specialized institution.

(4) The Minister of the Interior and Safety and the head of a local government may share the results of surveys under paragraphs (1) through (3) with the heads of the relevant central administrative agencies and the heads of other local governments.

Article 30 (Establishment and Operation of Centers for Responding to Depopulation Regions)

(1) The Minister of the Interior and Safety may require public institutions having expertise prescribed by Presidential Decree to establish and operate a center for responding to depopulation regions.

(2) Matters necessary for the organization, operation, etc. of a center for responding to depopulation regions shall be prescribed by Presidential Decree.

Article 31 (Establishment and Operation of Comprehensive Information System)

(1) The State shall endeavor to provide information necessary for local governments to promote policy measures by comprehensively managing information on policies and projects related to depopulation regions of the central administrative agencies, etc.

(2) The Minister of the Interior and Safety may establish and operate a comprehensive information system to provide information under paragraph (1).

Article 32 (Inspection and Evaluation of Implementation of Policies)

(1) In order to ensure the sustainable development of depopulation regions, the State and local governments shall inspect the implementation results of the national master plan and implementation

plans, City/Do master plans and implementation plans, Si/Gun/Gu master plans and implementation plans, and shall evaluate performance records thereof.

(2) The Minister of the Interior and Safety shall submit a performance report including the outcomes of inspection and evaluation of the implementation results under paragraph (1) to the Presidential Committee for Balanced National Development under Article 22 of the Special Act on Balanced National Development.

(3) The head of a local government shall submit a performance report including the outcomes of inspection and evaluation of the implementation results under paragraph (1) to a City/Do committee under Article 9. In such cases, where the head of a local government is the head of a Si/Gun/Gu, he or she shall submit the report through the Mayor/Do Governor.

(4) The Minister of the Interior and Safety and the head of a local government shall reflect the outcomes of inspection and evaluation conducted under paragraph (1), in the following cases:

1. Where the policy measures for supporting depopulation regions are promoted;
2. Where the national master plan, a City/Do master plan, or a Si/Gun/Gu master plan is formulated or modified.

(5) If necessary for the inspection and evaluation under paragraph (1), the Minister of the Interior and Safety may request the relevant agencies, etc. to provide data. In such cases, the relevant agency upon receipt of a request shall comply therewith, unless there is good cause.

Article 33 (Discovery and Dissemination of Exemplary Cases)

(1) The Minister of the Interior and Safety shall endeavor to continuously discover and disseminate the exemplary cases of response to depopulation by local governments, public institutions, etc.

(2) The Minister of the Interior and Safety may implement the following projects each year to promote the matters prescribed in paragraph (1):

1. Discovery, awarding, and publicity of the exemplary cases of response to depopulation regions;
2. Holding a forum or seminar for the dissemination of exemplary cases of response to depopulation regions;
3. Other support, etc. for projects necessary for responding to depopulation regions.

(3) The State may provide financial incentives within the budget to local governments that show the outstanding results in the discovery of exemplary cases.

Article 34 (Support for Prevention and Management of Depopulation)

(1) The Mayor/Do Governor or the head of a Si/Gun/Gu having jurisdiction over a region that is not designated as a depopulation region may take necessary measures to preemptively respond to a crisis of depopulation.

(2) Where the Mayor/Do Governor or the head of a Si/Gun/Gu implements necessary measures, such as conducting a fact-finding survey and formulating a plan, to respond to a crisis of depopulation pursuant to

paragraph (1), the Minister of the Interior and Safety may provide administrative and financial support.

ADDENDA <Act No. 18877, Jun. 10, 2022>

Article 1 (Enforcement Date)

This Act shall enter into force on January 1, 2003.

Article 2 (Effective Period)

@Article 20 shall remain effective until December 31, 2031 pursuant to the Framework Act on the Management of Local Government Funds.

Article 3 Deleted.

Last updated : 2023-08-30

