Newcastle University | Centre for Landscape

The Spatial MBTI Landscape Approach to De-population Mitigation

- **With South Korea facing a population crisis**, the government, primarily under the leadership of the Ministry of the Interior and Safety, has launched initiatives to support regions.
- In November 2021, the Ministry of the Interior and Safety **designated 89 areas as population decline areas based on the Population Decline Index** for focused policy intervention.
- In December 2021, Articles 22 through 29 were newly established in the **"Local Autonomy Finance Management Act", introducing the "Fund to Respond to Local Extinction"** to be supported by the central government for the years 2022 to 2023.
- However, existing spatial strategies **face challenges in providing strategic responses tailored to the specific characteristics of each region,** mainly due to limitations in objective, specialised analysis of regional issues, insufficient spatial planning guidelines, and underdeveloped support systems, making it difficult to implement effective, sustainable solutions.

This research introduces **a regional diagnostic funding system** to better understand and address depopulation challenges. **By analysing demographic trends, spatial characteristics, and economic factors,** the research proposes customised policy solutions that reflect each region's unique needs

Policy Recommendation

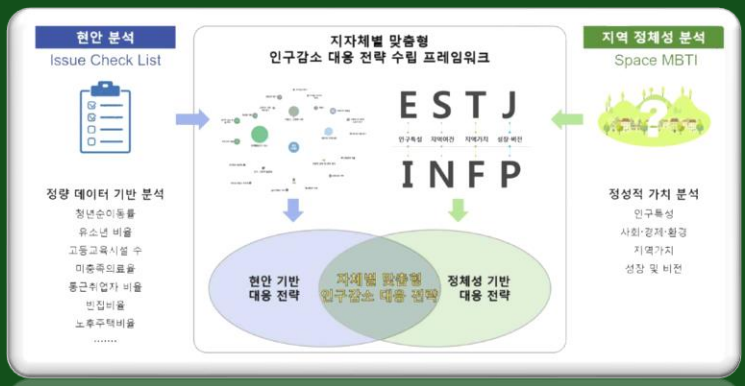
Core Challenges Identified: The primary issue lies in the deterioration of the physical environment, which negatively impacts infrastructure and service quality.

Complex Interdependencies: Population decline areas face intertwined human and spatial challenges, highlighting the need for strategic policies that foster economic activity and attract residents.

Regional Insights: The study underscores the importance of understanding local conditions, leveraging synergies with neighbouring areas, and identifying regional distinctiveness to inform policy decisions.

Policy Implications: The findings inform subsidy investment strategies for the Fund to Respond to Local Extinction, offering targeted policy recommendations.

Practical Application: The findings provide local governments with a clear assessment of their strengths, weaknesses, and comparative position, facilitating data-driven decision-making and regional benchmarking.



Source: Park et al., (2023) A Study on a Diagnostic System for Population Decline Areas to Develop Customised Spatial Strategies. Sejong: Architecture & Urban Research Institute.

The Significance of Geography-Based Spatial Policy in Addressing Population Issues

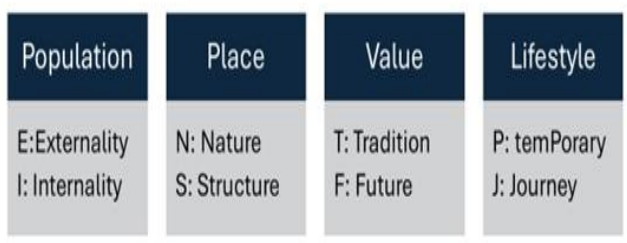
A comprehensive approach integrating demographic, spatial, economic, and social factors offers a more effective strategy for revitalising South Korea's declining rural communities:

- **Population (External & Internal):** Population trends, composition, and demographic characteristics
- **Place (Nature & Structure):** Housing, green spaces, urban infrastructure, education, cultural and welfare facilities, and safety indices
- **Value (Tradition & Future):** Employment, industry, and business environment indices
- **Lifestyle (Temporary & Long-Term):** Quality of life, social services, including healthcare and elderly care

Study Scope: This research examines 89 local government units designated as population decline areas and 15 metropolitan local government units.

Methodology: A mixed-method approach combines quantitative analysis of regional statistics with qualitative insights from expert opinion surveys to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue.

Combining quantitative data analysis with expert insights, this research aims to enhance urban planning, optimise government funding and develop place-based strategies that support long-term regional resilience.

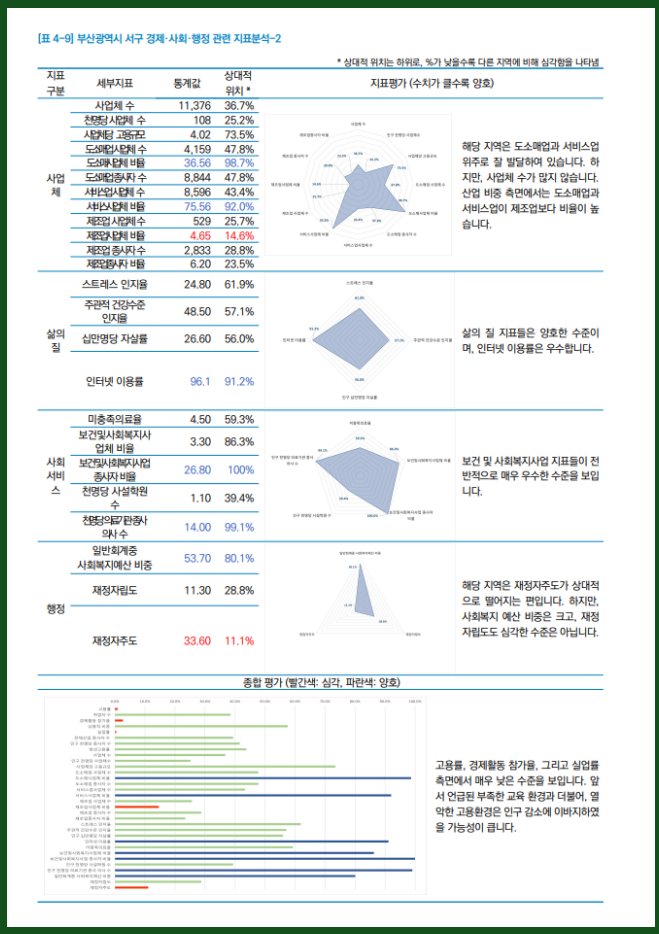


Source: Sung (2025) The MBTI Spatial approach.

The area where the population is shrinking is expected to be able to understand the region in different ways, *using the strengths and weaknesses of the area and what the residents like, by combining the experts' analysis and the numbers to show the changes in the area, based on the 'Regional Characteristics MBTI',* ***to create customised spatial policies (Ministry of the Interior and Safety, 2024).***

Source: Ministry of the Interior and Safety (2024) 'Supporting the Establishment of Customised Policies by the Region with the MBTI'.

The following excerpt is a segment of the analytical report (Park et al., 2023)


[표 4-9] 부산광역시 서구 경제·사회·행정 관련 지표분석-2

* 상대적 위치는 하위로, %가 낮을수록 다른 지역에 비해 심각함을 나타냄

지표 구분	세부지표	통계값	상대적 위치 *	지표평가 (수치가 클수록 양호)
사업체	사업체 수	11,376	36.7%	해당 지역은 도소매업과 서비스업 위주로 잘 발달하여 있습니다. 하지만, 사업체 수가 많지 않습니다. 산업 비중 측면에서는 도소매업과 서비스업이 제조업보다 비율이 높습니다.
	천명당 사업체 수	108	25.2%	
	사업체당 고용규모	4.02	73.5%	
	도소매업체 수	4,159	47.8%	
	도소매업체 비율	36.56	98.7%	
	도소매업종사자 수	8,844	47.8%	
	서비스업체 수	8,596	43.4%	
	서비스업체 비율	75.56	92.0%	
	제조업 사업체 수	529	25.7%	
	제조업 업체 비율	4.65	14.6%	
	제조업 종사자 수	2,833	28.8%	
	제조업종사자 비율	6.20	23.5%	
삶의 질	스트레스 인지율	24.80	61.9%	삶의 질 지표들은 양호한 수준이며, 인터넷 이용률은 우수합니다.
	주관적 건강수준 인지율	48.50	57.1%	
	십만명당 자살률	26.60	56.0%	
	인터넷 이용률	96.1	91.2%	
사회서비스	미충족의료율	4.50	59.3%	보건 및 사회복지사업 지표들이 전반적으로 매우 우수한 수준을 보입니다.
	보건및사회복지사업 업체 비율	3.30	86.3%	
	보건및사회복지사업 종사자 비율	26.80	100%	
	천명당 사설학원 수	1.10	39.4%	
	천명당의료기관종사자 수	14.00	99.1%	
행정	일반회계중 사회복지예산 비중	53.70	80.1%	해당 지역은 재정자주도가 상대적으로 떨어지는 편입니다. 하지만, 사회복지 예산 비중은 크고, 재정자립도도 심각한 수준은 아닙니다.
	재정자립도	11.30	28.8%	
	재정자주도	33.60	11.1%	

종합 평가 (빨간색: 심각, 파란색: 양호)

고용률, 경제활동 참가율, 그리고 실업률 측면에서 매우 낮은 수준을 보입니다. 앞서 언급된 부족한 교육 환경과 더불어, 열악한 고용환경은 인구 감소에 이바지하였을 가능성이 큽니다.

Source: Park et al., (2023) A Study on a Diagnostic System for Population Decline Areas to Develop Customised Spatial Strategies. Sejong: Architecture & Urban Research Institute.

Acknowledgement

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