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# Policy Needs for Social Security in the Process of Citizenization of the Peri-urban Farmers: A Case Study of Hefei City

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**Abstract** We conduct a survey of transformational towns and villages in High-tech Development District, Yaohai District and Shushan District, Hefei City. Using data, we analyze the "sideline effect" and inherent contradiction of transformational cities, research the policy needs for social security and its trend in the citizenization process of the peri-urban farmers. On this basis, we construct the social security policy system that can adapt to the accelerated process of urbanization. Finally, we put forth the following recommendations for the social security policy in the citizenization process of the peri-urban farmers: distinguishing different groups' policy needs for social security; attaching importance to people's dynamic policy needs for social security in urbanization; focusing on the adaptability of social security policy transformation in urbanization; attaching importance to the social psychosocial environment of social security policy transformation in urbanization; achieving the trinity of non-farm conversion, urbanization and citizenization in the process of urbanization; strengthening the government's dominant position in the building of social security policy system.

**Key words** Hefei City, Peri-urban farmers, Citizenization, Social security, Policy needs

## 1 Introduction

In the accelerated process of social transformation and urbanization, the adaptation, transformation and change of social security policy (as an important carrier of livelihood projects), will undoubtedly shoulder more and more important responsibilities and mission. Hefei City in Anhui Province is regarded as one of mark posts of great-leap-forward development in the central regions. Studying people's psychological needs and policy needs for social security in the citizenization process of the peri-urban farmers in Hefei City, to promote effective transformation of security system, is not only related to the stable transformation and healthy development of the region, but also of certain reference value for other similar areas.

The citizenization of farmers under the urban-rural integration should be the "trinity" citizenization of migrant workers, suburban farmers, and village farmers; the citizenization cost of suburban farmers is the lowest. Hefei City is a second-tier city bordering on the coastal areas. With the constantly accelerated pace of reform, Hefei City is in the new strategic highland for the industrial transfer of the "Yangtze River Delta", facing a transition period of great development, great stride and great construction. The building pattern of "Large Hefei" is established. Along with the rapid expansion of urban areas of Hefei, its suburban towns and villages, such as Daxing Town and Cuo Town, also face the transformation of urbanization and expansion of urban construction; the towns and villages after

transformation will inevitably become important functional areas in Hefei City. In the process of urban expansion, it will inevitably encounter some transformation problems, such as weighing of the subjects' interests, the protection of vulnerable groups, and the support system for the transformation of towns and villages. Based on the current transformation of Hefei City, in the context of urbanization, we lay emphasis on the "sideline effect" and inherent contradiction of transformational cities, come straight to the peri-urban farmers' policy needs for social security in citizenization, and put forward recommendations for reference through targeted survey and research.

## 2 Survey methods

The research team came to High-tech Development District, Yaohai District and Shushan District in Hefei City in the period December 2011 to April 2012, to conduct survey and research of the transformation towns and villages in the suburban Daxing Town, Longgang Town, and Cuo Town. 350 questionnaires were distributed, involving construction sites, self-employed households, catering and entertainment industry, of which 150 were about people still living in towns and villages; 100 were about urban residents having lived in the city; 100 were about the migrant workers from suburban towns and villages. 345 questionnaires were called back, and there were 317 valid questionnaires, with total validity rate of 90.6%.

In terms of sample composition, among valid respondents, male sample accounted for 57.73% and female sample accounted for 42.27%; the respondents aged 18 to 39 years old accounted for 39.12%, aged 40 to 59 years old accounted for 33.75%, and aged more than 60 years old accounted for 27.13%; the respondents working in the villages accounted for 65.30%, working in the urban areas accounted for 34.70%

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(Table 1).

**Table 1 The basic information of the survey sample**

Category	Sample composition	Number of people	Proportion//%
Gender composition	Male	183	57.73
	Female	134	42.27
Age composition	18 to 39 years	124	39.12
	40 to 59 years	107	33.75
	More than 60 years	86	27.13
Workplace	Countryside	207	65.30
	City	110	34.70

### 3 Survey results

**3.1 Personal psychological will** In the process of exploring citizenization of the peri-urban farmers, it is necessary to examine the individual mental attitude in the process of citizenization, and the analysis of the personal attitudes is the basis of and foundation of the policy psychological needs. Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents (48.58%) can correctly face new way of life; 18.30% of respondents feel confused; 14.51% of respondents reject and fear new way of life.

**Table 2 Attitude towards new lifestyle**

Attitude towards new lifestyle	Number of people	Proportion//%
Longing for it	71	22.40
Actively adapting to it	83	26.18
Does not matter	59	18.61
Confused	58	18.30
Rejective and fearful	46	14.51
Total	317	100.00

**3.2 Personal emotional needs** On the basis of research of personal attitudes, we conduct further exploration of personal emotional needs and effectively analyze these needs, playing a key role in understanding the fundamental traceability of policy needs. It can be seen from Table 3 that "sense of belonging", "equality of opportunity", "recognition" and "personal conditions", as four factors that affect the mental attitude in citizenization, reach a basic balanced state, each accounting for about 25%.

**Table 3 The greatest difficulties encountered in the process of identity transformation**

The greatest difficulties	Number of people	Proportion//%
No sense of belonging	87	27.45
Inequality of opportunity	73	23.03
Lack of recognition	76	23.97
Inadequate personal conditions	81	25.55
Total	317	100.00

**3.3 People's living needs** After rural urbanization, with a series of changes in lifestyle, employment patterns, etc., people's actual needs are the basis of the policy making in the process of citizenization. The results in Table 4 show that the greatest problems people concerned about in citizenization are

income security (22.08%) and housing security (21.45%). Another two factors caused by land requisition can not be ignored, namely subsidies and compensation issues (15.14%) and the issue of legal aid (1.26%). The two factors are always important constraints influencing the demolition.

**Table 4 The problems people concerned about after rural urbanization**

The problems people concerned about	Number of people	Proportion//%
Income security	70	22.08
Medical insurance	20	6.31
Urban identity	44	13.88
Housing security	68	21.45
Children's education	35	11.04
Continued payment of the original insurance premium	25	7.89
Subsidies and compensation issues	48	15.14
The issue of legal aid	4	1.26
Other problems	3	0.95
Total	317	100.00

**3.4 People's policy needs for social security** In order to examine the policy needs for social security that the suburban people care about in the context of urban sprawl, we define the social security having drawn the most attention in the urbanization of towns and villages as seven categories: social relief, social welfare, housing security, pension insurance, social security for farmers whose farmland is requisitioned, medical insurance (cooperative medical service) and the floating population social security.

As to the social security policy that the peri-urban farmers are most concerned about in the citizenization process, the survey results show that in the context of urbanization transformation of towns and villages, people's needs for social security also experience subtle changes, pension insurance and medical care are even no longer the major concerns, only accounting for 11.8% and 12.2% of the respondents, respectively; people's attention to housing security, the floating population social security and social security for farmers whose farmland is requisitioned, reaches 20.6%, 19.5% and 19.1%, respectively.

Thus we can find that housing security, social security for the floating population and social security for the farmers whose farmland is requisitioned, are becoming the peri-urban farmers' new policy needs for social security in the context of citizenization.

**3.5 Demolition-inevitable theme in the process of urbanization** With the industrial transfer in the Yangtze River Delta, the Hefei area's development potential is enhanced, and "Hefei metropolitan area" is facing dramatic development, great stride and great construction. In recent years, the construction pattern of "Large Hefei" is increasingly clear, and the peri-urban areas, such as Daxing Town, Longgang Town and Cuo Town, are also facing transformation of urbanization and expansion of urban construction.

Accompanied by the transformation of old city areas and

urbanization of suburban towns and villages, the demolition contradiction is inevitable<sup>[2]</sup>. The reasons for the dispute are classified as the following four categories:

(i) Compensation is too low, not enough to ensure the livelihood security of the people whose houses are demolished. As can be seen from Table 5, the compensation obtained by 26.50% of the people whose houses are demolished can not meet their security needs; especially given that the real estate prices are soaring in recent years, the people whose houses are demolished are in a "homeless" state instantaneously, and if the government's subsequent life security arrangement is not satisfactory, it will naturally trigger people's revolt against demolition.

(ii) The demolition standard is opaque, and people's right to know can not be ensured. Especially in the reality of lack of effective supervision on the demolition work, the demolition standard is not clear, and the demolition person has a lot of "free space", thereby causing the common phenomenon of excessively bringing down the compensation; in addition to unbalanced market information, people are rarely able to participate in the setting of compensation standard, and the right to know can not be reasonably guaranteed.

(iii) The illegal demolition phenomenon still exists, and 4.10% of the respondents are not satisfied with the demolition. Under the premise of the excessive cost of safeguarding rights by law, people confronting the illegal demolition with their life, is always repeated in the process of urbanization.

(iv) Affected by the traditional psychological concept of "home", this factor has a large proportion in the old people. 13.25% of people generally feel unease, indicating that in the process of urbanization and modernization, the law enforcement philosophy must be increasingly "humane", posing higher requirements on the law enforcement means.

**Table 5 Survey data concerning people's mentality under the dispute**

People's mentality	Number of people	Proportion//%
Compensation is insufficient to cover the price of the original property.	38	11.99
Compensation is too little, making it difficult to purchase houses, thus there is no housing security.	84	26.50
Losing the original home, failing to adapt to it psychologically.	42	13.25
Not satisfied with the government's subsequent life security arrangement.	57	17.98
The relocation units drive down house prices.	51	16.09
Rarely being informed of the matter related to demolition.	32	10.09
Not satisfied with the demolition	13	4.10
Total	317	100.00

### 3.6 The social security of the floating population – an old subject to be urgently solved in the process of urbanization

In the survey of the workers, more than half of people have not yet participated in any social security. We conduct survey and research people's mentality of unwillingness to par-

ticipate in social security, and conduct statistical analysis of the data, as is shown in Table 6.

(i) Limited awareness of social security. More migrant workers are concerned about the immediate visible health insurance, but seldom accept the long-term pension insurance. 45.36% of migrant workers' awareness is limited; 20.62% of migrant workers do not know the benefit of this policy; even 24.74% of migrant workers do not know at all about it.

(ii) The exclusion of floating population in the city by the current social security system design. 17.53% of the people do not participate in social security due to cyclical working; 11.34% of migrant workers have no fixed job in the city, or work in different cities for a long time, so they do not participate in social security.

(iii) Obvious conformist mentality. Affected by the surrounding environment, 13.40% of the respondents' awareness of social security is limited, easily influenced, highlighting the mentality of "group obedience".

(iv) The government should supervise the corporate conduct. In order to reduce costs, many units are not willing to buy insurance for workers; due to difficulties in obtaining employment opportunities and limited awareness of the social security, few migrant workers pose the insurance coverage requirements, highlighting the necessity of the government playing a leading and supervisory role.

**Table 6 The reasons for the floating population's unwillingness to participate in the insurance**

Reasons	Number of people	Proportion//%
Willing to participate, but the wage is low.	6	6.19
Willing to participate, but the unit does not support it.	4	4.12
Many people around do not participate.	13	13.40
Do not know, do not know how to participate	24	24.74
Not to participate, and it is a waste of money.	20	20.62
The city work is temporary, and they will go back to the rural areas someday.	17	17.53
Frequently changing jobs is inconvenient.	11	11.34
Others	2	2.06
Total	97	100.00

### 3.7 Housing security-the complex relationship between the expansion of the urban economy and public welfare

In the process of urban expansion, economic growth, accompanied by increasingly serious internal divide between rich and poor, some families lose land and face the reality of no house due to demolition in the urban sprawl, or become the object that the new housing market prices discriminate against, reduced to a vulnerable group living in the city. Thus the construction of security housing has become a kind of important institutional arrangement for solving urban low-income family's housing difficulties.

Currently, there are three kinds of security housing for low-income families in Hefei City: low-rent housing, affordable housing and public rental housing. In the relevant survey of se-

curity housing, we select 72 low-income families for survey and study, and select five indicators from the questionnaire "Satisfaction with the Construction of Security Housing" (the amount of security housing in the market (11.60%); the quality of security housing (28.30%); the price of security housing (9.80%); the government's allocation of security housing (17.60%); the approval procedures of security housing (32.70%). The results show that the low-income groups are satisfied with the security housing on the whole, but the satisfaction with the amount of security housing in the market and the price of security housing is the lowest.

**3.8 Different ages of respondents' preferences for the social security program** The results of Table 7 show that horizontally, the groups of different ages have needs for medical insurance, pension insurance, housing security, and improving the three social security policies will undoubtedly become an im-

portant pillar for the social support system in the process of urbanization.

Vertically, the respondents aged between 18 and 39 years believe that the four most necessary security systems are medical insurance (21.77%), pension insurance (23.39%), housing security (19.35%), and children's education (16.94%). For the respondents aged between 40 and 59 ages, their main social security needs are medical insurance (24.30%), pension insurance (28.97%) and housing security (21.50%), but comparatively speaking, the burden of their children's education is eased, and the proportion of needs for pension insurance project is increased. The security needs of old people aged over 60 years are medical insurance (33.72%), pension insurance (30.23%) and social assistance (24.42%). The old people are more concerned about the social assistance.

**Table 7 Different ages of respondents' preferences for the social security program**

The most necessary social security program	Type	18 to 39 years		40 to 59 years		More than 60 years	
		Number of people	Proportion %	Number of people	Proportion %	Number of people	Proportion %
Medical Insurance	Medical Insurance	27	21.77	26	24.30	29	33.72
Pension insurance	Pension insurance	29	23.39	31	28.97	26	30.23
Unemployment insurance	Unemployment insurance	4	3.23	2	1.87	0	0
Injury insurance	Injury insurance	9	7.26	7	6.54	0	0
Maternity Insurance	Maternity Insurance	2	1.61	0	0	0	0
Social relief	Social relief	8	6.45	6	5.61	21	24.42
Their children's education	Their children's education	21	16.94	12	11.21	0	0
Housing security	Housing security	24	19.35	23	21.50	10	11.63
Total		124	100.00	107	100.00	86	100.00

**3.9 The advocacy of social security policy** The survey results in Table 8 show that the publicity modes that people are willing to accept in urbanization transformation of suburban towns and villages are publicity paper (36.59%), meeting (29.27%) and TV media (15.12%). The urban residents are

more willing to the publicity of TV media (30.92%), community or corporate local area network (28.18%); the publicity mode of publicity paper is not obvious (16.36%). For the permanent residents in cities, towns and villages, the advocacy work is easier, but the publicity for floating population in the city is difficult.

**Table 8 The publicity mode people most likely to accept**

The publicity mode	The most acceptable mode when working in the rural areas		The most acceptable mode when working in the urban areas	
	Number of people	Proportion//%	Number of people	Proportion//%
Publicity paper	75	36.59	18	16.36
TV media publicity	31	15.12	34	30.92
Meeting	60	29.27	15	13.64
Community or corporate LAN	9	4.39	31	28.18
Newspapers and magazines	28	13.66	6	5.45
Other modes	2	0.97	6	5.45
Total	205	100.00	110.00	100.00

Note: There are 2 people who have no option in rural valid questionnaires, which are not included in the data of Table 8.

## 4 Recommendations for the social security policy in the citizenization process of the peri-urban farmers

**4.1 Distinguishing different groups' policy needs for social security** For migrant workers in the city, we should make clear the following three types:

(i) The workers with fixed abode or fixed job. Such workers flowing into the city can be transformed into residents with

permanent urban residence certificate according to the working life and other standards, thereby being included in urban social security system.

(ii) The workers with fixed abode in rural areas. They only work in the city during slack farming season, and the social security can be incorporated into their rural birthplace.

(iii) The workers with neither fixed abode nor fixed job.

For the three categories of groups, there is an urgent need to establish injury, unemployment and serious illness insur-

ance, strengthen the responsibility of the employer and the government; regulate recruitment, and supervise the two sides of labor market subject to sign labor contract in accordance with the law; establish social relief system, including emergency relief and legal assistance, for migrant workers; promote the floating population's flexible employment to translate into formal employment, through the guidance and support of the government; promote the organized employment, and maintain the floating population's social security rights.

**4.2 Attaching importance to people's dynamic policy needs for social security in urbanization** In the period of transition, the city will encounter a series of policy difficulties. How to solve these problems is a rare attempt and breakthrough opportunity for Hefei City in "great leap, great transformation", and also the most powerful driving force for the policy innovation and adaptation.

In the transition period, Hefei and some other large cities will face some problems, such as transformation of towns and villages, population migration in the process of urbanization, land adjustment, household registration and policy transformation. It is bound to generate vulnerable groups, and selecting the right reform breakthrough point is the fundamental guarantee for the effectiveness of the reform. In the process of urban transformation, people's policy needs are the cut-in point of the social security reform; the urbanization of towns and villages is the breakthrough point of the social security reform; people's needs are the staying power of the reform.

The urbanization of towns and villages is just the weak point of the reform; people's policy needs under the transformation of towns and villages is the key point of the social security reform. The public opinion point of social security policy in the transition period is the social security for the farmers whose farmland is requisitioned with demolition as the core, the social security for the floating population, and the housing security with the government responsibility as cut-in point.

**4.3 Focusing on the adaptability of social security policy transformation in urbanization** In the process of urbanization, in order to achieve connection with the city, the economy and management of suburban towns and villages also require the social security policy to adapt to the city, which involves the transformation and transition of policy. In the process of adjusting policy, it is necessary to adhere to the principles of coordination and progress step by step, to achieve the smooth transition and effective transformation of the social security policy.

**4.4 Attaching importance to the social psychosocial environment of social security policy transformation in urbanization** The arrangement of social security policy is related to people's vital interests; people's recognition of the policy hinges on people's satisfaction with the policy. In the institutional arrangement of social security, we often neglect research on people's mentality.

Social mind, the sensor of the social operating mechanism, can express the understanding of the social life, emotion and intention. It will spontaneously respond in a timely manner to any gentle ripple in the social life, and have a significant

effect on social development<sup>[3]</sup>. Rationally understanding the public sentiment and social attitudes, researching the mentality of people whose interests are damaged under policy transformation, and strengthening the guarantee and support for people's mentality, becomes the ground mass for the effective implementation of social security in transformation.

**4.5 Achieving the trinity of non-farm conversion, urbanization and citizenization in the process of urbanization** It can be said that the farmers' citizenization path includes not only the non-farm conversion process of variation in identity and occupation, but also the urbanization process of geographical living space transfer, and more importantly, the citizenization process of change in thinking, consciousness, behavior pattern, production and life pattern. In the development stage of rural modernization, non-farm conversion, urbanization and citizenization are the Trinity, jointly advancing<sup>[4]</sup>.

In this process, social security plays a role of assaulting fortified positions and catalyst: the process of non-farm conversion must ensure effective compensation for social security; the process of urbanization must be accompanied by effective livelihood security; the process of citizenization needs the social security to provide support, assistance, respect and equal social environment. Effective design of the social security becomes the fundamental guarantee for the peri-urban farmers to achieve citizenization. On the basis of sound social security, it can realize personal social participation and ensure the peri-urban farmers' due social rights.

**4.6 Strengthening the government's dominant position in the building of social security policy system** First of all, there is a need to clarify the role and responsibility of the government in the social security system. In the development, the government is not only the regulator of economy, and the interests defender for people whose benefits are damaged in the economic development, but also the defender of the healthy development of the economy, and the guarantor of the interests of the overwhelming majority of people. The government with role deflection is not an effective government organization. In order to strengthen the leading role of the government in the implementation process of the social security policy, it is necessary to include the indicator of public security responsibility in the performance evaluation system for officials at all levels, and earnestly safeguard the survival and development interests of the impaired group.

Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen the interaction between government and the people, and increase people's trust in government. In the urbanization process of the peri-urban farmers, a series of contradictions between the government and the people arise, basically stemming from the lack of interaction between government and the people: the government can not well protect the interests of people; due to the excellent location of residence, some people feel that the urbanization will deprive them of vested interests, thus they are reluctant to become urban residents. The transformation period is a period full of prominent contradictions and disputes of interests.

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crease office facilities, equip advanced diagnosis and treatment instrument, strengthen training and guidance of medical workers, and improve management methods, to ensure those people who receive services in rural medical care institutions are willing to accept services. For disputes between doctors and patients, it should provide proper handling mechanism and method, improve farmers' understanding and quality, and establish rapid joint action system between county, township and village for patients with serious disease.

The improvement of personnel quality includes two aspects: one is the quality of medical workers, and the other is the quality of rural people. The new medical reform specifies that rural medical institutions should return to public welfare and provide active door-to-door services, and village touring services. Besides, it is very essential to improve quality of rural people, help them correctly understand the gist of new medical reform, and promote system of comprehensive arrangement for serious diseases, risk pooling of outpatient services, and public health services, and reduce disputes between doctors and patients.

**4.2 Speeding up informationization construction and sharing medical care and health resources** At present, application of information technology is sufficient in county or above level medical institutions, while in township hospitals, the informationization level is low. To fundamentally solve the problem of "expensive medical bills and difficult access to quality medical services", it should speed up informationization construction of rural medical care and health institutions and share medical care and health resources. For example, dynamic electronic file management system is helpful for reducing influence of population mobility on establishing health file; digital remote training system is favorable for solving training problem in case of shortage of medical workers in township hospitals; regional cooperation informationization system is beneficial for realization of new medical reform scheme, like two-way consultation.

**4.3 Strengthening service awareness and improving supervision and assessment mechanism** Rural medical care and health institutions should strengthen service awareness, provide health knowledge education for farmers in various forms, and raise farmers' ability of self health care. This requires providing farmers with services in many aspects and channels, helping them cultivating good eating habit, for instance; teaching farmers correct exercise; assisting them in solving living pressure and mental pressure, and self-control

methods when faced with disputes. Besides, it should constantly improve supervision and assessment mechanism of rural medical care and health institutions. It is required to disclose functions, working contents, services and ways of providing services of rural medical care and health institutions to local farmers, transmitting opinions of farmers about services to superior competent authorities, and feed back to local medical care and health institutions. For possible policy losses brought about by the new medical reform, it should also establish strict supervision system. Medicine bidding channel and medicine price should be open and transparent. Any problem found should be solved promptly.

**4.4 Giving prominence to functional orientation and realizing effective connection of rural three-level medical care and health network** The new medical reform has definite functional orientation of rural three-level medical care and health institutions, and all levels of rural medical care and health institutions should carry out work and cultivate medical workers in accordance with the functional orientation. At present, to give prominence to functional orientation and realize effective connection of rural three-level medical care and health network, the most urgent task lies in rural areas, especially, township hospitals and village clinics should strengthen configuration of instrument and equipment, increase number of medical workers and improve their quality. Furthermore, it is necessary to establish and improve effective personnel and management mechanism for connection of rural three-level medical care and health network, bring into full play their respective functions, and provide real-time aid and treatment for patients.

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Government and the people must strengthen the interaction; the government should effectively guide the survival security arrangement for the impaired groups, and strengthen people's policy awareness and participation, achieving mutual trust.

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