

Associate Professor Takeshi Hieda, Graduate School of Law

Although we often associate the Graduate School of Law with the legal profession, Associate Professor Hieda actually teaches political science. He earned his Ph.D. in political science and specializes in the study of comparative politics. In the course of his study of elder care and other welfare policies in Japan, he became interested in the reasons behind the country's diverse social welfare and social security programs and began to focus his research on the political determinants of the welfare states.

Not satisfied with studying only Japan's situation, he conducted a comparative study of elder care policies in other countries, including the U.S.A. and Sweden, for a total of five years abroad. He spent two years at the University of Colorado at Boulder in U.S.A. and three years at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy, where he compared various policies with

the situation in Japan. Dr. Hieda analyzes the relationship between electoral systems, political party systems, and policies, and compares the situations in various countries. His research is notable for its comparative approach using econometrics. The results of his research in institutes outside Japan were compiled in the English-language publication, "Political Institutions and Elderly Care Policy: The Comparative Politics of Long-term Care in Advanced Democracies."

Using his own experience when taking childcare leave last year, he is now focusing on childcare support policies in addition to the nursing care system. He plans to use statistical approaches to study the political institutions that incentivize the dominant party as well as the relation between restructuring of party systems, government partisanship and family-related policies.



Another Side

Dr. Hieda noted the biggest reward from his 12-month paternal leave last year was "a higher level of enlightenment." He experienced the sense of isolation from society that many mothers often say they feel, as reflected in the days he had meaningful conversations with only his wife, even though he wrote textbooks and papers on weekends and on weekday evenings after his wife returned home from work. He said he was glad to have taken childcare leave because he was able to see his child learn to talk, eat, and walk along with other many precious "first-ever" moments.