

Utilizing the Act to Promote Women's Participation to accelerate and expand the advancement of women

From the "White Paper on Gender Equality 2017"

Summary

Cabinet Office, Government of Japan

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The Cabinet annually submits to the Diet a report on the state of formation of a gender-equal society and policies implemented by the government (the White Paper on Gender Equality).

Please see the White Paper (in Japanese) for more detailed information on sources cited.

Table of Contents

Section 1. Current state of women’s participation in the workplace and issues to be addressed	1
Section 2. An increasing number of initiatives aimed at promoting the advancement of women following the enactment of the Act on Promotion of Women’s Participation and Advancement in the Workplace.....	5

Table of Figures

I-Feature-Figure 1. Employment rate trends	1
I-Feature-Figure 2. Female employment rate trends and changes by age group	2
I-Feature-Figure 3. Female employment rate trends by prefecture(15 to 64 years of age).....	2
I-Feature-Figure 5. Comparison of female employment rates in European countries with those in Fukui Prefecture and Toyama Prefecture (2015).....	3
I-Feature-Figure 8. The proportion of female workers and women in managerial positions (by prefecture).....	4
I-Feature-Figure 10. Regular and non-regular employment trends(by gender, year-on-year increase/decrease)	4
I-Feature-Figure 14. Numerical targets for the action plans of government bodies.....	6
I-Feature-Figure 20. Types of information published on the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare’s Database of Companies Promoting Women’s Participation and Advancement	7
I-Feature-Figure 25. The number of employers (with more than 300 employees) registered on the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare’s Database of Companies Promoting Women’s Participation and Advancement	8
I-Feature-Figure 28. The number of Eruboshi certified companies by company size, and their proportion in relation to the total number of Eruboshi certified companies	9
I-Feature-Figure 29. The number of Eruboshi certified companies by business field, and their proportion in relation to the total number of Eruboshi certified companies	9

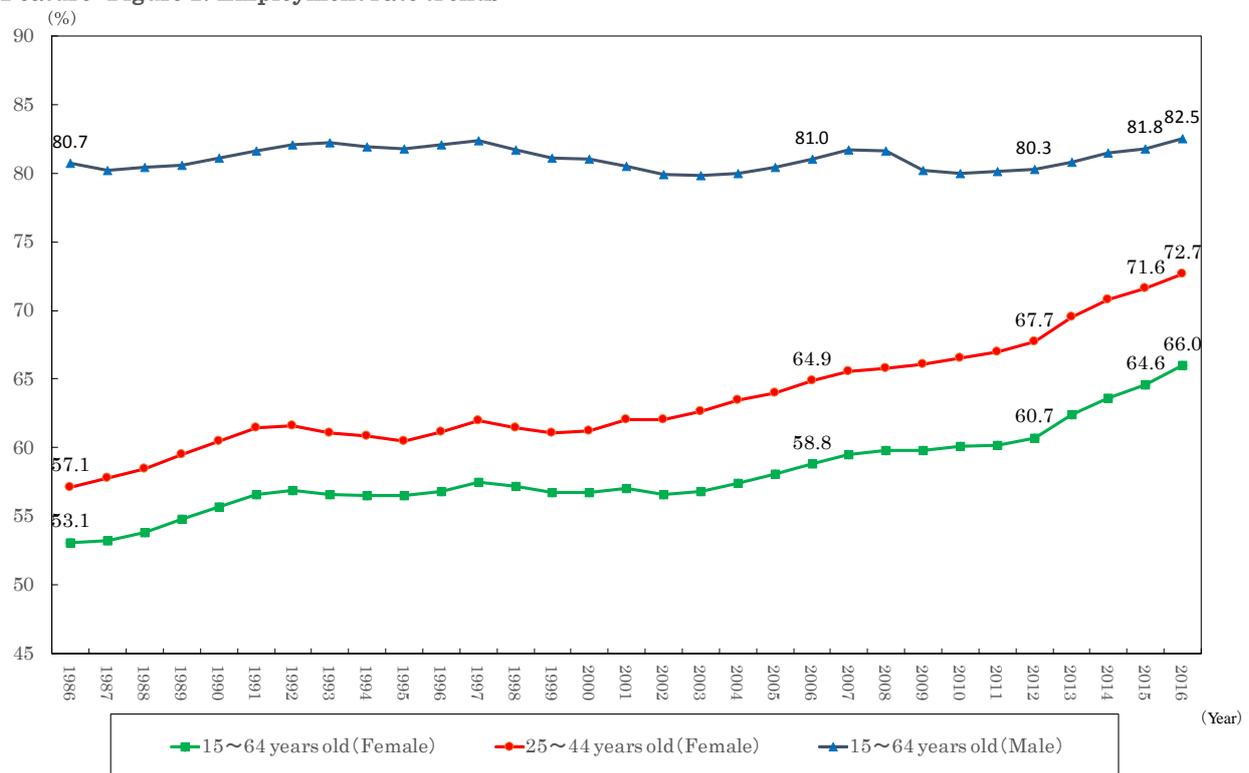
Utilizing the Act to Promote Women’s Participation to accelerate and expand the advancement of women

Section 1. Current state of women’s participation in the workplace and issues to be addressed

(The increasing female employment rate)

Although the working age population is decreasing, the total number of employed persons increased by 1.7 million—with females making up 1.47 million of the total and males making up 230,000—meaning a relative expansion in the employment rate for females. Over the three decades between 1986 and 2016, the female employment rate (15 to 64 years of age) increased 12.9% from 53.1% to 66.0%. The majority of that increase occurred over the last decade, and particularly over the last four years, during which the rate increased by 5.3% (see I-Feature-Figure 1).

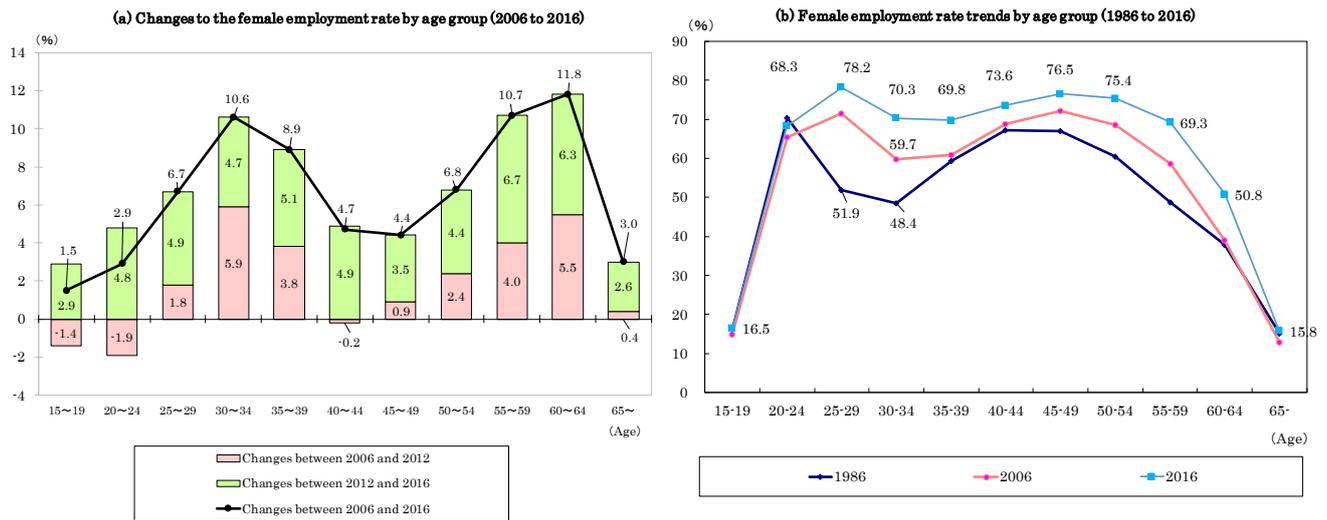
I-Feature -Figure 1. Employment rate trends



(Notes) Source: “Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation),” the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC).

When looking at female employment rates by age group, they conform to the so-called “M-shaped curve”, but the lower point of the “M-shaped curve” has risen significantly over the last 30 years leading to a shallowing of the dip, and the overall figures have also shifted upwards by a significant margin (I-Feature-Figure 2 (b)). Over the last decade the increase in the female employment rate has accelerated and an increase has been seen in across all age groups, particularly in the 30-34, 55-59, and 60-64 age groups which have all seen an increase of more than 10% (I-Feature-Figure 2 (a))

I-Feature-Figure 2. Female employment rate trends and changes by age group



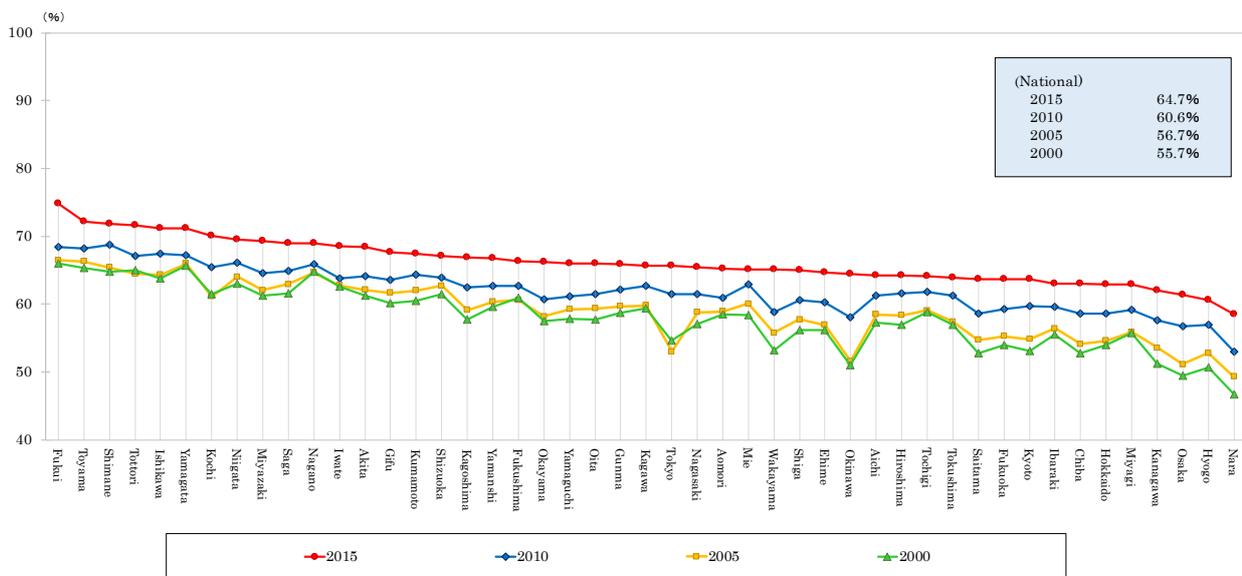
(Notes) Source: "Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation)," the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC).

(Notes) Source: "Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation)," the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC).

(Female employment rates are increasing in every prefecture)

Female employment rates (15 to 64 years of age) increased in all of Japan's prefectures during the decade from 2005 to 2015. In 35 prefectures the increase was more rapid in the second half of the decade than in the first half, but regional differences remained pronounced (I-Feature-Figure 3).

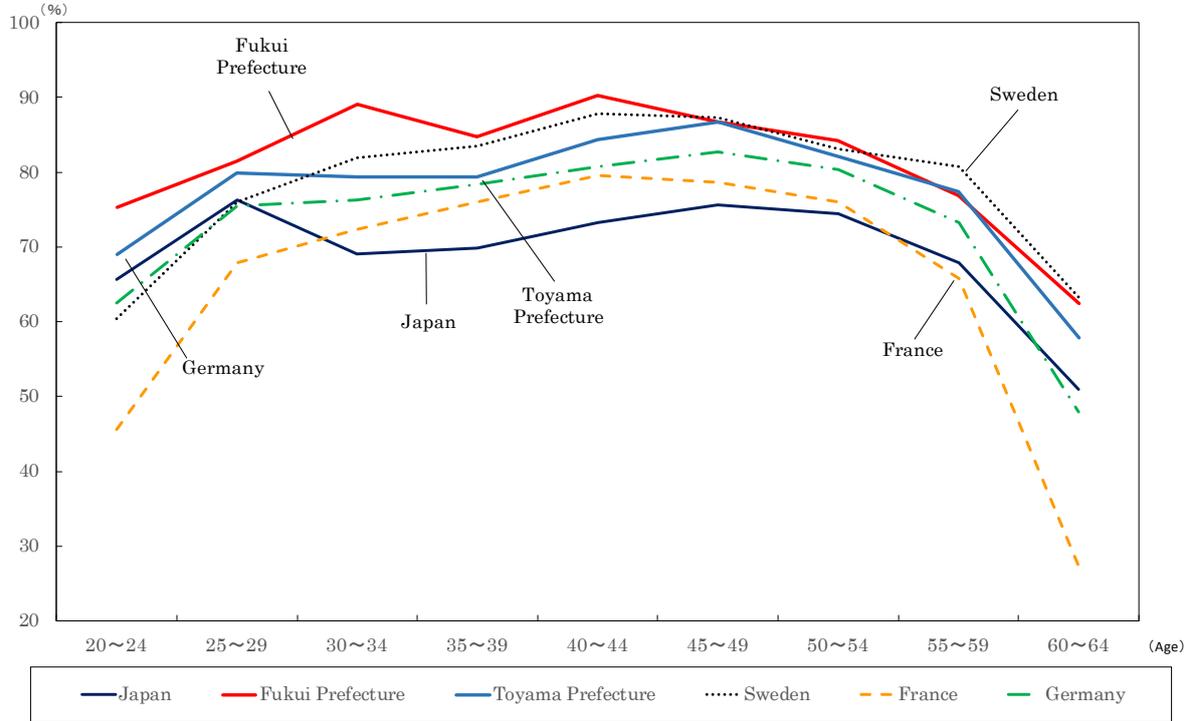
I-Feature-Figure 3. Female employment rate trends by prefecture (15 to 64 years of age)



(Note) 1. Prepared based on the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications "National Population Census". Figures for 2015 are preliminary tabulation figures.
 2. Total figures for 2000 and 2005 included persons whose employment statuses were unknown. The employment figures for those years have been calculated by subtracting the unknown figures from the total figures.

When comparing female employment rates with those in European countries—the graphs for which show no so-called “M-shaped curve”—the employment rates for women aged 20 to 44 of Fukui Prefecture and Toyama Prefecture (the prefectures with the highest and second-highest female employment rates in Japan) are already higher than those of Sweden, and the overall female employment rates in both prefectures are higher than those in Germany and France (I-Feature-Figure 5).

I-Feature-Figure 5. Comparison of female employment rates in European countries with those in Fukui Prefecture and Toyama Prefecture (2015)



(Notes) Figures for Japan are based on the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications’ “National Population Census (preliminary tabulation)” (2015), and figures for other countries are based on the International Labour Organization’s ILOSTAT database.

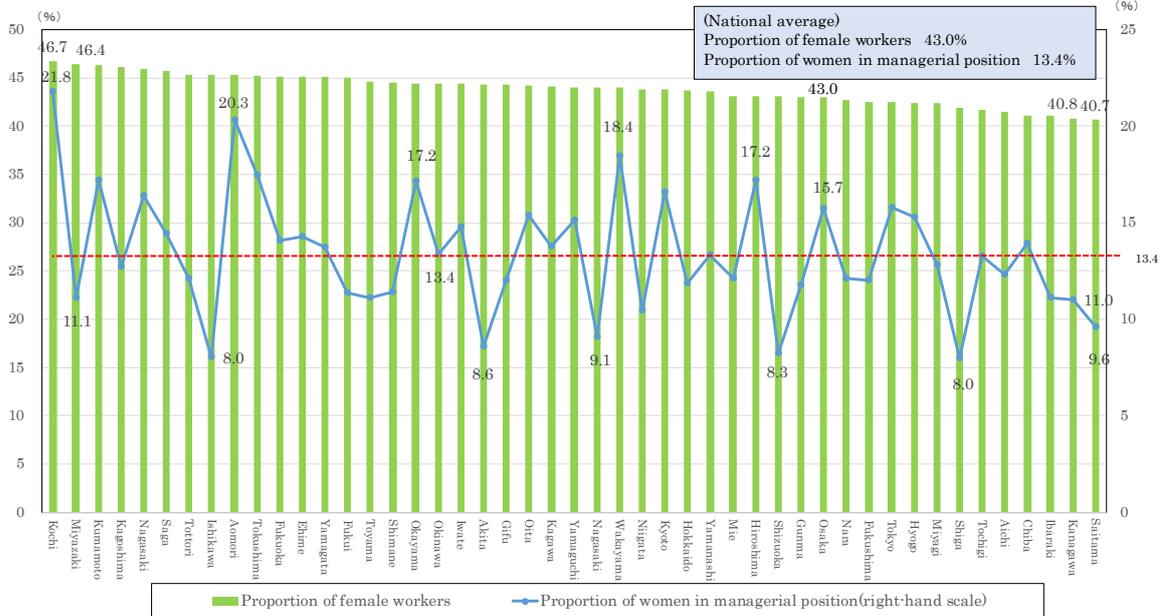
(A continuing lack of women in managerial positions in primary industries and in many regions)

Female employment has increased in Japan and the proportion of female workers is almost the same as levels seen in Western countries. On the other hand, although the proportion of women in managerial positions is increasing slightly, as of 2016 it remains at a low level (13.0%)—significantly lower than levels in Western countries and in Asian countries such as Singapore and the Philippines.

When looking at the proportion of women in managerial positions by prefecture in Japan, one can see that while there are prefectures with more than 20%, there are also prefectures with only 8%. Although in the five prefectures with the highest female employment rates (Fukui, Toyama, Shimane, Tottori, and Ishikawa), all saw increases in female employment levels, women in managerial positions was lower than the national average (I-Feature-Figure 8). One of the reasons for the large prefectural variations in the proportion of female management-level staff is presumably the differences in the industrial structures of each prefecture, one of the significant factors distinguishing the various regions of Japan. In

prefectures where the proportion of employees involved in manufacturing is high, the proportion of women in managerial positions is relatively low and vice versa, indicating a negative correlation between these.

I-Feature-Figure 8. The proportion of female workers and women in managerial position(by prefecture)

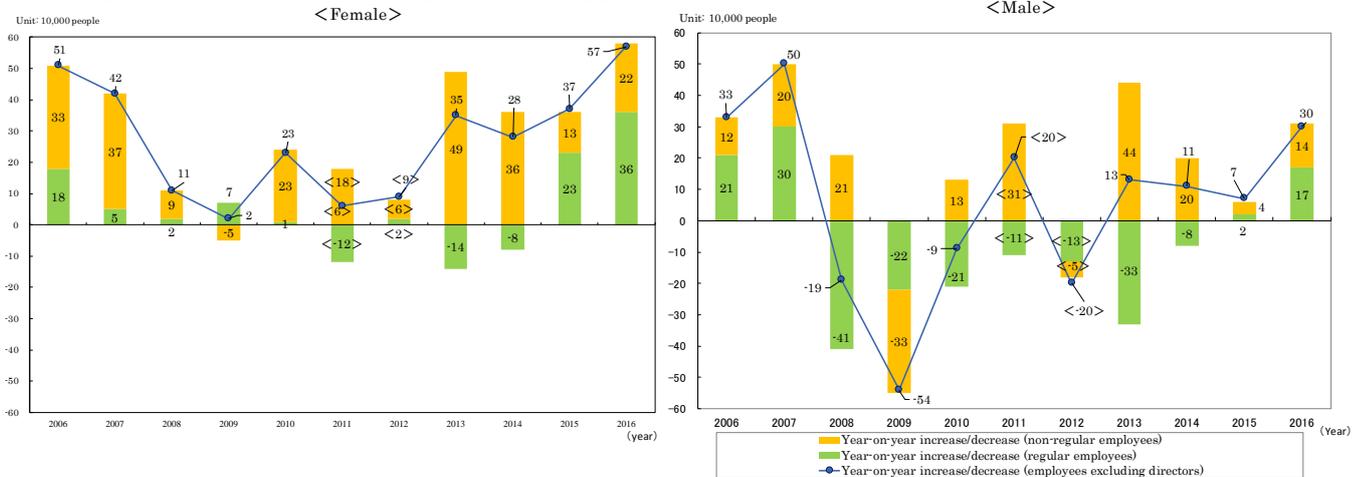


(Note) 1. Prepared based on the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications' "Employment Status Survey" (2012).
 2. "Persons in managerial positions" refers to those in positions involving management/administration of entire management units or internal organizations from departments/sections upwards (including internal organizations that are the equivalent of departments/sections), who are responsible for determining business management policies; establishing corporate plans based on management policies; overseeing work duties; governance, etc.

(Promotion of working style diversity and flexibility)

Over the last decade, the number of male employees decreased in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2012, while the number of female employees has continued to increase, with a significant increase in 2013 and with a greater increase in regular employment than non-regular employment for two consecutive years (in 2015 and 2016) (I-Feature-Figure 10).

I-Feature-Figure 10. Regular and non-regular employment trends (by gender, year-on-year increase/decrease)



(Notes) 1. Prepared based on the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications' "Labour Force Survey" (Detailed Tabulation).
 2. Employment status categories are those used in places of employment.
 3. Figures for "non-regular employees" prior to 2009 are the sum of "part-time/casual employees", "dispatched temporary employees", "contract/fixed-term employees", and "other employees". Figures from 2009 onwards use the total figures from the newly added "Non-regular employees" entry.
 4. Since "Year-on-year increase/decrease (employees excluding directors)" indicates the increase/decrease in numbers of employees excluding directors, it doesn't necessarily correspond with the increase/decrease in total figures for "regular employees" and "non-regular employees".
 5. Figures in "< >" are figures for reference purposes calculated using supplementary estimates.

While the proportion of women engaging in non-regular employment despite wanting to engage in regular employment is significantly lower than that for men, the overall number of female non-regular employees is slightly higher (1.49 million for women and 1.47 million for men).

Although women in Japan who return to work after childbirth and childrearing etc. often re-enter the workforce as non-regular employees, the proportion of women who wish to shift from non-regular employment such as temporary or part-time work to regular employment is high. In addition, although the wage disparity between men and women is decreasing, the average wage of female general employees is 27.0% lower than that of male general employees (as of 2016). It is inevitable to facilitate the transition of female staff from non-regular to regular positions and to improve their working conditions in order to increase the options of flexible working styles for women and to improve the working environment to become one where female workers can fully demonstrate their ability.

Section 2. An increasing number of initiatives aimed at promoting the advancement of women following the enactment of the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace

With the aim of steadily pushing forward with initiatives aimed at promoting the advancement of women, the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace (Act No. 64 of 2015; hereinafter "Act to Promote Women's Participation"), which came into full effect in April 2016, obligates the national government, local governments, and private sector corporations with more than 300 employees to draft and publish "action plans by business owners" (hereinafter "action plans"). When drafting an action plan, business owners must first ascertain by themselves the extent of women's participation at their workplaces and carry out an analysis of the issues, and, based on the results of this, must incorporate numerical targets and initiatives into their action plans. In addition, they disclose information on female participation in their workplaces in order to help women with finding a suitable job.

(National government initiatives)

All government ministries and agencies are required to set numerical targets for "proportion of female national public employees through the recruitment examination", "rates of female managers", "the rate of male employees taking childcare leave", and "the rate of male employees taking childbirth leave for spouses and leave for participation in childcare", and publish information relating to these targets (I-Feature-Figure 14). Of the 13 areas of information subject for disclosure, the seven¹ required to assess the conditions

¹"Proportion of female national public employees through the recruitment examination", "gender gap in years of continuous employment", "working hours", "proportion of women at each rank in national government positions", "the rate of male/female employees taking childcare leave", and "the rate of male employees taking childbirth leave for spouses and leave for participation in childcare", are areas that must be ascertained by public business owners as stipulated in the guidelines for drafting action plans, which are based on the Act to Promote Women's Participation.

before drafting actions plans are disclosed by four government bodies (the Cabinet Secretariat, the Cabinet Office, the Consumer Affairs Agency, and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).

I-Feature-Table 14. Numerical targets for the action plans of government bodies

The "O" symbols in the table indicate that numerical targets have been set, while "-" indicates that there are no numerical targets.

	Proportion of female national public employees through the recruitment examination	Rates of female staff (Proportion of women in each employee level)	Rate of male employees taking childcare leave	Rate of male employees taking childbirth leave for spouses and leave for participation in childcare	Reduction of long working hours/support for continued employment and balance between work and family			Part-time employees
					Number of days/proportion of annual leave taken	Implementation rate of "no overtime days"	Frequency of telecommuting	
Cabinet Secretariat	O	O	O	O	-	-	-	-
Cabinet Legislation Bureau	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
National Personnel Authority	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Cabinet Office	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Imperial Household Agency	O	O	O	O	-	-	-	-
Fair Trade Commission	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
National Police Agency	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Personal Information Protection Commission	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Financial Services Agency	O	O	O	O	-	-	-	-
Consumer Affairs Agency	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Reconstruction Agency	(no employment)	O	O	O	-	-	-	O
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	-
Ministry of Justice	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan	O	O	O	O	-	-	-	-
Ministry of Finance	O	O	O	O	-	-	-	-
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology	O	O	O	O	O	O	-	-
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare	O	O	O	O	O	-	O	-
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan	O	O	O	O	-	-	-	O
Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport	O	O	O	O	O	O	-	O
Ministry of the Environment	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Ministry of Defense	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Board of Audit of Japan	O	O	O	O	-	-	-	-
Supreme Court of Japan	-	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Secretariat of the House of Representatives	O	-	O	O	O	-	-	-
Secretariat of the House of Councillors	-	-	O	O	O	-	-	O
Legislative Bureau of the House of Representatives	O	-	O	O	O	-	-	-
Legislative Bureau of the House of Councillors	-	-	O	O	O	-	-	O
National Diet Library	O	O	O	O	O	-	-	-
Judge Impeachment Court	-	-	O	O	O	-	-	O
Judge Indictment Committee	O	-	O	O	O	-	-	-

(Notes) 1. Prepared by the Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office using employer action plans on the Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office's "Visual Representation of the Act to Promote Women's Participation" website (as of January 4, 2017)

2. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications includes the Environmental Dispute Coordination Commission Fire and the Disaster Management Agency. The Ministry of Justice includes the Public Security Examination Commission and the Public Security Intelligence Agency. The Ministry of Finance includes the National Tax Agency. Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology includes the Agency for Cultural Affairs and the Japan Sports Agency. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan includes the Forestry Agency and the Fisheries Agency. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry includes the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy, the Japan Patent Office, and the Small and Medium Enterprise Agency. The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport includes the Japan Tourism Agency, the Japan Meteorological Agency, the Japan Transport Safety Board, and the Japan Coast Guard. The Ministry of the Environment does not include the Nuclear Regulation Authority. The Ministry of Defense does not include the Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency.

3. Items surrounded by a red dotted line are those that are considered to be included in initiative plans drafted and published by each ministry and agency in the "Guidelines for promoting female civil servants' workplace participation and work-life balance".

(Local government initiatives)

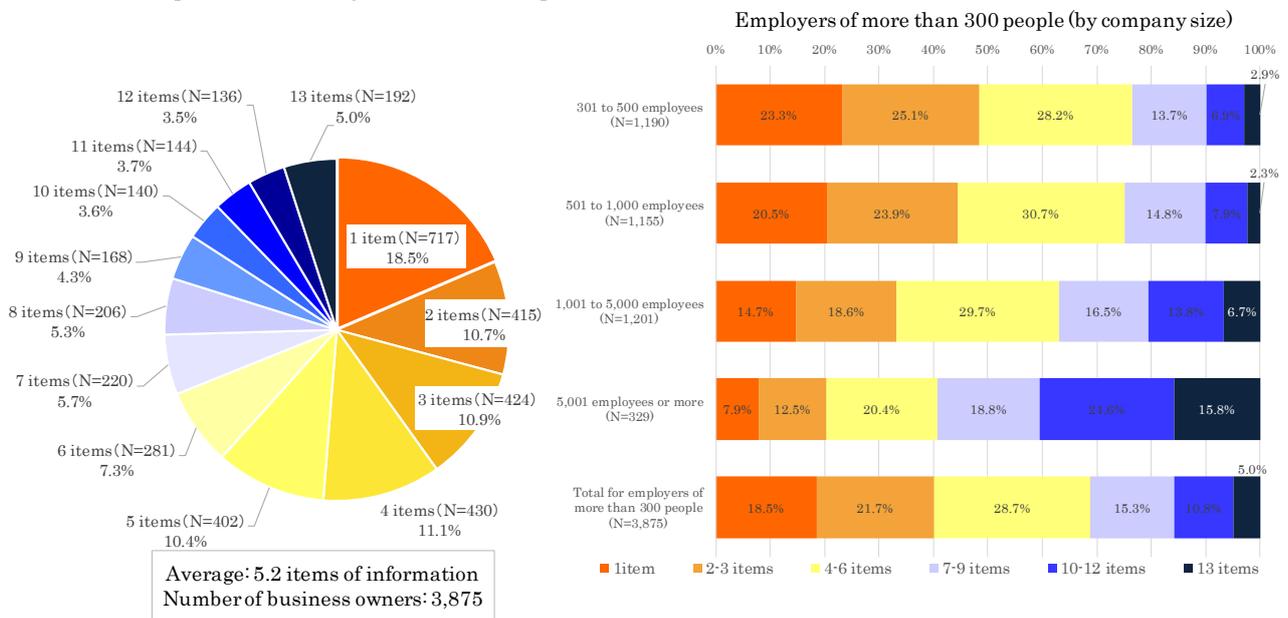
Looking at the prefectural government initiatives, 43 prefectures have set numerical targets relating to the rates of female managers in their action plans. There is considerable variation in the numerical targets set by the 43 prefectures, reflecting the considerable variation in the rates of female managers in each prefecture. Many prefectures and municipalities proactively make local plans focused on female advancement in the workplaces of small- to medium- sized companies, while also utilizing local councils

formulated by public and private organizations in each region.

(Initiatives relating to the drafting of action plans and the publication of information by private sector corporations)

As of the end of December 2016, 99.8% of general business owners (15,740 business owners) with more than 300 employees (who are obligated to draft action plans etc.) had submitted their action plans. Of the general business owners with more than 300 employees, 3,875 business owners have published both their action plans and other information on MHLW’s Database of Companies Promoting Women’s Participation and Advancement. These companies have published an average of 5.2 items of information on the database, and the larger the company, the more information they tended to publish (I-Feature-Figure 20). Of the general business owners with 300 or less employees (who have been imposed with a best-effort obligation to draft and submit action plans), 2,155 business owners have voluntarily drafted and submitted action plans.

I-Feature-Figure 20. Types of information published on the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare’s Database of Companies Promoting Women’s Participation and Advancement

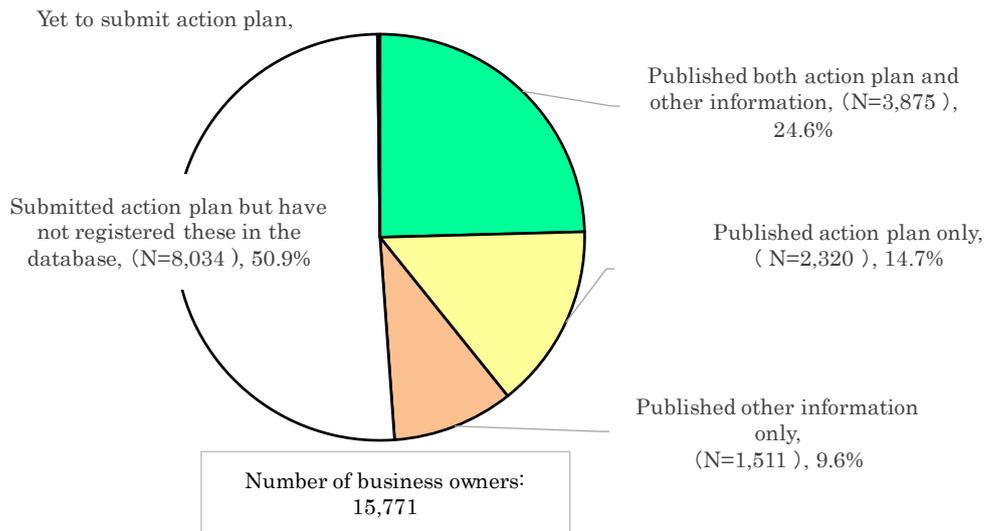


(Notes)1. Prepared by the Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office using the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare’s Database of Companies Promoting Women’s Participation and Advancement (as of the end of December 2016).
 2. Total number (3,875) of the general business owners in Japan with more than 300 employees that have published both their action plans and other information on the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare’s Database on Companies Promoting Women’s Active Participation.

(The importance of improving information disclosure on the Database of Companies Promoting Women’s Active Participation and Advancement)

Of the business owners with more than 300 employees, approximately one quarter have published both their action plans and other information, and even when business owners that have published either their action plans or other information are included, the proportion of employees who have registered on the database only increases to about half. Enhancing the visibility of the database is an important issue to address (I-Feature-Figure 25).

I-Feature-Figure 25. The number of employers (with more than 300 employees) registered on the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare’s Database of Companies Promoting Women’s Participation and Advancement

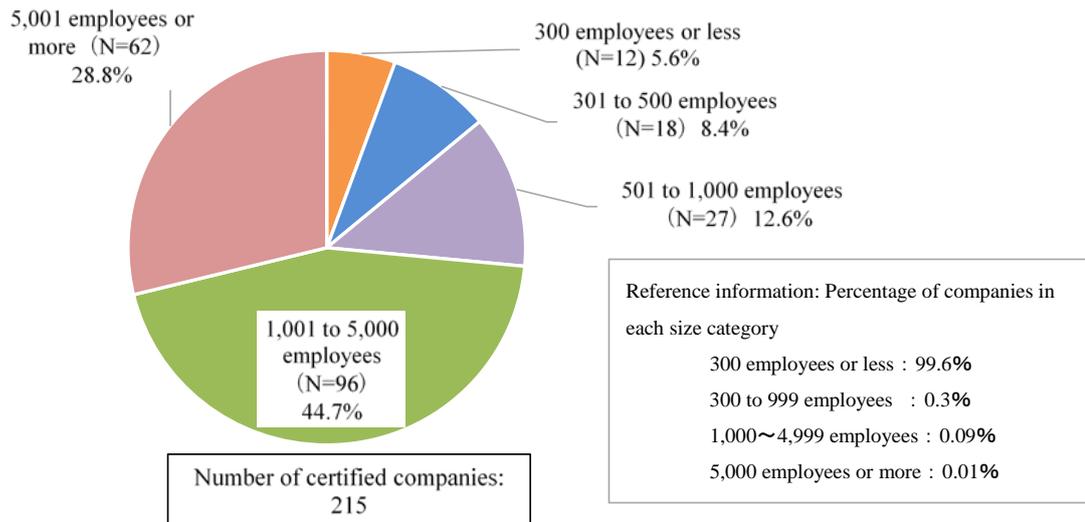


(Notes)1. Prepared by the Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office using the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare’s Database of Companies Promoting Women’s Participation and Advancement (as of the end of December 2016).
 2. This indicates the number of business owners and the ratio of employers to the number of employers obligated to comply (15,771).

(Certification of companies that are proactive in the promotion of women’s participation in the workplace: “Eruboshi” certification)

As of the end of December 2016, 215 companies had received Eruboshi certification. More than 70% of these were large scale companies with more than 1,000 employees. The three business areas of finance/insurance, wholesale/retail, and manufacturing accounted for more than 60% of the companies (I-Feature-Figure 28/Table 29). It is not easy however, even for Eruboshi certified companies, to meet the certification standards for retention of female employees, promotion of female employees to managerial positions, and so on.

I-Feature-Figure 28. The number of Eruboshi certified companies by company size, and their proportion in relation to the total number of Eruboshi certified companies



- (Notes) 1. Prepared by the Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office using information published on the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare website. The percentage of companies in each size category was prepared based on the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications' 2014 "Economic Census for Business Frame".
2. Since the figures for the proportion in relation to the total number of certified companies was rounded to one decimal place, the total will not add up to 100.

I-Feature-Table 29. The number of Eruboshi certified companies by business field, and their proportion in relation to the total number of Eruboshi certified companies

Industry	Number of companies	Proportion in relation to the total number of Eruboshi certified companies (%)	(Reference) Percentage of companies in each industry (%)
Construction	3	1.4	11.1
Manufacturing	38	17.7	10.2
Electricity, gas, heat supply, water	4	1.9	0.03
Information and communications	32	14.9	1.1
Transport and mail	1	0.5	1.8
Wholesale and retail	45	20.9	22.2
Finance and insurance	47	21.9	0.8
Real estate, goods rentals	3	1.4	7.9
Academic research and specialized/technical services	7	3.3	4.8
Accommodation and food/beverage services	4	1.9	13.3
Lifestyle-related services and entertainment	2	0.9	9.4
Education and learning support	2	0.9	2.9
Medicine and welfare	6	2.8	7.3
Compound services	1	0.5	0.2
Service industry (companies to which other categories do not apply)	19	8.8	6.2
Unclassifiable industries	1	0.5	—
Total	215	—	—

- (Notes) 1. Prepared by the Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office using information published on a Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare website. The percentage of companies in each size category was prepared based on the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications' 2014 "Economic Census for Business Frame".
2. Since there are no Eruboshi certified companies in the "agriculture and forestry", "fishery", "mining, stone quarrying, and sand" industries, they have been excluded from the table.
3. Since the figures for the proportion in relation to the total number of certified companies was rounded to one decimal place the total will not add up to 100.

(Encouragement of initiatives by small- to medium-sized companies to promote women's participation in the workplace)

Some small- to medium-sized companies have voluntarily drafted and submitted action plans, and have utilized their own knowhow and coordinated with other companies in their respective fields to devise original proactive initiatives aimed at addressing issues such as increasing employment of women, expanding the fields in which women can work, providing training, retaining female employees through facilitating their transition to regular positions, and promoting female workers to managerial positions.

(Accelerating and expanding women's participation in the workplace using the Act to Promote Women's Participation as the primary motive force)

With the full enforcement of the Act to Promote Women's Participation, and under the recognition that the role of business owners is important in promoting the participation of women in workplaces, a systematic framework for promoting participation of women in workplaces has been created in which not only the national government and local governments, but also companies and other business owners are obligated to ascertain the level of participation of women in their workplaces, analyze issues, and draft and publish action plans, etc. The national government, local governments, and large companies have drafted and published action plans; the national government and local governments have provided support; and positive action has been encouraged through "Eruboshi" certification and public procurement etc.; and more than 2,100 small- to medium-sized companies have voluntarily drafted and submitted action plans (as of the end of December 2016). With the enforcement of the Act to Promote Women's Participation, it is necessary to press forward even more strongly with initiatives to promote women's participation in the workplace, establish a trend for companies and regions to autonomously promote female advancement and accelerate and expand the trend in order to increase social diversity and vitality in response to the low birthrate and population ageing and to enable Japan's economy to achieve powerful growth.

**[Article: Pioneering the recruiting of women in the printing industry
Kinyosha Printing Co., Ltd. (a printing company with a workforce of 290, based in Ota
Ward, Tokyo)]**



Printing involves a large amount of physical work, meaning the workforce is dominated by male employees, but the advance of automation means the scope for participation by female employees has expanded. While this had led to an increase in the number of female employees and expanded the range of work they can engage in at Kinyosha Printing, female employees themselves hesitated to take on leadership roles in the workplace. To address this issue, a



leadership training framework was created involving the setting up of multiple internal committees and delegating responsibility for overall committee operations/management and proceedings to young and mid-career employees in order to build up their management experience. This proved to be a good employee training framework, and led to a desire amongst young male and female employees to pursue managerial positions. 8.6% of managerial positions at the company are held by female employees (4 out of 46), which is higher than the average for the printing industry (4%). The company now has a locally employed female executive who is a role model to the other female management-level staff in the company.

**[Article: Placing female employees the heart of the company—the production floor
Asakura Senpu Co. Ltd. (A textiles company with a workforce of 98, based in Kiryu,
Gunma Prefecture)]**



Asakura Senpu is a company that dyes textile products. As of the end of the 2016, it is the only company in the city of Kiryu that has obtained Eruboshi certification. Looking at the distribution of personnel, the company noticed that the two-shift dyeing and finishing production floors had few female employees. To expand the range of positions that female employees can pursue, studies were carried out to identify issues facing female employees working on the production floor, and female employees were then deployed.



Once dyed, textile is loaded into a wagon weighing close to 500 kilograms and this had to be moved about manually. To obviate the need for this physical work, an electric vehicle was employed. The alterations made to the workplace environment also had a secondary benefit in that they have also helped to enhance health and safety conditions for male employees. In addition to continuing to expand the range of jobs that can be performed by female employees, the company plans to ensure that the female staff on the production floor are not assigned for long periods to the same work processes simply because they are considered more appropriate for women, and in doing so support their career development by enabling them to become multi-skilled workers.

**[Article: Measured personnel training and promotion to managerial positions
Ohta Fukushi Kinenkai (a social welfare service corporation with a workforce of 233,
based in Koriyama, Fukushima Prefecture)]**



A geriatric nursing welfare facility and home nursing care provider, and the first organization in Fukushima Prefecture to obtain Eruboshi certification. In order to provide high quality nursing services, the organization considers it necessary to encourage experienced and skilled employees to work long-term regardless of their gender, and they implement personnel training in a measured manner based on workplace exercises and courses.



In addition, by enabling employees to experience working in new work environments by transferring them to other facilities in regular five- to six-year cycles, they attempt to sustain the motivation of employees toward their work. From April 2016 the organization has also been providing courses for candidates for managerial positions with the aim of increasing the proportion of female management-level staff to 70% or more by the end of 2019 (the industry average is 42.9%). Nursing care involves night shift work and people tend to perceive nursing care as being hard work, but the organization's employee turnover rate is only roughly 2.5%, much lower than the average rate for the nursing care industry (16.5%).

**[Article: Nurturing female executives through the strong leadership of the company
president**



Sanshu Seika Co. Ltd. (a foodstuff producer with a workforce of 247, based in Kasukabe, Saitama Prefecture)]

In April 2016, Sanshu Seika became one of the first companies in the country to receive Eruboshi certification. Under the strong leadership of the current president, the number of female management-level staff has been increased over the last two decades from zero in the late 1980s to five, or, 27.8% of the total. The company is also passionate about promoting motivated and capable employees to regular positions, and 27% of female employees in regular positions transitioned from irregular part-time positions, with two of them having been made assistant managers. Even in companies where there are large numbers of female management-level staff, there is a tendency for women to



A meeting of product-planning staff

shift to supportive roles, and to counteract this, Sanshu Seika has introduced initiatives that are unheard of at other companies such as setting periods during meetings in which male employees are prohibited from speaking, and staffing the product-planning team entirely with women. These bold reforms are now producing results, such as a new product developed by young female employees that became a hit product that now accounts for more than 10% of the company's sales.

[Article: Promotion to managerial positions through a fair personnel evaluation system
Hulic Co., Ltd. (a real estate company with a workforce of 149, based in Chuo Ward,
Tokyo)]



In April 2016, Hulic became one of the first companies in the country to receive Eruboshi certification. The company's president is firmly convinced that, for companies to survive despite the declining size of the working population, it is essential that they provide an environment in which women can continue to work. As symbolized by the case of a female employee who was recruited mid-career and was promoted to a managerial position after successfully leading a project aimed at launching a directly-managed hotel, the company is consistent in its policy of evaluating and promoting motivated and capable employees in a fair manner regardless of their gender, age, or work experience. In 2012, the company installed a day-care center inside its head office building, and, as of the end of 2016, the center has four children of employees as well as children of local residents, and is thereby contributing to the creation of social infrastructure that also allows women in the local community to participate more actively in society.



Members of the “women’s workplace participation promotion project team”, who exchange recommendations etc. on a cross-departmental basis.