

4. Expansion of Women's Participation in Policy Decision-making Processes in All Fields in Society

Various initiatives are being undertaken through the promotion of “positive action” to expand women’s participation in policy decision-making processes in all fields in society.

Positive Action

“Positive provision of opportunities for either women or men within necessary limits to redress gender disparities in terms of formation of a society where both women and men shall be given equal opportunities to participate voluntarily in activities in all fields as equal partners in the society” (defined in Article 2 of The Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society)

Target of “30% by 2020”

Various efforts are being made to achieve the target of “increasing the share of women in leadership positions to at least 30% by 2020 in all fields in society” stipulated in the Second Basic Plan for a Gender-equal Society approved by the Cabinet in December 2005, including an annual follow-up to assess progress in promoting women’s participation in various fields.

Program for Accelerating Women’s Social Participation

Adopted by the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality on April 8, 2008

Although various efforts are being made to achieve the target of “30% by 2020” as indicated above, the participation of women in society in Japan is far from satisfactory and remains at the bottom of the league compared internationally. Against this background, the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality formulated a “Program for Accelerating Women’s Social Participation” in April 2008 with the view of accelerating women’s participation in all fields.

Status Quo

Women’s social participation, especially in decision making, is far from satisfactory and remains at the bottom of the league when compared internationally.



The program was adopted as a strategic initiative to accelerate women’s participation

Basic Direction of the Measures

Realization of the Work-life Balance

Implement initiatives in accordance with the objectives of “the Charter for Work-Life Balance” and “the Action Policy for Promoting Work-Life Balance”

Measures to Support Women’s Effort to Build their Capacity and Fulfill their Potential

Promote Positive Action to assist women in fulfilling their potential;
Support women in their career development;
Support women in their efforts to establish themselves in new fields;
Facilitate reemployment of women who left jobs for childcare, etc.

Awareness-raising

Change the way of thinking by top representatives in every sector of society, managers of organizations and women themselves



To be Promoted
in Collaboration

Specific Efforts - to be implemented by the end of FY2010-

(1) Development of infrastructure for promoting women’s participation in all fields

- **Lobbying top representatives in every sector of society**
e.g. visits to top representatives of economic organizations by Minister of State for Gender Equality
- **Human resources development / capacity-building programs for women, provision of opportunities for women to fulfill their potential**
e.g. support for network-building in local communities and in various fields
- **Positive assessment of pro-active initiatives, good practices to be disseminated**
- **Social systems which are neutral in the selection of social activities by men and women in consideration of taxation, social security systems, etc.**
- **Assess the status quo and extend follow-up action**

(2) Efforts with a particular focus on fields where women’s participation is expected but progress therein has been slow

- **Female medical doctors**
review their work systems, support their continuous employment and their reemployment, etc.
- **Female researchers**
spread and embed a progressive approach that can be a model, etc.
- **Female public officers**
extend flexible work, promote female public officers to senior positions (increase the share of female public officers in and above the position of Director at Ministries to approximately 5 % in the whole government), etc.

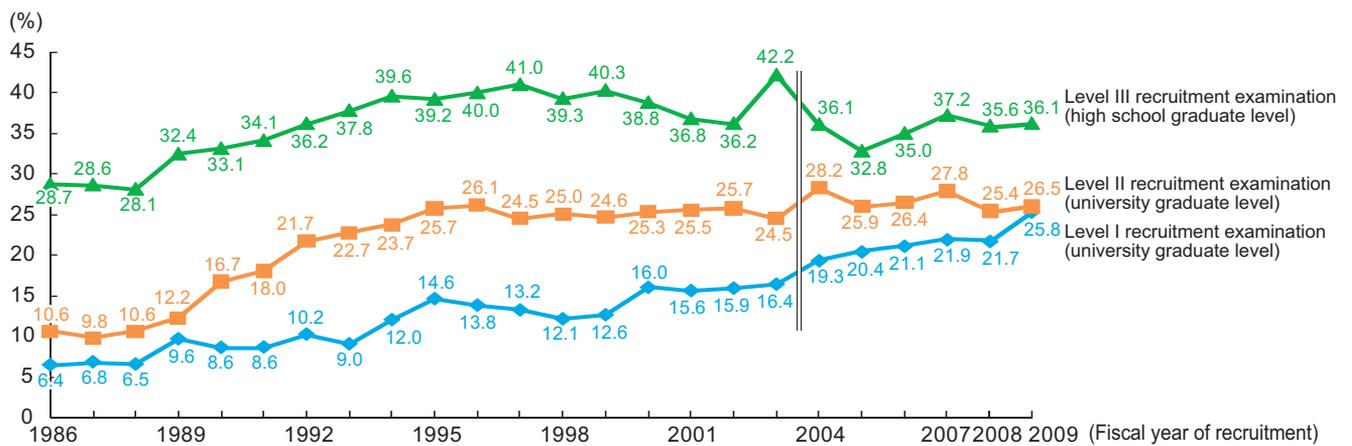


Positive outcome to be reflected in other fields



Toward a Diverse, Vitalized Society!

Ratio of Female National Public Officers



Source: Data from the National Personnel Authority and from the “Toward the Enlargement of the Recruitment and Promotion of Female National Public Employees – Follow-up Measures,” National Personnel Authority, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

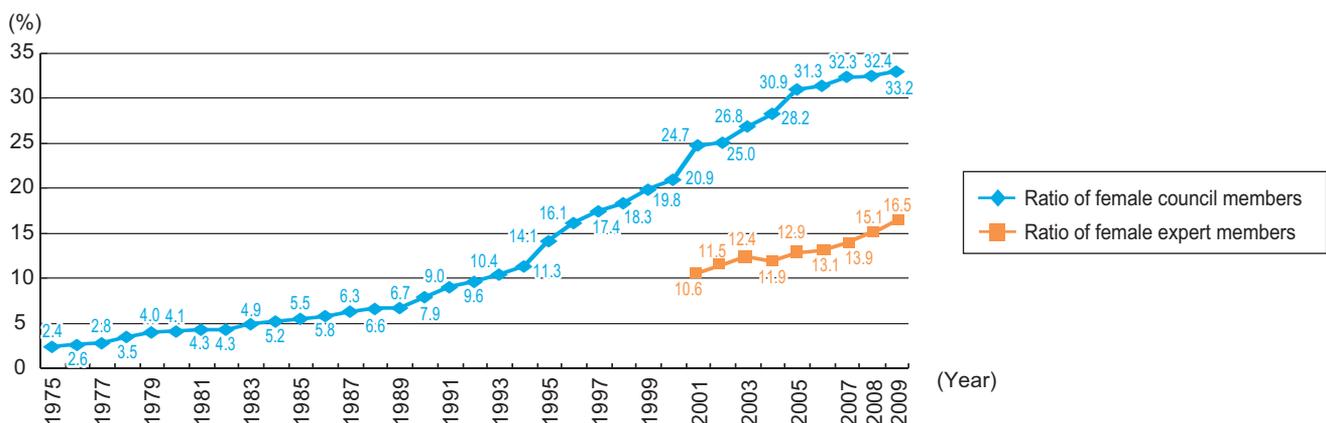
Notes:

1. Data for fiscal 2003 and before (left hand side of the double line) represent female employees employed by level I, II and III Recruitment Examinations (including those employed by independent administrative agencies), excluding those employed by the Defense Agency or as National Diet staff.
2. Data for fiscal 2004 and after (right hand side of the double line) represent the aggregate of female employees employed by level I, II and III Recruitment Examinations (excluding those employed by independent administrative agencies or as National Diet Staff) those employed by level I, II and III Recruitment Examinations by Ministry of Defense or other similar examinations and those employed by Re-Challenge Examination in fiscal 2008 (excluding imperial palace guards, correctional officers and immigration control officers).
3. Data for fiscal 2008 is as of April 30, 2009

The government set a target of increasing the recruitment of female employees in the whole government from among successful applicants who passed the Level I recruitment civil service examination to approximately 30% around FY 2010. The target was also incorporated in the Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality adopted by the Cabinet in December 2005.

With regard to the promotion of female public officers, a numerical target of increasing the share of women in managerial positions in the whole government to approximately 5% was adopted, under the above-noted “Program for Accelerating Women’s Social Participation.”

Female Members in National Advisory Councils and Committees



Source: Data from the Cabinet Office

With regard to the female members in national advisory councils and committees, initiatives for setting numerical targets and the deadline for their achievement are well under way. The current overall objective is to have the composition of these councils as such that the number of either male or female members shall not be less than 40% of the total membership by 2020, and efforts are being made to increase the proportion of female members to at least 33.3% by the end of FY 2010 as the short-term target. The survey at the end of September 2009 revealed that the proportion of female members was 33.2%.