

5. Women's Empowerment Act

■ The Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace

- Promulgated and partly came into effect on September 4, 2015/ Fully came into effect on April 1, 2016.
- Temporary legislation with a 10-year term limit (until March 31, 2026)
- Partial revision of the act was promulgated on June 5, 2019.

● Basic Concept

To promote female advancement in the workplace and make our society rich and vibrant

- 1) Consider the impacts of business practices such as stereotyped perceptions of gender roles in the workplace and improve them by, for example, actively providing women with opportunities of appointment to higher positions and promotions
- 2) Develop the environment required for women to balance work and family life
- 3) Respect women's own will

● Overview of the Act

Employers (private business owners and national government and local governments) are to:

- 1) **Grasp conditions** related to female participation and advancement in the workplace (required items specified in ministerial ordinance) and **analyze issues**;
- 2) **Establish and disclose a plan of action for employers** based on the conditions grasped and issues analyzed; [Items required in the plan of action for employers (specified in the law)];
• **Goals (to be set numerically)** • Initiatives • Implementation period for initiatives • Plan period
- 3) **Disclose information related to women's participation and advancement** to contribute to career opportunities for women.

The national government conducts measures such as **certifying general employers who are recognized as having favorable conditions ("Eruboshi" certification)** and **increasing opportunities for public procurement contracts**, etc. for such employers.

Local governments conduct measures such as increasing contract opportunities, etc. in line with national government policy (obligated to make efforts).

Local governments establish and disclose a promotion plan (plan related to promotion of female participation and career advancement in their areas of jurisdiction) (obligated to make efforts).

● Overview of the Partial Revision of the Act

- (1) The scope of general employers who are required to establish a plan of action for employers and disclose information related to women's participation and advancement will be expanded from General employers with 301 or more full-time employees to General employers with 101 or more full-time employees.
- (2) General employers with 301 or more full-time employees as well as national and local governments will be required to disclose multiple items of information related to women's participation and advancement.
- (3) A system of special certification (called Platinum Eruboshi) will be established to recognize general employers who have done an outstanding job of addressing women's empowerment.

※ Date of enforcement is:

- Provision (1) above will be enforced on April 1, 2022 .
- Provisions (2) and (3) above will be enforced on June 1, 2020.

● Progress Status of Measures

1. **Development rates of the plan of action for employer** : National, prefectural and municipal governments **100%**, Private business owners employing more than 300 regular workers **98.9%** (as of the end of Dec.2019)
2. Promoting **“visualization”**, which is mainly achieved by disclosing information (national and local governments: “Visualization” site (Cabinet Office), private business owners: Database of companies promoting female advancement (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare))
3. **Eruboshi certification acquisition** : **992 companies** (Level 3: 638 companies, Level 2: 349 companies, Level 1: 5 companies as of the end of Dec. 2019)
4. In the evaluation for **public procurement (Comprehensive Evaluation Bidding Method, etc.)**, additional points are given to companies promoting work-life balance (**such as Eruboshi certified companies**) (Since FY 2016)
5. **Regional Female Advancement Promotion Subsidies by Cabinet Office**: Support the local government’s initiatives based on the promotion plans (Since FY 2016)
6. **Development rates of prefectural promotion plans**: **100%** (as of the end of Dec.2019)

■ Public Procurement for Evaluating Corporations that Promote Measures such as Work-life Balance to Encourage the Advancement of Women

The guidelines for utilization of public procurement and subsidies towards the promotion of women’s advancement (Decided by the Headquarters for Creating a Society in which All Women Shine on March 22, 2016)



● Basic Concept

To encourage companies to take positive actions for public procurements and subsidies for the realization of work-life balance, which forms the basis of promoting the advancement of women.

● Initiative for the Evaluation of Work-life Balance in Procurement

- Pursuant to the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation, when ministries conduct procurements that evaluate factors other than price (overall-greatest-value evaluation method and competitive proposal evaluation method), additional evaluation points will be awarded to companies that promote work-life balance* based on the content of the contract.

* Companies that received certification [e.g., “Eruboshi” certification] pursuant to the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation, the Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children, or the Youth Labor Welfare Act and small- and medium-sized companies that formulated action plans for business owners based on the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation.

※ In general, promoting work-life balance will increase work efficiency as a result of streamlining and revising the workflow. It will also enhance the company’s planning ability and capacity to adapt to market changes as a result of securing and consolidating diverse human resources including women. This will in turn increase productivity, which is expected not only to raise the company’s price competitiveness but also secure and improve the quality of its businesses.

※ All of the certifications based on the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation, the Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children, and the Youth Labor Welfare Act have criteria that limit long-hour work, a critical component of the work-life balance initiative.

※ The detailed allocation of points will be decided by each ministry.

● Progress Status of Measures

() is the percentage of implemented procurement measures

		FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
Government	Amount	¥ 620 billion (14.5%)	¥ 940 billion (25.1%)	¥ 1,210 billion (32.2%)
	Number of cases	8,500 cases (19.5%)	8,800 cases (24.3%)	9,500 cases (27.4%)
Incorporated administrative agencies**	Amount	—	¥ 390 billion (34.3%)	¥ 670 billion (41.9%)
	Number of cases	—	4,800 cases (48.3%)	6,400 cases (54.7%)

** For incorporated administrative agencies, we do not have data for FY2016.