

Steps towards Gender Equality in Japan

**Gender Equality Bureau
Cabinet Office
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(Appendix) Milestones in the advancement of women since International Women's Year

Preface

The constitution of Japan, enacted after World War II, clearly stipulates respect for the individual and equality under the law. Since the constitution was written, Japan has pressed forward with laws to strive toward gender equality, and has radically improved the legal status of women.

A brief looking at the situation for women in Japan today is revealing. The average life expectancy for Japanese females in 2004 was 85.6 years, much greater than the male average of 78.6. Every year since 1985, Japanese women have had the world's longest life expectancy. Regarding the education of Japanese women, 97.8 percent of them advance to high school or the equivalent, and since 1969 that percentage has been higher for women than for men. In 2004, the percentage of women advancing to universities and junior colleges was 48.7 percent, very nearly as high as the 51.1 percent of men who did so. Furthermore, women made up 41.3 percent of the workforce.

However, women's participation in Japan's policy decision-making processes remains low, and the percentage of women in the labor force drops during the primary marriage and childbearing/rearing period of the early 30s. Opportunities for women to exert their abilities and fully contribute to society are insufficient.

At the same time, to respond to the rapid changes occurring in Japan's socioeconomic situation, such as the trend toward fewer children, the aging of the population, and the maturation of domestic economic activities, it has become a matter of urgent importance to achieve a gender-equal society in which men and women respect the other's human rights and share responsibilities, and in which every citizen is able to fully exercise their individuality and abilities regardless of gender.

In light of this situation, it is vital to position the realization of a gender-equal society as a top-priority task in determining one of Japan's 21-century frameworks, and to implement policies related to promotion of formation of a Gender-equal Society in all fields.

What Is a Gender-equal Society?

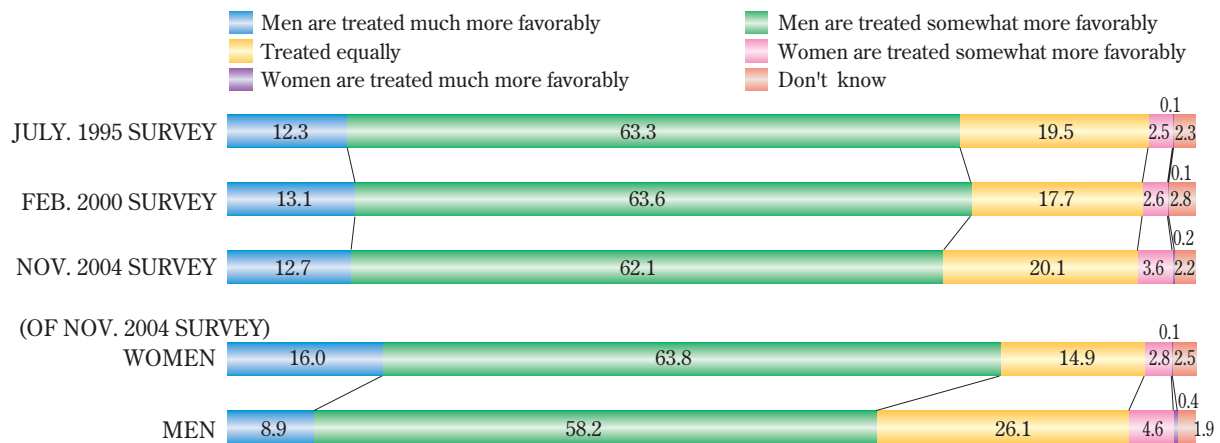
“a society in which both women and men shall be given equal opportunities to participate voluntarily in activities in all fields as equal partners, and be able to enjoy political, economic, social and cultural benefits equally as well as to share responsibilities”

<from Article 2 of the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society, effective in 1999, Japan>

1. Perceptions of Gender Equality and Stereotyped Role-Sharing

When asked about gender equality in society as a whole, both women and men feel that disparities exist in the status of women and men. 73.9 percent of the total feel men are treated more favorably.

(Figure 1) Sense of Equality Regarding the Status of Women and Men

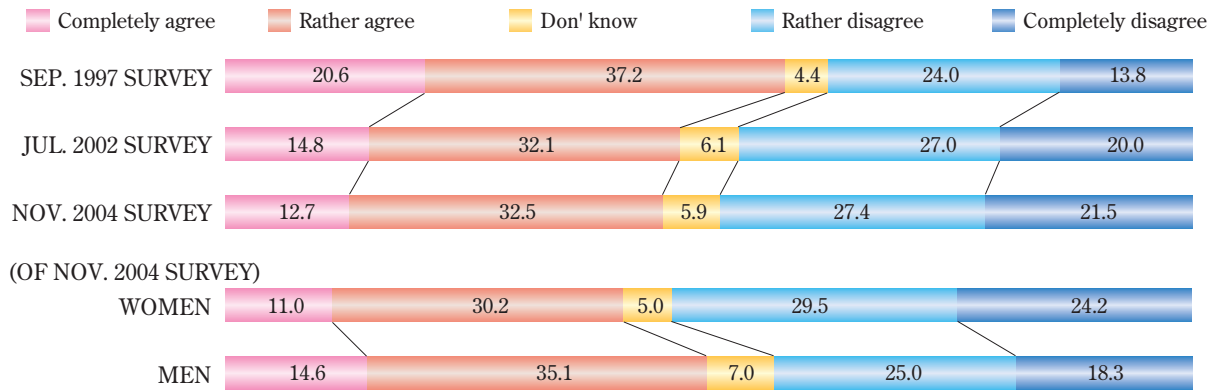


(Source) "Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society (Nov. 2004)," Cabinet Office

According to the 2004 "Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society", the number of those who agree with the view "The husband should be the breadwinner; and the wife should stay at home" remains large, while the number of those who disagree increased by 11.1 percentage points compared to that of seven years ago, with 48.9 percent of the total disagreeing with the view and the same percentage agreeing.

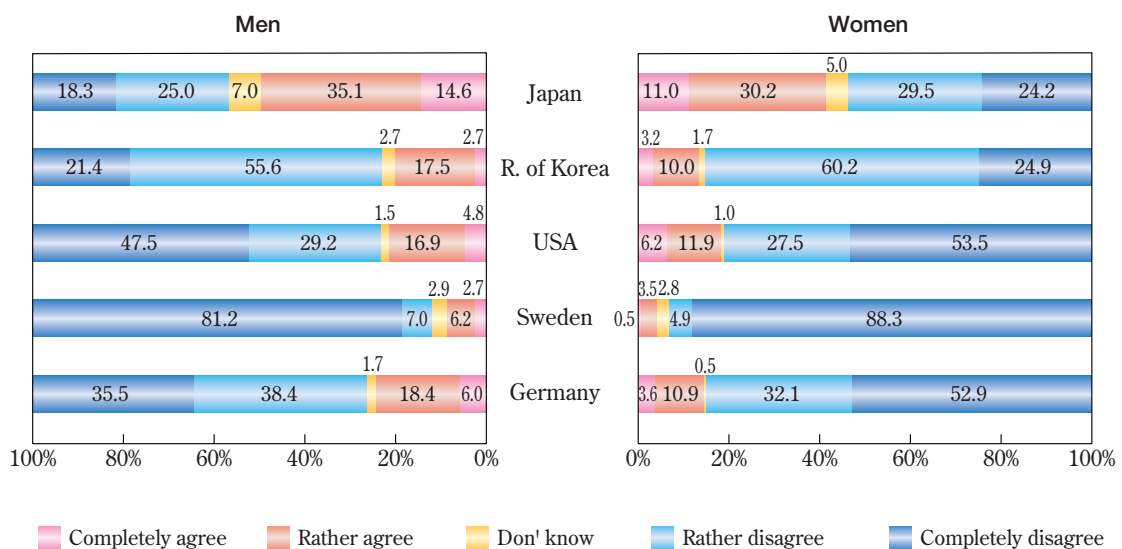
The stereotyped perception for gender roles that has been developed and standardized over a long time in the minds of Japanese people has been a major obstacle in the formation of a truly gender-equal society.

(Figure 2) View on the Question, “The Husband Should Be the Breadwinner, and the Wife Should Stay at Home”



(Source) “Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society (Nov. 2004),” Cabinet Office

(Figure 3) International Comparison : View on the Question, “The Husband Should Be the Breadwinner, and the Wife Should Stay at Home”



(Source) Japan: “Public Opinion Poll on a Gender-equal Society (Nov. 2004),” Cabinet Office

The others: International Comparison on a Gender-equal Society (Jun. 2003),” Cabinet Office

2. International Comparison of Human Development Index

According to the “Human Development Report 2005” produced by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Japan is ranked 11th out of 177 countries in the HDI (Human Development Index), which shows how far basic human capabilities are being developed. Japan's rank in the GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure), which shows the extent to which women participate in politics and economics, however, is a much lower 43rd out of 80 countries.

In other words, in Japan, the development of human potential—including that of women—has come a long way, but women still lack sufficient opportunities to develop their full potential.

(Table 1) International Comparison of Human Development Indices

(1) HDI
(Human Development Index)

Rank	Country	HDI
1	Norway	0.963
2	Iceland	0.956
3	Australia	0.955
4	Luxembourg	0.949
5	Canada	0.949
6	Sweden	0.949
7	Switzerland	0.947
8	Ireland	0.946
9	Belgium	0.945
10	United States	0.944
11	Japan	0.943
12	Netherlands	0.943
13	Finland	0.941
14	Denmark	0.941
15	United Kingdom	0.939
16	France	0.938
17	Austria	0.936
18	Italy	0.934
19	New Zealand	0.933
20	Germany	0.930
21	Spain	0.928
22	Hong Kong, China (SAR)	0.916
23	Israel	0.915
24	Greece	0.912
25	Singapore	0.907
26	Slovenia	0.904
27	Portugal	0.904
28	Korea, Rep. of	0.901
29	Cyprus	0.891
30	Barbados	0.878
31	Czech Republic	0.874
32	Malta	0.867
33	Brunei Darussalam	0.866
34	Argentina	0.863
35	Hungary	0.862
36	Poland	0.858
37	Chile	0.854
38	Estonia	0.853
39	Lithuania	0.852
40	Qatar	0.849
41	United Arab Emirates	0.849
42	Slovakia	0.849
43	Bahrain	0.846
44	Kuwait	0.844
45	Croatia	0.841

(2) GEM
(Gender Empowerment Measure)

Rank	Country	GEM
1	Norway	0.928
2	Denmark	0.86
3	Sweden	0.852
4	Iceland	0.834
5	Finland	0.833
6	Belgium	0.828
7	Australia	0.826
8	Netherlands	0.814
9	Germany	0.813
10	Canada	0.807
11	Switzerland	0.795
12	United States	0.793
13	Austria	0.779
14	New Zealand	0.769
15	Spain	0.745
16	Ireland	0.724
17	Bahamas	0.719
18	United Kingdom	0.716
19	Costa Rica	0.668
20	Argentina	0.665
21	Portugal	0.656
22	Singapore	0.654
23	Trinidad and Tobago	0.65
24	Israel	0.622
25	Barbados	0.615
26	Lithuania	0.614
27	Poland	0.612
28	Latvia	0.606
29	Bulgaria	0.604
30	Slovenia	0.603
31	Namibia	0.603
32	Croatia	0.599
33	Slovakia	0.597
34	Czech Republic	0.595
35	Estonia	0.595
36	Greece	0.594
37	Italy	0.589
38	Mexico	0.583
39	Cyprus	0.571
40	Panama	0.563
41	Macedonia, TFYR	0.555
42	Tanzania, U. Rep. of	0.538
43	Japan	0.534
44	Hungary	0.528
45	Dominican Republic	0.527

(Note)

1. The HDI rankings are from among 177 countries.
2. The GEM rankings are from among 80 countries.

HDI: Human Development Index

The HDI is a composite index that measures how far basic human abilities have been developed by assessing the level of achievement in three basic areas: “the ability to live long and healthy,” “knowledge,” and “living standards worthy of humans.” In concrete terms, it is calculated using average life expectancy, the standard of education (adult literacy rate and school attendance rate) and adjusted income per capita.

GEM: Gender Empowerment Measure

This is a measure of whether women are able to participate actively in economic and political life, and in decision-making. Whereas the HDI focuses on the expansion of human abilities, the GEM focuses on whether people are able to use these abilities to take advantage of various opportunities throughout their lives. In concrete terms, it is calculated using women's income, the percentage of women holding professional and technical posts, the percentage of women holding administrative or managerial posts and the percentage of female elected representatives in government.

(Source) "Human Development Report 2005,"
UNDP

3. Women's Participation in Various Fields

(1) International Comparison

The proportion of women's participation in national parliaments and managerial positions in Japan remains remarkably low.

**(Table 2) International Comparison : Women in National Parliaments
(Situation as of 31 January 2006)**

Rank	Country	Lower or single House			Upper House or Senate		
		Seats	Women	% of W	Seats	Women	% of W
1	Rwanda	80	39	48.8	26	9	34.6
2	Sweden	349	158	45.3	-	-	-
3	Norway	169	64	37.9	-	-	-
4	Finland	200	75	37.5	-	-	-
5	Denmark	179	66	36.9	-	-	-
10	Mozambique	250	87	34.8	-	-	-
16	Germany	614	195	31.8	69	13	18.8
45	Canada	308	64	20.8	89	33	37.1
51	United Kingdom	646	127	19.7	721	126	17.5
68	United States of America	435	66	15.2	100	14	14.0
84	France	574	70	12.2	331	56	16.9
88	Italy	616	71	11.5	321	26	8.1
99	Russian Federation	447	44	9.8	178	6	3.4
102	Japan	480	44	9.2	242	34	14.0
105	Cameroon	180	16	8.9	-	-	-

(Source) IPU (Inter-Parliamentary Union) Website (<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>)

The data of Japan is under the situation as of December 2005.

(Note) 187 countries are classified by descending order of the percentage of women in the lower or single House.

(Table 3) International Comparison:Women's Participation in Managerial Positions

	Female legislators, senior officials and managers		National Public Officers
United States of America	45.9 % (2002)		23.1 % (2001)
France	—		19.3 (2001)
Germany	34.5 (2002)		9.5 (1998)
Sweden	30.5 (2002)		—
Japan	10.1 (2004)		1.5 (2004)

(Source) “Annual Report on the Employment of Minorities, Women and People with Disabilities in the Federal Government” (USA), I L O “Yearbook of Labour Statistics 2004”, etc.

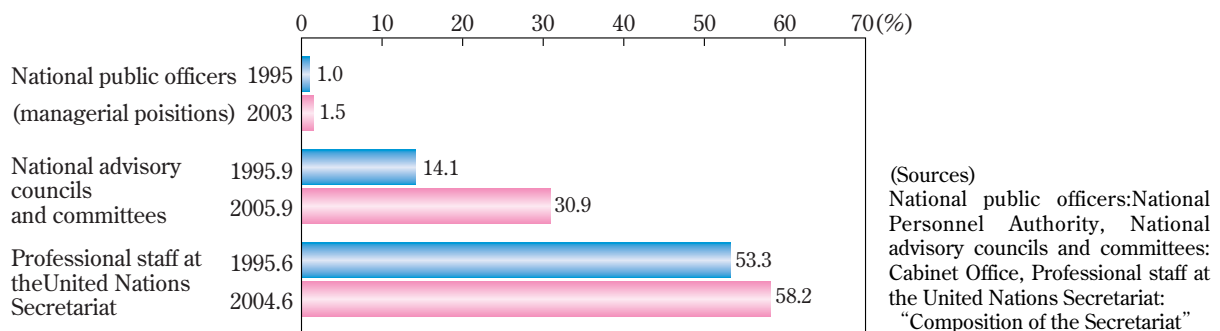
(2) Administration

The percentage of female national public officers in high-ranked managerial positions (director and/or higher level in headquarters) stood at 1.5 percent in fiscal 2003, and has shown a gradual increase over the long term.

According to one survey, as of September 30, 2005, the proportion of female members of national advisory councils and committees had risen substantially, to 30.9 percent; 99 percent of those had female members.

Regarding female local government workers, according to a survey, basically as of April 1, 2004, the percentage of female workers appointed to managerial positions accounted for 4.9 percent in prefectures and 6.4 percent in government-designated cities. The proportion of female members of advisory councils and committees in local government has been increasing in prefectures and government-designated cities, and stood at 28.3 percent in prefectures, 27.2 percent in government-designated cities.

(Figure 4) WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN ADMINISTRATION AND INTERNATIONAL FIELDS



(3) International Fields

Eleven women have been appointed ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary since the first woman was appointed to ambassador in 1980. Three of them currently serve as ambassadors: to Italy, Ghana and Norway, and women comprise approximately 2.5 percent of all Japanese ambassadors (as of October 1, 2004).

Women's representation among Japanese professional staff in the Secretariat of the United Nations is gradually rising, from 54.8 percent at the end of June 1997, to 58.2 percent at the end of June 2004. The number of female Japanese professional staff in the United Nations and other major international organizations had risen significantly, from 271 in 1997 to 357 in 2004. Of these, those who are currently engaged in executive positions are the Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Deputy Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). More Japanese women are expected to work for international organizations in the future.

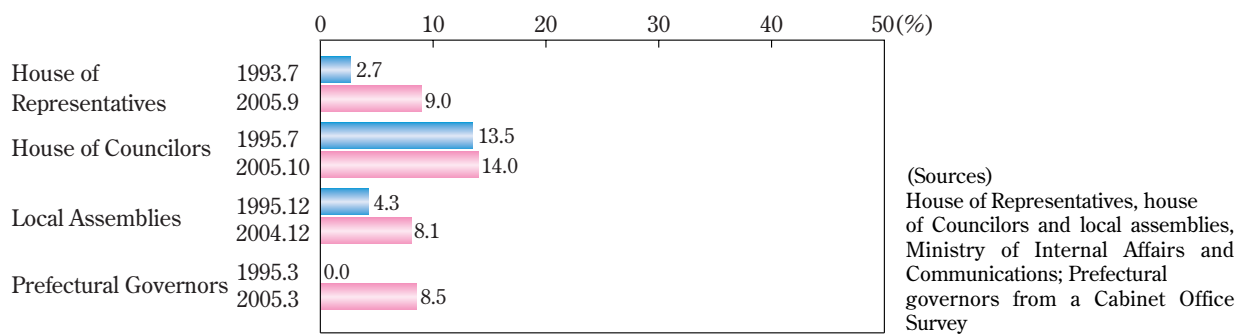
(4) Politics

With the exception of a short period after the war, the percentage of female members of the House of Representatives wavered between 1 and 2, until the 38th general elections in 1986, after which it began to rise. It was 9.0 percent as of Sep. 2005. Female membership in the House of Councilors has risen gradually from 4.0 percent in the first ordinary elections in 1947, to 14.0 percent as of Oct. 2005.

The number and ratio of female members in local assemblies is 4,635, or 8.1 percent. Notably, it stands at 21.5 percent in the assemblies of special wards (Tokyo).

There are four women governors of prefectures (8.5 percent of the total) as of April 1, 2005, nine city mayors (1.2 percent of the total) as of the end of December 2004, five town mayors and two village mayors (0.3 percent of the total) as of the end of December 2004.

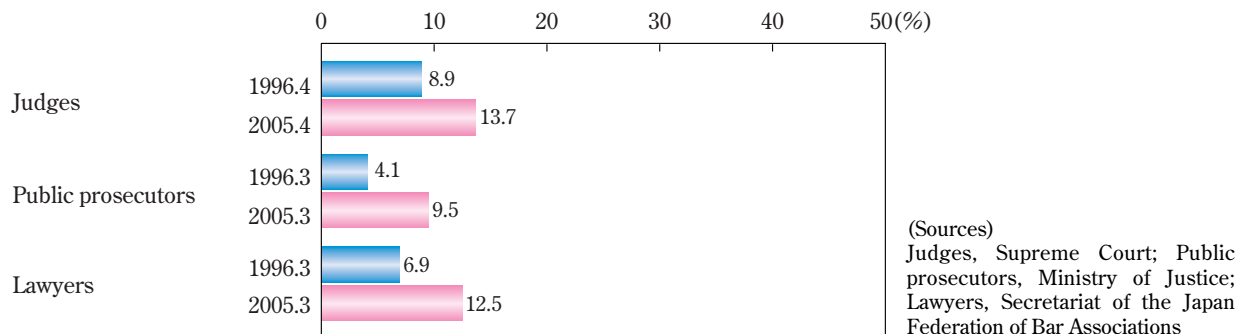
(Figure 5) WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS



(5) Judiciary

The long-term trend is for the percentage of female judges, public prosecutors and lawyers to rise.

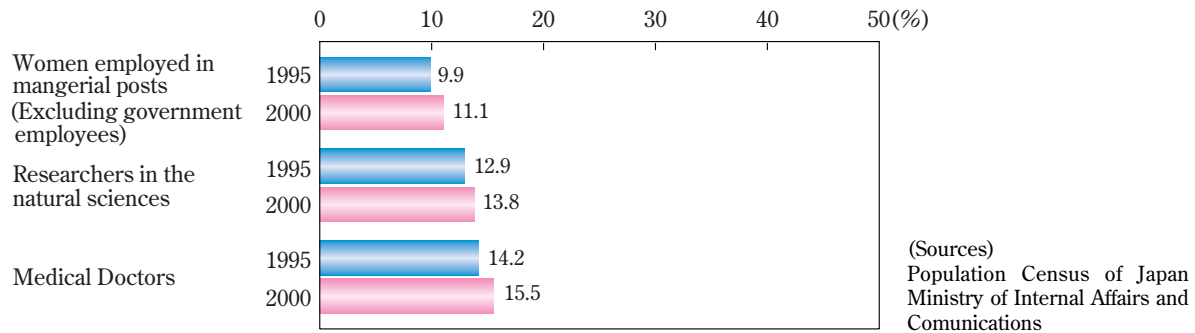
(Figure 6) WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE JUDICIARY



(6) Managerial, Professional, and Technical Fields

Although the percentage of women employed in managerial posts (excluding government employees) and female researchers in the natural sciences and medical doctors remains low, their numbers have increased.

(Figure 7) WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN MANAGERIAL, PROFESSIONAL, AND TECHNICAL FIELDS



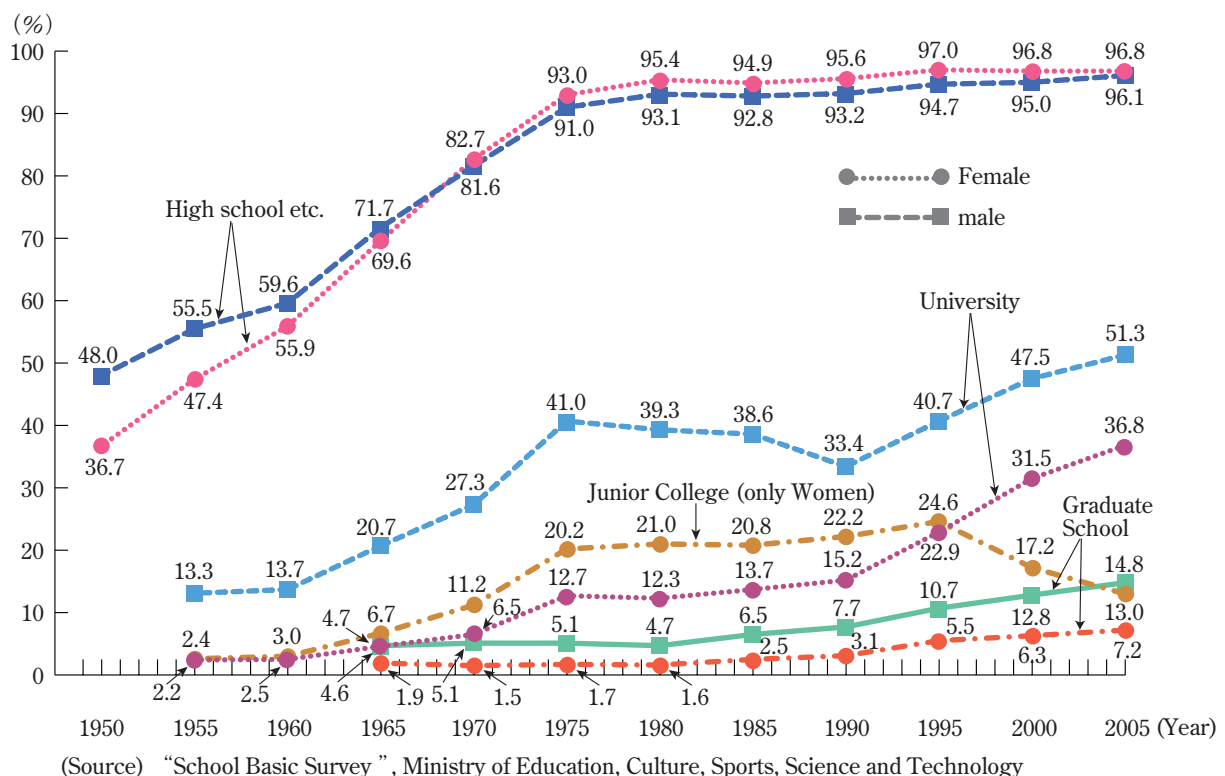
(7) Education

The percentage of students advancing to high school in Japan is extremely high, with the percentage of female students exceeding that of male students.

In terms of higher education level, most male students choose universities (undergraduate level). On the other hand, some female students go to universities (undergraduate level), while other female students enter junior colleges. Recently, more female students have been enrolling in four-year universities, while the percentage of female junior college students has been falling.

Especially, the percentage of advancing to graduate school is the highest (7.1percent).

(Figure 8) Enrollment Rate by School Category

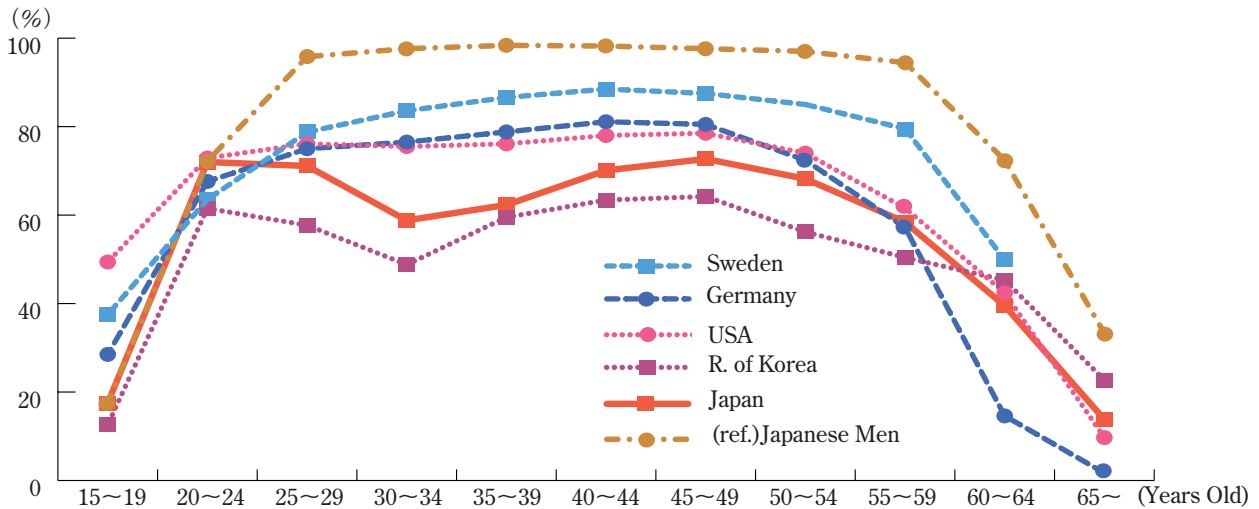


4. The Present Status of Women in the Field of Employment

(1) Labor Force Participation Rate of Women

In the United States, Germany, Sweden, the pattern of women's labor force participation rate by age bracket is not M-shaped.

(Figure 9) International Comparison : Women's Labor Force Participation Rate by Age Bracket



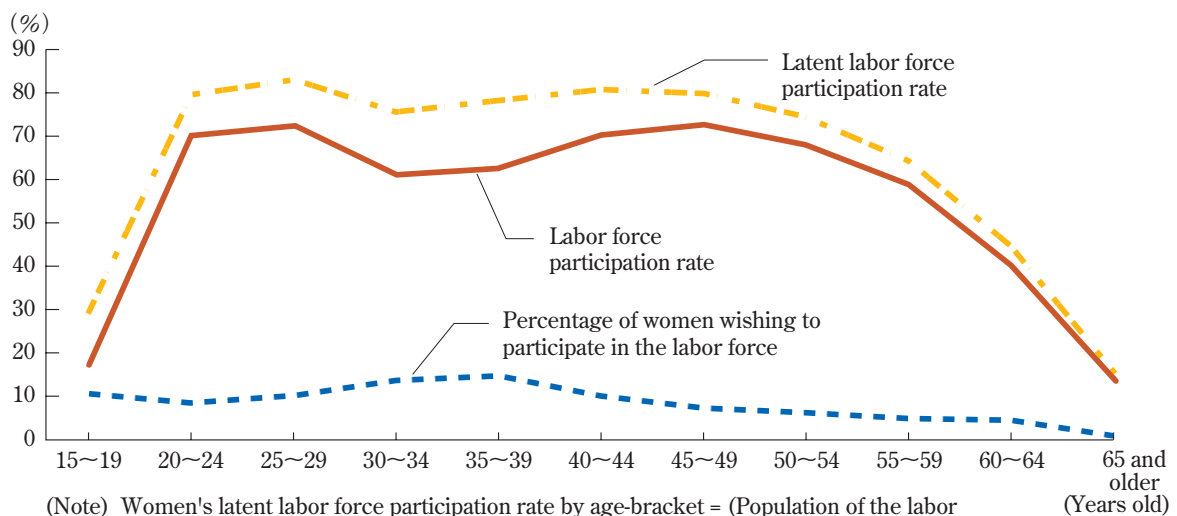
(Source) USA, Japan, Germany: ILO "Yearbook of Labour Statistics 2002"

(Note) 1. Labor force participation rate = (Population of the labor force / Population aged 15 years and older)

2. "15~19 years old" of USA and Sweden means 16~19 years old.

The labor force participation rate of women in Japan remains an M-shaped curve, with their participation declining due to marriage, childbirth, and child raising. Women's aspirations to work are not being realized, although many women have a great desire to work throughout their childbirth/child raising years. The latent labor force participation rate, which adds the number of unemployed women who wish to work to the labor force population, approximates an upside down U-shaped curve.

(Figure 10) Women's Latent Labor Force Participation Rate by Age Bracket



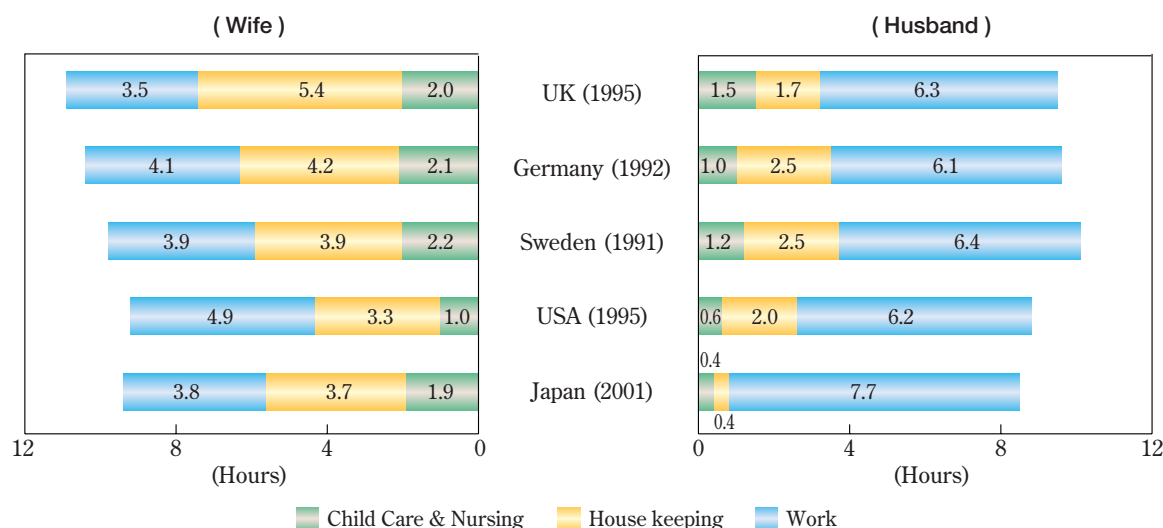
(Note) Women's latent labor force participation rate by age-bracket = (Population of the labor force (by age-bracket) + Population of non-working population who want to work (by age-bracket)) / Population aged 15 years and older (by age-bracket)

(Source) "Labor Force Survey (2004)", Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

(2) Usage of Time by Married Couples

Internationally, Japanese husbands spend little time on housework and raising children.

(Figure 11) International Comparison : Usage of Time by Married Couples

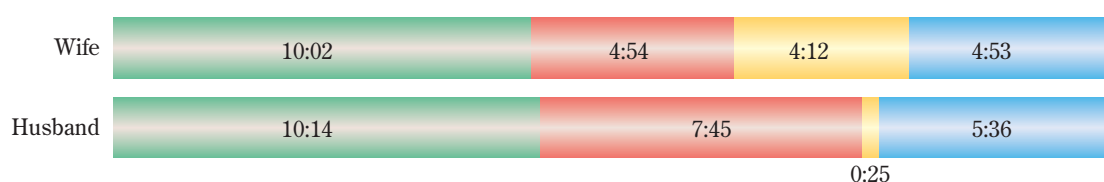


(Source) “Basic Survey of Social Lifestyles” 2001, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications,
“Employment Outlook” 2001, OECD

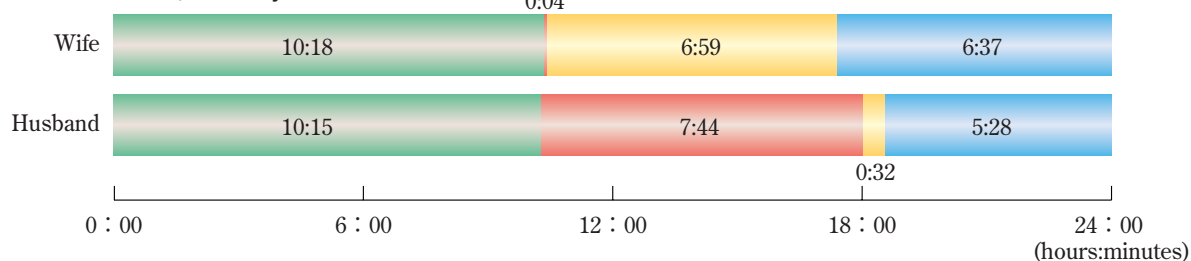
Looking at how Japanese couples spend their time, we see that regardless of whether their wives work, husbands spend little time on housework, raising children, or caring for the elderly. As a result, working wives have to shoulder their responsibilities both at home and at work.

(Figure 12) Japan: Usage of Time by Married Couples

＜ Both husband and wife work ＞



＜ Husband works, wife stays at home ＞



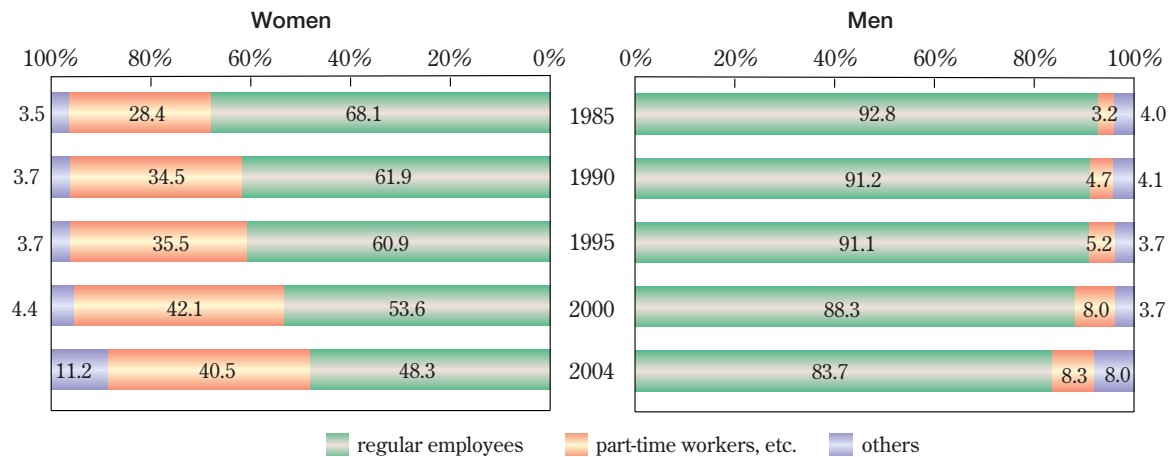
Primary Activities (Sleeping&Eating) Secondary Activities (Work & Commuting) Secondary Activities (Housekeeping, Child Care, Nursing, etc.) Tertiary Activities (Other than activities on the left)

(Source) “Basic Survey of Social Lifestyles” 2001, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

(3) Composition of work patterns

Diversification of work patterns may be given as a distinguishable change in recent employment. The proportion of the labor force engaged in work patterns other than regular employees, including part-timers, dispatch workers and contract workers, has increased, and this trend is particularly noticeable among women.

(Figure 13) Composition of Employees Excluding Board Members by Form of Employment (non-agricultural and forestry sectors)

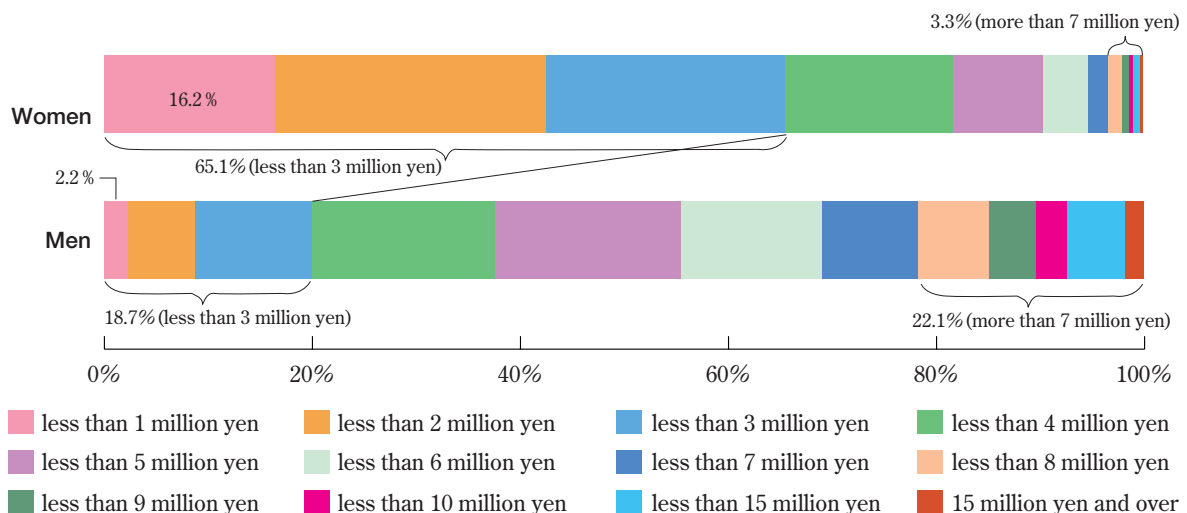


(Source) “Special Survey of the Labour Force Survey (Aug. 2001)”, “Labour Force Survey (2004)”, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

(4) Composition of Salaried Workers by Income Bracket

There is a significant income gap between male and female workers. Among female salaried workers who work for a whole year, 65.1 percent earn 3 million yen or less a year (male workers: 18.7 percent); and 16.2 percent make 1 million yen or less a year (male workers: 2.2 percent). Only 3.3 percent of them make more than 7 million yen a year (male workers: 22.1 percent).

(Figure 14) Composition of Salaried Workers by Income Bracket

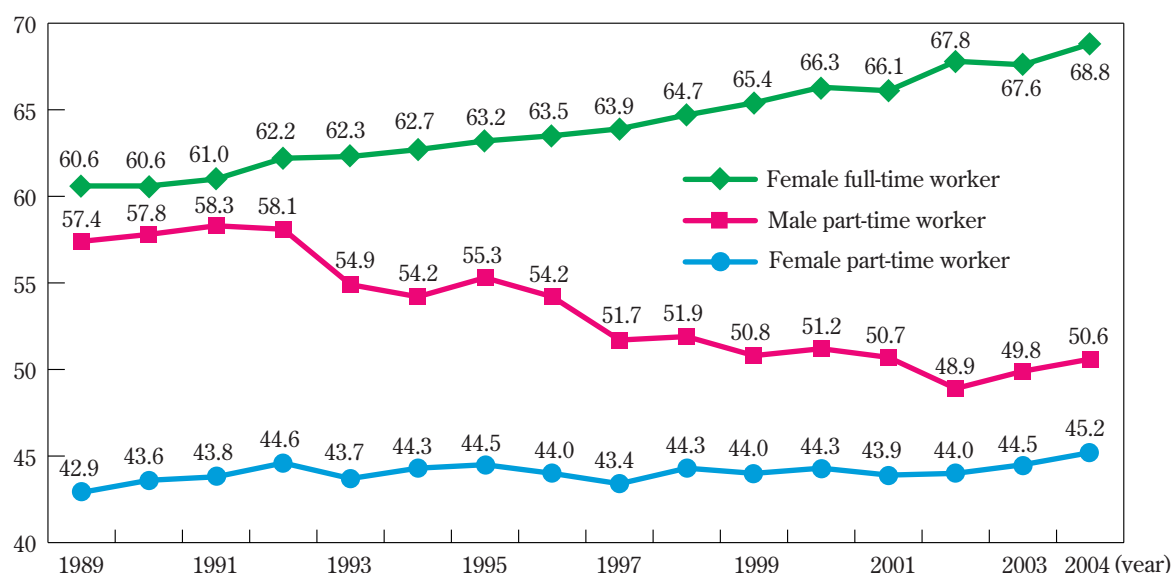


(Source) “Statistic Survey on salary in the private sector 2003,” National Tax Agency

(5) Average Hourly Wages for Workers

The hourly wage level of full-time and part-time female workers still remain low comparing with that of male full-time workers.

(Figure 15) Average hourly wages for workers (male full-time worker=100)



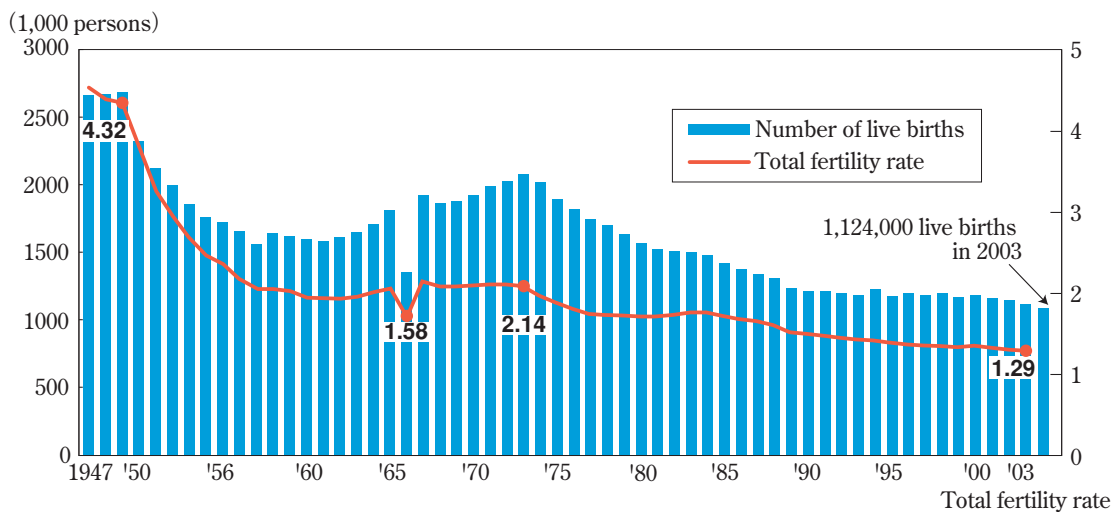
(Source) "Basic Survey on Wage Structure," Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

5. The Declining Birthrate and Gender Equality

(1) Declining Birthrate and Aging Population

Japan has been gaining lower birthrates and an increase in the population of the elderly. The total fertility rate (a cumulative rates of age specific fertility rates for women aged 15 to 49 in a given year; this corresponds to the number of births per woman in her lifetime based on these age specific birthrates) fell below 2.00 in 1975 and has been declining further since then. It is assumed that one of the reason for decrease of total fertility rate in Japan is increase of unmarried rate.

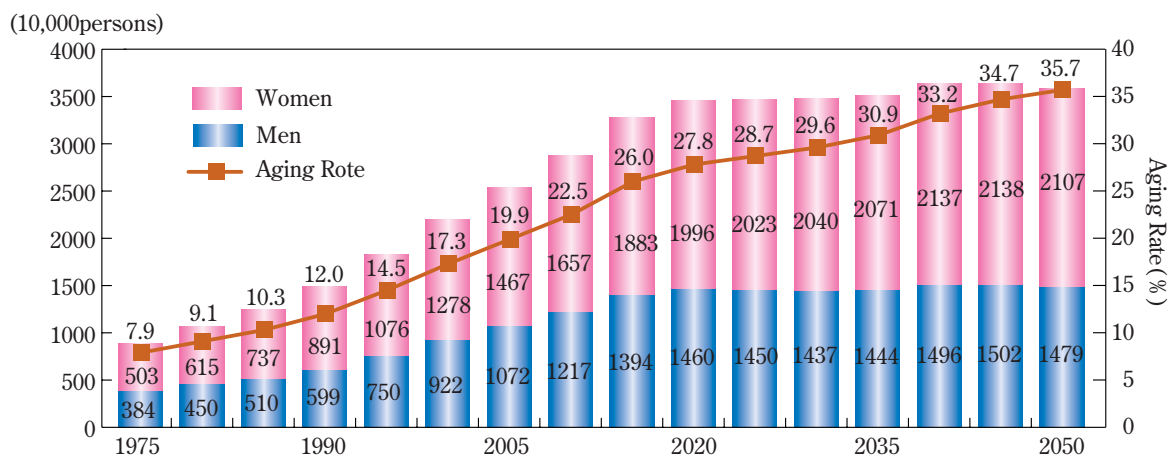
(Figure 16) Trends in Live Births and Total Fertility Rate



(Source) "Vital Statistics of Japan," Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

The aging rate (the proportion of population aged 65 years and over to total population) has also been rising rapidly. Japan's population is aging mainly due to lower birthrates and longer life expectancies. The life expectancy at the birth for women was 85.33 years and 78.36 years for men in 2003.

(Figure 17) Aging Rate and Population of Elderly People added 65 and over

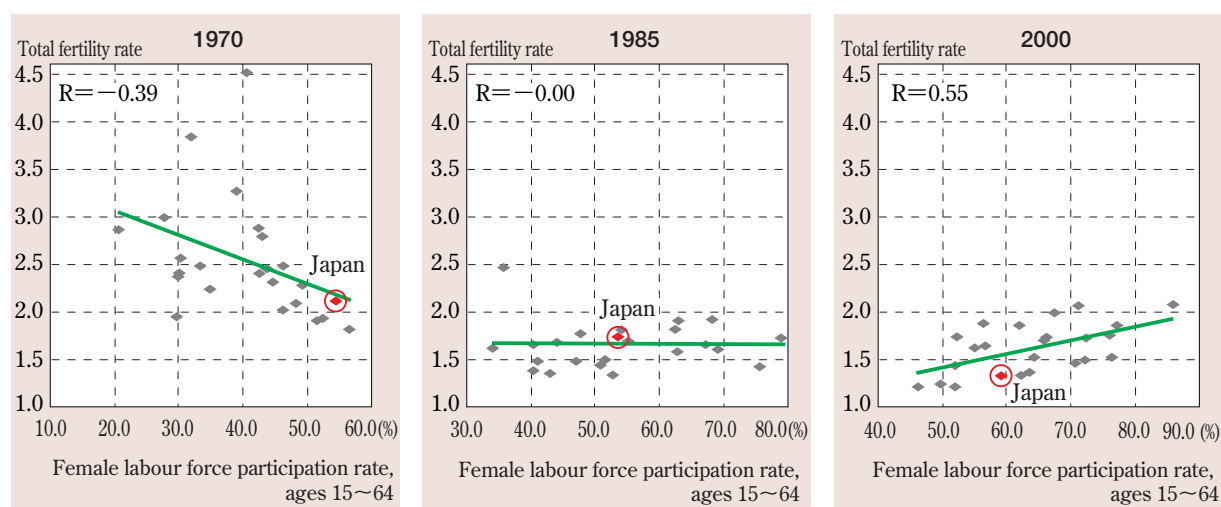


(Source) Population data leading up to the year 2000 are collected from the "National Census", Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. Those for 2005 and onward represent the projected population as of October 1 of each year (median projection), which comes from "Population Projections for Japan: 2001-2050 (as of January 2002)," National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.

(2) Relationship Between the Female Labour Force Participation Rate and the Birthrate

According to data from the OECD countries, in 1970, the higher the female labour force participation rate, the lower the birthrate tended to be. In 2000, however, tendency for countries with higher rates of female labour force participation to have higher birthrates was evident. This demonstrates that there is no firm relationship between the female labour force participation rate and the birthrate such that when one goes up the other does as well. Instead, it is apparent that there are social environments (policies, systems, values, etc.), affect both.

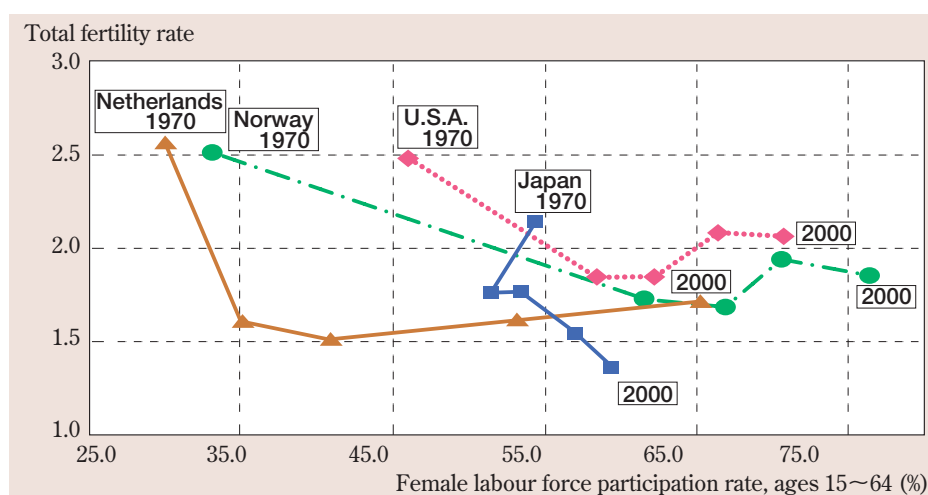
(Figure 18) Female Labour Force Participation Rate and Total Fertility Rates in 24 OECD Countries :1970, 1985, and 2000



(3) Changes in Female Labour Force Participation Rate and Total Fertility Rate

The increase in Japan's rate of female labour force participation from 1970 to 2000 is the smallest of the 24 countries. (Japan increased its rate by 5.2 percentage points, while the average increase was 23.3 points for 24 countries.) On the other hand, the decline in Japan's birthrate was about average rather than small. (Japan declined by 0.8 points, while the average decline was 0.9 points for the 24 countries.)

(Figure 19) Changes in Female Labour Force Participation Rate and Total Fertility Rate in Japan, the U.S.A., the Netherlands, and Norway



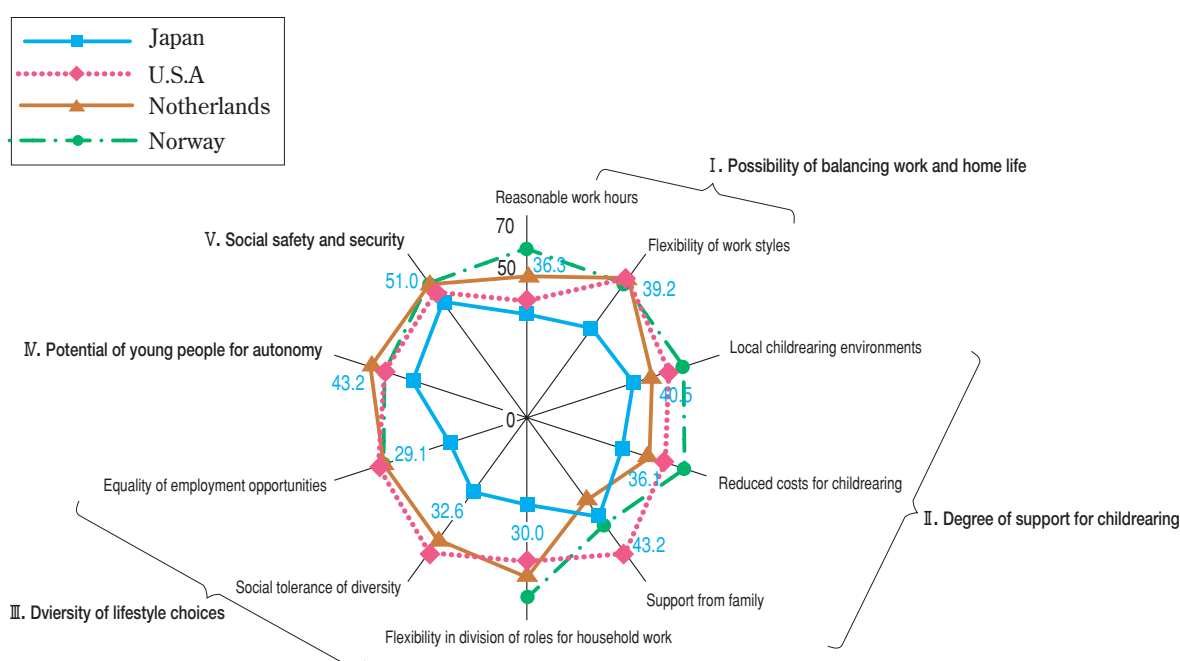
(Note)
Five time points: 1970, 1980, 1985, 1990, and 2000.

(4) Social Environments Regarding Declining Birthrates and Gender-Equality

Social environments in countries that have both increased female labour force participation rate and restored birthrates over the past 20 years are characterized by progress on support for balancing work and home life, such as reexamining work styles including those of males, and upgrading daycare facilities; on eliminating stereotyped views of gender roles; on male participation in housework and childrearing; and on equalizing employment opportunities.

This suggests that promotion of policies for gender-equal participation will also contribute to measures against the declining birthrate.

(Figure 20) Social Environment Indices for Japan, the U.S.A., the Netherlands, and Norway



(Note) 1. Numbers shown in blue are Japan's scores.

2. The data were not available for Norway regarding "Social tolerance of diversity".

(Figure 18-20: Sources)

"International comparison of the social environments regarding declining birthrates and gender-equality" (2005), Specialist Committee on the Declining Birthrate and Gender Equality, Council for Gender Equality

The Japanese government is now promoting efforts to realize a gender-equal society, based on the content of the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society and the Basic Plan for Gender Equality.

1. The Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society

The Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society was publicized and enforced in June 1999. The purpose of this law is to comprehensively and systematically promote formation of a Gender-equal Society. The Law clarifies five basic principles relating to the formation of a gender-equal society, and stipulates the roles of the state, local governments, and citizens regarding their respective responsibilities.

5 basic principles

1. Respect for the human rights of women and men (Article 3)

Formation of a Gender-equal Society shall be promoted based on respect for the human rights of women and men.

2. Consideration to social systems or practices (Article 4)

Care should be taken so that social systems and practices have as neutral an impact as possible on this selection of social activities.

3. Joint participation in planning and deciding policies, etc. (Article 5)

Formation of a Gender-equal Society shall be promoted based on securing opportunities for women and men to participate jointly as equal partners in the society in planning and deciding policies of the State or local governments, or policies of private bodies.

4. Compatibility of activities in family life and other activities (Article 6)

Formation of a Gender-equal Society shall be promoted so that women and men can perform their roles smoothly as household members in home-related activities.

5. International cooperation (Article 7)

In consideration of the close relationship between the internal promotion of the formation of a Gender-equal Society and efforts by the international community, formation of a Gender-equal Society shall be promoted based on international cooperation.

Responsibility of the State, Local Governments, and Citizens

1. The State is responsible for the comprehensive formulation and implementation of policies related to the promotion of formation of a Gender-equal Society (including Positive Action※/Temporary Special Measures) pursuant to the basic principles on formation of a Gender-equal Society. (Article 8)

※ Positive Action/Temporary Special Measures: Positive provision of the opportunities stipulated in the preceding item to both women and men within the necessary limits to redress gender disparities in terms of such opportunities.

2. Local governments are responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies related to the promotion of the formation of a Gender-equal Society corresponding to national measures, and other policies in accordance with the nature of the areas of local governments, pursuant to the basic principles. (Article 9)

3. Citizens shall make efforts to contribute to the formation of a Gender-equal Society in all areas of society, pursuant to the basic principles. (Article 10)

2. The Basic Plan for Gender Equality

On December 27, 2005, the Cabinet decided the Basic Plan for Gender Equality, the Second plan based upon the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society.

The Basic Plan for Gender Equality stipulates the following items :

- The outline of the policies that should be implemented comprehensively and over the long term related to the promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society
- Other matters required to comprehensively and systematically implement policies related to the promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society

The Basic Plan carries 12 priority fields, and describes the basic direction of long-term measures up until 2020, along with concrete measures to be implemented before the end of fiscal 2010.

12 Priority Fields

1. Expand women's participation in policy decision-making processes
2. Review social systems and practices and raise awareness from a gender-equal perspective
3. Secure equal opportunities and treatment between men and women in the field of employment
4. Establish gender equality for realizing dynamic rural areas
5. Support the efforts of men and women to harmonize work with their family and community life
6. Develop conditions that allow the elderly to live with peace of mind
7. Eliminate all forms of violence against women
8. Support lifelong health for women
9. Promote gender equality in the media
10. Enrich education and learning that promote gender equality and facilitate diversity of choice
11. Contribute to the “Equality, Development and Peace” of the global community
12. Promote gender equality in fields requiring new initiatives

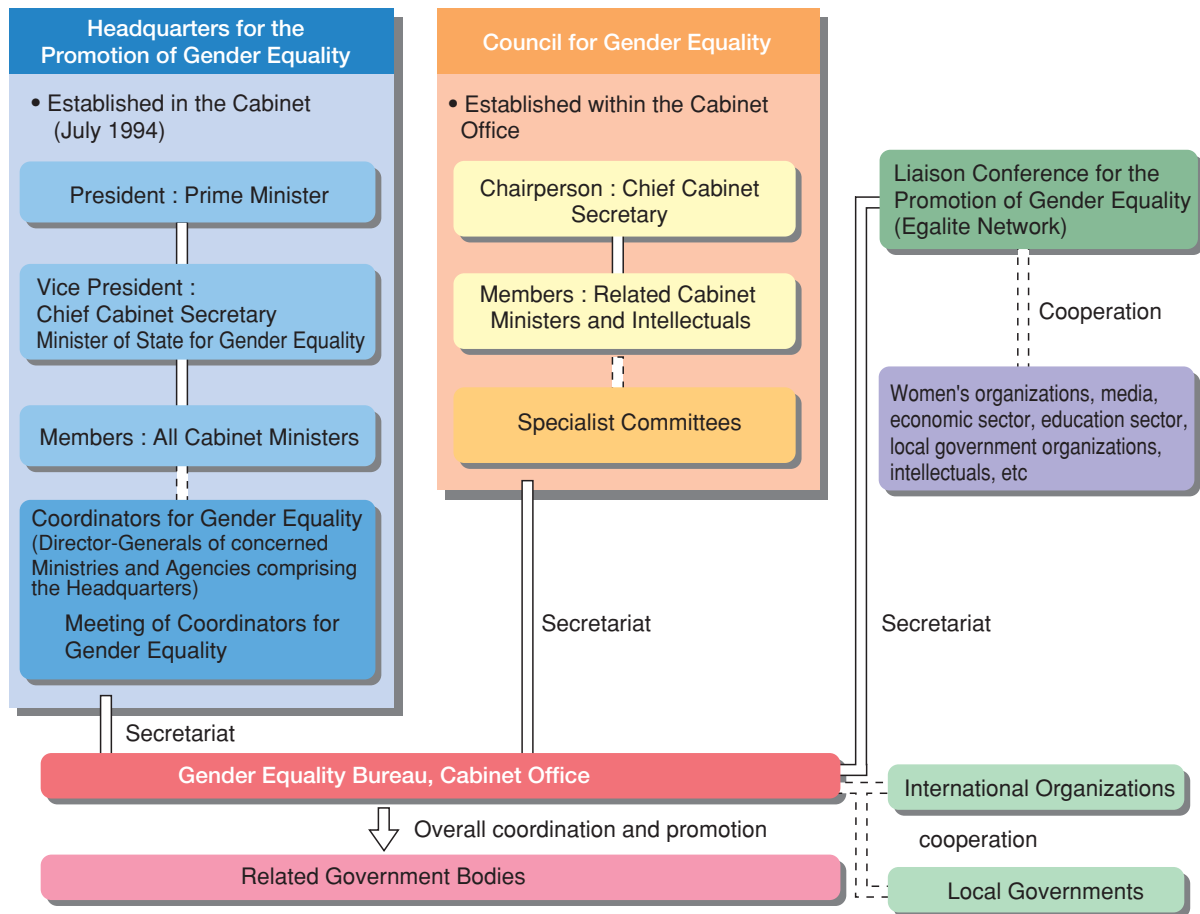
The Council for Gender Equality is mandated to monitor the implementation of policies related to the promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society. To promote the Basic Plan for Gender Equality effectively, the Council monitors policies based on the Basic Plan and utilizes the ideas of experts in gender issues and other areas.

Prefectural governments need to draw up their gender-equality plan based on the Basic Plan. Municipalities are also expected to prepare their Gender Equality Plan by using the Gender Equality Basic Plan and prefectural gender equality plan as reference documents. The Cabinet Office provides local governments with necessary information when they formulate their plans for gender equality.

1. National Machinery for the Promotion of the Formation of a Gender-equal Society

Since January 2001, the national machinery for the promotion of gender equality in Japan has been enhanced and strengthened, by establishing the Council for Gender Equality and Gender Equality Bureau.

JAPAN'S NATIONAL MACHINERY FOR THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY



Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality

The Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as “Headquarters”) was established for the smooth and effective promotion of measures regarding the formation of a gender-equal society. The Prime Minister serves as the president of the Headquarters, and the Chief Cabinet Secretary and the Minister of State for Gender Equality serve as vice president. It comprises all cabinet ministers, and high level government officials such as director general of the member ministries/ agencies are appointed by the president, as coordinators for gender equality. A meeting of coordinators for gender equality is held for mutual cooperation between member ministries/agencies.

Council for Gender Equality

The Council for Gender Equality is responsible for the following tasks:

- (1) To submit its opinions with regard to the Basic Plan for Gender Equality to the Prime Minister.
- (2) (in addition to task No.1) To study and deliberate upon basic policies and measures and important matters with regard to promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society in response to consultations with the Prime Minister or other relevant ministers, and submit its opinions to them, when recognized as necessary after studying and deliberating.
- (3) To monitor the implementation status of government measures to promote the formation of a gender-equal society and study the impacts of government measures on the formation of a gender-equal society, and to submit its opinions to the Prime Minister and other relevant ministers, when recognized as necessary.

* See “2. Council for Gender Equality and Specialist Committees” (page 20) for its detailed structure and function.

Gender Equality Bureau

The Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office has the function as the secretariat for the Headquarters and the Council for Gender Equality. It undertakes planning and overall coordination of various matters related to the promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society.

Moreover, it compiles the “Annual Report on the State of Formation of a Gender-equal Society” (white paper), undertakes studies and research, publicizes and promotes the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society, enlightens the public about the Law, and cooperates with local governments, NGOs, and international organizations.

Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality (Egalite Network)

The Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality, formed from experts in all sectors of society, undertakes activities towards the realization of a gender-equal society, such as widespread provision of information and opinion exchange.

2. Council for Gender Equality and Specialist Committees

The Council for Gender Equality is chaired by the Chief Cabinet Secretary and comprises 12 cabinet ministers designated by the Prime Minister and twelve intellectuals appointed by the Prime Minister.

To execute its mandated duties, the Council currently has the following four specialist committees, two of which were established in July 2004. The Specialist Committee on Support Measures for the Balancing of Work and Child Raising, the Specialist Committee on Monitoring and Handling Complaints, the Specialist Committee on Gender Impact Assessment and Evaluation, and the Specialist Committee on the Basic Plan for Gender Equality were previously established, and have already completed their missions.

Specialist Committee on Basic Issues

Studies and deliberates basic perceptions of gender equality and individual, priority issues of great concern to people and closely related to basic perceptions (from May 2001).

REPORTS

“Interim Report on Deliberations on a System That Gives a Married Couple an Option to Retain Separate Surnames” (Oct. 2001)

“Measures to Support Women's Challenges” (Apr. 2003)

Specialist Committee on Violence Against Women

Studies and deliberates on measures for the future while considering each of the fields, violence from husbands or partners, sexual crimes, prostitution, sexual harassment, and stalking behavior (from Apr. 2001).

REPORTS

“Towards Smooth Enforcement of the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims.” (Oct. 2001, Apr. 2002)

“Reports on How the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims is enforced and so forth” (Jun. 2003)

“Tasks to be tackled on Violence against Women and Measures to it” (Mar. 2004)

Council for Gender Equality

※the Council currently has the following four specialist committees.

Specialist Committee on Monitoring and Gender Impact Assessment and Evaluation

Studies and deliberates whether the Basic Plan for Gender Equality is being steadily implemented in each ministry and agency, as well as on government measures and other matters affecting the formation of a gender-equal society, in order to reflect the viewpoints of gender equality to every social system (from Jul. 2004).

Specialist Committee on the Declining Birthrate and Gender Equality

Studies and deliberates on the relation between the declining birthrate and gender equality, through analyzing statistical data, etc. (from Jul. 2004).

REPORTS

“International comparison of the social environments regarding declining birthrates and gender-equality” (Sep. 2005)

1. Expanding Women's Participation in Policy Decision-Making Processes

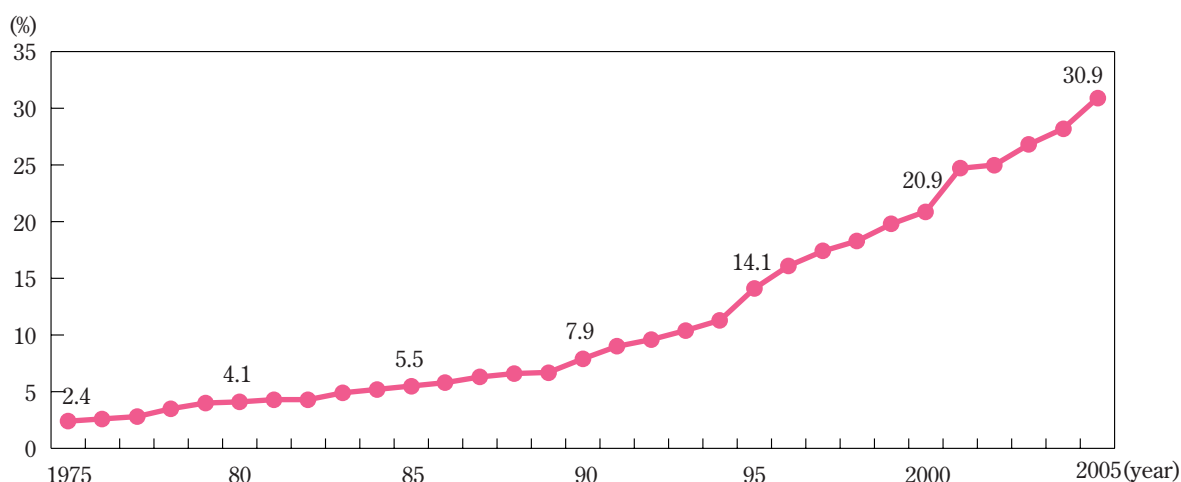
(1) Promoting the Participation of Women in National Advisory Councils and Committees

To increase the number of female members in National Advisory Councils and Committees, the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality is working toward by setting the target of “reaching 30 percent as early as possible,” and “no later than the end of 2005” as adopted in August 2000.

According to one survey, as of September 30, 2005, the proportion of female members of national advisory councils and committees had risen substantially, to 30.9 percent, and the target was achieved.

The government will further promote measures to expand the participation of women in National Advisory Councils and Committees.

(Figure 21) Proportion of Female Members in National Advisory Councils and Committees



(Note) The data from 1975 to 1994 are as of the end of Mar. and from 1995 as to 2005 as of the end of Sep.

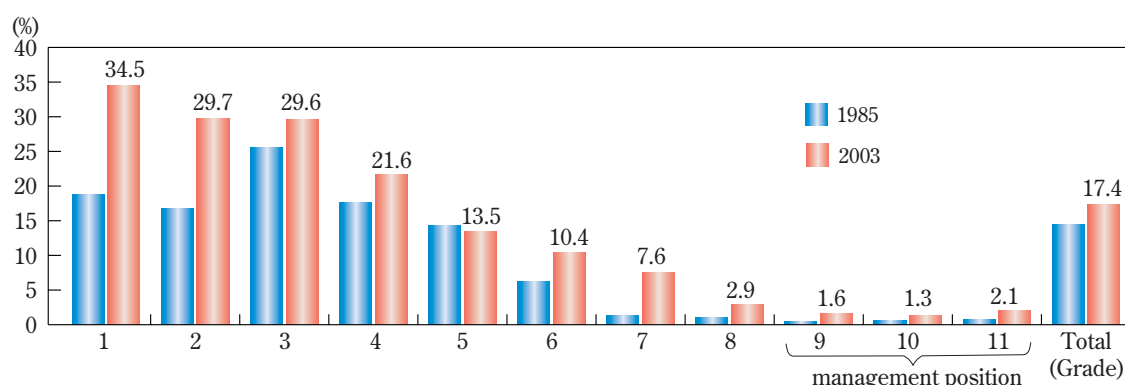
(Source) Cabinet Office

(2) Recruiting and Promoting of Female National Public Officers

The National Personnel Authority formulated its “Guidelines Concerning the Enlargement of the Recruitment and the Promotion of Female National Public Officers” in May 2001. In June 2001, responding to the Guidelines, the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality decided on the “Enlargement of the Recruitment and the Promotion of Female National Public Officers” to promote comprehensive and systematic measures. With this decision, each ministry formulated its own plan to enlarge the recruitment and promotion of female national public officers that stipulated targets to be achieved by the end of fiscal 2005. Nevertheless, the percentage of women in management positions remains low.

Given these circumstances, in 2004, the government has set a target of percentage of female officers to be recruited (about 30 percent around the year 2010) as national government officers who passed the Level I civil service exam.

(Figure 22) Proportion of Female National Public Officers by Salary Grade



(Source) “Survey on Recruitment of National Government Employees of General Class”, National Personnel Authority

(3) Survey of Women's Participation in Policy and Decision-making

The “Survey of Women's Participation in Policy and Decision-Making” has been compiled every year since 1977 (with the exception of 1982). It summarizes the level of participation of women in policy and decision-making at the national level, in local governments, in the private sector, and in other areas.

(4) Support Measures for Women's Challenges

In June 2003, the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality decided “The Promotion of Measures to Support Women's Challenges” to raise the percentage of women in leading positions in various fields to at least 30 percent by the year 2020 and to create networks that efficiently provide information on supportive measures for women's challenges. With this decision, the government has taken the following measures:

1) Temporary Special Measures for encouraging women's activities

To achieve the 30% target by the year 2020, the government grants awards to private companies/organizations and also encourages them to review their practices in the labor, agriculture and research fields.

2) Support for women's renewed challenge

Encourages social participation for women who had to quit their jobs in the past because of child-raising and nursing care duties.

In December 2005, “Committee for deliberation on support measures for women's renewed challenge,” chaired by the Chief Cabinet Secretary, formulated “Plan of Support for Women's Renewed Challenge”.

3) One-stop information and network services for supporting women's challenges

The government comprehensively provides related ministries' support information at the Cabinet Office website*, and establishes human networks consisting of various support organizations by making use of the gender equality promotion center as a core facility.

4) Providing information on role models

The government grants awards and provides role model information that would encourage highly motivated women at the Cabinet Office website*.

* “Challenge Site”: <http://www.gender.go.jp/e-challenge/>

2. Measures Aimed at Eliminating All Forms of Violence against Women

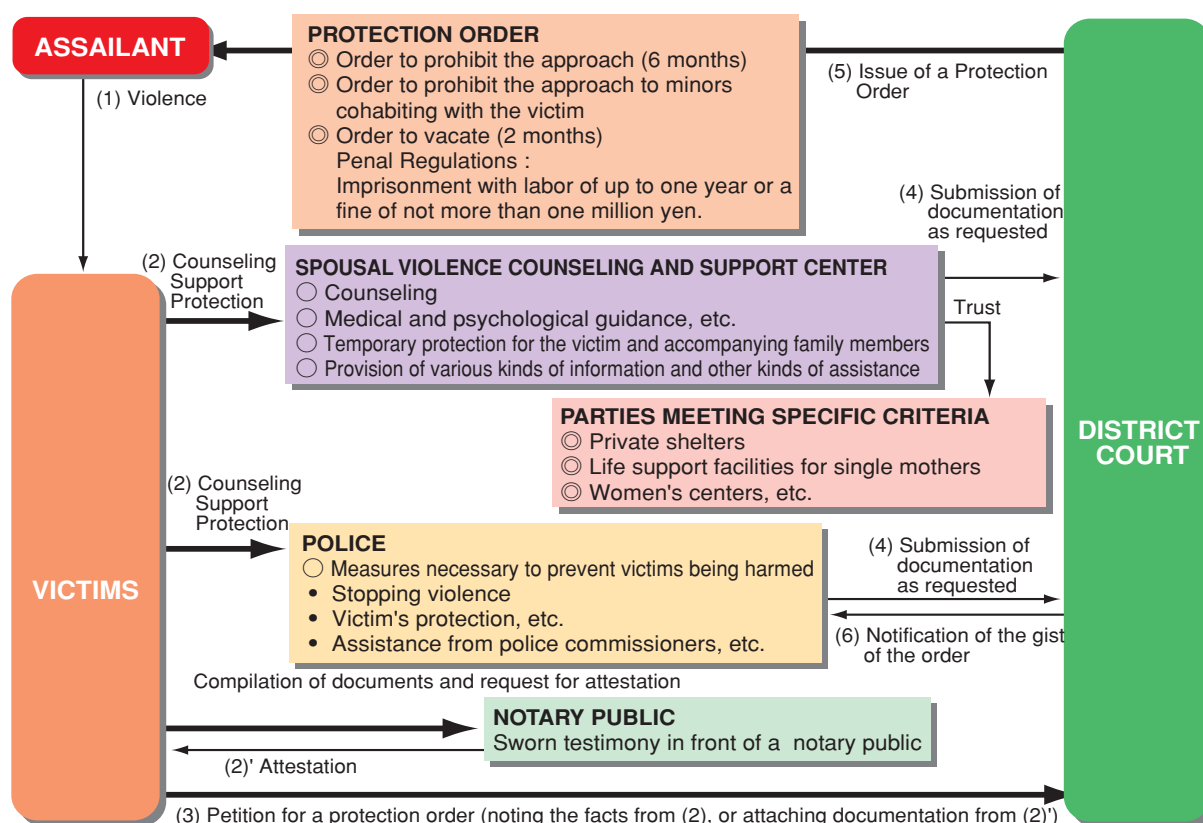
Violence against women, in the form of spousal violence, sexual crimes, prostitution, trafficking, sexual harassments, stalking behavior, and so forth, is a severe violation of women's human rights, and represents a serious problem that must be overcome as part of the process of achieving a gender-equal society. This problem is not only seen as serious in Japan but around the world as well. In 1999 the United Nations established an International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

(1) Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims

The Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims, the first comprehensive law of its kind, was promulgated in April 2001; it was amended in June 2004. Based on this law, 120 Spousal Violence Counseling and Support Centers were established nationwide. These centers provide temporary shelter for victims and provide counseling for more than 4,000 cases per month. In accordance with this law, Orders to Prohibit Approach and Orders to Vacate are issued by the courts at a pace of more than 100 cases per month. These new edicts are providing much-needed help to women who suffer from spousal violence.

In 2004, the Prime Minister, National Public Safety Commission, Minister of Justice, and Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare established a basic policy concerning measures for the prevention of spousal violence and protection of victims.

Legal Flowchart for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims



(2) Campaign for Eliminating Violence against Women

The Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality conducts a campaign to strengthen activities regarding violence against women, in collaboration with local governments, women's organizations, and other related organizations. The campaign runs for two weeks, from November 12th through November 25th (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women). The Cabinet Office holds a Symposium on Violence against Women every year on November 25 in conjunction with this campaign.

(3) Surveys and Research Regarding Violence against Women

According to the “Survey on Domestic Violence,” which was implemented by the Cabinet Office in 2002, almost one in five (19.1 percent) women has experienced physical assault, frightening threats, and/or sexual coercion. And 4.4 percent of women respondents “felt in danger for their lives” due to such behaviors, showing one of every 20 women suffer severe violence perpetrated by husbands or partners.

In FY2003, the Cabinet Office conducted a survey on standards for batterer intervention programs. Various types of surveys and research will continue in the future.

(4) Information on Assistance in Incidents of Spousal Violence

The Cabinet Office on its website provides information on laws, schemes, and facilities that are helpful for supporting victims of spousal violence.

Symbol for Elimination of Violence against Women

The Cabinet Office adopted a symbol for elimination of violence against women, in the form of spousal violence, sexual crimes, prostitution, trafficking, sexual harassments, stalking behavior, and so forth. The symbol has been widely used at PR activities.



3. Cooperation with Local Governments and NGOs

To bring about a gender-equal society, it is important that local governments, working closely with citizens, promote measures based on each region's particular characteristics. Promotion of a wide range of activities related to gender equality in all sectors of society is also vital. The Cabinet Office is conducting various activities in collaboration with local governments and NGOs.

(1) Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality (Egalite Network)

The Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality, since its inauguration in September 1996, undertakes activities such as holding general assemblies twice a year, organizing meetings of information/opinion exchange when necessary, and so on.

(2) Programs Encouraging Gender Equality Declaration Cities, Summit Meeting of Gender Equality Declaration Cities

The Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality, the Cabinet Office, and local governments have jointly held the “Programs Encouraging Gender Equality Declaration Cities” since 1994. Eighty-five municipalities have declared themselves to be “Gender-Equality Declaration Cities” as of March 2006, via pronouncements by mayors and city council resolutions, resulting in programs to increase appointment of women in advisory councils, publicity and promotional campaigns to inform the public, and many other activities. In addition, from 1996, the “Summit Meeting of Gender Equality Declaration Cities” has been held to increase cooperation even further among Gender-Equality Declaration Cities.

(3) Gender Equality Forum

Since 2000, the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality, the Cabinet Office, and local governments have jointly held the “Gender Equality Forum.” Citizens from all sectors of society, along with representatives of private and public organizations and agencies, meet together in one place to work toward realizing a gender-equal society, by taking advantage of the characteristics of each region. In FY 2005, two forums were held across the country.

(4) Training on Gender Equality

The Cabinet Office provides local government officials with “basic training” and “policy training” sessions on gender equality to deepen their understanding of related national government policies. “Counseling training” sessions for staffs of comprehensive facilities for gender equality are also provided.

In order to provide better compliant processing services on gender equality matters, the Cabinet Office prepared the “Compliant Handling Guidebook” and sent it to compliant

handling sections at the local government level, administrative counselors and human rights protection officers as well as using it as a teaching material during the training sessions for compliant handling officers at the local government level.

In addition, the Cabinet Office holds the “Gender Equality Young Leader Conference” every year, inviting younger people who are expected to play a leading role in local communities in the near future.

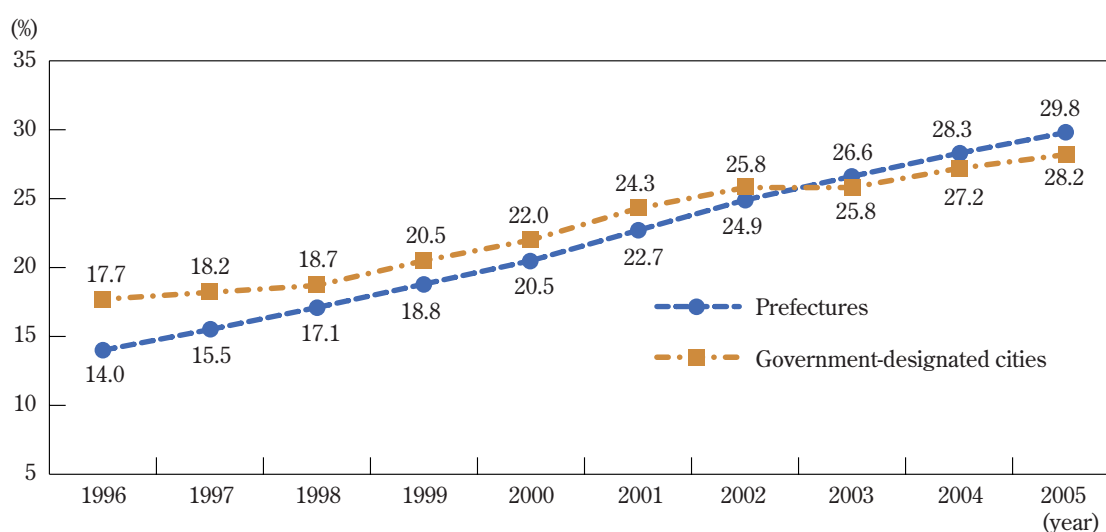
(5) Survey on the Status of the Formation of Gender-equal Society in Local Governments

The Cabinet Office conducts an annual survey on the status of the promotion of measures on the formation of a gender-equal society or women related issues in local governments.

Based on the survey, 46 prefectures, 13 government-designated cities, and 252 municipalities have enacted ordinances on gender equality as of January 19, 2005. Moreover, plans for gender equality have been formulated in all prefectures and government-designated cities. As for municipalities, 34.0 percent have such plans as a whole, 84.7 percent of cities and only 18.8 percent of towns and villages have formulated them.

According to one survey, as of September 30, 2005, the proportion of female members in advisory councils and committees had risen substantially to 29.8 percent in the Prefectures, to 28.2 percent in the Government-designated cities.

(Figure 23) Proportion of Female Members in Advisory Councils and Committees of Local Governments



(Note) Those figures are simple averages of the proportion of female members of each prefecture or government-designated cities.

(Source) Cabinet Office

4. PR Activities

(1) Implementation of “Gender Equality Week”

To deepen the understanding of the goals and the basic philosophy of the Basic Law among the public, and to promote various measures/efforts for realizing a gender-equal society, “Gender Equality Week” has been held regularly since 2001, based on the decision by the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality in December 2000.

The Gender Equality Week (the week from June 23rd to 29th) was set to match the promulgation and enforcement date of the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society. During the week, various events are held with the cooperation of local governments, women's organizations, and other related organizations.

The events sponsored by the Cabinet Office are as follows:

- “National Conference for the Formation of a Gender-equal Society”
- “Chief Cabinet Secretary's Award for Merit to Formation of a Gender-equal Society”
- “Women's Challenge Grand Prize” and “Women's Challenge Support Grand Prize”
- Contest for slogans of the week, making and distributing posters
- Public service announcements of the week



(2) Promotion of PR Activities Using Various Media

1) White Paper on Gender Equality

Based on the provisions of the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society, the Japanese government submits to the Diet each year an annual report (White Paper on Gender Equality). This report describes the current status and related government measures for each of the 11 priority objectives in the Basic Plan for Gender Equality and contributes to the appropriate promotion of measures for gender equality by the government as a whole. This report is made accessible to the public at large via the Cabinet Office (Gender Equality Bureau) website.

2) Publication of Public Relations Magazines

“News from the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality” and a general magazine on gender equality, “Equal Participation 21” are published to spread information about the activities of the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality, local government, women's organizations, and other related organizations. The Cabinet Office also provides information gathered at international conferences in these magazines.

3) Establishment of a Website (<http://www.gender.go.jp/>)

A website of the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office has been established to facilitate national and international dissemination of information on measures related to gender equality and relevant data, including the one on the Council for Gender Equality, in Japanese and English.

5. International Cooperation

Promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society in Japan is closely related to various activities in international society (see Appendix). The Japanese government is currently working toward the goals of international regulations, standards and guidelines for the advancement of status of women, as well as toward the integration of them into Japanese society, so that activities aimed at formulating a gender-equal society in Japan can be successfully implemented.

(1) Cooperation with UN System Agencies^{*}

The Japanese government participates in international conferences such as the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), gathers information on international regulations, guidelines and the global situation on gender equality, and provides information about activities underway in Japan. Through this active participation, Japan is making efforts in promoting cooperation together with UN system agencies and the national machineries of other countries.

^{*} “UN system agencies” refers to a UN organizational structure, including UN secretariat, various UN programs and funds, and specialized agencies.

(2) International Cooperation

1) Public Relations

The Cabinet Office features information on gender equality related activities in Japan through a public relations magazine for foreigners, published annually since 1984. This magazine, titled “Women in Japan Today,” is distributed to the governments of various countries, international organizations, and other organizations.

2) Collaboration with International Organizations

The Japanese government participates as an observer in the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men of the Council of Europe to strengthen relations with European countries, which have been active in the field of gender equality from early on. As for cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, collaboration on developing activities to reflect gender perspectives in the field of economy under the framework of APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) has also been promoted.

3) International Cooperation (Bilateral)

The Cabinet Office, the national machinery of Japanese government, has been implementing political and institutional supports to national machineries in developing countries through technical cooperation programs of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), such as dispatching lecturers for Gender Mainstreaming seminars/workshops.



“Seminar on Gender Mainstreaming Experience in Japan”
October in 2004, Cambodia

4) The Advisory Council on Assistance to Women in Afghanistan

To deliberate the best way to implement reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan with due consideration for the needs of women, the Advisory Council on Assistance to Women in Afghanistan has been held since February 2002, as a council, organized by the Chief Cabinet Secretary.

(Appendix) MILESTONES IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN SINCE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

		United Nations	Japan
	1975	Establishment of International Women's Year by the General Assembly (Goals: Equality, Development and Peace) The World Conference of the International Women's Year (Mexico City) Adoption of the World Plan of Action	Establishment of the Headquarters for the Planning and Promoting of Policies Relating to Women Convening of the Council on Women's Issues
Proclamation of the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) by the General Assembly	1977		Formulation of the National Plan of Action
	1979	The 34 th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations Adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	
	1980	World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women (Goals: Equality, Development and Peace) (Copenhagen) Adoption of the Program of Action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women	
	1981		Formulation of the Priority Targets for the Second Half of the Period Covered by the National Plan of Action
	1985	World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women (Goals: Equality, Development and Peace) (Nairobi) Adoption of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women	Amendment of the Nationality Law (employing a bilinear system) Promulgation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
	1986		Expansion of the Headquarters for the Planning and Promoting of Policies Relating to Women (the organization was expanded to all ministries and agencies; mandate was also expanded) Convening of the Advisory Council to the President of the Headquarters for the Planning and Promoting of Policies Relating to Women
	1987		Formulation of the New National Plan of Action towards the Year 2000
	1990	The 34 th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women Adoption of the First Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)	
	1991		Promulgation of the Child Care Leave Law
	1994		Establishment of the Office for Gender Equality, the Council for Gender Equality and the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality
	1995	The Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing) Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action	Revision of the Child Care Leave Law (legal establishment of the Family Care Leave System)
	1996		Establishment of the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality (Egalite Network) Formulation of the Plan for Gender Equality 2000 - the National Plan of Action for Promoting a Gender-Equal Society by the Year 2000
	1997		Establishment of the Council for Gender Equality by Law Revision of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law and related laws Promulgation of the Law concerning Long-term Care Insurance System
	1999		Promulgation and enforcement of the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society Promulgation and enforcement of the Basic Law on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas
	2000	The 23 rd Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly "Women 2000" (New York)	Formulation of the Basic Plan for Gender Equality
	2001		Establishment of the newly formed Council for Gender Equality Establishment of the Gender Equality Bureau Enforcement of the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims The first Gender Equality Week Cabinet Decision on the Policy on Support Measures for the Balancing of Work and Child Raising Campaign for Eliminating Violence against Women decided by the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality
	2002		Convening of the Advisory Council on Assistance to Women in Afghanistan
	2003		The Promotion of Measures to Support Women's Challenges decided by the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality Convening of the Panel on future of a Gender-equal Society Consideration of the fourth and fifth periodic reports on implementation of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
	2004		The Enlargement of the Recruitment and the Promotion of Female National Public Officers decided by the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality Report of the Panel on future of a Gender-equal Society Enforcement of the amended Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and Protection of Victims
	2005	The 49 th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (Beijing+10) (New York)	Formulation of the Basic Plan for Gender Equality (2 nd)



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