

22 Women

Social Status of Women

The social status of women in Japan improved substantially after World War II. Article 14 of the Japanese Constitution, which came into force in 1947, declares, "All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin."

In order to realize a true gender-equal society, the government in 1994 established the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality within the cabinet. The Office for Gender Equality and the Council for Gender Equality were also set up in the Prime Minister's Office (reorganized into the Cabinet Office in 2001). Based on the final report by the Council for Gender Equality, the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society was enacted and came into force in June 1999.

In 2006, 98.0% of girls went on to high school after graduating from junior high school, and 51.0% of female high school graduates advanced to universities or junior colleges, while the figures for male students were 97.4% and 53.6%, respectively. Of Japan's total 66.57 million workforce in 2006, 27.59 million (41.4%) were women.

Women's participation in the policy decision-making process still remains insufficient, however. Female members in the Diet accounted for only 9.4% for the House of Representatives in 2006, which is far behind the corresponding figures in other industrialized countries.

Working Population by Gender

(10,000 persons)

FY	Total	Female	Male
1985	5,963	2,367	3,596
1990	6,384	2,593	3,791
1995	6,666	2,701	3,966
2000	6,766	2,753	4,014
2001	6,752	2,760	3,992
2002	6,689	2,733	3,956
2003	6,666	2,732	3,934
2004	6,642	2,737	3,905
2005	6,650	2,750	3,901
2006	6,657	2,759	3,898

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, *Rodoryoku chosa* (Labor Force Survey), 2006.

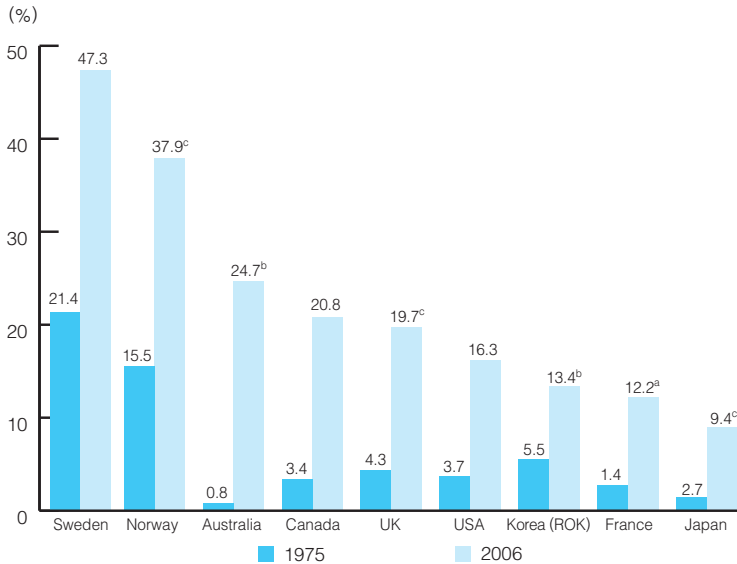
Note: Figures are for people aged 15 years and above.

Female Members of the Diet and Prefectural and Municipal Assemblies

FY	Diet		Prefectural assembly		Municipal assembly	
	Number	Share (%)	Number	Share (%)	Number	Share (%)
1960	24	3.4	35	1.3	245	1.3
1970	21	2.9	33	1.3	272	1.4
1980	26	3.4	34	1.2	441	2.2
1990	45	5.9	72	2.6	862	4.5
2000	68	9.1	159	5.5	1,855	10.1
2005	78	10.8	200	7.2	2,505	10.6
2006	79	11.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office.

Share of Female Members in National Parliaments by Country

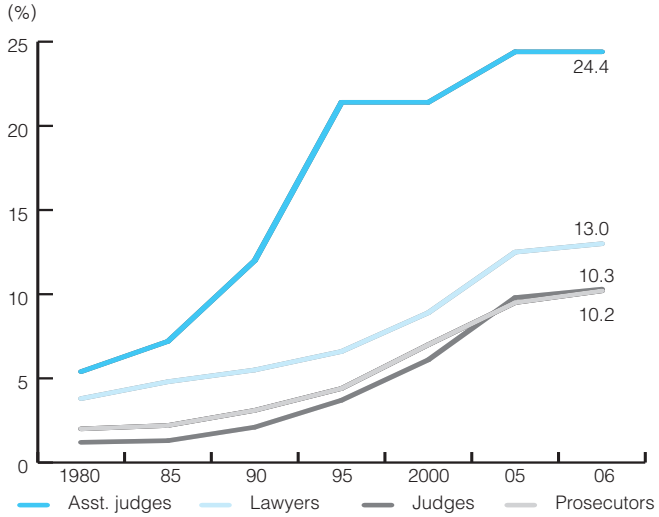


Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Women in National Parliaments*.

Note: Figures are for lower or single house.

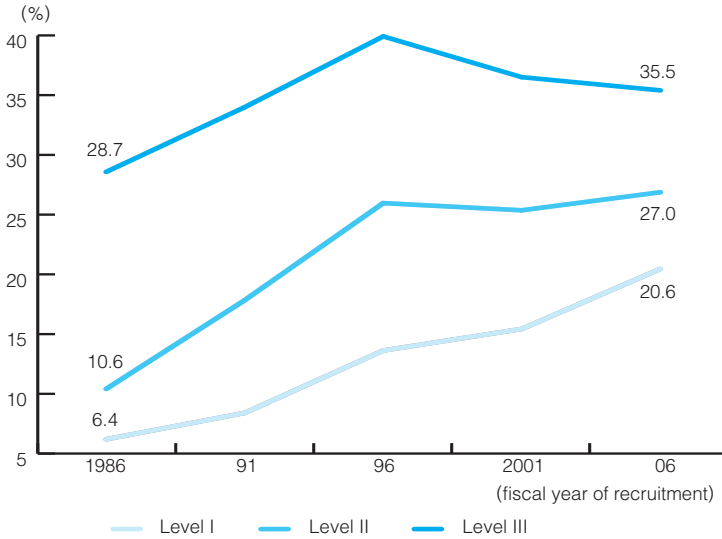
a. 2002 election; b. 2004 election; c. 2005 election.

Share of Women in Judicature



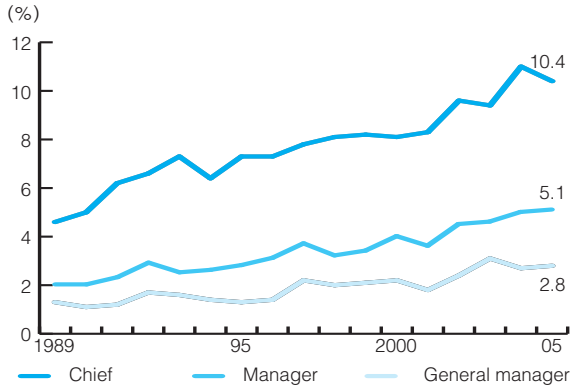
Source: Cabinet Office.

Share of Women Recruited as National Public Servants



Source: Cabinet Office, *Danjo kyodo sankaku hakusho* (White Paper on Gender Equality), 2006.

Trends in Share of Female Executives in Private Companies



Source: Cabinet Office, *Danjo kyodo sankaku hakusho* (White Paper on Gender Equality).