

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 2005, 97.9% of girls went on to high school after graduating from junior high school, and 49.8% of female high school graduates advanced to universities or junior colleges, while the figures for male students were 97.3% and 53.1%, respectively. Of Japan's total 66.50 million workforce in 2005, 27.50 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 9.0% of the House of Representatives in 2005, which is far behind the corresponding figures in other industrialized countries.

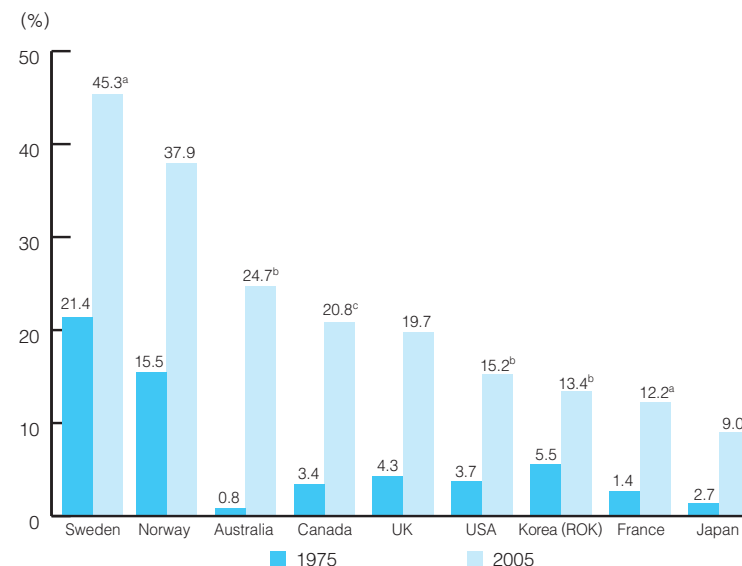
In order to realize a true gender-equal society, the government in 1994 established the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality within the cabinet. The Office for Gender Equality and the Council for Gender Equality were also set up in the Prime Minister's Office (reorganized into the Cabinet 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.

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	10.0
2005	78	10.8	194 ^a	6.9 ^a	2,505 ^a	12.0 ^a

Source: Cabinet Office; Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
a. As of December 2004.

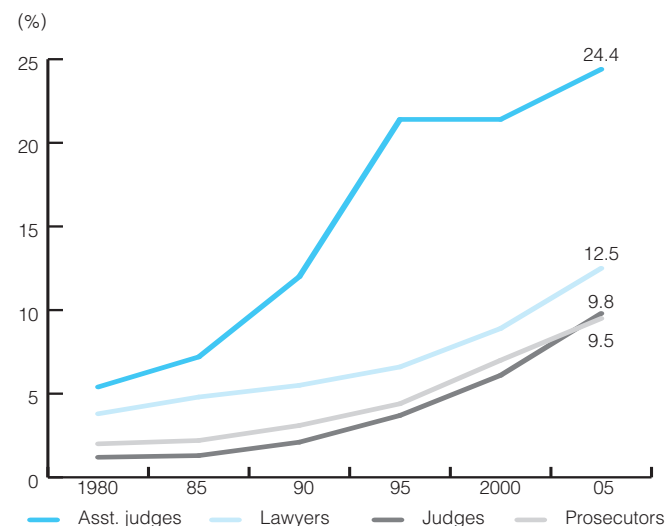
Share of Female Members in National Parliaments by Country



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

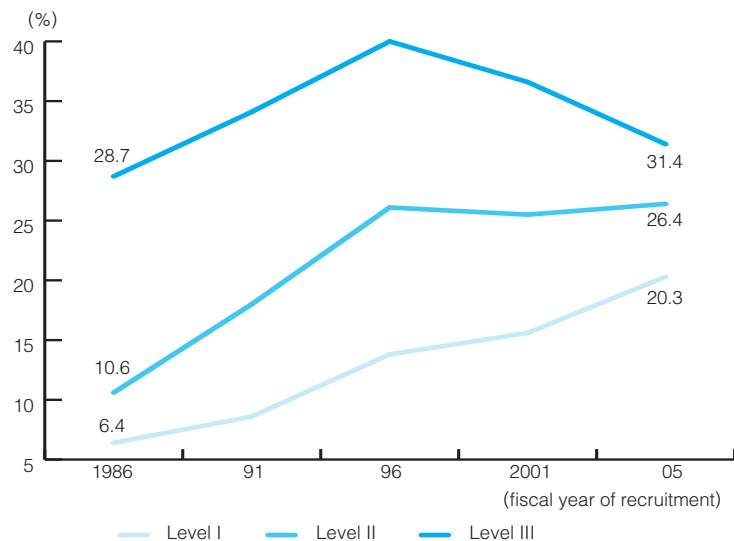
Note: Figures are for lower or single house.
a. 2002 election; b. 2004 election; c. 2006 election.

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), 2005.

Share of Companies with Female Executives by Category and Size (%)

Category	FY	General manager		Manager		Chief	
		1998	2003	1998	2003	1998	2003
Mining		4.1	–	5.9	14.4	23.5	6.7
Construction		5.0	4.7	13.9	8.5	24.9	23.2
Manufacturing		5.0	5.3	14.9	17.6	32.7	32.8
Electricity, gas, heat supply, and water		2.4	3.7	12.4	16.0	26.0	30.5
Transport Communication		3.7	11.9	9.8	37.3	19.3	37.3
			0.7		9.2		18.3
Wholesale and retail service		5.4	7.0	20.1	25.9	34.4	37.8
Finance and insurance		7.9	11.6	36.6	45.6	64.7	58.3
Real estate		2.2	3.1	19.0	27.3	35.1	46.8
Food and lodging service		n/a	12.2	36.6	30.0	64.7	35.4
Medical and welfare service		n/a	21.7	n/a	36.2	n/a	57.1
Education and learning assistant service		n/a	11.7	n/a	22.3	n/a	42.4
Service		9.7	11.4	17.1	24.2	32.2	32.0
All industries		5.8	6.7	17.1	20.2	32.2	32.0

Number of Employees

Number of Employees	1998	2003	1998	2003	1998	2003
5,000 or over	19.0	37.0	65.8	74.1	74.3	71.9
1,000–4,999	13.4	14.2	44.9	53.5	66.8	65.7
300–999	5.6	9.1	25.2	32.6	45.5	51.8
100–299	7.2	7.2	19.1	24.1	39.2	38.7
30–99	5.1	6.0	14.8	16.6	27.8	26.9

Source: Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, *Josei koyo kanri kihon chosa* (Basic Survey on Employment of Women), FY 2003.

Note: Figures for wholesale and retail service in 1998 include food service.