

Nihon University Inaugural International Symposium on Gender Equality in Academia:

What is needed to unleash the potential of female researchers and foster female leaders in research?

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Keynote address:

The role of female researchers in a new era: standard bearers for a social revolution

Kuniko INOGUCHI, Ph.D.

Professor of Political Science

Member of the Science Council of Japan

Former Minister of State for Gender Equality and Social Affairs

Former Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament



The Power of Ideas

Kuniko INOGUCHI, Ph.D.
Member, House of Representatives
Member, Science Council of Japan

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Falling behind in social development

Social Development

Political development, deepening of democracy, expansion of political participation, stabilization of the policy-making process

Economic development, expansion of world trade, technological innovation and mass production have brought about changes such as overcoming poverty and a growing middle-class.

Social policy, which should be propelled by social, political, and economic development working in tandem, has been delayed in some countries leading to social development incommensurate with economic standards due to various reasons and constraints.

Japan is an example of this as, in the process of aiming for development under the disadvantage of being a resource-poor nation, it was forced to prioritize economic policy. Hence, though it became the second largest economy in the world, it also lagged behind in policies for women, becoming a low birth rate society. Beyond resource constraints, there are also countries forced to focus excessively on security, and therefore display the same imbalance. An example is the insufficiency of social policy in Germany, which stood on the front line of the Cold War and has also experienced the phenomenon of a low birth rate.

Social contradictions encapsulated in a low birth rate

Various indices of social development

Diffusion of education, substantiation of social security, realization of diversity, proportion of women and minorities in the policy making process, etc.

In Japan, the average life expectancy and infant mortality rate have reached world standard levels. On the other hand, the trend of exceptionally low fertility ultimately reflects contradictions in the structure of society.

The rapid decline in the total fertility rate encapsulates an extreme social contradiction, namely that society cannot reproduce itself. It conveys the social outcome brought about by an extreme imbalance, namely the second largest economy which is nevertheless ranked 54th in the Gender Gap Index.

Finally, an era of social development, a time of social revolution!

Is it possible to have clear awareness and change direction? This is a matter not only for government policies. There must be a new social pact with a sense of ownership that resonates with private corporations, research bodies, information media, places of education, and communities. It is a historic social revolution that will be created through the great number of people who wish to be a part of a larger cause, with the spirit and courage of leaders of change, and through the heroic efforts of countless individuals in their day-to-day lives.

Change is possible

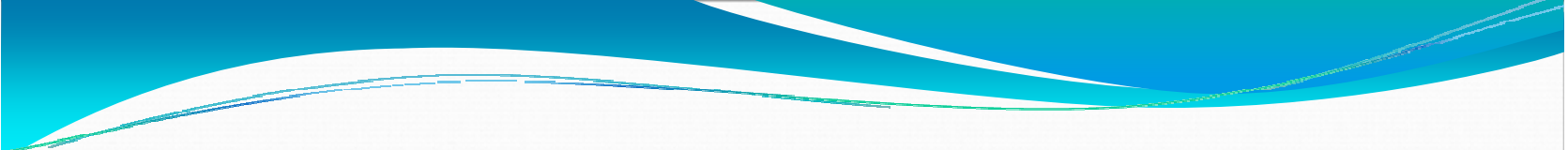
It is possible to make a difference through a shift to reform and prioritization of social policy through the full efforts of society.

Germany is a good example. The total fertility rate in Germany toward the end of the Cold War fell to 1.25, lower than Japan. However, the dividends of post-Cold War peace extended also to the field of social security, and with the diversification and substantiation of family support policies, the birth rate increased to 1.5 after 10 years, something thought to be impossible in Japan at present. In 2005, Japan recorded a historical low of 1.26, and after a Special Minister dedicated to family policy was appointed, the birth rate returned to growth after measures were strengthened, although the birth rate is still only 1.34. The resolve to build a new society without receding from the consensus for social development even within a global recession is the challenge faced by Japan.

The role of female researchers

As the vanguard of social revolution, researchers should be aware of their special role. Times of political and social change have always been preceded by new ideas and theories. Politics and society undergo change through the guidance of ideas. With regard to democracy, at the dawn of the democratic revolution, there were guiding ideas about the freedom and equality of humankind.

Therefore, it is first necessary to erase the contradiction of delayed social development in places of research. Nevertheless, in Japan the proportion of female researchers is 12.4%, close to the lowest among advanced nations, and the gap is especially pronounced in the field of science. The proportion of female university professors is: 2.2% for engineering, 3.9% for science, 8.2% for medicine and dentistry, 8.9% for pharmacology, and only 8.1% of university deans are women. In this situation, female students cannot perceive role models or a future in a research environment. The world of research, which should be leading by example in the implementation of ideas at the forefront of society, is at risk of becoming a vacuum of social development.



Difficulties also persist in filling leadership positions with women in other fields. The percentage of female parliamentarians is 12.3%, 6.4% of prefectural governors, 15.4% of judges, 12.9% of certified public accountants, 3.6% of managers in private corporations, 14.7% of journalists, and 4.2% of agricultural committee members. There are few women in any field or in sufficient numbers to advocate social policies which have been lagging behind in work/life balance, childrearing support, and family policy. Even so, women should act rather than despair. They should become the standard bearers of social revolution by gaining skills, demanding change, and forming collectives that perceive the big picture. This is because if women do not stand up, who will make the rapid gains in the fledgling stage of a social revolution of such significance? The main current of social revolution often springs from the minority faction of a pre-existing system. When the generation that struggles stands up and resolves that future generations will not repeat these hardships, they gain the empathy of forward-looking people who transcend age or gender and create a great tide for change.

Women who are also researchers have the role of bearing two types of hardship for Japan's social revolution. I hope to discuss the issues and means for concrete change for female researchers at this symposium.

Gender Empowerment Measure and Human Development Index

Japan ranks 54th out of 93 countries, the lowest among developed countries, in the GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure) that measures women's participation in political and economic life as well as in decision-making processes. On the other hand, Japan ranks 8th out of 177 countries in the HDI (Human Development Index) that looks at important dimensions of people's well-being and human development.

GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure)

GEM measures to what degree women take part in political and economic life and participate in decision-making. It tracks the share of seats in parliament held by women; of female legislators, senior officials and managers; and of female professional and technical workers; and the gender disparity in earned income.

1	Norway	0.910
2	Sweden	0.906
3	Finland	0.887
4	Denmark	0.875
5	Iceland	0.862
6	Netherlands	0.859
7	Belgium	0.850
8	Australia	0.847
9	Germany	0.831
10	Canada	0.820
13	Austria	
22	Portugal	
23	Trinidad and Tobago	
24	Costa Rica	
25	Lithuania	
26	Cuba	
27	Switzerland	
28	Israel	
71	Russia ...	
14	UK	0.783
15	USA	0.762
18	France	0.718
21	Italy	0.693
54	Japan	0.557

HDI (Human Development Index)

Measures well-being of people and the level of human development in a country by looking at life expectancy, education (adult literacy and gross enrolment rate) and standard of living (measured by purchasing power parity).

1	Iceland	0.968
2	Norway	0.968
3	Australia	0.962
4	Canada	0.961
5	Ireland	0.959
6	Sweden	0.956
7	Switzerland	0.955
8	Japan	0.953
9	Netherlands	0.953
10	France	0.952
12	USA	0.951
16	UK	0.946
20	Italy	0.941
22	Germany	0.935

Source: "Human Development Report" UNDP, 2007

The State of Women's Participation by Field

Although women's participation in each field is steadily expanding, the percentage of women remains low. It is necessary to promote initiatives further still.

House of Representatives: 45 of 479 (9.4%) (2/2009)

- 138th of 187 nations (data: Inter-Parliamentary Union H P 2008)
- 1.9% (10/1952) 45 members=9.4% (2008)

House of Councillors: 44 of 242 (18.2%) (2/2009)

- 6.0% (4/1953) 18.2% (2009)

State deliberative councils: 32.4% (2008)

- 2.6% (1975)
- 4/2006 New target by Headquarters for Promotion of Gender Equality Members : at least 40% (men and women) of total members by 2020
33.3% female members by end of 2010
- [Prefectures : 32.6%、City, wards, towns, villages: 25.2%(2008)]

Regional legislative assemblies: 10.4% (2007)

Management positions in business: 9.7% (2007)

- 1.2% (1975)
- Prefectural : 8.0%、 local : 12.3%、 town/village : 7.7% (2007)

State officials (management): 1.9% (1/2007)

- USA : 41.8%、 Germany : 37.7%、 Sweden : 32.3% (2006)

Legal profession Judiciary: 15.4%, Lawyers: 14.4%, Prosecutors: 12.2% (2008)

- 169 of 9,106 persons
- USA : 26.3% (2005)、 France : 14.0% (2003)
Germany : 15.9% (2002)

Researchers: 13.0% (2008)

- Judges : 2.1%、 Lawyers : 3.3%、 Prosecutors : 1.0% (1977)

Successful candidates of national exam for medical practitioners: 34.5% (2008)

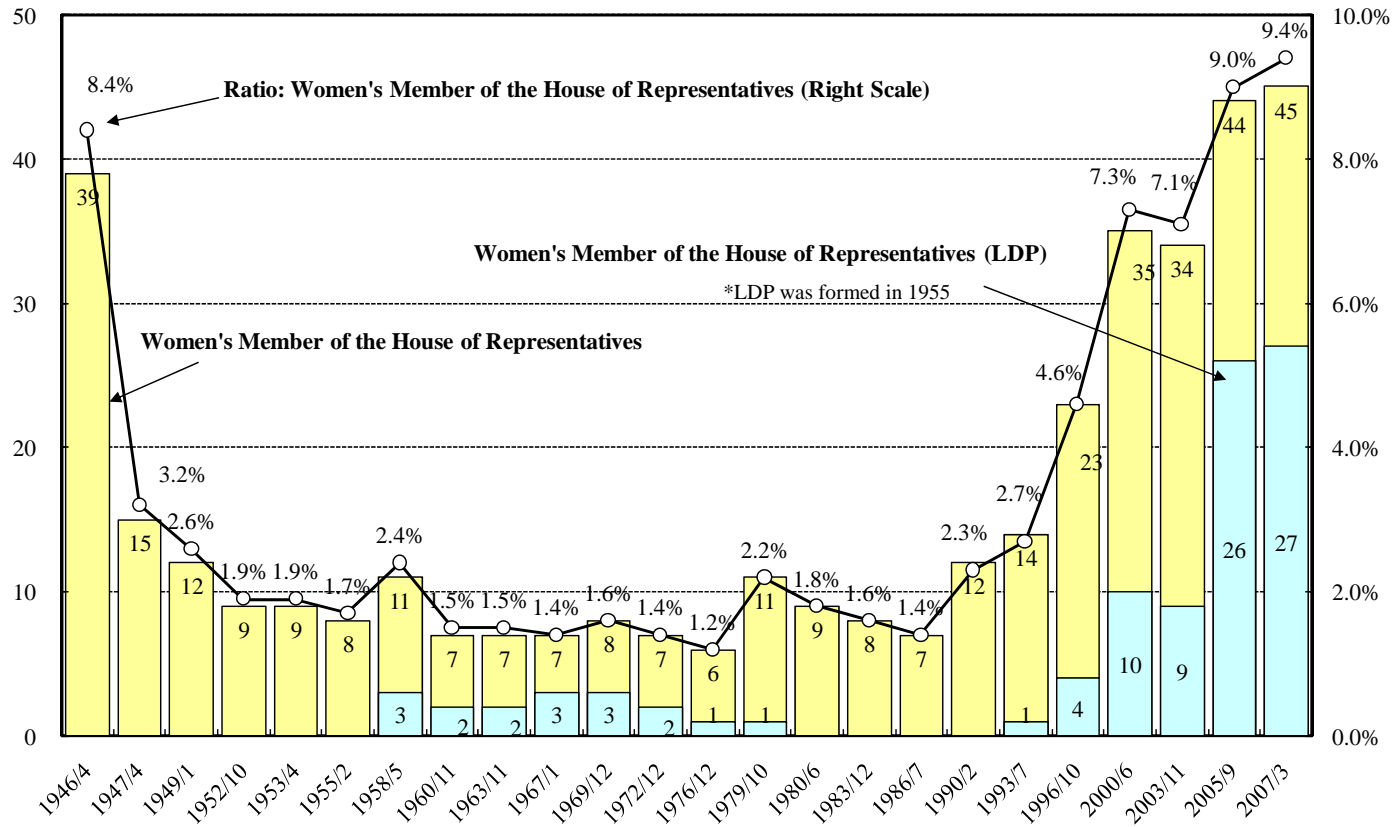
- 7.9% (1992)
- France : 27.8% (2004)、 UK : 26.0% (2000)、
Germany : 19.2% (2003)

- 19.2% (1991)

Women leaving employment upon 1st birth: 67.4% (2001)

Women in national politics

In the general election of 2005, the House of Representatives reached a historic high of 9% women. The House of Councillors reached 17.4%.

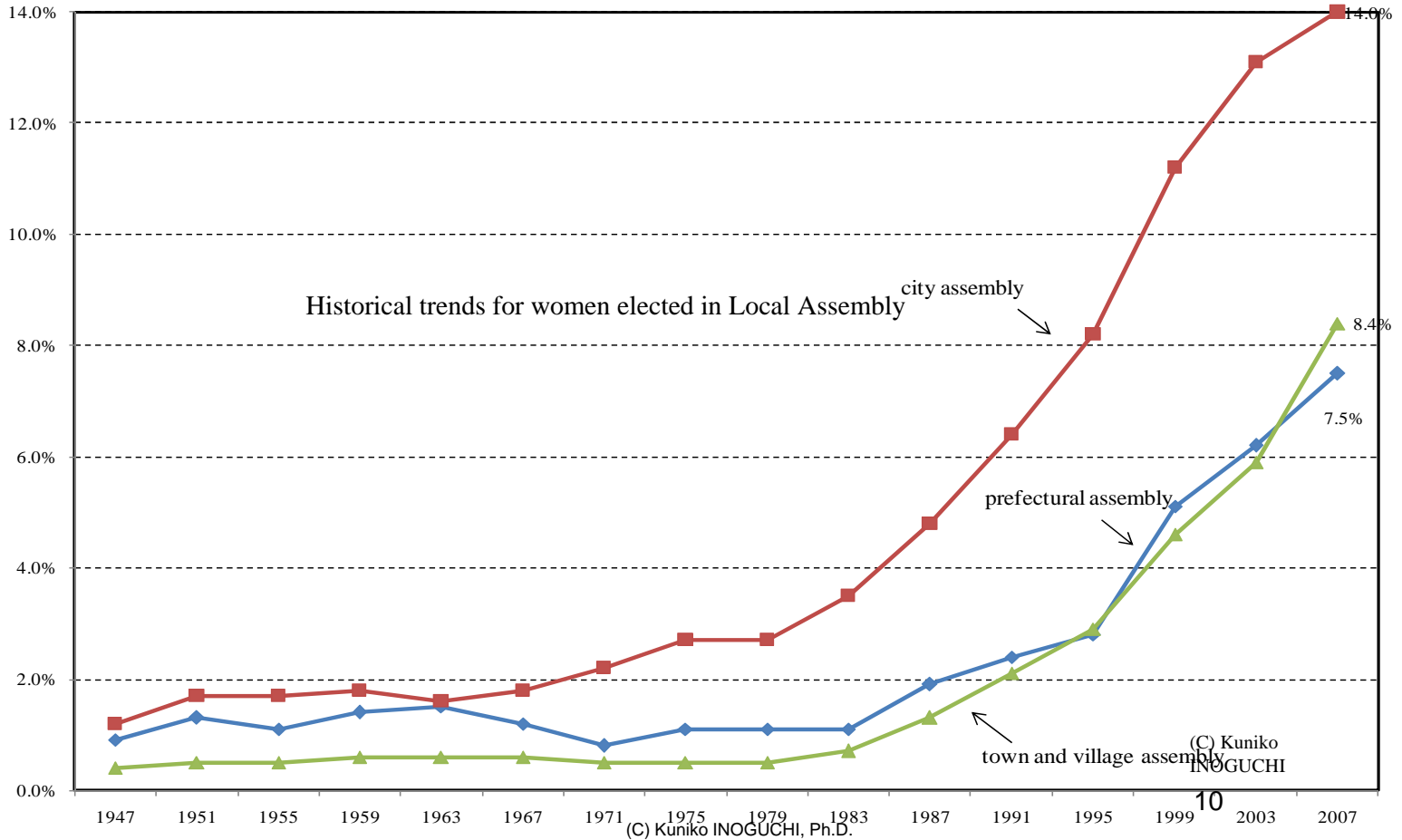


Data: House of Representatives

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Women in local politics

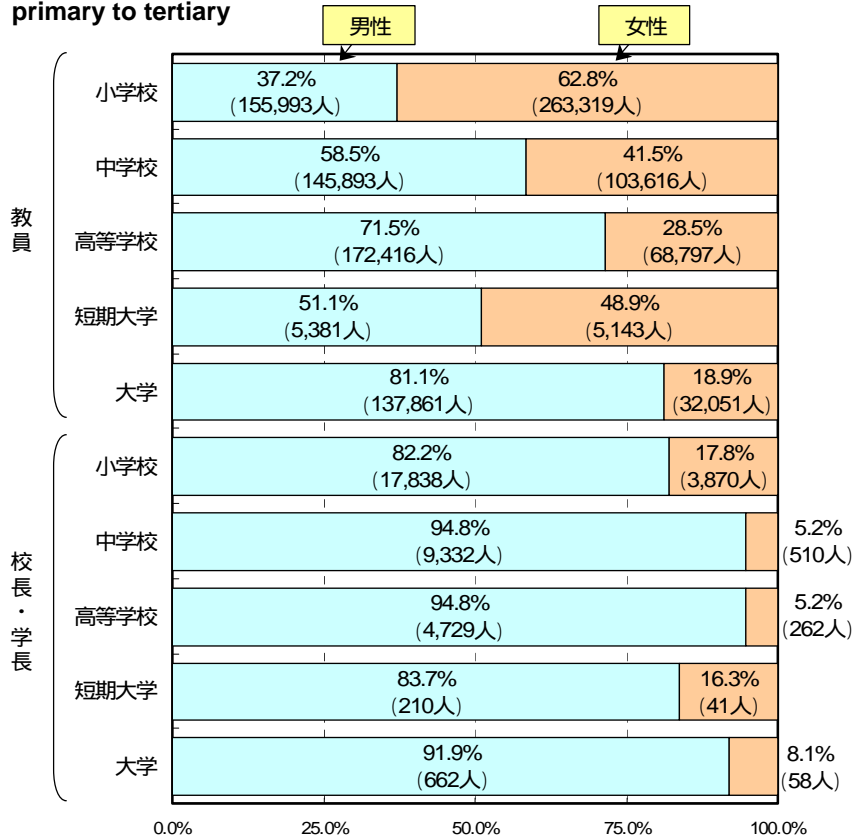
The highest proportion of female legislators is 24.7% in special wards. The figure is 17.2% for Cabinet-designated cities, 11.8% for all cities, 8% for prefectures, 7.7% for local councils. The trend is upward in cities and downward in rural areas.



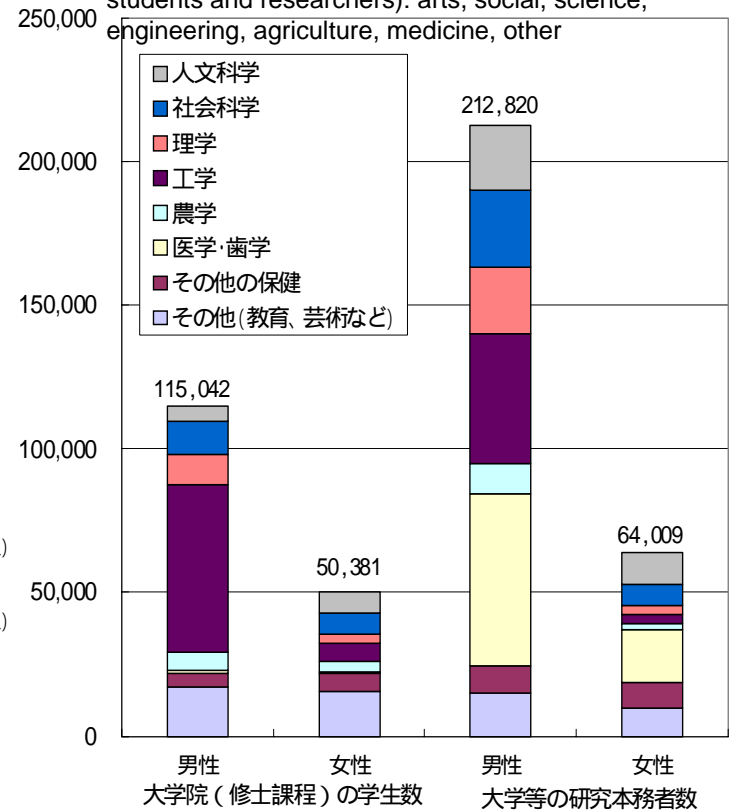
Women in education and research

A comparison between men and women teachers reveals that (excluding junior colleges) the higher the level, the lower the proportion of women. Also, the number of female graduate students and women undertaking research at universities is extremely low in the fields of science, engineering, and agriculture.

Comparison of male (left) and female teachers and principals: primary to tertiary



Men (left) vs. women (right) by field (graduate students and researchers): arts, social, science, engineering, agriculture, medicine, other

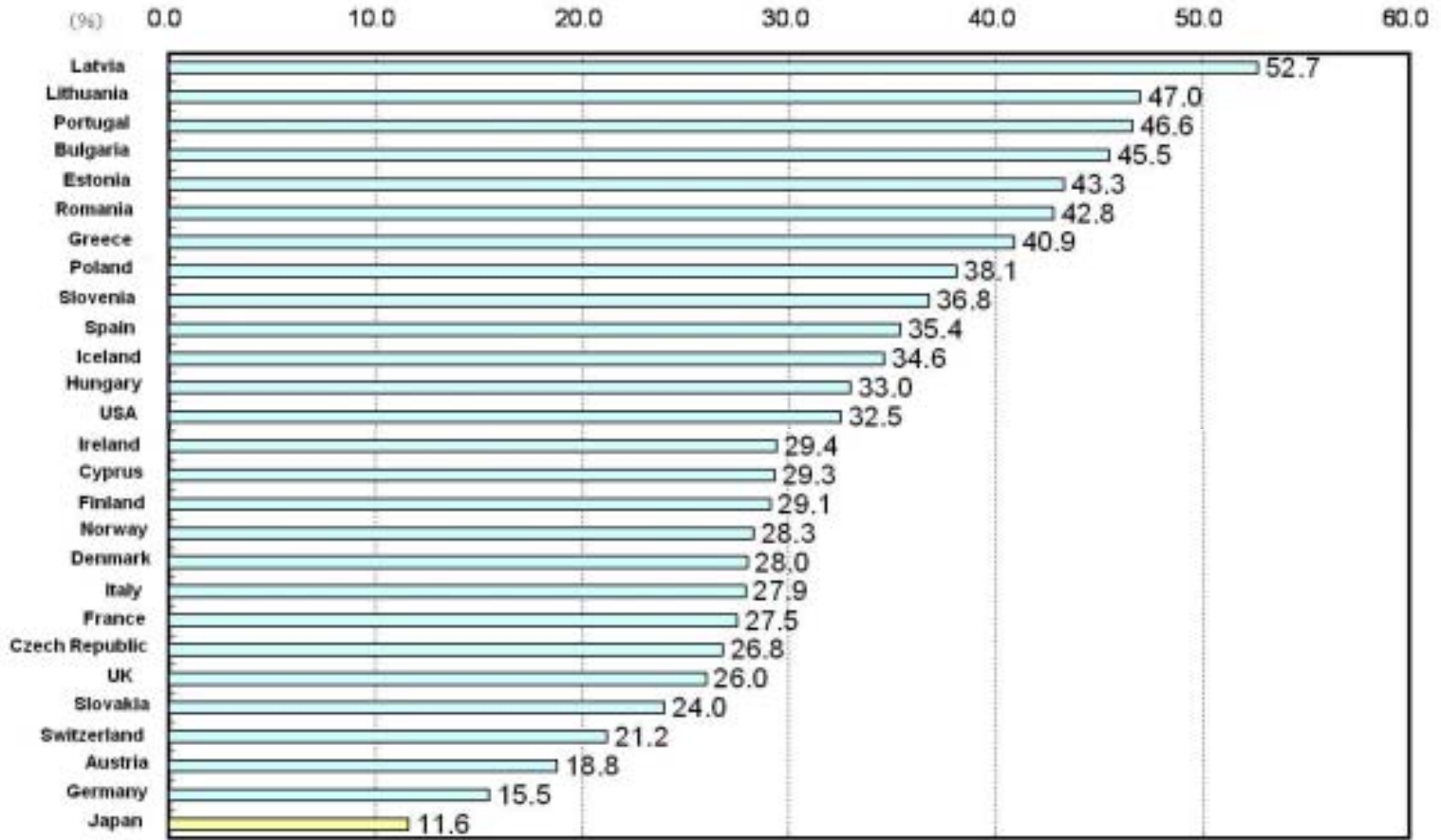


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International Comparison of Proportion of Female Researchers

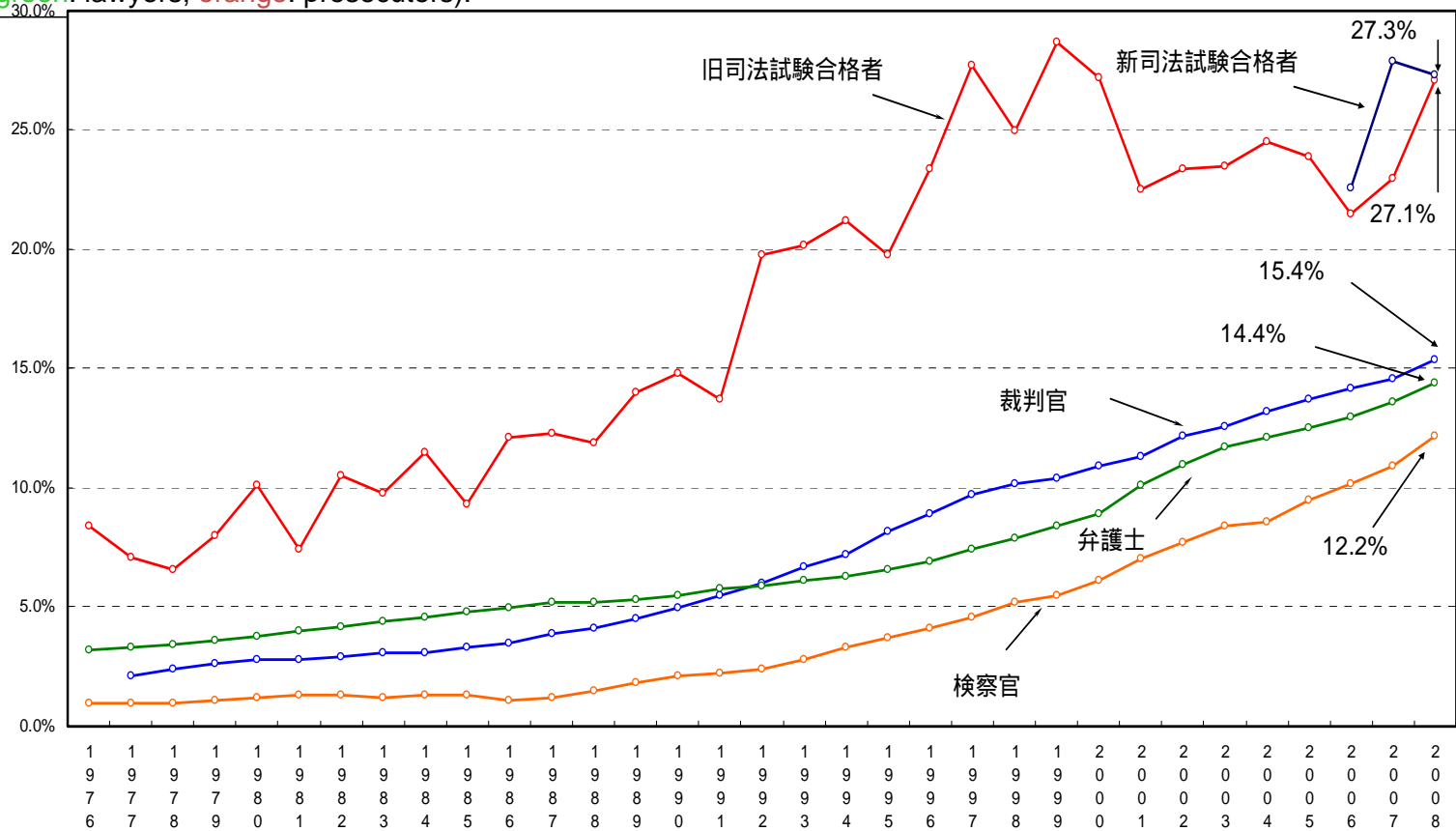
Current data (2008): USA: 34.3%, France: 27.8%, UK: 26.0%, Germany: 19.2%, **Japan 13.0%**



Data: Cabinet Office 2008

Women in the legal profession

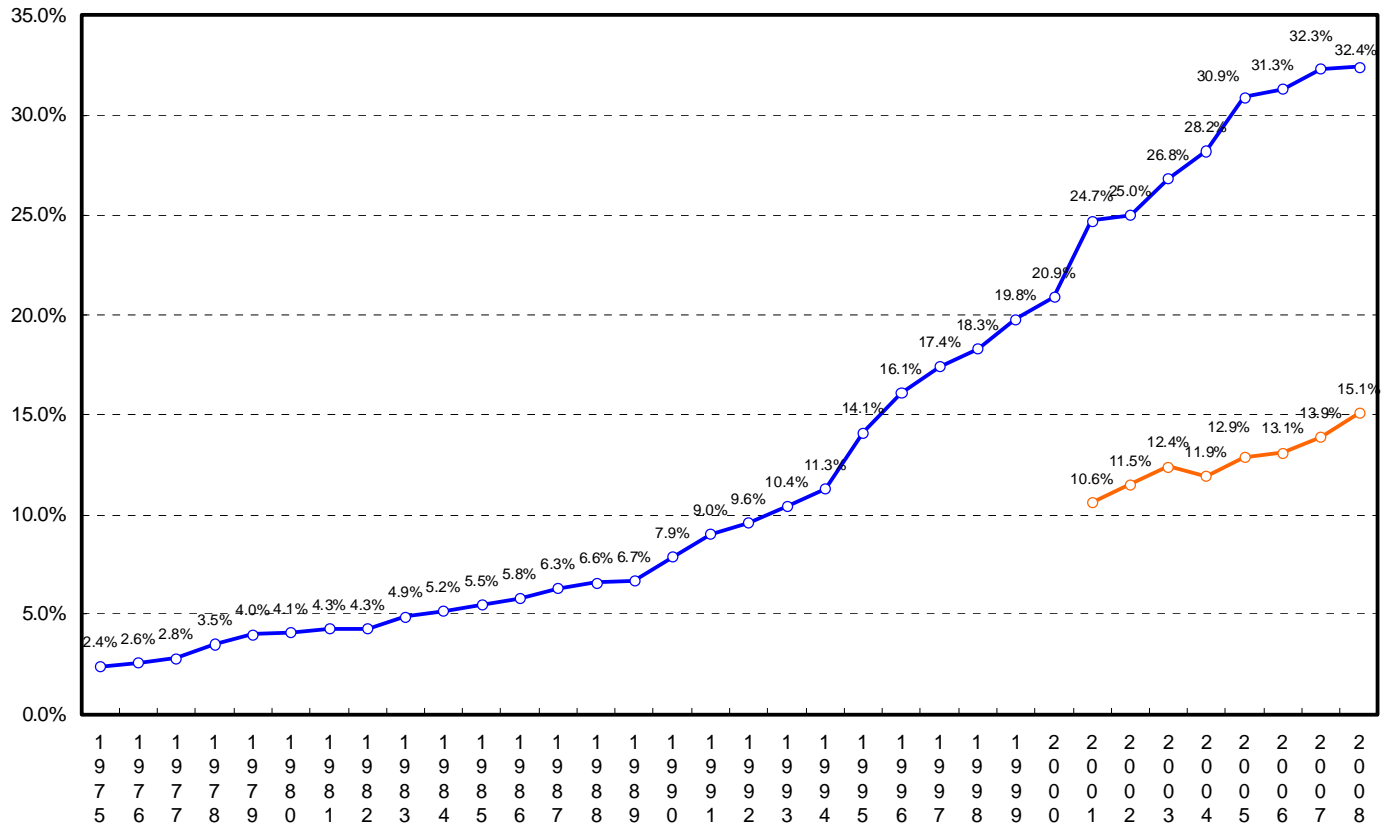
The proportion of female judges, prosecutors, and lawyers is showing a steady increasing trend. Furthermore, the percentage of female students in new graduate law schools is about 30%, so the role of women in the legal profession can be expected to increase (red: pre-existing bar exam, dark blue: new bar exam, light blue: judges, green: lawyers, orange: prosecutors).



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Women on state deliberative councils

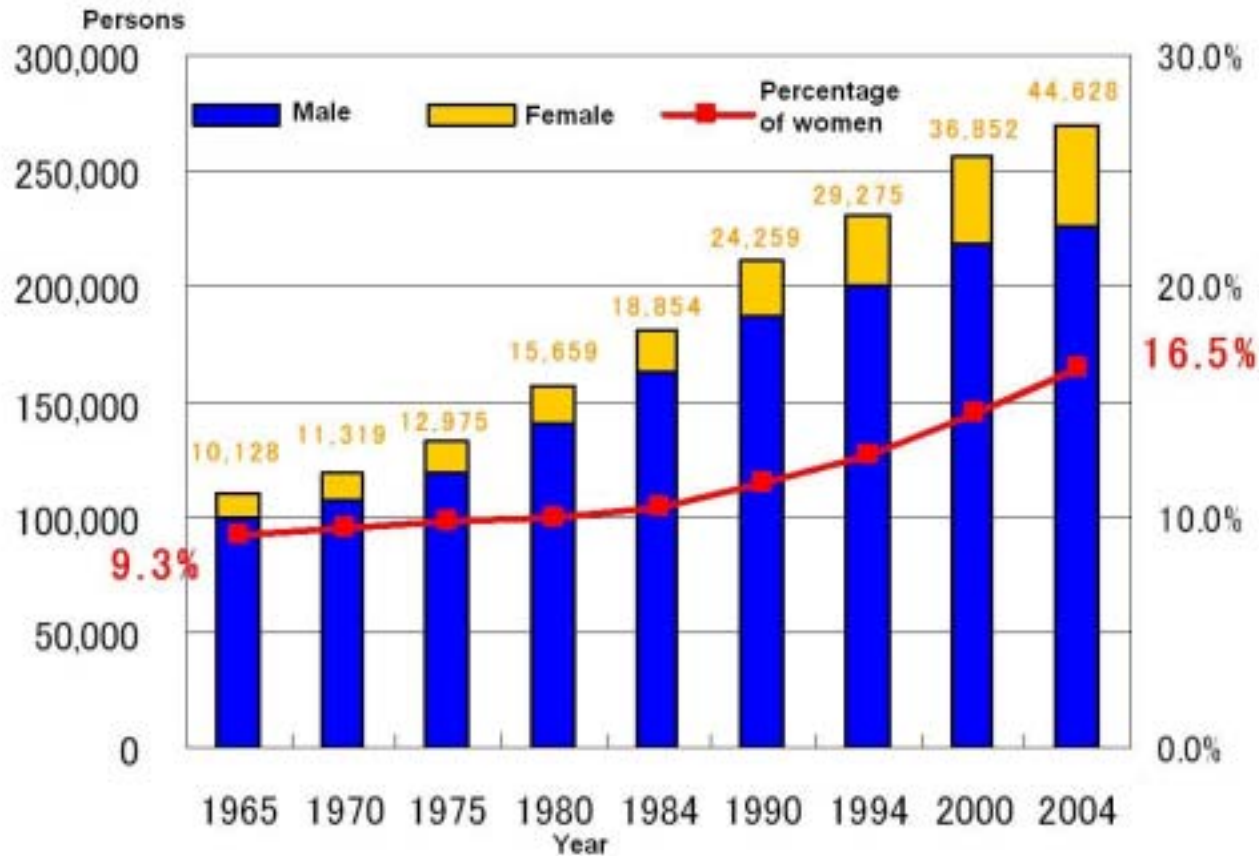
The Headquarters for Promotion of Gender Equality, devised under Minister for gender equality Kuniko Inoguchi, in its policy statement “Promotion of the advancement of female members of the state deliberative councils” set an aspirational goal of 40% female membership of deliberative councils by 2020. The percentage of women is showing a steady increasing trend and was 32.4% in 2008. However, the proportion of expert members that are female remains small.



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Transition in Number and Proportion of Female Doctors

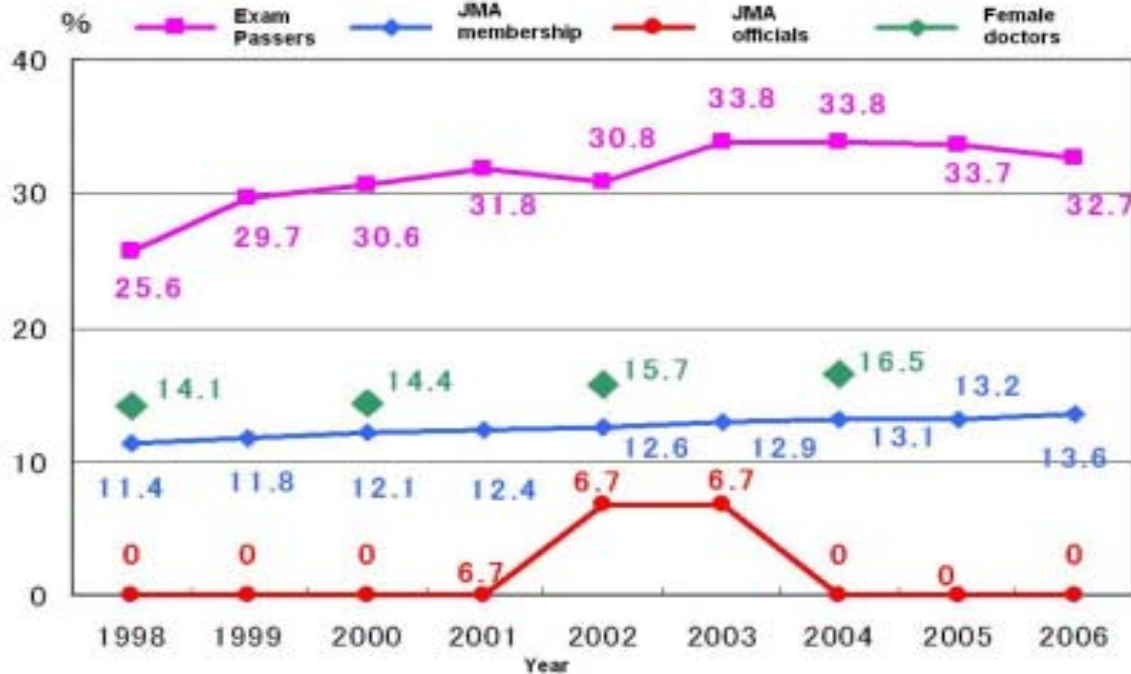
The number and proportion of female doctors is steadily increasing, though it has not reached 20% of the total. From 1990, the number of female doctors has increased by an average of 6% annually. **2006 figure: 17.2%**



Percentage of Women Passers of National Medical Examination, Doctors, and Members and Officials of Japan Medical Association

The percentage of successful female candidates of the national exam for medical practitioners was 32.7%. 16.5% of doctors are women and it is expected that the percentage of female doctors will increase in the future due to the higher ratio at younger generations. The percentage of female members of the Japan Medical Association is 13.6%. In contrast, the percentage of the Association's officials that are women is 0%, demonstrating the difficulty female members have of reaching official positions.

Proportions of female medical exam passers, doctors, and JMA membership / officials



The Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society (1999)



Five Basic principles

(Article 3) Respect for the 1946 The Constitution of Japan

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

(Article 4) Consideration of social systems or practices

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

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

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.

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

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.

(Article 7) International cooperation

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.

Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality (Dec 27, 2005)

Expand women's participation in decision-making processes

- Promote efforts to expand women's participation in every field, so that women will take at least 30% of the leadership positions in all fields of society by 2020.
- Encourage voluntary positive action to expand women's participation in every field of society.

Challenge support for female workers

- Promote challenge support measures and create a one-stop information service.
- Enhance support measures to assist unemployed women to return to work (e.g., to be re-employed or start a business).
- Encourage companies to openly offer full-time and other positions to female workers who had left their prior jobs for child rearing or other reasons.

Secure equal opportunities and treatment between men and women in the field of employment

- Examine measures to ensure substantial equal opportunities in the field of employment, and promote equal employment opportunities and treatment on the job.

Support the efforts of men and women to harmonize work with their family and community life, and review the types of employment

- Conduct a significant and specific review of the types of employment for women and men to assist them in balancing work and family and/or community life.

Promote gender equality through the enrichment of education and learning

Efforts to promote gender equality in new fields

- Promote gender equality in new fields (e.g., science and technology, disaster prevention, disaster recovery, regional development, community revitalization, tourism, and environment) that require new approaches to achieve gender equality.
- Expand employment opportunities for female researchers, and provide support measures to balance work and family.
- Formulate disaster prevention measures to address the different needs of women and men.
- Highlight successful examples of regional development in which women have participated.
- Expand women's participation in the field of environmental conservation.

Promote appropriate medicines that address the specific needs of women and men

- Disseminate knowledge about appropriate medicines that addresses the specific needs of women and men among medical professionals, as well as citizens.

Gender-equal society for men

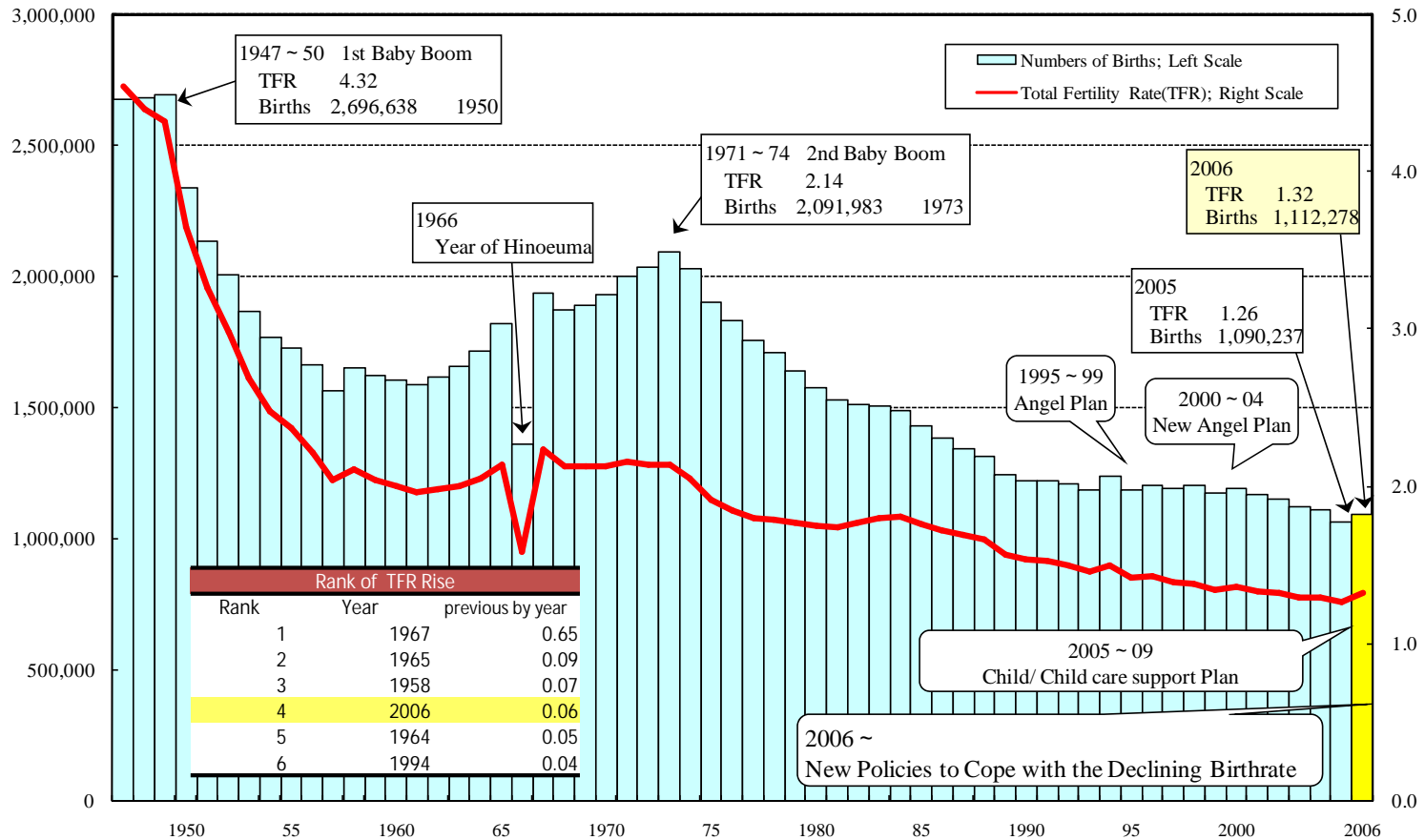
Eliminate all forms of violence against women

- Promote measures to protect and support victims of violence.
- Promote measures to prevent violence against women.

Related measures will be formulated and implemented from a gender-equal perspective to promote gender equality in all fields

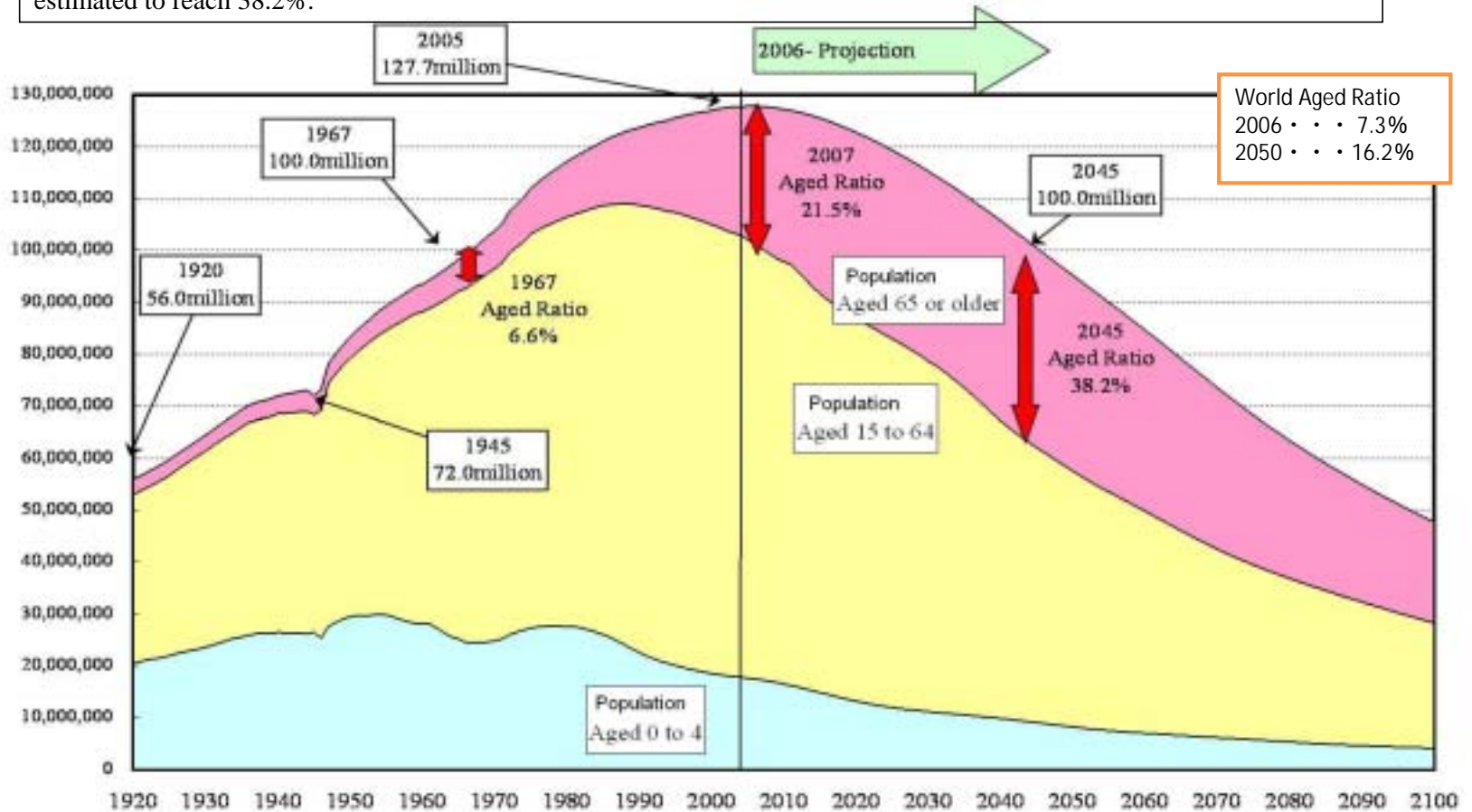
Total Fertility Rate, Number of Births

Both the total fertility rate and the number of births have seen a downward trend since the second baby boom between 1971 and 1974. The trend reversed in 2006 when the number of births reached 1,112,278, which was an increase by 32,041 from the previous year. This is the first increase in 12 years since 1994 when the number of births increased by 51,672.



Trends of Population by Age Structure

If the declining birth rate continues, the total population of Japan will be 100 million by 2045. In 1967, when the population reached 100 million, the aged ratio (% of population aged over 65) was only 6.6 % whereas in 2045, it is estimated to reach 38.2%.



New Policies to Cope With the Declining Birthrate

Child-raising support measures

Newborn and infant stage (from pregnancy and birth through to the nursing of infants)

- Improvement of procedures for the lump-sum allowance for childbirth and nursing
- Reduction of the cost burden for medical expenses during pregnancy
- Expansion of public financial support for fertility treatment
- Ensuring thorough usage of and improvement in conditions for paid leave during initial stages of pregnancy
- Enhancement of obstetric medical services through the employment of more obstetricians, etc.
- Establishment of an extra allowance for infants within the child-support allowance system
- Creation of childcare support network, including home visits to families engaged in the early stages of raising a family

Stage up to school entry

- Enhancement of centers for child-raising support in the community, targeting all families
- Further promotion of Zero Waiting List Campaign
- Enhancement of childcare for sick and recuperating children, and children with disabilities, etc.
- Enhancement of the pediatric healthcare system
- Look into revising the Law for Promotion of Measures to Support the Development of the Next Generation, including the announcement of an Action Plan
- Enhancement and Dissemination of system of child-care leave and reduced working hours
- Promotion of childcare service provision to employees, including childcare facilities established within offices
- Promotion of measures to prevent child accidents
- Enhancement of efforts to reduce the burden on parents or guardians for pre-school education

Primary school stage

- Promotion of the After School Children's Plan in elementary schools nationwide
- Implementation of further safety measures for children while at school or on their commute to or from school, including the introduction of school buses

Junior high, high school, and university stage

- improvement of scholarships, etc.
- Recommendation of student babysitters, etc.

Reform of working practices

- Employment assistance measures for young people
 - Strengthening career development education to prevent youth from becoming 'permanent part-timer' and 'NEET' (Not in Education, Employment or Training)
 - Support to 'older' permanent part-timers to become formal employee
- Promotion of equal treatment for part-timers
- Strengthened measures including in setting enabling legal frameworks
- Assistance measures for continuing employment or reemployment for women
 - Measures to encourage women to take maternity/child care leave and to help them balance work and child rearing, including shorter working hours
 - Vocational and skills training for women who seek reemployment
- Promotion of corporate efforts for child-raising support
 - Funding support to companies that deploy child-rearing support system
- Review of working practices, including revision of long working hours
 - Strengthened measures including in setting enabling legal frameworks
- Promotion of a joint public-private movement to jointly promote child-raising assistance, including reviews of working practices
 - Promotion of good "Work-Life balance"

Other important areas

- Consideration of a taxation system designed to assist those engaged in child-raising, etc.
- Promotion of foster parent and adoption system, including publicity activities to raise awareness
- Strengthening of measures to prevent child abuse and measures to support children in care
- Promotion of food education
- Assistance for family homes, and for situations in which three generations of one family live together or in close proximity, etc.

Special characteristics of Japan and the future of the international community

1 . Resource poor nation education, innovation, science and technology

2 . Victim of nuclear attack disarmament and nonproliferation (nuclear and other weapons)

- Epistemic Community = networks for resolving problems devised through transnational frameworks with a view to policy
- Geriatric Peace (the antiwar structure of a low birth rate aging society in a democracy)
 - butter or gun medicine or gun

S O S = Solution-Oriented Synergy (networking to resolve problems)

- What is knowledge?
- Local knowledge
- Affected partners
- Raising up voices
- Technological innovation to resolve hardships faced by society

necessity of means with a view to resolution