Policies, initiatives and tools to promote women’s economic empowerment in the world of work in Japan
Acknowledgements

The WE EMPOWER G7 Programme is funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). WE EMPOWER G7 contributes to advancing women’s economic empowerment and encourages businesses to promote gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community by signing the Women’s Empowerment Principles and implementing the principles of the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policies (MNE Declaration) and international labour standards on gender equality at work.

This mapping document has been produced with financial support from the European Union. It was commissioned by the ILO and Emi Omura (consultant) carried out the review in Japan. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of UN Women, the International Labour Organization, and the European Union or their constituents. The author would like to thank the project’s Advisory Group of Japan for the inputs and comments received.

Published in 2019.
Contents

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 1
Policies and Initiatives on Gender Pay Gap ..................................................................................... 2
  A. Legislative framework ............................................................................................................. 2
  B. Policies and Initiatives taken by the Government ................................................................. 3
  C. Policies and Initiatives taken by Employers’ Organizations ............................................... 5
  D. Policies and Initiatives taken by Workers’ Organizations .................................................... 8
Policies and Initiatives on Work-life balance and Childcare ........................................................ 10
  A. Legislative Framework .......................................................................................................... 10
  B. Policies and Initiatives taken by the Government ................................................................. 11
  C. Policies and Initiatives taken by Employers’ Organizations ............................................... 15
  D. Policies and Initiatives taken by Workers’ Organizations .................................................... 16
Policies and Initiatives on Culture and Stereotypes ................................................................... 17
  A. Legislative framework .......................................................................................................... 17
  B. Policies and Initiatives taken by the Government ................................................................. 17
  C. Policies and Initiatives taken by Employers’ Organizations ............................................... 19
  D. Policies and Initiatives taken by Workers’ Organizations .................................................... 20
Bibliography .................................................................................................................................. 21
Introduction

The EU, UN Women and ILO project “Empowering women at work through responsible business in G7 countries” (WE EMPOWER G7) aims at supporting sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth by promoting women’s economic empowerment in public and private sector in G7 countries. WE EMPOWER G7 convenes stakeholder dialogues on gender equality in the changing world of work in Canada, Japan, the United States and the EU to exchange knowledge, experiences, good practices and lessons learned.

The inception phase of the project (January-June 2018), focused on collecting data, information and knowledge on women’s economic empowerment, including policies, guidelines, tools and resources in the target G7 countries, in order to foster exchange of good practices.

As a result of preliminary consultations with the project stakeholders and in line with the thematic areas of the ILO’s Women at Work Centenary Initiative (pay equity, violence and harassment in the world of work and care work and care policies), three themes have been selected at the inception phase of the project and for the purposes of this mapping: the gender pay gap, work-life balance and childcare; culture and stereotypes.

This mapping document covers legislation, policies and initiatives on the above topics undertaken by or of relevance to governments, employers’ and workers’ organizations of Japan. It is intended as an overview rather than as an exhaustive review. It also identifies relevant knowledge products linked to such laws, policies and initiatives. All information in this document is as of June 2018, with specific updates until June 2019.
Policies and Initiatives on Gender Pay Gap

A. Legislative framework

1. **Act on Promotion of Women’s Participation and Advancement in the Workplace**
   (Act No.64 of 4 September 2015, as amended on 29 May 2019)¹
   **English Legislative Summary**
   The Act obliges enterprises with more than 300 employees² to:
   (a) collect and analyze the data on issues of gender and employment. Pursuant to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Ordinance No. 162 of 2015, as amended in March 2017. Such data include: (i) rates of female employees newly hired; (ii) gender gap on years of service; (iii) working hours; and (iv) rates of women in management positions;
   (b) devise and disclose action plans to improve gender equality with concrete objectives and measures to be taken based on these analyses; and
   (c) disclose data regarding women’s participation and advancement in the workplace.
   The MHLW Ordinance No.162 of 2015 does not refer to gender wage gap, therefore under this Act disclosure of gender wage gap is not obliged.

2. **Equal Employment Opportunity Act**
   (Act No.113 of 1972, as last amended in March 2016; the revised Act came into force on 1 January 2017)
   The Act prohibits discrimination based on gender in recruitment, assignment, promotion and training, but does not cover discrimination in remuneration (articles 5-10).

3. **Labour Standards Act**
   (Act No. 49 of 7 April 1947, as last amended in May 2015)
   Article 4 of the Act provides that “an employer shall not engage in discriminatory treatment of a woman as compared with a man with respect to wages by reason of the worker being a woman”; however this article does not capture the principle of “equal remuneration for work of equal value”.

4. **Act to prepare related legislation concerning the promotion of work-style reform.**
   (Act No. 71 of 6 July 2018)
   **Act Concept in English | Summary of Act in Japanese**
   Main elements of the Act include (i) establishment of the basic policy on work-style reform; (ii) correction of practice of working long hours and realization of more diverse and flexible form of work; and (iii) ensuring fair treatment regardless of employment type (i.e., regular or non-regular). Given that 68.2% of non-regular workers is consisted of women (as of 2017), the Act is considered relevant to filling gender wage gap.

¹ According to the Government’s translation. In NATLEX it is referred to as “Law concerning the Promotion of Women’s Career Activities”. Hereinafter called “Women’s Advancement Act of 2015”.
² Pursuant to the amendment made in 2019, the companies with more than 100 employees will be covered.
B. Policies and Initiatives taken by the Government

1. Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW)
   MHLW Guideline on supporting measures taken by workers and employers aiming at eliminating gender pay gap (August 2010)
   (Ministry Website in Japanese)
   **Objective:** The MHLW Guideline aims at capturing the status quo, and at facilitating workers’ and employers’ review of wages and employment management system.
   **Scope:** The Guideline proposes three viewpoints to review wages and employment management system: (i) to establish a fair, clear, and objective wages and employment management system, and to ensure transparency; (ii) to review and improve treatment including relocation, assignment and training; and (iii) to take positive actions to rectify past discrimination.
   **Impact:** Both workers’ and employers’ organizations introduce the Guideline on its website respectively, but no data is available on the number of enterprises which have actually taken any measures pursuant to the Guideline.

2. MHLW Guideline on implementing job evaluation pursuant to an analytical method based on points and factors (November 2012)³
   (Guidelines in Japanese)
   **Objective:** The MHLW Guideline was released pursuant to the Part-time Workers Act (Act No. 76 of 1993, as last amended in April 2014), and was updated in July 2015. The Guideline aims at “eliminating unreasonable gap in treatment of regular workers and part-time workers”, and at “promoting workers’ exercise of abilities by enhancing the understanding of part-time workers” concerning the gap in treatment.
   **Scope:** The Guideline is targeted at workers and employers, showing how to implement objective job evaluation based on points and factors. An enterprise,

---
³ MHLW, Manual on reviewing base wage by conducting job evaluation (March 2019)
https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/000496880.pdf.
which has revised its wage scale, may apply for subsidies granted by the MHLW, and the amount of subsidies will increase when the applicant enterprise has adopted the objective job evaluation pursuant to the Guideline.

**Impact:** Given that 74.1% of part-time workers is consisted of women (as of FY 2016), this guideline is considered relevant to addressing the gender wage gap. However, no data is available on the number of enterprises, which have actually taken any measures pursuant to the Guideline. “Good practice examples” included in the MHLW pamphlet (see box below) introduce ten enterprises which have conducted objective job evaluation for part-time workers, but no gender disaggregated data is available.

**KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS**

**Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare**

- **Part-time work portal site**
  This website includes: (i) information on the Part-Time Workers Act; (ii) an “enterprise diagnosis” tool, which provides analytical index on the advancement of part-time workers, in order to enable employers to compare the management system within its business sector; (iii) an “enterprise declaration” site, which any enterprise can demonstrate its internal measures regarding part-time workers; (iv) “part-time workers promotion award”, which is given by the MHLW based on certain criteria to be met; (v) information on good practice examples; (vi) information on job evaluation; (vii) explanation on “regular work with shorter working time” system; and (viii) information on career advancement for part-time workers. *(Portal in Japanese)*

- **Pamphlet on good practice examples (July 2015)**
  The pamphlet is entitled “points on evaluating jobs and roles and good practice examples”. It provides explanation on analytical method of job evaluation based on points and factors. Examples from ten enterprises are introduced as conducting such job evaluation. *(Pamphlet in Japanese)*

- **Manual for implementing job analysis (July 2015)**
  The manual clarifies the three points to be noted by employers: (i) to ensure treatment of part-time workers which corresponds to their work-style and contribution to the company; (ii) to ensure equitable treatment between part-time workers and full time workers; and (iii) to fulfill accountability before part-time workers on the difference of treatment. *(Manual in Japanese)*
3. Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office
   The 4th Basic Plan for Gender Equality (December 2015)
   (Plan Summary in English).
   The main policies include promoting measures aiming at eliminating gender wage gap, “bearing in mind the concept of the ILO Convention No. 100 (1951) on equal remuneration for work of equal value”.

   (Pamphlet in English)
   **Objective:** The pamphlet introduces facts and figures as well as measures for gender equality.
   **Scope:** The figures include gender pay gap, which was 27% as of 2016. The explanation reads “wage gap between male regular workers and female regular workers has been decreasing. The wage gap between regular workers and part-time workers also has been decreasing”. No further analysis on gender pay gap is provided in the pamphlet.

5. Program for training women executives (FY2016)
   (Program in English)
   **Objective:** The program aims at increasing numbers of women executives promoted internally and women executives hired from outside sources.
   **Scope:** A model program for training women candidates for executive positions and globally active leaders was created. The model program has been communicated to local governments and economic organizations, etc. and its implementation is being broadly promoted. In FY2017, seminars based on the model program were held in two prefectures.
   **Impact:** This program for women executives could be considered as addressing the gender pay gap, but policy is scarce targeting women in general. 28.4% of female regular workers’ annual salary ranges between JPY 2 million (15,368 Euros) to JPY 2.99 million (22,975 Euros) as of February 2017, but no major policy is found targeting those women.

C. Policies and Initiatives taken by Employers’ Organizations

1. **Policy proposal called “Full-swing Womenomics” (December 2017)**
   **Implementing Actor:** Keidanren (Japan Business Federation)
   (English summary)
   **Objective:** The Keidanren initiatives under this policy proposal aim at bolstering “efforts to offer career education” for women and at voluntary release of corporate information on “active participation by women” for the purpose of attracting more investment.
   **Scope:** This policy proposal consists of five initiatives on work styles, market, investment, “diplomacy” (active exchange among female executives at the global level) and lifestyles.
   **Impact:** Disclosure of information is up to each enterprise’ voluntary effort. Also, information to be disclosed is merely referred to as information on “active participation by women”, and is not specified further. No specific reference is made to wages or gender wage gap in this policy proposal.

---

4 Stands for “Women and Economics”, the core policy proposed by the P.M. Shinzo Abe administration.
2. Policy proposal “Toward the realization of equal pay for equal work” (July 2016)

*Implementing Actor: Keidanren (Japan Business Federation)*

*(English Policy Outline)*

**Objective:** In response to the proposed work-style reform by the Government, this policy aims at proposing a “Japanese-style equal pay for equal work”, while ensuring equal or balanced treatment regardless of employment type (regular or non-regular).

**Scope:** Keidanren emphasizes that “differences between Japan’s employment practices and personnel/wage systems and those of European nations” need to be taken into account.

3. Action Plan on “Women’s Active Participation in the Workplace: Enhancing Corporate Competitiveness and Achieving Sustainable Economic Growth” (April 2014)

*Implementing Actor: Keidanren (Japan Business Federation)*

*(Proposal in English) (Summary in English)*

**Objective:** This Keidanren Action Plan aims at “proactive voluntary efforts” of enterprises in implementing five action plans concerning women’s active participation in the workplace.

**Scope:** The five action plans include disclosure of information on the promotion of women to managerial and board positions, and establishing a management development course for women to offer opportunities to gain experience and build networks outside the company.

**Impact:** This Action Plan led to the disclosure on Keidanren website of the voluntary action plans by each enterprise on women in management positions and board members, starting December 2014.

**KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS**

*Keidanren (Japan Business Federation)*

- List of companies which adopt voluntary action plans on women in management positions and board members
  - **Example 1:** Accenture (consulting firm): set the target of 20% of women in management positions by the end of FY2020 (the rate was 12.7% in 2016).
  - **Example 2:** NTT data (information and communications): set the target of more than 200 women in management positions in FY2020, and more than 10 female executives in FY2020.
  - **Example 3:** Itochu (operating in 63 countries; trading of various products such as textile, machinery, metals, minerals, energy, chemicals, food, etc.): set the target of more than 10% of women in “sogo-shoku” (main career track), and more than 10% of women in leadership positions in 2020.
  - **Example 4:** Canon marketing Japan (electronics): set the target of 2 (two) % of women in management positions by the end of 2020; aims at conducting training and introducing mentorship programs for female employees in management positions.
  - **Example 5:** Sony (electronics): set the target of more than 15% of women in management positions in the end of FY2020.

*(Full list in Japanese)*
4. Action pledge by business owners “Creating diversity on decision-making boards: appointing female managers and executives to strengthen corporate competitiveness” (May 2012) 
Implementing Actor: Japan Association of Corporate Executives (Keizai-Doyukai) 
(English Summary)

Objective: This pledge aims at board diversity and increase of women in management positions, and change of mind-setting of business owners.
Scope: The pledge is as follows: business owners shall (i) make an effort to achieve the goal of 30% of women in management positions by 2020, bearing in mind the appointment of women in the board as well; (ii) set a realistic goal depending on sectors and work styles, and promote advancement of women in the workplace; (iii) disclose in its investors’ relations reports or CSR reports the numbers and rates of women in management positions and the board, as well as the established goal; (iv) consider introducing education programs for women in management positions; and (v) review owner’s mind setting and bear in mind that diversity is a business strategy.

5. Policy proposal on “tax scheme and social welfare scheme to promote women’s participation in the labour force” (September 2015) 
Implementing Actor: The Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) 
(Proposal in Japanese)

Objective: This proposal aims at promoting women’s participation in the labour force. While no specific reference is made to gender wage gap, change of tax scheme aims at increasing women’s earnings.
Scope: The proposal covers the issue of changing national tax scheme and social welfare scheme to promote women’s participation in the labour force, as well as at changing “support allowance” scheme (which normally is given when a male employee financially supports a non-working wife) at each company level.
KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS
Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry

- Portal site “promotion of youth and women vitalization for SMEs”
  The portal site aims at supporting SMEs in the area of promotion of youth and women in the workplace. The site is consisted of links to knowledge products produced by JCCI, as well as links to the governmental policies and various measures taken by the relevant ministries.  
  (Website in Japanese)

- Support tool for drafting action plan (September 2016)
  The tool consists of excel spreadsheets, and aims at supporting SMEs to draft an action plan pursuant to the new Act on Women’s advancement in the workplace.  
  (Full toolkit in Japanese)

- Handbook on “promoting women’s advancement for SMEs” (March 2016)
  The handbook introduces various issues arising at each career stage and/or life event, and show examples on how to respond to these issues. The handbook is targeted at both employers and workers.  
  (Full text in Japanese)

- Good practice examples
  As of June 2018, 51 examples are introduced on the measures taken by the SMEs on women’s advancement in the workplace. Good practice examples include the following.
  - **Example 1 (printing SME)**: (i) a short-time work (i.e. working shorter time than 8 hours per day) is available; (ii) during childcare leave, employees can receive follow-up information on the status of work in order to prepare for returning to the workplace.
  - **Example 2 (wholesale of rubber products SME)**: (i) reduction of overtime work to only 20 hours per year on average was achieved, at the cost of decrease of sales; (ii) all of the 44 employees became regular workers.
  - **Example 3 (construction SME)**: (i) introduction of short-time work system to increase the recruitment of women in the sector; (ii) assign female workers in various positions to give broader career options.  
  (Full list in Japanese)

D. Policies and Initiatives taken by Workers’ Organizations

1. **Rengo 2nd Action Plan pursuant to the Women’s Advancement Act of 2015 (2019)**
   
   Implementing Actor: Rengo (Japan Trade Union Confederation)  
   (Full plan in Japanese)

   **Objective:** The Action plan is established in order to fulfill the requirements of the Women’s Advancement Act of 2015 within Rengo. The period of the plan is
set from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2021.

**Scope:** Five targets are: (i) to achieve more than 30% of women in management positions; (ii) to decrease gap within 40% between men and women at each department; (iii) to promote men’s participation in child rearing; (iv) to achieve at least 70% of take-up rate of annual leave with pay; and (v) conduct seminars and trainings to promote awareness on these targets.

**Impact:** Information is disclosed as of 2019 on Rengo website with regard to (i) rates of female employees newly hired (100%); (ii) gender gap on years of service (92%); (iii) average overtime work per month (6.88 hours); and (iv) rates of women in management positions (28.9%).

---

**KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS**

**Rengo (Japan Trade Union Confederation)**

- “Guideline for taking measures to adopt voluntary action plan pursuant to the Women’s Advancement Act” (December 2015)
  
  The Guideline is targeted at trade unions to get involved in the drafting process of action plans. The Guideline shows each step of the Women’s Advancement Act of 2015 to be taken by employers, i.e., (i) to conduct survey internally to capture the status quo; (ii) to adopt, disseminate, disclose and register a voluntary action plan; (iii) to establish a PDCA (plan, do, check and act) cycle to ensure effective implementation. In addition, the Guideline shows the roles of labour unions, the ways of engagement by workers at each step.

  In particular, the Guideline asserts that workers need to ask employers to conduct survey to capture gender pay gap at each workplace. The Guideline also emphasizes the importance of workers being involved in the drafting process of an action plan, bearing in mind that disclosure of gender pay gap is an option (not mandatory) under the Act.

  *(Full text in Japanese)*

---

2. **Zenroren**

No specific policy is found on gender wage gap.

**KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS**

**Zenroren (workers’ organization)**

- Leaflet “utilize the Women’s Advancement Act” (2016)
  
  This leaflet explains the contents of the Women’s Advancement Act of 2015, and asks labour unions to get involved in the process of drafting action plans by employers pursuant to the Act.

  *(Full text in Japanese)*
Policies and Initiatives on Work-life balance and Childcare

A. Legislative Framework

1. Act on Arrangement of Relevant Act on Promoting the Work Style Reform (Act No. 71 of 2018) (Basic concept in English) (Summary of Act in Japanese)

   Main elements of the Act include (i) establishment of the basic policy on work-style reform; (ii) correction of long-working practice at workplace and realization of more diverse and flexible form of work; and (iii) ensuring fair treatment regardless of employment type (i.e., regular or non-regular). In particular, correction of long-working practice is relevant to work-life balance.

2. Act on Promotion of Women’s Participation and Advancement in the Workplace (Act No.64 of 4 September 2015): see IA-1.

3. Act on Childcare Leave, Caregiver Leave, and Other Measures for the Welfare of Workers Caring for Children or Other Family Members (Act No. 76 of 15 May 1991, as last amendment entered into force on 1 October 2017).

   The Act provides childcare leave until the child reaches one year of age (or 14 months if both parents take leave) and other related measures for workers with family responsibilities, including measures to shorten working hours, exemption from or limitation of overtime work or late-night work.

4. Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children (Act No. 120 of 2003)

   The Act obliges employers with more than 100 employees to adopt, disclose, disseminate and register an action plan on facilitating employment environment to enable employees to balance both work and child-rearing. Such action plan needs to specify (i) period for the plan; (ii) targets; and (iii) measures to achieve targets and timeline for implementation.

5. Equal Employment Opportunity Act (Act No.113 of 1 July 1972, as last amended in March 2016; the revised Act came into force on 1 January 2017).

   The amendment (article 11-2 was added) obliges employers to take measures to prevent harassment by any superiors or colleagues of an employee, due to pregnancy, childbirth, use of family leave (whether by male or female), etc. The MHLW Guidance (MHLW notice No. 312 of 2016) under this Act also came into force on 1 January 2017.

   An amendment, which provides the same effect as above, was also made to the Childcare and family care leave Act (article 25 was added), and came into force on

5 In NATLEX, it is referred to as “Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members Including Child Care and Family Care Leave Law [Law No. 76 of 15 May 1991]”. Hereinafter called “Childcare and Family Care Leave Act”.

6 Hereinafter called “Next Generation Act of 2003”.
6. Labour Standards Act (Act No. 49 of 7 April 1947, as last amended in May 2015)
The Act provides for maternity leave and time for childcare for female employees (articles 65-67).

B. Policies and Initiatives taken by the Government

1. Plan to Accelerate the Elimination of Childcare Waiting Lists (April 2013)
   Implementing Actor: Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet (Kantei)
   (Full plan in Japanese)
   **Objective:** This policy aims at the elimination of childcare waiting lists (decrease of children on waiting lists for nursery care), which enables more women to participate in the labour market.
   **Scope:** The target is set to increase nursery care facilities for 500,000 children for the period from FY2013-2017.
   **Impact:** The Government achieved increase of nursery care facilities for approximately 428,000 children for the period from FY2013-2016. (MHLW statistics in Japanese as of April 2017). Women aged 25-44 with children aged 0-3 who participate in the labour market increased by 170,000 in Oct-Dec 2016 in comparison to the same period in 2012. (Kantei site in Japanese)

2. Plan to ensure the number of childcare providers (January 2015)
   Implementing Actor: Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet (Kantei)
   **Objective:** The plan aims at increasing human resources capable of providing childcare.
   **Scope:** The target is set to “70,000 staff” by the end of FY 2017. The target was modified to “90,000” in November 2015. Measures with additional budget cover the improvement of working conditions of childcare providers including a pay-rise.
   **Impact:** The number of childcare staff increased to 356,952 as of October 2016 from 354,345 in the previous year. The average monthly salary for staff at a childcare provider with more than 100 staff increased to JPY224,700 in the year 2017 from JPY 218,300 in 2016 (approximately 50 euros up). (MHLW statistics in Japanese)

3. Childrearing Security Plan (June 2017)
   Implementing Actor: Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet (Kantei)
   (Full plan in Japanese) (English excerpts of the MHLW Annual Report; page 12 shows the Plan)
   **Objective:** The Plan aims at eliminating “the waiting list for children nationwide within three years, by the end of FY2020 at the latest”; and at eliminating “M-shaped curve in 5 years while maintaining a zero waiting list for children”.
   **Scope:** Under the Plan, the Government secured a “budget to prepare a reservoir for approximately 220,000 children in 2 years from FY2018 to the end of FY2019”. Also, the Government secured a “budget to prepare a reservoir for approximately 320,000 women in 5 years from FY2018 to the end of FY2022”. The target for the female employment rate is set at 80% (the rate was 72.7% as of April 2016).
   *Implementing Actor: Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet (Kantei)*
   *(Plan in English)*

   **Objective:** The plan aims at “a virtuous cycle of Japanese economy”, and tries to “build a new system of our economic society where we enhance childcare supports and social security as a broader economic policy, which will lead to a more robust economy”. The plan also refers to the “desirable birthrate of 1.8”.

   **Scope:** Measures to be taken include “preparation of childcare arrangements, improvement in working conditions of childcare providers, ensuring and development of various human resources and reduction in labor burdens through improvement in productivity”.

   **Impact:** This plan explains that the target for additional childcare arrangements was raised from “for 400,000 children” to “for 500,000 children” for the FY 2017.

5. **SDGs Implementing Guiding Principles and Specific Measures to Achieve the SDGs (December 2016)**
   *Implementing Actor: SDGs Promotion Headquarters, Cabinet Office*
   *(Principles in English) (Specific Measures in English)*

   **Objective:** Following the establishment of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters in the Cabinet Office in May 2016, Implementing Guiding Principles and Specific Measures to Achieve the SDGs aim at representing “Japan’s national strategy to address the major challenges for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda”.

   **Scope:** “The document sets out Japan’s vision, priority areas, implementation principles, implementation framework and approach to the follow-up and review processes, as well as concrete measures clustered under priority areas. The Specific Measures include reduction of overwork, securing equal opportunities and treatment for men and women in work-life balance, youth employment, and employment of persons with disabilities, etc.

6. **“Kurumin-mark” Certificate**
   *Implementing Actor: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare*
   *(Certificate System in Japanese)*

   **Objective:** This certificate system aims at promoting the effective implementation of action plans pursuant to the Next Generation Act of 2003 (see IIA-4 above).

   **Scope:** Employers who have adopted action plans pursuant to the Act may apply for certificate called “kurumin-mark”. Ten criteria for certification include the adoption of an action plan, achievement of the targets specified in the action plan, dissemination of information on the action plan at the workplace, and the rate of men and women who took childcare leave.

   **Impact:** The employers can put the “kurumin-mark” on its products, services and advertisement for such products and services, as well as on recruitment advertisement. As of the end of December 2017, 2,848 companies were certified with “kurumin-mark”.

---

**Impact:** Not yet published.
7. Advantageous treatment in public procurement

**Objective:** An advantageous treatment in procurement for companies with “kurumin-mark” aims at the increase of the application for the mark, and thereby promoting companies' measures on balancing work and childcare.

**Scope:** Starting FY 2016, companies with “kurumin-mark” can get extra points during the process of evaluation for open bids for public procurement both at national and local levels.

**Impact:** No data is available on the number of companies who receive extra points in public procurement process.

8. Tax benefits

**Objective:** The tax benefits were given to promote the application for “kurumin-mark”.

**Scope:** The benefits were applied until 31 March 2018. The companies, which were certified with “kurumin-mark”, could receive tax benefits. During the period of the enacted action plan, depreciation rate was increased for newly built or reformed office buildings.

**Impact:** The Osaka Labour Standards Bureau canceled the application of “kurumin” tax benefits for an electronic giant Panasonic, Inc., after the Bureau found out illegal overtime work at the company.

9. Selection of “Nadeshiko” Brand

**Implementing Actor:** Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)

**(News Release in English) (News Release in Japanese)**

**Objective:** The Brand is aimed at promoting investment in enterprises, which have taken measures to promote and advance women in the workplace, and at “accelerating efforts to encourage women’s success in the workplace”.

**Scope:** Nadeshiko Brand is an initiative that METI and the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TES) jointly started in FY2012. In this initiative, “METI and the TSE introduce certain TSE-listed enterprises that are outstanding in terms of encouraging the empowerment of women in the workplace as attractive stocks to investors who are concerned with improving corporate value in the mid- and long-term”.

The seven criteria for the Brand include rate of women in management
positions and on the board, flexible work-style and easiness to continue working, and childcare leave take-up rate by male employees. (Full criteria list in Japanese)

Impact: Among 3,500 TSE-listed enterprises, 48 enterprises were selected as “Nadeshiko” Brand in March 2018 for FY 2017.

10. “Diversity Management Selection 100” and “Diversity Management Selection 100 Prime Programs”
Implementing Actor: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)
(News Release in English) (News Release in Japanese)

Objective: The Selection programs aim at “strengthening Japanese enterprises’ competitiveness by promoting diversity management as an effective strategy, which provides diverse human resources, including women, foreign nationals, the elderly and challenged people (people with disabilities), with opportunities to exercise their potential to the greatest extent possible and to take part in the value creation process”.

Scope: The “Diversity Management Selection 100” started in FY 2012. Starting FY 2017, METI started “Selection 100 Prime program” to “select outstanding enterprises out of those that have already been recognized under the existing programs and that still strive for diversity management under the Diversity 2.0 program while focusing on continuous efforts across departments”.

Impact: In total 205 enterprises (106 large firms and 99 SMEs) were selected between FY2012-2016.

11. Diversity 2.0 Action Guideline (March 2017)
(English Summary) (Full guidelines in Japanese)

Objective: The objective of “Diversity 2.0” is to “continuously create added values, by maximally leveraging the diverse attributes and skills of each individual”, by taking a company-wide and consistent management action.


Impact: The Action Guideline led to a new “Diversity Management Selection 100 Prime Programs” starting FY 2017 as written above.

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS
Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

- Diversity management booklet for FY 2017
The booklet introduces good practice examples of SMEs on diversity management, including the introduction of flexible work style for employees with children; establishing reemployment systems for employees who quit work after childbirth; and organizing events for employees and children to promote understanding of workers with family responsibilities.
(Complete booklet in Japanese)
C. Policies and Initiatives taken by Employers’ Organizations

1. Initiative called “Workstyle reform challenge 2017”
   Implementing Actor: Keidanren
   (Reform information in English)
   **Objective:** The objectives of the workstyle reform initiative include rectifying business practices, which lead to long working hours, and thereby promoting balance of work and childcare.
   **Scope:** The initiative is consisted of (i) drafting workstyle reform action plans; (ii) joint declaration on rectifying business practices which lead to long working hours; (iii) campaign on encouraging employees to take annual leave; and (iv) information sharing on good practices.
   **Impact:** As of October 2017, the joint declaration was endorsed by 112 associations, comprising the 4 major business associations, 60 industrial business associations, and 47 regional economic associations.

   **KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS**
   Keidanren (Japan Business Federation)
   - Booklet on good practice examples: “Successful business impacts by women’s economic empowerment” (2017)
     This booklet is a “collection of the outcomes and business impacts of pioneering efforts to empower women in the workplace”, including examples of innovations from the perspectives of women, and opening of a new sales market for products and services targeted at women.
     The booklet also introduces examples on changes of working culture at companies as a result of the increase of women in the workforce, such as reduction of overtime, increased awareness on productivity in a limited time, and increase of take-up rate of annual leave.
     (Full booklet in English and Japanese)
   - Good practice examples on work style reform (September 2017)
     Examples of progressive initiatives from 15 companies are introduced in the booklet. The initiatives include “facilitating flexible work styles, such as reducing working hours, encouraging workers to take paid leave, achieving compatibility of work and child/elderly care, enabling employees to balance work and health, and offering teleworking”, among others.
     (Full booklet in Japanese)

2. Report entitled “Toward the realization of true diversity in the board”
   Implementing Actor: Keizai Doyukai
   (Full Report in Japanese) (Summary in English)
   **Objective:** The report aims at following up to the Action pledge made in May 2012 (see I-C above), and further strengthen measures to promote women in management positions and in the board.
Scope: The report was released in November 2013. The report points out that as one of the challenges to realize the board diversity, measures on compatibility of work and childcare is not sufficient.

3. JCCI and Keidanren issued a statement in June 2010 that support for childrearing needs to have public funding, rather than imposing burdens on enterprises.
   Implementing Actor: Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Full statement in Japanese)
   No other policy proposal concerning work-life balance and childcare is found.

D. Policies and Initiatives taken by Workers’ Organizations

1. Secretary General’s Statement on the MHLW Labour Policy Council proposal (December 2016)
   Implementing Actor: Japan Trade Union Confederation (Rengo) (Full statement in Japanese)
   Objective: The Statement aims at showing concern to the MHLW Labour Policy Council proposal, which tried to extend the period of childcare leave from one year and six months to two years.
   Scope: This Statement showed concern that extending the period of childcare leave without promoting childcare leave take-up rate by male employees, might run counter into the advancement of women in the workplace.

2. Policy proposals on balancing work and childrearing (2015)
   Implementing Actor: Zenroren (Full proposal in Japanese)
   Objective: The proposals aim at expanding social system to enable compatibility of work and childrearing.
   Scope: The proposals include extension of childcare leave, expansion of childcare leave to non-regular workers, and combatting effectively unfair treatment due to take-up of childcare leave.
Policies and Initiatives on Culture and Stereotypes

A. Legislative framework

1. **Basic Act for Gender Equal Society** (Act No. 78 of 1999)
   
   *Full Legislative Text in English (PDF)*
   
   Article 4 of the Act provides that “in consideration that social systems or practices can be factors that impede the Formation of Gender Equal Society by reflecting a stereotyped division of roles on the basis of gender, [...] and having a biased effect on men and women's selection of social activities, consideration shall be given so that social systems and practices have as neutral an impact as possible on this selection of social activities.”

B. Policies and Initiatives taken by the Government

1. **The 4th Basic Plan on Gender Equality** (2015-2025)
   
   *Implementing Actor: Gender Equality Bureau (Summary in English)*
   
   **Objective:** One of the twelve objectives of the Basic Plan includes “awareness-raising on gender equality through education and media”.
   
   **Scope:** The Basic Plan was adopted in December 2015, and set the target for the period until the end of FY 2025.

2. **“Riko (science and engineering) challenge” campaign (2016-)**
   
   *Campaign website in Japanese*
**Objective:** This campaign starting in 2016 aims at increasing women and girls in science and engineering field.

**Scope:** The site includes information on the work in the science and engineering field, targeted at girls at junior high and senior high schools as well as female university students.

**Impact:** Various events have taken place every year, with the cooperation of business sectors.

3. “Declaration on Action by a group of male leaders who will create a society in which women shine” (June 2014)
   (Full declaration in English)

   **Objective:** The declaration aims at raising awareness of male leadership on women’s participation in the workplace.

   **Scope:** The Declaration includes (i) taking actions and sending messages; (ii) disrupting the status quo; and (iii) developing networking. The Declaration emphasizes the importance and contribution of different views held by women.

   **Impact:** A report on good practice example, “Male leaders’ challenges to promote women’s active participation in Japan” was published (in Japanese and English) in December 2017.

4. World Assembly for Women “WAW!”
   (Full website in English)

   **Objective:** To strengthen international cooperation on women’s active participation.

   **Scope:** Starting 2014, Japan held the fourth World Assembly for Women in November 2017.

   **Impact:** 64 top leaders and experts active in women’s empowerment participated in the WAW!2017 as speakers with 2,400 audience.

5. “Get Dads Cooking Campaign” (2017)
   (Full campaign in Japanese)

   **Objective:** The campaign aims at promoting the participation of men in housework and childrearing.

   **Scope:** The 4th Basic Plan on Gender Equality set the target of increasing men’s participation in housework and childrearing to 2 hours and a half per day on average by 2020, as opposed to 67 minutes per day in the year 2011 (statistics on men with children under the age of 6 years old).

   **Impact:** Governors of local municipalities participated in the campaign and posted their cuisine on the website.

   (Panel information in Japanese)

   **Objective:** The panel was established to analyze challenges and measures to be taken to change men’s awareness and lifestyle, thereby to increase active participation by men in housework and childrearing.

   **Scope:** Five meetings of the panel were held from October 2016 to February 2017.

   **Impact:** A report on “challenges and measures to be taken to bring changes to men’s awareness and lifestyle” was released in March 2017.

7. Positive action portal site
   Implementing Actor: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW)
(Portal website in Japanese)

**Objective:** The site aims at raising awareness on positive action measures pursuant to the target of “30% of women in all area of society by 2020”, which was set in June 2003. The MHLW defines positive action as rectifying difference between male and female workers, including lack of women in management positions, “due to stereotypes on the roles of men and women”.

**Scope:** The site disseminates information on relevant laws, good practice examples by companies and gathers information on enterprises, which sign up for “declaration on advancement of women”.

**Impact:** As of June 2018, the number of enterprises, which signed up for the declaration, increased to 2,112.

---

**KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS**

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

- Checklist for eliminating difference in treatment due to gender stereotypes (targeted at employees in management positions) *(Checklist in Japanese)*
- Checklist for gender stereotypes at workplace (targeted at employees in general) *(Checklist in Japanese)*

Both checklists are consisted of multiple questionnaires to raise awareness on gender stereotypes, and examples of stereotypes, including how people perceive and react to same actions taken by male or female employees, and how differently employers assign qualified male or female for certain posts.

---

**C. Policies and Initiatives taken by Employers’ Organizations**

1. **“Riko (science and engineering) challenge” campaign (2016-)**
   - Implementing Actor: Keidanren
   - *(Campaign website in Japanese)*
   - **Objective:** This campaign aims at increasing women and girls in science and engineering field.
   - **Scope:** In association with the Gender Equality Bureau of the Cabinet Office, Keidanren provides opportunities for girls and female students to visit workplaces in the field of science and engineering.

   - “Summary of Action Plan on Women’s Active Participation in the Workplace”.
   - Implementing Actor: Keidanren
   - *(Summary in English) (Summary in Japanese)*
   - **Objective:** This Keidanren Action Plan aims at “proactive voluntary efforts” of enterprises in implementing five action plans concerning women’s active participation in the workplace.
Scope: Five action plans include “publishing pamphlets with profiles of women working in science and engineering jobs and organizing large-scale events involving multiple enterprises in collaboration with the government, universities, and business.” This initiative also covers “stereotypes as women’s roles” as one of the challenges faced in women’s active participation in the workplace. As to measures to be taken, Keidanren proposes (i) the introduction of new tax scheme and social welfare scheme to rectify gender stereotypes; and (ii) the work style reform to rectify long-working hours aiming at enabling more men to participate in childrearing.

Impact: This Action Plan led to the disclosure on Keidanren website of the voluntary action plans by each enterprise on women in management positions and board members, starting December 2014.

3. Survey
Implementing Actor: Keidanren
(Results in Japanese)
Keidanren conducted a follow-up survey on its policy proposal in 2003 on the “preparation of childrearing environment” and released a survey result in 2006 that 61.7% of 107 enterprises conducted some awareness raising activities to rectify “gender-based roles” at the workplace. However, “gender-based roles” at the workplace does not seem to cover culture and stereotypes in a broader sense.

4. Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry
No policy concerning culture and stereotype is found.

D. Policies and Initiatives taken by Workers’ Organizations

1. Statement of the Secretary General concerning “Emphasis in policy to accelerate women’s advancement in the workplace” (June 2017)
Implementing Actor: Rengo (Japan Trade Union Confederation)
(Full Statement in Japanese)
Objective: The statement constitutes a counterproposal to the Government’s policy proposal on accelerating women’s advancement in the workplace for the FY2017.
Scope: The statement asserts that (i) in order to promote women’s active participation in the workplace, participation by men in housework and childrearing is necessary; and thus, (ii) not only awareness raising activities, but also drastic improvement and preparation of social system to rectify gender stereotypes is necessary.

2. Policy proposal on the “Abe administration’s workstyle reform” (December 2016)
Implementing Actor: Zenroren
(Full proposal in Japanese)
Objective: This policy is a counterproposal to the “workstyle reform” promoted by P.M. Abe administration.
Scope: With regard to proposed tax and social welfare scheme, Zenroren proposes that the current system, which is based on a household unit (traditionally positions male as a breadwinner and head of a household), needs to be reviewed. Zenroren asserts that the tax and social welfare scheme needs to be based on individuals, rather than on households.


