

1 Work and Income

- In view of the rapidly aging population and declining birthrate, Law Concerning Stabilization of Employment of Older Persons. (Act No. 68 of 1971, hereafter referred to as the Revised Act for Stabilization of Elderly Employment') was revised in June 2004. According to this Act, an employer is obliged to take Measures for securing employment for older persons. These include obliging an employer to gradually extend the retirement age of workers, along with raising the initial pensionable age, to enable them to continue working until at least the pensionable age of 65 years old. This measure should be completed by April 1st of 2013, having started from April 2006. Others include the introduction of a continued employment system.
- In the Hello Work offices, guidance regarding raising the compulsory retirement age and introducing a continued employment system is provided to employers. In this case, an elderly-employment adviser from the Prefectural Association of Employment Development for Elderly People is present or provides follow-up consultation. By establishing close coordination between each prefectural labour department and the association, effective and efficient guidance or assistance is also provided.

policy to support career building in each stage of one's career such as the preparation period, the development period, as well as the mature period, is promoted not only for employed workers but also for people in 'NEET (Not currently engaged in Employment, Education or Training)' status, people who have discontinued working for delivery or child rearing, elderly people who are retiring from work life etc.

- Measures regarding working hours are related not only to shortening of working hours, but also to the setting of working hours, holidays, leave, etc. by considering the health and life of workers. It is also important to make improvements corresponding to diverse working styles. For this purpose, based on the Act for Special Countermeasures Concerning Improvement in the Setting of Working Hours (Act No. 90 of 1992), voluntary efforts aiming to

- Introduction of countermeasures for securing employment of elderly people aged 65 years old or above is also promoted by providing financial incentives to the operators of small and medium sized enterprises for either raising the compulsory retirement age to 65 years or above or not setting a retirement age at all.
- The council that promotes 'enterprises you can work at until 70 years old' project has been set up by the Japan Organization for Employment of the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities with an aim to realize these countermeasures. Along with submitting recommendations to spread and promote "enterprises you can work until 70 years old" project, explaining the recommendations submitted in the project council, and introducing activities of advanced enterprises, is carried out at the symposiums held in each region. Furthermore, activities related to better employment until 70 years old are carried out, commissioned by the Employers Association in each region, and as long as there is willingness and ability, improvements in the environment for securing employment opportunities until 70 years old is encouraged.
- By formulating a 'standard vocational training plan' from the viewpoint of maintaining and improving the energy of economic society, the

Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members by taking Child Care and Family Care Leave (Act No.76 of 1991. Hereafter called as 'Child and Family-care Leave Act'.), workers have a right to take child-care leave, family-care leave, child nursing leave, to maintain the balance between work and family life, and it is the duty of an employer to take measures to shorten working hours etc and support workers who take care of children and other family members.

- The amount of the pension is revised automatically in accordance with fluctuations in price. In case of the amount of the pension for FY 2007, though the National Consumer Price Index (composite index including fresh products) rose 0.3% year-on-year, nominal take-home pay variability was unchanged, at 0.0%; so the pension amount for FY 2007 was decided to be the same as

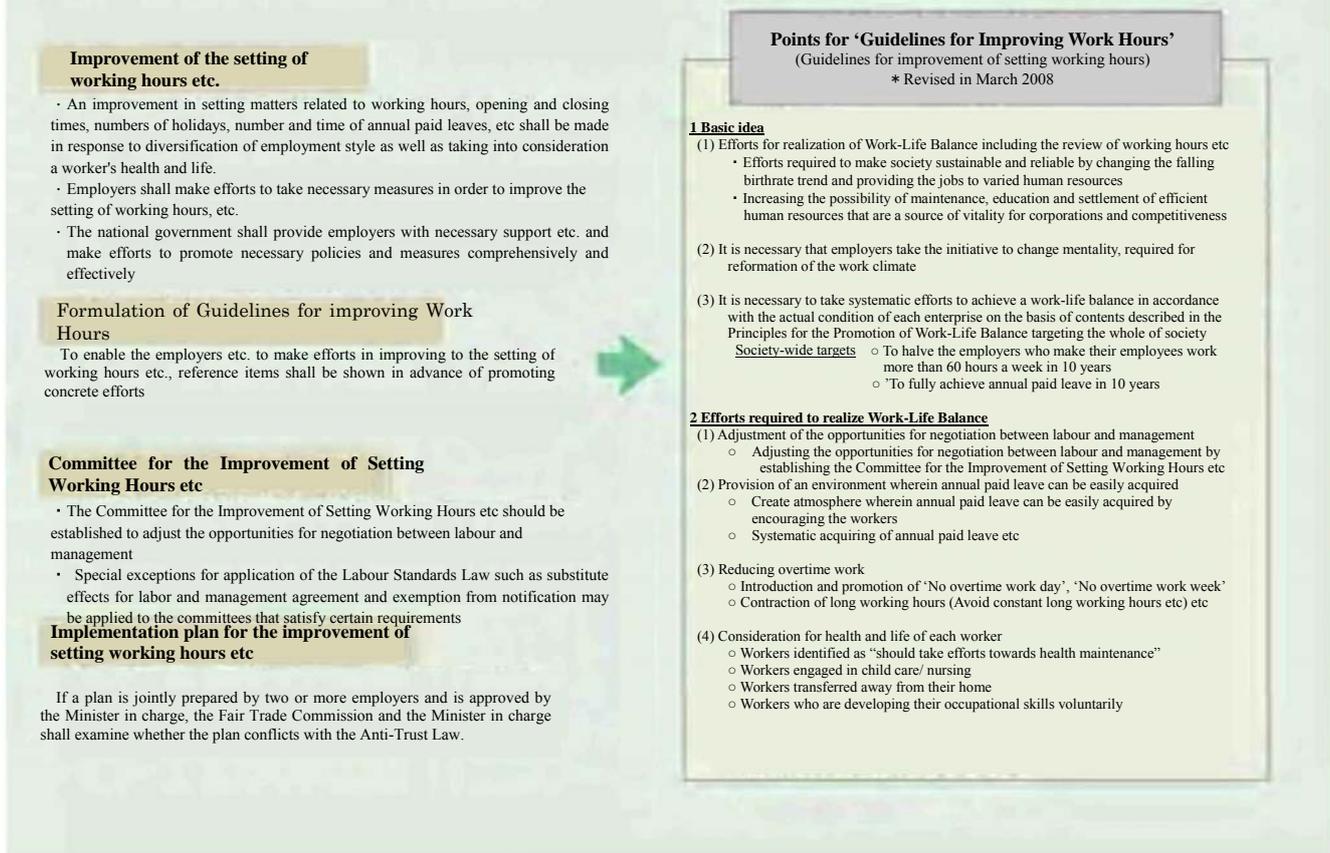
improve the setting of working hours by labour and management are encouraged, and balance between work and life is thus promoted. (Figure 2-3-2).

- According to the Act for the Welfare of Workers

that of FY 2006. The same can be said for the pension amount for FY 2008: that the National Consumer Price Index was unchanged year-on-year, so the amount of pension for FY 2008 was decided to the same with that of FY 2007.

Figure 2-3-2

Outline of the Act for the Improvement of the Setting of Working Hours as well as Guidelines for Improving Work Hours.



- A 'Proposal on Partial Amendments to the Employee's Welfare Pension Insurance Act to Unify Employees' Pension System was presented in the 166th Session of the Diet. The Proposal is based on the Basic Policy regarding the Unification of Employees' Pension Systems (approved by Cabinet in April, 2006) as well as the Basic Policy and Procedure to Unify Employees' Pension Systems' (Agreed by the Government, ruling party in December, 2006),
- Regarding the Social Insurance Agency Reformation, the Japan Pension Service Act (Act No. 109 of 2007) was formulated in June 2007, and it was decided that Social Insurance Agency will be discontinued in 2010, and a new Japan Pension Service, a non-civil servant public corporation, would be established.
- Social Insurance Agency is dealing with the

2 Health and Welfare

- 'National Health Promotion Movement in the 21st country(Health Japan21)' with goals in 9 fields and 70 items was developed to promote lifelong health promotion, from 2000. In 2002, to promote national health promotion and disease prevention further with 'Healthy Japan 21' at its core, the Health Promotion Law (Act No 103 of 2002) was established and came into effect from May 2003. Furthermore, in 2007, a 'Healthy Japan 21' interim assessment report was published. Considering the result of this interim assessment, representative target items and new target items were set and the countermeasures against life-style

so-called “pension registration problem” consistently, based on restoration of confidence in pension registration and the establishment of a new pension registration management system. Computer-aided name identification and sending of special mail for pension confirmation was completed by the end of March, 2008, according to the schedule.

- A corporate pension study group was formed under the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Pension Chief in October 2006, with the entry of the Defined Contribution Pension Act (Act No. 88 of 2001) into its fifth year after enforcement, in October 2006, and also with the entry of the Defined Benefit Corporate Pension Act (Act No. 50 of 2001) into its fifth year after enforcement, in April 2007. The group inspected the enforcement status of the corporate pension system and compiled the result of enforcement status of the corporate pension system in July 2007.
- In 2002, in a prefectural social welfare council, a long term life supporting fund lending system was established for lending from a living fund, with the possibility of using real estate as security, to elderly people with low-income who hoped to continue to live in the housing that they own. As of the end of June 2007, such lending work has been started in 46 prefectures and lending decisions had been made for 556 cases.

elderly, restructuring and consolidation of insurer etc were taken and implemented in a phased manner. (Figure 2-3-14).

- In March 2006, the Government, Ruling Party Committee for Countermeasures to the Falling Birthrate was established and, keeping the advent of depopulating society in mind, discussions aiming at expansion and enhancement of countermeasures were carried out and were complied with as ‘Regarding New Countermeasures to the Falling Birthrate’ in June 2006.

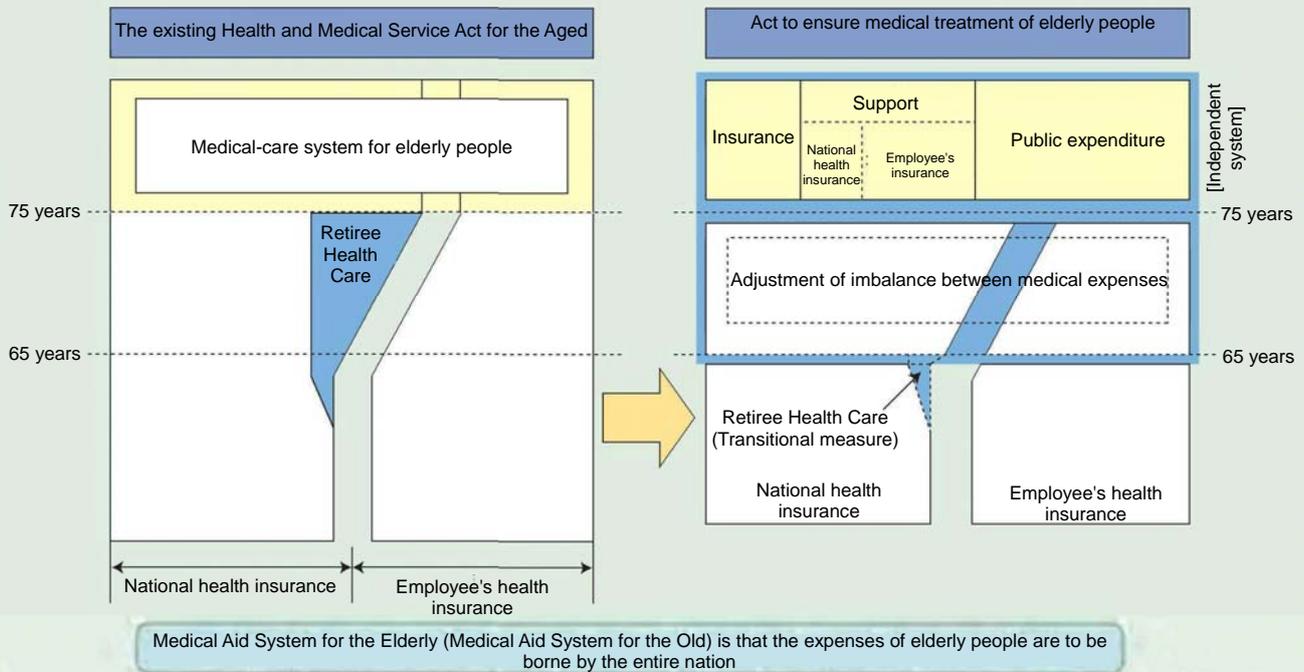
related diseases are promoted.

- A countermeasure, based on the New Health Frontier Strategy compiled in April 2007, was carried out steadily.
- With regard to the long-term care insurance system, which has been enforced for eight years since April 2000, the number of people using nursing-care service doubled since its start and it is smoothly getting established as a system that supports life at old age.
- With regard to the countermeasures against dementia, support for the activities carried out in each prefecture and specified cities, was provided by implementing ‘A Project for Providing Complete Support for Countermeasures against Dementia.’ The project is aimed at promoting the countermeasures corresponding to each stage of dementia like enhancement of doctor-centered local medical system for early diagnosis etc, spreading of services provided in early stages, raising the awareness about dementia occurring in the region and assisting in the building of a support network of the people concerned and their families, improvement in training the specialized staff in dementia nursing etc.
- The Act for the Partial Revision of the Health Insurance Act was formulated in June 2006, and to make the medical insurance system sustainable in future and to maintain universal healthcare system, required countermeasures like comprehensive implementation of moderation in healthcare costs, establishment of new medical system for the
- ‘Act on the Partial Revision of the Child Allowance Law’ (Act No 26 of 2007) was enacted in March 2007. By keeping the rapid fall in birthrate in our country in mind, from the point of view of reducing the financial burden on the families raising children, it was decided that child-care allowance would be given to the person who rear infants under 3 years old. The fixed amount of ten thousand yen is paid as an allowance for the first and second child irrespective of birth order.

Figure 2-3-14

Establishment of new medical-care system for the elderly (April 2008)

- An independent medical care system is to be established in FY 2008 for the people of the age 75 or above, considering their physical and current living conditions etc.
- A large number of retired people between the ages of 65 and 74 are to be signed up for National health insurance and a system is to be established to adjust the imbalance occurring between medical expenses of insured people
- The existing medical care system for retired people is to be discontinued. However, in order to plan a smooth transfer from the existing system, until FY 2014, transitional countermeasures extending existing medical care system for retired people are to be taken targeting retired people less than 65 years of age



1. For the person 75 years old or above, one insurance certificate is delivered.

4. It is possible to pay one's own medical expenses

2. Insurance premium is cheaper on average than National Health Insurance

- a) Pension fund (monthly amount: 66,000 yen) for the person living alone and for married couples
For one person: monthly amount 1,000 yen (national health insurance 2,800 yen)
- b) Average employee pension (monthly amount 167,000 yen) for the person living alone and for married couple
For husband: monthly amount 5,800 yen (national health insurance 7,700 yen)

※ The amount is calculated by using the most popular calculation method; however, the burden may increase.

5. To reduce unnecessary costs related to the time and the efforts for paying insurance premium from the pension fund instead of depositing the amount into the bank etc.

6. Reduction in the insurance premium for the salaried persons who did not have the responsibility of dependents until now.

- April 2008 to September 2008 0 yen
- October 2008 to March 2009 1% of original insurance premium (average 350 yen / month)

3. Contribution is same as before. As a general rule, it is 10 percent. (The number of persons working actively is 30 percent)

- The Act for Promotion of Providing Comprehensive Education and Daycare Services for Preschool Children (Act No 77 of 2006) was enacted in June 2006. From October 2006, a prefectural government-certified kindergarten system has been started for providing early childhood education and care as well as support for child rearing in a unified manner.

3 Education and Social Participation

- In order to ensure that appropriate education opportunities are provided to people with diverse learning needs throughout life, various groups such as national and local public entities, universities, private education operators, NPOs must work positively and comprehensively to promote lifelong learning by developing a collaborative and cooperative structure. For this purpose, a principle of lifelong learning was newly provided in the Basic Act on Education (Act No 120 of 2006) which was revised in December 2006. Furthermore, for the promotion of lifelong learning, a center assisting promotion of lifelong learning in private sector and also a center assisting in municipal development of a region by promoting education, culture and sports were set up, along with the promotion of activities carried out for the realization of a lifelong learning society based on 'Life-Long Learning Promotion Law.' (Act No 71 of 1990) and reports made by Central Council for Education.
- Furthermore, 'Measures for Promoting Lifelong Learning to Lead the New Era ~Aiming at the Construction of a Knowledge-circulating Society ~ (report)' was submitted by Central Council for Education on February 2008. The report includes strategies supporting lifelong learning for citizen and strategies to improve the education skills in the whole society.

(Refer to :

http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chukyo/chukyo0/index.htm)

- To spread and cultivate of lifelong learning, the "National Lifelong Learning Festival" was held, and by arranging a symposium, experiencing the classroom etc, different activities related to lifelong learning for general public were put into practice on a nationwide scale (2nd ~ 7th November, 2007, it was held in Okayama prefecture based on the theme of 'The Land of Sunshine – Shining Circle of Learning'.
- 'Regions urging experiential activities and promoted schools' are designated for the promotion of various experiential activities served by volunteered elementary, junior high, and high schools students as social services and the implementation of project to promote rich experiential activities such as deployment of experiential activities that act as a model for other schools.
- Plenty of learning opportunities are provided to a wide range of age groups at social educational facilities such as community learning centers, libraries, museums and women's education centers as well as boards of education. These opportunities include activities to promote an understanding of the aging society and also include classes and courses for elderly people. (Table 2-3-23).

Table 2-3-23

Situation of classes, courses conducted for elderly people at the Government Board of Education and community centers

Category	(Course)	
	FY 2004	FY 2001
Total	51,548	45,501
Cultural advancement	31,132	25,215
Physical education/ recreation	6,660	9,898
Family education and family life	3,309	2,845
Advancement of occupational knowledge and skills	862	823
Public awareness and social solidarity	4,824	4,334
Others	4,761	2,386

Source: 「The Survey on Social Education」 by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

- It is important to maintain conditions of various social environmental to enable the elderly discover their role in the society and actively participate in the society with a sense of purpose. For this purpose, subsidies are provided to regional senior citizens' clubs that carry out social participation activities comprehensively and being promoted.
- In order to promote fulfillment and health improvement for the elderly, necessary support is provided for conducting activities to raise awareness and to disseminate information on elderly people social activity programs and elderly volunteer activities held by municipalities. Furthermore, the National Health and Welfare Festival for the elderly (Nen-rin-pic) was held in Ibaraki prefecture in November 2007.
- In order to promote voluntary social activities contributed by citizens, specified nonprofit organizations are certified and supervised based on 'Act to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities'(Act No 7 of 1998).

4 Living Environment

- According to the purpose of 'Act on Promotion of Rental Housing Supply for People in need of securing a housing' enacted in July 2007, the government is planning to enhance the supply of publicly rental housing and the utilization of private rental housing.
- In fiscal year 2007, Good Quality Regional Rental Housing system was established by reorganizing public rental housing (Good Quality Rental Housing and Good Rental Housing for Aged) supplementary system complement Publicly-operated Housing system. In case of the rental housing that is provided by private landowners and built up with equipments and specifications considering the decline in physical abilities of elderly people, subsidies are provided for construction and the house rent is reduced by local governments.
- In order to provide stability of residence early for elderly people, persons with disabilities and so on, by promoting improvements in the environment that enables the elderly to lead safe, comfortable and independent lives,

measures were taken in fiscal year 2007, such as income tax and fixed property tax reductions applied to barrier-free repair works on houses where elderly people live.

- From fiscal year 2007, a housing support center for elderly people will also guarantee the cost required for restoring a place to its original condition and lawsuits, in addition to existing house rent debt. This relieved concerns of house owners, and made the entry of elderly people into private rental housing smoothly.
- Development of intensive and unified barrier free environment for construction, public transport, walking space is promoted based on 'The Law for Promoting Barrier-free Transport and Facilities for the Elderly and the Disabled (New barrier free Act) '(Act No 91 of 2006)
- In July 2007, 'Maintenance Guideline for the Smooth Operation of the Passenger Facilities of Public Transport' and 'Maintenance Guideline to Facilitate Movements Regarding Carriages of Public Transport' were formulated. In August 2007 'Passenger Ship Barrier-free Guideline' was formulated. In January 2008, 'Maintenance Guideline to Facilitate Movements in Urban Parks' was formulated.
- Activities such as opening of 'barrier free classroom' with the theme of experience in giving assistance to the elderly, simulated experience of aged people are promoted, to enable everyone to provide willing support to the elderly people by building up the awareness regarding volunteering along with the deepening of the understanding of each and every individual in the country regarding barrier free.
- In March 2006, the Eighth Fundamental Traffic Safety Program (Plan Period: fiscal year 2006~) was decided by the Central Traffic Safety Policy Council.
- For prevention of consumer troubles involving elderly people, 'The Elderly Consumer Watch Network Liaison Council' in which elderly welfare groups participated was held, and in March 2007, efforts toward the prevention of consumer troubles involving elderly people and disabled people were compiled. As a result, information regarding malicious commercial activities requiring precautions, collected during consumers consultation and others is sent out by

email regularly, and to arouse attention to elderly people, a mail magazine called Watch Fresh Information is issued to those in daily contact with elderly people.

- In November 2005, the ‘Act Concerning Support for the Prevention of Abuse of the Elderly and for the Nurses for the Elderly’ (Act No. 124 of 2005) was enacted and enforced from April 2006.

After the enforcement of the Act, ‘Result of the Investigation Regarding Situation of Support based on the Act to Prevent the Abuse of Elderly People’ was published, which compiled the situation of support provided by municipalities and prefectures in fiscal year 2006. Based on the investigation results, points that had to be considered to ensure appropriate and smooth operation of the Act were made known to the prefectures.

- From April 2006 onwards, due to the revision of the Long-term Care Insurance System, training programs have been provided for community support center staff at the Comprehensive Community Support Centers. The centers have been established in each municipality in order to ensure that it can help protect the human rights of the elderly and provide comprehensive consulting services by clarifying the actual state of the elderly who need support and take appropriate action against the abuse on the elderly.
- In order to reduce the number of fatalities killed in fires breaking out at homes, the majority of whom are the elderly, activities in cooperation with fire companies, women’s fire-prevention clubs and voluntary disaster prevention organizations etc were started to disseminate housing fire alarms in an early stage.
Furthermore, for two years from fiscal year 2006, review meetings were held consisting with academic experts, organizations related to elderly people and fire-fighting institutions. For those aging people with auditory impediment staying at Japanese inns, hotels etc, a cell-phone mail system that delivers information regarding occurrence of fire in the concerned establishment was developed.
- Based on ‘Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas Basic Plan’ (approved in March, 2005) that was

designed under ‘Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas Basic Act’ (Act No. 106 of 1999), support to the successors by elderly farmers, exchanges with city-dwellers and maintenance of regional resources like agricultural land and water were promoted and facilities supporting the life of elderly farmers were also improved so that they would utilize their knowledge and skills and lead their lives with a sense of fulfillment.

5 Promoting Surveys and Research

- National Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology promoted activities regarding implementation of advanced medical treatments and research about the elderly people-specific diseases like dementia, osteoporosis etc.
From the point of view of forming a market responding to the spread of products that can be easily used by elderly people and diversification of values of consumers, National Institute of Technology and Evaluation established cooperation with concerned authorities and attempted improvement in JIS national standards in the welfare field. Furthermore, along with performing enhancement and update of the data about basic human properties such as dynamic state or feelings etc related to safety and comfort, that must be considered at the time of designing a product in an enterprise, standardization of methods for measurement required in collection was performed for the promotion of data collection and analysis in enterprises.
- Based on ‘The Third-term Comprehensive Ten-year Strategy for Cancer Control’ that has been carried out since fiscal year 2004, in Third-Term Comprehensive Control Research for Cancer Control, advancement of additional essential analysis regarding cancer was promoted as well as applying the result of this analysis broadly to drive the development of innovative prevention, diagnosis and treatment techniques. Additionally, in order to push ahead evidence-based treatment, multi-centered clinical research was promoted aiming to build-up of an effective medical technology.

- Based on the fact that the mapping and sequencing of human genome was completed in April 2003, capitalizing on our national strength, basic and leading research about the genome network that is hoped to clarify complicated vital functions and realize revolutionary drug development has been actively promoted continuously. By revealing the differences between the individual's genome, related to the causes of occurrence of diseases including high-blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, dementia, and the reaction to drugs, the research aiming at the realization of a medical treatment (tailor-made treatment) that enables optimum prevention and treatment to each individual as well as the research aiming at realization of regenerative medicines for bone regeneration using ability to repair oneself, severe heart failure etc, were promoted.
- Molecular imaging research was promoted that aims at realization of shortening drug development process, cost reduction, early diagnosis of diseases such as Alzheimer's Disease, cancer etc. by taking the image of various molecules of proteins that build up living beings in their viable condition.
- In order to enable creative and highly-qualified young researchers who will be the core of future research development activities to work to the best of their abilities, an independent organization called the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science has drove various systems to support postdoctoral and other young researchers, such as the Special Research Fellowships and Special Fellowships for Research Abroad.
- A research study was carried out to urge social participation of elderly people using information and communications technology.