

## Section 3

## Implementation Status of Policies According to Area

## 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 ‘Elderly Act’) was revived 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 the fiscal year 2013, having started from April 2006. Others include the introduction of a continued employment system (hereafter referred to as the ‘Measures for Securing Employment of Elderly People’).
- 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.
- Regarding heads of households, especially any middle-aged and elderly persons who have an urgent need to be re-employed, assistance using trial employment benefits for middle-aged and elderly persons is being provided with a view to attempting to promote their transfer to regular employment through trial employment. In the fiscal 2008 First Supplementary Budget, in addition to adding elderly persons aged 65 or older to the list of receivers of the abovementioned benefits, the frame of receivers of the Employment Development Grant for Specific Job-seekers was also enlarged and a special benefit for the employment development of elderly persons established, which intends to support business owners employing unemployed persons aged 65 or older for one year or longer through the introduction of Public Employment Security Offices etc.
- In order to realize a society where people can work irrespective of age, a project promoting “Businesses where people can work until 70 years old” was implemented. In addition to introducing the attitudes of advanced businesses through symposiums and seminars, individual consultations and support by 70 year olds employment support advisors was performed through the revision of personnel treatment systems. Moreover, efforts have been made toward the further employment of persons aged 70 or younger through commissioning regional business owners or associations and establishing environments, where people can work until 70 years old as long as they have the will and ability.
- Through the provision of benefits to business owners that increase the mandatory retirement age to 65 years old or older, abolish the mandatory retirement age system or introduce continuous employment systems, and business owners involved in model activities of reclaiming new areas of work where people can work until 70 or older, attempts are made to secure the opportunity for employment of persons aged 65 or younger and to spread and promote “Businesses where people can work until 70 years old”
- In order to establish employment environments where part-time workers can demonstrate their ability more effectively the “Act to Amend Part of the Act on Improvement etc of Employment Management of Part-Time Workers” (Act No. 72 of 2007) was enacted in April 2008, which secures balanced treatment for part-time workers comparable to regular workers according to the current status of work styles and promotes their transfer to being regular workers. In order to perform steady enforcement of the improvements act business owners are provided with instructions as well as wide educational activities performed. In addition, a grant is provided in supporting business owners and middle or small business owners grappling with the problem of providing balanced treatment for part-time workers.
- In fiscal 2008, from the following point of view, and in order to realize the share of tax revenues needed in the basic pension being 1/2 from fiscal 2009, the “Draft to Amend Part of the Act etc to Amend Part of the National Pension Act etc” was presented at the 171st Session of the Diet.

- 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 the new Japan Pension Service would be established.
- In July 2008 “the Fundamental Plan for Urgent Management of Japan Pension Service” ,which reveals the fundamental way of thought about the promotion of outsourcing the Japan Pension Service practices and its employment of staff, was decided by the Cabinet. Based on the plan members appointed by the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare decide criteria for the employment of staff at the Japanese Pension Service. Preparations have therefore taken place for establishing the organization.
- Regarding the problem of pension records, steady responses have been promoted, for example, based on the “Restoration of confidence in pension records and establishment of a new pension record management system” created by the Council of Government and Ruling Parties on Pension Service Reformation in July 5, 2007), “Special Pension Letter” was sent to all the receivers and its members finalized by October 2008.
- Regarding the defined contribution pension, the Outline of the Revised Tax Reform of 2009 provides for income deductions to be applied to the total amount of premiums related to the introduction of individual contributions (matching contributions) and for the limit of the contribution to be increased. A “Draft to Amend Part of Defined Contribution Pension Act to Attempt to Establish Corporate Pension System” was presented at the 171st Session of the Diet.

## 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, based on the results of a 'Healthy Japan 21' interim assessment report published in April 2007, representative target items and new target items were set and from the fiscal year 2008, as a new national movement with a focus on “Moderate exercise”, “Moderate eating” and “Quitting smoking”, “National Movement Promoting Sound Life Practices” have been implemented to promote countermeasures against life style related diseases.
- Since an evil and systematic unjust case was caused on the part of broad-area long-term care service businesses, and in order to prevent such cases from taking place and to attempt to adjust the management of long-term care businesses, the “Act to Amend Part of Long-term Care Insurance Act and Act on Social Welfare Service for Elderly” (Act No. 42 of 2008) were just established in May 2008, which will review the current status of regulations for long-term care businesses.
- Regarding long-term care services in recent years, the situation is that a high turnover rate of long-term care workers makes it difficult to secure human resources. Based on the fact that in the 169th Session of the Diet, “Act on Improvement of Treatment of Long-term Care Workers Aiming at Securing Human Resources of Long-term Care Workers)” (Act No. 44 of 2008) was established, “the Life Measures” published on October 30, 2008 provides that 3.0% increase in remuneration for long-term care aiming at improving treatment of long-term care workers shall be performed and measures to control the sudden rise of the insurance premium shall be taken.

- In order that elderly people can continue to live in the region they are accustomed to living in, since April 2006, the establishment of regional comprehensive support centers is being promoted as a central institution in the region and with the following functions: (1) comprehensive consultation support, (2) protection of rights such as early detection and prevention of abuse, (3) comprehensive and continuous care management support, and (4) care management for preventing long-term care, and as of the end of April 2008 there were 3,976 in all the cities, towns and villages.
- Realizing the significance to promote measures against dementia more effectively for "Immediate construction of a society where people can live at ease even after suffering from dementia", "Urgent Project for Improving the Quality of Treatment and of Life with Dementia" was organized, and a series of proposals was formed.
- Regarding the "Nationwide Caravan to Train One Million Dementia Supporters", 28,514 "Caravan mates", who serve as lecturers at "Supporters" training lectures, and 694,854 "Supporters" had been trained by the end of December 2008.
- With a view to attaining greater understanding and recognition of long-term care in supporting long-term care service users, their families and care workers, and promoting mutual support and exchanges in the regional societies surrounding those people, it was decided to establish a day when the focus will be put on performing education for citizens regarding long-term care of elderly people and people with disabilities. Based on opinions collected from the general public November 11 was set as the "National Care Day". Toward the "National Day of Care", a "National Care Day" homepage was opened, posters distributed, and public relations and education activities or events performed in prefectures, cities, wards, towns and villages, and by long-term care businesses, and related institutions and associations.
- Facing the matter of the elderly dying isolated from their community, mainly in urban areas, being of public concern, the proposal by "The Conference on Creating the Community where the Elderly can Live at Ease on their own" was made public in March 2008 and case reports in the model regions were announced. In addition, in the Special Support Project for Promoting Regional Welfare, supports were made to the local authorities on pioneering and experimental works to solve the contemporary issues in their region, including actions against the isolated death of the elderly.
- In implementing a new medical system for elderly people, from the point of view of attempting to provide careful treatment while taking into consideration the situation elderly people are in, in fiscal 2008 the following measures were taken: the increase from 10% to 20% of the percentage of the medical fee to be paid by persons aged 70 to 74 was suspended, the collection of premiums from dependents of employee insurance also suspended for 6 months, and their amount reduced by 90% for the remaining 6 months.
- In order to more firmly establish the medical system for elderly people announcements and public relations were performed concerning its intentions and content. In addition, as a measure for reducing further charges of low-income earners, in fiscal 2008 it was decided that persons whose per capita amount of insurance premiums would be reduced by 70% the amount of premium should then be uniformly reduced by 85% and for low-income earners of those that pay graded income taxes, the amount of graded income tax should be reduced by 50%. In addition, regarding methods of paying insurance premiums, in fiscal 2009 the decision was made that all the persons recognized by cities, towns and villages could choose the method between account transfer and deduction from pension.
- While making efforts toward firmly establishing a longevity medical system, and from the point of view that the system needs to be reformed so that elderly people can also be satisfied with it, and in order that experts can discuss it widely, a "Meeting for Reviewing Medical Systems for Elderly Persons" has been held under the authority of the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare since September 2008, with in March 2009 the collection and classification of past arguments being performed.

### 3 Education and Social Participation

- It has become more important to make the effort to arrange various types of social environment in order that elderly people can find a role in society and actively participate in it with a reason to live. Support is therefore being provided to senior citizen's clubs that perform comprehensive social participation activities in their regions, and the activities promoted.
- In order that elderly people themselves can demonstrate their abilities and enhance their will to live with a reason to live, support is being provided for activities conducted by prefectures, cities, towns and villages, such as education and propagation of social activities for elderly people and activities that create a reason to live and ensure the health of elderly people. In addition, a National Health and Welfare Festival (Nenrinpic) was held in Kagoshima prefecture in October 2008.
- In order that elderly people and the Dankai generation (first baby boomers in post-war period) can actively participate in schools and/or regional societies, utilizing the experience acquired in their professions and study, propagating and firmly establishing the results of implementing the “Educational supporter” system is being attempted.
- Efforts are being made in elementary school districts all over the country in the Program to Promote After-School Classes for Children (After-School Plan for Children) that provides the opportunities of various experience activities and exchange activities for all children by utilizing surplus classrooms at elementary schools after school or on weekends, establishing safe and secure activity bases (places to call their own) for children, and obtaining the participation of regional residents of a wide variety of generations, including elderly people.
- In the “Clean Asia Initiative” created in June 2008 for creating sustainable societies in Asia, understanding and taking measures for the environmental situation of developing countries by making use of the Dankai generation, who have been playing an active role at the front of anti-pollution measure activities of Japan, have just been placed as one of the pillars of measures for supporting Asian countries.

### 4 Living environments

- With private rental houses there are cases in which apprehension about rent arrears causing elderly people's occupations being avoided, and hence stabilizing and securing housing for elderly people is being attempted by using systems of registration of and reading of materials on rental houses that do not reject elderly people's occupation according to the Act on Securement of Stable Supply of Elderly Persons' Housing and by implementing a rent guarantee system for elderly people's households occupying rental houses registered at the Housing Support Center for Elderly Persons (registered houses).
- With rental houses of the Urban Renaissance Agency measures are being taken in favor of households with elderly persons, which include increased preferential treatment for the aged families in the lottery for new rental houses, instituting the priority application period exclusively for them for existing rental houses, and allowing them to move to houses on the first floor or the floor where elevators stop.
- In order to promote barrier-free reform work on housing, special measures are being taken of reducing income tax and/or fixed asset tax if certain barrier-free reform work was performed in a housing where elderly people live.
- The Japan Housing Finance Agency has a special refund scheme for elderly people with regard to finances for reform work on housing with a structure corresponding to aging, and it is possible to refund the principal at the time of their death. In addition, according to the Support scheme for acquiring a good quality house that utilizes the scheme of securitization business, the interest rate is decreased for any housing with especially high barrier-free performance.
- In order that all people including elderly people can live safe secure lives and participate in society it is necessary to promote improvement of barrier-free environments with both hardware and software aspects taken into account and thus continuously ensure accessible paths of travel from their home to traffic systems and into cities. Creating care communities with elderly people taken into consideration is therefore being comprehensively promoted with all regions being under improvement with a focus on the flatness.

- By utilizing the “Urgent Support Project for Creating Barrier-Free City Parks” established in 2008 more barrier-free city parks are being created.
- In addition to making a principle the establishment of social welfare facilities as annexes when re-building large-scale public rental housing, since 2008, the Project for Creating Reliable Residential Spaces in re-improving public rental housing complexes and so forth as a welfare base of the region has been implemented. Furthermore, when urban re-development projects collectively improve social welfare facilities and so forth in order to appropriately place social welfare facilities used by elderly people in easy-to-access places such as downtown area, additions are made to the assistance.
- As a measure to help elderly drivers to continue driving safely, the Act to Amend Part of the Road Traffic Act (Act No. 90 of 2007) will be enacted in June 2009, which provides that persons aged 75 or older as of the due date of renewal of their driver's licenses are obliged to take the Cognitive Impairment Screening Test for Senior Drivers within 6 months before the due date of the renewal period of their driver's licenses. In order to smoothly implement the test and improve the safety driving course for elderly drivers which is based on the results of the test, the necessary preparations are being performed.
- With respect to telephone fraud and extortion, including “ore ore sagi”(“it’s me, it’s me” fraud) and refund money frauds, from which elderly people often suffer, while strengthening enforcement against the abovementioned crimes with the use of every and any law and regulation such as the “「Act on Prevention of Transferring Profits Gained by Criminal Activities」 (Act No. 22 of 2007) ” and “Act on Identification of Contractors etc by Mobile Voice Communication Businesses and Prevention of Unjust Use of Mobile Voice Communication Services” (Act No. 31 of 2005), the private and government sectors are promoting prevention activities such as public relation and education activities with a focus on victims such as elderly people, and addressing persons at places with ATMs installed in cooperation with related institutions and associations such as financial institutions.
- Publication of a mail magazine “New Information to Watch for” is being conducted in order to quickly deliver information requiring caution (e.g. information on criminal sales) that was obtained on site, such as through consumer affairs consultations, to persons surrounding elderly people etc and cause them to draw the attention of elderly people etc to it.
- Based on the "Act on Prevention of Elderly Abuse and Support for Attendants of Elderly Persons (Act No. 124 of 2005) ", state of action in cities, towns, villages, and prefectures in fiscal 2007 was reported as "Results of the survey concerning the state of action based on ‘Act on Prevention of Elderly Abuse and Support for Attendants of Elderly Persons’". Following this report, points of concern to ensure appropriate and smooth operation of the law were notified to prefectures and others.
- Efforts have been made to rescue victims of human rights infringements and promote the idea of respect for human rights as follows: Human rights counseling services are available to elderly people at standing human rights counseling offices in the Legal Affairs Bureaus and the District Legal Affairs Bureaus. An investigation will be undertaken when human rights infringement case toward elderly people, such as maltreatment at home or welfare facilities, is suspected, and if the facts of human rights infringement are found based on the investigation, appropriate measures for the case will be taken to relieve the harm and prevent recurrence. In addition, human rights counseling systems got strengthened by offering special human rights counseling service at welfare facilities in order that inmates in the facilities and their families can easily consult with counselors.
- Based on the “Basic Plan for Fisheries” (decided by Cabinet in March 2007) created according to “Fisheries Basic Act” (Act No. 89 of 2001), while promoting improvement of care facilities for elderly people taken into consideration, activities related to fisheries were promoted with the use of technology and the abilities of elderly people.

**5 Promoting surveys and research**

- In addition, based on the “New Investigation Activation 5 Year Plan” created in March 2007, efforts have commenced related to the promotion of investigations and clinical research, such as in selecting the central hospitals and base medical institutions and improving the medical institution system.
- According to the “Basic policies regarding measures for promoting research and propagation of welfare tools” (Ministry of Health and Welfare and Ministry of International Trade and Industry Notification and No.4, 1993) that was based on the “Act on Promoting Research, Development and Propagations of Welfare Tools” (Act No. 38 of 1993), collections and analysis is being performed on the information necessary to conduct assistance to businesses engaged in developing welfare tools toward practical use, research and development.
- In order to aim at improving information barrier-free environments, where elderly people and so forth can enjoy convenient measures of information and communication, assistance is being provided to persons engaged in research and development of technology related to communication and broadcasting services for elderly people and so forth. Furthermore, investigations and research have been conducted in promoting the improvement of environments, where everyone including elderly people can easily utilize ICT.
- 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.