

**Annual Report
on the Ageing Society
[Summary] FY2023**

**June 2023
Cabinet Office
Japan**

This Report concerns the state of ageing and status of the implementation of measures adopted by the government for the ageing society, and documents measures to take in view of the state of societal ageing under Article 8 of the Basic Act on Measures for the Ageing Society (Act No.129, 1995).

Annual Report on the Ageing Society

The government submits this Report annually to the National Diet (Legal white paper) in accordance with the Basic Act on Measures for the Ageing Society. This edition is the 28th.

Basic Act on Measures for the Ageing Society

Article 8.1. The government shall submit a report annually to the National Diet concerning the state of the ageing society and the implementation of measures for the ageing society adopted by the government.

Article 8.2. The government shall prepare and submit to the National Diet annually a document which clearly describes the measures that will be adopted to take account of the state of the ageing society as described in the report of the preceding paragraph.

Chapter 1 Situation of the Ageing Population

Section 1 Situation of the Ageing Population (Trends in Ageing population and Projection for the Future)

Section 2 Trends of Living of the Elderly (Trends in Employment Rate by Age Group, Trends in Healthy Life Expectancy at Birth and Life Expectancy at Birth)

Section 3 <Special Feature> Trends in the Health of the Elderly

<Topics>

1. Sado City, Niigata Prefecture:
Health improvement and social participation for the elderly using traditional *wadaiko* drumming
2. Ichinomiya City, Aichi Prefecture:
Challenge of creating a Coming-together Place linking to the next generations
3. Hirosaki City, Aomori Prefecture:
Iwaki Health Improvement Project
4. Osaka Prefecture:
Smart Senior Life Project
5. Sarabetsu Village, Hokkaido:
Sarabetsu SUPER VILLAGE Concept

Chapter 2 Situation Regarding Implementation of the FY 2022 Measures for the Ageing Society

Section 1 Fundamental Framework of Measures for the Ageing Society

Section 2 Implementation Status of Measures in each Field (Measures implemented by each government ministry and agency during FY 2022)

1. Employment and Income
2. Health and Welfare
3. Learning and Social Participation
4. Living Environment
5. Research Development and Contribution to the World
6. Promote Success of All Generations

Chapter 3 Measures for the Ageing Society in FY 2023

Section 1 Basic Approach to Measures for the Ageing Society in FY 2023

Section 2 Measures for the Ageing Society in each Field (Measures implemented by each government ministry and agency during FY 2023)

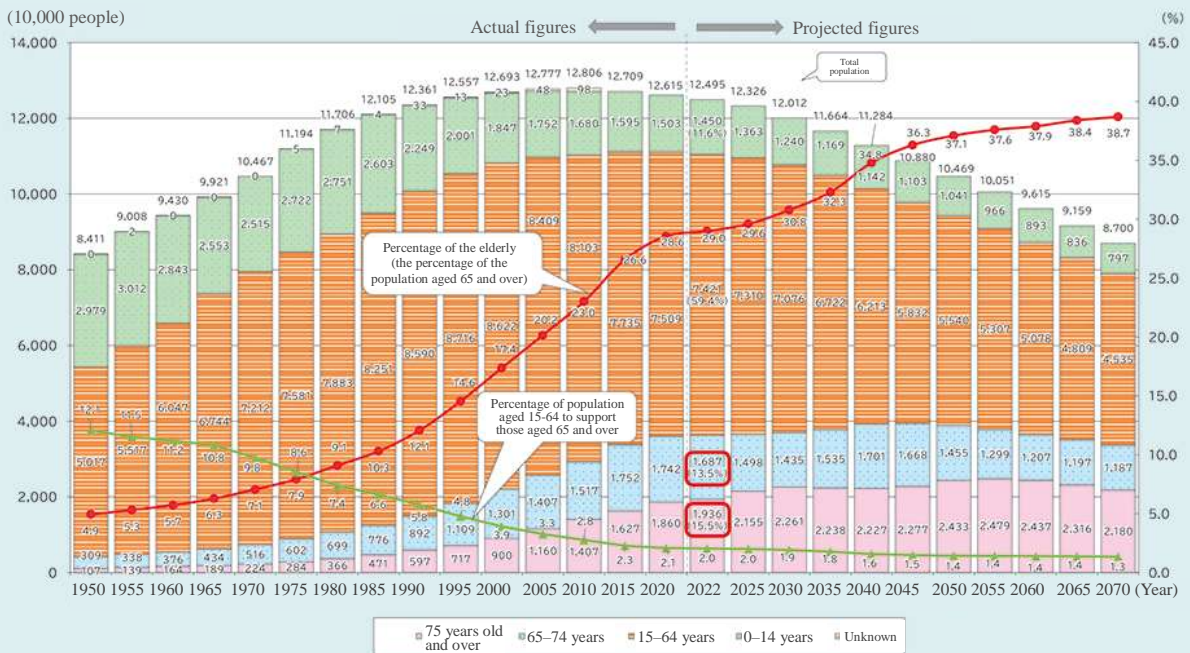
1. Employment and Income
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Chapter 1 Situation of the Ageing Population

Section 1 Situation of the Ageing Population

- **The percentage of the elderly rises to 29.0%**
 - The total population of Japan is 124.95 million people as of October 1, 2022.
 - The number of the population aged 65 and over is 36.24 million. The percentage of the population aged 65 and over (percentage of the elderly) is 29.0%.
 - The number of the population aged 65-74 is 16.87 million, accounting for 13.5% of the total population. The population aged 75 and over is 19.36 million, accounting for 15.5% of the total population, and has overtaken the population aged 65-74 in size.
 - By 2070, one in 2.6 people will be 65 years old and over, and one in 4.0 will be 75 years old and over.

Chart 1-1-1 Trends in Ageing population and Projection for the Future



Source: With regard to the ageing rate shown in the bar graph and solid line, the figures are taken up until 2020 from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) Population Census (figures in 2015 and 2020 are based on the results with imputation), from MIC's Population Estimates for 2022 (as of October 1, 2022 (final estimates), and from 2025 onwards from the projection based on the medium fertility variants with a medium-mortality assumption in the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research's Population Projections for Japan (2023).

(Note 1) The population by age group in 2015 and 2020 is based on the results with imputation, so "age unknown" does not exist. The population by age group in 2022 is calculated based on the population of MIC's 2020 Population Census (result with imputation), so "age unknown" does not exist. Furthermore, the population by age group after 2025 is based on the Population Census Reference Table (result with imputation) of 2020 by MIC's Statistical Bureau, so "age unknown" does not exist. In calculating the rates of ageing from 1950 to 2010, the "age unknown" is excluded from the denominator. However, in calculating the rates for 1950 and 1955, the part of the Okinawa Prefecture population shown in (Note 2) is not included in the "age unknown."

(Note 2) For Okinawa Prefecture, 136 foreigners (55 males and 81 females) aged 70 and over in 1950 and 23,328 people (8,090 males and 15,238 females) aged 70 and over in 1955 are excluded from the population aged 65 - 74 or aged 75 and over, and included in the "age unknown."

(Note 3) Population projections represent the future trends of population based on the demographic data obtained before the base year. Deviation between the projection and actual result is likely to occur due to structural changes and other reasons occurring after the base year, and the population projections are regularly revised based on such results.

(Note 4) Totals do not necessarily add up to 100% due to rounding off.

Who are the elderly?

The term "the elderly" is applied to different subjects depending on context and systems, and there is no uniform definition. The Guideline of Measures for Ageing Society (decided by the Cabinet in February 2018) uses as a generally accepted term "the elderly" for the sake of convenience. In this white paper too, the term is used in its generally accepted sense except in cases in which the definitions in various statistics or systems are followed.

For the classification and the definitions of the elderly, the "Working Group Report on the Definition of the Elderly" (March 2017) from the Joint Committee of Japan Gerontological Society and the Japan Geriatrics Society proposes to newly define people aged 75 and over as the elderly.

The Guideline of Measures for Ageing Society also states that the general tendency to uniformly regard people aged 65 and over as "the elderly" is no longer realistic in light of the current situation.

Note that, in principle, the elderly are described in this White Paper separately as those aged 65-74 and those aged 75 and over.

Section 2 Trends of Living of the Elderly

- **The employment rate of the elderly is in an increasing trend**
 - As for employment rates, rates in 2022 for age 60–64, 65–69, 70–74 and 75 and over have increased to 15.3 points, 13.7 points, 10.5 points and 2.6 points, respectively, compared to that of 2012, ten years ago.

Chart 1-2-1 Trends in Employment Rate by Age Group



Source: "Labor Force Survey," Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

(Note 1) Annual average

(Note 2) The "Employment Rate" represents a percentage of employed persons in the population aged 15 and over.

- **Healthy life expectancy at birth is increasing more than the increase of life expectancy at birth**
 - Average period of time spent without limitation in daily activities (healthy life expectancy at birth) was 72.68 years for males and 75.38 years for females as of 2019. Compared to 2010, both became longer (2010 to 2019: males 2.26 years, females 1.76 years). The increase of healthy life expectancy at birth is larger than that of life expectancy at birth (2010 to 2019: males 1.86 years, females 1.15 years).

Chart 1-2-2 Trends in Healthy Life Expectancy at Birth and Life Expectancy at Birth



Sources: Life expectancy at birth: "Abridged Life Tables," Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare for 2001, 2004, 2007, 2013, 2016 and 2019 and "Complete Life Tables," Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, for 2010

Healthy life expectancy at birth: "Reference Document for the 16th Promotion Specialized Committee of Healthy Japan 21 (the second term)," Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

Section 3 <Special Feature> Trends in the Health of the Elderly

The Cabinet Office conducts annual surveys on measures for the ageing society regarding the areas of "Employment and Income," "Health and Welfare," "Learning and Social Participation," "Living Environment," and "Research Development and Contribution to the World" in accordance with the Guideline of Measures for Ageing Society (decided by the Cabinet in February 2018). In October and November of FY2022, a Survey on the Health of Older People was conducted.

In this report, in addition to introducing some of the survey results, other survey data is used and the analyses of these have been compiled into special features (unless specifically stated the sources are in the FY 2022 Survey on the Health of Older People (The Survey on the Health of Older People (hereinafter "the Survey on Health") is implemented every five years.).

1. Health of the elderly

(1) Taking care of health

○ The state of health of those who have taken care of their health since youth is good

Looking at having taken care of health (relaxation, walking etc.) and the current state of health shows that those who responded that they "take care" of their health account for a large proportion of those who responded that their health is "good." Furthermore, looking also at state of health according to the age at which people started to take care of their health, around half of those who did so from the age of 40 or before responded that their health was "good," and the proportion of those responding that their health is "good" is high among those who started to take care of their health from youth (Chart 1-3-1-1).

In addition, in the panel survey implemented by MHLW over the past twenty years there is a large proportion responding that "my health is good" among those who started participating in sports and health exercise (walking etc.) from their 50s (Chart 1-3-1-2).

Chart 1-3-1-1

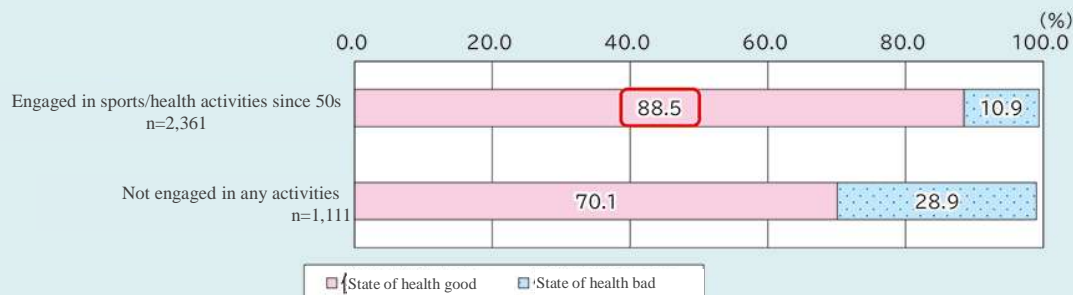
Taking Care of Health/Age at Which Taking Care of Health Started and Current State of Health (Single Response)



(Note 1) "Good" is the total of "Good" and "Fairly good." "Bad" is the total of "Not very good" and "Bad."
 (Note 2) Those responding "Been taking care since my 70s" are all 70 years of age or over.
 (Note 3) Totals do not necessarily add up to 100% due to rounding off.

Chart 1-3-1-2

Sports/Health Activities and State of Health



Source: MHLW "the 17th Longitudinal Survey of Middle-Aged and Elderly Persons" (A Continuous Survey on the Living Conditions of Middle-aged and Elderly Persons) (Nov. 2021 survey)
 (Note 1) Continuous sample calculatable from 1st to 17th survey is 16,579 people.
 (Note 2) Targets of 17th survey were aged 66 to 75 (50 to 59 in the 1st survey in 2005).
 (Note 3) Totals do not necessarily add up to 100% due to rounding off.
 (Note 4) "Engaged in sports/health activities since 50s" indicates those continuously active from 1st to 17th survey; "Not engaged in any activities" indicates those not engaged in any activities continuously from 1st to 17th survey.

(2) Health and participation in social activities

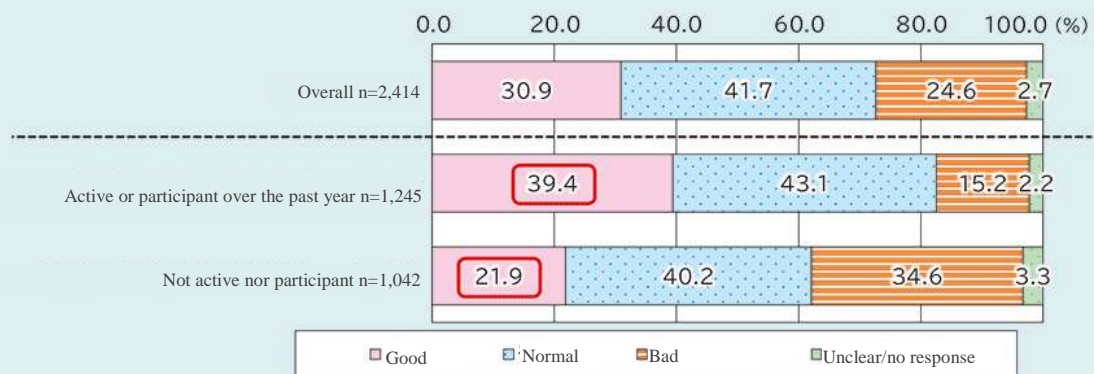
○ The health of those who participate in social activities is good

Looking at the current state of health of people according to whether or not they participate in social activities (health, sport and community activities etc.) the proportion of those responding that their state of health is “good” was high among those who participated in a social activity over the past year (Chart 1-3-1-3).

Furthermore, looking at the reasons why people do not want to participate in social activities in a separate Cabinet Office survey, the proportion of those responding “Because I am not confident in my health and physical strength” was the highest (Chart 1-3-1-4).

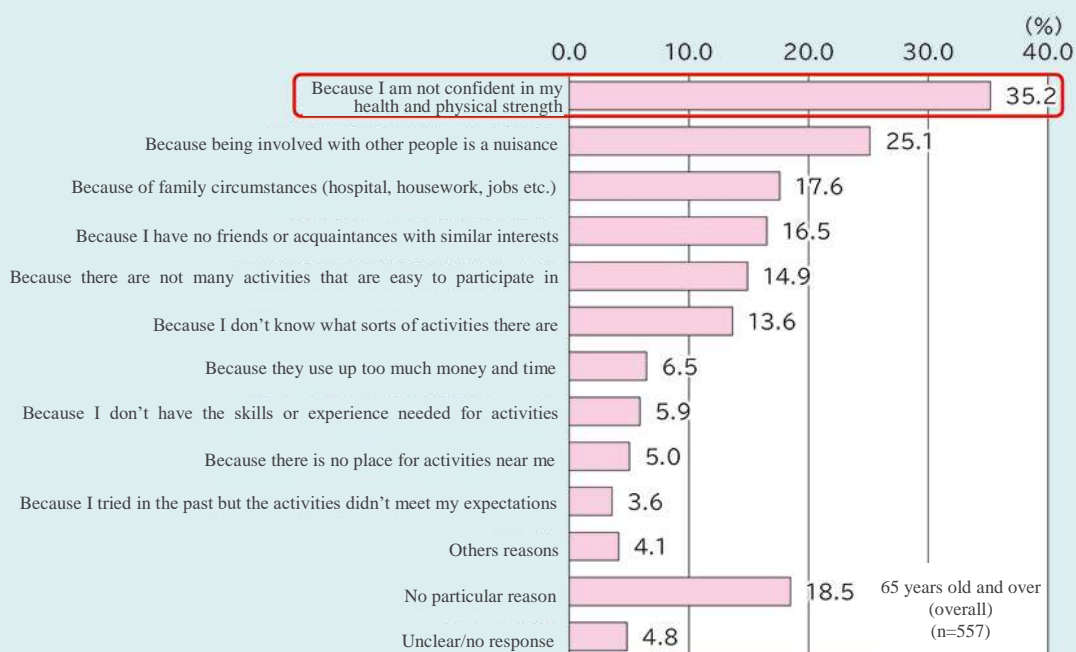
It should be noted with regard to why people thought it was good that they participated in social activities, a larger number responded “I was able to feel a sense of enrichment in my life,” “I was able to make new friends,” and “I gained confidence about health and physical strength” (Chart 1-3-1-5).

Chart 1-3-1-3 State of Health According to Whether or Not Social Activities Are Participated in (Multiple Response)



(Note 1) “Good” is the total of “Good” and “Fairly good.” “Bad” is the total of “Not very good” and “Bad.”
 (Note 2) Totals do not necessarily add up to 100% due to rounding off.

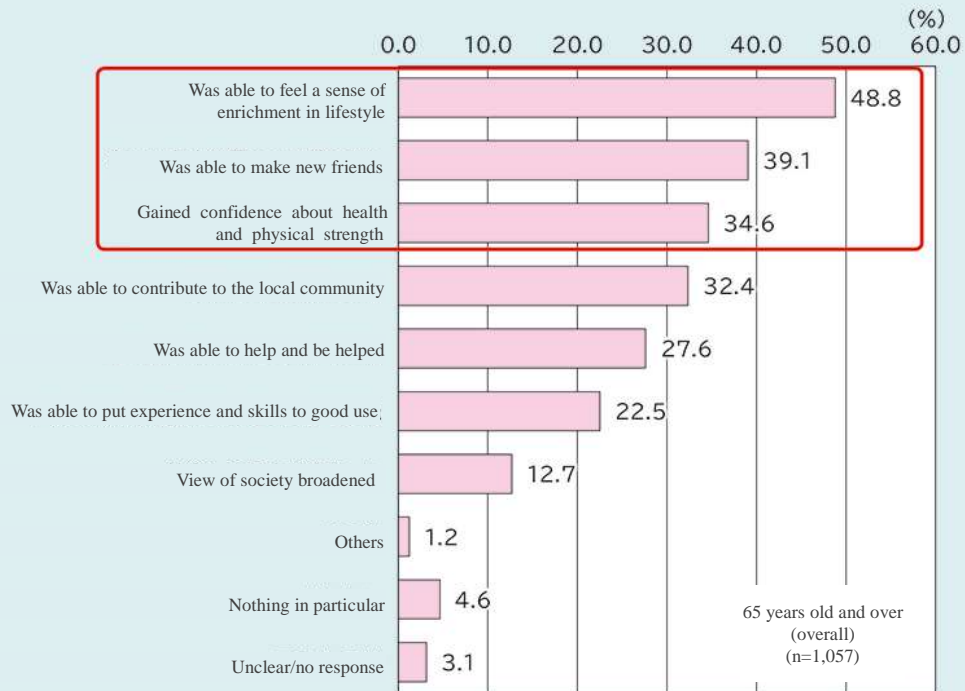
Chart 1-3-1-4 Reasons for Not Wanting to Participate in Social Activities (Multiple Response)



Source: Cabinet Office Survey on the Elderly's Daily Lives and Participation in Local Communities (FY2021)

Chart 1-3-1-5

What People Felt Was Good about Participation in Social Activities (Multiple Response)



Source: Cabinet Office Survey on the Elderly's Daily Lives and Participation in Local Communities (FY2021)

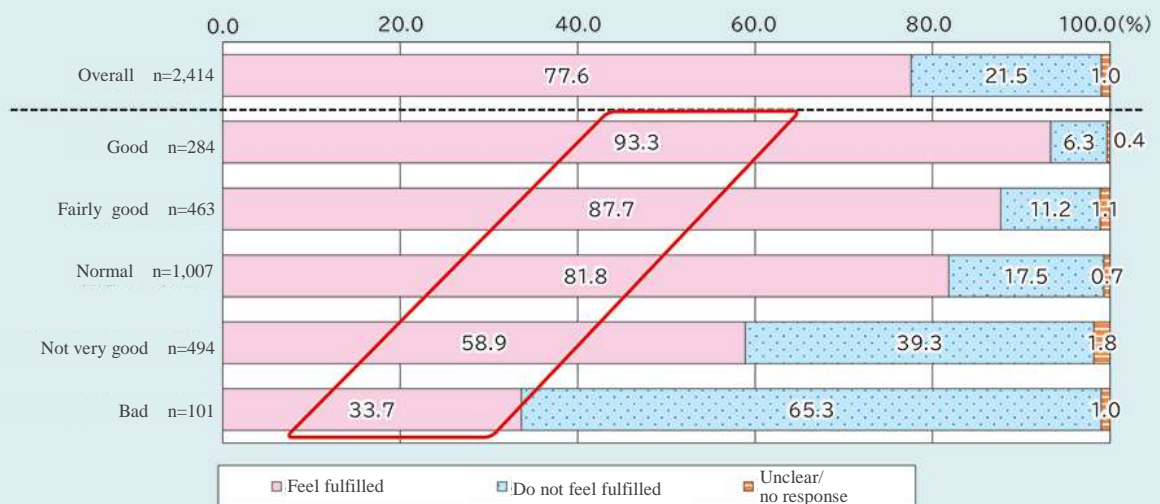
(3) Health and Sense of Fulfillment

○ The better people's health is, the more they feel fulfilled in life

The degree to which people feel fulfilled in their lives looked at by their current state of health shows that those responding that their state of health is "good" feel more fulfilled, and an extremely strong correlation exists between state of health and sense of fulfillment (Chart 1-3-1-6).

Chart 1-3-1-6

Do You Feel a Sense of Fulfillment (Pleasure and Enjoyment)? (By State of Health) (Single Response)



(Note) Totals do not necessarily add up to 100% due to rounding off.

2. The Impact on Communication among Elderly People due to the Covid-19 Pandemic

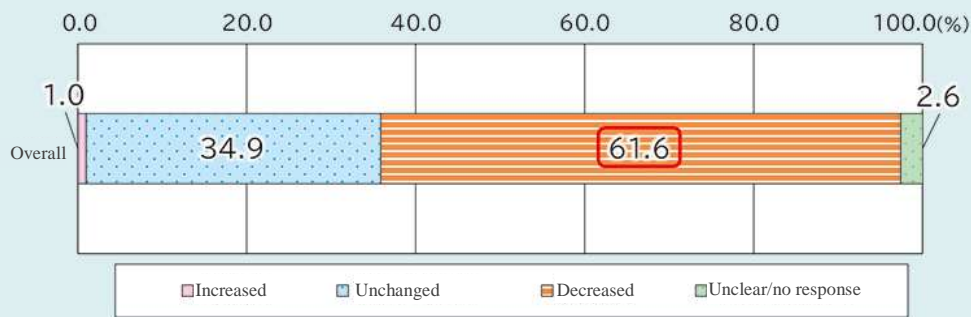
○ Changes in communication between people have arisen due to the Covid-19 pandemic

Looking at the results of the Basic Survey on Human Connection conducted by the Cabinet Secretariat in FY2021, over 60% of respondents said the amount of time directly meeting and communicating with others had “decreased.” It should be noted that among this 60%, around a further 30% said the time they spend communication with others without directly meeting them had “increased” (Chart 1-3-2-1, Chart 1-3-2-2).

Furthermore, according to the Survey on Health, the comparison with the collection of information on medical institutions and diseases etc. over the internet in the previous survey (FY2017) shows that the proportion of elderly people searching on the internet has increased heavily (Chart 1-3-2-3).

Moreover, according to a separate Cabinet Office survey, there is a gradual increase in those responding that they “Contact family and friends using mobile phones or smartphones,” and “Gather information and shop on the internet” (Chart 1-3-2-4) .

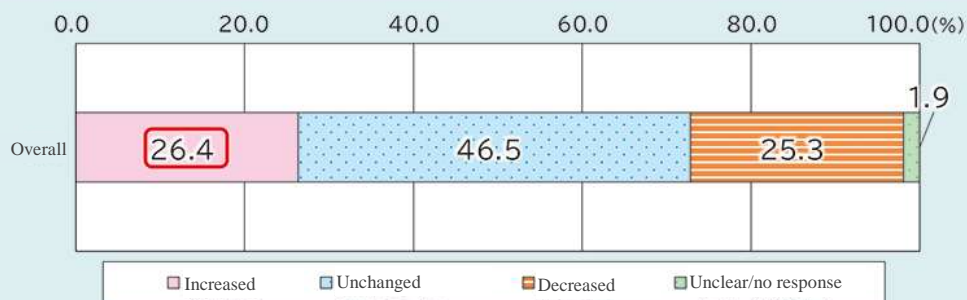
Chart 1-3-2-1 Direct Meeting and Communication with Others due to Covid-19 Pandemic



Source: Based on the Cabinet Secretariat Basic Survey on Human Connection (FY2021)

(Note) Totals do not add up to 100% due to rounding off.

Chart 1-3-2-2 Communicating without Directly Meeting People among Those Whose Direct Meeting with Others Decreased due to the Covid-19 Pandemic



Source: Based on the Cabinet Secretariat Basic Survey on Human Connection (FY2021)

(Note) Totals do not add up to 100% due to rounding off.

Chart 1-3-2-3

State of Collecting Information over the Internet (Multiple Response)

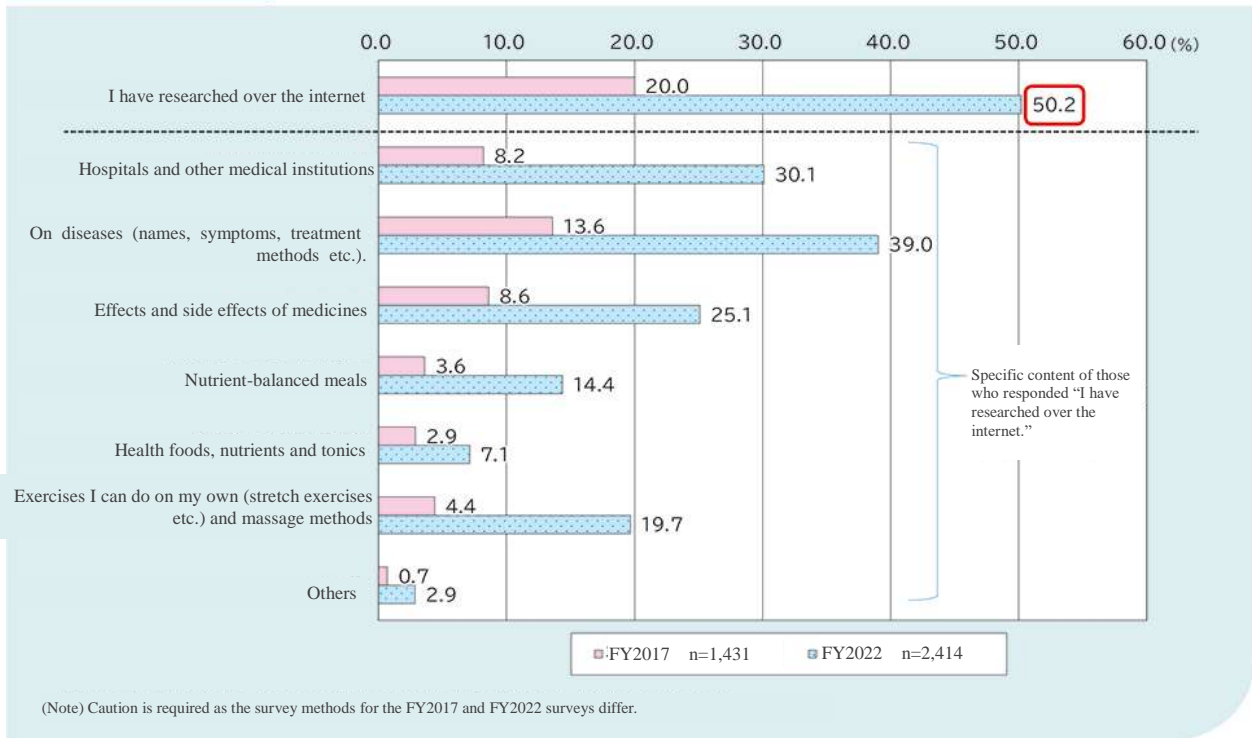
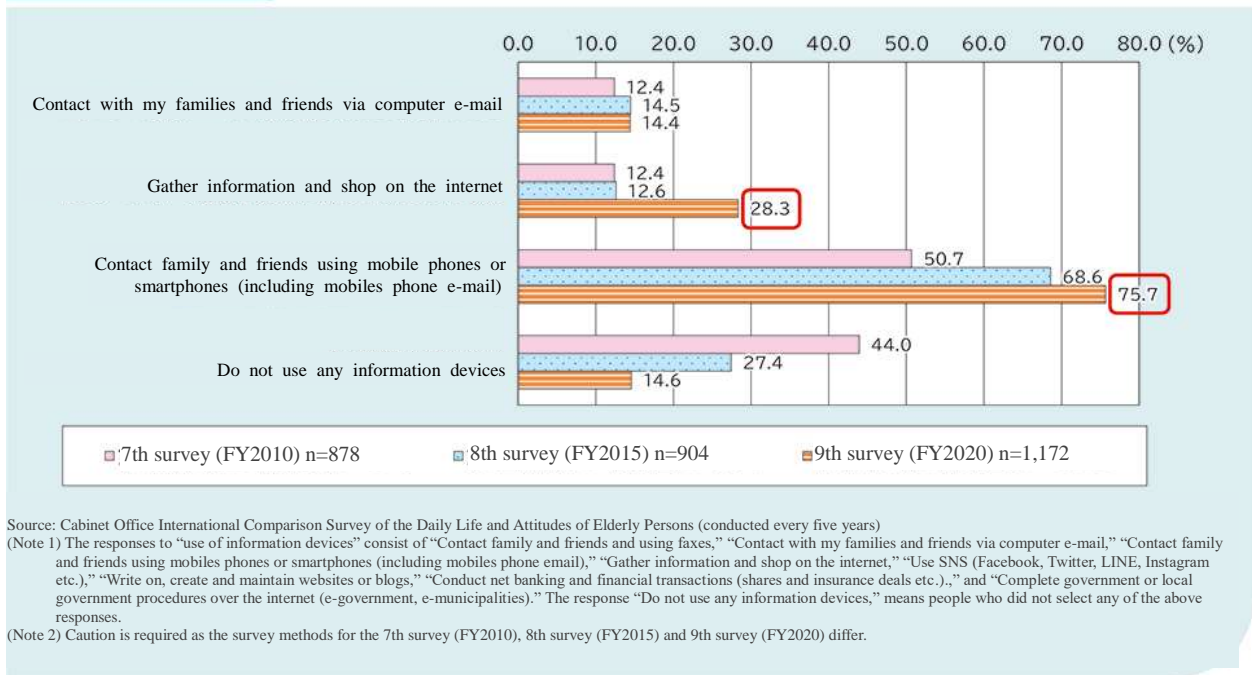


Chart 1-3-2-4

State of Use of Information Devices (Multiple Response)



3. Observations

(1) The health of elderly people

It is feasible that a good state of health leads to participation in social activities, and also that by participating in social activities people become more confident about their health and physical strength, leading the generation of a virtuous cycle linking to further participation. Furthermore, it is possible that maintaining an interest in ones' health before becoming elderly links to good health. It is also feasible that by participating in social activities people are equipped with confidence about their health and physical strength, which in turn leads to a sense of fulfillment in their lives.

(2) The impact on communication by elderly people due to the Covid-19 pandemic

It is considered that the Covid-19 pandemic served as an opportunity for non-face-to-face communication by elderly people. In addition, changes are visible in the attitudes of elderly people regarding collecting information over the internet and using information devices to communicate with friends, and it is possible that the Covid-19 pandemic served as a catalyst for social activities among elderly people utilizing the internet.

(3) Conclusion

In the future, in order to prevent the decline of mental, physical and cognitive functions accompanying ageing, and realize longer healthy lives, there are needs for initiatives that encourage the participation in social activities of elderly people and, as one part of these, attempts are required to thoroughly pursue initiatives towards resolving the digital divide aimed at elderly people who do not know how to or cannot properly use information devices, or who do not feel any need to do so.

For example, as can be seen in the Topics case studies, there is much to be expected from initiatives taken according to the circumstances of communities in order to attempt to achieve a virtuous cycle in which the social participation of elderly people generates health and a sense of fulfillment leading to further activities and contributing to community creation.

Topics

(Case study 1) Sado City, Niigata Prefecture: Health improvement and social participation for the elderly using traditional *wadaiko* drumming

In Niigata Prefecture's Sado City, where the maintenance of communities is becoming difficult due to major population decline and ageing, one of the city's caring prevention classes conducted exercises using traditional Japanese *wadaiko* drumming. In addition to improving the health of elderly people and preventing dementia, the city is attempting on a town-wide scale to solve community issues such as the encouragement of social participation and the revitalization of communities.

(Case study 2) Ichinomiya City, Aichi Prefecture: Challenge of creating a Coming-together Place linking to the next generations

In Aichi Prefecture's Ichinomiya City, under the theme of health improvement so that people can continue to live vibrant lives even after reaching old age, the city is combining "offline" Coming-together Place activities based on local community centers and at-home "online" activities arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, attempting to encourage social participation of elderly people and create next-generation-type communities.

(Case study 3) Hirosaki City, Aomori Prefecture: Iwaki Health Improvement Project

In Aomori Prefecture's Hirosaki City, utilizing the big data accumulated during the large-scale health checkups conducted by Hirosaki University each year for the residents in the city's Iwaki district, research and development into disease prevention targeting lifestyle-related illnesses and dementia are conducted, and a health improvement project is being promoted through collaborations among local government, educational institutions and corporations etc.

(Case study 4) Osaka Prefecture: Smart Senior Life Project

With the objective of solving elderly people's issues and extending healthy life expectancy, Osaka Prefecture is implementing an initiative for the one-stop provision, through tablet terminals and digital devices such as the LINE application, of local government administrative services and services for elderly people through private sector companies in many fields including finance, insurance, IT, medical care, pharmaceuticals and entertainment.

(Case study 5) Sarabetsu Village, Hokkaido: Sarabetsu SUPER VILLAGE Concept

Aiming for the basic services requisite for elderly people to live to 100 or over with a sense of fulfillment and pleasure, Hokkaido's Sarabetsu Village is using digital technology in an attempt to revive the weakening interpersonal links resulting from the ageing society with low fertility, and to improve the health of the villagers. It is also implementing initiatives to achieve smart agriculture that even elderly people can continue and enjoy healthily.

The government considers that it is important for it to encourage initiatives in various communities, and take action in order that people can feel fulfilled and live in good health throughout their lives.