

**Annual Report on
Government Measures for
Persons with Disabilities
(Summary) 2005**

**Cabinet Office
Japan**

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I. Current Status of Persons with Disabilities

1. Number of Persons with Disabilities

(1) Overview

In Japan, there are about 3.516 million persons with physical disabilities (28 out of 1,000 persons), about 0.459 million persons with intellectual disabilities (4 out of 1,000 persons), and about 2.584 million persons with mental disorders (21 out of 1,000 persons). In other words, about 5% of the total population has disability of some kind.

Figure 1-1: Number of Persons with Disabilities in Japan

(Persons)

	Total	Persons living in home	Persons living in institutions
Persons with physical disabilities	3,516,000 (28)	3,327,000 (27)	189,000 (2)
Under 18 years of age	90,000	82,000	8,000
18 years of age or older	3,426,000	3,245,000	181,000
Persons with intellectual disabilities	459,000 (4)	329,000 (3)	130,000 (1)
Under 18 years of age	103,000	94,000	9,000
18 years of age or older	342,000	221,000	121,000
Age unknown	14,000	14,000	0
Persons with mental disorders	2,584,000 (21)	2,239,000 (18)	345,000 (3)
Under 20 years of age	142,000	139,000	3,000
20 years of age or older	2,436,000	2,095,000	341,000
Age unknown	6,000	5,000	1,000

Notes:

- (1) The figures in parentheses are the number of persons out of a population of 1,000 (based on the 2000 Population Census).
- (2) The figures are rounded off to the nearest thousand.

Source:

“Persons with physical disabilities”

- Persons living in home:

“Survey on the Actual Status of Children/Persons with Physical Disabilities (2001)”, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW)

- Persons living in institutions:

“Survey on Social Welfare Institutions (2001)” and others, MHLW

“Persons with intellectual disabilities”

- Persons living in home:

“Comprehensive Survey on Children/Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (2000)”, MHLW,

- Persons living in institutions:

“Survey on Social Welfare Institutions (2001)” and others, MHLW

“Persons with mental disorders”

- Persons living in home:

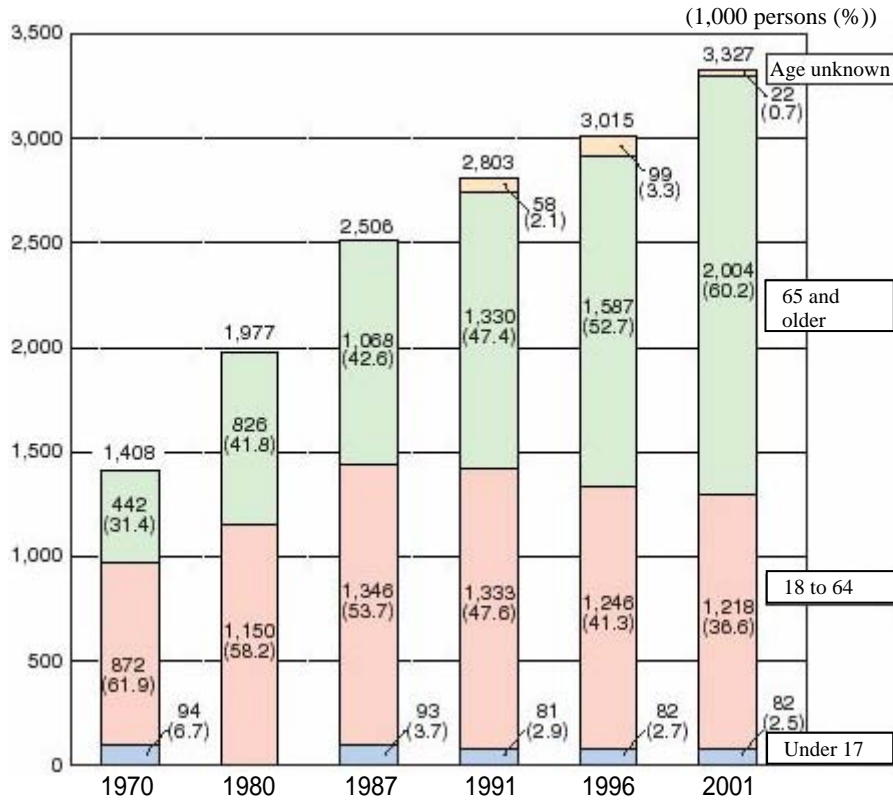
- Persons living in institutions:

Based on “Patient Survey (2002)”, and arranged by Department of Health and Welfare for Persons with Disabilities, Social Welfare and the War Victims’ Relief Bureau, MHLW

(2) Number of persons with disabilities by age

60.2% of persons with physical disabilities are aged 65 and older, which is more than 3 times as high as an aging rate, while 2.8% for persons with intellectual disabilities and 27.2% for persons with mental disorders.

**Figure 1-2: Rate of Persons with Disabilities by Age Group
(Persons with Physical Disabilities Living in Home)**



Note: The survey on children with physical disabilities (0 to 17) was not conducted in 1980.

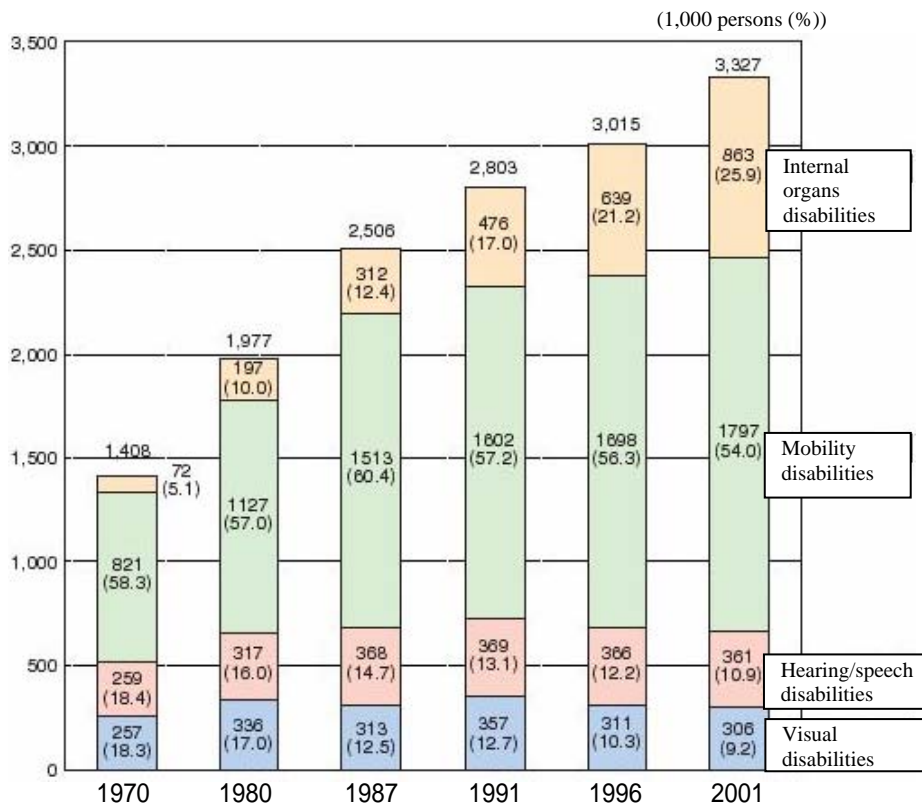
Source: “Survey on the Actual Status of Physically Disabled Children/Persons”, MHLW,

(3) Number of persons with disabilities by type of disability

Among persons with physical disabilities, the number of persons with visual disabilities and persons with hearing/speech disabilities remain almost unchanged, while the number of persons with physical disabilities and persons with organ disabilities are increasing.

Among persons with mental disorders, the number of persons with schizophrenia remains almost unchanged, and the number of persons with depressive disorder increasing.

**Figure 1-3: Number of Persons with Disabilities by Type of Disability
(Persons with Physical Disabilities Living in Home)**



Note: The survey on children with physical disabilities (0 to 17) was not conducted in 1980.

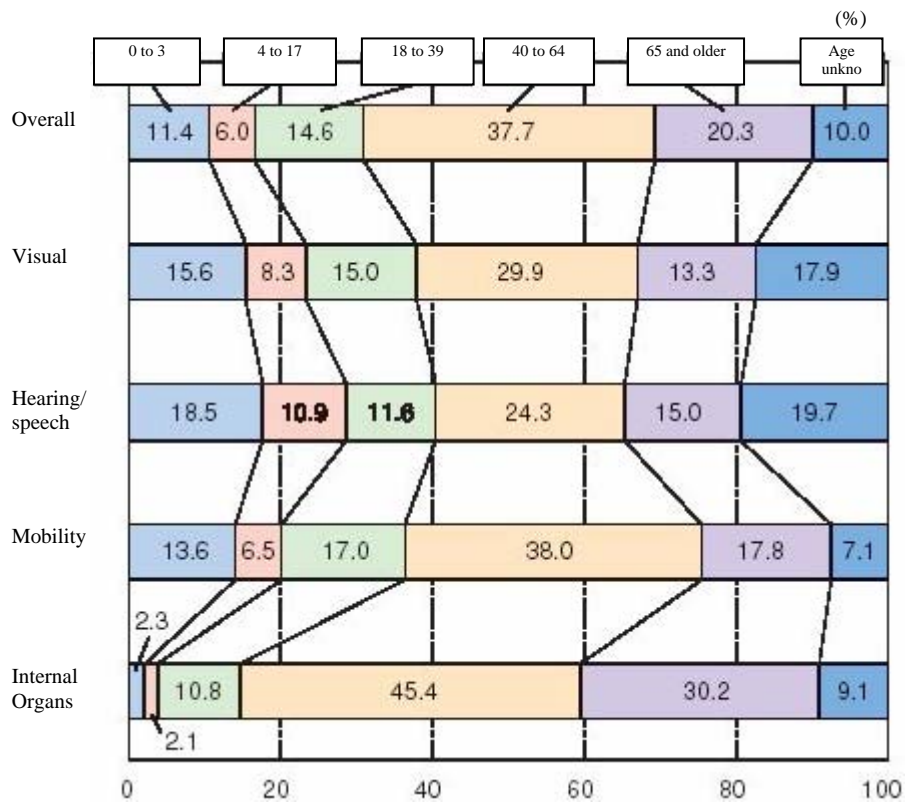
Source: “Survey on the Actual Status of Physically Disabled Children/Persons”, MHLW,

(4) Age and causes in which persons become disabled

Almost 60% of persons with physical disabilities became disabled at the age of 40s or older. With regard to cause of disability, the rate of diseases and accidents is high.

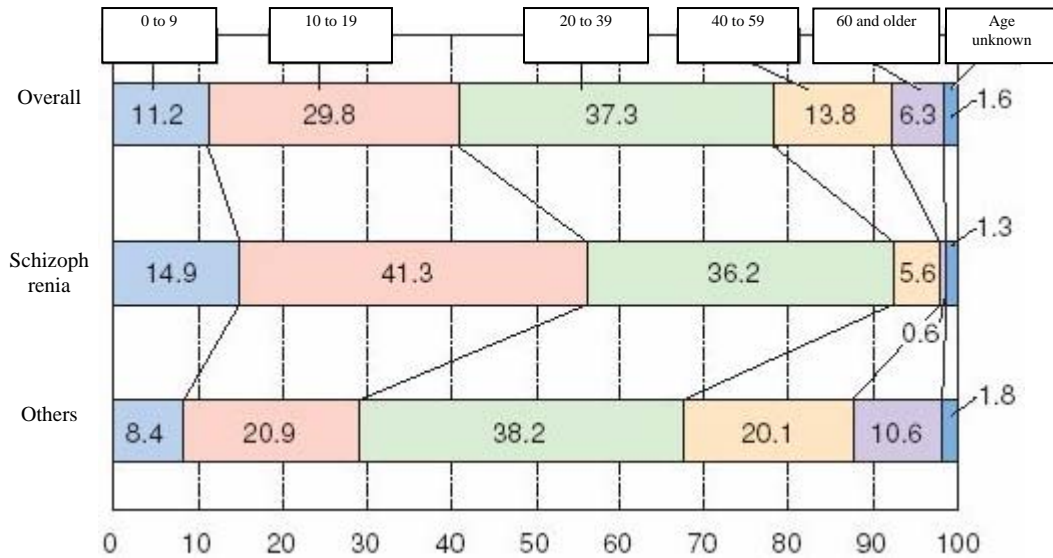
Almost 40% of persons with mental disorders living in home have their first medical examination under 20 years old. In particular almost 60 % of persons with schizophrenia are under 20 years old.

**Figure 1-4: Age in which Person became Disabled
(Persons with Physical Disabilities Living in Home)**



Source: “Survey on the Actual Status of Physically Disabled Children/Persons (2001)”,
MHLW,

Figure 1-5: Age in which Person became Disabled
(Persons with Mental Disorders Living in Home) (%)



Source: “Survey on Needs for Rehabilitation Services for Persons with Mental Disorders (2003)”, MHLW

(5) Severe and multiple disabilities

With regard to level of severe and multiple disabilities, more than 40% of persons with physical disabilities have severe disabilities categorized in Grade 1 or Grade 2. The number of persons with severe disabilities categorized in Grade 1 or Grade 2 has been increasing in recent years.

2. Livelihood

(1) Place of residence

More than 80% of persons with physical disabilities are living in the house of their own or their family, while the rate of those who are living in rented house is low. Some persons with intellectual disabilities or mental disorders are living in group homes with support services.

(2) Persons with disabilities living in home

Less than 10% of persons with physical disabilities are living alone, and among them almost 60% have spouse. The rate of persons with intellectual disabilities living alone or having spouse is quite small, while most of them are living with their

parents or relatives. Less than 20% of persons with mental disorders are living alone, and among them about 30% have spouse.

Figure 1-6: Persons with disabilities living in home

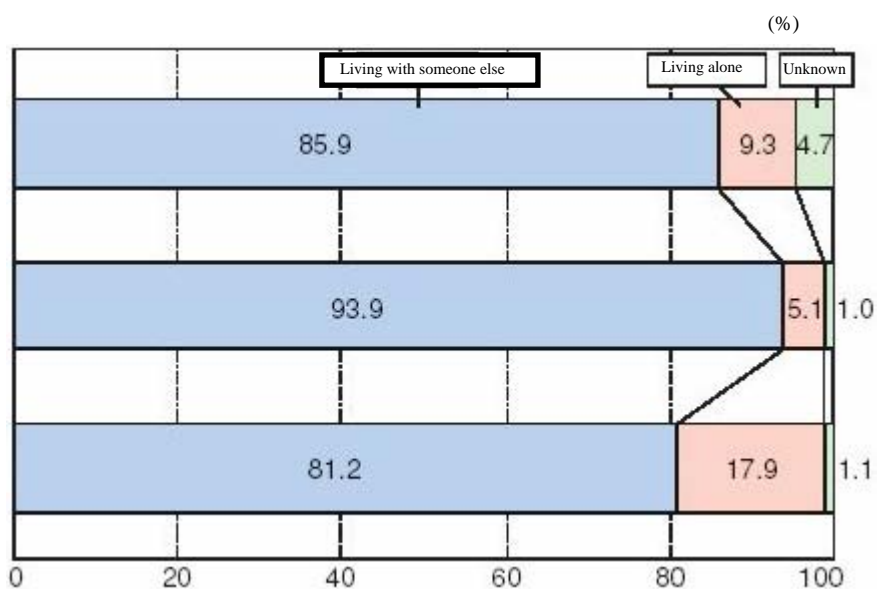
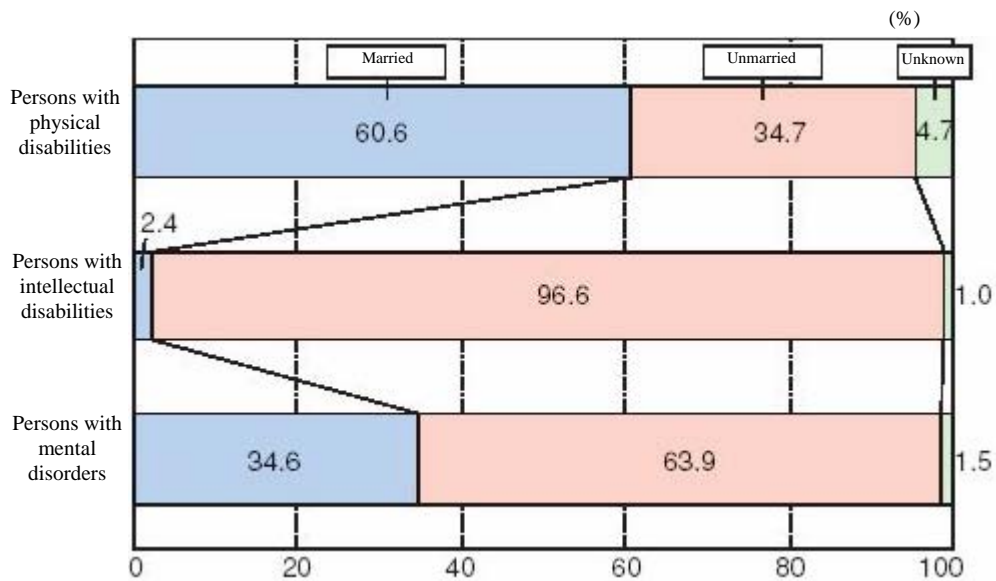


Figure 1-7: Marital Status



* The rate of married persons with physical / intellectual disabilities shows that they are living with their spouses.

Sources:

“Survey on the Actual Status of Physically Disabled Children/Persons (2001)”, MHLW,

“Comprehensive Survey on Children/Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (2000)”, MHLW

“Survey on Needs for Rehabilitation Services for Persons with Mental Disorders (2003)”, MHLW

(3) Rearing children with disabilities

With regard to places of activity for preschool, facilities for children with disabilities such as kindergarten and nursery school, as well as day-care center for children with disabilities are available. About 40% of children with disabilities are staying at home.

For children with physical disabilities, various facilities such as hospitals, child care centers, welfare offices, public health centers, and educational institutions are available. Similarly for children with intellectual disabilities, various facilities such as fellow workers, school teachers, doctors, staff of specialized agencies, and associations of persons with disabilities are available for consultation.

With regard to rearing children with disabilities, various facilities are available for support in the community. There is a need for a network for health care, medical care, welfare, and education to provide support to children with disabilities and their parents from an early stage.

3. Education

(1) Education of children with disabilities

The number of children with disabilities at compulsory education stage is 179,000 (approximately 1.6% of the total number of school-age children) among children who are delivered education at schools for blind children, schools for deaf children, and schools for children with intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities and health impairments, and those who are delivered education in special classes or Tsukyu classes (resource rooms) in elementary and lower secondary schools.

Even among children in regular classes at elementary and lower secondary schools, 6% may be in need of special educational support in learning or activity due to Learning Disabilities (LD), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD), or High-Functioning Autism.

Figure 1-8: Number of Children Delivered Special Education

(1) Schools for blind children, schools for deaf children, and schools for children with intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, and health impairments

Approx. 99,000 persons
(Persons)

Classification		Kindergarten	Elementary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary
Schools for blind children		271	668	497	2,434
Schools for deaf children		1,287	2,175	1,112	1,999
Schools for children with intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, and health impairments	Intellectual disabilities	59	18,970	14,457	32,204
	Physical disabilities	68	7,705	4,492	6,491
	Health impairments	3	1,430	1,326	1,175
	Subtotal	130	28,078	20,275	39,870
Total		1,688	30,921	21,884	44,303

(As of May 1, 2004)

(2) Special classes in Elementary and Lower secondary schools

Approx. 91,000 persons
(Persons)

Classification	Elementary schools	Lower Secondary schools
Intellectual Disabilities	37,905	19,178
Physical Disabilities	2,743	808
Health Impairments	1,282	455
Low Vision	205	62
Hard of Hearing	806	332
Speech and Language Disorder	1,146	47
Emotional Disturbance	19,028	6,854
Total	63,115	27,736

(As of 1 May 2004)

(3) Tsukyu classes (resource rooms) in Elementary and Lower secondary schools

Approx. 36,000 persons

(Persons)

Classification	Elementary schools	Lower secondary schools
Speech and Language Disorder	28,738	132
Emotional Disturbance	4,389	644
Low Vision	137	15
Hard of Hearing	1,448	246
Physical Disabilities	1	1
Health Impairments	4	2
Total	34,717	1,040

(As of 1 May 2004)

Source: “Materials on Special Support Education (FY 2004)”,
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

(2) After graduating from school

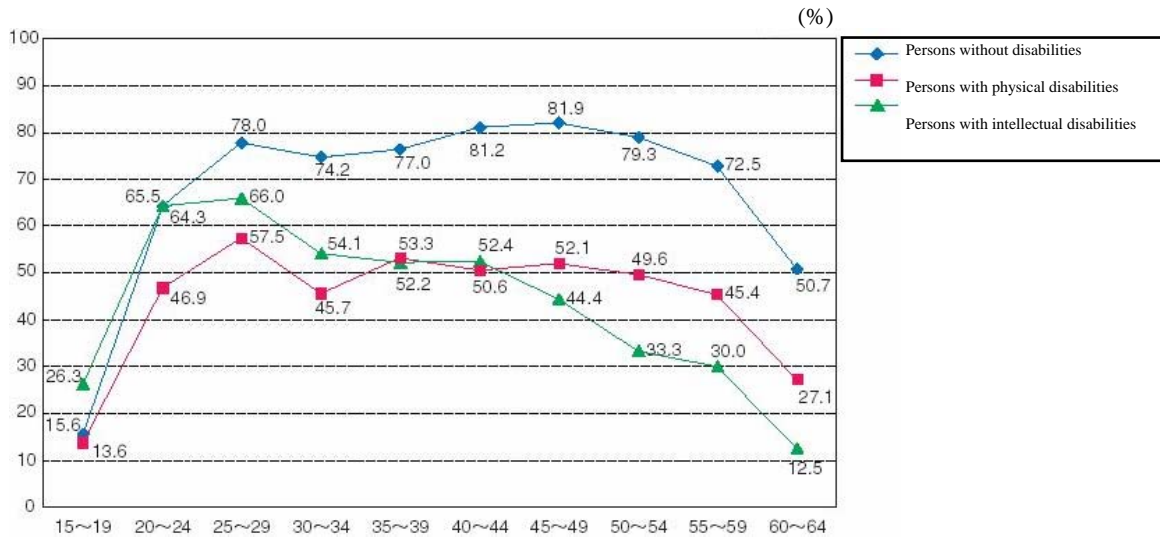
The major occupation after graduating from school are as follows: as for schools for blind children proceeding to a school of higher grade or using welfare facilities or medical facilities; as for schools for deaf children proceeding to a school of higher grade or finding employment; and as for schools for children with intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, and health impairments using welfare facilities or medical facilities.

4. Work and employment

(1) Work

The rate of persons with physical disabilities who are working is generally lower than that of persons without disabilities. In case of persons with intellectual disabilities, the rate sharply drops from at the age of second half of 40s. With regard to occupation, 5.0% of persons with physical disabilities and 53.8% of persons with intellectual disabilities are working in workshops or sheltered workshops.

Figure 1-9: Employment Rate by Age Group



Source:

“Survey on the Actual Employment Status of Persons with Physical Disabilities and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (2001)”, MHLW,
 “Annual Report on Labour Force Survey (2001)”, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC)

(2) Category of work by type of disability

Massage service and acupuncture/moxibustion therapy for persons with visual disabilities, operation of a product line for persons with hearing/speech disabilities, and manufacturing and processing work for persons with intellectual disabilities is dominant .

(3) Employment

The number of persons with disabilities employed by employers who have five or more employees is as follows: 369,000 persons with physical disabilities; 114,000 persons with intellectual disabilities; and 13,000 persons with mental disorders.

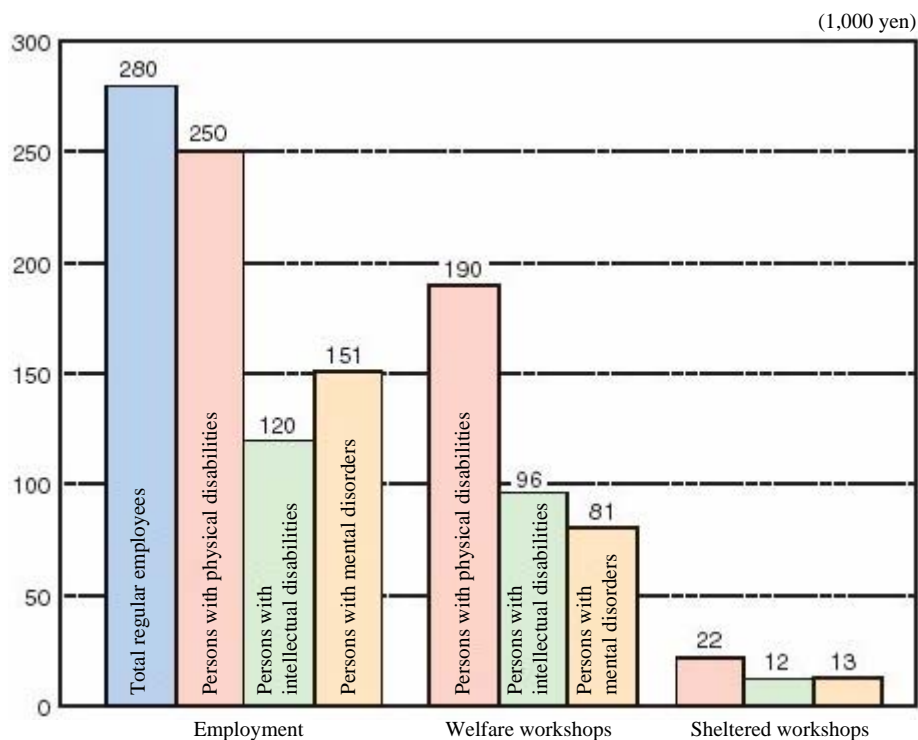
5. Income

(1) Wage

The average amount of monthly wage of persons with disabilities who are employed by employers is 250,000 yen for persons with physical disabilities, 120,000 yen for persons with intellectual disabilities, and 151,000 yen for persons with mental disorders.

The average amount of monthly wage from welfare workshops is lower than that of employed persons with disabilities. The average amount of monthly wage from commuting sheltered workshops is extremely low, the average amount is 22,000 yen for persons with physical disabilities, 12,000 yen for persons with intellectual disabilities, and 13,000 yen for persons with mental disorders.

Figure 1-10: Average Amount of Monthly Wage



Source:

- Total regular employees: “Monthly Labour Survey (November 2003)”, MHLW
- Employment: “Survey on the Actual Employment Status of Persons with Physical Disabilities and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (2003)”, MHLW
- Welfare workshops/sheltered workshops: “Survey on the Actual Status of SELP Centers (2000)”, Japan SELP Center Association

(2) Monthly income from work

The amount of monthly income from work of persons with physical disabilities is the highest for persons with internal organs disabilities, followed by persons with mobility disabilities, persons with hearing/speech disabilities, and persons with visual disabilities.

The amount of monthly income from work is 30,000yen or less for half the number of persons with intellectual disabilities.

(3) Pension

About 60% of persons with physical disabilities are provided public pension, and about 20% of them are provided public benefit. About 80% of persons with intellectual disabilities are provided pension or benefit.

Among persons with mental disorders, a quarter of them are provided disability pension, and 10% of them are provided other pension. Persons with mental disorders are in financially difficult conditions, only 20% receive paid salary as part of their regular income, and less than 20% have no regular income.

6. Health

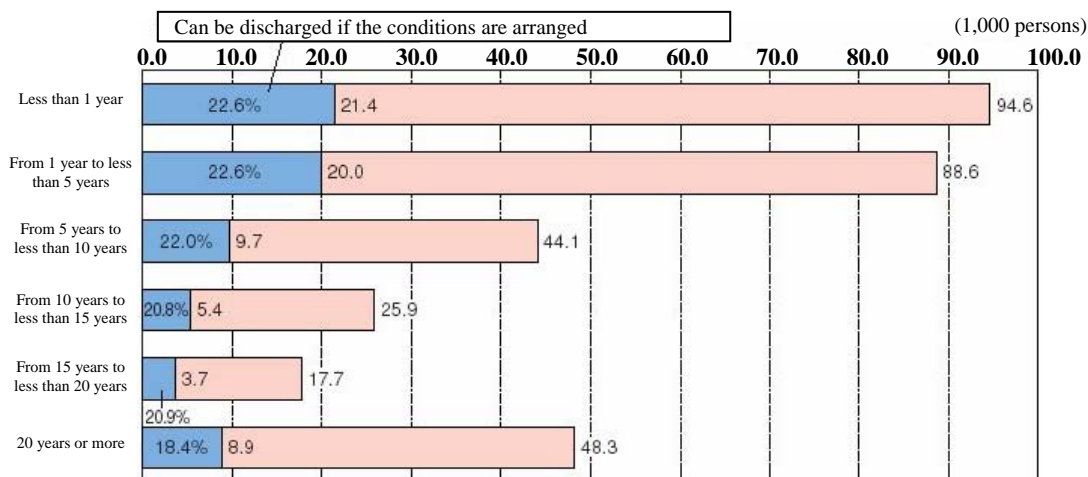
(1) Treatment

With regard to the status of treatment of persons with physical disabilities for the past year, the rate of persons with internal organs disabilities who receive treatment for “31 days or more” is more than one-third of the total, and that is the highest rate.

(2) Patients in mental hospitals

Among patients in mental hospitals, 15.1% has been admitted for 20 years or more, while about 20% can be assessed by the hospitals to be discharge if the conditions of the community in which they live are arranged.

Figure 1-11: Rate of Patients in Mental Hospitals who can be discharged if the conditions of community in which they live are arranged



Source: Based on “Patient Survey (2002)”, arranged by Department of Health and Welfare for Persons with Disabilities, Social Welfare and War Victims’ Relief Bureau, MHLW

7. Daily Life

(1) Status of daily life activities

The rate of persons with hearing/speech disabilities and internal organs disabilities who can do daily activities by themselves is high as a whole. The rate of persons with visual disabilities and physical disabilities those who can eat by themselves is high, but that of those who can go daily shopping by themselves is 60% for persons with physical disabilities and 50% for persons with visual disabilities. With regard to persons with mental disorders, the rate of those who can eat by themselves is high, but the rate of those who can go daily shopping is about 70%, and those who can cook by themselves is about 50%.

(2) Status of house renovation

More than 60% of persons with physical disabilities are in need for house renovation. Toilet and bath are the most common renovated places.

(3) Communication

10.6% of persons with visual disabilities use Braille, and only 17.3% of persons with severe visual disabilities use Braille, that means information provided by sound is indispensable to those who do not use Braille.

Similarly 15.4% of persons with hearing disabilities use sign language, and only 23.0% of persons with severe hearing disabilities use sign language, that means information provided by script, such as conversation in written words and speech-to-text interpreters are indispensable to those who do not use sign language.

8. Messages from Persons with Disabilities

(1) Reality of disability

With regard to reality of disability, persons with disabilities want others to know as follows: that disability cannot always be recognized by appearance and there are some persons with such disability who have difficulties in not being understood by others; disability is not one kind, but there is a diversity of disability in level and type; and disability is common issue to anyone.

(2) Necessary accommodations

With regard to necessary accommodation, persons with disabilities want others to know as follows: there are many things that cannot be resolved solely by efforts of persons with disabilities by themselves or their families; support for work and places of work to be secured, because persons with disabilities are wishing to work despite their disabilities; experts on persons with disabilities are expected to gain the sufficient necessary knowledge.

**Figure 1-12: Summary of “Messages from Persons with Disabilities”
(by Type of Disability)**

	Realities of disabilities	Help sought
Visual Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all persons with visual disabilities can use Braille. It is hard to find out on which floor an elevator is stopping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PC and Internet users include persons with visual disabilities as well, so please have the content support screen readers. Machines with touch sensitive panels are hard to operate.
Hearing/ Speech Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tough aspect of hearing disabilities is in the difficulty of communication. Since we do not understand sound information, we cannot find out what is being announced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please also think of ways to convey information visually by using electric billboards, panels, or the like. Please increase captioned and sign language interpreted TV programs.
Physical Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When using a wheelchair, we cannot move forward when there is even a slight step or a small obstacle. On a wheelchair, we cannot reach high places and we cannot easily pick things off of the floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some people cannot use the Japanese style toilets, so please always provide a western style toilet as well at public toilets. The absolute number of parking spaces for persons with disabilities is small, and the spaces are sometimes occupied by cars of persons without disabilities
Internal Organ Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the disabilities cannot be recognized by sight, it is hard to gain people’s understanding of our situation. The disabled organ (heart, lung, etc.) is not the only problem, but it has a bad effect on the entire body. So, we are tired everyday, unable to recover from the fatigue, and problems sometimes occur due to lack of concentration or perseverance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We become tired easily, but since the disorders cannot be recognized by sight, we find it hard to be able to sit on priority seats even if we want to. It would be useful if there were a mark or sign that allowed other people to recognize that you suffer from internal organ disorders.
Intellectual Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We find it difficult to understand abstract concepts. We are not good at expressing our intentions or asking the right questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please talk slowly with easy to understand words. Please help us with the abilities we need but lack for working and supporting ourselves, and consider us as fellow neighbors
Mental Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The disease is distressing, but life is also distressing with low income and so on. Many people do not want other people to find out that they have mental disorders, because then they tend to be treated unfavorably. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please do not treat persons with mental disorders specially, but respect their individualities and treat them gently and cheerfully. Since it takes courage to confide that one is suffering from mental disorders, please do not tell others about it without permission.
Developmental Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is said that 6.3% of the total population suffer from mild developmental disorders, such as Learning Disabilities (LD), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD), Asperger's syndrome, and High-Functioning Autism. However, such developmental disorders have not gained sufficient understanding and support. Since the disorders cannot be recognized by sight, persons with disorders are often criticized as “having a bad attitude” or “being badly brought up.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The disorders can often be overcome to a certain extent by teaching or learning in a more individual specific manner. Visual support is often helpful for understanding.

Source: Cabinet Office

II Measures Taken for Persons with Disabilities (Focused on FY2004)

1. Comprehensive Approach to Measures for Persons with Disabilities

Government of Japanese promotes measures through taking a comprehensive and organized approach to facilitate enjoyment of persons with disabilities of their living independently and participation in the society in accordance with the Basic Law for Persons with Disabilities. Specific measures set out in the “Basic Programme for Persons with Disabilities (FY2003-FY2012)” and the “Five-Year Plan for Implementation of Priority Measures (FY2003-FY2007)” are steadily taken by relevant ministries in close cooperation with the “Headquarters for Promoting Measures for Persons with Disabilities” headed by the Prime Minister.

[Principal measures taken]

(1) The Law for Amending the Basic Law for Persons with Disabilities was promulgated and entered into force on 4 June 2004. The main points of amendments are that concept of non-discrimination on the basis of disability is explicitly spelled out, the “Week of Persons with Disabilities” (3-9 December) is established, and prefectural governments are required to establish programme for persons with disabilities.

(2) In June 2004, the “Outline of Promotion of Accessible Environment” was decided by the Ministerial Meeting on Accessible Environment.

(3) Four working groups consist of staff of relevant ministries to consider key issues were established under the Headquarters of Promoting Measures for Persons with Disabilities: there are “Working Group for promoting raising awareness regarding disability”, “Working Group for promoting provision of appropriate public services”, “Working Group for promoting employment of persons with disabilities in public sectors” and “Working Group for promoting consideration of the Draft Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”.

2. Mutual Understanding and Exchange

With regard to raising awareness and public information relating to promotion of people’s understanding of persons with disabilities, measures stipulated by the amendment of the Basic Law for Persons with Disabilities are taken through some events for “Week of Persons with Disabilities”. In addition, welfare education is

promoted through school education and activities for raising awareness of local residents, enhancement of public service providers' understanding of persons with disabilities, and encouragement of volunteer activities.

With regard to international cooperation which is appropriate for the international position of Japan, Japan provided grant aid and technical assistance through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), while actively engaging in the discussions at the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities.

[Principal measures taken]

(1) On 1 December 2004, "Implementation of the Week of Persons with Disabilities" was decided by the Headquarters for Promoting Measures for Persons with Disabilities. The people are encouraged to take measures in accordance with concept stated in "To create a cohesive society: Let us cultivate nice attitude in ourselves."

(2) "Manual for accommodating to persons with disabilities at public service counters" was well prepared by the Headquarters for Promoting Measures for Persons with Disabilities.

(3) A total of 60 projects were implemented with the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects, including a project to renovate rehabilitation centers for persons with mental and physical disabilities in Indonesia. Japan contributed 54,000 US dollars to the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability and about 10,000 US dollars to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

3. Promoting the Base for Independence and Participation in Society

With regard to education for children with disabilities, specific education services tailored to conditions of individual disability is promoted at schools for blind children, schools for deaf children, and schools for children with intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities and health impairments as well as special classes and Tsukyu classes (resource rooms) in elementary and lower secondary schools. In addition, institutional issues are considered so that appropriate instructions and necessary support can be provided to children with severe and multiple disabilities,

Learning Disabilities (LD), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD), and High-Functioning Autism.

With regard to measures for promoting work and employment of persons with disabilities, guidance or request is provided to enforce private enterprises and national and local governments to implement employment quotas in accordance with the “Law for Employment Promotion, etc, of Persons with Disabilities”. In addition, extension of category for work appropriate for ability and expertise of persons with disabilities through establishing a manual for employment of persons with disabilities, making use of special subsidiary system, providing subsidies to private enterprises, and revising conditions for disqualifications relating to persons with disabilities.

[Principal measures implemented]

(1) In December 2004, an interim report on “Future Visions for Special Support Education System” was compiled by the Central Council for Education.

(2) A booklet for good practices in accordance with “Guidelines for Promoting Measures for Barrier-Free School Facilities” concerning basic principles for barrier-free school facilities, was established and distributed to the respective board of education.

(3) “Bill for amending the Law for Employment Promotion, etc. of Persons with Disabilities” covering strengthening of employment measures for persons with mental disorders, support for persons with disabilities working at home, and organic coordination between welfare measures and employment measures for persons with disabilities was submitted to the 162nd session of the Diet.

(4) “Handbook for Employment of Persons with Disabilities in the Public Sectors” was prepared by the Headquarters for Promoting Measures for Persons with Disabilities.

(5) According to increase of persons with disabilities who wish to work or to be employed, outsourced training is actively implemented nationwide by using diverse outsourcees such as local companies in the community in which persons with disabilities are living, and allow for such persons to receive vocational training in the community in which they live.

(6) According to progress of IT, a model project on remote education program through

e-learning is implemented, in order to promote human resources development through using IT facilitating to expand job categories for persons with disabilities.

Figure: Employment Quotas and Actual Employment Rates of Persons with Disabilities

(As of 1 June 2004)

		Employment Quotas	Actual Employment Rate
Private enterprises	General private enterprises	1.8%	1.46% (1.48%)
	Government-affiliated corporations	2.1%	1.71% (2.09%)
Government and local governments	Government bodies	2.1%	2.15% (2.19%)
	Prefectural bodies		2.28% (2.49%)
	Municipal bodies		2.20% (2.45%)
	Prefectural boards of education	2.0%	1.33% (1.24%)

- The figures in parentheses are those as of 1 June 2003.
- Note: Measures for reducing the rate of exemption for alleviating employment obligation was taken in April 2004.
- Source: Ministry of Health Labour and Welfare

4. Promoting the Base for Daily Life

With regard to measures for securing livelihood for persons with disabilities, a user-oriented life support system are promoted through assistance benefit supply system, setting up of accessible consulting support system, and promoting protection of the rights of persons with disabilities as well as measures for independence and social participation of persons with disabilities are promoted through organized development of in-home care services and securing of housing such as group homes. In addition, economic independence of persons with disabilities is supported through securing their income and supporting appropriate management of individual property, as well as promoting use of facilities in the community, holding various sports events,

promoting R&D and diffusion of welfare equipment, and developing professionals for welfare.

With regard to measures for health and medical care, school safety is improved and measures for prevention of industrial accidents are promoted, in addition to prevention, early detection and intervention of diseases that cause disabilities through such as health checkups. In addition, medical treatment, medical rehabilitation, and health instructions for disabilities are provided. Furthermore, early detection and intervention of mental disorders are implemented through promotion of measures for mental health and health services in the community, and R&D is promoted for the purpose of preventing disabilities and establishing fundamental methods of treatment.

[Principal measures taken]

(1) In September 2004, a “Reform Vision for Mental Health, Medical Care and Welfare.” was presented by the Headquarters for Measures for Mental Health and Welfare.

(2) A “Bill for Supporting Independence of Persons with Disabilities” was submitted to the 162nd session of the Diet. The bill aims at developing community in order to promote support for persons with disabilities to enjoy living independently in the community through such measures as unifying welfare services and medical care services subsidized by the public expense in accordance with types of disability.

(3) The “Law for Supporting Persons with Developmental Disabilities” to promote people’s understanding of developmental disabilities and establish a comprehensive support framework for persons with developmental disabilities was established in December 2004.

(4) In June 2004, the “Law for Amending the National Pension Law, etc.”, covering improvement of system of disability basic pension and extending the period of special measures for application for providing disability basic pension, was established. In addition, in December 2004, “Law for Provision of Special Disability Benefit for Specific Persons with Disabilities” was established, and according to this law special disability benefit was provided to persons with disabilities who were subject to join national pension plan voluntarily in or before fiscal year of 1991 taking into account of their special situations.

(5) Towards realization of a cohesive society, “Expert Meeting on Work Support for Persons with Disabilities” was established in Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, to promote mutual understanding between welfare administrative and private enterprises, and to exchange views on welfare measures for work support that both welfare administrative and private enterprises can provide.

(6) Delegation of Japanese athletes was dispatched to Athens Paralympics and Melbourne Deaflympics, and Special Olympics World Winter Games were held in Nagano Prefecture.

5. Promoting the Base for Comfortable Living Environments

With regard to measures for facilitating comfortable living environments for persons with disabilities, physically accessible environment such as public housing accommodates to persons with disabilities, government facilities and buildings for public use, public transport, and pedestrian space should be created. In addition, specific measures are promoted for vulnerable persons including persons with disabilities who are in need of assistance in case of disaster in various situations, through disseminating knowledge of preventing disaster, providing disaster information, and instructing emergency evacuation. Furthermore, measures for preventing crime, which give due consideration to persons with disabilities, are promoted.

With regard to measures for facilitating persons with disabilities to lead their life in safety, R&D and diffusion of equipment and system are promoted taking into account of disability, and accessible information becomes widely available by accessible websites to persons with disabilities. In addition, provision of information through establishing information networks, creating video programs with captions, and increasing TV programs with closed-captions are promoted.

[Principal measures taken]

(1) In October 2004, the “Basic Policy for Promotion of Facilitating Mobility” was amended to encourage municipal governments to take into account of new concept. The new concept is to count the consolidating measures for accessible environment including buildings in intensive development area when municipal governments make a basic plan of certain areas that have facilities for transportation such as train station as the core facility.

(2) In order to facilitate accessibility of vessels operating on remote island routes, government subsidy has been provided for part of the construction fee related to accessibility in building an alternative vessel or renovating the vessel in case the vessel operates on a route subject to government subsidy, since fiscal 2004.

(3) The accessibility maps of entire Koganei City for residential area, and Higashiyama, Kyoto for tourism venues were on the website. In addition, accessibility maps are created for underground shopping arcade and ground level around Tokyo Station for large scale of underground shopping arcade by using a 3D geographical information system.

(4) On 3 March 2005, “Working Group for Distribution of Information and Evacuation Support for the Elderly in the situation of Torrential Rainstorms” disseminated a report including recommendation for creation of “information advising evacuation preparation (evacuation of persons who need assistance)” and development of information distribution framework in municipal governments.

(5) An audio book rental service via Internet was implemented through “DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) contents delivery project by the broadband network (Biblionet).”

(6) In regular election for the House of Councilors in 2004, the number of postal and other voting certificates issued was 61,010, increasing by 9,662 over the previous election (2001). Among 36,205 voters (local constituencies) in total, 1,650 persons voted by representative voting system.