

## Country Paper (Japan)

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### Part A

#### (1) Recruitment

In Japan, national government officials, including officials of NSO, are recruited through the common examinations for national government officials, which qualify candidates to be employed as national government officials. The examinations are classified into categories by academic backgrounds and specialties of candidates. NSO recruits actively new officials from the fields of mathematics or information science.

There are no special systems for NSO to recruit experts in statistics, therefore it is necessary for NSO to request and negotiate with the personnel department to recruit new officials who have enough capability for the work in NSO.

It is most important that good candidates understand and have interest in the work of NSO and that they hope to be recruited to NSO. Therefore NSO is introducing students in the faculty of mathematics or information science to the work in NSO for official statistics and making efforts to have the students understand the importance and challenges of the work.

NSO is making efforts to recruit new officials who have enough capability for statistical work. However, recently the number of new officials is rather small because of the restriction of recruitment to the national government in Japan.

It is an important challenge to recruit human resources enough in quality and quantity constantly.

#### (2) Development

In NSO, training courses are done for officials from new employees to middle grade section chiefs according to their positions. The purpose of the training courses is to improve their specialty through acquiring expert knowledge about statistics and statistical administration and also to improve capability to accomplish the tasks such as planning ability and management ability according to their positions. In addition to these training courses, on-the-job training is done at each section in NSO to improve practical capability.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, to which NSO belongs to, has the Statistical Research and Training Institute (hereafter SRTI), which carries out

statistical training courses for statistical staff of national and local governments. NSO utilizes these training courses of SRTI for training the staff of NSO.

Recently, under the policy to restrict the total number of national government officials, it becomes difficult to increase staff engaging in statistical work according to increasing important tasks about official statistics. Therefore, it also becomes difficult that statistical staff take enough training courses of SRTI.

In Japanese government, cycle of personnel transfers is very short in general (usually 2 or 3 years), and personnel transfers are carried out among statistical sections and other sections. Consequently it is important issues to secure the personnel arrangement which enables staff of NSO to make use of the result of training courses and their knowledge and experience about statistics to their statistical work.

### **(3) Organizational strategies**

In Japan, the Statistics Act was completely revised and promulgated in May 2007. The new Statistics Act was totally enforced in April 2009.

One of the most important characteristics of the act is to establish a Basic Plan concerning the development of official statistics every 5 years. The Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications draws up a draft Basic Plan while hearing the opinions of the Statistics Commission, which was established based on the Act, and requests a decision of the Cabinet. The first Basic Plan was established in March 2009, prior to the total enforcement of the Act.

The Basic Plan includes issues about cultivating and securing statistical personnel.

In the Basic Plan it was decided that each office and ministry of national government should establish measures that center mainly on core personnel, such as formulating a policy regarding the cultivation of human resources, personnel exchanges, using a new personnel evaluation system and establishing cultivation targets, etc.

On the basis of this decision, NSO established a new guideline on training program for staff of NSO and SRTI, and also made a training program based on the guideline. NSO is introducing young employees of other departments to its statistical work and making efforts to secure human resources. And also in personnel transfers, NSO is actively promoting personnel exchanges among statistics-producing sections and statistics-utilizing sections in order to cultivate core personnel who have broad knowledge and experience about official statistics.

Through active participation to academic societies, such as Japan Statistical Association, NSO grasp recent trends of academic societies and new knowledge, and introduce researcher and users to challenges in official statistics and efforts to address

them.

#### **(4) Other**

Development of IT is a main factor in enabling statistical work more effective and efficient both in producing and using statistics. It demands that statistical staff address new challenges. Under the new statistical system, the following measures are promoted in Japan, such as development of “Establishment Frame Database” (business register) based on results of statistical surveys and administrative records, production and provision of anonymized micro data and provision of statistics in response to the request of users (tailor-made tabulation).

Accordingly, to deal with increasing work about data processing, National Statistics Center, which perform tabulation of fundamental official statistics and provide tailor-made tabulation service and anonymized micro data in cooperation with NSO, is recruiting new employees who have skill on information processing, with streamlining its statistical work under restriction of budget.

About professional capability of statistical personnel, I think it is one of important requirements that they are able to tackle to realize diversifying user needs under the restriction of human resources and budget. For that purpose, it is needed that they not only have expert knowledge and grasp user needs properly, but also acquire the ability of management which enable them to plan and carry out concrete measures.

### **Part B**

In Part B, details of establishment of Basic Plan and efforts to cultivate and secure statistical personnel based on the plan are described.

#### **(1) Establishment of Basic Plan**

As mentioned in part A, the Statistics Act was completely revised and promulgated in May 2007, and the new Statistics Act was totally enforced in April 2009.

One of the most important characteristics of the act is to establish a Basic Plan concerning the development of official statistics every 5 years. The Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications draws up a draft Basic Plan while hearing the opinions of the Statistics Commission, and requests a decision of the Cabinet. The first Basic Plan was established in March 2009. The Basic Plan includes issues about cultivating and securing statistical personnel.

In the Basic plan, the present condition and problems about statistical personnel are stated as follows.

- i) In producing official statistics, it is important to sufficiently exhibit the expertise of personnel involved in their production. In order for Japan to actively contribute to approaches such as international standardization of statistics, it is essential to cultivate and secure human resources who can conduct discussions on the same level as statistical experts of various foreign countries.
- ii) Since it is generally not the case that personnel transfers in each office and ministry are limited to within a specific bureau or department, it is difficult to cultivate core personnel (personnel who have spent much of the number of the years that they have worked as a national government officials engaging in statistics-related affairs) through only statistics bureaus and departments.
- iii) There are also cases where it is difficult to implement statistical training, etc. according to the office or ministry due to the aspect of organizational structures, etc. Local public entities are also very busy with daily businesses, and as a result, participation in long-term training, etc, held by the national government is difficult.
- iv) Consequently, from the perspective of cultivating and securing highly specialized human resources in the organization that produce statistics in Japan as a whole, it has become necessary to improve the capabilities of personnel by implementing personnel transfers, personnel exchanges, training programs, etc. that are conscious of the cultivation of human resources now more than ever.

On the basis of the situation, in the Basic Plan following orientation of approach is decided.

- i) Establishing measures that center mainly on core personnel, such as formulating a policy regarding the cultivation of human resources, promoting personnel exchanges, using a new personnel evaluation system, establishing cultivation targets, etc.
- ii) A system where the appointment of personnel engaged in statistics, training for such personnel, etc. can be promoted systematically will be developed, such as by dispatching personnel to statistical government agencies overseas, based on the perspective of cultivating and securing human resources who can make contributions to international society.

## **(2) Efforts in NSO**

On the basis of the Basic Plan, NSO established a new guideline on training program for staff of NSO and SRTI, and also made a training program based on the guideline. NSO is introducing young employees of other departments to its statistical work and making efforts to secure human resources. And also in personnel transfers, NSO is actively promoting personnel exchanges among statistics-producing sections and statistics-utilizing sections in order to cultivate core personnel who have broad knowledge and experience about official statistics.

The purpose of the training courses is to improve their specialty through acquiring expert knowledge about statistics and statistical administration and also to improve capability to accomplish the tasks such as planning ability and management ability according to their positions.

Training courses are basically classified by position in NSO, and they are done for officials from new employees to middle grade section chiefs according to their positions. For officials of deputy director grade, seminars should be held separately.

Each training course should have clear goal and keep to the point. The program should be effective and efficient, expanding contents into such as “work-life balance”.

After training courses, participants fill out a questionnaire about satisfaction and request to the training courses. The answers help improvement of training courses.

### **(3) Efforts in SRTI**

As mentioned in part A, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has the Statistical Research and Training Institute (SRTI). SRTI plays the role of a central statistical training institute and a special training institute for statistics in Japan. It provides various statistical training courses for the personnel of national and local governments with the aim of imparting statistical knowledge and skills in duty such as the compilation of statistics, statistical analysis, and the use of statistical data. NSO utilizes these training courses of SRTI for training the staff of NSO.

Recently, under the policy to restrict the total number of national government officials, it becomes difficult to increase staff engaging in statistical work according to increasing important tasks about official statistics. Therefore, it also becomes difficult that statistical staff take enough training courses of SRTI.

For that reason, needs for Comprehensive Courses, which aim to provide statistical theories and analytical skills for the entire statistical areas in a week, are increasing more than General Course, which aims to provide extensive and comprehensive knowledge, theories and analytical skills in statistics required for policy planning in various administrative fields in 3 month.

In Japanese government, cycle of personnel transfers are very short in general (usually 2 or 3 years), and personnel change is carried out among statistical sections and other sections. Consequently it is important issues to secure the personnel arrangement which enables statistical staff to make use of the result of training courses and their knowledge and experience about statistics to their statistical work.

#### **(4) Conclusion**

Statistical work in NSO needs highly professional skills. It needs not only technical knowledge and experience about statistics but also scholarly knowledge about statistical science, economics etc.

Expert knowledge professional staff should master is thought following five fields.

- i) Economic statistics
- ii) Social and demographic statistics
- iii) Statistical theory
- iv) Information system
- v) International affairs

In addition, management skills are required for managerial posts.

It is necessary to cultivate and secure the personnel who have above expert skills deliberately.

In Japan, There are no special systems for NSO to recruit and cultivate statistical experts, therefore it is necessary for NSO to request and negotiate with the personnel department about personnel matters such as recruit, transfer and promotion.

In order to cultivate and secure the personnel necessary for NSO through this process, it is essential for top management of NSO to make concrete plans to cultivate and secure the personnel forecasting the future, and to seek understanding and cooperation to relating departments continuously.

# Basic Plan Concerning the Development of Official Statistics

March 13, 2009 Cabinet Decision

( excerpt )

## 3. Matters Necessary for Promoting the Development of Official Statistics

### 2 Securing and making effective use of statistical resources

#### (3) Cultivating and securing human resources such as statistical personnel

a) Current state, issues, etc.

In producing official statistics, it is important to sufficiently exhibit the expertise of personnel involved in their production. In order for Japan to actively contribute to approaches such as international standardization of statistics, it is essential to cultivate and secure human resources who can conduct discussions on the same level as statistical experts of various foreign countries.

However, since it is generally not the case that personnel transfers in each office and ministry are limited to within a specific bureau or department, it is difficult to cultivate core personnel<sup>1</sup> through only statistics bureaus and departments. In addition, there are also cases where it is difficult to implement statistical training, etc. according to the office or ministry due to the aspect of organizational structures, etc. Local public entities are also very busy with daily business, and as a result, participation in long-term training, etc. held by the national government is difficult.

Consequently, from the perspective of cultivating and securing highly specialized human resources in the organization that produces statistics in Japan as a whole, it has become necessary to improve the capabilities of personnel by implementing personnel transfers, personnel exchanges, training programs, etc. that are conscious of the cultivation of human resources now more than ever.

b) Orientation of approaches

While establishing measures that center mainly on core personnel, such as formulating a policy regarding the cultivation of human resources, promoting personnel exchanges, using a new personnel evaluation system that is based on the Act on Partial Revision of the National Service Act (Act No. 108 of 2007), establishing cultivation targets, etc., a system where the appointment of personnel engaged in statistics, training for such personnel, etc. can be promoted systematically will be developed, such as by dispatching personnel to statistical government agencies overseas, based on the perspective of cultivating and securing human resources who can make contributions to international society.

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<sup>1</sup> Refers to personnel who have spent much of the number of years that they have worked as a public servant engaging in statistics-related affairs.

## Appendix: Concrete Measures that Should Be Established within the Next Five Years

### “3. Matters Necessary for Promoting the Development of Official Statistics”

Item	Concrete measures, policies, etc.	Office and/or ministry in charge	Implementation period
2 Securing and making effective use of statistical resources (3) Cultivating and securing human resources such as statistical personnel a) Promotion of systematic cultivation and securing of core personnel	<p>- Each office and ministry with a bureau or department that manages statistics will make efforts toward systematic cultivation of human personnel in accordance with the actual circumstances of each office or ministry, such as by establishing challenges related to the percentage of core personnel who have at least 10 years worth of experience as a public servant making up the overall number of personnel belonging to the bureau or department managing statistics as well as goals for affiliated personnel to undergo training, etc. In other ministries, efforts will be made toward the same kind of approaches in the sections managing statistics.</p> <p>With regard to core personnel, policies for cultivating human resources such as regarding the transfer of personnel between bureaus and departments using statistics and bureaus and departments producing statistics will be specified within the office or ministry wherever possible, and efforts will be made toward the execution of such policies.</p> <p>- Mutual relationships of trust will be fostered between ministries, between the national and local governments, and between government and academia, and under the common recognition of cultivating human resources of good quality, exchanges of human resources between ministries, between the national and local governments, and between government and academia will be promoted while taking heed of making effective use of the system of employing officials with a fixed term of office as based on the Act on Special Measures of Employment and Remuneration of Officials with Fixed Term of Office in the Regular Service (Act No. 125 of 2000).</p>	Each office and ministry	Will be implemented starting in FY2009.
	- From the perspective of increasing the expertise of personnel engaged in statistics who belong to statistical departments and bureaus, efforts will be made to establish items related to the improvement of the expertise of statistics as a goal for personnel in the personnel evaluation system that is planned on being introduced in the future.	Each office and ministry	Will be implemented starting in FY2010.
	- While taking the needs of each office and ministry as well as those of local public entities into consideration, enhancements will be made for training carried out for the purpose of improving their ability in producing primary statistics and training that is directly linked to increased ability in secondary use, etc.	MIC	Will be implemented starting in FY2010.
	- From the perspective of promoting and supporting approaches made by each office and ministry, the state of such approaches will be comprehended, and the sharing of information between each ministries will be promoted.	MIC	Will be implemented starting in FY2010.
b) Promotion of the cultivation and securing of human resources who can contribute to international society	- To cultivate personnel who can flourish in the field of international statistics, measures for improving their international response capabilities will be promoted through dispatching them to government statistical agencies overseas.	Each office and ministry	Will be implemented starting in FY2009.
	- With regard to international issues such as establishing and revising statistical standards, opportunities will be established so that each office and ministry can share information and carry out research and reviews on countermeasures, and support will be	MIC	Will be implemented starting in FY2009.

Appendix 1

	provided for strategically improving their international response capabilities.		
c) Implementation of research oriented toward cultivating and securing human personnel	- In order to contribute to the cultivation and securing of human resources with a great deal of expertise, research regarding the establishment of targets for the expertise that statistical personnel should possess and policies for supporting the acquisition of the targeted capabilities will be implemented, while referring to case examples, etc. of various foreign countries.	MIC, each office and ministry	Will be implemented starting in FY2010.

### Statistical Training Courses in SRTI (FY 2009)

Name of Course		Contents and Major Subjects	Term	
General Course		A comprehensive training course to acquire statistical knowledge and theory, and the analytical skills required for policy planning and evaluation in various administrative fields, as well as building up extensive applied skills	3 months	
Comprehensive Courses	Designing Statistical Surveys	A course to gain knowledge and skills in basic statistical theory, the planning and design of statistical surveys and opinion polls, and sample design of establishment and enterprise surveys, and learn various survey methods such as online, internet and telephone surveys	2 weeks	
	Population Estimation	A course to gain practical knowledge and skills in population estimation using various basic data	1 week	
	Economic Projections	A course to gain practical knowledge and skills in economic projections using various economic data	1 week	
	Introduction to Statistics Using PCs	A course to gain basic skills in EXCEL worksheet functions for statistical calculations, and in the creation of statistical tables and graphs, and acquire basic knowledge on the use of statistical geographic information systems (GIS)	1 week	
	Statistical Analysis Using PCs	A course for personnel with skills in EXCEL worksheet functions for statistical calculations to study analytical methods and basic knowledge on geographical information systems (GIS)	1 week	
	National and Prefectural Accounts	A course to learn knowledge, theory and estimation methods, as well as analytical methods for national and prefectural accounts	1 week	
	Structure of I-O Tables and Analysis of Economic Impacts Using I-O Tables	A course to gain knowledge on of national and prefectural accounts as well as I-O tables, and learn the structure of I-O tables and analytical methods for estimating economic impacts using I-O tables	1 week	
Specialized Courses	Central Training	Statistical Training Course for General Staff	A course designed for general staff to gain the basic statistical knowledge required for their work	4 days
		Statistical Training Course for Middle-Class Managers	A course designed for middle managers to gain the statistical knowledge required for their work, and study the application of statistics to solving problems using case studies	4 days
		Introduction to Economic Statistics	A course to gain basic knowledge, theory and analytical methods of economic statistics such as National Accounts, household economy and price statistics	3 days
		Introduction to GIS and Regional Analysis	A course designed for personnel engaged in GIS-related work, to gain basic knowledge of statistical GIS and data analytical methods using GIS basic software	3 days
		Statistical Methods for Administrative Evaluation	A course to learn basic statistical knowledge, theory and data analysis methods required for administrative evaluation in national and local governments	4 days
		International Statistical Training Course	A course to gain expert knowledge and skills in statistics to work with other countries or international organizations	6 days (once a week)

Appendix 2

Specialized Courses	Distance Learning	Basic Statistical Survey Course (Basics)	Distance Learning	A course designed for personnel newly engaged in statistical work, to gain the most fundamental statistical knowledge and theory through "Internet Learning (Distance Learning)" by using PCs at their offices as well as "Schooling (group training)"	15 days
			Schooling		2 days
	Basic Statistical Survey Course (Advanced)	Distance Learning	A course designed for local personnel (targeting the Tokai and Hokuriku District for FY 2009), to gain the most basic statistical knowledge and promote the dissemination of statistical knowledge	15 days	
	Regional Statistical Seminar			1 day	

Note: Statistical Training Courses of FY 2010 are slightly changed from one of FY 2009.