

**RESEARCH REPORT ON
ECONOMY, INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT**

**Economic Vitalization and
the Response to Diversifying Employment
in a Mature Society**

SUMMARY

June 2007

**Research Committee on Economy, Industry and Employment
House of Councillors
Diet of Japan**

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Introduction

The research committees of the House of Councillors, which are unique to the upper house, have been set up for terms of three years since 1986 with the aim of conducting intensive research on basic issues of national politics from a long-term and comprehensive perspective and contributing to the establishment of countermeasures. The research committees compile reports every year, submit them to the president of the House of Councillors, and make them public. In addition, when deemed necessary, the committees can submit bills of their own or advise other committees on the submission of bills.

The House of Councillors Research Committee on Economy, Industry and Employment, which was established on October 12, 2004, carried out research on the theme of “Economic Vitalization and the Response to Diversifying Employment in a Mature Society.” On the basis of its activities in the third year, the Committee compiled a final report, which includes an outline and arrangement of the discussions, and submitted this report to the president of the House of Councillors on June 8, 2007.

The following is a summary of the final report.

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I. Course of Research

The House of Councillors Research Committee on Economy, Industry and Employment was established in October 2004 during the 161st session of the Diet in order to conduct research from a long-term and comprehensive perspective on the economy, industry, and employment. The Committee commenced its three-year research after deciding in November of the same year that the theme of its research would be “Economic Vitalization and the Response to Diversifying Employment in a Mature Society.”

In the first year the Committee proceeded with research on the “Structural Reform and Medium-Term Economic and Fiscal Perspectives and the N Report—Toward a New Industrial Structure,” “Basic Employment Measures Plan and job support for young people,” “Measures for economic vitalization in a mature society,” the “Vitalization of regional economies,” the “Strengthening of the international competitiveness of the Japanese economy,” the “Response to diversifying employment,” the “Problem of the employment of young people, such as *freeters* (permanent part-time workers) and NEETs (“not in education, employment, or training”),” and the “Form of human resources development in response to economic and social changes,” and on June 13, 2005, it submitted an interim report to the president of the House of Councillors including proposals concerning the particularly urgent issue of the employment of young people.

In the second year the Committee conducted research on the “Issue of the economic and income gap,” the “Response to globalization of the Japanese economy,” the “Impact of the mass retirement of the postwar baby-boom generation on the economy, industry and employment,” the “Issue of form of employment of the elderly, and the issue of the employment of

women.” On June 2, 2006, the Committee submitted an interim report to the president of the House of Councillors including proposals regarding the response to diversifying employment.

In the third and last year, during the 165th session of the Diet, the Committee heard explanations from government representatives and asked them questions on the “Current status and issues of employment and the Economic Growth Initiative.” The Committee also heard opinions from voluntary testifiers and questioned them on the “Current status and issues of nonregular employment” and dispatched members to conduct fact-finding surveys in Tokyo. Later, during the 166th session of the Diet, the Committee resolved to conduct a survey on work-life balance. The Committee heard opinions from voluntary testifiers and questioned them on “International trends in work-life balance” and on the “Responses to and issues of work-life balance in Japan.” The Committee also heard explanations from government representatives and asked them questions on their efforts toward work-life balance. Later, each political group represented in the Committee expressed its views, and Committee members exchanged opinions to finalize this report, which was submitted to the president of the House of Councillors on June 8, 2007.

On the basis of surveys conducted in this last term of the Committee it was decided to submit a “Draft Resolution on Promoting Work-Life Balance,” prepared on Committee members’ initiative, to the plenary session of the Diet for its adoption.

* The “Draft Resolution on Promoting Work-Life Balance” was unanimously approved by the plenary session of the House of Councillors on June 13, 2007.

II. Outline of Research

1. Opinions from Voluntary Testifiers and Questioning

Regarding the theme of “Economic Vitalization and the Response to Diversifying Employment in a Mature Society,” opinions were heard from and questions put to the following voluntary testifiers: (1) on November 22, 2006, concerning the current status and issues of nonregular employment, Shigeyuki Jo, president, Joe’s Labo; Toshiaki Tachibanaki, professor, Graduate School of Economics, Kyoto University; and Yoshio Higuchi, professor, Faculty of Business and Commerce, Keio University; (2) on February 14, 2007, concerning international trends in work-life balance, Akiko Nagai, associate professor, Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo; Katsuhiko Fujimori, chief research associate, Mizuho Information & Research Institute, Inc.; and Yukari Yomo, HR director, Japan Region, Microsoft Corporation; and (3) on February 21, 2007, concerning the responses to and issues of work-life balance in Japan, Kentaro Iemoto, chief executive officer, Clara Online, Inc.; Akira Kawaguchi, professor, Faculty of Policy Studies, Doshisha University; and Shigeki Matsuda, senior research associate, Dai-ichi Life Research Institute Inc.

Questions and answers involved such issues as perceptions of the current status of nonregular employment; the need for particular measures for those of the so-called “lost generation” who found employment hard to come by in the recession years; the form of minimum wage system; policies for the materialization of the principle of equal pay for equal work; the Swedish system allowing those who are taking child-care leave to have 80% of their salary paid; the issues of “Part-Time Workers Regulations 2000” in the United Kingdom; the aspects that Japanese corporations need

to change; the basic concept of work-life balance; the relationship between the rise in the rate of employment for women and the degree of progress of work-life balance and the birthrate; the need for disclosure of information on work-life balance; short work hours and the enhancement of support measures for people resuming their careers after being out of the workforce for a while as implemented in Nordic countries.

2. Discussions by Committee Members

Each political group expressed its opinions and Committee members held discussions among themselves on May 9, 2006.

(Liberal Democratic Party)

Japan continues its economic expansion. Because of the country's social and economic maturing, however, the expansion cannot be expected to be as great as that of the Izanagi boom years of high economic growth and has failed to reach the household sector, which makes some people claim that they have no real feeling of a buoyant economy. In particular, the benefits of the economic boom have not had sufficient impact on local regions and small and medium-sized enterprises. For the economic expansion to continue and for the Japanese people to enjoy a truly affluent life, it is necessary from now on to proactively pursue the creation of an environment conducive to local autonomy and the implementation of policies that spotlight local regions and small and medium-sized businesses. It is important to provide a support scheme for regions that are making self-help efforts. Equally essential is the enhancement of support measures for the small and medium-sized businesses that are the foundation for local economies and employment. In addition, an important challenge is to encourage innovations for Japan's economy to grow over the medium and long term, and there is a need for further advancing a comprehensive approach toward,

among other things, reinforcing research and development systems, distributing funds more efficiently and effectively, and developing human resources.

As for employment trends, recent years have seen a diversification of employment patterns to include part-time, dispatch, and fixed-term contracts. Those who desire to secure permanent employment should be given a chance from the standpoint of equal opportunity, and the bipolar structure of regular and nonregular employment should not be allowed to become entrenched. The diversification of working patterns, which is spreading as a result of the development of the information society, changes in economic and industrial structures, and diversification of individual lifestyles, seems somewhat unavoidable in some respects in a maturing society, but what should be noted is the viewpoint of ensuring fairness. The objective is to achieve an employment system that will be satisfactory to both the company and the employee, and laws should be revised in a timely fashion to achieve this. Corporations are required to make efforts to develop an appropriate and flexible work environment, especially by remunerating nonregular employees in a manner appropriate to their responsibilities and actively promoting the transition to regular employment for those who desire it.

Regarding the employment of young people, there is concern that the so-called senior *fretters* may be unable to get rid of their status. This should be avoided by urgently setting in place a system to support those who are willing to undertake a challenge again. This means the necessity for the administration to improve educational training programs already in place, such as “Job Cafes” and the Japanese version of the “dual system” (combination of education courses and workplace training), as well as for corporations to place even greater importance on hiring criteria taking into account abilities, regardless of age.

Regarding employment of the elderly, the revised Law for Stabilization of Employment for Older Persons took effect in April last year. De-

spite the issue of the postwar baby boomers who will soon be retiring en masse, it is to be hoped that corporations, particularly in the manufacturing sector, will surmount this crisis by achieving the successful transmission of the technology and skills of their older employees.

Regarding the employment of women, the major issue is resolution of the so-called M-curve in which the participation of women in the labor force drops temporarily due to marriage and childcare. Already, child-care leave system has been improved and sick/injured child care leave system has been created. What is needed now is to further generalize these kinds of systems. It is also necessary to develop and enhance the labor market and opportunities for educational training so that women who have temporarily stopped working because of childcare and other reasons can find appropriate reemployment.

One of the urgent issues related to the achievement of work-life balance is the creation of a work environment that makes it easy for people to take care of children and other family members while also working at their job. If corporations are able to offer a number of choices, such as flextime, working at home, regular employment with shorter hours, and so on, it will be possible for many people to continue working. This presumably will not only increase the satisfaction of workers but also make it possible for corporations to retain their best employees. Besides, work-life balance can be expected to enable the individual to work in a dynamic way tailored to his or her living needs, lead to an employment environment that allows for self-selection, and contribute to the achievement of greater productivity by reviewing the rigid work styles or the nature of the work that have been the norm to date. The volunteer testifiers spoke of the need for disclosure of information and fiscal and tax support regarding work-life balance. The administration is required to give due consideration to such support measures.

(The Democratic Party and The Shin-Ryokufukai)

Japan's economy is said to be continuing to recover, but what most Japanese really feel are probably the growing disparities in diverse dimensions of society. One major issue that stands out is the disparity between regular and nonregular employment. In particular, if the number of *freeters* among the young increases, there is concern that it will accelerate the declining birthrate and have a detrimental effect on Japan's social security system.

Diversifying work patterns are sometimes cited as a reason for the increase in nonregular employment, but the reality presumably is that in most cases there is no choice but to work as a nonregular employee. The so-called senior *freeters*, in particular those who graduated from college at a time when jobs were very scarce and who were unable to find positions as regular employees, are forced to continue working as nonregular employees even though the job market is improving.

Measures that should be urgently implemented include the implementation of vocational training by the national and local governments and requiring corporations to hire an increased number of regular employees and switch nonregular employees to regular status. Wages should be paid on the basis of the principle of equal pay for equal work, and the introduction of a system of regular employment with shorter hours should be promoted to open up employment opportunities for as many workers as possible.

Against the background of an unavoidable shrinkage of the labor pool due to the increasingly declining birthrate, in order for Japan to maintain a dynamic and affluent society, it is vital that older persons and women enter the labor market more actively than ever before.

The Law for Stabilization of Employment for Older Persons requires employers to either raise their retirement age, introduce a system for continued employment, or do away with retirement requirements altogether. For the time being it is important through such measures to give older per-

sons the opportunity to continue working, but the ultimate objective is an age-free society in which everyone can work to their full potential regardless of age.

More and more women are entering the labor market in Japan, but the wage gap between men and women remains large and the percentage of women in management positions is extremely small. A major challenge will be to do away with stereotyped gender roles and discrimination and inequality between men and women in all areas of society so as to realize a gender-equal society.

The percentage of women workers taking advantage of child-care leave exceeds 70% today, but this does not include women who quit their jobs to get married or have children. The percentage is lower in small and medium-sized businesses compared with large corporations. Additional efforts are needed to design devices to improve the child-care leave system, and there is also a need to implement measures to further allow workers to take time off from work to care for family members. On the other hand, less than 1% of men take child-care leave, and the perception seems to remain strong that it is up to women to carry out household chores and child raising. To achieve a better balance of work and family life, self-awareness and cooperation on the part of men is essential and greater efforts are required to enlighten them to this effect.

The upgrading and expansion of various support measures for work-life balance must be premised on the rectification of long working hours. Regular employees in Japan in particular work excessively long hours compared with the West, and unpaid overtime work is common. Resolving the issue of long working hours is critical in order that men with small children can participate in household chores and child raising while working.

There are still many children in Japan on waiting lists for entry into child day-care centers. This is a major obstacle for women who want to

continue working while taking care of their children. More child day-care centers must be opened without delay, and at the same time it is to be hoped that holiday nursing and after-school facilities for school-age children will be expanded and strengthened while taking into account users' needs.

Increasing the effectiveness of work-life balance support measures requires comprehensive implementation from a long-term perspective, and methods should be considered to ensure continuity and integration of the policies concerned, especially by setting in place an interagency system and elaborating plans to this effect.

(New Komeito)

With the rapidly declining birthrate and aging of Japanese society and the resulting decrease in the working population, it is imperative that employment rates go up and labor productivity be enhanced in order to maintain growth and improve the quality of life in the future. This requires the expansion of employment opportunities for young people, the elderly, and women, whose will to work and abilities are not being fully utilized. In addition, it is critical to promote work-life balance in order to ensure the labor force needed, raise labor productivity, and, more than anything else, enhance the value of our existence as human beings.

There is a polarization beginning to develop in Japan's labor market between regular employees, who receive both strong protection and constraints from the corporation, and nonregular employees, who receive less protection and constraints. To resolve this situation, efforts are urgently required to transform nonregular employment into regular employment, correct the tendency toward long working hours, introduce flexible work patterns, and guarantee equal treatment.

There is not only an income gap between regular and nonregular employment but also a gap in opportunity for the development of vocational

capabilities, and there is concern that this may become a factor in Japan's declining technological capabilities. Additionally, since the percentage of unmarried people is also higher among nonregular employees, there are fears that the increase in nonregular employment could undermine the accumulation of human capital for society as a whole, accelerate the trend toward late marriage, and further lead to a declining birthrate. To correct such discrepancies between regular and nonregular employment, there is a need to seek to ensure equal treatment that reflects actual working conditions and to promote transfer to regular employment.

The problems of nonregular employment are especially severe among young people, and it is said that the majority of contract-based workers, a topic much discussed in recent years, are young people who are being made to work as if they were expendable. We believe that the government should take vigorous action to find out the actual conditions of contract-based work and undertake measures to address the problems. It continues to be difficult for so-called senior *freeters* in their late twenties and older to secure regular employment. On the other hand, there is concern that corporations that have been refraining from hiring new graduates will suffer from a lack of workers in their late twenties to middle thirties, who are the very people who should be supporting the company in the future. Measures should be instituted that will encourage corporations to take advantage of the subsidies that are provided for the hiring of senior *freeters* as regular employees and to change over to an employment system that can accommodate the hiring of mid-career applicants. There should also be an in-depth review of the way in which career education is conducted.

To maintain sustainable development henceforth in Japan, where the population has started to dwindle and labor supply constraints are becoming increasingly severe, we believe that efforts must be made to achieve a society of lifelong activity in which people can continue to work regardless of age so long as they have the desire and capability to do so.

The downturn in the annual total hours worked for the total workers in recent years is primarily due to an increase in the percentage of part-time workers. Full-time workers continue to work excessively long hours. In order to rectify this polarization of hours worked and achieve work-life balance, three courses of action are required: correction of the tendency toward long working hours, introduction of flexible work patterns, and guarantee of equal treatment. Regarding the percentage of extra pay for working overtime, while separate measures will be necessary for small and medium-sized businesses, consideration should be given in the future to raising it to 40%. We believe that such measures as short hours, flextime, and working at home should be encouraged, and the introduction of the principle of equal pay for equal work should be realized beginning with fields in which the nature of the work is relatively clearly defined.

As the birthrate continues to drop, it is vital that there be greater support especially for balancing work and child raising, one of the constituent elements of work-life balance. The New Komeito's "Comprehensive Plan for a Society with a Declining Birthrate" recommends that efforts be made to generalize and expand child-care leave system and make it compulsory for private corporations to make public their action plans based on the Law for Measures to Support the Development of the Next Generation. Furthermore, we believe it necessary to promote the provision of opportunities for educational training for those who have had to stop working because of childbirth and child raising as well as improvement of company reemployment systems. Those corporations that have taken the lead in implementing support measures for the balancing of work and family life have seen improved work attitudes resulting from their child-care leave and support programs for returning workers and are endeavoring to achieve higher labor productivity. It is important that a change in corporate culture be promoted by publicizing these kinds of examples.

We believe that a comprehensive and systematic approach should be

taken to implement measures for work-life balance and that the nation as a whole—corporations and the Japanese people—need to act together to change the way we work. Our party is working studiously to formulate a basic law on promotion of work-life balance.

(Japanese Communist Party)

The increase of poorly paid and insecure nonregular employment has generated the expansion of poverty and economic disparities. Even regular workers are not free from problems: unusually long working hours are threatening their life and health and destroying their family and community. What is needed now is to stop any further subversion of employment and work rules, to forbid any further expansion of economic disparities, and to adopt effective corrective measures. Our proposal is based on the following three pillars:

The first is to remedy the problem of long working hours. The white-collar exemption system would only worsen the long hours of work and deprive white-collar workers of their income. The blow to the Japanese economy would be severe, so any attempt to make this system into law should not be pursued.

To correct the problem of long working hours, it is imperative that illegal unpaid overtime work be eradicated. We believe that supervision and accusation systems should be reinforced, that the names of malicious corporations should be made public, and that stricter penalties should be imposed such as by requiring double compensation for unpaid overtime work. It is also necessary to institute an upper limit on overtime hours and guarantee consecutive hours of rest. The government should immediately make into law the ministerial notification that states there should be no overtime in excess of 360 hours per year, and the rate of pay increase for overtime work should be raised from the current 25% to 50%. Furthermore, there should be a rule like that in the European Union requiring a rest period of

no less than 11 consecutive hours.

Second, the practice of making people work as if they were expendable needs to be stopped. In other words, the rights of nonregular workers must be protected and progress made toward ensuring them equal treatment and the opportunity to become regular employees.

To this end, it is necessary, first of all, to eradicate disguised contract-based work that violate the Worker Dispatching Law or the Employment Security Law. We strongly demand that the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare strictly enforce the directives issued in September last year and again in March this year. To eradicate disguised contract-based work and change over to stable employment, the Worker Dispatching Law must be revised so as to impose strict responsibility upon the corporations that receive disguised contract workers.

Also, new rules are needed to promote improvement of the status of dispatched workers and make it easy for them to become regular employees. Dispatched workers should be limited to temporary and short-term employment only and should not in principle be employed as substitutes for regular employees. The way should be opened for dispatched workers to become regular employees. The Worker Dispatching Law should be further revised so that companies making use of dispatched workers would be required to offer direct employment after one year. A new form of day labor is on the rise in which registered workers are repeatedly dispatched to undertake low-pay, short-term work, and there is an urgent need to adapt health insurance and employment insurance to actual working conditions. Day-labor-type employment through the dispatch of registered workers should be done away with, too. We believe that the Worker Dispatching Law should be fundamentally changed into a law for the protection of dispatched workers, which should clearly state that dispatched labor must be used only for temporary and short-term employment, restrict the business categories for dispatched workers, guarantee equal treatment with regular

employees, and eliminate altogether the practice of registered workers. At the same time, equal treatment should be written into law, the rights of part-time workers should be guaranteed, and remuneration should be improved.

In addition to the above, the following are required: control of short-term employment without any rational reason as an unjust contract so as to transfer workers in this situation to regular full-time employment, and strict monitoring of illegal and fraudulent actions on the part of corporations and guaranteeing of the rights of nonregular employees, which requires a doubling of the number of labor standards inspectors. It is also important for national and local governments to intensify their efforts to support the working poor and *freeters*. There must be a fundamental increase in opportunities for vocational training, assistance should be offered to cover living costs while undergoing vocational training, and there should be livelihood support as well.

Third, minimum wages should be raised and a uniform minimum wage system for the whole country established. Japan's minimum wages are among the lowest in the world. Right now labor unions are demanding an increase to not less than ¥1,000 per hour. The government should respond to this demand and at the same time establish a uniform minimum wage system for the whole country.

(Social Democratic Party)

In Japanese, work-life balance is expressed as the harmonization of work and life, but studies have shown that although this seems to be taken as a matter of course, the reality is that there is no balance. The tendency is to think of work-life balance in terms of support for child raising, but the concept should not be confined to any one age group or category of occupation. It needs to be incorporated as part of the social system.

Work styles have changed drastically over the past 10 years, as have

employment patterns, and there has been an increased polarization of work styles between regular employees forced to work long hours and part-time and dispatched workers who work under poor conditions and are cheaply used at the convenience of the corporation. It has been assumed that part-time workers are easily able to achieve a balance with their personal affairs, but they lack sufficient support mechanisms, which makes it difficult for them, for instance, to secure child-care and family care leave. Additionally, while performance-based standards evaluate the worker on the basis of achievement rather than time, lax time management has only helped accelerate the tendency toward long working hours. As a result, the incidence of mental health problems has gone up, and deaths from overwork and suicides have become serious issues. Moreover, people cannot manage a balance of work and life and are unable to fulfill their family obligations of housework and child raising.

A search for a new form of employment has been pursued against the backdrop of the disintegration of Japanese-style employment practices, but the dimension of work-life balance has been almost disregarded, which has only resulted in a steady degeneration of the way people work. Much of this is due to the attitude of management, which seeks only to achieve profits. When equal treatment for part-time workers is demanded, management replies that it would not be able to compete internationally if it granted this. This attitude must be changed. Treasuring their workers should actually give companies a competitive edge in international competition. The understanding and efforts of management are essential to achieving work-life balance. As the working population dwindles, corporations need to consider how they can compete while showing that they value their workers.

A lot of hopes are laid on work-life balance as a system that will treat and reform the various distortions of working society. There have been some improvements made, such as with the provision of child-care and family care leave, but around 70% of women still quit work before taking

child-care leave. The figures show that of the remaining 30%, only 64% actually take advantage of child-care leave. For men the rate is 0.33%. To those who have no interest in such a program, an individual program like child-care leave can even appear as a hindrance to job performance. To obtain greater support for these kinds of programs, total life support systems must be put in place that are premised on the assumption that work-life balance is a challenge to all working people. While implementation of support means an investment for corporations, its cost can be recovered if capable workers imbued with a new sense of challenge contribute to the better performance of their companies. Supporting employees in their attempt to maintain work-life balance encourages them to work with a high degree of enthusiasm and leads to an expansion of opportunities for women to get on in their working life as well.

To establish work-life balance as a social system, government endeavors and support must play a major role. But a look at what the government is doing, such as revising the laws for unemployment insurance and the minimum wage, indicates a stance that favors management. The “Work-Life Balance Charter” currently in the process of formulation likewise lacks insight into the fact that diversifying work styles and performance-based systems are actually jeopardizing the life of the worker.

Article 25 of the Constitution guarantees the right of existence by stating, “All people shall have the right to maintain the minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living.” And Article 1, Paragraph 1 of the Labor Standards Law specifies the right of existence in terms of working conditions by stating, “Working conditions shall be those which should meet the needs of workers who live lives worthy of human beings.” This paragraph anticipates the concept of work-life balance and is the basis on which it is imperative for the government to take the initiative to promote work-life balance.

A discussion among Committee members took place from the perspectives of the economy, education, local revitalization, nonprofit organizations, and work-life balance, etc.

Appendix

1. Resolution on Promoting Work-Life Balance

With the increasing globalization of the economy, and given the ongoing maturing of Japanese society as epitomized by the declining birthrate, aging population, and diversification of values, in order to realize sustainable development and affluent national life it is necessary that each individual be given the opportunity to apply his or her volition and abilities to the full. In particular, as the labor pool dwindles, there is an urgent need to create a working environment in which everyone who desires to work can find employment.

Employment patterns are also rapidly diversifying, with the number of nonregular employees exceeding 30% of all employees. Various disparities, such as in wages, are evident between regular and nonregular employees, and these need to be corrected. At the same time, regular employees are confronted with such problems as long working hours, so it is essential that the working styles of both regular and nonregular employees be reviewed.

To change this situation, we need to promote work-life balance while improving working conditions so that each individual may seek to attain a balance of work and personal life and live a fulfilling life filled with a feeling of affluence.

For the individual, work-life balance can be considered to allow a working style that is tailored to the individual's lifestyle and particular stage in life. For the corporation, work-life balance should make it possible to improve productivity and ensure human resources. So it seems to present benefits to

both the individual and the corporation. Promoting work-life balance is also important from the perspective of society as a whole, in order, among other things, to strengthen family ties, address the issues of the declining birth-rate and the aging society, and stimulate lifelong education and volunteer and community activities.

The government and all those concerned should be sufficiently aware of the need to promote work-life balance as a desirable manifestation of Japan with maturing society and should endeavor to implement the following measures:

1. Efforts must be made to improve measures related to support for the balancing of work and family, such as greater generalization of child-care and family care leave systems, expansion of sick/injured child care leave system, creation of a childcare environment in child day-care centers, including overtime childcare and day care for sick children and on holidays, as well as the enhancement of after-school care programs for children. In addition, support should be provided for reemployment and return to work of those who have left employment because of child raising, especially through the further enhancement of vocational training for them.
2. In order to improve the current conditions where women still tend to bear the greater share of family and household responsibilities, it is necessary to further enlighten men to stimulate their awareness and cooperation.
3. While striving to correct the disparities between regular and nonregular employment, corporations should try to increase the recruitment of regular employees and proactively work to implement changeovers from nonregular to regular employment.
4. While further creating working conditions so that workers can under-

take renewed challenges, corporations should reconsider the practice of mass hiring of new graduates, provide opportunities for those who have already graduated, and make positive efforts to hire mid-career applicants.

5. In order to offer a diverse choice of work styles and create employment opportunities for many people, efforts should be made to promote the introduction of such systems as regular employment with shorter hours, flextime, and working at home and to ensure continued careers. Due consideration should also be given to the relationship between employment and the social security system, including pensions.
6. Efforts should be made to completely eliminate unpaid overtime work, rectify the practice of long working hours, and increase the usage rate of paid holidays.
7. The government must expend maximum effort to create systems and formulate plans for the comprehensive promotion of work-life balance. Corporations must strive to foster a corporate culture and work environment conducive to work-life balance and promote work-life balance by, for example, publicizing the implementation of their policies relating to work-life balance.

The above resolution is hereby agreed on.

2. Committee Members

(As of June 8, 2007, the day on which the final report was submitted.)

Chairperson: Wakako Hironaka

Directors: Masakatsu Koike
Chieko Nohno
Yoshifumi Matsumura
Motoyuki Odachi
Moto Kobayashi
Yuji Sawa

Members: Kuniomi Iwai
Tsuyako Ohno
Shinobu Kandori
Shuji Kitaoka
Akio Koizumi
Akio Sato
Hidetoshi Nishijima
Tetsuro Nomura
Iwao Matsuda
Mototaka Ito
Atsuko Shimoda
Yuji Fujimoto
Mitsuyoshi Yanagisawa
Hiroko Wada
Akira Matsu
Satoshi Inoue
Sadao Fuchigami
Seiji Mataichi