

Achieving the Work-Life Balance

to be confirmed

I Significance and urgency

【Conventionally】 Reviewing of work practices has been dependent on the efforts made by respective companies. → Some of the companies have proactively addressed this issue, which has not become prevalent in the society.

【This time】 The business community, labor community, and local government executives have discussed and reached agreement. → This will serve as a trigger to move the whole of society.

【Polarization of working patterns, etc.】

- Increased competition, flagging economy, changes in the industrial structure →
A significant increase in the number of nonpermanent employees; continuously long working hours of permanent employees
- Full-time homemakers used to be the majority. Currently, the majority of households are double income.
→ The social infrastructure, including work practices and support to childrearing, has not changed.
- Stereotyped concepts concerning the different roles of men and women remain.

【Increase in the number of persons with problems about work and life】

- An increase of the way of working as a nonpermanent employee → a layer of persons unable to be economically independent
- Long working hours
→ “Mental and physical fatigue” “The layer of persons unable to enjoy happy family lives”
- Constraints on options for work styles
→ Reconciling work and childrearing is difficult.

【Policies to cope with the declining birthrate and securing of the workforce are issues that must be addressed by the entire society.】

- Encouraging the desires of citizens concerning marriage and childrearing is hard to fulfill, resulting in the rapidly declining birthrate.
- Options for the way of working are limited. A variety of human resources, including women, elderly persons, etc., cannot be positively used.

- It is necessary to make it possible to choose from a variety of working styles according to the personal lifestyle and the stage of life.
- Reviewing the way of working will help improve productivity and competitiveness = “Investment in tomorrow”

II The “Charter” and the “Action Policy”

“Charter for Work-Life Balance” (showing the overall direction of national efforts) and “Action Policy for Promoting Work-Life Balance” (A policy for effective corporate and workers’ efforts and national and local government measures) has been developed.

A state of society where there is a work-life balance

A society where each citizen works with a sense of satisfaction, finding his/her job rewarding, executes work-related responsibilities, and at the same time, chooses and lives a variety of lifestyles according to different stages of life, such as the childrearing and midlife periods, within his/her family and community life.

1. A society where economic independence by working is possible

2. A society where time can be secured for healthy and rich lives

3. A society where choosing a variety of ways of working and living is possible

Set the targets for the whole society to promote the efforts of respective entities.

(Major examples) (The figures are: the current figure → figure in ten years)

- Employment rate (also related to ② and ③)
< Females (25 to 44 years old) >
64.9% → 69~72%
- < Elderly persons (60 to 64 years old) >
52.6% → 60~61%
- Number of part-time workers
1.87 million → 1.447 million or less
- Percentage of employers working 60 hours or more in a week
10.8% → decrease by half
- Rate of use of annual paid leave
46.6% → Full use
- Rate of continuous employment of females after the birth of the first child
38.0% → 55%
- Rate of use of child-care leave
(Female) 72.3% → 80%
(Male) 0.50% → 10%
- Hours spent by men on child-care and household chores
(Households with a child under 6 years of age)
60 minutes/day → 2.5 hours/day

Identify and evaluate the state of progress throughout society to reflect the results in policies

Roles that should be played by persons concerned

Companies and workers

should work together to improve productivity, while voluntarily striving to improve the way of working, and at the same time, to enhance the awareness and climate of the workplace.

National and local governments

should increase the momentum through a national movement, strive positively for promotional and support measures in order to establish the system framework and improve the environment, and implement the above according to the specific circumstances of the community.