
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Statistics

Second session

Bangkok, 15-17 December 2010

Item 3(a) of the provisional agenda

Items for information: Family registration system and vital statistics in Japan

Family registration system and vital statistics in Japan¹

1. Family Registration

Family registration is the system of registering and notarizing the family relationships of an individual from birth until death. A family register is made for every Japanese national and is the only public document to certify that he or she has Japanese nationality. Family registration work is handled by city, town or village offices, but the State (Director of the Legal Affairs Bureau or the District Legal Affairs Bureau) gives advice, suggestions or directions to ensure that the work of registration may be performed in a smooth, proper and uniform manner throughout the whole country.

The Law for Partial Amendment to the Family Registration Law which came into force on 1 December 1994 has enabled city, town or village offices designated by the Minister of Justice to deal with family registration work using computers and, as of 30 November 2009, a total of 1,585 (81.53 per cent) cities, towns and villages have introduced computers to handle this work.

Moreover, the Family Registration Law was amended again and came into force on 1 May 2008. The principle of public disclosure of the family register was abolished, and the circumstances under which a third person is able to request the issuance of a copy of a person's family register were limited. In addition, the amended law stipulates that identification papers must be shown when the applicant gives notification of family registration in order to prevent false registrations through false notification.

¹ This document was contributed by the Director-General for Policy Planning on Statistical Standards of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the Government of Japan. It has been reproduced without formal editing. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations.

2. Vital statistics

2.1. Objective

This survey is to collect vital statistics in Japan and obtain a basic data set for population and policymaking on health, labour and welfare.

2.2. History

Vital Statistics Survey is based on family registration. The history of vital statistics began in 646 AD when live births and deaths were registered and summed up. After a modern family registration system was instituted in 1872, taking opportunity of the enactment of the Family Registration Law in 1898, a modern vital statistics survey was established in 1899. Since then, an individual form for each statistical event has been used and the data of each case has been summed up by the central government.

2.3. Subjects and objects

Subjects of the survey are the total events of live births, deaths, marriages, divorces, and fetal deaths notified in accordance with “Family Registration Law” and “Provisions Regarding Notification of Stillbirths”, but objects of this survey are events that occurred among Japanese persons living in Japan within the survey year.

2.4. Survey period

From January 1 to December 31 of the survey year

2.5. Survey items

The Vital Statistics Survey Form consists of 5 types of forms: Live Birth Form, Death Form, Fetal Death Form, Marriage Form, and Divorce Form. A Summary of each form is as follows.

(1) Live Birth Form: Items based on notification of live birth, for instance, Date of birth; Place of birth; Birth weight; Name and surname of parents; Age of parents, etc.

(2) Death Form: Items based on Notification of Death, for instance Date of birth of the deceased, Residence, Date of death, etc.

(3) Fetal Death Form: Items based on Notification of Fetal Death, for instance Date of delivery, Address of institution, Age of parents, etc.

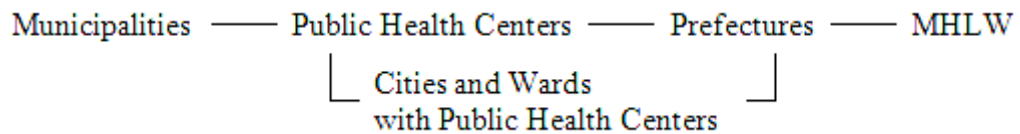
(4) Marriage Form: Items based on Notification of Marriage, for instance Date of birth of wife and husband, Residence address of groom, first marriage/remarriage, etc.

(5) Divorce Form: Items based on Notification of Divorce, for instance, Date of birth of wife and husband, Resident address before separation, Type of divorce, etc.

2.6. Survey method

Municipal heads fill in Vital Statistics Survey Forms based on notifications of live births, deaths, marriages, divorces, and fetal deaths.

2.7. Route of Report



2.8. Publications

The following reports on vital statistics are printed and released.

(1) Prompt Vital Statistics Report

Data: Number of survey sheets submitted

Tabulation Objects: Japanese and aliens living in Japan, and Japanese living abroad (both including events which occurred earlier than the previous year)

Release: Monthly (Two months after the survey month)

(2) Monthly Vital Statistics Report

Data: Preliminary

Tabulation Objects: Japanese living in Japan (excluding events which occurred earlier than the previous years)

Release: Monthly (Five months after the survey month), annually (June of the year after the survey year)

(3) Annual Vital Statistics Report

Data: Final (Corrected preliminary data)

Tabulation Objects: Japanese living in Japan (Aliens living in Japan, Japanese living abroad, and events which occurred earlier than the survey year are released separately)

Release: Annually (Around September of the year after the survey year)

Reports (Published around February or March two years after the survey year)

Volume 1: (Outline and analysis of vital statistics)

Volume 2: (Statistics tables of live births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages, and divorces)

Volume 3: (Statistics tables of causes of deaths)