

Number and Type of Public Employees

In order to provide an overall perspective of public employees, the classifications and numbers of public employees are shown below, including national public employees in regular service and special service, and local public employees.

Article 15 of the Constitution of Japan stipulates that: “The people have the inalienable right to choose their public officials and to dismiss them” (Paragraph 1), and that “All public officials are servants of the whole community and not of any group thereof” (Paragraph 2). “Public officials” in the Constitution includes all officials affiliated to the legislative, administrative, and judicial branches of the government, including Diet members, ministers, and judges, as well as all local government officials, including assembly heads and administrative heads and their subordinates, encompassing all of the persons engaged in public service.

Public employees are classified into two categories: national public employees who engage in national public service, and local public employees who engage in local public service. National public employees are broadly divided into two groups, regular service and special service, and those in special service, as described in Article 2 of the National Public Service Act, could be broadly classified into the following categories: persons responsible for political affairs (Prime Minister, Ministers of State, etc.); persons of whom it is logical to entrust the construction of a personnel system for the legislative and judicial branches in accordance with the constitutional principle of separation of power (judges and other court employees, Diet employees); persons for whom separate standards for treatment of status are appropriate because of the characteristics of the job (personnel of the Ministry of Defense); and persons to whom the characteristics of their jobs make it inappropriate to apply the standard principles applied to public employees in general, including recruitment examinations and guarantee of status (Imperial Household Agency employees, certain council and committee members, etc.).

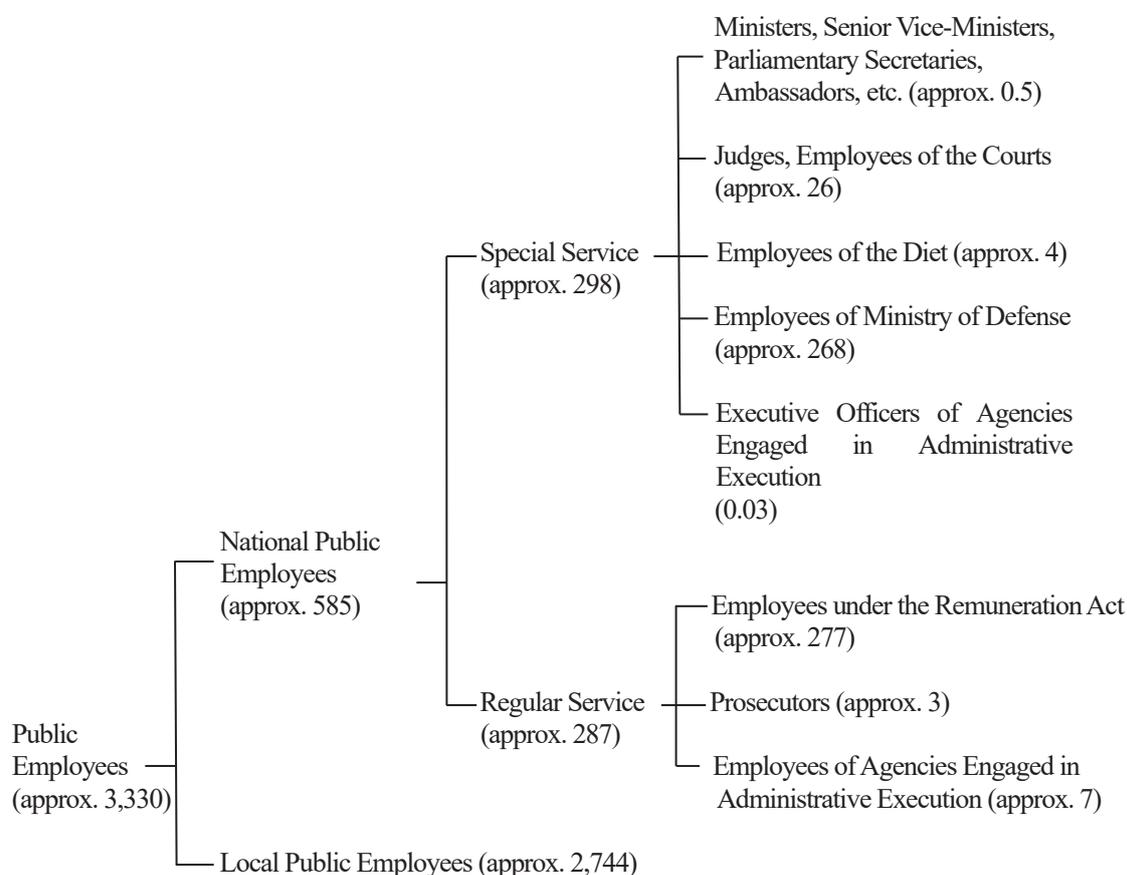
Based on the principle that national public employees in regular service should perform their duties fairly and with neutrality, there are various stipulations in the National Public Service Act, including the principle of the merit system, guarantee of status, and strict service discipline. From the standpoint of determining their working conditions, these employees are classified into employees affiliated to agencies engaged in administrative execution who possess the right to conclude collective agreements, employees under the Remuneration Act who do not possess the right to conclude collective agreements and prosecutors. (Prosecutors’ working conditions are determined so that there is a balance with those of judges.)

With regard to local public employees, they are organized in almost exactly the same manner as national public employees, with only slight differences. That is, the positions of part-time advisor and counselor are categorized as special service in local public employees, though they are categorized as regular service in national public employees.

As employees of some public institutions have become non-public employees due to events such as postal privatization, incorporation of national universities, and conversion of Specified Incorporated Administrative Agencies into Unspecified Incorporated Administrative Agencies (Agencies Managed under the Medium-term Objectives or National Research and Development Agencies after Apr. 1, 2015), the number of national public employees in regular service, which had been maintained at over 800,000 employees since the mid-1960s, has decreased to approx. 287,000 (which is the total number budgeted at the end of FY2019). With the addition of 298,000 employees in special service, the overall number of national public employees is approx. 585,000. Including local public employees, the total number of full-time public employees is approx. 3,330,000.

Number of National Public Employees and Local Public Employees and Their Classification

(Unit: Thousand People)



Note:

1. The number of national public employees, excluding those in the categories noted below, is the total number budgeted at the end of FY2019.
2. Regarding Agencies Engaged in Administrative Execution, the number of executive officers is the total number of full-time officers as of Oct. 1, 2018 (Source: Cabinet Bureau of Personnel Affairs), and the number of employees is the total number of full-time employees as of Jan. 1, 2019. (Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications)
3. The number of local public employees is the number of those in regular service according to the “Survey of the Fixed Number of Local Public Organizations in 2017 [as of Apr. 1, 2017].” (Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications)
4. There may be discrepancies due to rounding.
5. Part-time employees are not included in the data above. The number of part-time employees in regular service (excluding employees at agencies engaged in administrative execution) is about 148,000. (Source: Cabinet Bureau of Personnel Affairs)