



Botschaft  
der Bundesrepublik Deutschland  
Tokyo



## **GENDER (IN-)EQUALITY IN JAPAN AND GERMANY**

### **Panel Discussion**

**2 June 2021**

**18:30-20:00 (JST)**

**10:30 am - 12:00 am (GMT/UTC +1)**

**Tokyo, Japan**

Despite various efforts to promote gender equality, Japan and Germany are still facing substantial challenges in this important field of social policy. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2021, Japan ranks 120 out of 156 countries, while Germany ranks overall 11th, but shows deficits in the categories "Economic Participation and Opportunity" and "Educational Attainment." Japan's main problems lie in the sectors "Political Empowerment" and "Economic Participation." In both countries, equal pay remains a particularly challenging issue; in Germany, average income of women is 18 percent lower than those of male workers. Many women in Japan as well as Germany still find it difficult to have kids and a career, as they shoulder the larger chunk of family duties. Both societies, however, are becoming increasingly sensitive to women's issues and apart from governments, many NGOs as well as expert groups have been launched that lobby for more equal opportunities for women and provide consultation and other forms of support.

To discuss these topics, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), the German Embassy in Tokyo and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens (OAG) will host a panel discussion with experts from Japan and Germany, covering the spectrum of academia, politics and economy.

**Venue:**

Online Streaming (details will be announced on the websites of the organizing institutions)

**Language:**

English with simultaneous translation in Japanese

## **Schedule**

18.00 Registration Open

18:30 **Welcome Remarks**

Sven SAALER, Professor of Modern Japanese History, Sophia University, Tokyo; Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)

18:40 **Panel Discussion**

Regina FREY, genderbüro Berlin

Ina LEPEL, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Japan

Karen MAKISHIMA, Member, House of Representatives

Kathy MATSUI, former vice chair of Goldman Sachs Japan

Momoko NOJO, "NO YOUTH NO JAPAN" NPO

Machiko OSAWA, Professor emerita, Japan Women's University

*Moderator:* Jochen NEUMEYER, First Secretary, German Embassy in Tokyo

20:00 **End of the Event**

### **Panelists (in alphabetical order):**

**Regina FREY** holds a PhD in Political Science and is a gender equality expert based in Berlin, Germany. She has been working as a consultant for the German government and international organisations for the last 20 years. From 2015 to 2020 she was the head of the Agency for the German Federal Gender Equality Reports. Currently, Dr Frey is a consultant to UN Women, the German Environment Agency and the NGO „FairShare of Women Leaders“. Her core topics are institutional mechanisms for the implementation of gender equality policies, gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting, gender analysis and impact assessment. She likes to work with evidence-based indicators like the gender pay gap, gender care gap and gender pension gaps.

**Ina LEPEL** has been German Ambassador to Japan since September 2019. She holds a Master's Degree in Economics from Indiana University and Bonn University. She entered the German Foreign Office in 1988 and has had postings in Bangkok, Tbilisi (Georgia), New York and Islamabad. In capital she worked in the Spokesman's Office of the Federal Foreign Office, served as Deputy Head of the UN Affairs Section in the Foreign Affairs Department of the Federal Chancellor's Office, in the Foreign Office as Head of the UN Policy Division, as Deputy Director-General for Global Issues (UN Security Council, Crisis Prevention, Humanitarian Assistance, Counter-Terrorism) and as Director-General for Asia and Pacific.

**Karen MAKISHIMA** has been a Member of the House of Representatives since 2012. In 2020, she was appointed as the director of the Youth Division of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), becoming the first woman to assume this key post. From 2015 – 2016, she was Parliamentary Vice-Minister of the Cabinet Office. She earned a PhD in political science and public administration from the Graduate School of the International Christian University and an MA in political management from George Washington University. In 2009, her book “政治は「歌」になる” (Politics become ‘song’) hit No.1 sales at Amazon.com in the diplomacy and international relations category.

**Kathy MATSUI** is former vice chair of Goldman Sachs Japan, co-head of Macro Research in Asia and chief Japan equity strategist. She was ranked No. 1 in Japan Equity Strategy by Institutional Investor magazine multiple times, was chosen by The Wall Street Journal newspaper as one of the "10 Women to Watch in Asia" in 2007 for her work on the "Womenomics" theme, and she was also named to Bloomberg Markets magazine's "50 Most Influential" list in 2014. She has served on numerous government committees aimed at promoting gender diversity in Japan. Ms. Matsui earned an AB, magna cum laude, in Social Studies from Harvard University and an MA from Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies.

**Momoko NOJO**, born in 1998, is a First-Year Student at Graduate School of Economics, Keio University. In 2019, when she was in Denmark, where the youth voting rate marks over 80%, she established the nonprofit organization "NO YOUTH NO JAPAN" in order to curate Japanese political information with colorful illustration and visualization on Instagram, and

rapidly gained about 15,000 online followers within the following fortnight. In 2020, NO YOUTH NO JAPAN was incorporated for continuous activities in order to increase the Japanese youth voting rate. With about 70 members, she pursues the grass-roots participative democracy while being interested in gender issues and climate change.

**Machiko OSAWA** is Professor emerita at Japan Women's University, Faculty of Integrated Arts and Social Sciences. She earned a PhD in economics from Southern Illinois University. Previously, she was a Hewlett Fellow at the University of Chicago and held associate professorships at the University of Michigan and at Asia University. She specializes in labor economics. Ms. Osawa has served on numerous government committees including the Special Research Committee for Work and Life Balance (Cabinet Office), the Statistics Council, the Industrial Structure Committee (Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry) and the Board of Advisors for Economic and Financial Affairs (Cabinet Office).