

Japanese minister: High heels for women at work are 'occupationally necessary and appropriate'

Notes & Cues:	<p><b>Article:</b></p> <p>A Japanese government minister has sparked controversy by saying that it is "socially accepted" that women be forced to wear high heels in the workplace.</p> <p>For many years it has been required in many Japanese offices for women to wear high heels. But a recent backlash has thrown the practice into question, with more than 19, 000 people in Japan signing a petition to ban the requirement.</p> <p>The petition was started by Tokyo artist, writer and feminist Yumi Ishikawa after comments she made on Twitter went viral across the country. "I'm hoping to get rid of the custom that women have to wear pumps at work," she wrote in January.</p> <p>An official at the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare's equal employment opportunity division said earlier that it had no plans to change the laws around whether employers could require staff to wear certain clothes or shoes.</p> <p>There are currently no laws that restrict companies from regulating employees' work wear. Japan currently ranks bottom among the G7 countries for gender equality.</p>
Summary:	