

# **Country Report for the Symposium on Globalization and the Future of Youth in Asia**

Creating working opportunities and enabling environment for young people

2 and 3 December 2004, Tokyo

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

## **JAPAN**

## Country Report [Japan]

### 1 The employment situation of youth

#### The trend of Labor Force Participation rate of youth

Observing the labor indexes by sexes, both Labor Force Participation Rate and Rate of Employment have tendency of declining in every age class except age class 25 ~ 29 of women. The number and the rate of Total Unemployment have tendency of increasing in every age class.

#### The trend of youth population

#### Population of youth (15 ~ 29 years old) & its proportion among the total Population

Year	Population of age 15 ~ 29years old (in 1000)	Proportion among the total Population (%)
1990	26,878	21.75
1995	27,273	21.72
2000	25,749	20.29
2001	25,254	19.83
2002	24,637	19.34
2003	23,962	18.78

Source : Statistical Bureau, Min. of Intern'l Affairs & Communications  
"Jinkô Suikei"

**Labor Force Participation Rate of Youth**

( % )

Year	Both sexes				Male				Female			
	Years old											
	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29
1990	54.5	18.0	73.4	79.0	59.1	18.3	71.7	96.1	49.8	17.8	75.1	61.4
1995	58.6	17.0	74.1	81.7	63.4	17.9	74.0	96.4	53.4	16.0	74.1	66.4
2000	60.8	17.5	72.8	83.2	65.8	18.4	72.7	95.8	55.6	16.6	72.7	69.9
2001	60.8	17.7	71.9	83.5	65.3	17.9	71.9	95.4	56.0	17.5	72.0	71.1
2002	60.0	17.3	70.8	83.4	64.5	17.8	71.4	94.6	55.2	16.7	70.1	71.8
2003	59.8	16.8	70.0	84.0	63.9	16.6	70.8	94.4	55.6	16.6	69.4	73.4

**Percentage of Employment in Youth**

(%)

Year	Both sexes				Male				Female			
	Years old											
	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29
1990	52.6	16.8	70.7	76.9	57.2	16.9	69.3	94.2	47.8	16.8	72.4	59.1
1995	55.5	15.6	69.9	78.1	60.2	16.1	69.9	92.8	50.4	14.8	69.8	63.0
2000	56.2	15.5	66.6	78.0	60.6	15.8	65.7	90.3	51.4	15.0	67.3	65.0
2001	55.9	15.6	65.5	78.0	60.0	15.6	64.6	89.5	51.5	15.6	66.1	66.0
2002	54.9	15.1	64.1	77.4	59.0	15.4	64.1	88.2	50.7	14.7	64.5	66.2
2003	54.7	14.6	63.2	78.1	58.1	14.4	62.9	87.8	51.1	14.9	63.4	68.1

**Number of unemployee in Youth**

( in 10,000 )

Year	Both sexes				Male				Female			
	Years old											
	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29
1990	53	12	24	17	27	7	12	8	26	5	12	9
1995	85	12	42	31	44	7	21	16	41	5	21	15
2000	121	16	54	51	69	10	31	28	52	6	23	23
2001	125	16	54	55	69	9	30	30	56	7	24	25
2002	125	16	53	56	72	10	31	31	55	6	23	26
2003	122	14	54	54	71	8	32	31	51	6	22	23

### Total Unemployment Rate for Youth

( % )

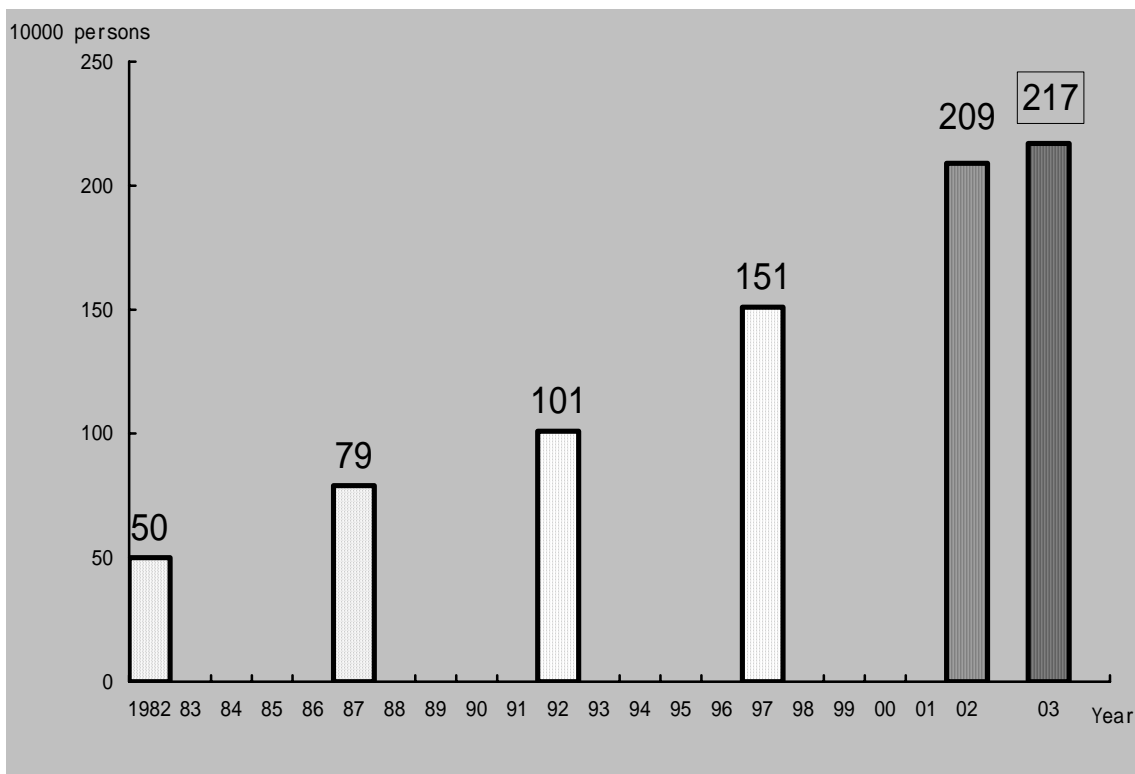
Year	Both sexes				Male				Female			
	Years old											
	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29	15-29	15-19	20-24	25-29
1990	3.6	6.6	3.7	2.7	3.3	7.4	3.7	2.0	4.0	5.7	3.7	3.7
1995	5.3	8.2	5.7	4.3	5.0	8.9	5.5	3.7	5.7	7.5	5.8	5.2
2000	7.6	12.1	8.6	6.2	7.9	14.1	9.6	5.8	7.3	9.8	7.5	6.7
2001	8.0	12.2	9.0	6.7	8.1	13.2	9.8	6.2	8.0	11.1	8.2	7.2
2002	8.4	12.8	9.3	7.1	8.8	15.2	10.5	6.8	8.2	10.2	8.3	7.7
2003	8.5	11.9	9.8	7.0	9.0	13.3	11.2	7.0	7.8	10.5	8.2	6.9

Source : Statistical Bureau, Min. of Intern'l Affairs & Communications

“*Lôdôlyoku Chôsa*(Labor Force Survey)”

### The trend of number of “*Fulitâ*” (“*Freeter*”; temporary worker)

Due to the increase of number of the new graduates without employment and the number of *Sôki Lishokusha* (those who leave their jobs soon after his /her first hiring in their life), the number of so-called “*Fulitâ*” has increased every year and estimated to reach 2.17 million in 2003.



## Notes

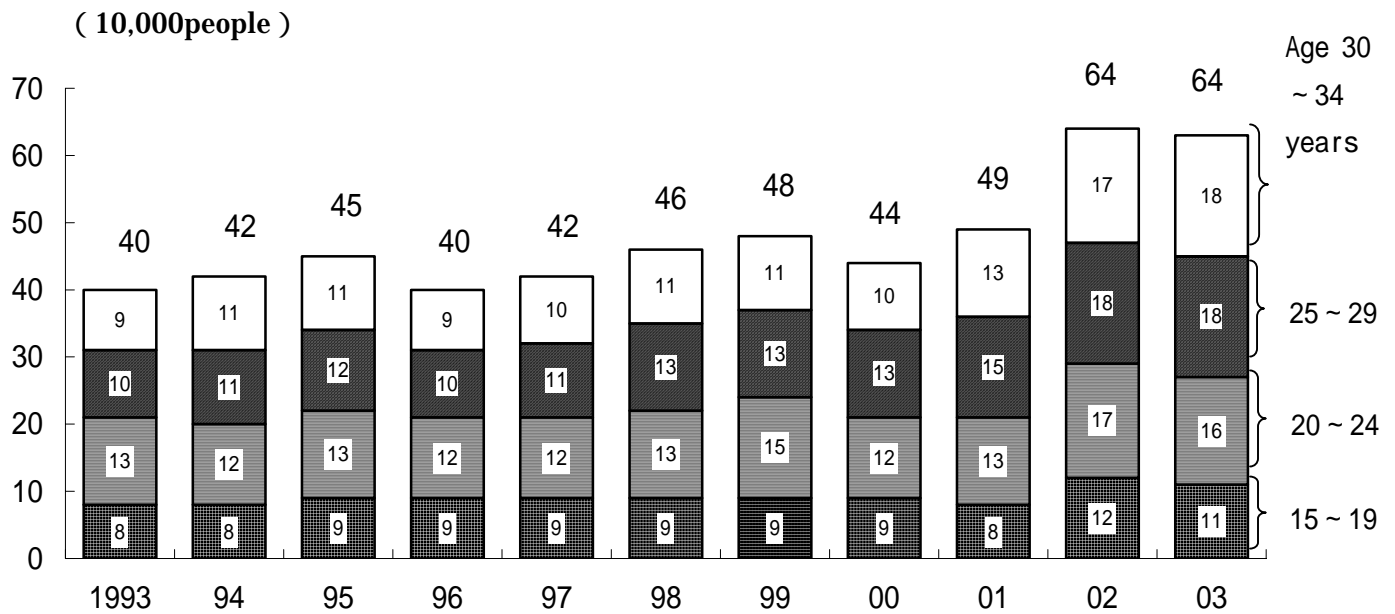
- (1) As for years 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, “*Fulitā*” is defined and being calculated those who aged 15 ~ 34 years old, and for employee who now possess the employment and being called “*Alubaito*” or “*Pāto*” in their work place and at the same time have the working experience of 1 ~ 5 years there (male) or unmarried and their main priority in their life is work (female), for those who now have no employment nor engage in housework nor commute to school and at the same time seek a job of “*Alubaito*” or “*Pāto*”.
- (2) As for years 2002 and 2003, definition of “*Fulitā*” is clarified by the change of definition. They are age 15 ~ 34 years and graduates. Thus from this change of definition, the students are exempted from “*Fulitā*”. At the same time, female must be un-married to be called “*Fulitā*” And at the same time, for employee who now possess the employment and being called “*Alubaito*” or “*Pāto*” in their work place  
for those who now have no employment, they have to be not engaging in housework nor commuting to school and at the same time seek a job of “*Alubaito*” or “*Pāto*”.
- (3) Note the fact as the definition of “*Fulitā*” has changed from the calculations in 1982 ~ 1997 to that of years in 2002 and 2003, the figures do not corresponde between these years.

Source : Min. of Health, Labour and Welfare “*Heisei 16 nen ban Lōdō Keizai no Bunseki*”

## Trend of the number of those who have no employment

Among the population of Non Labor Force in age 15 ~ 34 years, the number of youth with no-employment (not engage in school nor housework) has increased from 0.40 million in 10 years ago to 0.64 million.

### 【Trend of those who have no employment】



Source : Statistical Bureau, Min. of Intern'l Affairs & Communications "Lôdôlyoku Chôsa Nenpô (Annual Report of Labor Force Survey)"

## 2 Policies and Programs

### a Policies : National and regional

As for the employment situation for young people, the unemployment rate has maintained high level. There is an increasing number of "*Sôki Lishokusha*" (those who leave their jobs soon after his/her first hiring in their life) and "*Fuîtâ*" ("freeter"; temporary worker). In recent years, the number of youth who have not received adequate education nor training (NEET : Not in Education, Employment or Training) is increasing.

Since further persistence of this situation will be a huge loss not only for the youth themselves, but for the Japanese economy and society, the 4 ministers in related fields -- namely, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare, the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, and the Minister of State for Economic and Fiscal Policy -- announced a "*Wakamono Jilitsu Chôsen Pulan*" (Young People's Self-Support and Challenge Plan) in June 2003 aimed at promoting independence based on employment for all motivated youth and reversing the increase in the number of unemployed youth, etc.

### b Employment programs focused on youth

#### (1) Execution of support for Career Development and Employment Support from the Education Stage to Stabilization in work place

Developing a professional sense at an early stage, while youth are still at schools, is the key to securing optimal job options and to prevent easy-going leave from jobs.

For this purpose, the Program named "*Chûkôsei Shigoto Fuleai Katsudô Sien Jigyô*" (Program to Support Junior High and High School Student Job Encounter Activities) was implemented in 2003, in cooperation with schools, to encourage student professional sense through work-related investigative reporting, firsthand job experience, volunteer work, etc. That activities have been carried out also in the FY *Heisei* 16 (2004) in succession with the enlargement of subject regions.

Furthermore, assistance is provided to cultivate professional sense at an early stage through promotion of "junior internship" (program offering work experience to high school students) in cooperation with schools as part of a comprehensive study class; organization of "career search program" featuring dispatch of businessmen and other working adults to schools to make a speech on the realities of work and industries, the meaning of work, vocational

life etc., to promote understanding and deeper thought toward work among the students, not only in high schools, but also in elementary and junior high schools; and career guidance to provide knowledge essential for work and to build basic work skills.

Seminars and career choice consulting programs are being organized to foster greater self-understanding of the choices for best job options, etc., in cooperation with universities, etc. Employer's organizations are also being commissioned to set up programs that recruit enterprises for internship programs targeted toward university students, etc.

In order to provide smooth and precise job placement for junior high and high school graduates, "*Jyakunensha Jobu Sapôtâ*" ("Youth Job Supporters" : employment assistance advisers for youth [*Shûshoku Sien Sôdan'in*]) are stationed at PESOs (Public Employment Security Offices) nationwide in order to provide integrated assistance on all levels of job placement, from promoting professional sense among students through workplace tours, etc., to the after-support of him/her after their being placed to employment.

For youth such as "*Flîtâ*" etc., private job training organizations are being utilized for professional sense awareness enlightenment through group-counseling and work etiquette workshops. Newly added to these programs are firsthand work experiences at private enterprises.

"*Watashi no shigoto Kan*" (literally, "My Work Pavillion") has been in operation at *Kansai Bunka Gakujyutsu Kenkyû Toshi* (*Seika · Nishi-Kizu, Kyoto Prefecture*) for comprehensive support in career development for youth, in cooperation with schools, private enterprises, communities and other facilities/organizations providing support to youth.

## (2) Introduction of the Japanese Version Dual System (*Dualsystem*)

Because aggravation of the youth employment situation is due in part to the rising industrial sector demand for immediately deployable workers ("*Sokusenlyoku*") in the face of greater industry sophistication, there is a need to develop a mechanism to meet the advanced labor demands among private enterprises. As a new manpower development system targeted toward youth, the Japanese version of the Dual System is being introduced to train young people as full-fledged workers, based on evaluation of their immediately deployable job skills and competence after school completion, combined with integrated job training and firsthand work experience at enterprises.

**(3) Promotion of Career Development Assistance for Youth**

In order to achieve stable employment during their whole life, it is necessary for the workers to build-up their career actively.

For this purpose, necessary standards shall be established to define the necessary abilities and skills for career consultants specializing in youth. At the same time, training to build such abilities shall be organized and implemented at *Shokugyô Nôlyoku Kaihatsu Daigakkô* (Human Resources Development Colleges), etc., for active utilization to address the youth employment problem.

For the operation & management of "Young Job Spot" set up in large cities as centers to foster professional sense among "*fukûta*" etc., the Ministry shall continue to entrust its operation to the private organizations. At the same time, the Ministry shall promote its more efficient management through closer coordination with private enterprises, universities, and other relevant parties.

**(4) Arrange the better environment for the Labor Market for Youth**

**(i) Arrange the better environment for a mechanism for assessment and certification of practical job skills and abilities**

Defining study guidelines regarding job skills and abilities is an effective means for boosting the *employability* of youth. In order to enable the youth themselves to develop their own action plans for mastery of basic job skills (namely, communication skills, professional sense, basic academic skills, job qualifications, and work etiquette) that are viewed as important by private enterprises recruiting youth, action is under way to establish job skill acquisition benchmarks. Additionally, courses aimed at job skill acquisition and information services on job qualifications, etc., are made available for job skill certification for interested parties and to support youth employment.

**(ii) Support for new school graduates**

Though there exists some signs of improvement in recent years, new school graduates still face the severe situation for being employed.

That situation prompted the Ministry to execute job consulting, workplace tours, on-the-job training, preparing training for their first job etc., for the new-(High) school graduates in cooperation with high schools. Job suitability tests are also being held to aid job seekers in selecting careers, combined with services on job offer

information.

For new university graduates, "*Gakusê Shokugyô Sôgô Shien Sentâ*"( Comprehensive Support Center for Student Employment), along with "*Gakusê Shokugyô Sentâ*"(Student Employment Centers) and "*Gakusê Shokugyô Sôdan Shitsu*"(Student Employment Consulting Offices), are offering employment guidance, employment consulting, offering of broad-area employment information using databases, etc., in cooperation with universities, etc. Employment support for new graduates is also provided by "*Shûshoku Mensetsukai*" (organizing collective *rendez-vous* opportunities between job-seekers & job-offer enterprises), etc.

For university students already graduated without being employed, short-term job training, other job training programs, etc. are provided, together with recommendations to participate in "*Shûshoku Mensetsukai*" and provision of job offer information.

( ) Support for unemployed youth

To counter the trend of growing number of unemployed youth in recent years, assistance is provided to private enterprises willing to accept unemployed youth as workers on a probational basis (*Tolaialu Koyô* ; trial employment) in order to encourage eventual full-time employment. This program, named the Trial Employment Project for Youth (*Jyakunensha Tolaialu Koyô Jigyô*), was introduced in December 2001. Under this program, about 95,000 individuals secured employment on a trial basis as of Sep. 2004. Of these, about 80 %, or about 59,000 of the 74,000 individuals who had completed the trial employment, gained full-time employment, showing that the program is effective in promoting youth employment.

Among other means to support job placement for unemployed youths, personalized job consulting and guidance to discourage the premature job leave are being offered in "Young Work Plaza"s set up in *Tokyo, Kanagawa, Aichi, Osaka* and *Hyogo* for unemployed youth seeking stable jobs.

(5) Implementation of youth employment support programs in cooperation and coordination with communities

In order to resolve the youth unemployment problem, activities must be adjusted for local conditions and implemented. For this purpose, support is being provided to prefectural governments setting

up a "One-stop Service Center for Youth" (popularly known as a "Job Café") as a voluntary local community program providing integrated job assistance services for youth, in cooperation with the relevant national government ministries and agencies.

In FY2004, "Job Café"s have been opened in 43 prefectures. The Ministry plans to entrust them the project concerning the promotion of professional sense among youth ("*Jyakunensha Chiiki Lenkê Jigyô*" : "Community-linked programs for youth project").

The Ministry also support them with the establishing a PESO adjacent to them and executing job placement there at the request of prefectural governments.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry will tap private-sector resources in model areas (15 prefectures) in offering integrated employment-related services from counseling to job training, etc., in order to promote effective job assistance in communities.