

# Males' Work and Life in Transition

From the “White Paper on Gender Equality 2014”

## Summary

Cabinet Office, Government of Japan

June 2014

The Cabinet annually submits to the Diet a report on the state of formation of a gender-equal society and policies implemented by the government (the White Paper on Gender Equality).

Please see the White Paper (in Japanese) for more detailed information on sources cited.

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# Males' Work and Life in Transition

## Section 1 Family, household and work-life balance of men and women

### 1. Family and household

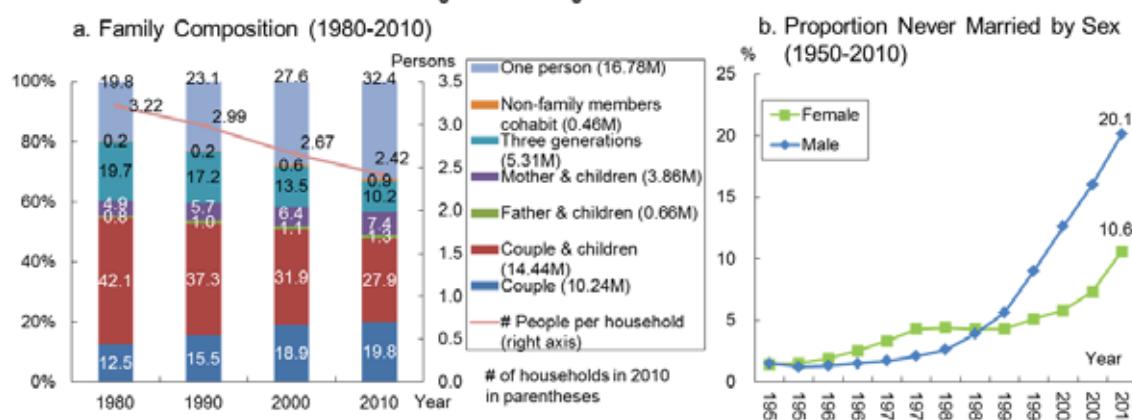
#### (Life expectancies)

Japan is ranked among top in the world with regard to the life expectancies of both sex: 79.94 years for males and 86.41 years for females in 2012. In the life tables, the number of death peaks even at higher ages for both men and women: 86 years old for males and 91 years old for females. 'The second life,' which starts after retirement in one's 60s, could be quite long for many Japanese.

#### (Changes in household patterns)

The ratios of households comprising a couple and those who live alone increased from 1980 through 2010, while that of households comprising a couple and their children and three generations living together decreased. The average number of family members per household decreased from 3.22 in 1980 to 2.42 in 2010 (Figure 1a). These trends are expected to continue, which would lead the average number of family member to 2.20 and push the ratio of those who living alone up to 37.2% in 2035.

Figure 1: Changes in Household Patterns



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications *Population Census*

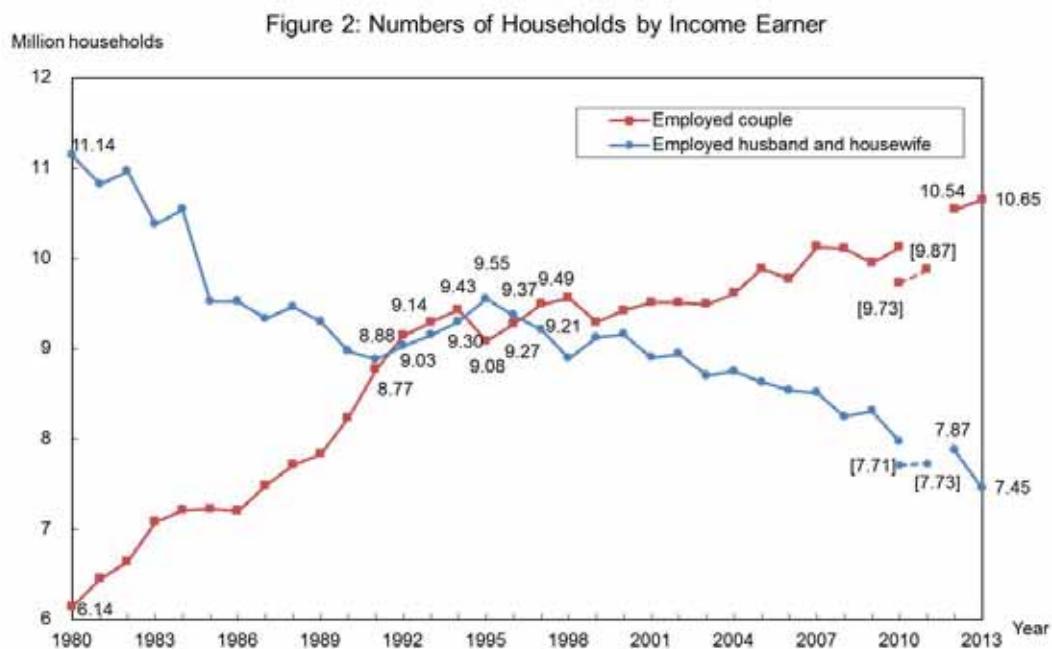
Notes:

1. (Fig.1a) Numbers indicate proportions in private households
2. (Fig.1a) "Three generations" means households comprised of family members except nuclear family.
3. (Fig.1b) "Proportion never married" is a ratio of never-married people at 50 years old, computed by simply averaging that of ages 45-49 and of 50-54.
4. (Fig.1b) "Marital status unknown" is excluded.

The number of those who are living alone is increasing both for males and females at their ages of 30s and over. The ratios of household comprised of a parent and his / her children are also rising. No specific family type can be called "typical" today.

Focusing on workers in a family, the number of dual-income household exceeded that of single-income in 1997 and is still increasing (Figure 2). Work-life balance is now the challenge for every type of people, regardless of sex, age, and family type.

Two factors could affect the increase of single households: the increase of widowers / widows and the growing percentage of unmarried people (Figure 1b).



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications *Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation, Special Survey)*

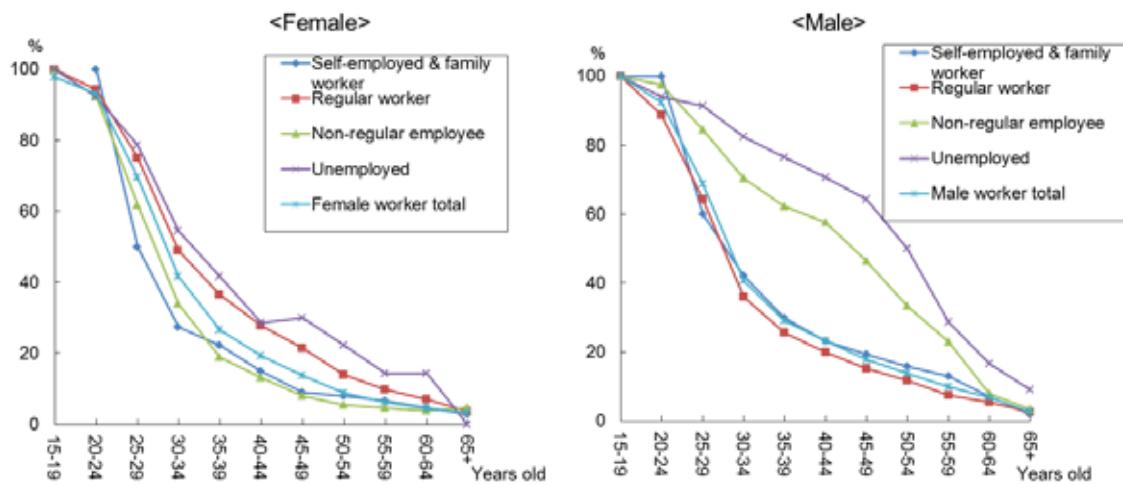
Notes:

1. Research designs of "Detailed Tabulation" and "Special Survey" are different.
2. "Employed husband and housewife" means a household in which husband is employed in a non-agricultural industry and wife is not working.
3. "Employed couple" means a household in which both husband and wife are employed in non-agricultural industries.
4. Figures in brackets do not include three prefectures (Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima).

(Never-married people)

Turning to the proportion of never-married people in each age group by sex and by job status, male non-regular employees and female regular workers have the same or higher ratio than average of each sex in any age groups (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Proportion of Never Married People by Sex by Labour Force Status  
(Status in Employment and Type of Employment) in 2013



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2013) *Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation)*

Note: "Regular worker" includes "regular employee" and "executive of company or corporation." "Executive of company or corporation" is computed by subtracting "employee excluding executive of company or corporation" from "employee."

#### (Attitudinal changes toward marriage among singles)

More than 80% of unmarried men and women think that being single is advantageous; this number is almost unchanged since 1987. "Flexibility in deciding behavior and way of life" is the most frequently chosen reason for the merit in being single by both sexes. The ratio of single males who feel advantage in marriage has been modestly decreasing at level of 60%, while that of single females kept growing slightly since 2005 after the standstill at around 70%. "Being able to have children or family" is getting more and more popular as a merit of marriage among single men and women. Increasing number of single females think that marriage is attractive based on the expectation of "economic affordability."

#### (Numbers of ideal and intended children to have)

Among wives in their first marriage, both the ideal and intended numbers of children hit the peak in 1987, and turned to decrease, reaching at 2.42 and 2.07 in 2010 respectively. The trends of those numbers in single people show a different picture: The ideal number of children of single males stays almost stable since 2002, while that of women started increasing in the same year.

32.7% of wives responded with a lower number for intended children than ideal. Looking at the reasons, wives who work as regular-workers chose "fears for negative impact on the job" more frequently than other job status groups. The issues related to

husband, such as "husband's unwillingness to do housework or child rearing," were not pointed out as main reasons. The response ratio to that question decreased to 9.4% in 2010 from 12.6% in 2014.

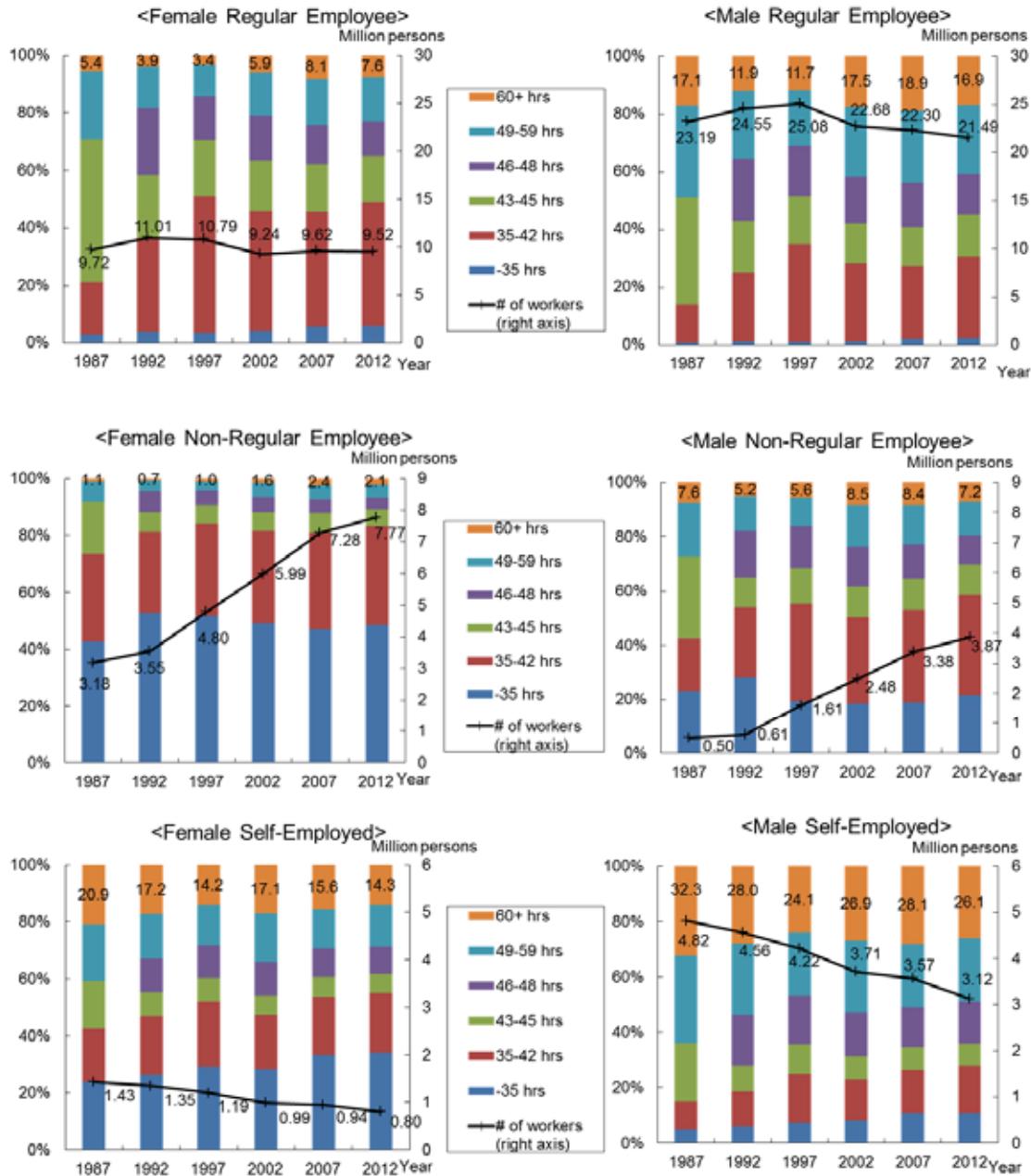
## 2. Work-life balance of men and women

### (Hours of work)

Figure 4 shows hours of working of people who work more than 200 days per year. The male ratio of those who work more than 60 hours per week is higher than that of females. The number is the highest among self-employed and the lowest in non-regular workers for both sexes.

The ratio of those who work more than 60 hours per week in the people who works more than 200 days per year decreased from 20.0% for males and 9.9% for females in 1987 to 16.8% for males and 6.1% for female in 2012. However, no clear sign for large drop is observed over the long run both for men and women when we look into the trends by employment status as aforementioned. Thus the increase of the proportion of non-regular workers to total employees is assumed to influence the decreasing trend of long-hour workers.

Figure 4: Working Hours per Week of Workers Who Work 200 Days and Over a Year by Sex (1987-2012)



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications *Employment Status Survey*

Notes:

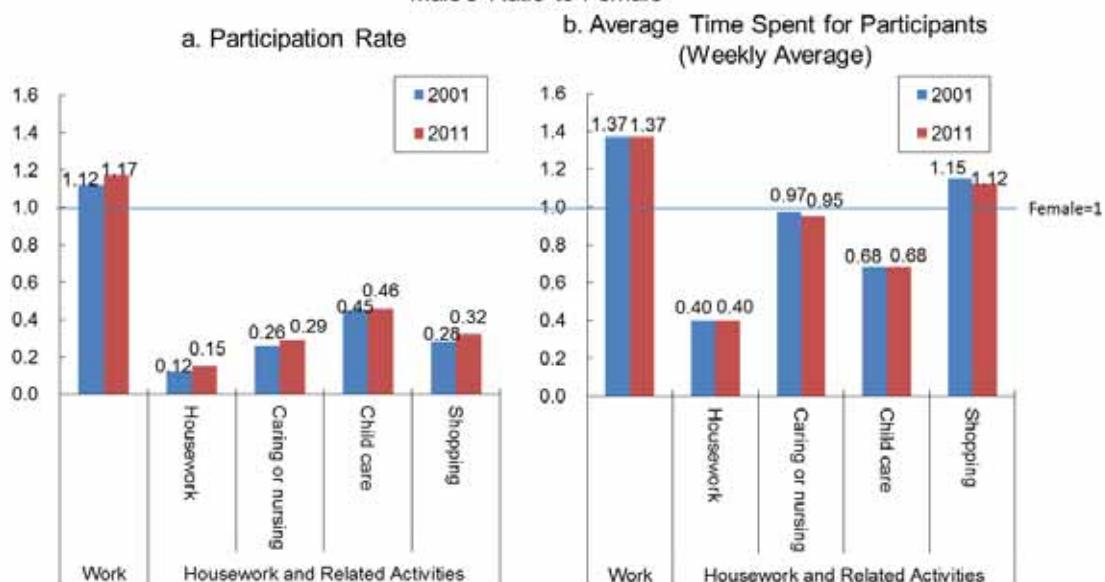
1. "Non-regular employee" is computed as follows:
  - Years 1987 and 1992: sum of "part-time worker" and "arbeit (temporary worker)"
  - Year 1997: sum of "part-time worker", "arbeit (temporary worker)", "entrusted employee etc.", "dispatched worker from temporary labour agency", and "other"
  - Year 2002: sum of "part-time worker", "arbeit (temporary worker)", "dispatched worker from temporary labour agency", "contract / entrusted employee", and "other"
  - Years 2007 and 2012: sum of "part-time worker", "arbeit (temporary worker)", "dispatched worker from temporary labour agency", "contract employee", "entrusted employee", and "other"
2. "Working hours unknown" is excluded from the calculation.
3. "43-45 hours" in 1987 is the sum of "43-45 hours" and "46-48 hours."

(Time use of married workers for work and housework)

Figure 5 shows male's ratio to female (female=1) in the participation rates and time spent by participants (weekly average) for work and housework. With regard to the work, the participation rate decreased for both sexes comparing 2001 and 2011, while the average time spent by participants per day increased to reach 536 minutes for men and 390 for women in the same time period. Males surpass females in both terms at both time points.

Average time spent for taking care of home (sum of housework, caring or nursing, child care, and shopping) per day increased from 2001 for both sexes running up to 358 minutes for men and 530 minutes for women in 2011. The male participation rate for taking care of home rose in comparison to females, while the male's ratio of time spent to female remained almost unchanged during the period.

**Figure 5: Average Time Spent on Work and Housework by Married Workers by Sex (2001-2011):  
Male's Ratio to Female**



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications *Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities*  
Note: Figures are male's ratio to female (female=1)

(Child care leaves taken by men)

The ratio of those who took child care leave in male employees has been increasing gradually, but stayed at 1.89% in fiscal 2012.

In calendar 2012, 10.6 % of working husbands who has preschool children living together took advantage of system of childcare leave or other support system (including shorter work hours or other measures related to child care provided by

companies). 48.7% of wives of those husbands did not have a job, and 12.2% of wives of those husbands were working but did not use such instruments.

#### (Caregivers)

In 2010, numbers of cohabitant caregivers per 100,000 persons requiring care are large at the ages from 50s through 70s regardless of the sex of the caregivers. The difference between the numbers of male and female caregivers was also the largest in those ages.

The number of women who quit their jobs due to caregiving or nursing stayed far bigger than that of men with annual fluctuations. The majority of them wish to work while caregiving or nursing, or to restart working in the future.

#### (Time use of workers by marital status)

Both workers' participation rate and time spent by participant (weekly average) for male were larger than female regardless of marital status. Looking at the housework by single workers, there was big difference in the participation rate between men and women, while no significant variation was observed in the time spent by participant per day between both sexes. The rates of participant to "free time" did not vary so much among single workers regardless of sex and marital status, while male's time spent by participant was longer than that of females by approximately 30 minutes. Single workers spent longer time for leisure than married workers regardless of sex by 30 minutes again, aligned with the single people's view on the merit of being single that they can decide behavior and way of life at their disposal.

## Section 2 Work status of men and women

### 1 Overall trends

#### (People in labour force, employed and unemployed)

The number of people in the labour force peaked out in 1998 and had kept decreasing since then; the peak for men is 1997, while females hit highest-ever 28 million in 2013. Both the labour force participation rate and the employment rate for males have been diminishing at a faster pace than those for females. The male unemployment rate remains higher than that of women since the beginning of the century.

#### (Labor force participation rate in cross national comparison)

The male labour force participation rate in Japan is high internationally

despite the decreasing trend, among which those of working-age (from 15 through 64 years old) is ranked in the highest group in the world.

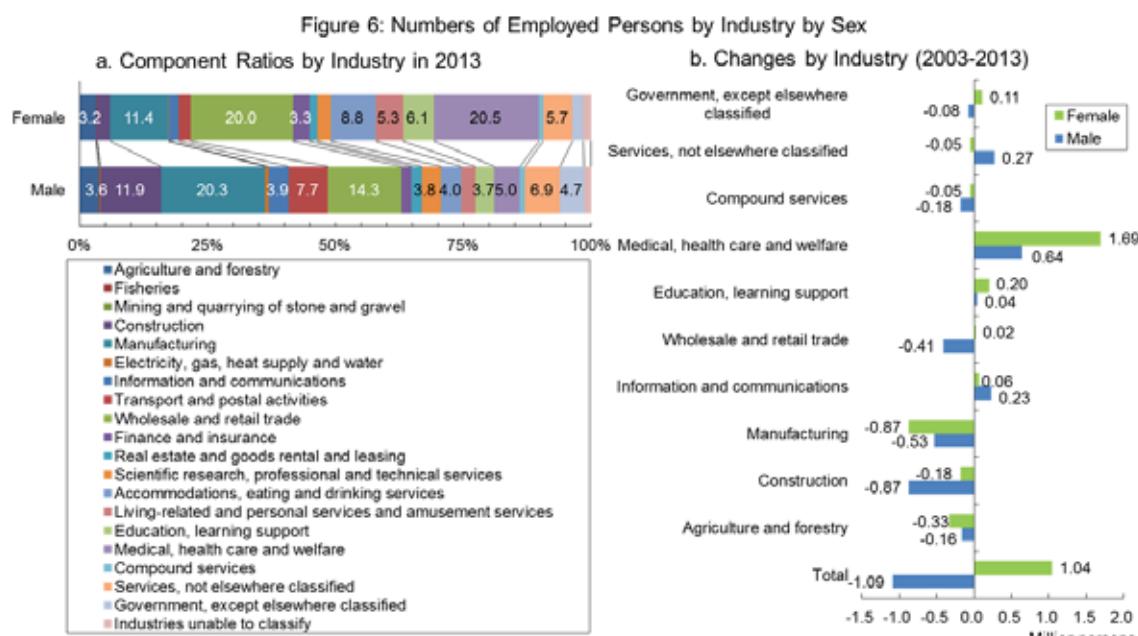
In contrast, the rate for females is not as high compared with major countries, forming M-shaped curve with decline at the age of 30s.

The rate for male and female total is higher than Singapore and the United States, while lower than Germany and Sweden.

#### (Employment by industry)

"Manufacturing" employs 20.3% of male workers, the largest among all industries. "Wholesale and retail trade" (14.3%) and "construction" (11.9%) come next. "Medical, health care and welfare" (20.5%) is the largest for female employees, followed by "wholesale and retail trade" (20.0%) and "manufacturing" (11.4%) (Figure 6a).

The numbers of male employed persons decreased 1.09 million from 2003 through 2013 while those of females increased 1.04 million during the same period. The transfer of male workers from traditional to emerging industries is not as obvious as females, of which the number of employed persons increases in growing industries (Figure 6b).



### (Employment by occupation)

Turning to the number of employed person by occupation, "manufacturing process workers" is the largest for men in which 17.7% male employed persons are categorized. "Professional and engineering workers" (15.0%) and "Clerical workers" (13.9%) occupy the second and the third places. "Clerical workers" (27.2%) is the largest for females, and "service workers" (19.5%) and "professional and engineering workers" (17.2%) follow.

Male employed persons decreased 0.56 million from 2009 through 2013, while females increased 0.52 million in the same time frame. No clear sign is observed for the transition of male workers between occupations, while the number of females expands in the occupations related to the growing industries.

## 2 Workers

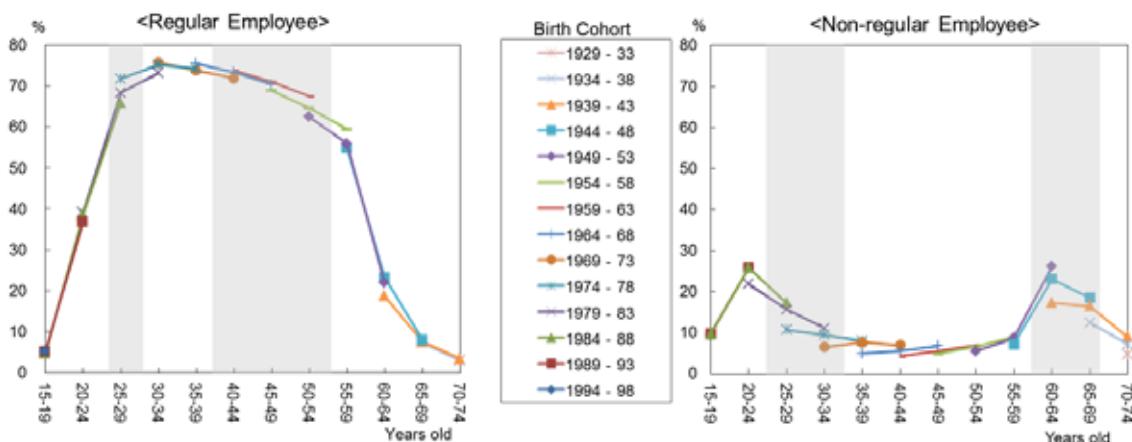
### (Employees by type of employment)

The number of "non-regular employees" increased from 2002 through 2013 for both sexes: The ratio of "non-regular employees" to the total employees hit 19.4% and 53.9% for men and women respectively in 2013.

Decomposing the labour force participation rate by type of employment, the proportion that the non-regular employees account for is higher in cohorts born more recently at the ages from 25 through 35 years old and 60s (Figure 7).

The rate of never-married of male non-regular employees is higher than the male average, mentioned previously. In sum, the increase of non-regular employment and the decrease of regular-employment among young males are expected to affect the rate of never-married people in the future.

Figure 7: Decomposition of Male's Labour Force Participation Rate by Type of Employment by Birth Cohort



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications *Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)*.  
Note: Age groups with notable features are shaded.

#### (Reasons choosing non-regular employment)

"Not obtaining a job as a regular employee" (30.6%) is the most frequent answer by male non-regular workers as the reason for choosing that kind of employment type. "For supplementing family income or earning school expense" (26.8%) ranks top among female counterpart, while "Not obtaining a job as a regular employee" (13.3%) ranks fourth.

#### (Labour force / employment status by educational attainment)

Higher education groups are characterized by a higher rate of regular employment and a lower rate of non-regular employee regardless of sex, though "regular employees" account for a higher ratio in males than in females in general.

Considering the high rate of never married among male non-regular workers and among men with lower education, educational attainment is supposed to have associations with the status and the type of employment and the rate of never married.

#### (Transition of workforce)

The rate of those who switched jobs increased and that of those who stayed in the first job decreased from 2002 through 2012 for both sexes. Increasing numbers of women are assumed to return to the labour force market with a different job from the first one even after they quit job for child rearing or other reasons. The rate of those who never worked and became a housewife got lower.

The proportion of those who had switched job rose for men, though less obvious than women, and reached almost the same level as that of those who stayed in the first job in 2012.

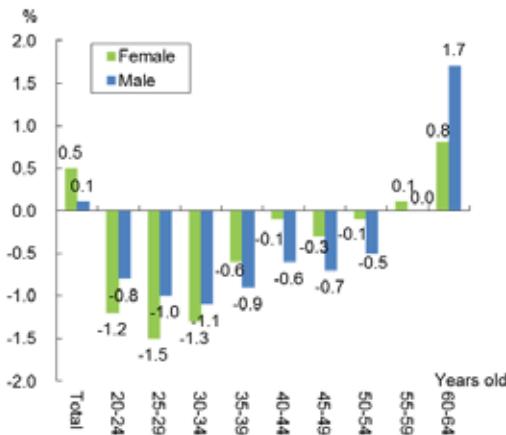
#### (Average length of service and annual scheduled cash earnings)

Average length of service at the age of 20s through mid-50s lessened from 1999 through 2013 as the proportion of job switchers rose (Figure 8a).

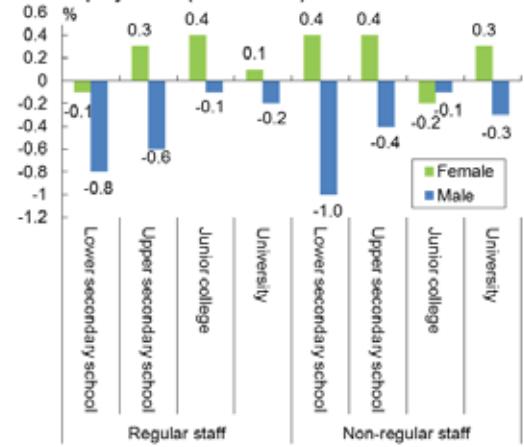
Male's average annual scheduled cash earnings decreased from 2005 through 2013 regardless of education and type of employment, while that of females increased in general. Males who graduated from lower or upper secondary school faced the largest decline (Figure 8b).

Figure 8: Length of Service and Annual Scheduled Cash Earnings on Average of Full-time Employees by Sex

a. Compound Annual Growth Rate of Average Length of Service by Age Group (1999-2013)



b. Compound Annual Growth Rate of Average Annual Earnings by Education by Type of Employment (2005-2013)



Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare *Basic Survey on Wage Structure*

Notes:

1. Figures are of private establishments with 10 regular employees or more.
2. A "full-time employee" is a person who is not a "part-time worker" who is a worker who has fewer scheduled hours worked per day, or who has the same scheduled hours worked per day but fewer scheduled days worked per week than ordinary workers of the establishment.
3. "Length of service" denotes the number of years during which an employee has worked from a date employed to a date surveyed.
4. "University" includes graduate school graduates. "Junior College" means college of technology and junior college graduates.

#### (Administrative and managerial workers)

The number of male administrative and managerial workers peaked out in 1992, hitting 2.39 million. That of female keeps decreasing from 0.22 million in 1996 with smaller declining rate than males. Consequently, the ratio of female in managers is rising (Figure 9a).

Focusing on the changes by industry, the number of male managers decreased sharply in "wholesale and retail trade," "manufacturing," and "construction," the three largest industries in terms of the number of male employed persons. The decline for women was relatively modest: The number of female managers stayed almost unchanged in the "services" including "medical, health care and welfare" in which the female workforce expands dramatically (Figure 9b).