Results of the “JILPT Panel Survey on the Impact of COVID-19 on Work and Daily Life”

(October 2021, 6th wave) (First Aggregation)

About half of the respondents who had difficulty in their life circumstances from before the spread of the coronavirus infectious disease (COVID-19) continue to experience effects of the disease on their employment, work, or income. Forty percent of all respondents said that they feel that social disparities have widened due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, when asked about how they would like to work after the pandemic is brought under control, more than 20% responded “want to work less than before the pandemic” (14.8%), “do not want to work for the time being” (1.9%), or “do not want to work anymore” (6.3%). Forty percent of these respondents mentioned “lower motivation to work” as the reason. This survey is the sixth conducted thus far and follows the surveys of May, August, and December of 2020 and March and June of 2021. The survey received responses from a total of 4,882 people, comprised of 4,307 employees of private enterprises (2,068 respondents to all of the past surveys + 2,239 others) and 575 freelance workers (independent workers who are not shop owners and who do not have employees; excluding those in agriculture, forestry, or fishery).

Findings from the survey results of all valid respondents

1. A total of 14.4% of employees and 34.3% of freelance workers who are self-employed or engage in piecework indicated that their monthly income since the outbreak of COVID-19 “remains low.”

When the survey asked “employees of private enterprises” as of October 2021 (N=4,158) about transitional patterns in their monthly income since the COVID-19 pandemic’s outbreak, approximately two-thirds (66.8%) indicated “almost no change.” However, approximately one-seventh (14.4%) responded “remains low” and 7.4% responded “recovered after falling but has not returned to original level” (Figure 1). Additionally, when the survey asked those respondents who were “freelance workers” as of April 1, 2020, and who continue to be “self-employed or engaged in piecework” as of October 2021 (N=472) the same question, approximately one-third (35.6%) responded “almost no change,” which is only about half of the percentage of the same response among “employees of private enterprises.” Roughly one-third (34.3%) responded “remains low” and 11.4% indicated “recovered after falling but has not returned to original level” (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Transitional patterns in monthly income since the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak ("employees of private enterprises")

(%)

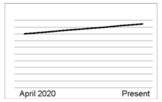
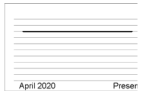
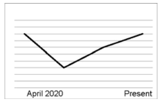
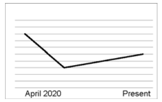
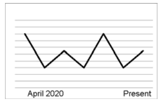
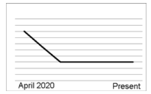
		N	Transitional patterns in monthly income since the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak						
			Increasing 	Almost no change 	Decreased but recovered to original level 	Recovered after falling but has not returned to original level 	After initial decrease, repeatedly fluctuating up and down 	Remains low 	Other
Total		4,158	4.1	66.8	2.2	7.4	2.9	14.4	2.2
Type of employment	Regular employee	2,778	4.3	68.3	1.5	6.8	2.4	14.8	1.8
	Non-regular employee	1,380	3.6	63.9	3.4	8.6	4.0	13.6	2.9
Breakdown of non-regular employees	Part-time workers and arbeit (temporary workers)	900	3.0	63.7	4.1	8.9	4.3	12.8	3.2
	Contract and shokutaku (entrusted workers)	320	4.1	67.8	2.2	8.8	3.1	12.8	1.3
	Dispatched workers	160	5.6	57.5	1.9	6.9	3.8	20.0	4.4
Main type of business	Construction	228	5.3	75.9	0.4	3.1	1.3	13.2	0.9
	Manufacturing	856	2.9	62.6	2.7	7.6	3.3	18.1	2.8
	Electricity, gas, heat supply, and water	60	1.7	71.7	1.7	10.0	3.3	11.7	–
	Information and communications	229	6.1	74.2	1.3	4.4	1.3	10.5	2.2
	Transport	252	4.8	56.3	0.8	9.5	6.3	19.8	2.4
	Wholesale and retail trade	524	3.2	70.4	2.1	8.2	1.7	12.4	1.9
	Finance and insurance	215	7.0	67.0	1.4	5.1	5.1	12.6	1.9
	Real estate	89	5.6	67.4	–	4.5	3.4	16.9	2.2
	Accommodations, eating and drinking services	77	2.6	45.5	2.6	14.3	10.4	23.4	1.3
	Medical, health care and welfare	717	4.0	75.0	2.0	5.3	2.2	9.2	2.2
	Education, learning support	119	5.0	61.3	6.7	15.1	0.8	9.2	1.7
	Postal services, cooperative associations	48	8.3	62.5	2.1	10.4	4.2	12.5	–
	Services	509	2.8	63.1	2.6	10.0	1.6	17.9	2.2
	Others	208	4.8	61.1	3.4	7.2	4.3	16.8	2.4
	Do not know	27	11.1	66.7	3.7	–	11.1	–	7.4
Size of enterprise	29 or fewer employees	823	3.4	67.3	2.4	7.2	3.2	15.3	1.2
	30 to 299 employees	1,288	3.7	67.7	2.2	7.4	2.4	14.8	1.9
	300 to 999 employees	554	4.2	67.9	0.9	6.7	3.2	14.8	2.3
	1,000 or more employees	1,075	5.1	66.1	1.8	7.6	3.1	14.5	1.8
	Do not know	418	3.6	63.6	4.3	8.4	3.3	11.0	5.7
Impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic	Total of "there was a major impact" and "there was some degree of impact" on employment, work, or income	1,529	3.5	36.8	4.2	17.4	6.1	29.2	2.7
	Total of "there was not much impact," "there was no impact at all," and "do not know"	2,629	4.4	84.3	1.0	1.6	1.1	5.8	1.8
Sex	Male	2,241	4.2	65.7	1.5	7.8	3.0	15.8	1.9
	Female	1,917	3.9	68.1	3.0	6.9	2.8	12.8	2.5
Age group	20-29 years old	610	6.2	61.0	1.1	11.0	4.3	13.6	2.8
	30-39 years old	991	4.7	66.3	2.4	7.2	3.3	13.6	2.4
	40-49 years old	1,161	4.4	65.5	3.2	7.7	2.2	15.1	1.9
	50-59 years old	1,011	2.1	71.6	1.6	5.8	2.8	14.3	1.8
	60-69 years old	385	3.1	68.8	1.6	5.7	2.3	16.1	2.3

Figure 2. Transitional patterns in monthly income since the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak ("freelance workers")

(%)

		N	Transitional patterns in monthly income since the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak						
			Increasing	Almost no change	Decreased but recovered to original level	Recovered after falling but has not returned to original level	After initial decrease, repeatedly fluctuating up and down	Remains low	Other
Total		472	1.5	35.6	5.7	11.4	8.7	34.3	2.8
Main type of business	Construction	49	–	38.8	2.0	10.2	12.2	34.7	2.0
	Manufacturing	25	–	28.0	8.0	16.0	12.0	32.0	4.0
	Electricity, gas, heat supply, and water	5	–	40.0	20.0	–	20.0	20.0	–
	Information and communications	37	5.4	51.4	2.7	10.8	13.5	10.8	5.4
	Transport	15	–	26.7	6.7	20.0	13.3	33.3	–
	Wholesale and retail trade	33	–	21.2	9.1	9.1	–	57.6	3.0
	Finance and insurance	18	–	66.7	5.6	11.1	–	16.7	–
	Real estate	35	–	57.1	2.9	11.4	–	28.6	–
	Accommodations, eating and drinking services	8	–	12.5	–	12.5	–	75.0	–
	Medical, health care and welfare	9	11.1	–	–	11.1	11.1	66.7	–
	Education, learning support	19	–	26.3	10.5	21.1	10.5	21.1	10.5
	Postal services, cooperative associations	1	–	100.0	–	–	–	–	–
	Services	113	0.9	31.0	7.1	12.4	10.6	38.1	–
	Other	100	3.0	34.0	6.0	9.0	9.0	34.0	5.0
	Do not know	5	–	40.0	–	–	–	40.0	20.0
Impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic	Total of "there was a major impact" and "there was some degree of impact" on employment, work, or income	288	1.7	10.1	8.0	16.0	11.8	49.7	2.8
	Total of "there was not much impact," "there was no impact at all," and "do not know"	184	1.1	75.5	2.2	4.3	3.8	10.3	2.7
Sex	Male	350	1.1	41.1	4.3	9.4	8.9	32.0	3.1
	Female	122	2.5	19.7	9.8	17.2	8.2	41.0	1.6
Age group	20-29 years old	15	–	46.7	6.7	20.0	6.7	–	20.0
	30-39 years old	60	5.0	28.3	5.0	16.7	10.0	30.0	5.0
	40-49 years old	132	2.3	41.7	6.8	6.1	8.3	32.6	2.3
	50-59 years old	163	0.6	33.7	4.3	12.9	11.0	36.8	0.6
	60-69 years old	102	–	33.3	6.9	11.8	4.9	40.2	2.9
Marital status presence of children in the household	Single parent	15	–	20.0	–	6.7	6.7	60.0	6.7
	Two parents	110	1.8	36.4	7.3	6.4	10.9	36.4	0.9
	Single without children	245	1.6	37.6	4.1	12.2	8.6	31.8	4.1
	Married without children	102	1.0	32.4	8.8	15.7	6.9	34.3	1.0
Region of residence as of April 1 of previous year	Tokyo metropolitan area	151	1.3	35.1	4.6	15.2	9.9	31.1	2.6
	Chubu or Kansai area	153	0.7	38.6	5.2	9.2	8.5	34.0	3.9
	Other	168	2.4	33.3	7.1	10.1	7.7	37.5	1.8

2. More than one-third of respondents indicated that their life circumstances between September 2021 and the end of the year were “hard.” The percentage of those indicating that their monthly income “remains low” was particularly high, and two-thirds indicated that their life circumstances are “hard.”

When the survey asked all valid respondents (employees of private enterprises [N=4,307] + freelance workers [N=575]) about their life circumstances between October 2021 (the time of the survey) and the end of the year, roughly half (50.2%) responded “normal” (Figure 3). The total of “extremely hard” (11.2%) and “somewhat hard” (27.4%) is 38.6%. On the other hand, the total of “somewhat comfortable” (8.8%) and “extremely comfortable” (2.4%) is 11.2%. There is a 27.4-percentage-point difference between the total of “hard” and the total of “comfortable,” which indicates deterioration of 11.0 points when compared to the life circumstances (immediately) before the COVID-19 pandemic’s outbreak (16.4-point difference) (Figure 3). Looking at the relationship between transitional patterns in monthly income since the COVID-19 pandemic’s outbreak and life circumstances from the time of the survey to the end of the year among all valid respondents, responses indicating that life circumstances are “extremely hard” exceed one-fourth (26.6%) among respondents whose monthly income “remains low” and who were “employees of private enterprises” on April 1, 2020, and at the time of the October survey or who were “freelance workers” on April 1, 2020, and continue to be “self-employed or engaged in piecework” at the time of the survey (N=4,630); when responses indicating “somewhat hard” are added in, the percentage reaches roughly two-thirds (67.0%) (see Figure 13 in the boxed column).

Figure 3. Life circumstances at the present time through to the end of the year compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak

		Life circumstances (immediately) before the COVID-19 pandemic (%)								(Percentage points)	Life circumstances between the present time and end of year (%)									(Percentage points)	
		N	Extremely hard	Somewhat hard	Normal	Somewhat comfortable	Extremely comfortable	Total of "hard"	Total of "comfortable"	Total of "hard" minus total of "comfortable"	N	Extremely hard	Somewhat hard	Normal	Somewhat comfortable	Extremely comfortable	Total of "hard"	Total of "comfortable"	Total of "hard" minus total of "comfortable"	"Total of 'hard'" compared to (immediately) before the COVID-19 pandemic	"Total of 'hard' minus total of 'comfortable'" compared to (immediately) before the COVID-19 pandemic
Total		4,882	6.4	23.2	57.2	10.8	2.4	29.6	13.2	16.4	4,882	11.2	27.4	50.2	8.8	2.4	38.6	11.2	27.4	9.0	11.0
Sex	Male	2,717	6.8	23.5	56.4	10.6	2.6	30.3	13.3	17.0	2,717	11.1	28.2	49.0	9.0	2.7	39.3	11.7	27.7	9.0	10.6
	Female	2,165	5.9	22.8	58.2	11.0	2.2	28.7	13.2	15.5	2,165	11.2	26.4	51.7	8.7	2.0	37.6	10.7	27.0	9.0	11.5
Age group	20-29 years old	649	6.6	19.7	59.0	11.9	2.8	26.3	14.6	11.7	649	10.9	24.0	52.9	9.7	2.5	35.0	12.2	22.8	8.6	11.1
	30-39 years old	1,106	6.0	24.6	57.6	8.9	3.0	30.6	11.8	18.7	1,106	10.6	28.0	51.0	7.4	3.0	38.6	10.4	28.2	8.0	9.5
	40-49 years old	1,348	7.7	25.2	55.6	9.7	1.8	32.9	11.5	21.4	1,348	12.0	28.6	49.1	8.5	1.9	40.6	10.3	30.3	7.6	8.8
	50-59 years old	1,235	6.2	23.3	57.2	11.1	2.2	29.6	13.3	16.3	1,235	11.6	27.8	49.9	8.7	2.0	39.4	10.8	28.6	9.8	12.3
	60-69 years old	544	4.2	19.1	58.1	15.4	3.1	23.3	18.6	4.8	544	9.6	26.7	48.7	11.9	3.1	36.2	15.1	21.1	12.9	16.4
Marital status	Married	2,471	5.2	21.6	57.7	12.9	2.6	26.8	15.5	11.3	2,471	8.7	26.4	51.7	10.7	2.4	35.2	13.1	22.1	8.4	10.8
	Divorced or widowed	540	6.9	27.8	54.6	8.9	1.9	34.6	10.7	23.9	540	14.1	34.8	43.0	6.3	1.9	48.9	8.1	40.7	14.3	16.9
	Unmarried	1,871	7.9	23.9	57.2	8.6	2.4	31.9	10.9	21.0	1,871	13.5	26.6	50.2	7.1	2.5	40.1	9.6	30.5	8.3	9.6
Presence of children in the household	Yes	1,770	6.3	25.1	56.8	9.7	2.1	31.4	11.8	19.6	1,770	10.7	30.5	49.0	8.0	1.8	41.1	9.8	31.3	9.7	11.7
	No	3,112	6.5	22.1	57.4	11.4	2.6	28.6	14.0	14.5	3,112	11.4	25.7	50.8	9.3	2.7	37.1	12.0	25.1	8.6	10.6
Marital status presence of children in the household	Single parent	263	8.4	31.2	52.9	6.8	0.8	39.5	7.6	31.9	263	15.2	38.0	40.7	5.3	0.8	53.2	6.1	47.1	13.7	15.2
	Two parents	1,507	6.0	24.0	57.5	10.2	2.4	30.0	12.5	17.5	1,507	9.9	29.1	50.5	8.5	2.0	39.0	10.5	28.5	9.0	11.1
	Single without children	2,148	7.6	24.0	57.1	8.8	2.4	31.6	11.3	20.3	2,148	13.5	27.3	49.6	7.1	2.6	40.7	9.7	31.1	9.1	10.7
	Married without children	964	3.9	17.8	58.0	17.2	3.0	21.8	20.2	1.6	964	7.0	22.2	53.6	14.2	3.0	29.1	17.2	11.9	7.4	10.4
Household income in 2020	Less than 3 million yen	718	16.4	33.8	45.5	3.6	0.6	50.3	4.2	46.1	718	26.2	35.9	35.1	2.4	0.4	62.1	2.8	59.3	11.8	13.2
	3 million yen to less than 5 million yen	1,114	5.9	28.4	56.5	8.3	1.0	34.3	9.2	25.0	1,114	13.1	31.5	47.7	6.7	1.0	44.6	7.7	36.9	10.3	11.8
	5 million to less than 7 million yen	949	4.2	24.7	60.2	9.0	2.0	28.9	11.0	17.9	949	7.4	28.6	54.0	7.7	2.4	35.9	10.1	25.8	7.1	7.9
	7 million yen or more	1,306	2.1	12.1	60.5	20.3	5.0	14.2	25.3	▲ 11.0	1,306	3.9	17.3	56.7	17.2	4.9	21.2	22.1	▲ 0.8	7.0	10.2
	Do not know	795	7.7	22.8	59.6	7.4	2.5	30.4	9.9	20.5	795	11.3	29.3	52.1	5.4	1.9	40.6	7.3	33.3	10.2	12.8
Current savings	No savings	476	29.4	38.9	29.8	1.3	0.6	68.3	1.9	66.4	476	46.0	34.0	19.3	0.2	0.4	80.0	0.6	79.4	11.8	13.0
	Less than 2.5 million yen	1,138	7.3	33.1	53.5	5.6	0.4	40.4	6.1	34.4	1,138	14.1	38.0	43.2	4.2	0.5	52.0	4.7	47.3	11.6	12.9
	2.5 million yen to less than 5 million yen	527	1.7	20.1	66.4	10.1	1.7	21.8	11.8	10.1	527	5.1	25.0	59.0	8.7	2.1	30.2	10.8	19.4	8.3	9.3
	5 million to less than 10 million yen	496	2.8	20.6	62.9	12.1	1.6	23.4	13.7	9.7	496	5.2	24.4	58.7	9.9	1.8	29.6	11.7	17.9	6.3	8.3
	At least 10 million yen	867	1.2	9.2	55.0	26.3	8.3	10.4	34.6	▲ 24.2	867	2.1	13.4	53.2	23.4	8.0	15.5	31.4	▲ 15.9	5.1	8.3
	Do not know/do not want to answer	1,378	4.1	20.5	65.4	8.4	1.6	24.6	10.0	14.6	1,378	6.9	27.3	58.3	6.2	1.4	34.2	7.5	26.6	9.6	12.0
Type of residence	Owned house	3,058	5.3	21.4	59.5	11.2	2.6	26.7	13.8	13.0	3,058	9.1	26.7	52.5	9.2	2.5	35.8	11.7	24.1	9.1	11.2
	Privately owned rented house	1,295	8.5	26.4	51.7	10.9	2.5	34.9	13.4	21.5	1,295	15.8	27.7	45.5	8.7	2.3	43.5	11.0	32.4	8.6	10.9
	Publicly owned rented house/issued house (company housing, etc.)	394	7.1	23.1	59.6	8.9	1.3	30.2	10.2	20.1	394	10.7	29.4	49.5	8.6	1.8	40.1	10.4	29.7	9.9	9.6
	Rented room, other	135	8.9	32.6	49.6	6.7	2.2	41.5	8.9	32.6	135	15.6	34.8	44.4	2.2	3.0	50.4	5.2	45.2	8.9	12.6
Type of employment	Regular employee	2,787	5.4	21.5	58.9	11.3	2.9	26.9	14.2	12.7	2,787	8.3	25.8	53.1	9.8	2.9	34.2	12.8	21.4	7.3	8.7
	Non-regular employee	1,404	7.0	26.6	55.8	9.0	1.6	33.5	10.7	22.9	1,404	12.7	28.6	49.8	7.5	1.4	41.4	8.8	32.5	7.8	9.7
	Self-employed or at-home pieceworkers, etc.	567	7.6	25.7	53.1	11.3	2.3	33.3	13.6	19.8	567	18.3	32.6	39.5	7.4	2.1	51.0	9.5	41.4	17.6	21.7
	Not working	124	17.7	11.3	52.4	16.1	2.4	29.0	18.5	10.5	124	24.2	25.8	38.7	8.9	2.4	50.0	11.3	38.7	21.0	28.2
Impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic	Total of "there was a major impact" and "there was some degree of impact" on employment, work, or income	1,968	8.8	28.6	50.5	10.7	1.5	37.4	12.1	25.3	1,968	18.3	36.1	38.0	6.4	1.2	54.4	7.6	46.8	17.0	21.6
	Total of "there was not much impact," "there was no impact at all," and "do not know"	2,914	4.8	19.5	61.7	10.9	3.1	24.3	14.0	10.4	2,914	6.3	21.6	58.4	10.5	3.2	27.9	13.7	14.2	3.6	3.8

3. About half of the respondents who had difficulty in their life circumstances from before COVID-19 continue to experience effects of the disease on their employment, work, or income. Forty percent of all respondents said that they "feel that social disparities have widened due to the COVID-19 pandemic."

When the survey asked all valid respondents (employees of private enterprises [N=4,307] + freelance workers [N=575]) about the relationship between their life circumstances (immediately) before the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak and the impact on their employment, work, or income as of October 2021, the percentage responding that either "there was a major impact" or "there was some degree of impact" on their employment, work, or income rises the more that people experienced hardship in their life circumstances from before the pandemic (See Figure 4). When the survey asked all valid respondents about changes brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, half (50.0%) responded with respect to whether they "feel that social disparities have widened due to the COVID-19 pandemic" that they have "no opinion," while the total of those responding "yes" was 40.1%, which far exceeded the total of those responding "no" of 9.9%. Looking at predominance in terms of current type of employment within "yes," "non-regular employees" (32.3 percentage points) is higher than "regular employees" (27.9 points), and this trend grows with "self-employed or engaged in piecework, other" (34.2 points) and "did not work" (39.5 points).

Figure 4. Changes in thinking brought by the COVID-19 pandemic

(%) (Percentage points) (%) (Percentage points)

		N	Feel that social disparities have widened due to the COVID-19 pandemic				Lost hope or prospects for a bright future due to the COVID-19 pandemic			
			Total of “Yes”	No opinion	Total of “No”	“Total of “‘Yes’” minus “total of “‘No’”	Total of “Yes”	No opinion	Total of “No”	“Total of “‘Yes’” minus “total of “‘No’”
Total		4,882	40.1	50.0	9.9	30.2	33.9	53.1	12.9	21.0
Sex	Male	2,717	35.6	53.2	11.2	24.3	30.4	55.5	14.0	16.4
	Female	2,165	45.8	45.9	8.3	37.5	38.3	50.1	11.6	26.7
Age group	20-29 years old	649	41.6	48.5	9.9	31.7	36.1	53.6	10.3	25.7
	30-39 years old	1,106	39.2	52.4	8.5	30.7	36.3	52.1	11.6	24.8
	40-49 years old	1,348	40.7	49.6	9.6	31.1	34.1	52.7	13.2	20.8
	50-59 years old	1,235	40.1	49.8	10.1	30.0	33.0	54.5	12.6	20.4
	60-69 years old	544	38.8	48.0	13.2	25.6	28.5	52.4	19.1	9.4
Marital status	Married	2,471	39.7	49.7	10.6	29.1	31.5	54.2	14.3	17.2
	Divorced or widowed	540	40.0	50.9	9.1	30.9	33.1	56.3	10.6	22.6
	Unmarried	1,871	40.6	50.1	9.3	31.3	37.4	50.7	11.9	25.5
Presence of children in the household	Yes	1,770	41.0	49.3	9.7	31.3	33.8	54.1	12.1	21.7
	No	3,112	39.6	50.4	10.1	29.5	34.0	52.5	13.4	20.6
Marital status presence of children in the household	Single parent	263	44.9	48.3	6.8	38.0	38.0	52.5	9.5	28.5
	Two parents	1,507	40.3	49.4	10.2	30.1	33.0	54.4	12.5	20.5
	Single without children	2,148	39.9	50.5	9.5	30.4	36.3	51.9	11.8	24.4
	Married without children	964	38.8	50.0	11.2	27.6	29.0	53.9	17.0	12.0
Household income in 2020	Less than 3 million yen	718	42.3	50.0	7.7	34.7	40.3	48.2	11.6	28.7
	3 million yen to less than 5 million yen	1,114	40.0	50.4	9.5	30.5	36.2	51.4	12.4	23.8
	5 million to less than 7 million yen	949	40.4	47.9	11.7	28.7	32.3	53.8	13.8	18.5
	7 million yen or more	1,306	41.7	47.0	11.3	30.3	30.6	54.1	15.3	15.3
	Do not know	795	35.3	56.5	8.2	27.2	32.5	57.5	10.1	22.4
Current savings	No savings	476	41.0	50.6	8.4	32.6	39.7	50.6	9.7	30.0
	Less than 2.5 million yen	1,138	43.6	47.8	8.6	35.0	37.1	51.1	11.9	25.2
	2.5 million yen to less than 5 million yen	527	40.6	48.4	11.0	29.6	36.2	49.9	13.9	22.4
	5 million to less than 10 million yen	496	46.8	43.1	10.1	36.7	41.1	49.4	9.5	31.7
	At least 10 million yen	867	40.0	46.5	13.5	26.5	26.4	53.1	20.5	5.9
	Do not know/do not want to answer	1,378	34.4	56.7	8.9	25.5	30.6	58.3	11.1	19.5
Type of employment	Regular employee	2,787	37.6	52.7	9.7	27.9	33.3	55.3	11.4	21.8
	Non-regular employee	1,404	42.0	48.2	9.8	32.3	34.7	51.2	14.1	20.6
	Self-employed or at-home pieceworkers, etc.	567	45.3	43.6	11.1	34.2	33.9	49.4	16.8	17.1
	Not working	124	51.6	36.3	12.1	39.5	41.1	42.7	16.1	25.0
Impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic	Total of “there was a major impact” and “there was some degree of impact” on employment, work, or income	1,968	50.2	42.5	7.3	42.8	43.5	47.1	9.3	34.2
	Total of “there was not much impact,” “there was no impact at all,” and “do not know”	2,914	33.3	55.0	11.7	21.6	27.5	57.2	15.4	12.1
Working from home/teleworking (employees of private enterprises)	Currently working from home/teleworking	754	43.8	46.8	9.4	34.4	35.3	51.3	13.4	21.9
	Not currently working from home/teleworking	3,404	38.0	52.2	9.8	28.1	33.4	54.5	12.2	21.2

4. More than 20% of respondents indicated that they “want to work less” “do not want to work for the time being,” or “do not want to work anymore” after the COVID-19 pandemic is brought under control. Roughly 40% of those respondents gave “lower motivation to work” as the reason.

When the survey asked all valid respondents (employees of private enterprises [N=4,307] + freelance workers [N=575]) about how they want to work after the COVID-19 pandemic is brought under control, 10.2% “want to work even harder than before the pandemic” and 66.8% “want to do (return to) the same level of work as before the pandemic,” while 14.8% “want to work less than before the pandemic,” 1.9% “do not want to work for the time being (but want to start working again eventually),” and 6.3% “do not want to work anymore.” When the survey asked those respondents who “want to work less than before the pandemic,” “do not want to work for the time being,” or “do not want to work anymore” (N=1,125) their reason for desiring those states (multiple responses), the highest percentage was “lower motivation to work” (38.4%) followed by “Want to prioritize other matters than work” (20.1%), “lingering anxiety over infectious diseases, etc. (not just COVID-19)” (18.0%), “lack of prospects for the future” (18.0%), and “poor work/employment environment due to COVID-19” (14.2%).

It should be noted that only 2.5% of all valid respondents were working on April 1, 2020, but “not working” at the time of the survey (2.0% in the “20-29 years old” age group; 6.3% in the “60-69 years old” age group); however, more than 40% of those respondents responded “do not want to work for the time being” or “do not want to work anymore,” suggesting a continuing trend toward separation from the labor force.

Figure 5. Desire with respect to work after the COVID-19 pandemic is brought under control and reasons

(%) (%)

		N	Way of working after the COVID-19 pandemic is brought under control: Want to work even harder than before the pandemic	Want to do (return to) the same level of work as before the pandemic	Want to work less than before the pandemic	Do not want to work for the time being (but want to start working again eventually)	Do not want to work anymore	Total of "want to work less," "do not want to work for the time being" and "do not want to work anymore"	N	Reasons for responses from "want to work less than before the pandemic" to "do not want to work anymore": Lower motivation to work	Want to prioritize other matters than work	Lingering anxiety over infectious diseases, etc. (not just COVID-19)	Lack of prospects for the future	Poor work/ employment environment due to COVID-19	Advancing age	Disability or health circumstances	No need to work to support daily living	Change in lifestyle (e.g., marriage, pregnancy, childbirth, child-rearing duties, nursing care duties, retirement, etc.)	Other
Total		4,882	10.2	66.8	14.8	1.9	6.3	23.0	1,125	38.4	20.1	18.0	18.0	14.2	11.1	8.3	7.6	7.0	4.9
Sex	Male	2,717	9.8	66.0	15.4	1.7	7.1	24.2	658	39.8	20.8	16.3	21.3	14.3	12.6	7.4	7.9	3.0	4.0
	Female	2,165	10.7	67.8	14.1	2.0	5.5	21.6	467	36.4	19.1	20.3	13.5	14.1	9.0	9.4	7.1	12.6	6.2
Age group	20-29 years old	649	13.1	61.2	16.2	2.5	7.1	25.7	167	42.5	25.7	16.2	13.2	16.2	-	3.0	6.6	10.2	3.0
	30-39 years old	1,106	11.8	65.1	13.8	2.2	7.1	23.1	255	36.9	22.4	16.1	23.1	11.4	1.2	8.2	3.9	13.3	2.7
	40-49 years old	1,348	11.3	65.8	14.5	1.2	7.3	22.9	309	46.6	19.4	14.2	23.0	14.2	3.6	7.4	5.2	3.2	9.4
	50-59 years old	1,235	8.4	69.5	15.5	1.8	4.8	22.1	273	32.2	17.2	26.0	15.8	15.0	19.8	10.6	8.1	4.8	3.3
	60-69 years old	544	4.8	73.0	14.5	2.4	5.3	22.2	121	28.9	15.7	15.7	6.6	15.7	47.1	12.4	21.5	4.1	4.1
Marital status	Married	2,471	10.4	69.0	13.4	2.0	5.3	20.6	509	34.2	20.8	16.7	13.2	13.0	16.5	5.1	8.4	11.2	4.9
	Divorced or widowed	540	10.4	66.7	15.0	1.7	6.3	23.0	124	38.7	17.7	16.9	17.7	15.3	11.3	12.9	6.5	5.6	4.0
	Unmarried	1,871	9.9	63.8	16.7	1.8	7.8	26.3	492	42.7	19.9	19.5	23.2	15.2	5.5	10.4	6.9	3.0	5.1
Presence of children in the household	Yes	1,770	12.0	69.1	12.5	1.6	4.8	18.9	335	36.1	19.1	17.3	14.0	14.3	15.5	6.0	6.0	11.3	4.2
	No	3,112	9.2	65.4	16.1	2.0	7.2	25.4	790	39.4	20.5	18.2	19.7	14.2	9.2	9.2	8.2	5.2	5.2
Marital status presence of children in the household	Single parent	263	14.8	63.9	14.4	0.8	6.1	21.3	56	25.0	17.9	19.6	17.9	17.9	14.3	12.5	5.4	5.4	5.4
	Two parents	1,507	11.5	70.0	12.2	1.7	4.6	18.5	279	38.4	19.4	16.8	13.3	13.6	15.8	4.7	6.1	12.5	3.9
	Single without children	2,148	9.4	64.5	16.6	1.9	7.6	26.1	560	43.6	19.6	18.9	22.5	15.0	5.9	10.7	7.0	3.4	4.8
	Married without children	964	8.7	67.4	15.1	2.4	6.3	23.9	230	29.1	22.6	16.5	13.0	12.2	17.4	5.7	11.3	9.6	6.1
Type of employment	Regular employee	2,787	9.7	66.7	16.1	1.1	6.4	23.6	657	43.7	20.7	16.4	18.4	12.6	8.8	5.2	3.2	5.9	4.6
	Non-regular employee	1,404	11.4	68.9	12.4	1.9	5.5	19.7	277	33.2	16.2	19.5	17.3	17.3	11.9	11.6	10.8	7.9	7.2
	Self-employed or at-home pieceworkers, etc.	567	9.9	69.3	14.5	1.8	4.6	20.8	118	30.5	26.3	23.7	23.7	14.4	16.1	16.1	11.0	4.2	4.2
	Not working	124	9.7	31.5	14.5	20.2	24.2	58.9	73	23.3	19.2	16.4	8.2	16.4	20.5	11.0	28.8	17.8	−
Employees of private enterprises: Main type of business	Construction	229	11.8	64.2	14.4	0.9	8.7	24.0	55	38.2	12.7	9.1	21.8	7.3	7.3	10.9	5.5	5.5	5.5
	Manufacturing	859	9.1	67.8	14.4	1.0	7.7	23.2	199	42.2	22.1	19.6	21.6	14.6	15.1	5.0	6.0	4.0	6.5
	Electricity, gas, heat supply, and water	61	11.5	70.5	11.5	-	6.6	18.0	11	45.5	18.2	-	9.1	27.3	9.1	−	18.2	−	−
	Information and communications	230	7.0	58.3	27.0	0.9	7.0	34.8	80	42.5	27.5	21.3	11.3	7.5	5.0	6.3	3.8	5.0	6.3
	Transport	255	13.3	62.7	16.1	1.2	6.7	23.9	61	45.9	23.0	11.5	21.3	8.2	9.8	3.3	4.9	1.6	−
	Wholesale and retail trade	526	10.3	69.6	13.7	1.1	5.3	20.2	106	39.6	19.8	17.0	23.6	14.2	10.4	8.5	5.7	5.7	3.8
	Finance and insurance	215	10.7	70.2	11.6	1.4	6.0	19.1	41	34.1	12.2	26.8	17.1	9.8	14.6	17.1	4.9	7.3	4.9
	Real estate	90	6.7	64.4	23.3	2.2	3.3	28.9	26	30.8	15.4	23.1	7.7	15.4	11.5	15.4	−	7.7	11.5
	Accommodations, eating and drinking services	78	17.9	60.3	12.8	3.8	5.1	21.8	17	41.2	29.4	5.9	23.5	17.6	5.9	5.9	5.9	11.8	17.6
	Medical, health care and welfare	720	8.2	73.5	12.9	1.1	4.3	18.3	132	44.7	14.4	15.2	18.2	13.6	9.8	6.1	4.5	12.9	6.1
	Education, learning support	121	11.6	71.1	12.4	1.7	3.3	17.4	21	42.9	14.3	33.3	28.6	19.0	4.8	4.8	9.5	9.5	−
	Postal services, cooperative associations	48	10.4	79.2	4.2	-	6.3	10.4	5	80.0	20.0	−	20.0	−	−	−	−	20.0	−
	Services	518	10.8	66.0	16.6	2.1	4.4	23.2	120	39.2	14.2	17.5	10.8	22.5	5.8	5.0	5.0	5.8	5.8
	Other	214	15.9	60.7	14.5	1.9	7.0	23.4	50	32.0	26.0	18.0	18.0	16.0	8.0	12.0	8.0	8.0	4.0
	Do not know	27	11.1	51.9	7.4	3.7	25.9	37.0	10	10.0	40.0	10.0	−	10.0	−	10.0	10.0	10.0	−
Employees of private enterprises: Size of enterprise	29 or fewer employees	828	10.1	69.7	13.8	1.4	5.0	20.2	167	40.7	20.4	18.6	15.6	9.0	9.0	7.2	6.6	9.0	3.6
	30 to 299 employees	1,291	9.5	69.1	15.0	1.0	5.3	21.4	276	40.6	16.3	15.6	22.8	16.3	10.5	6.9	4.7	6.2	3.6
	300 to 999 employees	555	10.8	66.3	16.0	1.1	5.8	22.9	127	33.9	24.4	21.3	14.2	14.2	9.4	6.3	3.1	9.4	4.7
	1,000 or more employees	1,076	10.1	65.8	16.5	0.8	6.7	24.1	259	43.6	21.2	17.4	18.1	14.3	12.0	8.1	5.4	3.5	7.7
	Do not know	441	12.2	63.9	11.1	3.6	9.1	23.8	105	41.0	15.2	15.2	14.3	15.2	3.8	5.7	8.6	7.6	7.6

Column

When the survey asked all valid respondents (employees of private enterprises [N=4,307] + freelance workers [N=575]) about the relationship between their life circumstances (immediately) before the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak and the pandemic's impact on their employment, work, or income, the percentage responding that either "there was a major impact" or "there was some degree of impact" on their current employment, work, or income rises the more that people experienced hardship in their life circumstances from before the pandemic (Figure 6).

Why is such a trend seen? Let us look at the relationship between life circumstances (immediately) before the COVID-19 pandemic and type of employment on April 1, 2020. The percentage of people who were not regular employees (non-regular employees or freelance workers) on April 1, 2020, rises among groups whose living conditions were harder before the pandemic's outbreak (Figure 7). Additionally, it is apparent that people whose life circumstances were hard before the pandemic have higher shares working in "transport," "wholesale and retail trade," "eating and drinking places, services" (main type of business of work [or employer in the case of employed persons]) on April 1, 2020 (Figure 8). (See Figure 9 for the relationship with size of employing enterprise.)

Figure 6. Life circumstances before the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak and impacts on employment, work, or income

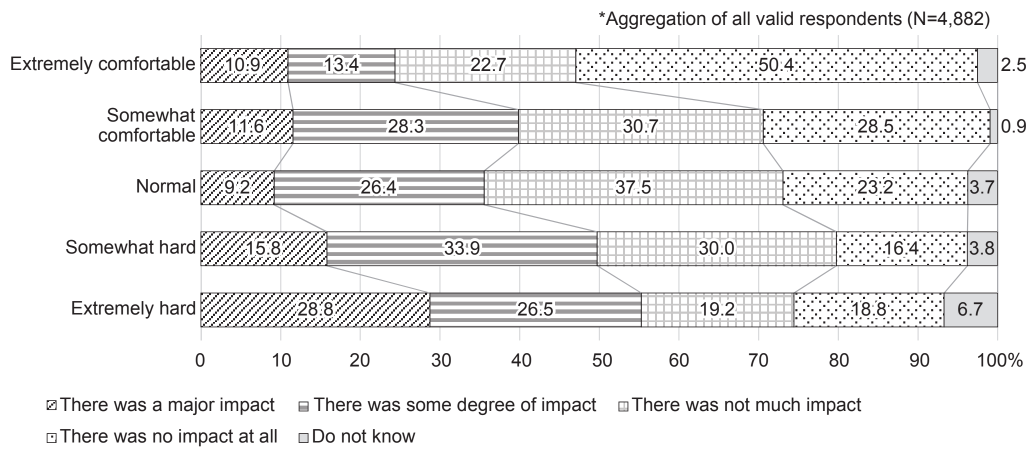


Figure 7. Relationship between life circumstances before the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak and type of employment on April 1, 2020

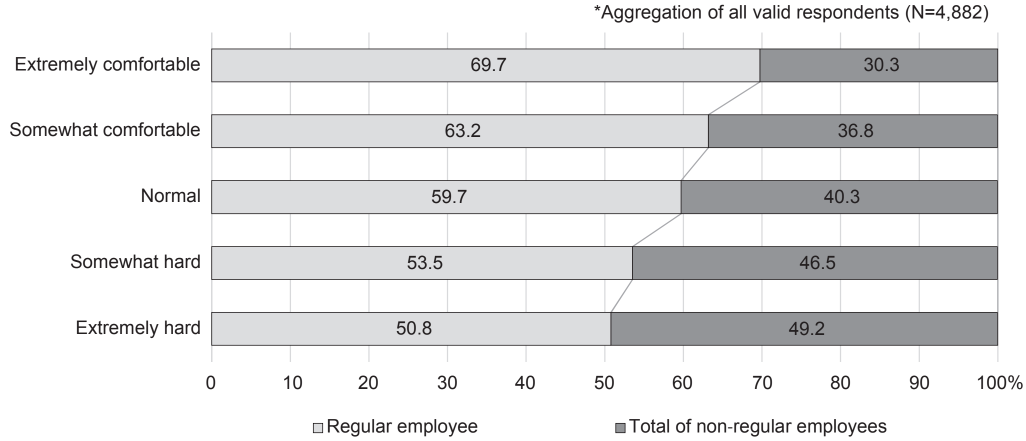


Figure 8. Relationship between life circumstances before the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak and main type of business of work (employer) on April 1, 2020

*Aggregation of all valid respondents (N=4,882)

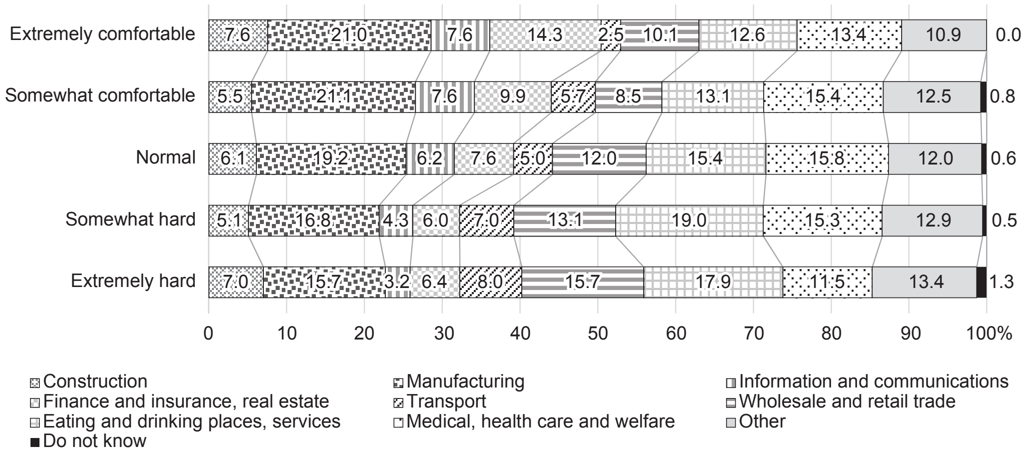
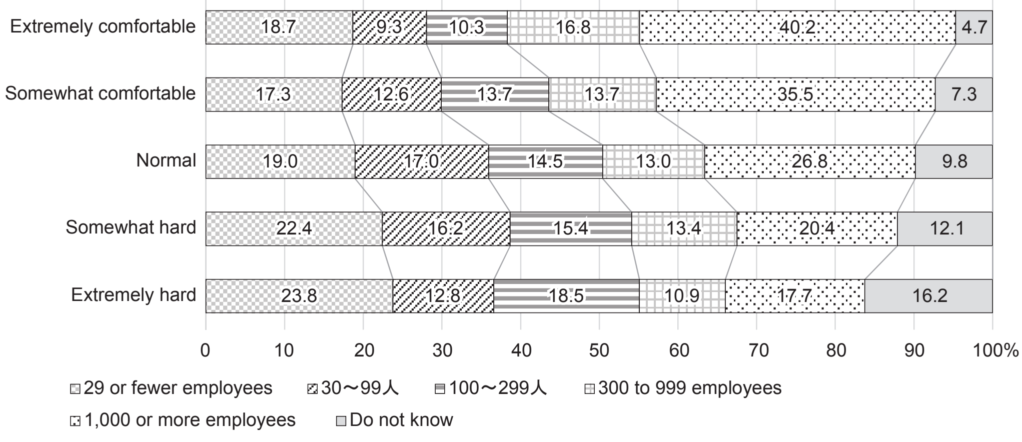


Figure 9. Relationship between life circumstances before the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak and size of employing enterprise on April 1, 2020

*Aggregation of 4,307 respondents who were "employees of private enterprises" on April 1, 2020.



Next, let us look at the relationship between impacts on employment, work, or income brought by the COVID-19 pandemic and transitional patterns in monthly income following the pandemic's outbreak. Of all valid respondents, the percentage whose monthly income following the pandemic's outbreak "remains low" rises correspondingly with larger impacts on employment, work, or income when respondents are "employees of private enterprises" both on April 1, 2020, and in October 2021, or when respondents are "freelance workers" on April 1, 2020, who are "self-employed or engaged in piecework" at the time of the survey (N=4,630) (see Figure 10). (The percentage of respondents whose monthly income has not returned to its original level rises correspondingly with the percentage of respondents who had lower individual annual incomes in 2019, before the pandemic's outbreak. See Figure 11)

Furthermore, a trend is seen whereby the percentage of respondents who have "currently have no savings" rises correspondingly with the percentages of respondents whose monthly income remains low or has not returned to its original level. A look at expenditures that respondents cut back on or forego due to worries about the future (multiple responses), for example, reveals high percentages for "food expenses at home" as well as "utilities expenses," "communications expenses (e.g., telephone, internet, etc.)," "medical expenses (including purchases of medicines)," and "insurance policies" (Figure 12). Additionally, the percentage of respondents whose life circumstances at the present time (as of October 2021) through to the end of the year are hard rises correspondingly with the percentages of respondents whose monthly income remains low or has not returned to its original level (Figure 13).

Figure 10. Impacts on employment, work, or income brought by the COVID-19 pandemic and transitional patterns in monthly income following the pandemic's outbreak

*Aggregation of 4,630 respondents who were "employees of private enterprises" both on April 1, 2020, and in October 2021, or "freelance workers" on April 1, 2020, who are currently "self-employed or engaged in piecework" in October 2021.

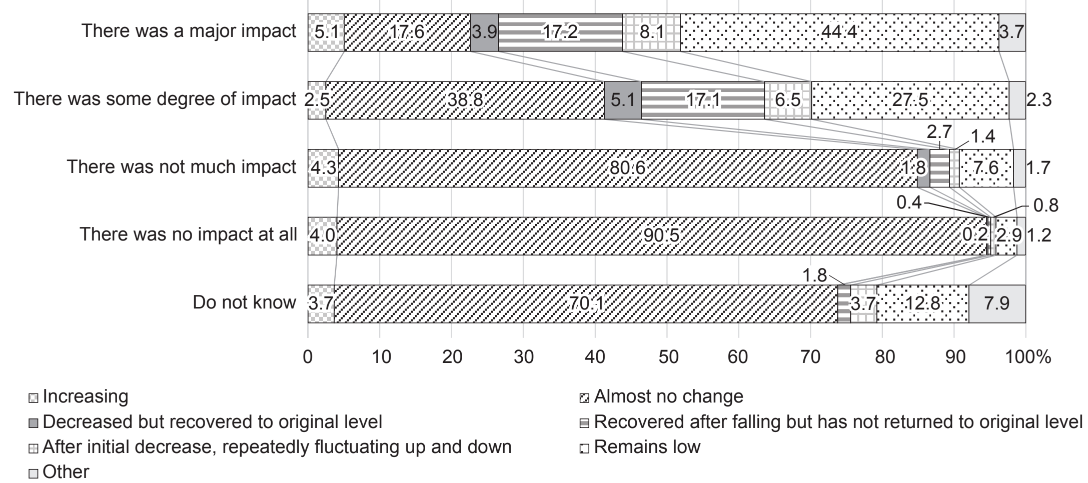


Figure 11. Transitional patterns in monthly income since the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak by individual annual income in 2019

*Aggregation of 3,445 respondents with transitional patterns in monthly income since the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak whose individual annual income in 2019 is known from the 1st through 6th waves.

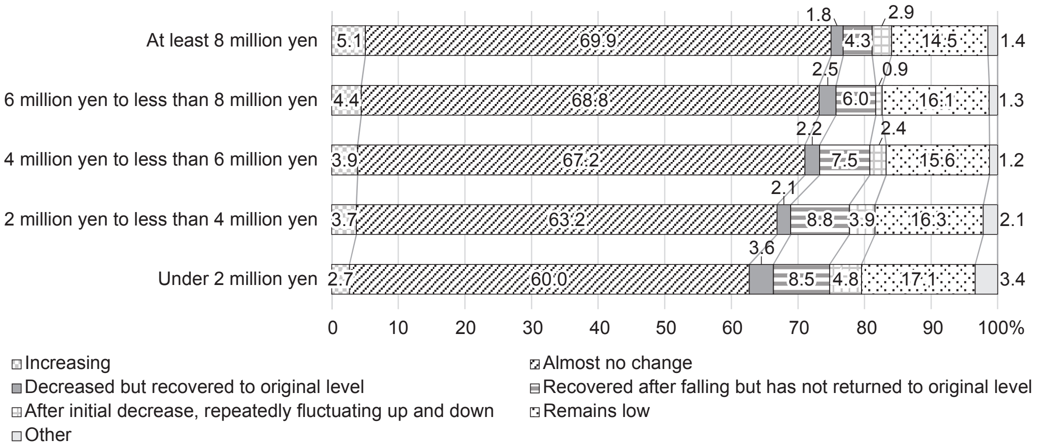


Figure 12. Expenditures that respondents cut back on or forego due to worries about the future by transitional pattern of monthly income since the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak

*Aggregation of 4,630 respondents who were "employees of private enterprises" both on April 1, 2020, and in October 2021, or "freelance workers" on April 1, 2020, who are currently "self-employed or engaged in piecework" in October 2021.

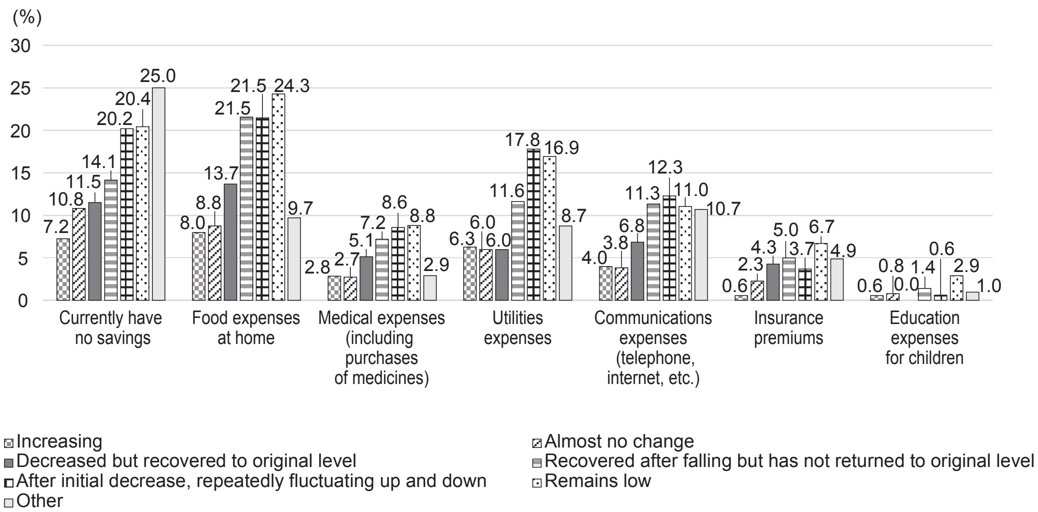
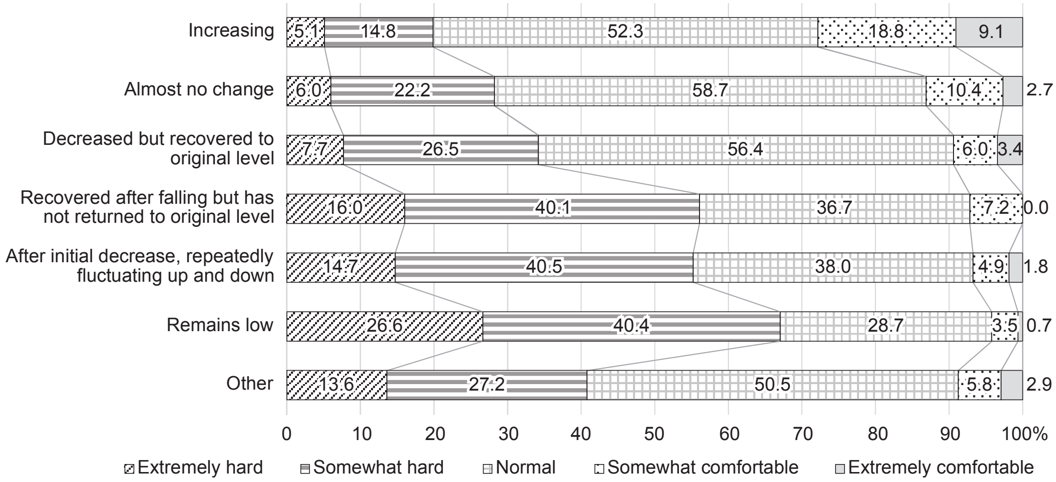


Figure 13. Life circumstances at the present time through to end of the year by transitional pattern of monthly income since the COVID-19 pandemic's outbreak

*Aggregation of 4,630 respondents who were "employees of private enterprises" both on April 1, 2020, and in October 2021, or "freelance workers" on April 1, 2020, who are currently "self-employed or engaged in piecework" in October 2021.



Outline of the Survey

"JILPT Panel Survey on the Impact of COVID-19 on Work and Daily Life"

1. Object

JILPT has been conducting an ongoing online survey of individuals since May 2020 to grasp the impacts that the spread of COVID-19 and measures to prevent it have had on the work and daily lives of workers. The 39th Short-Term Survey of Workers in Japan's "Immediate Report concerning COVID-19" (https://www.rengo-soken.or.jp/work/), which was conducted by the Research Institute for Advancement of Living Standards (RENGO-RIALS) as part of joint research by JILPT and RENGO-RIALS, is positioned as the "April 2020 Survey," and respondents who responded each time beginning with that survey have formed the core of the respondents panel since the first JILPT survey. The survey was conducted in late May and early June 2020 (1st wave), early August 2020 (2nd wave), mid-December 2020 (3rd wave), mid-March 2021 (4th wave), late June 2021 (5th wave) and late October 2021 (6th wave). Looking at developments pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic, states of emergency were declared on occasion in the past (as of June 2021); specifically, from April 7 to May 25, 2020 (expanded from seven prefectures to the entire nation and then fully lifted), from January 7 to March 21, 2021 (expanded from four prefectures to eleven prefectures and then fully lifted), and from April 25 (expanded from four prefectures to ten prefectures, lifted on June 20 except in Okinawa). Outbreaks of infections have been suppressed through requests for limitations on activities, namely in the forms of reducing commutes, suspending business, and refraining from going outside.

On July 12, 2021, just before the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games (July 23 to August 8, 2021), which were held in 2021 after a postponement of one year, the Tokyo metropolitan area was added to the area covered by a "third state of emergency declaration" following Okinawa. Six other prefectures were added on August 2. Subsequently, the number of new cases exceeded 20,000 a day, setting a new record almost every day, due to the rapid spread of a variant strain (the Delta variant) that is reported to be more infectious. As regions engulfed by the 5th wave faced serious pressure in terms of their medical care services, the state of emergency was expanded to 13 prefectures on August 20, 2021, and to 21 prefectures on August 27. Another 12 prefectures were placed under "semi-emergency coronavirus prevention measures."

Meanwhile, vaccination began on February 17, 2021, with priority given to health care workers and the elderly. Vaccination of the public progressed by adding workplace vaccination and mass vaccination, and more than 100 million people had been vaccinated (at least once) as of December 2021. As a result, the number of new cases has gradually decreased since September of 2021 and normalcy was restored on the medical front. The situation resulted in the full-scale lifting of the state of emergency and semi-emergency coronavirus prevention measures on September 30 for the first time in about six months. Although people still cannot remove their masks and go back to life as it was before due to vigilance against influenza and new variant strains (the Omicron variant), it appears the situation has finally entered a stage where social activities can resume as collective immunity is attained and society can look forward to "life with the coronavirus" and a "post-COVID" era.

It was within this context that the October 2021 survey continued getting a grasp of the urgent situation and investigating changes brought about by COVID-19 that will affect work, workplaces, and daily life in the future.

2. Surveyed persons (sample)

The survey targeted "employees of private companies" and "freelance workers" (independent workers who are not shop owners and who do not have employees [excluding those in agriculture, forestry, or fishery]) among people registered with an internet survey company who were aged at least 20 years old but no more than 64 years old and who were residing in Japan as of April 1 of last year (2020) (including people who subsequently became unemployed on or after April 1, 2020, and up to the time of the survey if they satisfy the above requirement). Using the Employment Status Survey as the basis in both cases, we conducted stratified allocated collection for "employees of private enterprises" by sex × age group × residential region block × by regular/non-regular employee status (by 180 cells), and for "freelance workers" by sex × age group × residential region block of "self-employed workers (without employees)" (by 90 cells). We then prepared panel data with the October 2021 Survey by delivering and collecting surveys with priority given to respondents who responded to the April 2020 Survey and all of the subsequent surveys conducted thus far (i.e., the surveys of May, August, and December 2020 and of March, June, and October 2021). We also conducted supplementary deliveries and collections to obtain portions missing from overall target numbers.

3. Survey period

October 20 to 26, 2021

4. Survey method

Internet survey (write-in responses on a web browser screen)

5. Number of valid responses

"Employees of private enterprises": 4,307 (2,068 "respondents to each of the April, May, August, December, March, June, and October surveys" and 2,239 others)

"Freelance workers": 575 (13 fewer than the target number)

See attached table for attributes of respondents.

6. Survey results

May 2020 Survey (1st wave)

https://www.jil.go.jp/english/special/covid-19/survey/documents/20200610.pdf

August 2020 Survey (2nd wave)

https://www.jil.go.jp/english/special/covid-19/survey/documents/20200826.pdf

December 2020 Survey (3rd wave)

https://www.jil.go.jp/english/special/covid-19/survey/documents/20210118.pdf

March 2021 Survey (4th wave)
https://www.jil.go.jp/english/special/covid-19/survey/documents/20210430a.pdf
June 2021 Survey (5th wave)
https://www.jil.go.jp/english/special/covid-19/survey/documents/20210727.pdf
October 2021 Survey (6th wave)
https://www.jil.go.jp/english/special/covid-19/survey/documents/20211222.pdf

For results originally released in Japanese, see websites below.
https://www.jil.go.jp/press/documents/20200610.pdf
https://www.jil.go.jp/press/documents/20200826.pdf
https://www.jil.go.jp/press/documents/20210118.pdf
https://www.jil.go.jp/press/documents/20210430a.pdf
https://www.jil.go.jp/press/documents/20210727.pdf
https://www.jil.go.jp/press/documents/20211222.pdf

Attributes of respondents:

"Employees of private enterprises" on April 1, 2020 (N=4,307) (regular employees N=2,848, non-regular employees N= 1,459)

(%)

		Total	Regular employee	Non-regular employee
Sex	Male	53.7	67.7	26.3
	Female	46.3	32.3	73.7
Age group (as of April 1, 2020)	20-29 years old	18.6	19.2	17.6
	30-39 years old	23.0	25.4	18.4
	40-49 years old	28.4	29.2	26.9
	50-59 years old	22.0	21.9	22.2
	60-69 years old	7.9	4.4	14.8
Marital status	Married	51.5	52.7	49.2
	Divorced or widowed	11.0	9.7	13.4
	Unmarried	37.5	37.6	37.4
Presence of children in the household	Yes	37.8	40.2	32.9
	No	62.2	59.8	67.1
Marital status presence of children in the household	Single parent	5.7	5.3	6.3
	Two parents	32.1	34.9	26.6
	Single without children	42.8	42.0	44.5
	Married without children	19.4	17.8	22.6

		Total	Regular employee	Non-regular employee
Region of residence (as of April 1, 2020)	Hokkaido	3.9	3.8	4.2
	Tohoku	6.7	7.0	6.2
	North Kanto	5.4	5.3	5.5
	Tokyo metropolitan area	30.8	31.0	30.4
	Chubu	18.6	18.8	18.1
	Kansai area	15.7	15.1	16.7
	Chugoku	5.6	5.7	5.3
	Shikoku	2.7	2.8	2.5
	Kyushu/Okinawa	10.7	10.5	11.1
Household income (including tax) in 2020	Less than 3 million yen	13.5	8.0	24.3
	3 million yen to less than 5 million yen	23.3	24.7	20.7
	5 million to less than 7 million yen	19.6	21.9	15.2
	7 million yen or more	27.9	32.7	18.6
	Do not know	15.6	12.7	21.2

"Freelance workers" on April 1, 2020 (N=575)

(%)

		Total
Sex	Male	70.6
	Female	29.4
Age group (as of April 1, 2020)	20-29 years old	4.9
	30-39 years old	16.5
	40-49 years old	29.7
	50-59 years old	31.7
	60-69 years old	17.2
Marital status	Married	43.8
	Divorced or widowed	11.8
	Unmarried	44.3
Presence of children in the household	Yes	25.0
	No	75.0
Marital status presence of children in the household	Single parent	3.3
	Two parents	21.7
	Single without children	52.9
	Married without children	22.1

		Total
Region of residence (as of April 1, 2020)	Hokkaido	3.8
	Tohoku	6.8
	North Kanto	5.0
	Tokyo metropolitan area	31.1
	Chubu	16.5
	Kansai area	16.3
	Chugoku	5.2
	Shikoku	3.0
	Kyushu/Okinawa	12.2
Household income (including tax) in 2020	Less than 3 million yen	23.5
	3 million yen to less than 5 million yen	19.0
	5 million to less than 7 million yen	18.1
	7 million yen or more	17.9
	Do not know	21.6