

## **JILPT Research Activities**

As was introduced in the first issue of the *Review*, January 2004, the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT) has launched research projects under nine themes in a three-year plan from FY2003 to FY2006. The following is an update of the progress status of each project for FY2004.

In addition to those research projects, researchers of JILPT also conduct “individual research.” There are approximately 50 themes for such individual research, a number of which are also outlined below.

### **Themes of Research Projects**

#### **1. Geo-structural analysis of unemployment**

In FY2004, the project has conducted research on employment and unemployment in the regions from the perspective of labor mobility and changes in industrial structure, as well as on regional vitalization through employment.

#### **2. Restructuring of the system determining working conditions**

In FY2004, the system determining working conditions of part-time workers has been comprehensively studied. The project has also conducted research on the modalities for labor-management relations given structural changes, including diversification of working conditions.

#### **3. Desirable employment strategy in Japan**

In FY2004, while continuing to study employment strategies in member countries of OECD and EU, the project has comprehensively analyzed public employment policies in Japan. It has also conducted specific analysis on the development of employment policies since the 1990s (presentation of primary model plan). The project has investigated the synergy between employment policies of central and local governments and employment strategies by corporations.

#### **4. Environment containing employment and safety nets which would make possible diverse workings styles**

In FY2004, the project has conducted case studies on outsourcing and personnel of non-profit organizations (NPOs) as well as on diverse working conditions at companies that extend employment contract beyond the retirement age of 60 years old.

#### **5. Comprehensive analysis of corporate business strategies and personnel treatment systems, etc.**

In FY2004, the research has been conducted to grasp the recent changes in human resources management systems of Japanese companies. It has also

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investigated how such changes are having an effect on corporate results, worker productivity and morale, and physical and mental well-being.

**6. Desirable infrastructure development for the labor market regarding vocational ability development**

In FY2004, the project has undertaken research to gain a picture of the status of the training market by conducting a questionnaire survey to educational institutions and training providers in the private sector on qualitative aspects, such as content, period and level of training provided in the training market, that are not immediately discernible from existing statistics. It also conducted interviews with workers, results of which have been comprehensively analyzed in comparison with related data.

**7. Establishment of a system which would harmonize private and occupational life**

In FY2004, the project has investigated corporations and employees on their policies designed to support harmonizing occupational and private life, such as child-raising and nursing-care, as well as their needs, to identify the way to expand and enhance such policies in the future and elucidate obstacles to harmonization of private and occupation life. This issue of harmonization has also been investigated from the perspective of a diversification of working styles and lifestyles.

**8. Development of an integrated occupational information database**

In FY2004, as a pilot study, the project has operated an Internet database for evaluation to improve the system. It has also developed and maintained occupational information, the substantial contents, including data on figures, to develop the primary version of practical use aimed for practical test scheduled in FY 2005.

**9. Support for the re-employment of middle-aged and older workers who have lost their jobs**

In FY2004, the project has developed tools designed to assist job-seekers realize their own potential and general status of re-employment. It has also developed prototype systems based on a research into a guidance system for attitude inventory, a management experience check list, the career counseling process and “*Career In ★ Sites*” for middle-aged and older workers. A number of career counseling cases have also been collected.

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## **Individual Research conducted during FY2004**

### **Estimates for demand and supply of labor force**

Researcher(s) seeks to estimate the labor force and unemployment rates until approximately 2050, which serves as basic information in formulating employment policies.

### **Research into the issue of foreign workers**

Researcher(s) seeks to gain an understanding of the trends in labor demand by corporations for foreign workers under the current high unemployment rate, and examine causes for such trends.

### **Research into the characteristics of the unemployed and paths to re-employment**

Researcher(s) investigates the actual situation on the unemployed to analyze the differences in their re-employment path according to characteristics. Based on that, the researcher(s) aims to make policy proposals towards re-employment of the unemployed.

### **Follow-up study on actual situation of the unemployed**

Researcher(s) conducts a three-year follow-up study on the actual situation on the unemployed. The results of the study will be analyzed as panel data to be used as reference for planning of more appropriate unemployment measures.

### **Research into theoretical analysis of unemployment rate**

Researcher(s) studies method to analyze structural and frictional unemployment more accurately to understand the labor market. The researcher(s) also provides reference materials to be used to identify the effectiveness of labor policies in responding to structural or frictional unemployment.

### **Investigation and research into young people's transition to labor market and modalities for supporting such a transition**

Researcher(s) conducts hearings into the support policies of Japan for young people that have recently been initiated and also studies the operational and evaluation status of new policies including "Connections" service in the United Kingdom to provide materials to be used to effectively develop support policies for young people in Japan.

### **Research into jobs and workplaces with appeal for young people**

Using the Human Resource Management (HRM) checklist, researcher(s) conducts a case study to investigate the kind of jobs and workplaces that have appeal for young people. The results of this study will be used as reference for support policies for young people.

### **Investigation into the labor contracts for workers engaging in a side job**

Researcher(s) studies a type of a side job that enables life design as a second

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career, starting from the form of side business (employment) to the form of a self-employment business. This includes studies on working regulations and career counseling provided by companies, changes in positioning of side jobs in the training system, and commission labor contract or employment at NPO as a side job.

**Wage reforms in large companies over the past ten years and future issues**

Researcher(s) collects actual cases to understand changes to the wage structure of leading companies in such industries as electronics and automobile during the so-called “lost decade,” to give an outlook for the future of wage systems.

**Research into wage data for work and duties standards**

Wage information, represented by the “Basic Statistical Study on Wage Structure,” or the one that relates to job descriptions and duties, is, with some exceptions including foreign-affiliated companies, not accessible. The researcher(s) aims to organize and provide wage information based on compact working standards.

**Research into legislation pertaining to labor standards and labor contract (Development of labor contract)**

Based on the supplementary resolution to the revised Labour Standards Law enacted in the 156th regular session of the Diet, researcher(s) conducts questionnaires and hearings to companies and labor unions, to gain a picture of the changes in labor conditions in Japan, and the development of labor contracts, including temporary or permanent transfer, and reassignment.

**Research into corporate compliance and employment**

Researcher(s) studies human resources management from the perspective of corporate compliance, the results of which are to be used as reference for planning of employment policies. The research will employ an approach to take the employment of persons with disabilities as an example, which is a theme that has been vigorously discussed in recent years in the United States and other countries.

**Research into workers job consciousness**

The Japanese style of employment premised on life-long employment is being replaced with a growing diversity of working styles including part-time work, dispatched work and contract labor, the needs of which are increasing. In addition, the circumstances surrounding workers are undergoing great change including the introduction of performance-based evaluation system. Researcher(s) aims to accurately grasp the direction of changes in needs and workers’ job consciousness in order to appropriately promote tailor-made employment policies in such a changing environment.