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General Survey

First-Ever Drop in CPI

The average consumer price index (CPI) for 1995 stood at 107.0 against the 1990 base of 100, down 0.1 percent from the previous year, the Management and Coordination Agency recently reported. This is the first ever year-on-year fall in the overall index. The present CPI index was first adopted in 1971. The fall stemmed chiefly from the decline in the prices of industrial products and sharp drops in the prices of rice and fresh vegetables relative to those of the year before, the latter being affected in 1994 by unusually hot weather and a shortage of water.

Contribution by component to the drop in the overall CPI index in 1995 shows that rent (+1.9%), tuition (+3.2%), communication expenses (+4.0%) and traveling allowances (+1.8%) prices worked to push up the overall CPI index. On the other hand, grains (-7.4%), auto-related expenses (-2.2%), vegetables (-5.3%) and cultural and entertainment related durable (-9.9%) pushed down the overall index. Public utility rates and service prices were up, but such commodities as furniture, kitchen utensils, apparel and footwear, whose prices continue to decline because of a surge in low-priced imports and rationalization and streamlining of distribution channels, pushed down the overall CPI index. However, the prices for furniture and apparel tended to show a smaller decline than in 1994, bringing the decline to a stop. "With the supply-demand gap expected to narrow in light of business recovery and import prices predicted to bottom out following the yen's depreciation, 1996 will not show a fall in consumer prices," the Economic Planning Agency forecasts.

Working Conditions and the Labor Market

Number of Regular Workers Posts First Decline in 20 Years -Preliminary Report of 1995 Monthly Labor Survey-

The number of regular workers at firms with 30 and more employees was 2,341 million, down 0.6 percent from a year earlier, according to a preliminary report on 1995 of the Monthly Labor Survey released by the Ministry of Labour. The figure represented the first year-on-year drop in the 20 years since 1975, following the first oil-supply crunch. It also showed that the decline in the number of workers was due to restrictions on new hires and other such reasons.

A look at the rate of change in regular workers in major industries in 1995 shows that

their number fell 1.9 percent from the previous year in manufacturing. The decrease was notably large in textiles. The number of regular workers shrank 1.0 percent in wholesale and retail trades and eating and drinking establishments, while they sagged 1.2 percent in finance and insurance. Services witnessed a 1.1 percent rise in the number of regular workers. Regarding the labor turnover rate by industry, in manufacturing the rate of new hires stood at 1.14 percent, down 0.02 point from the previous year, while the rate of job separations stood at 1.35 percent, up 0.03 point over the year before. On the other hand, the rate of new hires was 1.95 percent and that of job separations 2.11 percent, with both staying the same as the previous year, in wholesale and retail trades and eating and drinking establishments. In services, the rate of new hires was 1.91 percent, down 0.10 point, while that of job separations was 1.87 percent, down 0.08 point from a year earlier.

Meanwhile, total annual hours worked per regular worker stood at 1,909 hours, an increase of 5 hours over the year before, representing the first such rise in the eight years since 1987. By industry, they stood at 1,968 hours (up 0.5% over the previous year) in manufacturing, 1,762 hours (down 0.5% from a year earlier) in wholesale and retail trades and eating and drinking establishments and 1,836 hours (up 0.4% over the year before) in services. The Ministry of Labour ascribes the first increase in total annual working hours in 8 years to "less eagerness to reduce working hours resulting from a recession which would increase costs."

Corporate Support for Job Change and Going Independent

With the average age of the work force rising, recession-battered corporations are hard pressed to bear the heavy burden of personnel costs. Among middle-aged and senior white-collar workers who have become the target of restructuring, many abandon corporate life to work on their own. In addition, some firms have established a system for helping middle-aged and elderly employees find new jobs. Examples follow.

East Japan Railway Company, with more than 80,000 workers as of April 1994, launched in 1993 a "New Life Plan With Paid Time Off" intended to rectify the unbalanced age structure of its workforce - 30,000 employees in their 40s as against 3,800 in their 20s. Under the System, the 55-year-old worker is offered four retirement options to choose from as he wishes, including (1) continuing to work at the present job until age 57; (2) paid time off for two years and retirement at 57; (3) an early-retirement package effective at 55; and (4) temporary transfer to subsidiaries or related firms. When the worker continues to work until 57, he will be offered 3 options: first, paid time off for two years and retirement at 59; second,

a lucrative early-retirement package effective at 57; and third, secondment to subsidiaries or related firms until 60. The company will pay workers on leave 85 percent of their salaries for the 2-year period. More than 600 have chosen these options to date.

Nippon Steel Corp.'s "Special Vacation System" is targeted for union members 45 years or older. The employee can take a 1-year long vacation on condition that he will retire after finishing his paid time off. He will be offered 80 percent of his last salary immediately before taking vacation. What is more, he will have his paid time off computed in the ordinary retirement allowance. More than 100 employees have taken advantage of this offer in the 5-year period from 1989.

In March 1994, Nihon Unisys Ltd. created a program that supports new career options, with the following options. First is *tenseki*, or transfer to a subsidiary, for employees aged between 50 and 55 and the chance to extend employment there till 63. Second is the chance to find re-employment at a related firm for employees between the ages of 50 to 55 that would provide at the time of retirement 50 percent of the difference in annual income between the parent company and the related firm for the period till retirement. Third is the chance to find another job at a local subcontractor for employees aged between 48 and 58 that would provide as a special payment 50 percent of annual income at the time of retirement. Fourth is the chance to start a business for 55-year-old or younger employees who have worked for the company 20 years or more. Such former employees would receive support from the firm through business when the field is related to the firm's.

These support programs for middle-aged and senior employees are a method to cut payroll costs while also helping those who are considering going independent.

Labor-Management Relations

***Shunto* - Labor and Management Stances in Wage-Hike Talks**

Kinzokurokyo, Japan Council of Metal Worker's Unions (IMF-JC) submitted their wage-hike demands to management by February 22. Reflecting the yen's recent retreat against the dollar and improvement in corporate earnings, unions of four pace-setting metal industries (electrical machinery, automobiles, shipbuilding and heavy machinery, and steel) are seeking to surpass last year's record-low 2.83 percent average wage gain.

Management, meanwhile, maintains that assuring jobs is more important than raising wages to maintain international competitiveness. The annual labor-management wage

negotiations, known as *shunto*, thus got underway in earnest around March 21, when answers from management to these demands were scheduled to come.

With clear signs of recovery in business results due to increased demand for semiconductors amid a global boom in personal computers, electrical machinery makers are expected to show double digit profit increases for the second straight year in fiscal 1995, which ends in March 1996. Thus, labor and management in other industries are keeping a closer watch than before on the wage-setting trend in the electronics industry during this year's spring wage talks. Unions of electronics manufacturers will call for wage increases for a 35-year-old worker with 17 years of service, thus moving away from the present "average wage-hike formula" which represents the average wage-increase rate for all union members and will emphasize the new "individual wage formula." This move is intended to narrow the gap in wage disparity between industries by representation of the wage amount in a way that is easily comparable to that of other industries. They demand a wage hike averaging over 12,500yen monthly.

A tug of war over working hours between labor and management will be the focus of wage talks in the auto industry. Workers are expressing concern over the decline in domestic car production due to sluggish auto exports and expanding overseas production. Foreseeing more serious employment conditions in the years ahead, they are calling for adjustment of production capacity. Jidoshasoren (Confederation of Japan Automobile Workers' Unions) is demanding a cut in scheduled working hours to around 1,870 hours a year by shortening daily working hours by 20 minutes.

However management maintains "the current working hours are favorably comparable to those of U. S. Big Three and are much shorter than in South Korea".

Whether or not there will be a wage hike in the steel industry draws much attention. Last year, unions at the nation's 5 major steel makers faced the first zero-rise in wages except during the postwar period of economic turmoil. They reflected the poor business performance of steel makers in 1995. Tekkororen (Japan Federation of Steel Workers' Union) has demanded a pay hike of 3,000yen in this year's wage talks. It is determined to stand firm and reject a two-year streak of no pay increases, thus stressing that it plans to vote to approve a strike depending on management's response to their demand.

Japan Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Workers' Unions for the first time dropped an approach to determining wage increases based upon the rise in annual business. This is due to a wider gap in business results between Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd.

which expects record-high corporate earnings and 7 other firms.

International Relations

Workshop on Labor Mobility in Asian Regions

On February 1-2, the Japan Institute of Labour (JIL) sponsored a workshop on the theme of International Labor Mobility and the Job Market in Asia - National Policy and Regional Cooperation - at its LINC Hall in Shinjuku, Tokyo. The workshop, the second of its kind to be held for exchanges of information on international labor mobility under the aegis of the Japanese government, the OECD and the ILO, was attended by researchers and administrators from Asian countries.

Addressing the gathering in his key-note speech, Akira Takanashi, JIL's Research Director General, said changes were also occurring in international labor mobility due to rapid economic development in Asian regions, thus stressing the need to build a monitoring system to regularly grasp the mobility of people in the region.

Manolo Abella, ILO's senior specialist, pointed out that labor mobility in Asian areas was brought on by labor demand rather than by labor supply, stating the need for both sending and accepting countries to work together to establish a policy to protect workers overseas.

Participants from 9 Asian nations including Japan reported on the present situation of worker mobility and policy tasks in their countries. A representative from China, the major sending nation, explained that the government administers migration of its workers abroad and enters in agreement with the government of hosting nations to let them engage in such jobs as construction. Participants from Thailand and Malaysia which allow in foreign workers, reported on the current state which is characterized by a surge of workers from Indonesia into their respective countries. The two nations are plagued with a continuing labor shortage.

Furthermore, Thailand, which can be classified into the third category country characterized by the coexistence of both an inflow and outflow of workers, sees its workers migrating to Asian and Mideastern countries, while on the other hand, it has 500,000 illegal workers from Myanmar and Cambodia engaged in agriculture in the country.

■ Thus, the participants confirmed the ever more complex landscape of worker mobility in Asian regions and the need for systems of cooperation beyond national boundaries. These include cooperation on restriction of underground brokers or similar organizations.

Public Policy

Sixth Basic Plan for Vocational Ability Development

On February 5, the Ministry of Labour presented its draft Sixth Basic Plan for Vocational Ability Development for the 5-year-period of 1996 to 2000 to the Central Vocational Ability Development Council, which approved the plan. In the Basic Plan draft, the Ministry sets forth, in view of changes in the labor supply-demand structure, its priorities for vocational ability development. These are support for an individual's ability development, consolidation of an ability evaluation system in order to respond adequately to the conversion of the industrial structure, as well as expanding new fields resulting from sophisticated information telecommunications and ongoing deregulation. The Ministry reported this Plan to a Cabinet and will publish it as its notification by this spring.

Among the areas to be addressed in the Plan, one of the priority issues for vocational ability development is "consolidation and substantiation of the vocational education system." The Lifelong Ability Development Center (tentatively named) will be opened in fiscal 1997 as a facility to offer vocational education for white-collar workers. This center will analyze the realities of white-collar jobs and develop, implement and spread "model" vocational training programs. In addition, the Plan strengthens measures to deal with matters involving white-collar workers by expansion and substantiation of the Business Career System (the vocational ability acquisition system) and promotion of career analysis and counseling.

Meanwhile, there are four areas of vocational ability development for working individuals. Under the Plan, the Ministry will "promote individual-based vocational ability development" as follows. First, help will be provided to individual workers enabling them to make up an "ability development plan" by provision of information and consultative services. Second, education and training opportunities will be expanded by consolidating systems of a variety of educational institutions. Third, help will be given to companies to improve their systems for voluntary vocational ability development through vacations, paid time off for education, during working hours and by providing expenses for vocational ability development programs. ■ The Plan also proposes that the government offer support for smaller-sized venture businesses. According to the Plan, it is necessary to make active use of "the Project for Fostering People at Small- and Medium-sized Firms" and support measures stipulated in "the Law for Securing Labor Force in Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises".

Special Topic

Japanese In-House Job Training and Development

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Japan's In-House Job Training Amidst Down-sizing Wave

Because of the prolonged recession, Japanese companies have been forced to restructure their management, products and operations as well as human resources, to stay competitive. Most of them, however, do not take such drastic actions as firing their employees with obsolete skills. 66 percent of companies consider it necessary to convert employees' skill structure, but many are trying to implement this through their private employee-education, said the Japan Association of Industrial Training and, the Japan Federation of Employees' Associations, in their 8th Survey on Industrial Training, carried out in 1995, the survey team of which includes me.

The survey, to which 570 companies with an average of 3,341 regular employees responded, shows how the nation's leading companies offer education and training programs to their employees. According to the survey, recession-battered Japanese corporations are making greater efforts to reduce the time needed to build a competitive and dedicated freshman. At the same time, they are putting more energy into making managers with the ability to train, develop and motivate subordinates. Firms are also trying to rotate more frequently within the firm or within corporate groups middle-aged and senior workers with less chance to make the most of their skills in the current jobs. They are not only downsizing their off-JT but strengthening their human power through stressing on-the-job training (OJT) and supporting semi-autonomous self-development efforts.

OJT and Career Development Programs

The fundamental way of offering in-house job training is on-the-job. Jobs are so designed that employees may develop and nurture their own skills through their daily routine jobs. Managers are on the constant watch for his employees to see how well they are developing their skills, giving advice and discussing with them how to better do their jobs. OJT is essentially targeted for newly hired employees, and 51.8 percent of companies pick an instructor from among senior employees for each newly hired employee and let the former

look after the latter until they have acquired basic skills. The newly hired employees are considered non-active members for a period of from one week to several months as they undergo on-site training as non-staffers. While on probation, they rotate through several workplaces - factories and offices - to get a whole picture of the company.

The role of the superior is important in that he or she devises jobs so that his employees are groomed through daily jobs and that he or she gives advice day by day to them. Thus, managers are trained before being promoted to their current positions on how to plan and arrange skill-development of his subordinates. At 29.3 percent of the firms polled, managers are required to make a training plan for each of his subordinates. Manager and his subordinates meet one by one once or twice a year to discuss that plan. Whether the manager has fostered his subordinates properly constitutes an important yardstick in personnel evaluation of the manager himself.

Japanese corporations, however, do not consider the functioning of OJT is good enough. Corporate personnel staff relies totally on middle management and front line superiors for achieving the daily performance of OJT. The survey found 63.6 percent of firms believe that top management does not adequately check to see whether or not OJT is being properly performed. 69.1 percent said middle managers and supervisors are well aware of the importance of OJT, but their daily action of OJT can be questioned. Why? One of the reasons is that middle managers and supervisors are too busy to have any time for taking interest in the training of their juniors. This view was expressed by 50.7 percent of responding companies. As for the second reason, 47.2 percent said middle managers and supervisors themselves do not realize the importance of OJT. Thirdly, the generation gap poses a major problem in Japanese companies. Superiors and subordinates sometimes find that their values clash when they work together to draw up a career development plan. 31.9 percent pointed out the fact that a generation gap makes it difficult for both sides to communicate with each other smoothly.

Various Systems for Developing People

Having these problems involving OJT, Japanese corporations draft a variety of programs which complement OJT in order to stimulate the development of employees' abilities. According to the survey, 49.7 percent have established their own job qualification systems under which employees may become authorized experts in specific jobs. As for public qualification, only 18.2 percent offer lucrative packages, such as higher pay, to those who possess official qualifications. Japanese firms stress job qualifications that are applicable only within them, and respect less governmental qualifications. 36.1 percent give in-house examination to check their employees' skills, 27.7 percent have introduced a system of

job-posting and encourage their people to study for the job posted and check their ability if it can be enough developed to make them possible to apply that job. At 28.1 percent of firms, meanwhile, those workers in several sections who do not see each other in their daily jobs are organized to gather for special programs to cross-check their skills. Furthermore, 53.9 percent send workers to related firms for educational purposes and 45.9 percent have initiated a program of dispatching employees to universities and research institutions.

Group Training and Training Staffers

Half or more of the corporations questioned adopt such methods as lectures, discussions, case studies, role-playing, study tours to train and educate employees. More precisely, they offer lectures and discussions to division managers, lectures and discussions as well as case studies to section heads and chiefs, lectures and discussions to other employees and lectures and discussions, role-playing and OJT to new recruits. On the whole, companies go all out to train and educate new recruits and adopt a variety of approaches toward this end. Over 30 percent utilize audio-visual aids and management games. To make up for the shortage of training and development staffers, a cross-training system is adopted in in-house off-the-job training (Off-JT). The employee acts as a lecturer to instruct other employees. Top management themselves provide training to division managers, while division managers to section heads or below.

Direct expenses for group training (texts, instructor fees, meeting rooms, hotel bills, food, travel allowances, out-of-house seminar participation fees) average an annual 20,000yen to 100,000yen per employee. Of the firms surveyed, 74.8 percent think they should increase these training expenses, notwithstanding that the training budget fluctuates depending on business climate.

Companies surveyed have an average of 17.3 staffers responsible for training and development, which account for only 0.5 percent of the average number of 3,340.6 regular employees. Most of in-house training and development staffers do not have academic background in the area of education. Furthermore 46.1 percent said "We won't develop education and training professionals." Some of those responsible for training and development are selected from other departments and sections, and they perform education-related tasks for a given period and then shift back to other departments and sections. Some move from other sections of personnel management, but many move again on to sections other than personnel administration. In this sense, employees are sometimes trained by novices. Those novices are mainly trained at outside seminars. However, 43.6 percent of corporations consider the small number of training specialists on their staff as a problem for them.

Active Utilization of External Training Organs

With relatively weak in-house Off-JT, external training shops are actively utilized. Of the firms surveyed, 89.8 percent send employees to seminars outside the firm - 58.2 percent have division managers undergo training offered by private-sector training and development concerns, 75.4 percent do so for section heads, 72.5 percent for team leaders, 65.6 percent for general employees and 61.7 percent for new recruits. What do corporations do to make training programs, provided by outsiders, effective? First, they select training seminar participants carefully matching their skills with seminar targets. Next, those selected are expected to do homework for seminars beforehand. After the seminar, they are asked to report to their bosses on what they have learned and debate on this. But with education and training budgets slashed at the same rate as other costs during the recession, 41.2 percent of firms said they wish to rely less on outside education programs and instead offer equivalent training programs in the company.

Supporting Self Development

Firms are increasing spending on supporting self-teaching while reducing budgets for outside training centers. Japanese workers are generally studious, and many read professional books and magazines, take correspondence courses and attend external workshops. Many firms bear part of the tuition fees. These are called "employee self-development programs." What is the typical self-development program? The company bears part of the necessary expenses for a study group held voluntarily by employees. The company subsidizes part or all of the expenses for the courses employees choose from among a list prepared by the firm. Furthermore, the company financially helps employees purchase books or attend outside training classes to acquire official qualifications. Some companies distribute to employees a list of books they recommend to read. Some often conduct in-house seminars open to employees and some hold professional report writing and suggestion competitions. Such self-development programs, however, are not without problems. Employees can engage in these programs officially voluntarily, but in many companies managers tell their people how and what to study "voluntarily".

Management Training

In what job areas do corporations consider their people weak? More than half of the companies surveyed list corporate planning, legal and patent knowledge, global and domestic marketing as well as sales and distribution management as areas in which their employees lack the expected ability.

Who should be trained in these job fields? Division and section managers, said 49.1

percent of companies. 52.1 percent think they are behind in the development of division and section managers. What, then, are management training methods? Division managers training is built around their participation in corporate-planning meetings, briefings before and reporting to top management and attending training sessions by the president and other executives. Direct contact and discussion with executives offer them on the Job training. Some division managers are dispatched to subsidiaries, where they participate in management and train themselves. Section heads are given promotion examination at some firms. Training programs for executives-to-be are commonly implemented. Only 0.3 percent send them to business schools.

Emerging Area: Training of Senior Workers

Japanese work force is aging at the fastest rate in the world. Businesses express fear that employees will lose physical and mental flexibility as they age and will find themselves unable to adapt to a new management environment. Japanese corporations which are said to practice long-term employment push some of their senior workers out of the corporate pyramid, transferring them to affiliates and subsidiaries. Called *shukko* or temporary transfer, the system, however, becomes disliked by related and subcontracting firms unless dispatched or leased senior employees are skilled and capable employees. Thus retraining middle-aged and older workers become more inevitable, however, no substantial training is provided to senior workers except for helping them cover correspondence course fees. Some companies encourage middle-aged and elderly workers to acquire official qualifications as more employees have a strong desire to enhance their professional skill as specialists. But still, the company leaves them to do so voluntarily.

Fostering Engineers for Development of Proprietary Technology

Following WW II, Japanese manufacturers have long been good at purchasing technologies developed overseas and modifying and applying them for mass-production. But now as researchers and engineers are now readily available in Japan, many corporations are endeavoring to develop their own innovative technologies. 61.6 percent of firms with engineers on their staff said training engineers is vital to expediting development of new products and new business areas. To train engineers, many companies frequently hold in-house study sessions devised by engineers themselves or company-sponsored study sessions encouraging people to join. They also encourage them to attend academic conferences and give presentations there. But the training of engineers is not without problems. While development of new products is imperative, training those in charge of new product development is deemed inadequate in 40.3 percent of firms. Also, the fact that inadequately trained people are posted to the research and engineering jobs is acknowledged by 36.2 percent. Furthermore, 45.2 percent admitted lack of staff members responsible for training

engineers.

Retraining of Skilled Workers Amidst Deindustrialization

Trade friction and the rising yen has forced manufacturers to shift production facilities offshore and to procure parts and components from overseas. Thus, they are under pressure to choose between two tactics, to manufacture higher-quality products at domestic facilities and to further slash costs for less value-adding products. They remain strongly enthusiastic about retraining skilled workers to challenge this product shift. Of firms with skilled workers on the labor rolls, 64.7 percent provide skilled workers with efficiency skills and quality control techniques. 59.8 percent train skilled workers to be multi-skilled and expand job areas. In addition, 34.2 percent give maintenance skills training programs to machine operators to train them to be technicians. Furthermore, computer training and programming are offered to skilled workers at 34.4 percent of firms and job-transfer training is given at 30.9 percent.

Responding to Informationalization and Internationalization

With the active utilization of office automation (OA) and factory automation (FA) equipment and information networks, Japanese companies recently are placing emphasis on information-processing training for their employees. They offer division and section managers training programs to make them understand the company's information strategies more deeply. To team leaders, general workers and new recruits, they provide programs on how to make active use of computers to accomplish more efficiently daily tasks.

The number of companies with globalization strategies is increasing. But many of them leave behind the move toward this end in the training of international staff. 59.4 percent of firms which dispatch their employees abroad admit they send them off inadequately trained. Training programs for expatriates mainly involve education in languages, culture and socioeconomic situations as well as living abroad. To my regret, few training programs are provided on labor situations which are rather different from Japan.

Training Female Workers and Part-Time Workers

The tradition of Japanese firms has long been that they discriminate against women and did not treat them as members of the core work force. But with revision of labor laws as exemplified by the Equal Employment Opportunity Law, women's calls for equal rights combined with the shortage of skilled and younger workers, a growing number of companies are scrambling to train and make most of working women. Even so, less than half, or 43.3 percent, provide women with equal training opportunities. Because women's jobs tend to be geared more to those of office clerks, secretaries and receptionists, many companies give

women training programs adequate to these jobs only. 41.6 percent acknowledge that male managers are lacking in their efforts to train women employees.

Many working women are part-time workers. Due to radical business fluctuations and difficulty of seeing what will be required in the future, corporations curb regular workers and instead increase contingent work force of various types. Part-time workers occupy the largest segment of the contingent work force. But training part-time workers is under development. One reason is that many part-time workers are engaged in non-skilled jobs. Yet many companies want to utilize part-time workers for those jobs which need skills. Toward this end, 26.9 percent which employ part-time workers prepare job manuals targeted for part-time workers. Also, 24.9 percent have part-time workers participate in such team work activities as quality control (QC). Occupational safety and disaster-prevention education for part-timers are two of the fields most extensively offered.

Adversity - A Golden Training Opportunity

The present period of adversity provides a golden opportunity for employees to check and develop their abilities, say 44.6 percent of their firms. Most companies think daily duties to tackle cost reduction and restructure jobs provide the best arena for training of their people.

Statistical Aspects

Recent Labor Economy Indices

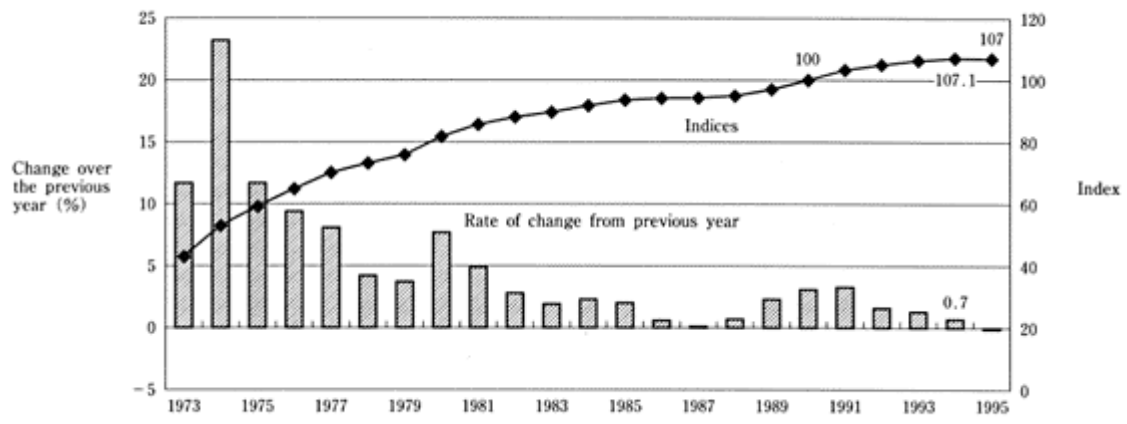
	December 1995	November 1995	Change from previous year
Labor force	6,610 (10thousand)	6,657 (10thousand)	23 (10thousand)
Employed	6,399	6,439	-11
Employees	5,307	5,289	48
Unemployed	211	218	34
Unemployment rate	3.2%	3.3%	0.5
Active opening rate	0.65	0.63	0.02
Total hours worked	162.1 (hours)	162.6 (hours)	0.1*
Total wages of regular employees	285.4 (¥ thousand)	282.2 (¥ thousand)	1.5*

Source: Management and Coordination Agency, Ministry of Labour.

Notes: 1.*denotes annual percent change.

2.From February 1991, data of "Total hours worked" and "Total wages of regular employees" are for firms with 5 to 30 employees.

Trends in Consumer Price Indices (1990 = 100)



Source : Management and Coordination Agency, *Consumer Price Index*.