

I. Main Labor Economic Indicators

1. Economy

The Japanese economy is still in a severe situation due to the Novel Coronavirus, but it is showing movements of picking up. Concerning short-term prospects, the economy is expected to show movements of picking up, supported by the effects of the policies and improvement in overseas economies while taking measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. However, full attention should be given to the further increase in downside risks due to the spread of the infectious diseases in Japan and abroad. Also attention should be given to the effects of fluctuations in the financial and capital markets. (*Monthly Economic Report*,¹ January 2021).

2. Employment and unemployment

The number of employees in December decreased by 590 thousand over the previous year. The unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, was 2.9%.² Active job openings-to-applicants ratio in December, seasonally adjusted, was 1.06.³ (Figure 1)

3. Wages and working hours

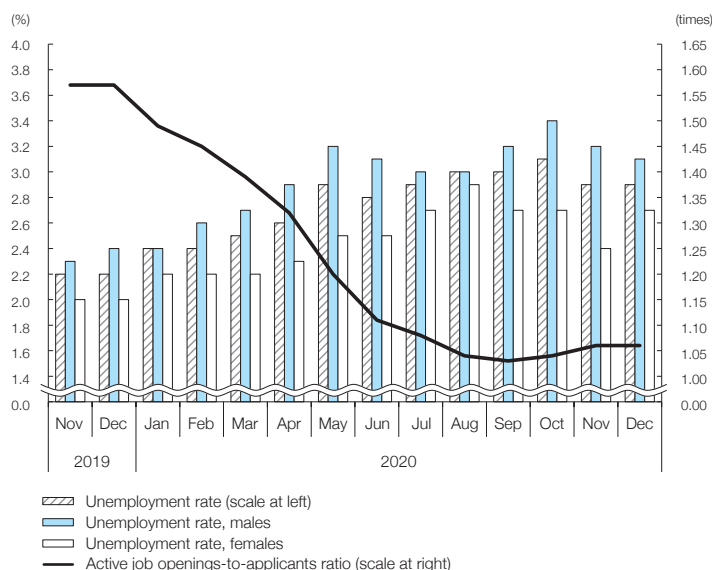
In December, total cash earnings decreased by 3.0% year-on-year and real wages (total cash earnings) decreased by 1.7%. Total hours worked decreased by 2.5% year-on-year, while scheduled hours worked decreased by 2.1%.⁴ (Figure 2)

4. Consumer price index

In December, the consumer price index for all items declined by 1.2% year-on-year, the consumer price index for all items less fresh food declined by 1.0%, and the consumer price index for all items less fresh food and energy declined by 0.4%.⁵

5. Workers' household economy

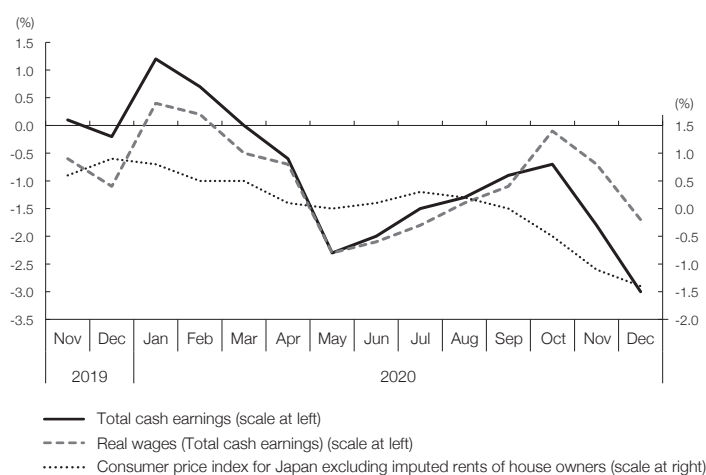
In December, consumption expenditures by workers' households decreased by 3.4% year-on-year nominally and decreased by 2.0% in real terms.⁶



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), *Labour Force Survey*; Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), *Employment Referrals for General Workers*.

Note: Active job openings-to-applicants ratio indicates the number of job openings per job applicant at public employment security. It shows the tightness of labor supply and demand.

Figure 1. Unemployment rate and active job openings-to-applicants ratio (seasonally adjusted)



Source: MHLW, *Monthly Labour Survey*; MIC, *Consumer Price Index*.

Figure 2. Total cash earnings / real wages annual percent change

For details for the above, see JILPT *Main Labor Economic Indicators* at <https://www.jil.go.jp/english/estatis/eshuyo/index.html>

1. Cabinet Office, *Monthly Economic Report* analyzes trends in the Japanese and world economies and indicates the assessment by the Japanese government. Published once a month. <https://www5.cao.go.jp/keizai3/getsurei-e/index-e.html>

2. <https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/roudou/results/month/index.html>

3. https://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/database/db-l/general_workers.html

4. For establishments with 5 or more employees. <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/database/db-l/monthly-labour.html>

5. <https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/cpi/index.html>

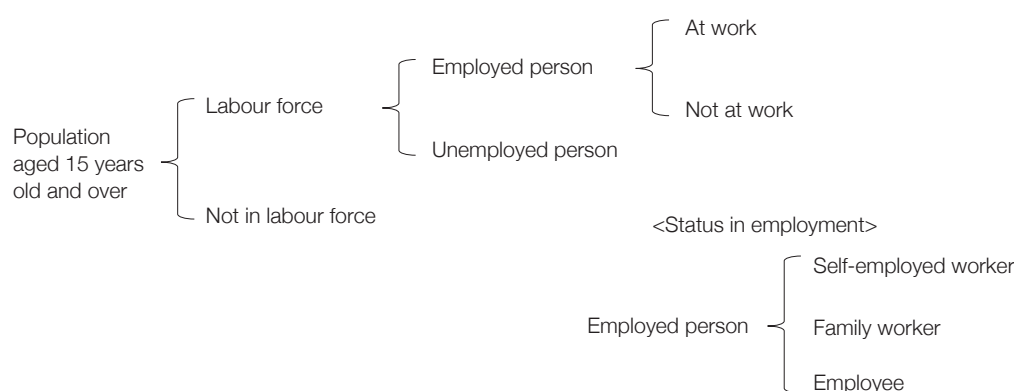
6. MIC, *Family Income and Expenditure Survey*. <https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/kakei/index.html>

II. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment and unemployment

There are growing concerns that COVID-19's spread will have a significant impact on employment by retarding economic activity in Japan. The following outlines the recent trends shown in statistical indicators relating to employment. See JILPT website *Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)* for the latest information (<https://www.jil.go.jp/english/special/covid-19/index.html>).

1. Employment and unemployment

(1) Definitions of *Labour Force Survey*



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), *Labour Force Survey, Concepts and Definitions*.
<https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/roudou/pdf/definite.pdf>

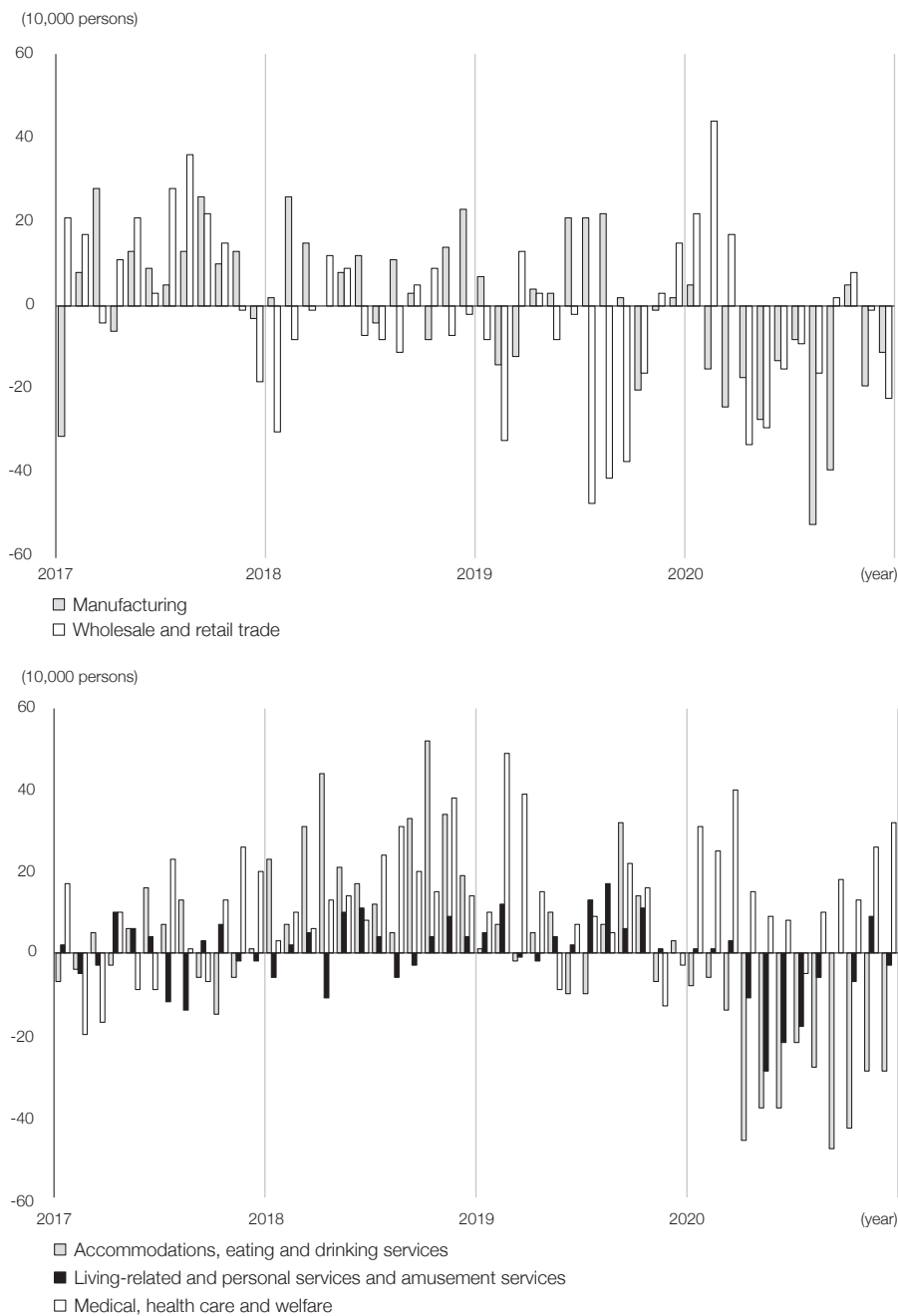
(2) Labor force

Table 1. Labor force

(10,000 persons)

		Labor force		
		Total	Employed person	Unemployed person
			Not at work	
2017		6,720	6,530	190
2018		6,830	6,664	166
2019		6,886	6,724	162
2020		6,868	6,676	191
2020	January	6,846	6,687	159
	February	6,850	6,691	159
	March	6,876	6,700	176
	April	6,817	6,628	189
	May	6,854	6,656	198
	June	6,865	6,670	195
	July	6,852	6,655	197
	August	6,882	6,676	206
	September	6,899	6,689	210
	October	6,910	6,694	215
	November	6,902	6,707	195
	December	6,860	6,666	194

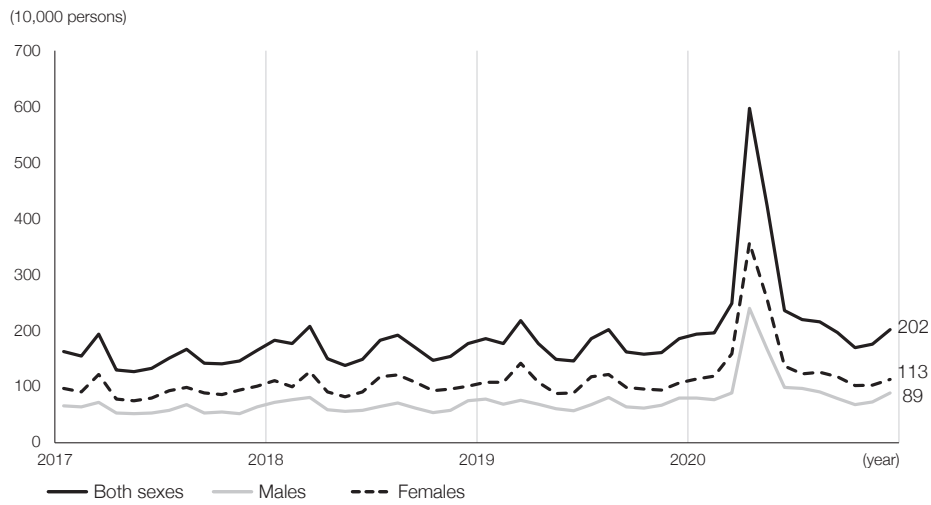
Source: Compiled by JILPT based on Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), *Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation)*(unadjusted values).



Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), *Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation)*.⁷

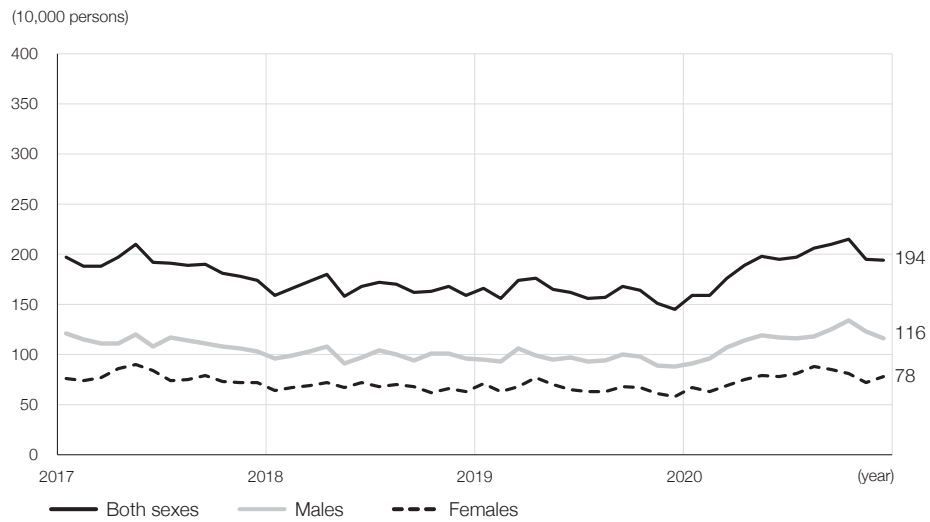
Figure 3. Number of employed persons by main industry (unadjusted values, year-on-year change) (January 2017 to December 2020)

7. For up-to-date information and further details, see <https://www.jil.go.jp/kokunai/statistics/covid-19/c01.html#c01-7> (in Japanese).



Source: MIC, Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation).⁸

Figure 4. Number of employed persons not at work (unadjusted values, by sex) (January 2017 to December 2020)



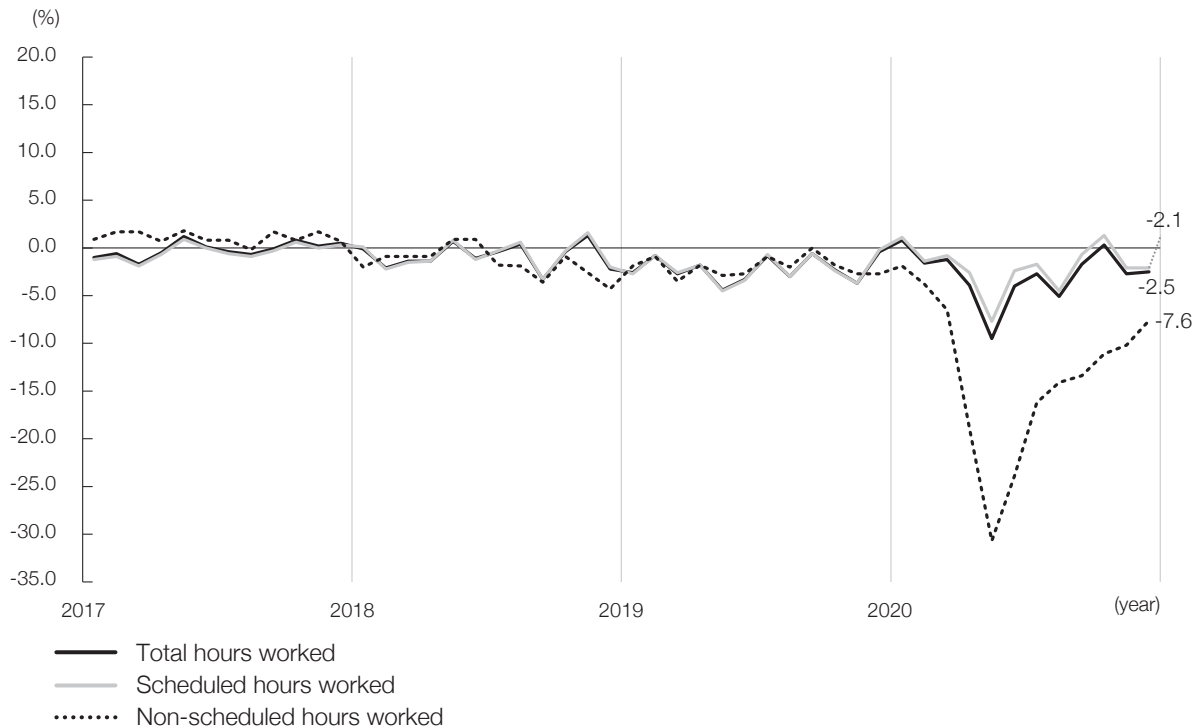
Source: MIC, Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation).⁹

Figure 5. Number of unemployed persons (unadjusted values, by sex) (January 2017 to December 2020)

8. For up-to-date information and further details, see <https://www.jil.go.jp/kokunai/statistics/covid-19/c23.html> (in Japanese).

9. For up-to-date information and further details, see <https://www.jil.go.jp/kokunai/statistics/covid-19/c03.html#c03-1> (in Japanese).

2. Working hours



Source: Compiled by JILPT based on MHLW, "Monthly Labour Survey."¹⁰

Notes: 1. Beginning in June 2019, values are based on a complete survey of "business establishments with 500 or more employees."

2. "Business establishments with 500 or more employees" for the Tokyo metropolitan area are re-aggregated beginning in 2012.

Figure 6. Total hours worked, scheduled hours worked, and non-scheduled hours worked (year-on-year change, total of full-time employees and part-time workers) (January 2017 to December 2020)

For the up-to-date information, see JILPT *Main Labor Economic Indicators* at <https://www.jil.go.jp/english/estatis/eshuyo/index.html>

10. MHLW, *Monthly Labour Survey*. <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/database/db-l/monthly-labour.html>. For up-to-date information and further details, see <https://www.jil.go.jp/kokunai/statistics/covid-19/c11.html#c11-1> (in Japanese).