

I. Main Labor Economic Indicators

1. Economy

The Japanese economy shows weakness in some components although it remains in picking up in a severe situation due to the Novel Coronavirus. Concerning short-term prospects, the economy is expected to pick up, supported by the effects of the policies and improvement in overseas economies while the socio-economic activities will be resumed with taking measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. However, full attention should be given to the movement of infections would affect the domestic and foreign economy. Also attention should be given to the effects of fluctuations in the financial and capital markets. (*Monthly Economic Report*,¹ March 2021).

2. Employment and unemployment

The number of employees in February decreased by 430 thousand over the previous year. The unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, was 2.9%.² Active job openings-to-applicants ratio in February, seasonally adjusted, was 1.09.³ (Figure 1)

3. Wages and working hours

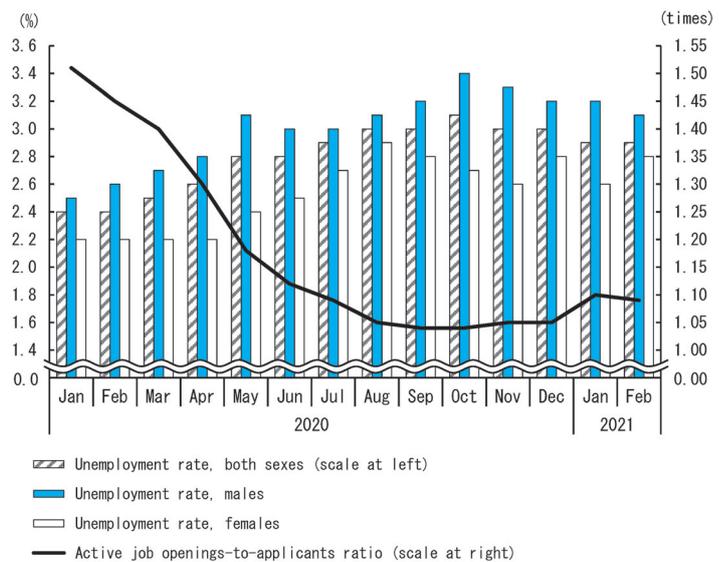
In February, total cash earnings decreased by 0.4% year-on-year and real wages (total cash earnings) increased by 0.1%. Total hours worked decreased by 3.5% year-on-year, while scheduled hours worked decreased by 3.1%.⁴ (Figure 2)

4. Consumer price index

In February, the consumer price index for all items declined by 0.4% year-on-year. The consumer price index for all items less fresh food declined by 0.4%, and the consumer price index for all items less fresh food and energy increased by 0.2%.⁵

5. Workers' household economy

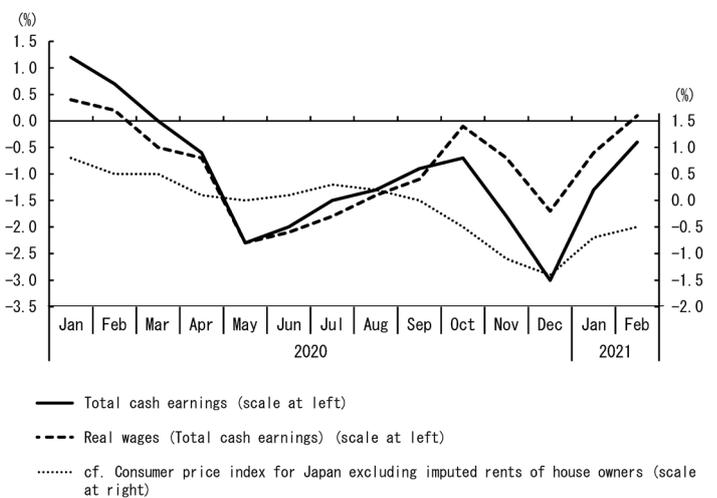
In February, consumption expenditures by workers' households decreased by 7.4% year-on-year nominally and decreased by 6.9% in real terms.⁶



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>

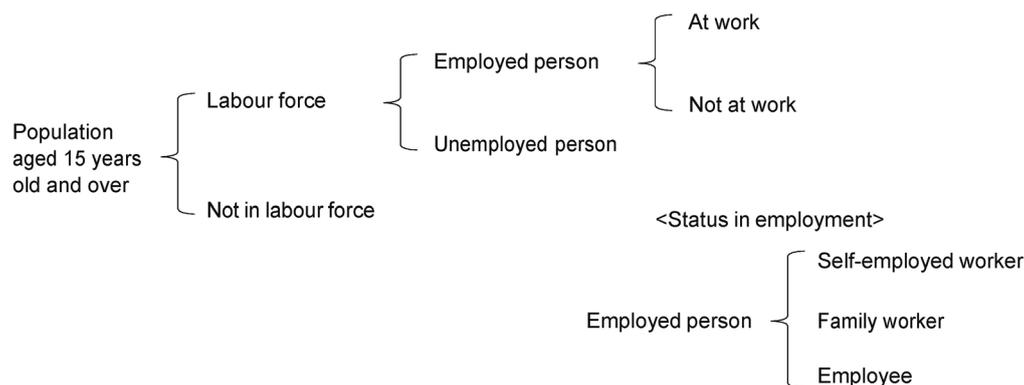
6. MIC, *Family Income and Expenditure Survey*. <https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/kakei/index.html>

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*



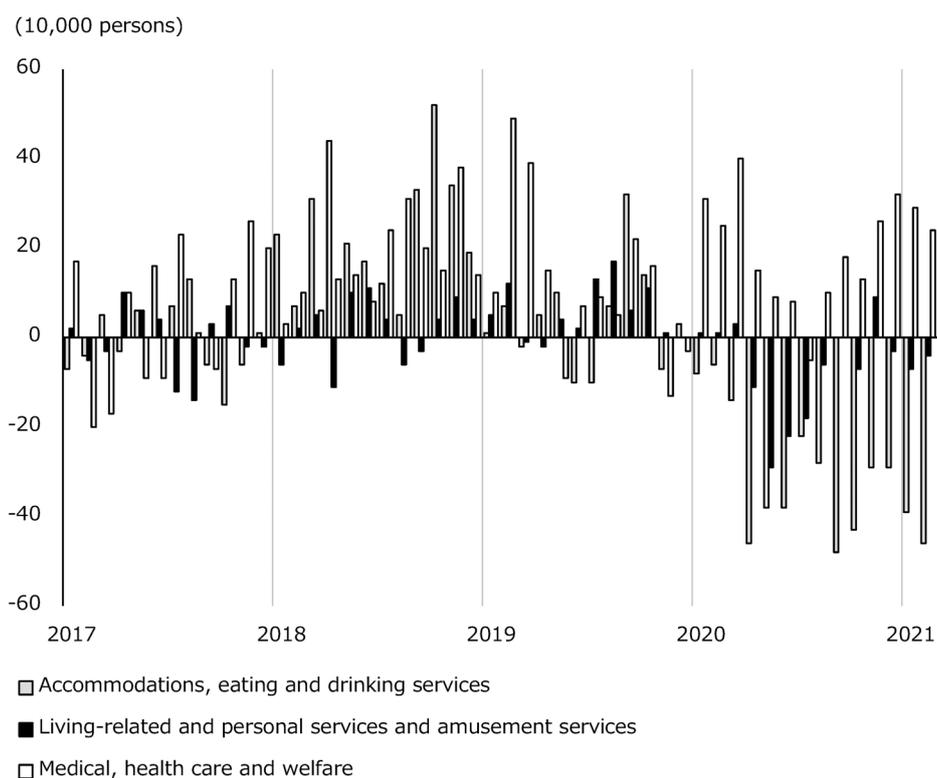
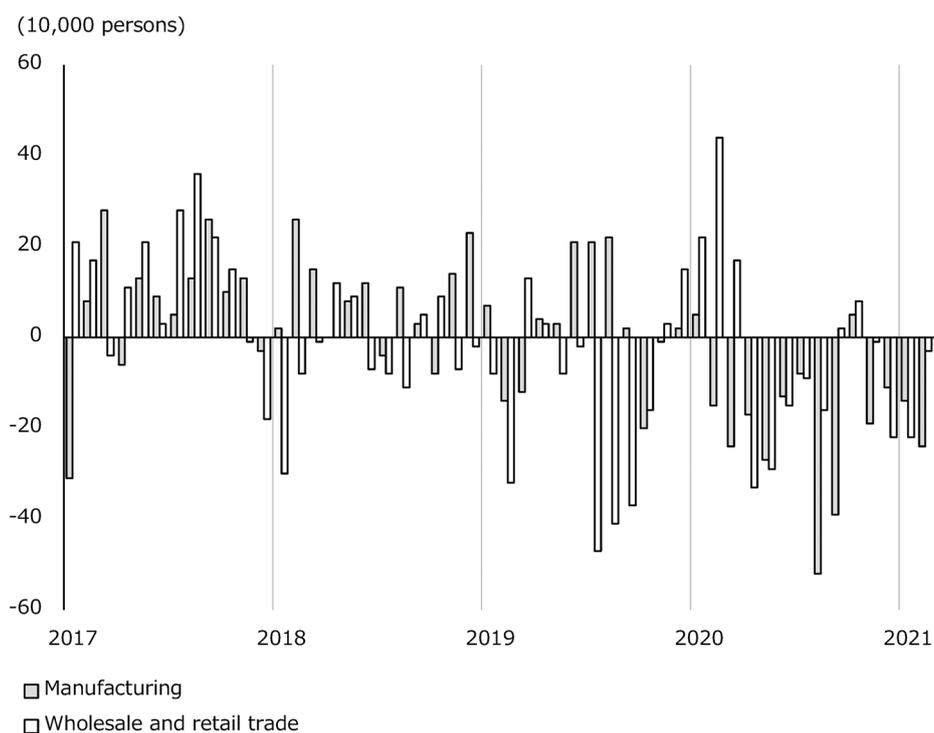
Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), *Labour Force Survey, Concepts and Definitions*.
<https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/roudou/pdf/definite.pdf>

(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	151	190
2018		6,830	6,664	169	166
2019		6,886	6,724	176	162
2020		6,868	6,676	256	191
	January	6,846	6,687	194	159
	February	6,850	6,691	196	159
	March	6,876	6,700	249	176
	April	6,817	6,628	597	189
	May	6,854	6,656	423	198
	June	6,865	6,670	236	195
	July	6,852	6,655	220	197
	August	6,882	6,676	216	206
	September	6,899	6,689	197	210
	October	6,910	6,694	170	215
	November	6,902	6,707	176	195
	December	6,860	6,666	202	194
2021	January	6,834	6,637	244	197
	February	6,840	6,646	228	194

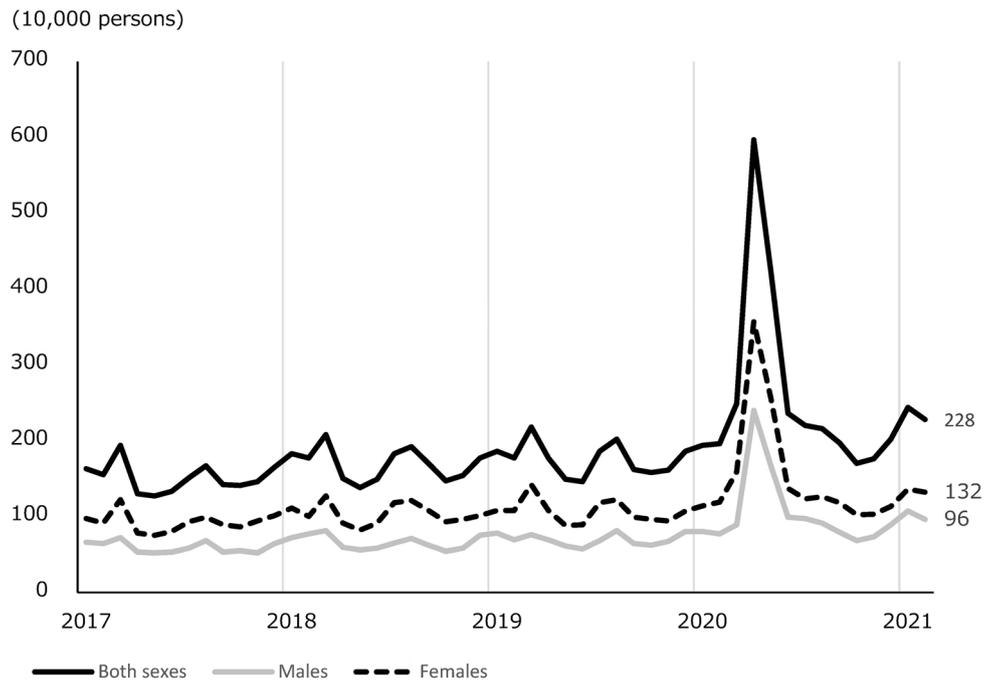
Source: Compiled by JILPT based on Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), *Labour Force Survey (Basic Tabulation)* (unadjusted values).



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

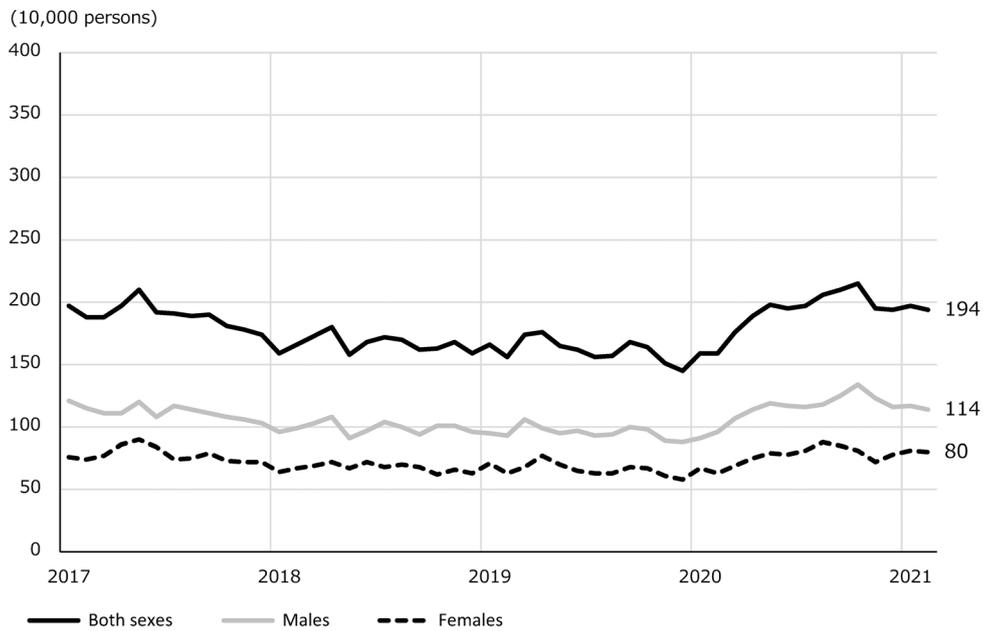
Figure 3. Number of employed persons by main industry (unadjusted values, year-on-year change) (January 2017 to February 2021)

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 February 2021)



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

Figure 5. Number of unemployed persons (unadjusted values, by sex) (January 2017 to February 2021)

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 February 2021)

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).