

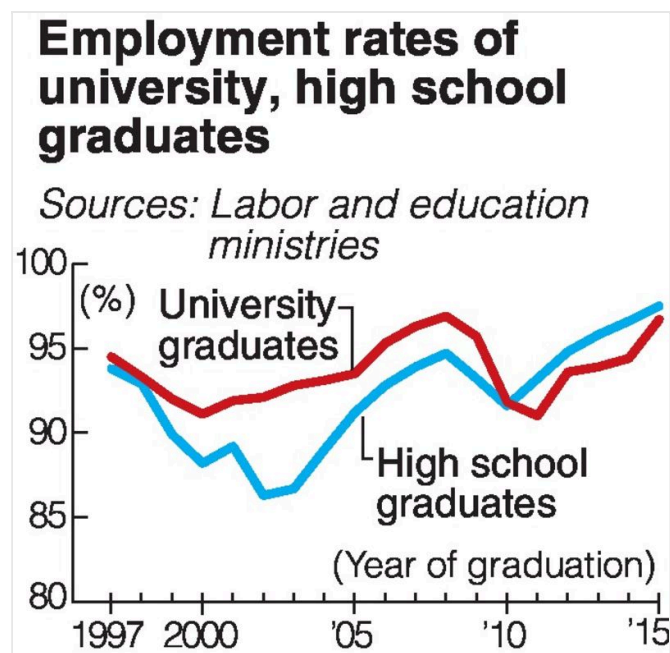
## University graduate employment at highest rate since 2008 - The Japan News

**The Yomiuri Shimbun**The percentage of March university graduates seeking work who secured employment stood at 96.7 percent as of April 1, marking the fourth consecutive year in which the rate has risen and its highest point since the Lehman Brothers collapse in 2008, related ministries announced Tuesday.

According to the announcement by the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry and the Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Ministry, the employment rate was the second highest since collection of the data about university graduates began in 1997.

The highest figure recorded to date is the 96.9 percent rate for those who graduated in 2008. In the autumn of 2008, the Lehman Brothers collapse occurred. This year's rate has recovered to a level close to that recorded before the world economic crisis.

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The Yomiuri Shimbun

Employment of high school graduates seeking work stood at 97.5 percent, marking the fifth consecutive year in which this rate has increased.

The ministries said that companies have become more enthusiastic in hiring new workers due to the nation's economic recovery, and that job offers have also been on the rise in provincial regions.

The ministries conducted sampling research on a total of 62 institutions among state-run, local government-run and private universities nationwide.

Among the graduates, about 411,000 — the highest ever — wished to become employees. Of them, about 397,000 were believed to have secured jobs.

By gender, 96.5 percent of male graduates, up 2.7 percentage points from a year ago, found jobs, and 96.9 percent of female graduates, up 1.7 points, secured employment.

For university arts and sciences courses, 96.5 percent of arts graduates, up 2.5 points, and 97.2 percent of science graduates, up 0.8 point, found jobs.

Among graduates of junior colleges who sought work, 95.6 percent, up 1.4 points, were able to find

positions.

By region, the highest rates were seen in the Chubu and Chugoku-Shikoku regions, at 97.3 percent. The figure in the Chubu region rose 1.9 points from a year ago, while that in the Chugoku-Shikoku region rose 4.5 points.

These were followed by the Kinki region at 97.1 percent, up 3.3 points; the Kanto region at 96.9 percent, up 0.5 point; the Hokkaido-Tohoku region at 95.3 percent, up 2.5 points; and Kyushu with 94.7 percent, up 3.9 points.

Increases of job offers were notable in provincial regions where the recovery of good employment conditions has been slow.

Takao Yoshimoto, editor in chief of a job information magazine at Mynavi Corp., said, "The numbers of job offers have been increasing in a wide variety of industries, as corporate performance has been improving. Major companies have been making efforts to attract students by, for example, increasing internship programs. But small and midsize companies are negatively affected by such actions, and there have been situations in which the smaller companies become unable to hire sufficient numbers of new graduates."

Also on Tuesday, the education ministry announced that 97.5 percent of high school graduates who graduated this spring and sought employment had found jobs as of the end of March.

That figure had risen 0.9 percentage point from a year ago. It was the first time in 23 years that the figure surpassed the 97 percent line, with the previous occasion being in 1992.

The employment rate among males was 98.1 percent, up 0.6 point, and that of females was 96.4 percent, up 1.3 points.

By prefecture, the highest rate was 99.9 percent in Toyama Prefecture, followed by 99.8 percent in Fukui and Ishikawa prefectures.Speech