

Graduate job seekers feel the pain

Kyodo News

Only 80.0 percent of university and college seniors hoping to work after graduating in March had managed to find a job as of Feb. 1, the lowest figure on record due to the lingering effects of the recession, a government survey showed Friday.

As for high school seniors, the rate stood at 81.1 percent as of Jan. 31, also one of the lowest figures ever, although it stayed above the record low of 74.4 percent logged in 2003, according to the joint survey by the education and labor ministries.

The rate fell 6.3 percentage points from a year earlier for university and college seniors, and 6.4 points for high school students.

The survey is based on research by 62 selected universities and colleges nationwide and on the education ministry's annual statistical survey of schools. Comparative data began to be compiled in 2000.

"Drawing a large impact from economic movements, companies must continue to suffer from situations in which they cannot make job offers," an official of the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry said.

The survey found an estimated 324,000 of the roughly 405,000 students who plan to graduate March 31 and are seeking a job have actually found work. Some 560,000 students are expected to graduate.

The success rate was 80.1 percent for male students and 79.9 percent for female students.

Meanwhile, about 131,000 high school students have found a job among some 161,000 job seekers, who decreased 13.0 percent from the year before. Job offers for high school graduates plummeted 40.6 percent to about 189,000, resulting in the ratio of offers to seekers plunging to 1.17 from 1.72.

The ratio of job offers to seekers for junior high school graduates also plunged, to 0.60 from 0.97, according to the labor ministry, which tallied the data for junior high school and high school students through contact with public job-placement offices and schools.

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