

Methodological paper Japan2000

The source for this database is ILO, Laborsta for Japan 2000. In these statistics, the rate of economic activity of the total population is given as 53.3 percent on average, 64.7 for men and 42.4 for women. This rate, especially for women, seems quite low and must refer to gainful work only.

The number of women of age 15 and above as 55,840,000, and the „economically active“ 27,520,000. The percentage of „active“ women in the entire „active“ population is 49.3 percent.¹

Which part of the 28,320,000 non-economically active women above 15 did non-paid reciprocal household work and thus contributed to the maintenance of households?

According to Japanese government statistics for 2000², the total number of families where the wife did „not work“ was 14,030,000.

Among these are families with wife and husband only (5,540,000), with husbands and elderly (+65) parents (1,140,000), with children (7,130,000), with wife, husband, and parents (350,000, this probably refers to parents younger than 65), and with parents and children (1,010,000).

Family situation of wives who are reported as „not working“

Wife and husband only	5,540,000
wife, husband, elderly (+65) parent/s	1,140,000
Wife, husband, child/ren	7,130,000
Wife, husband, parent/s [below 65]	350,000
Wife, husband, parent/s, child/ren	1,010,000
Total	15,170,000
Calculated total	15,170,000
Figure given in table 27	14,030,000
Difference	1,140,000

From the total of families, we deduct those with husband and wife only.

Total families reporting wife „not working“	14,030,000
Families reporting wife „not working“ with husband and wife only	5,540,000
Families reporting wife „not	8,490,000

¹ ILO, Laborsta, Japan 2000, table „Total and economically active population, by age group“.

² „Rōdōryoku chōsa, Kihon shūkei, Zenkoku, 2000 nendo“, table 27, „Otto no shūgyō jōtai, tsuma no shūgyō jōtai betsu fūfu no iru setaisū sōsū“ 夫の就業状態, 妻の就業状態別夫婦のいる世帯数総数 (Total number of families with both husband and wife, according to the separately stated occupational situation of husband and wife).

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working“ where wife takes care of
children and/or elderly

Thus, a figure of 8,490,000 can assumed to be doing full time unpaid family work. This is a bottom figure. We may assume that a family with only husband and wife causes less work than with those with family members to be taken care of. However, since even in the present-day post-industrial world, including Japan, „the house has to be cleaned, repaired and maintained in order to provide continuous living facilities“,³ we should subsume a higher figure of „non-working“ housewives under Lab-rel 5, as doing subsistence or reproductive labour.

The Laborsta statistics contain a category for „unpaid family workers“. These are a total of 3,410,000 people, with 630,000 male and 2,780,000 female. They work in the categories. Most are engaged in agriculture.

Professional, technical and related workers
Technical and managerial workers
Clerical and related workers
Sales workers
Service workers
Agricultural, animal husbandry and forestry workers, fishermen
and hunters
Production and related workers, transport operators and labourers
not identifiable

Since these figures are not taken into account by the „Labour force investigation“, some double countings might be possible. However, family workers might be young or unmarried daughters as well, not only housewives. Even if we generously account for 2 million of double countings and deduct these from the number of 14.03 million, still a figure of 12 million remains that is not accounted for in Laborsta as „working“, but should be added to the economically active as reproduction and subsistence workers.

We therefore suggest the following extension of the activity rates given in Laborsta for Japan 2000.

Age group	Total	Total	Total	Men	Men	Men	Women	Women	Women
	Total population	Active population	Activity rate	Total population	Active population	Activity rate	Total population	Active population	Activity rate
Total	126,880,000	67,660,000	53.3	62,020,000	40,140,000	64.7	64,860,000	27,530,000	42.4
Total (15+)	108,350,000	67,680,000	62.5	52,530,000	40,150,000	76.4	55,840,000	27,520,000	49.3
Amendment									
	New total active population	79,670,000					Additional figure for housewives, Lab-rel 5	12,000,000	

³ Van der Linden, *Workers of the World*, p. 326, citing Evers, „Urban and Rural Subsistence Production“, pp. 3-5.

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		New total activity rate	62.8				New total active female population	39,530,000	60.9
		New activity rate among age group 15+	73.5				New activity rate among age group 15+		70.8

Sources

ILO, Laborsta, <http://laborsta.ilo.org/cgi-bin/brokerv8.exe>

Van der Linden, Marcel, *Workers of the World: Essays Towards a Global Labour History*. Leiden etc.: Brill 2008.

„Rōdōryoku chōsa, Kihon shūkei, Zenkoku, 2000 nendo“ 労働力調査>基本集計>全国 2000 年度 (Labour force investigation, Basic compilation, Nation-wide, For the year 2000), published on April 27, 2001, Table 27, „Total number of families, according to occupational situation of husband and wife“, in E-Stat. Seifū tōkei no sōgō madoguchi 政府統計の総合窓 (General access to government statistics), <http://www.e-stat.go.jp/SG1/estat/List.do?lid=000001005653#>