

Just 62.5% of '10 university grads offered jobs next spring: survey

Kyodo News

The employment rate for students expected to graduate from universities next spring stood at 62.5 percent nationwide as of Oct. 1, down a sharp 7.4 percentage points from a year earlier, a government survey showed Thursday.

The figure is the third-lowest ever, ahead of 60.2 percent in logged 2003 and 61.3 percent in 2004, and reflects the economic slowdown, according to the survey conducted by the ministries of education and labor.

The decline is the biggest year-on-year drop since the ministries began compiling data in 1996.

The rate of employment for junior college students hit an all-time low of 29.0 percent, a 10.4 point slide from a year earlier — the worst-ever year-on-year fall.

The survey, which covered 62 four-year universities and 20 two-year junior colleges nationwide, looked into the percentage of students who have received job offers among all prospective graduates.

Job-seeking students appear to have been hit by the sharp deterioration in the economy since last autumn, triggered by the collapse of U.S. brokerage Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc., said an official at the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

"The government needs to do its best to help students find jobs," the official said.

By gender, the employment rate for male university students fell 6.5 points to 63.3 percent, while for female students it dropped 8.5 points to 61.6 percent, the survey showed.

By type of school, the employment rate for students at public universities came to 71.3 percent, slipping 1.9 points, compared with a rate of 59.6 percent for those at private universities, down 9.4 points.

The employment rate for students at private women's universities suffered the worst year-on-year setback, sinking 11.7 percent to 57.3 percent.

The employment rate for students majoring in science and technology rose to 68.5 percent, up 0.4 point, while that for students majoring in law, economics, and other social sciences declined 9.2 points to 61.2 percent.

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