

Number of 'freeters' up 80,000 in first rise in six years

Kyodo News

The number of so-called freeters, or young workers with nonregular and unstable jobs, came to 1.78 million in 2009, up 80,000 from 2008 and posting the first year-on-year increase in six years, according to officials of the Internal Affairs and Communications Ministry.

An official of the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry attributed the increase to a difficult employment situation and said the number of freeters could continue to rise this year.

About 20 percent of prospective high school and university graduates seeking employment had not found jobs as of the end of January.

An increase of freeters, whose work is largely unskilled, is considered a problem, as young workers in the category usually find it difficult to obtain job skills and switch to regular jobs.

They also find it hard to improve their lives due to low wages.

The internal affairs ministry defines freeters as part-time workers aged 15 to 34, excluding students and married women.

The number of male freeters stood at 810,000, up 50,000 from the previous year, while that of female freeters was 970,000, up 30,000, according to the internal affairs ministry.

The Japan Times: Sunday, April 11, 2010
(C) All rights reserved

[Go back to The Japan Times Online](#)

[Close window](#)