

Provisional Translation

The White Paper on Gender Equality 2022

Special Feature

Marriage and Family in the Era of 100-year Life:
“Changes in Family Structure and How to Address Challenges”

※ This is a provisional translation of the special feature which is a part of the white paper.



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The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are significant for both men and women, but the impact on employment and life is particularly severe for women. The female-dominated services industry, including accommodation and food/drinking services, was hit hard by COVID-19. The employment situation deteriorated rapidly, especially for non-regular employees, and there was a sharp increase in the number of suicides among women. The increase in consultations for domestic violence (DV) and problems such as poverty among women became apparent, and as highlighted in The White Paper on Gender Equality 2021, the lack of progress in gender equality in Japan once again became evident.¹ It has been pointed out that underlying this problem is the fact that, despite an increase in single-parent households, an increase one-person households and other changes in family structures, the wage gap between men and women, work styles and other work practices, people’s consciousness, and various policies and systems have remained unchanged since the post-war high growth period (1954–1973) in the Showa Era (1926–1989).² For example, looking at the gender wage gap, it tends to widen with age even among the same regular staff, and on average, the salary of a regular female staff who graduated from university is about the same as that of a regular male staff who graduated from senior high school.

Meanwhile, half of all women now live to over the age of 90. The average life expectancy is 87.71 years for women and 81.56 years for men, but the modal age at death is 93 years for women and 88 years for men. As of 2020, there were 69,757 women and 9,766 men over the age of 100. It truly is the era of 100-year life.

It is no longer the Showa Era. The family structures of an employed husband, a wife without paid work and their children, and that of a couple and their children living together with their elderly parents (three generations household)—which were common in the Showa Era—have been decreasing, while one-person households have been increasing across all age groups, both for men and women. In this era of the 100-year life, the lives of individuals have diversified in various ways in prolonged life period. Some people remain single without ever getting married. Some people get divorced after marrying, and some of these remarry. Some people have a family without getting legally married, and others live with their parents. And some people lead a single life after having cared for their spouse or parents. As the family structure change and as lives have diversified, system design and policies are needed which accommodate this change and diversification.

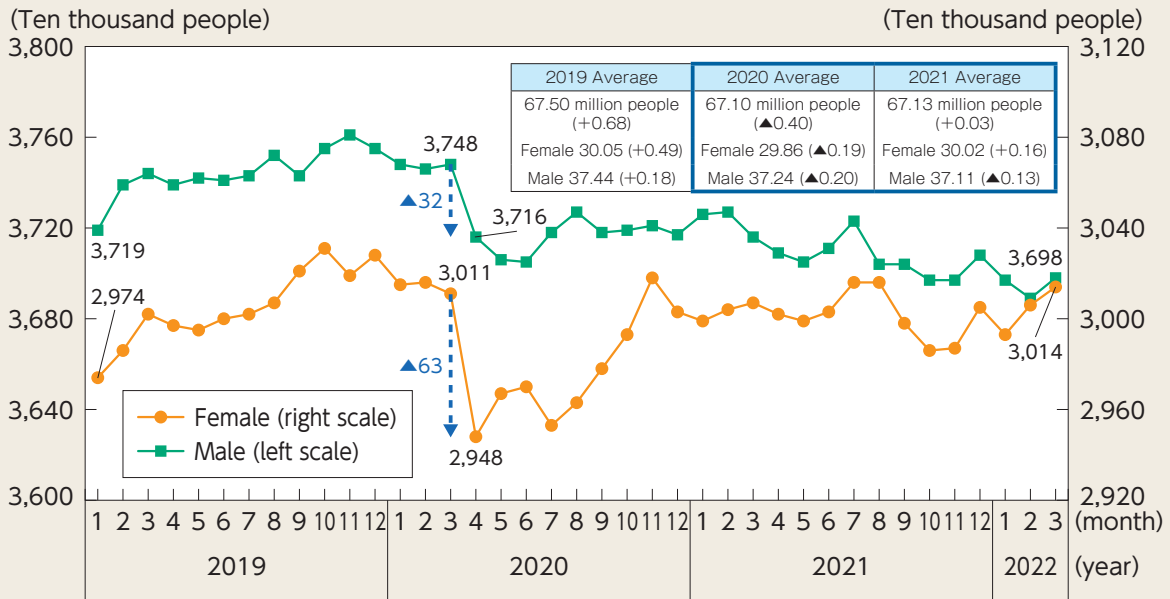
Sections 1 and 2 summarize the change in family structure, the diversification of life, and the circumstances surrounding marriage and family, with a focus on various statistical data (mostly government statistics) and awareness surveys conducted by the Cabinet Office, before clarifying issues that stem from systems and practices that are at odds with reality and from structural problems based on fixed attitudes toward gender roles, including unconscious bias. Section 3 discusses the challenges of gender equality in the era of 100-year life.

¹ Impact on Women Under COVID-19 have been analyzed in Special Feature: Challenges Exposed by COVID-19 and the Future of Gender Equality, The White Paper on Gender Equality 2021, and in the Cabinet Office’s Research Report on the Impact and Challenges for Women under COVID-19: Ensuring No One is Left Behind Post COVID-19 (in Japanese, <https://www.gender.go.jp/kaigi/kento/covid-19/index.html>).

² Raised by the Study Group on the Impact and Challenges for Women under COVID-19, Cabinet Office.

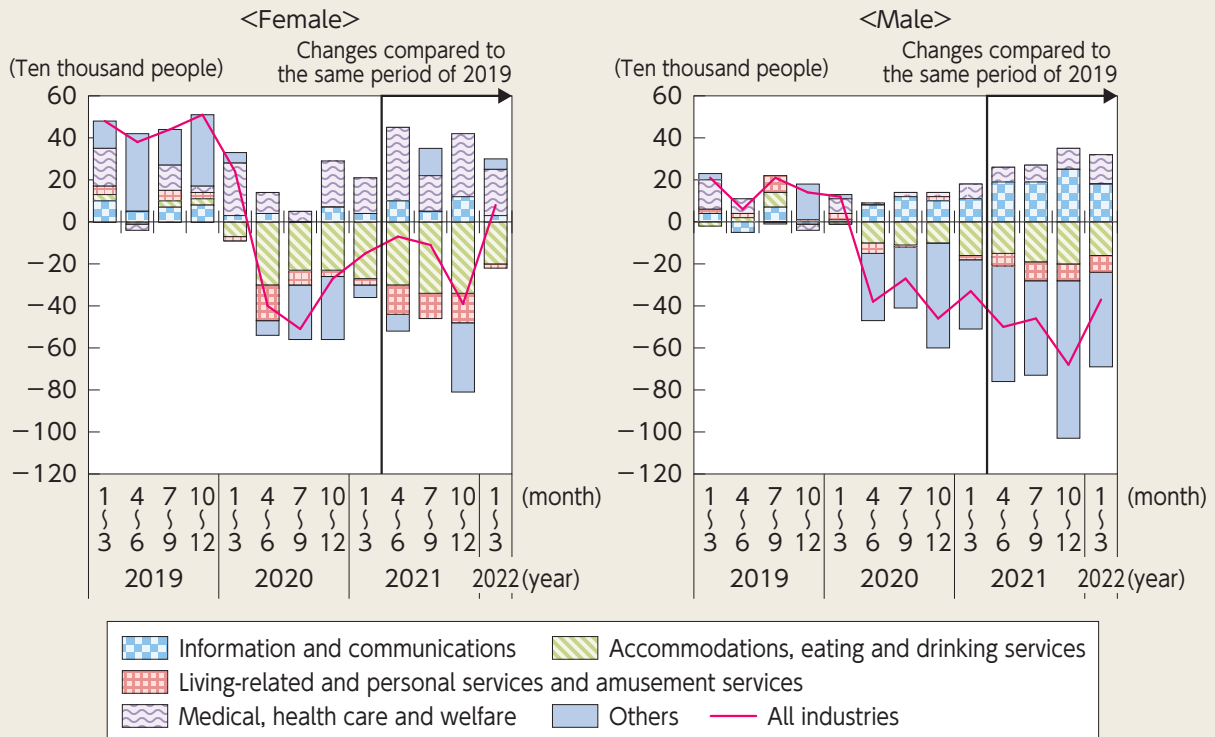
Impact on Women under COVID-19

Changes in the Number of Employed Persons



(Note) Prepared from "Labour Force Survey" by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. Seasonally adjusted series.

Year-on-Year Changes in the Numbers of Employed Persons by Industry



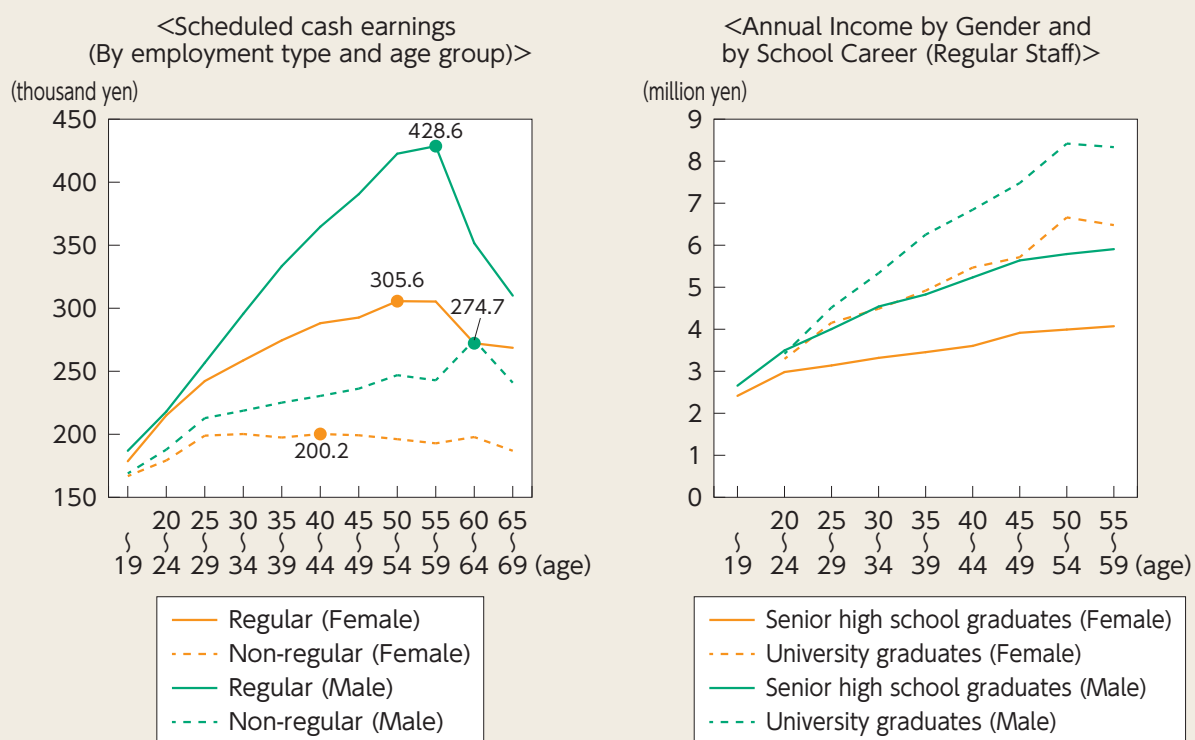
(Note) Prepared from "Labour Force Survey" by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. Original series.

Changes in the Number of Suicides

2019 total	2020 total	2021 total
20,169 people	21,081 people (+912)	21,007 people (▲74)
Female 6,091	Female 7,026 (+935)	Female 7,068 (+42)
Male 14,078	Male 14,055 (▲23)	Male 13,939 (▲116)

(Note) Prepared from "Number of Suicides" on the National Police Agency's website. Definite figure.

Gender Wage Gap



(Note) 1. Prepared from “Basic Survey on Wage Structure 2021” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
2. Annual income by gender and by school career shows the annualized value with contractual cash earnings and special cash earnings.

Life Expectancy of Women and Men

	Female	Male
Survival rate at age 90	52.6%	28.1%
Survival rate at age 95	27.9%	10.5%
Average life expectancy	87.71 years	81.56 years
Modal age at death	93 years	88 years
Population aged 100 or older	69,757	9,766
Population aged 105 or older	5,800	715

(Note) 1. Population aged 100 or older and population aged 105 or older are based on the “2020 Population Census,” Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications; other data is based on the “23rd Life Tables,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
2. “Modal age” at death is the most common age of death.



Key Points of the Special Feature

Section 1. Change in Family Structure and Diversification of Life

- The number of marriages was around 600k in recent years (2015–2019). The number of divorces was 200k, or roughly one-third of the number of marriages.
- Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, marriages totalled 526k in 2020 and 514k (prompt figures) in 2021, the lowest since the end of World War II.
- A comparison of population compositions by marital status in 1980 and 2020 shows that the percentages of both men and women who “never married” or are “divorced” increased significantly over this 40-year period.
- The percentage of never married people at age 30 as of 2020 was 40.5% for women and 50.4% for men.
- The percentage of people without a spouse at age 50 due to having never been married or to being divorced or widowed was about 30% for both men and women as of 2020.
- “Dual-income households” are trending upward, whereas “households consisting of an employed husband and a wife without paid work” are on the decline.
- Between 1980 and 2020, the number of female one-person households (aged 20 years or older) increased 210% (including 130% for women who have never married), and the number of male one-person households increased 160% (including 70% for men who have never married).
- When comparing working women and men in one-person households, a higher percentage of women (53.3%) than men (31.9%) have an income of household of less than 3 million yen. For both one-person households and other households, the earning of women is concentrated around 2.00–2.99 million yen.

Section 2. Circumstances Surrounding Marriage and Family

- At least 20% of both men and women of all generations responded, “I don’t have a spouse or girlfriend/boyfriend (unmarried).” In particular, about 50% of women and about 70% of men in their 20s responded, “I don’t have a spouse or girlfriend/boyfriend (unmarried).”
- About 20% of women in their 20s, 60% in their 30s and 70% in their 40s and older responded, “I have a spouse (legal marriage).” 14% of men in their 20s, about 50% in their 30s and 60–80% in their 40s and older gave the same response.
- Among singles in their 20s, a higher percentage of women intend to get married compared to men. This percentage decreases for women in their 40s and older, while about 20–40% of men in their 40s through 60s intend to get married.
- 14.0% of women in their 20s and 25.4% in their 30s, and 19.3% of men in their 20s and 26.5% in their 30s responded that they do not intend to get married.
- Around 50% of women mention, “I don’t want to be tied down by marriage; I want to remain free” and “I haven’t met someone I love enough to marry” as their reasons for not actively

wanting to get married. When comparing the differences between women and men, a higher percentage of women mention, "I do not want to end up being burdened with work, housework, childcare and caregiving" and "I don't want change my family name." A higher percentage of men mention, "I can't afford married life/My job is insecure."

- Both men and women who separated and divorced in 2020 were most likely to be in their 30s when they began living separately (women: 32.5%, men: 30.3%), followed by those in their 40s (women: 27.5%, men: 28.8%) and those in their 20s (women: 21.4%, men: 15.8%).
- 19.4% of women in their 50s, 18.4% of women in their 60s, 13.3% of men in their 50s and 12.9% of men in their 60s have got divorced in the past. Among people in their 50s and 60s who are currently single, about half of the women have got divorced in the past, and more than half of the men have never been married.
- About 15% of both men and women responded that they "may get divorced" in the future.
- Looking at the individual annual incomes of married and single (by type of residence) men and women in their 40s and 50s, about 50% of single women who "live alone" and about 60% who "live with parents" have an individual annual income of less than 3 million yen (including no income). The percentage of single men whose income is "7 million yen or more" is less than that of married men.

Section 3. Challenges for Gender Equality in the Era of 100-year Life

- Facing the era of 100-year life, the family structure and people's lives in Japan have diversified and completely changed from the post-war high growth period (1954-1973) in the Showa Era (1926-1989).
- In promoting gender equality, the government should always aim to realize a society in which no one is left behind and as it checks and reviews systems and policies across a wide range of fields.
- There are issues that need to be addressed as a priority to ensure that people can live life with dignity and pride over the course of their long lives, without falling into economic hardship.
 1. Establishment of an environment that enables economic empowerment for women
 2. Security/protection based on individuals instead of households / Consideration for those doing unpaid care work
 3. Career education for women from an early age
 4. Promotion of flexible work styles
 - Not reverting to pre-COVID-19 ways of working
 5. Policies that are mindful of the fact that men's lives are also becoming more diverse

Change in Family Structure and Diversification of Life

This section provides an overview of the diversification of life and the challenges this presents by examining the current state of marriage and families in terms of change in marital relationships and family structure.

1 Current State of Marriage and Families

(1) Change in marital relationships (Number of Marriages, Divorces, and Remarriages)

Looking at the numbers of marriages, divorces, and remarriages, in 1970 when the first baby boom generation³ reached their early 20s, there were about 1 million marriages and about 100k divorces. After peaking in 1972,⁴ the number of marriages decreased until a blip from 1995 to 2000⁵ when the second baby boom generation reached around the age of 25. It subsequently resumed its downward trend, and more recently (2015–2019), it remained at about 600k. Divorces were at their lowest during the postwar period

in 1961.⁶ Since then, the number of divorces has fluctuated on an upward trend, and more recently (2015–2019), it remained at about 200k, or about a third of the number of marriages. Since 2020, amid COVID-19, marriages numbered 526k in 2020 and 514k (prompt figure) in 2021,⁷ the lowest since the end of World War II, whereas divorces numbered 193k in 2020 and 188k (prompt figure) in 2021 (Figure SF-1).

The number of remarriages as a percentage of all marriages has been increasing since the 1970s, and in 2020, there were 139k remarriages, or about a quarter of all marriages. Looking at the combinations of first marriage/remarriage for husbands and wives as percentages of the total number of remarriages, in 2020, there were 52k cases (37.3%) in which both the husband and wife were remarrying—the most common combination—followed by 50k cases (36.3%) in which the husband was remarrying and the wife was marrying for the first time and 37k cases (26.4%) in which the husband was marrying for the first time and the wife was remarrying (Figure SF-2).

³ The term “baby boom” refers to a temporary surge in births. In Japan, since the end of World War II, there have been two baby booms. The first baby boom was 1947–1949 and the second baby boom was 1971–1974. The first and second baby boom generations are colloquially called “baby boomers” and “junior baby boomers,” respectively (“*A 2015 Declining Birthrate White Paper*,” Cabinet Office).

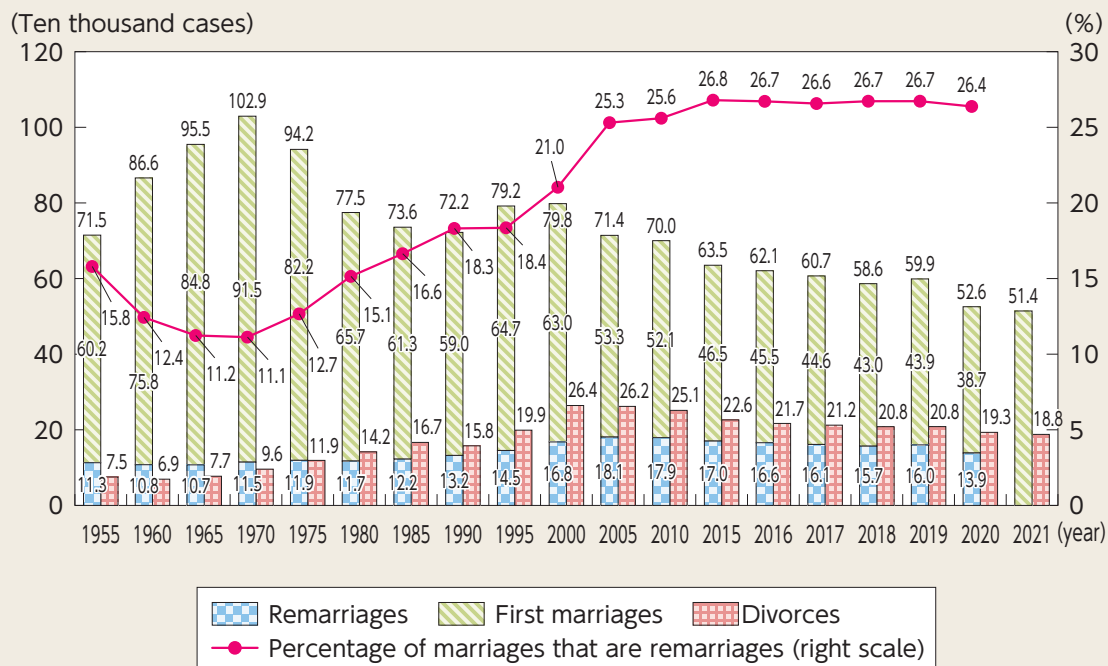
⁴ The number of marriages in 1972 was 1,099,984 (“*Vital Statistics of Japan*,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).

⁵ Between 1993 and 2001, the number of marriages generally remained in the 790k range (“*Vital Statistics of Japan*,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).

⁶ The number of divorces in 1961 was 69,323 (“*Vital Statistics of Japan*,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).

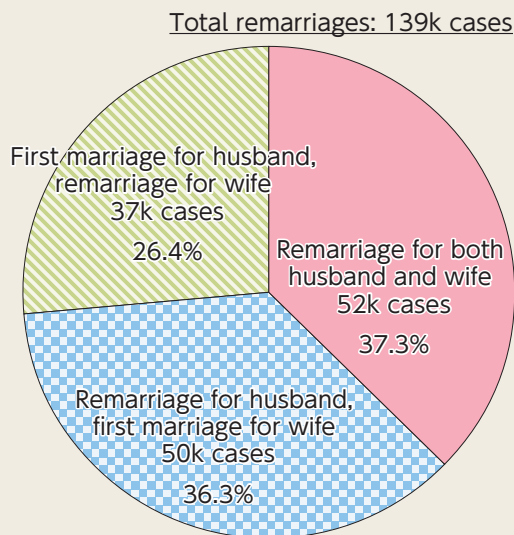
⁷ Figures for 2021 are prompt figures which include foreigners, etc. in Japan.

Figure SF-1: Number of Marriages, Divorces, and Remarriages



(Note) 1. Prepared from “Vital Statistics of Japan” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
 2. Figures for 2021 are prompt figures which include foreigners, etc. in Japan. The number of marriages in 2021 is the total of first marriages and remarriages.

Figure SF-2: Number and Percentage of Remarriages and Proportion of First Marriage/Remarriage Combinations (2020)



(Note) Prepared from “Vital Statistics of Japan” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

(Change in Population Composition by Marital Status)

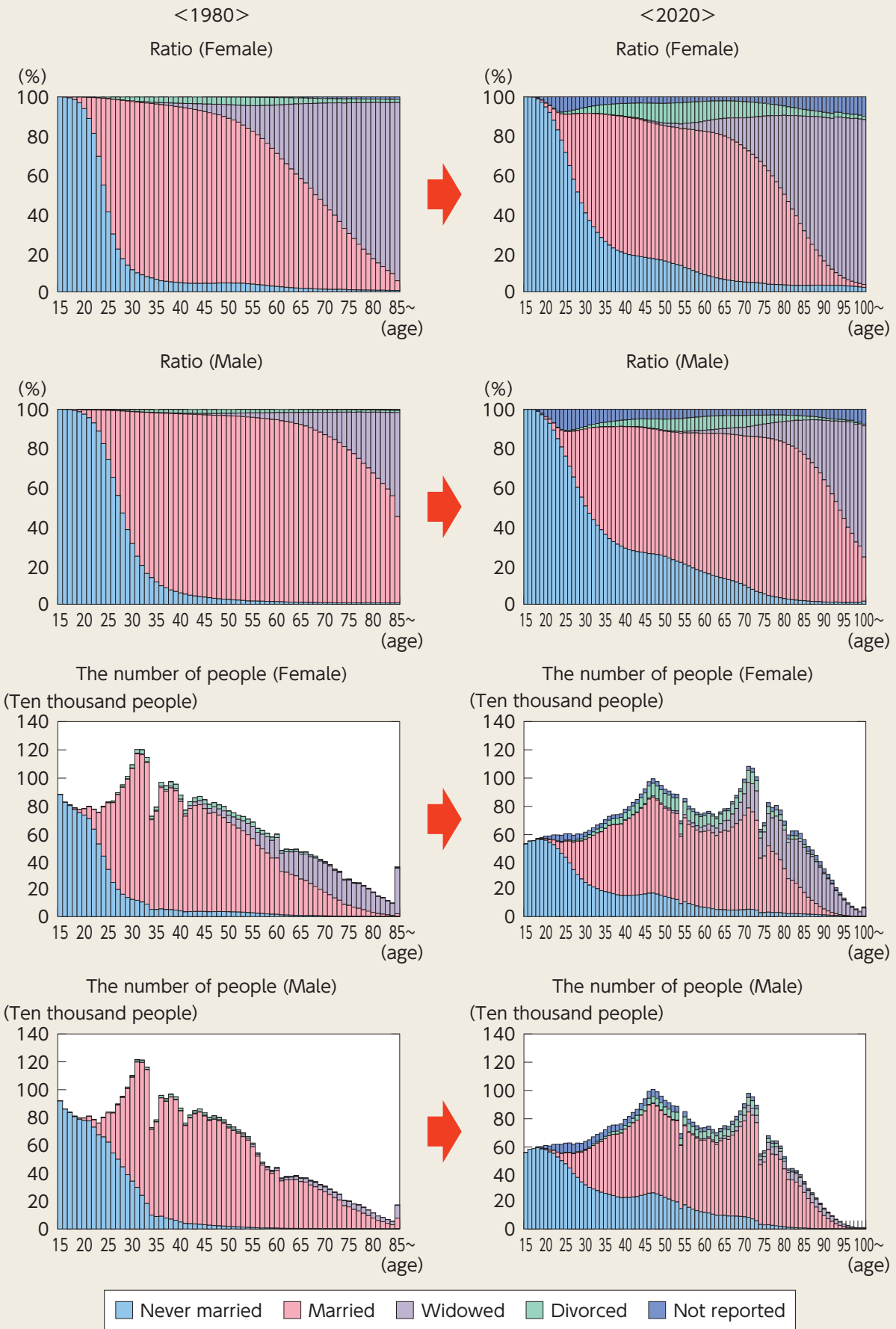
A comparison of population compositions by marital status between 1980 and 2020 shows that the percentages of both men and women who have “never married” or are “divorced” have increased significantly over this 40-year period. The percentage of women and men who were never married at age 30 increased from 11.3% (1980) to 40.5% (2020) and from 31.1% (1980) to 50.4% (2020), respectively. The percentage of people without a spouse at age 50 due to having never been married or to being divorced or widowed was approximately 20% for women and less than 10% for men in 1980, but was approximately 30% in 2020. A breakdown of this shows that 15.8% of women

had never married, 10.2% were divorced, and 1.4% were widowed, while 24.6% of men had never married, 5.7% were divorced, and 0.5% were widowed (Figure SF-3).

Looking at the percentage of people who had never married at age 50,⁸ in 1980, it was slightly higher for women than for men but still very low for both sexes (women: 4.45%, men: 2.60%). However, since 1990, the percentage of men who had never married at age 50 has risen sharply, and has continued to far exceed that of women. In 2020, 17.81% of women had never married at age 50, meaning that about one in six 50-year-old women had never married. For men, this figure was 28.25%, meaning that about one in four 50-year-old men had never married (Figure SF-4).

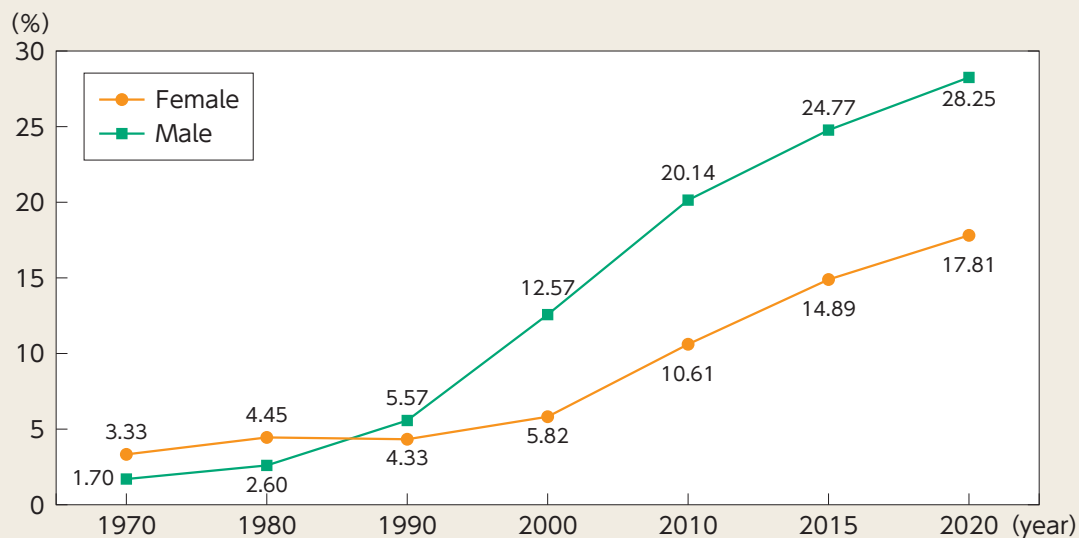
⁸ Average of the percentage of 45–49 year-olds who had never married and the percentage of 50–54 year-olds who had never married.

Figure SF-3: Change in Population Composition by Marital Status (Male/Female)



(Note) Prepared from "Population Census" by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

Figure SF-4: Percentage of People who had never married at age 50



(Note) 1. Prepared based on “*Latest Demographic Statistics (2022)*,” National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.
 2. The “percentage of people who had never married at age 50” refers to the average of the percentage of 45–49 year-olds who had never been married and the percentage of 50–54 year-olds who had never been married.
 3. Figures for 2015 and 2020 are based on results with imputation for unknown marital status.

(2) Change in Family Structure (Proportion of Households by Family Type)

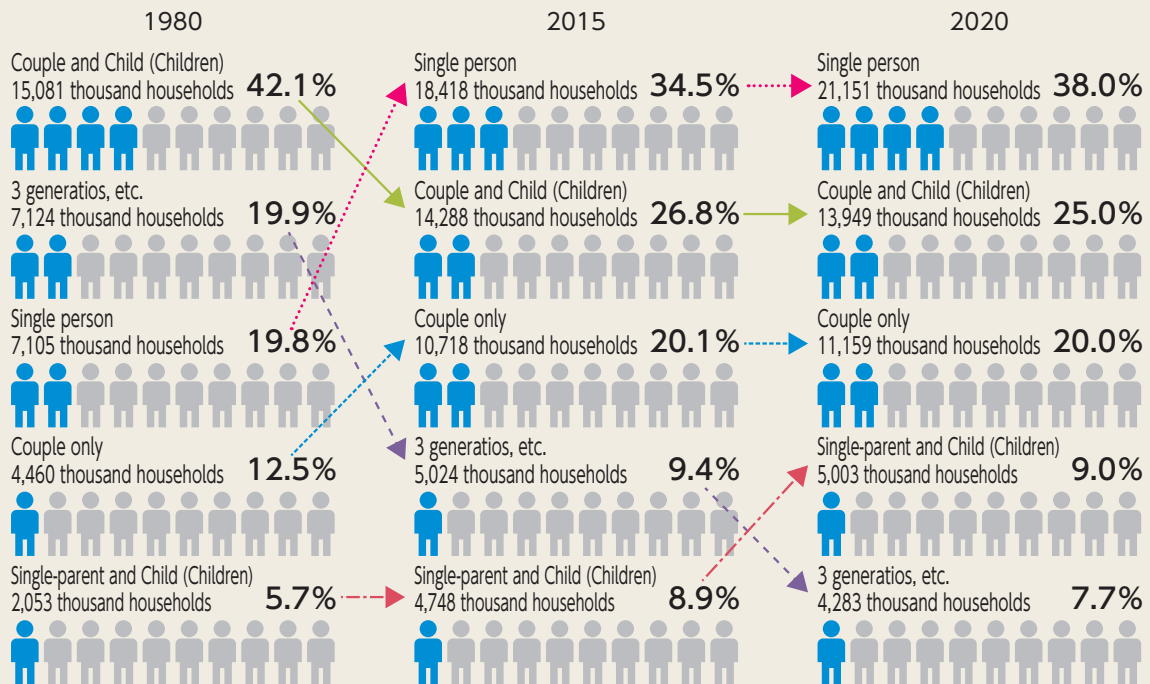
Looking at the change in family structure, as of 1980, more than 60% of all households were families consisting of a “couple and child(ren)” (42.1%) or “three generation, etc.” (19.9%). By 2020, the percentage of households consisting of a “couple and child(ren)” had decreased to 25.0%, and the percentage of households consisting of “three generations, etc.” had decreased to 7.7%, while the percentage of “single person” households had nearly doubled from 1980 to 38.0%. In addition, while the number of households with child(ren) as

gradually decreased,⁹ the number of “single parent and child(ren)” has increased and exceeded the number of “three generation, etc.” households in 2020 (Figure SF-5).

Looking at the changes in proportions of households by family type, the percentage of “single person” households surpassed more than a third of all households (34.5%) in 2015, and is estimated to have risen since then. The percentage of “couple and child(ren),” which was 42.1% in 1980, decreased to about a quarter of all households (26.9%) in 2015, and is estimated to have declined since then (Figure SF-6).

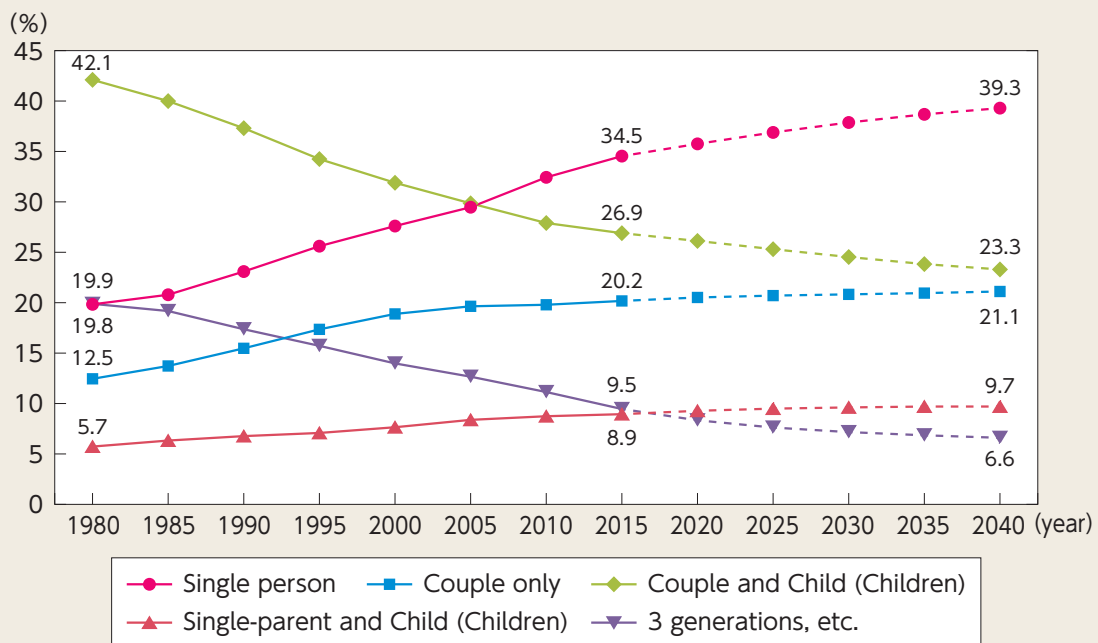
⁹ Looking at changes in households with children (unmarried persons under the age of 18), the number of such households was 17,364 thousand (46.2% of all households) in 1986, and 11,221 thousand (21.7%) in 2019 (“*Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions*,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).

Figure SF-5: Change in Family Structure



- (Note) 1. Prepared from "Population Census" by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
 2. Percentage of private households. Does not include persons in institutions, etc. "3 generations, etc." is the sum of households other than nuclear families of the households consisting of only relatives, and households that include non-relatives.
 3. "Child" refers to a member of the household who is a "child" of the youngest "married couple" among the relatives in the household, and includes adults.

Figure SF-6: Changes in Proportion of Households by Family Type



- (Note) 1. Prepared from "Household Projections for Japan (National Estimates, 2018)," National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.
 2. Percentage of private households. "3 generations, etc." is the sum of households other than nuclear families of the households consisting of only relatives, and households that include non-relatives.
 3. "Child" refers to a member of the household who is a "child" of the youngest "married couple" among the relatives in the household, and includes adults.
 4. In calculating percentages for 2015, unknown family types have been distributed proportionally among the household numbers. Percentages for 2020 onward are estimates.

2 Diversification of Life

In the post-war Showa Era, women's lives were often characterized by working or helping with household chores after completing their last level of education, getting married, and then becoming a wife without paid work or working in agriculture or the family business as a family employee. In 1960, about 98%¹⁰ of women had been married by the age of 50, and much of the social systems and practices were based on this assumption.

Nowadays, as the structure of marriage and families changes and diversifies, women's lives are also becoming more diverse. In 2020, 69.3% of women were in a marriage at age 50, and as noted earlier, of those without a spouse, 15.8% had never married, 10.2% were separated, and 1.4% were widowed. Women's lives were diverse: some women lived alone having never married, some women lived with their parents, some women lived alone or as single parents after becoming separated or widowed after marriage, and some women had remarried after becoming separated or widowed.

During the Showa Era, men's lives too were

often characterized by working as an employee after completing their last level of education, getting married, and then devoting themselves to their work, leaving their wives to take care of the home. For example, in 1980, 94.1% were in a marriage at age 50. But by 2020, this had changed to 64.2% (Figure SF-3, see above).

(1) Fall in the number of wives without paid work

Looking at the changes in the number of "Dual-income households"¹¹ and the number of "households consisting of an employed husband and a wife without paid work" (so-called a salaryman husband and a wife without paid work),¹² while the number of dual-income households has trended upward, the number of households consisting of an employed husband and a wife without paid work has been declining. In 2021, there were 11.77 million dual-income households and there were 4.58 million households consisting of an employed husband and a wife without paid work, accounting for 23.1% of all households with couples¹³ (Figure SF-7).

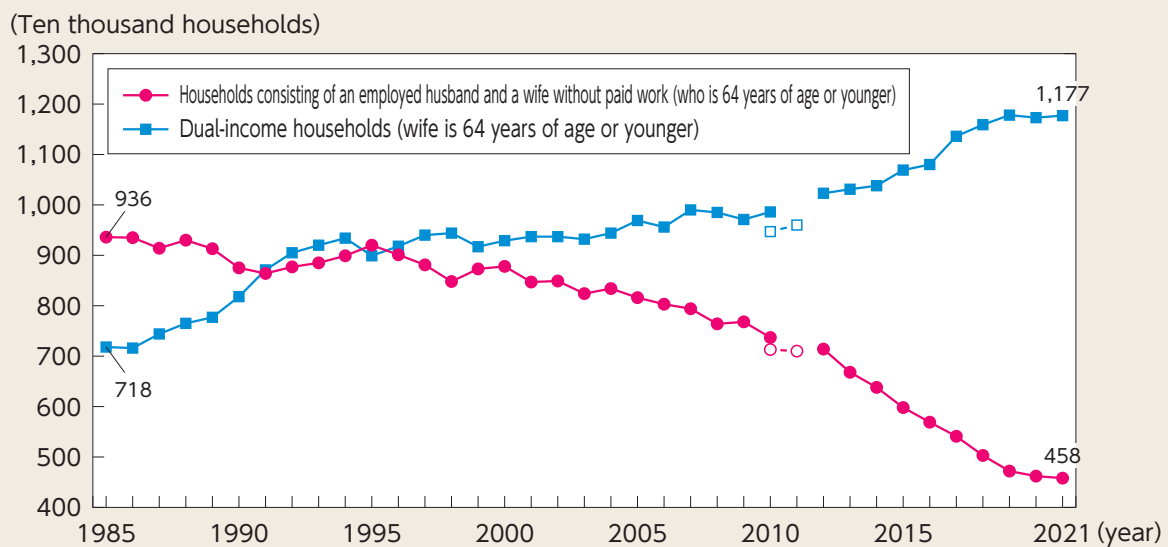
¹⁰ Calculated using the average percentage of 45–49 year-olds and 50–54 year-olds who had never married (1.9%) (*Population Census*, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications).

¹¹ The wife is 64 years old or younger.

¹² The wife is 64 years old or younger.

¹³ The total number of households with couples is 19.84 million (*Labour Force Survey*, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications).

Figure SF-7: Number of Dual-income households and Households consisting of an employed husband and a wife without paid work (age of wife: 64 or younger)



- (Note) 1. Figures are based on 1985 to 2001 from “*Special Survey of the Labour Force Survey*” (every February), Management and Coordination Agency, and figures from 2002 from “*Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)*” by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. “*Special Survey of the Labour Force Survey*” and “*Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)*” differ in terms of survey method, survey month, etc., so care needs to be taken when making a time-series comparison.
2. Until 2017, “households consisting of an employed husband and a wife without paid work” referred to households in which the husband is a non-agricultural or forestry employee and the wife is a non-working person (Not in labour force or Unemployed person) and is 64 years old or younger. From 2018 onwards, following the change in classification categories of employment status, it refers to households in which the husband is a non-agricultural or forestry employee and the wife is a non-working person (Not in labour force or Unemployed person (ILO 2013)) and is 64 years old or younger.
3. “Dual-income households” refers to households in which both spouses are non-agricultural and forestry employees (including non-regular employees) and wife is 64 years of age or younger.
4. Values for 2010 and 2011 (outlined square) are for the entire country excluding Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima prefectures.

Looking at dual-income households in terms of the wife’s hours of work, the number of households in which the wife works full-time (at least 35 hours per week)¹⁴ has remained flat between 4 and 5 million since 1985, and was 4.86 million in 2021. In contrast, the number of households in which the wife works part-time (less than 35 hours per week) has increased from about 2 million in 1985 to about 7 million, and was 6.91 million in 2021 (Figure SF-8).

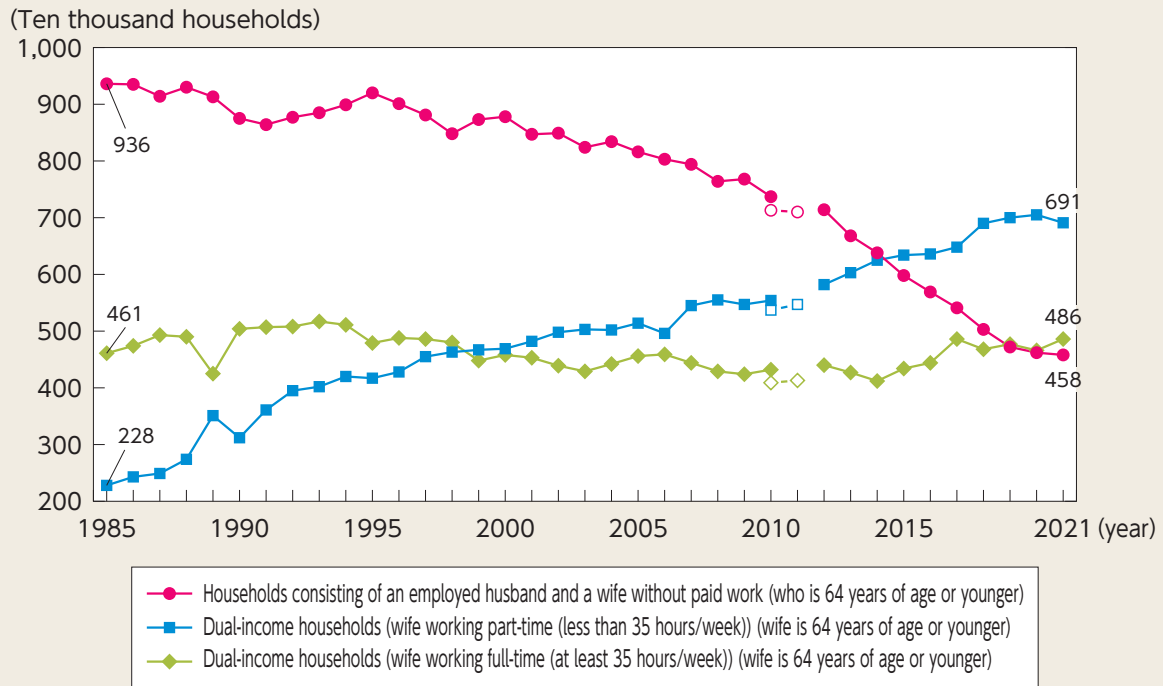
As for changes in households with children in terms of the wife’s employment status, a comparison between 2005 and 2021 shows that, in 2005, households in which the wife is

in not in labour force (wife without paid work)¹⁵ accounted for the highest proportion of all households with children across all age groups, but by 2021, this proportion had decreased to about 20–30% in all age groups. Meanwhile, the proportion of households in which the wife is working part-time (less than 35 hours per week) has increased, and in 2021, accounted for the largest share of all households with children, at about 40–45% across all age groups. While the number of dual-income households has increased, it seems that the majority of the increase can be attributed to the increase in households in which the wife works part-time (Figure SF-9).

¹⁴ Here, full-time work is defined as working at least 35 hours per week, and part-time work is defined as working less than 35 hours per week. This is based on the “*Labour Force Survey*,” Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, in which a “person in time-related underemployment” is defined as: (1) an employed person, (2) who works less than 35 hours per week, (3) who wishes to work additional hours, and (4) who is able to work additional hours.

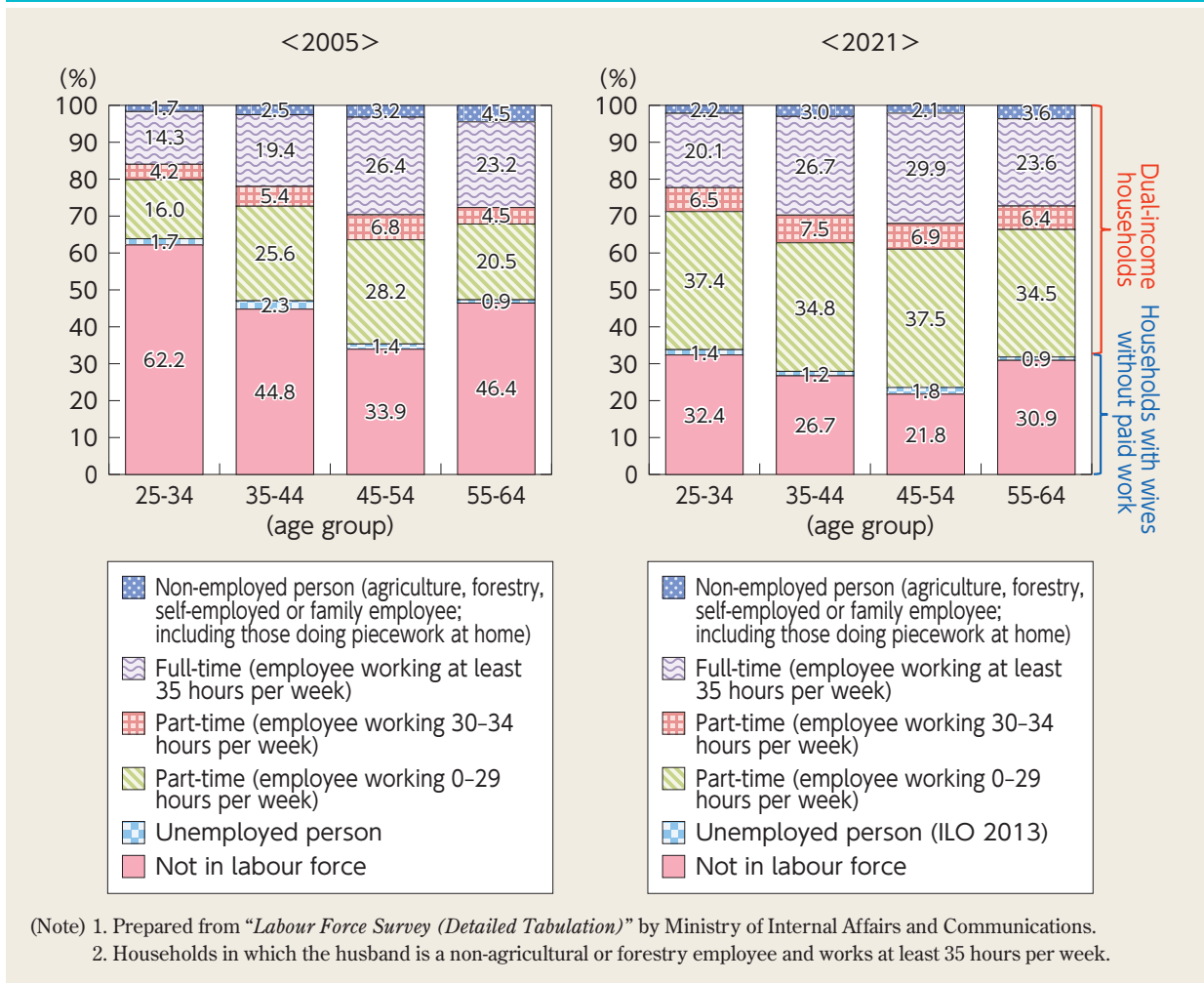
¹⁵ Figures include unemployed persons in 2005 and unemployed persons (ILO 2013) in 2021.

Figure SF-8: Number of Dual-income households (age of wife: 64 or younger)



- (Note) 1. Figures are based on 1985 to 2001 from “*Special Survey of the Labour Force Survey*” (every February), Management and Coordination Agency, and figures from 2002 from “*Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)*” by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. “*Special Survey of the Labour Force Survey*” and “*Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation)*” differ in terms of survey method, survey month, etc., so care needs to be taken when making a time-series comparison.
2. Until 2017, “households consisting of an employed husband and a wife without paid work” referred to households in which the husband is a non-agricultural or forestry employee and the wife is a non-working person (Not in labour force or Unemployed person) and is 64 years old or younger. From 2018 onwards, following the change in classification categories of employment status, it refers to households in which the husband is a non-agricultural or forestry employee and the wife is a non-working person (Not in labour force or Unemployed person (ILO 2013)) and is 64 years old or younger.
3. “Dual-income households” refers to households in which both spouses are non-agricultural and forestry employees (including non-regular employees) and wife is 64 years of age or younger.
4. Values for 2010 and 2011 (outlined square) are for the entire country excluding Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima prefectures.

Figure SF-9: Breakdown of Households Consisting of a Couple and Children by Wife's Employment Status (by Wife's Age Group)

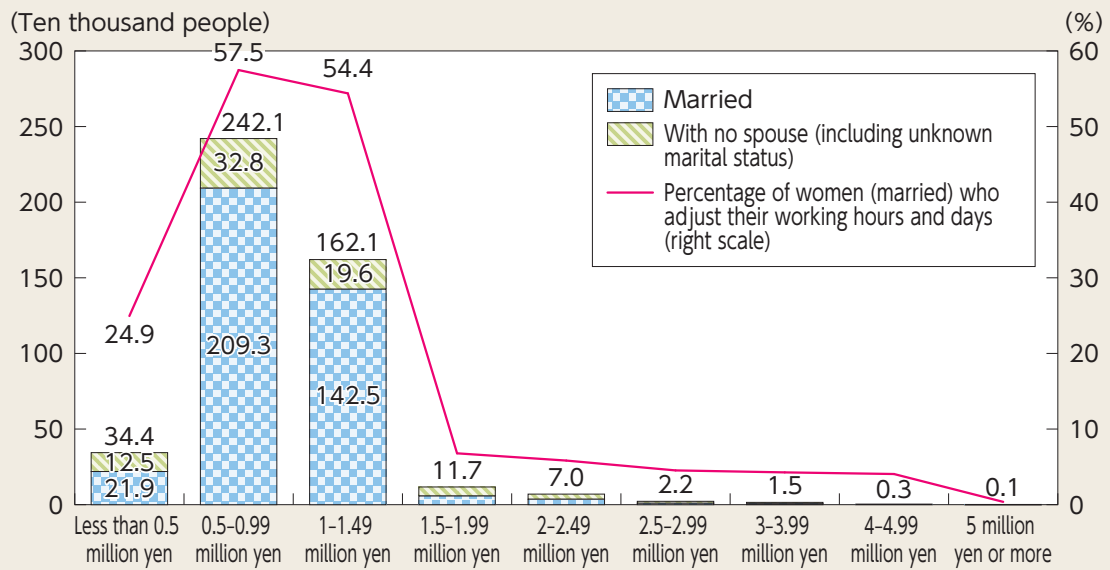


Among women who are in irregular employment and who have a spouse, 57.5% of those with an income of 0.5–0.99 million yen and 54.4% of those with an income of 1–1.49 million yen responded that they adjust their working hours and days in order to keep their income

below a certain amount (Figure SF-10). This adjustment of working hours and days is one of the reasons why women's incomes are low. Approximately 60% of married women¹⁶ engaged in work have an annual income of less than 2 million yen (Figure SF-11).

¹⁶ The term "married" in this section refers to the "total" under marital status less "never married," and includes "widowed or divorced" and "unknown."

Figure SF-10: Number and Percentage of Female Irregular Employees Who Adjust Their Working Hours and Days (by Marital Status, by Income Group) (2017)

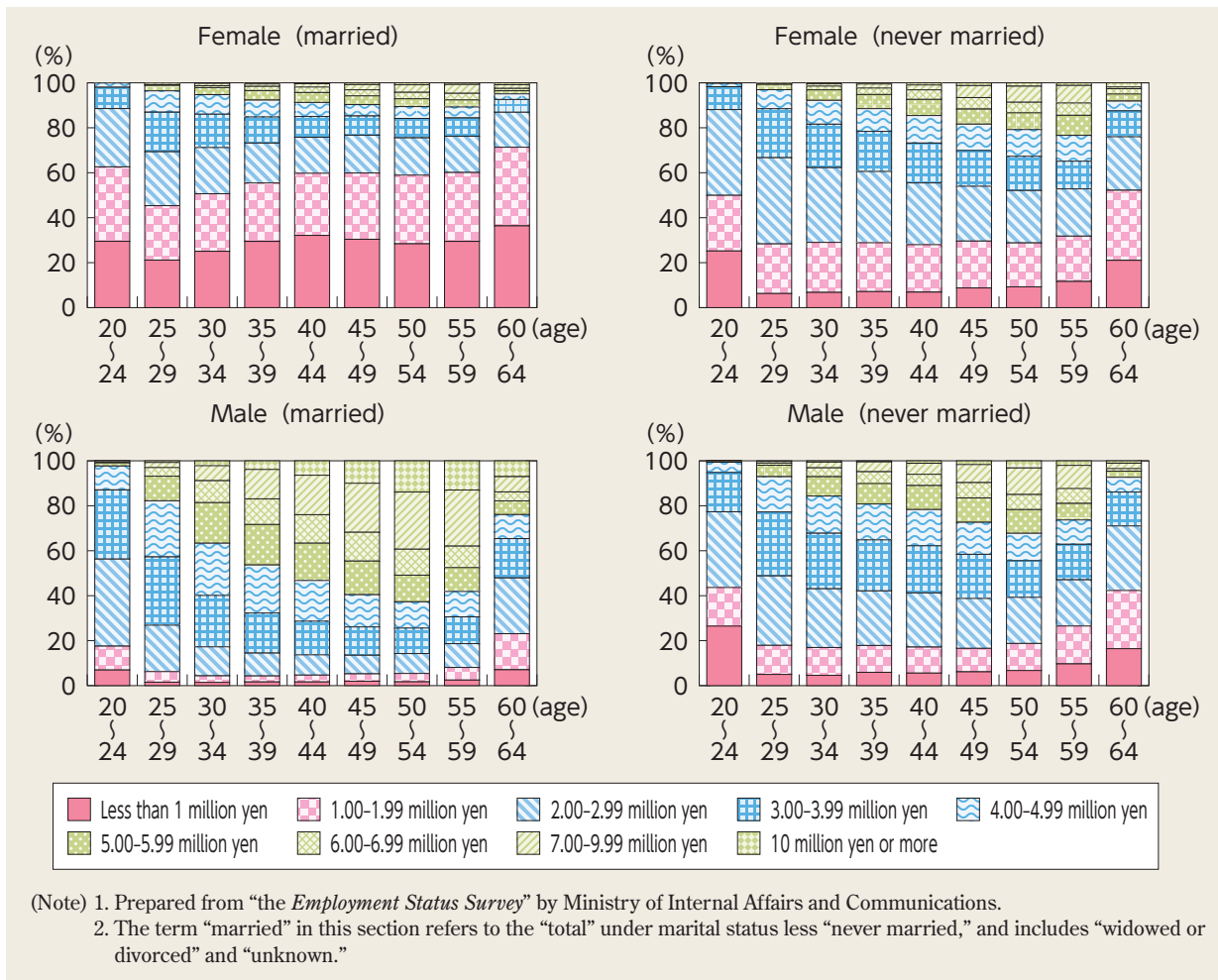


(Note) 1. Prepared from “the *Employment Status Survey*” by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
 2. Total “yes” responses to the question, “Are you adjusting working hours and days to keep your income to a certain amount?”

Whether Adjusting Working Hours and Days	Total number of women in irregular employment (ten thousand people)	
	Married	With no spouse (including unknown marital status)
Adjusting working hours and days	463.6	77.4
Not adjusting working hours and days	940.5	419.6
Total	1,404.1	497.0

(Note) Prepared from “the *Employment Status Survey*” by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

Figure SF-11: Percentage of persons engaged in work by annual income (by sex, marital status, age) (2017)



The existence of various systems created during the Showa Era and family allowances provided by companies have been cited as factors underlying why women adjust their working hours and days.

Japan’s social security system was shaped during and after the post-war high growth period in the 1960s. It was centered around universal health insurance and universal pensions against a backdrop of a steadily growing economy, low unemployment, a nuclear family model (of a husband with a regular full-time job for life, a wife without paid work, and children), well-developed corporate welfare programs, and local communities in which people were connected with each

other.¹⁷ However, as described earlier, as of 2020, the number of “single person” households and “single-parent and child (children)” households had nearly doubled the number of “couple and child (children)” households. In addition, among married households, the number of dual-income households is trending upward. The model family of a working husband, wife without paid work, and children—on which today’s social security and tax systems are premised—is declining in number year by year, and the number of households consisting of a husband who is employed, a wife who is not, and children under 18 years of age was 8.57 million in 1980, and 2.18 million in 2020.¹⁸

¹⁷ See “*Annual Health, Labour and Welfare Report 2011-2012.*”

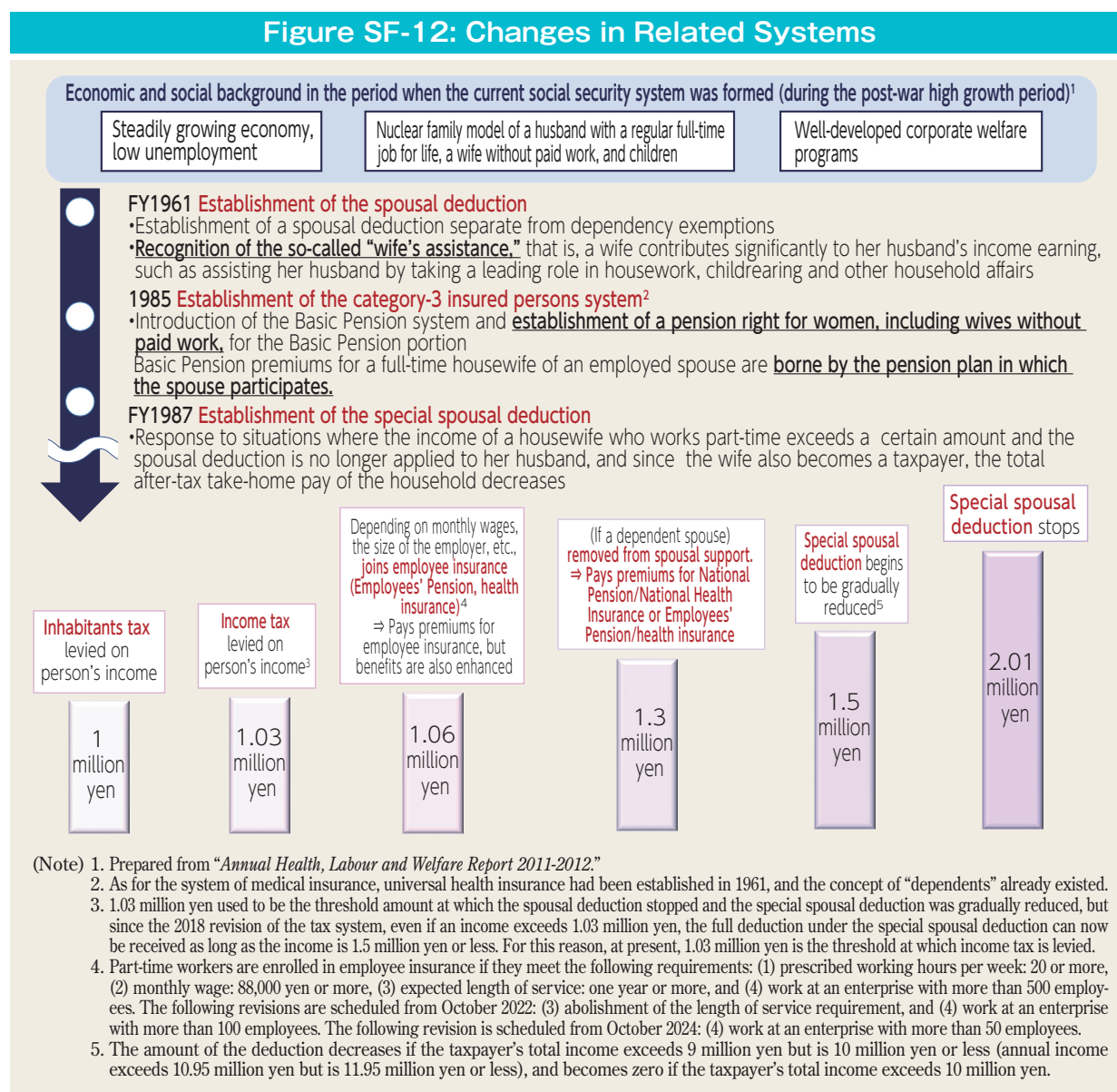
¹⁸ Prepared from “*Population Census*” by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

Amid changing socio-economic circumstances, in the Tax Reform of 2017, the requirement for a spouse's salary income to be eligible for the full spousal deduction was raised from 1.03 million yen to 1.5 million yen, and at the same time, caps on the taxpayer's income to be eligible for the spousal deduction was established. As for the social security system, coverage of employee insurance (health insurance, Employees' Pension insurance) is being gradually expanded to part-time workers, and in 2016, coverage was expanded to enterprises with more than 500 employees. Coverage will be further expanded to enterprises with more than 100 employees from October 2022, and to

enterprises with more than 50 employees from October 2024.

On the other hand, while the number of companies that pay family allowances has been decreasing, as of 2021, about three-quarters of private-sector business establishments across Japan with an enterprise size of 50 or more employees and an establishment size of 50 or more employees still provide family allowances, and about three-quarters of these provide family allowances for spouses. Of the companies that pay a family allowance to spouses, 86.7% have restrictions based on spousal income, with most of them having established income limits linked to the so-called "policy

Figure SF-12: Changes in Related Systems

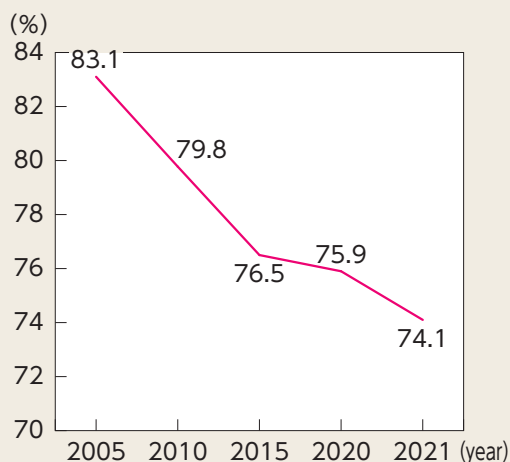


wall” of 1.03 million yen (45.4%) or 1.3 million

yen (36.9%) (Figure SF-12) (Figure SF-13).

Figure SF-13: Status of Family Allowance Payments and Restrictions Due to Spousal Income

Percentage of Private-Sector Establishments with Family Allowance Programs



(Note) Prepared from “Survey of Pay Rates in the Private Sector” by National Personal Authority.

Payment of Family Allowances in the Private Sector (2021)

Provision of family allowance	Percentage of business establishments
Has a family allowance program	74.1% (100%)
Provides family allowance for spouse	(74.5%) [100%]
Has restrictions based on spouse's income (total)	[86.7%] (100%)
Amount of income limit	
1.03 million yen	(45.4%)
1.3 million yen	(36.9%)
1.5 million yen	(7.0%)
Other	(10.6%)
No restrictions based on spouse's income	[13.3%]
Does not provide family allowance for spouse	(25.5%)
Does not have a family allowance program	25.9%

- (Note) 1. Prepared from “2021 Survey of Pay Rates in the Private Sector” by National Personal Authority.
 2. Figures in parentheses () represent percentage of business establishments based on the total number of employees at business establishments that have a family allowance program.
 3. Figures in square brackets [] represent percentage of business establishments based on the total number of employees at business establishments that provide family allowances for spouses.
 4. Figures in angle brackets < > represent percentage of business establishments based on the total number of employees at business establishments that have restrictions based on spousal income.
 5. Percentages are calculated using the weighted number of employees.

Dependent Allowance for National Public Employees

Allowance	Details, amounts paid
Dependent allowance	Paid to employees who have dependent family members
	(Amount paid)
	Spouse 6.5 thousand yen *
	Children 10 thousand yen
	Children (beginning of FY in which child turns 16 through to end of FY in which child turns 22) Additional 5 thousand yen
	Parent, etc. 6.5 thousand yen *
	* Under the Salary Schedule for Administrative Service (I), the amount paid for Grade 8 employees, etc. is 3.5 thousand yen. Allowance is not paid to Grade 9 employees, etc. or higher.

(Note) Prepared from “Overview of Allowances for National Public Employees” (as of April 2021), National Personal Authority.

Monthly Family Allowance Payments in the Private Sector (by Dependent Family Members) (2021)

Monthly allowance by composition of dependent family members	Spouse	12,713 yen
Spouse + 1 child	19,145 yen	
Spouse + 2 children	25,243 yen	

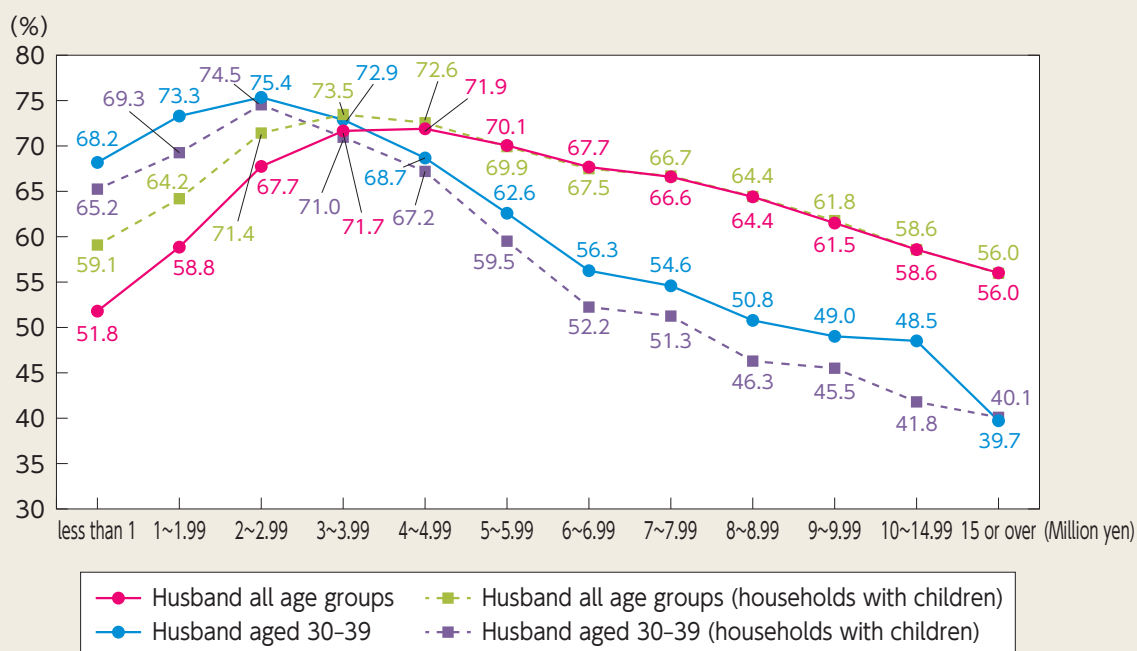
- (Note) 1. Prepared from “2021 Survey of Pay Rates in the Private Sector” by National Personal Authority.
 2. Monthly allowances are calculated for business establishments that provide family allowances for spouses and which have restrictions on payments based on spousal income.

In this way, systems and practices such as the tax system, social security system, and corporate spousal allowances are thought to be one factor in keeping women within the model of being wives without paid work, or even if they do work, as merely helping to support the family income. Given the large number of women in irregular employment who adjust their working hours and days despite the various institutional revisions of the past, more effort is needed.

In addition, looking at the employment rate of wives, organized by their husband’s income

group, the higher the husband’s income group, the lower the wife’s employment rate. This trend is particularly prominent among households with children in which the husband is aged 30–39. This is one example of the social security and other systems from the Showa Era benefiting higher income groups. Underlying this, there still remains stereotyped perceptions of gender roles, such as “husbands should work outside the home and wives should take care of the home,” and these seem to be having an impact (Figure SF-14).

Figure SF-14: Ratio of Persons Engaged in Work of Wives by Husband's Income Group (2017)



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the *Employment Status Survey*” by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

2. The term “households with children” is the total of “households of a couple and child(ren)” and “households of a couple, child(ren) and parent(s).”

(2) Rise in the number of single-parents

While the number of households with children has been decreasing gradually,¹⁹ in the roughly 30-year period between 1988 and 2016, the number of single-parent households²⁰ increased from 1.022 million (849 thousand single-mother households, 173 thousand single-father households) to 1.419 million (1,232 thousand single-mother households, 187 thousand single-father households). This represents about 50% increase for single-mother

households and 10% increase for single-father households. Furthermore, in 2016, single-mother households accounted for 86.8% of single-parent households (Table SF-15) (Figure SF-16).

Looking at the household composition of single-parent households, 55.6% of single-father households live with someone other than the father and child, whereas 61.3% of single-mother households live by themselves (Figure SF-17).

¹⁹ Looking at changes in households with children (unmarried persons under the age of 18), the number of such households was 17,364 thousand (46.2% of all households) in 1986, and 11,221 thousand (21.7%) in 2019 (“*Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions*,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).

²⁰ A single-mother household is a household in which a fatherless child (aged under 20 years, unmarried) is raised by their mother. A single-father household is a household in which a motherless child is raised by their father. (“*FY2016 Nationwide Survey on Single-Parent Households*,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).

Table SF-15: Single-Parent Households

Over the past 30 years, the number of single-mother households has increased about 50% and the number of single-father households has increased about 10%.

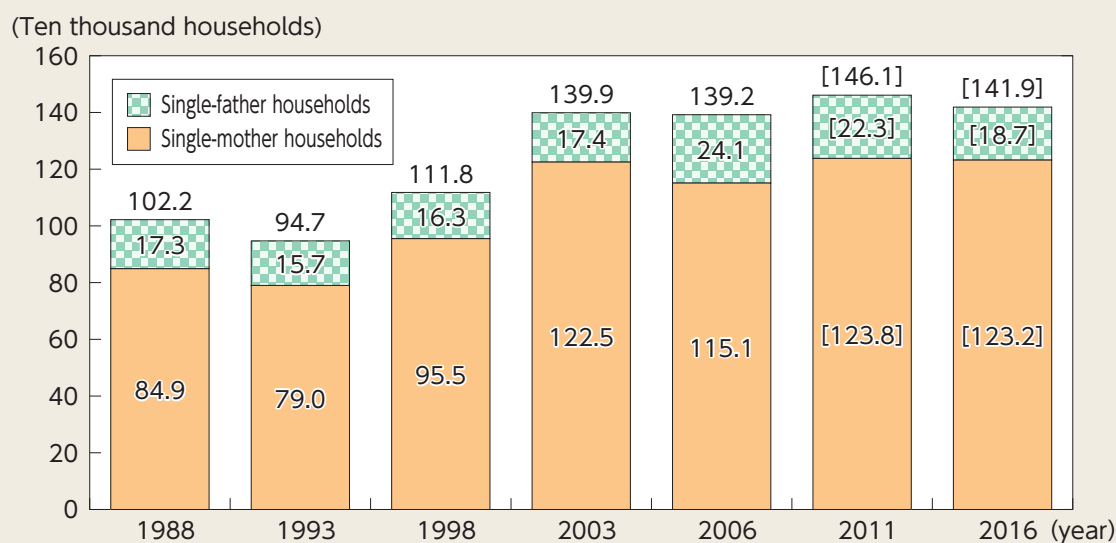
(1988) → (2016)
 Number of single-mother households* 849 thousand households → 1,232 thousand households (86.8% of single-parent households)
 Number of single-father households* 173 thousand households → 187 thousand households (13.2% of single-parent households)

* Total number of single-mother households and single-father households, including households with a person other than the mother or father living with the child.

	Single-mother households	Single-father households	Private households
Employment rate	81.8%	85.4%	Women: 71.3% Men: 83.9%
Percentage of regular employees in employees (excluding executives)	47.7%	89.7%	Women: 49.2% Men: 83.3%
Percentage of non-regular employees in employees (excluding executives)	52.3%	10.3%	Women: 50.8% Men: 16.7%
Average annual income from work	2.00 million yen Regular employment: 3.05 million yen Part-time workers: 1.33 million yen	3.98 million yen Regular employment: 4.28 million yen Part-time workers: 1.90 million yen	(Average earnings) Women: 2.93 million yen Men: 5.32 million yen
Percentage receiving child support	24.3%	3.2%	—

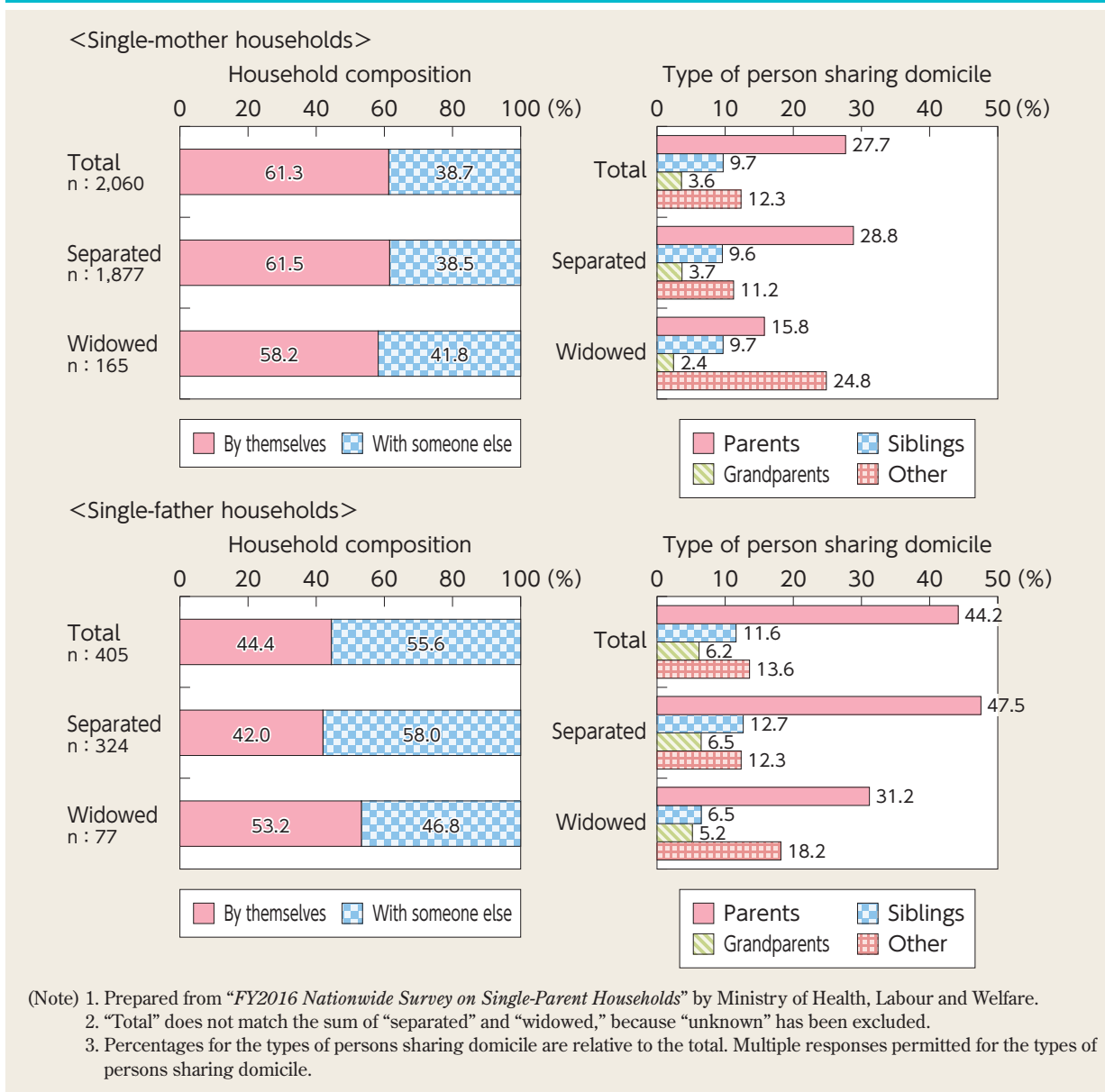
(Note) 1. Figures for single-mother households and single-father households are based on “FY2016 Nationwide Survey on Single-Parent Households,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. The percentages of employees in regular employment and employees in non-regular employment in single-mother households and single-father households were calculated as a fraction of the total of “regular staff/employees” and “non-regular staff/employees” (total of “dispatched workers” and “part-time workers and temporary workers, etc.”). Average annual income from work is the personal income earned from working by the mother or father of a single-mother household or single-father household.
 2. The employment rates of private households are based on the “FY2021 Labour Force Survey (Aged 15–64),” Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, and average annual incomes from work are based on “Statistical Survey of Actual Statistics for Salary in the Private Sector in 2020,” National Tax Agency.

Figure SF-16: Number of Single-mother households and Single-father households



(Note) 1. Figures from prior to 2011 are based on “Nationwide Survey on Single-Mother Households” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and figures from 2016 are based on “FY2016 Nationwide Survey on Single-Parent Households” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
 2. As of November 1 of each year.
 3. A single-mother household is a household in which a fatherless child (aged under 20 years, unmarried) is raised by their mother. A single-father household is a household in which a motherless child is raised by their father.
 4. Values for 2011 are excluding Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima prefectures. Values for 2016 are excluding Kumamoto prefecture.

Figure SF-17: Household Composition of Single-Parent Households



Furthermore, the percentage of widowed single-person households has been declining over the long term, both for single-mother households and single-father households. In 2016, approximately 80% of single-mother households and about three-quarters of single-father households had become single-parent households as a result of divorce.²¹

Looking at the ages of mothers at the time they became a single-mother household due to divorce or other reasons, the most common

age group was 30–39 (48.4%), followed by 20–29 (28.8%) and 40–49 (19.4%). Looking at the ages of the youngest child at the time they became a single-mother household due to divorce or other reasons, 45.7% of children were aged 0–2 years and 22.7% were aged 3–5 years, meaning that close to 70% of the children were preschool children aged 5 or younger (Figure SF-18) (Figure SF-19).

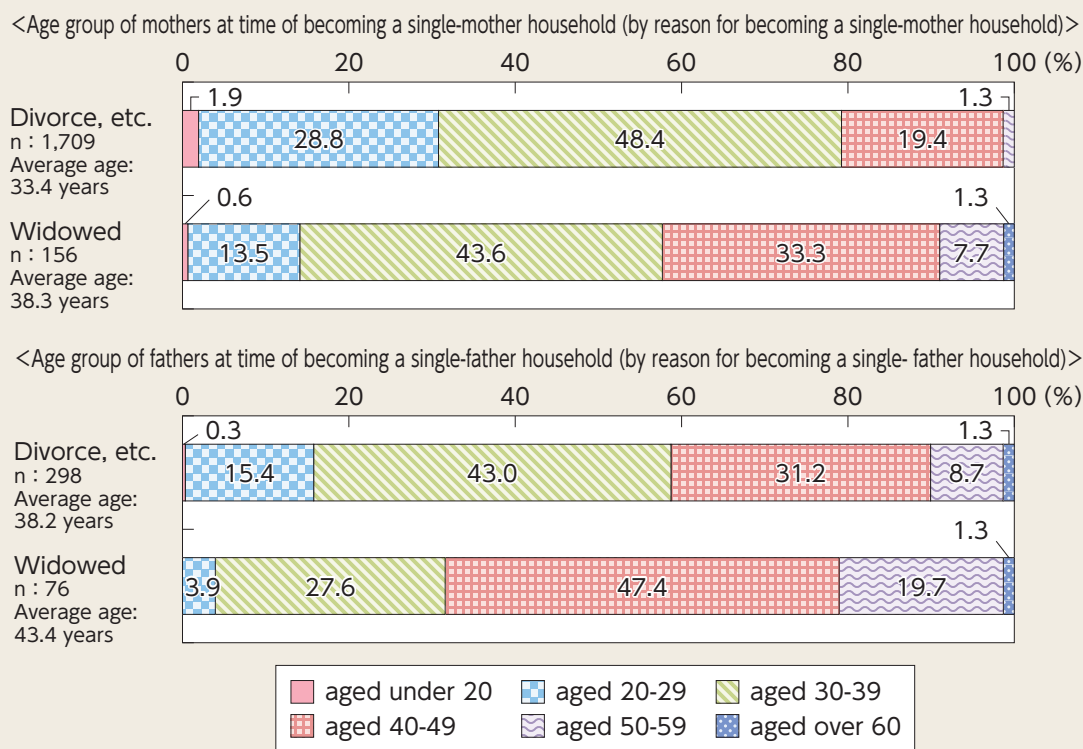
Looking at the ages of fathers at the time they became a single-father household due to

²¹ Prepared from “FY2016 Nationwide Survey on Single-Parent Households,” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

divorce or other reasons, the most common age group was 30–39 (43.0%), followed by 40–49 (31.2%) and 20–29 (15.4%). In terms of the ages of the youngest child at the time they became a single-father household due to

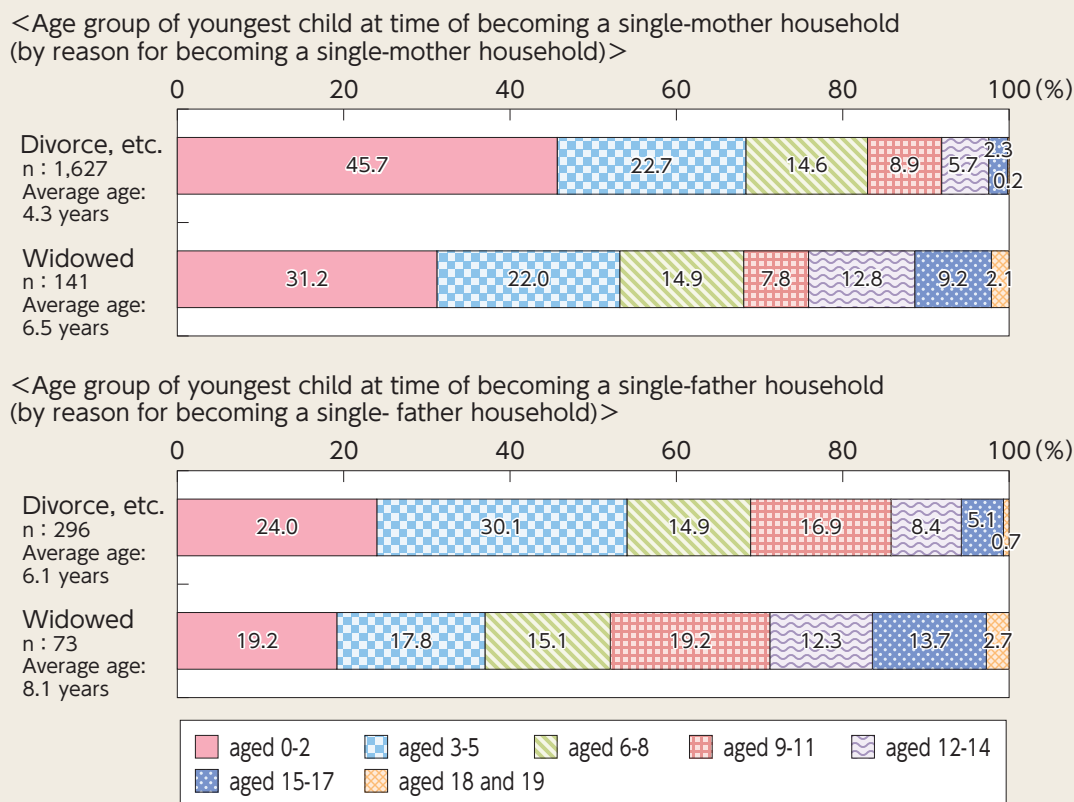
divorce or other reasons, 30.1% of children were aged 3–5 years and 24.0% were aged 0–2 years, meaning that more than half were pre-school children aged 5 or younger.

Figure SF-18: Age of Parents at Time of Becoming a Single-Parent Household



- (Note) 1. Prepared from “FY2016 Nationwide Survey on Single-Parent Households” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
 2. A single-mother household is a household in which a fatherless child (aged under 20 years, unmarried) is raised by their mother. A single-father household is a household in which a motherless child is raised by their father.
 3. “Divorce, etc.” is defined as “living separately” in “FY2016 Nationwide Survey on Single-Parent Households,” and is the sum of divorced, unmarried mothers, deserted, missing and other.
 4. The percentage of single-parent households, by parent’s age group, is calculated as a fraction of all households excluding those in which the parent’s age at the time the family became a single-parent household was unknown.

Figure SF-19: Age of Youngest Child at Time of Becoming a Single-Parent Household



(Note) 1. Prepared from “FY2016 Nationwide Survey on Single-Parent Households” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
 2. A single-mother household is a household in which a fatherless child (aged under 20 years, unmarried) is raised by their mother. A single-father household is a household in which a motherless child is raised by their father.
 3. “Divorce, etc.” is defined as “living separately” in “FY2016 Nationwide Survey on Single-Parent Households,” and is the sum of divorced, unmarried mothers, deserted, missing and other.
 4. The percentage of single-parent households, by parent’s age group, is calculated as a fraction of all households excluding those in which the parent’s age at the time the family became a single-parent household was unknown.

81.8% of mothers in single-mother households is in employment, and the employment rate is high by international standards. However, of those who are employees, 52.3% of them are in non-regular employees, and their average annual employment income from work is 2 million yen, which is less than that of women in private households (2.93 million yen). In addition, about three-quarters of all single-mother households do not receive child support from their divorced ex-husbands (Table SF-15, see above).

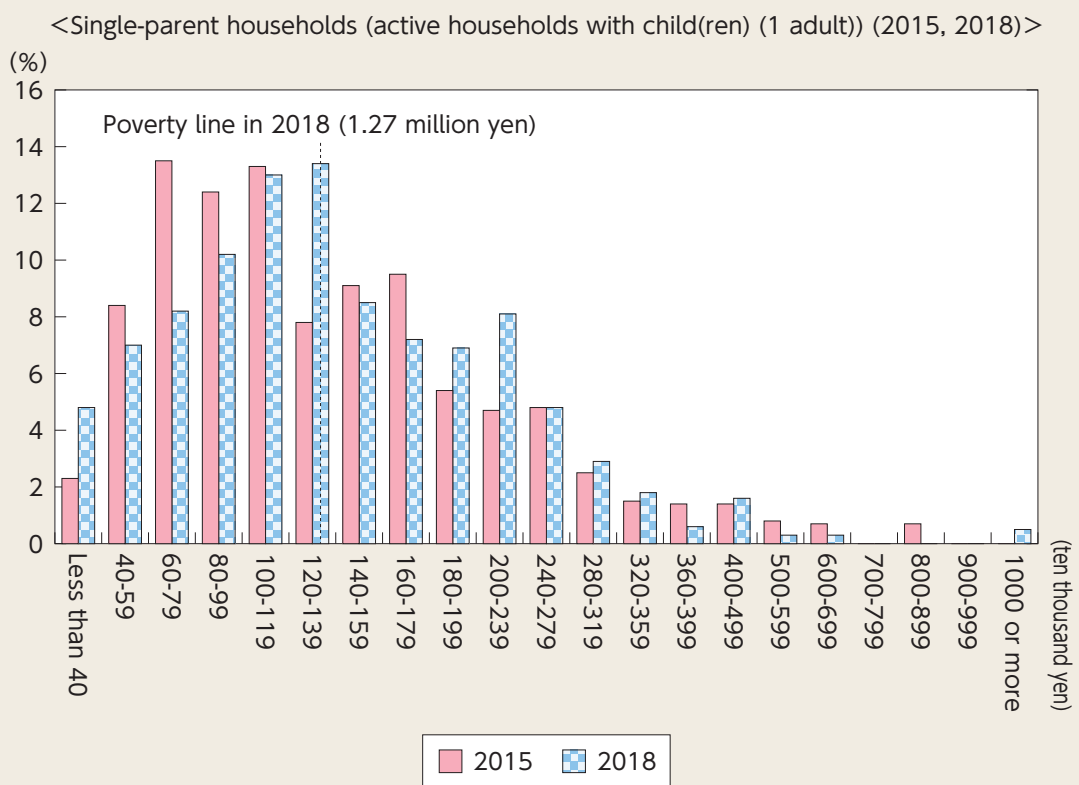
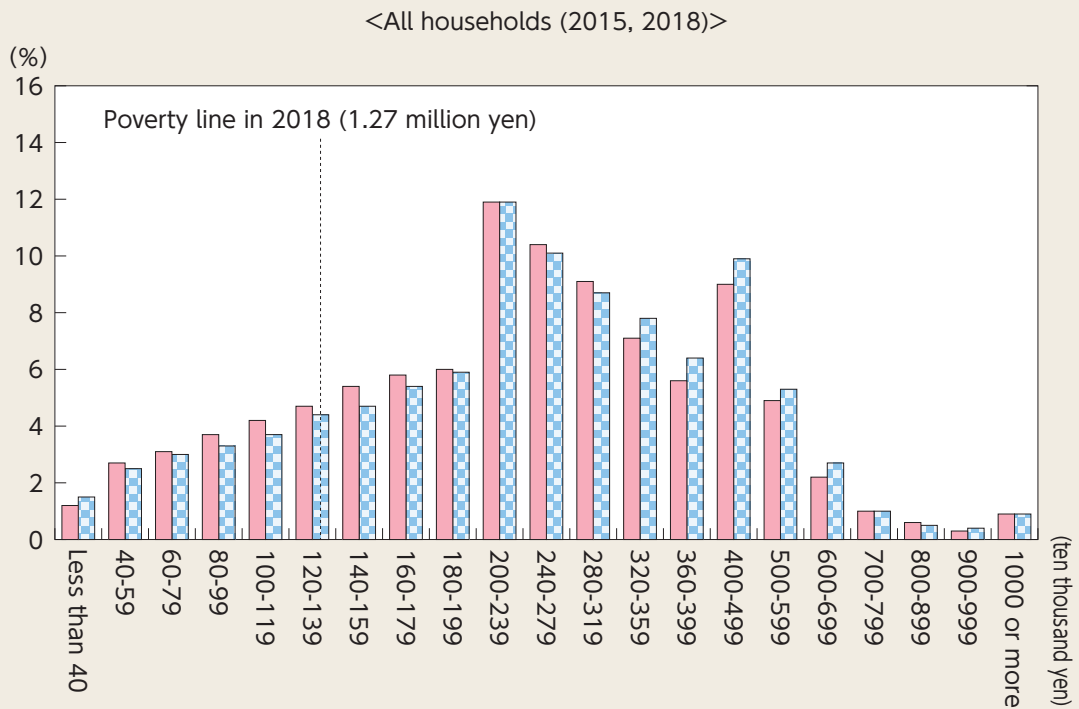
Comparing the distribution of equivalent disposable incomes²² between working-age households with children in which there is only one adult (single-parent

households) and all working-age households, in 2018, most single-parent households were distributed near the poverty line (half of the median equivalent disposable income, which was 1.27 million yen in 2018), and the “relative poverty rate” (the percentage of household members below the poverty line) for members of households “with one adult” was 48.1%, far above the overall rate of 15.4% (Figure SF-20). According to a survey by the Cabinet Office,²³ 51.8% of single-parent households and 53.3% of single-mother households responded that their current living conditions are “difficult” or “very difficult”—more than double that of two-parent households (21.5%) (Figure SF-21).

²² Adjusted income equal to household disposable income (so-called take-home pay after taxes, social insurance premiums, etc. are deducted from income) divided by the square root of the number of household members (“Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).

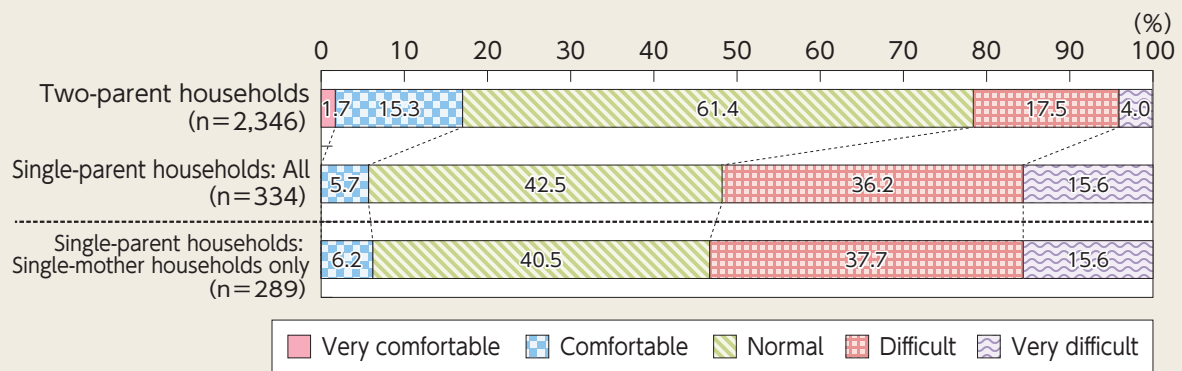
²³ “Report on the Analysis of the Survey of Children’s Living Conditions, 2021” (December 2021), Cabinet Office.

Figure SF-20: Distribution of Equivalent Disposable Income for All Households and for Single-parent Households



(Note) 1. Prepared from “Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
 2. Figures for 2015 exclude Kumamoto prefecture.
 3. “Adult” refers to a person aged 18 years or older, and “child” refers to a person aged 17 years or younger. “Active household” refers to a household in which the head of the household is aged 18 or older but younger than 65.
 4. Excludes household members whose equivalent disposable income is unknown.

Figure SF-21: Current Living Conditions



(Note) Prepared from “Report on the Analysis of the Survey of Children’s Living Conditions, 2021” (December 2021), Cabinet Office.

(3) Rise in the number of one-person households

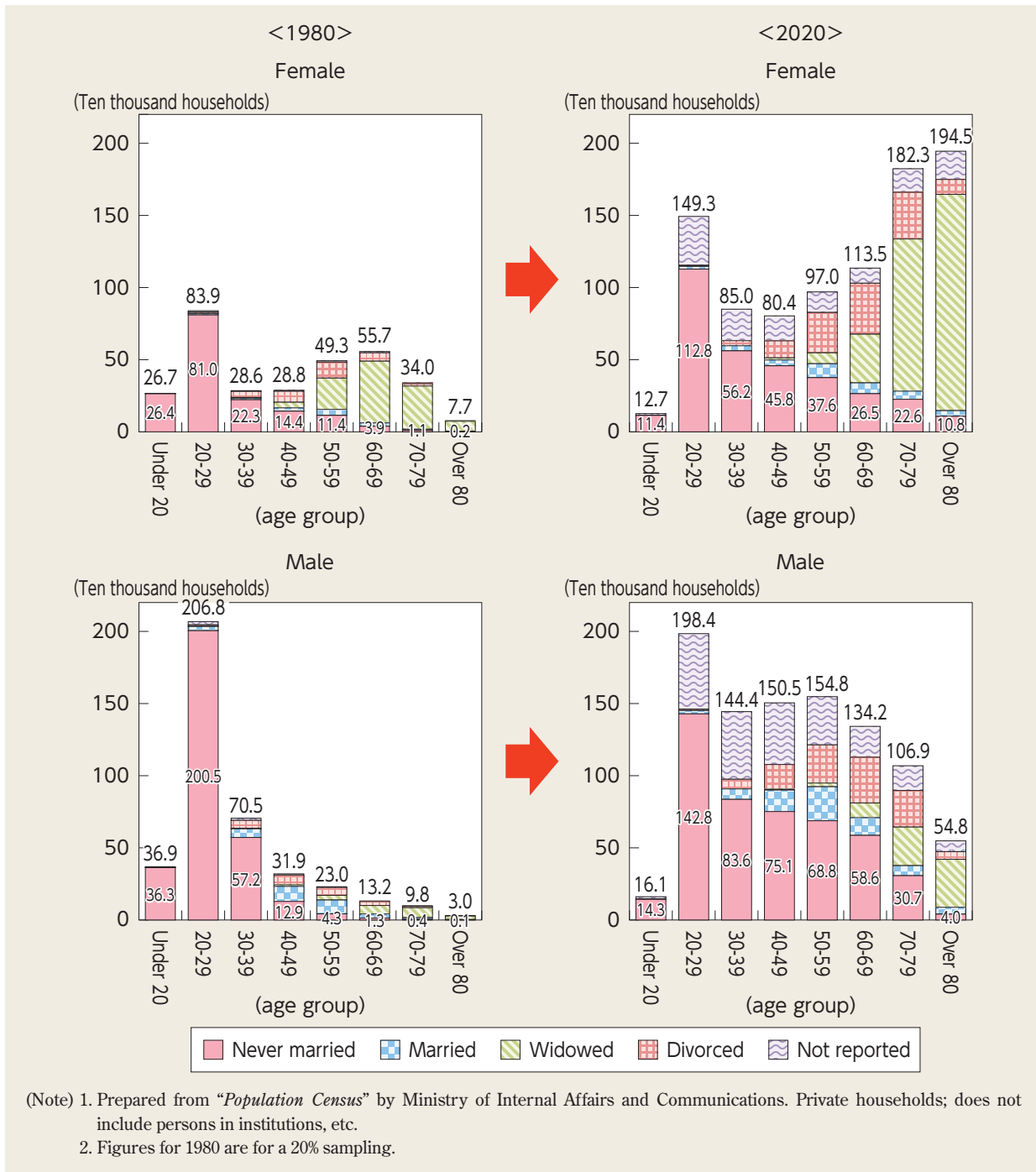
Looking at one-person households (by age group), the number of female one-person households aged 20 years or older was 2.88 million in 1980 (including 1.34 million who had never married), but by 2020 this had increased 210% (130% for those who had never married) to 9.02 million households (including 3.12 million who had never married). Although there have been increases in all age groups of women aged 20 years and older, the magnitude of the increase is particularly large

for elderly women aged 70 years and older²⁴ who have been widowed.

The number of male one-person households aged 20 years or older was 3.58 million in 1980 (including 2.77 million who had never married), and in 2020 this had increased 160% (70% for those who had never married) to 9.44 million households (including 4.64 million who had never married). For men, there have been increases in all age groups 30 years and older, but especially among men aged 40 and older who have never married (Figure SF-22).

²⁴ Does not include elderly women in institutions, etc.

Figure SF-22: Number of One-person Households (by Age Group)

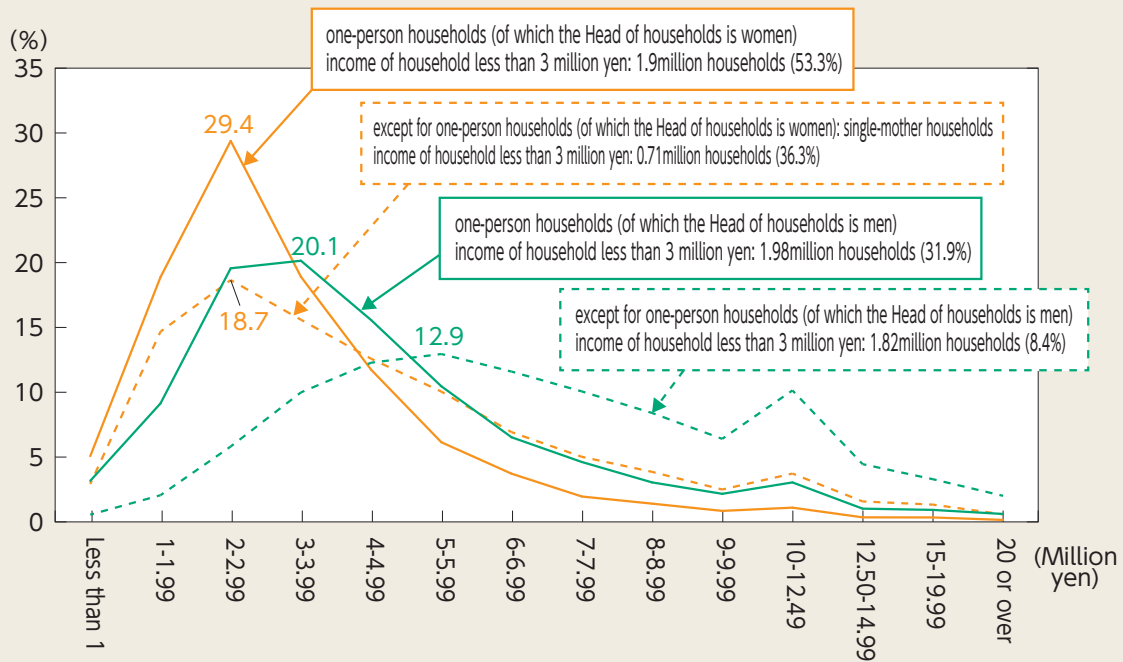


Here we look at the income distribution of one-person households versus other households where the head of the household is employed. When comparing working women and men in one-person households, a higher percentage of women (53.3%) than men (31.9%) have an income of household of less than 3 million yen. A comparison of women and men in households other than one-person households also shows that a higher percentage of

women (36.3%) than men (8.4%) have an income of household of less than 3 million yen. Furthermore, both for one-person households and other households, there is a concentrated distribution of household incomes for women in the 2–2.99 million yen bracket (Figure SF-23).

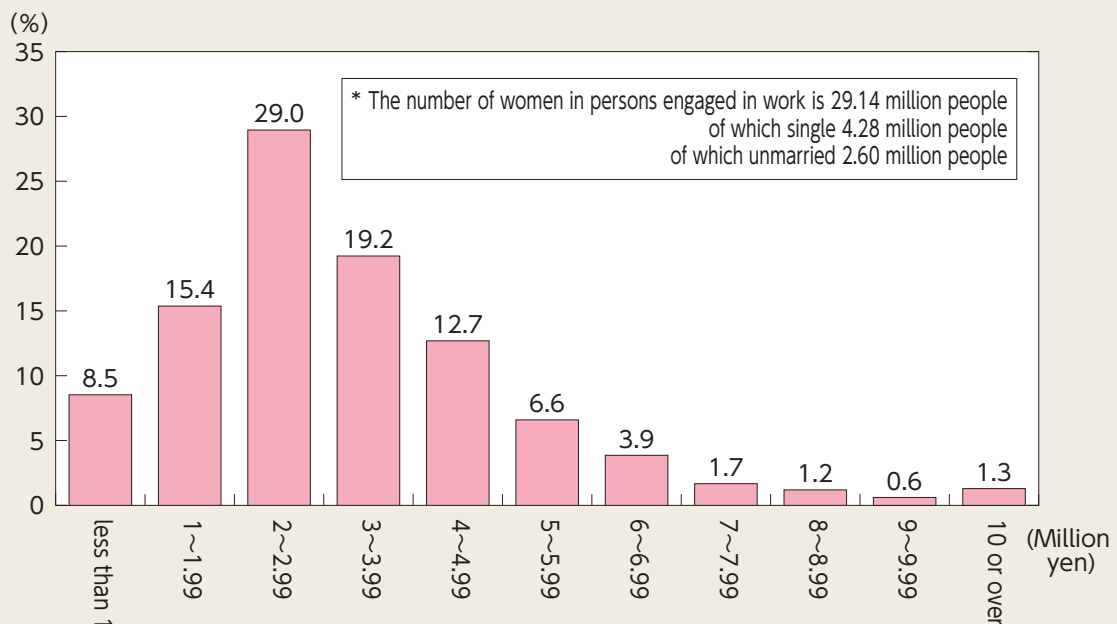
In addition, 23.9% of employed, single (never married) women have an income of household of less than 2 million yen (Figure SF-24).

Figure SF-23: Income Distribution among Households in Which the Head of the Household is at Work (2017)



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the *Employment Status Survey*” by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
 2. “Households in which the head of the household is at work” refers to households in which the head of the household is mainly engaged in work. “Income of Household” refers to the sum of incomes (including taxes) for the past year (October 2016 to September 2017) ordinarily earned by the head of household, the spouse of the head of household and other related household members. Regularly earned incomes, such as pensions and public retirement packages are included; but incomes earned from selling assets (such as land, houses and securities) or from converting owned property into cash (such as withdrawals of deposits or savings) and temporary incomes (such as inheritances, gifts and retirement benefits) are not included.

Figure SF-24: Income Distribution among Households of Single (Unmarried) Women in persons engaged in work (2017)



(Note) Prepared from “the *Employment Status Survey*” by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

Furthermore, in recent years, as human connections have tended to weaken amid the COVID-19 pandemic, social problems of increased loneliness and isolation have been gaining attention. Looking at feelings of loneliness by age group, it is prevalent among both men and women in their 20s and 30s, and in terms of marital status, again both for men and women, it is greater among those who have never married or who are divorced. In terms of whether the respondent lives with others in the same house, feelings of loneliness are greater among single men who do not live with someone, and looking at different age groups, it is prevalent among women in their 30s and men in their 50s (Figure SF-25).²⁵ Looking at the degree to which people aged 60 years and older socialize with their neighbors, more than half of men in one-person households "I just say hello to my

neighbors," and the percentage responding "I have almost no social contact with my neighbors" is higher than other household types (Figure SF-26).

According to data published by the Tokyo Medical Examiner's Office,²⁶ the number of people living alone in the wards of Tokyo who died in their homes in 2019 was approximately 1,700 for women and 3,900 for men (Figure SF-27).

Suicides where "feelings of loneliness" is a factor are more common among males, which is increasing both among males and females during the COVID-19 pandemic. For these women, the most common age group of suicides is those aged over 80 years.

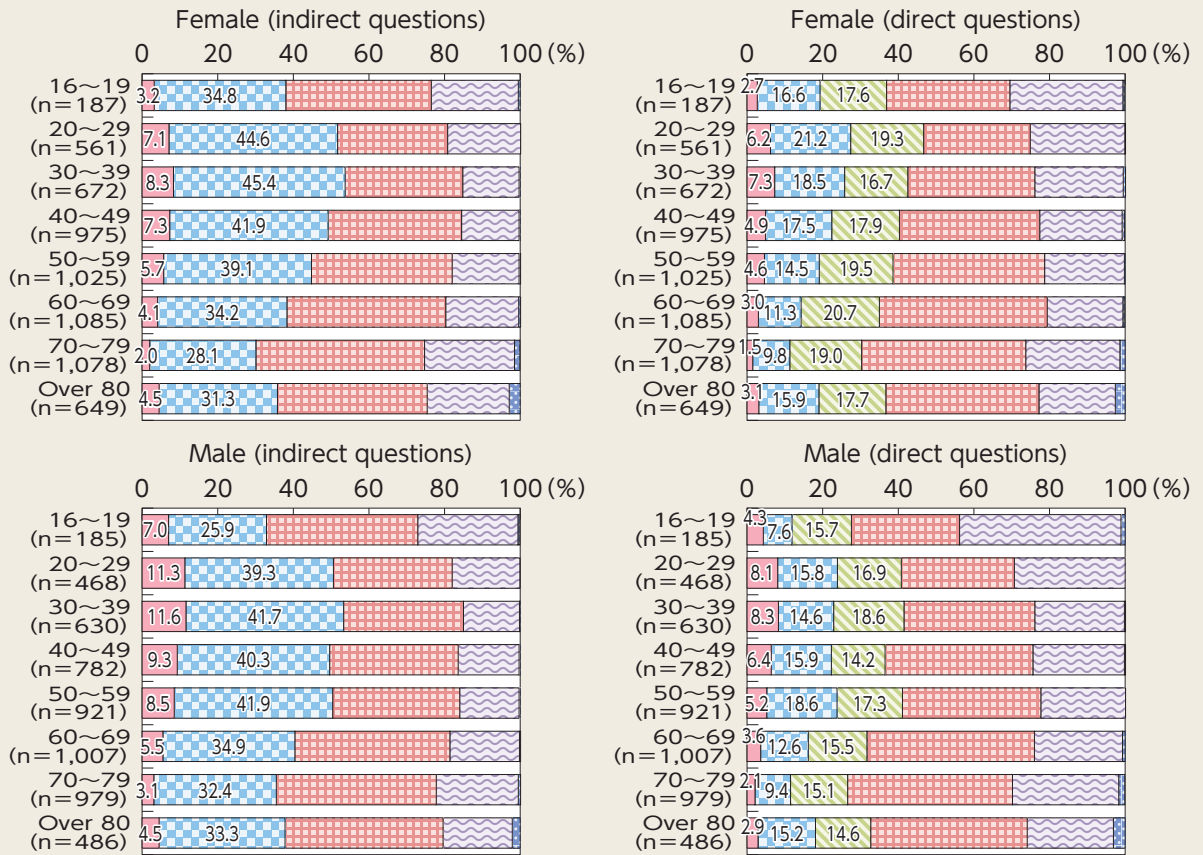
While for those men, the number of suicides is the same for each age group over 20 years in general (Figure SF-28).

²⁵ To more accurately grasp the subjective feeling of loneliness, an attempt was made to understand feelings of loneliness by way of (1) direct questions and (2) indirect questions ("*Basic Survey on Human Connection (2021)*," Office for Policy on Loneliness and Isolation, Cabinet Secretariat).

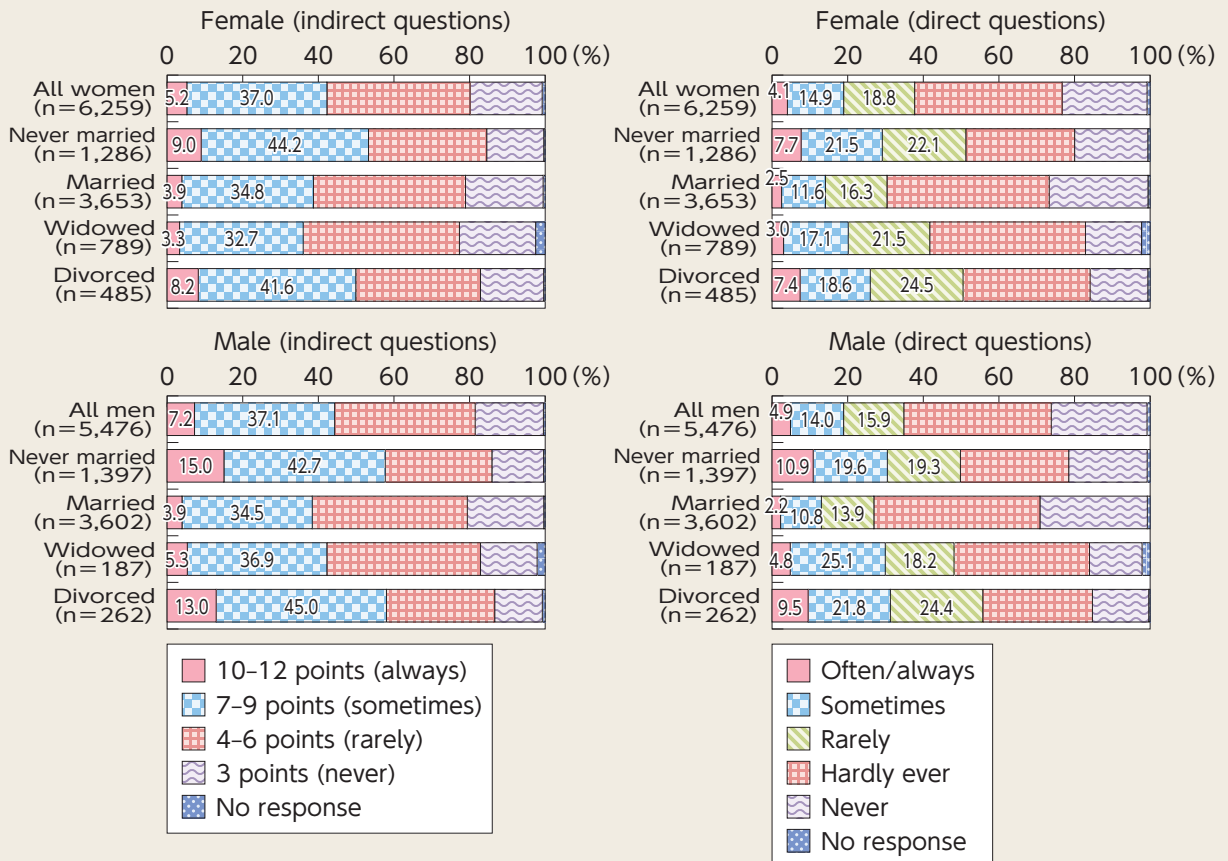
²⁶ The Tokyo Medical Examiner's Office performs examinations and autopsies for people who died a sudden death or in an accident with unknown causes.

Figure SF-25: Feelings of Loneliness

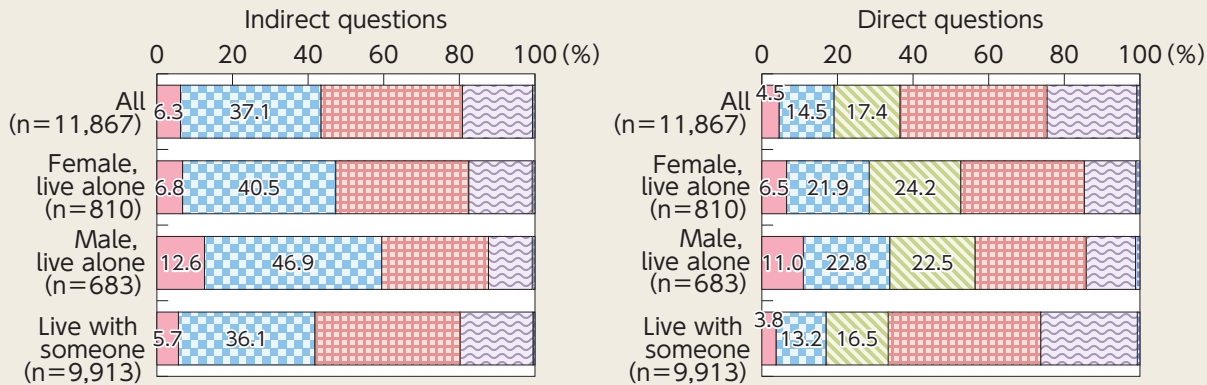
<By age group>



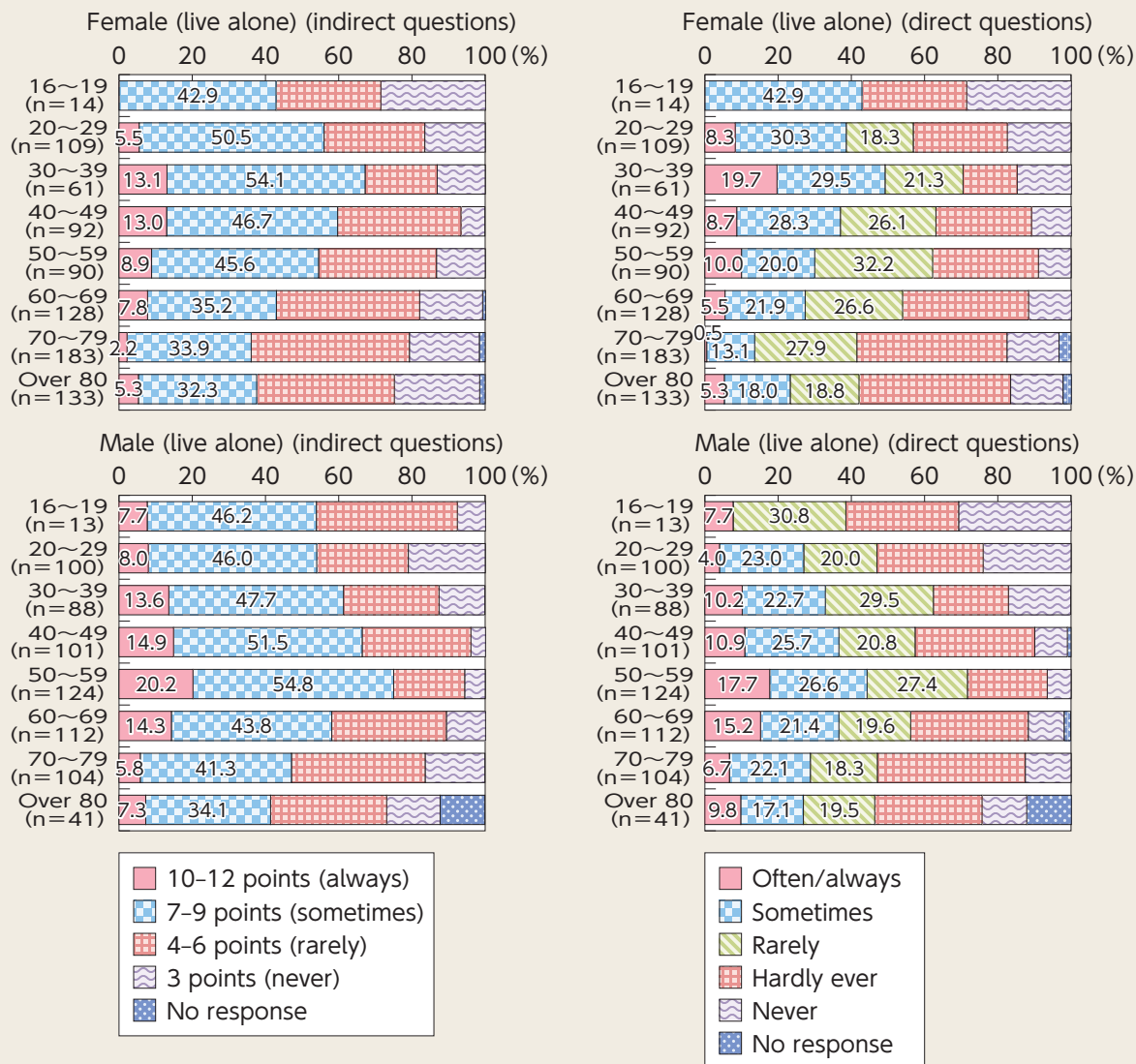
<By marital status>



<By status of living with others>

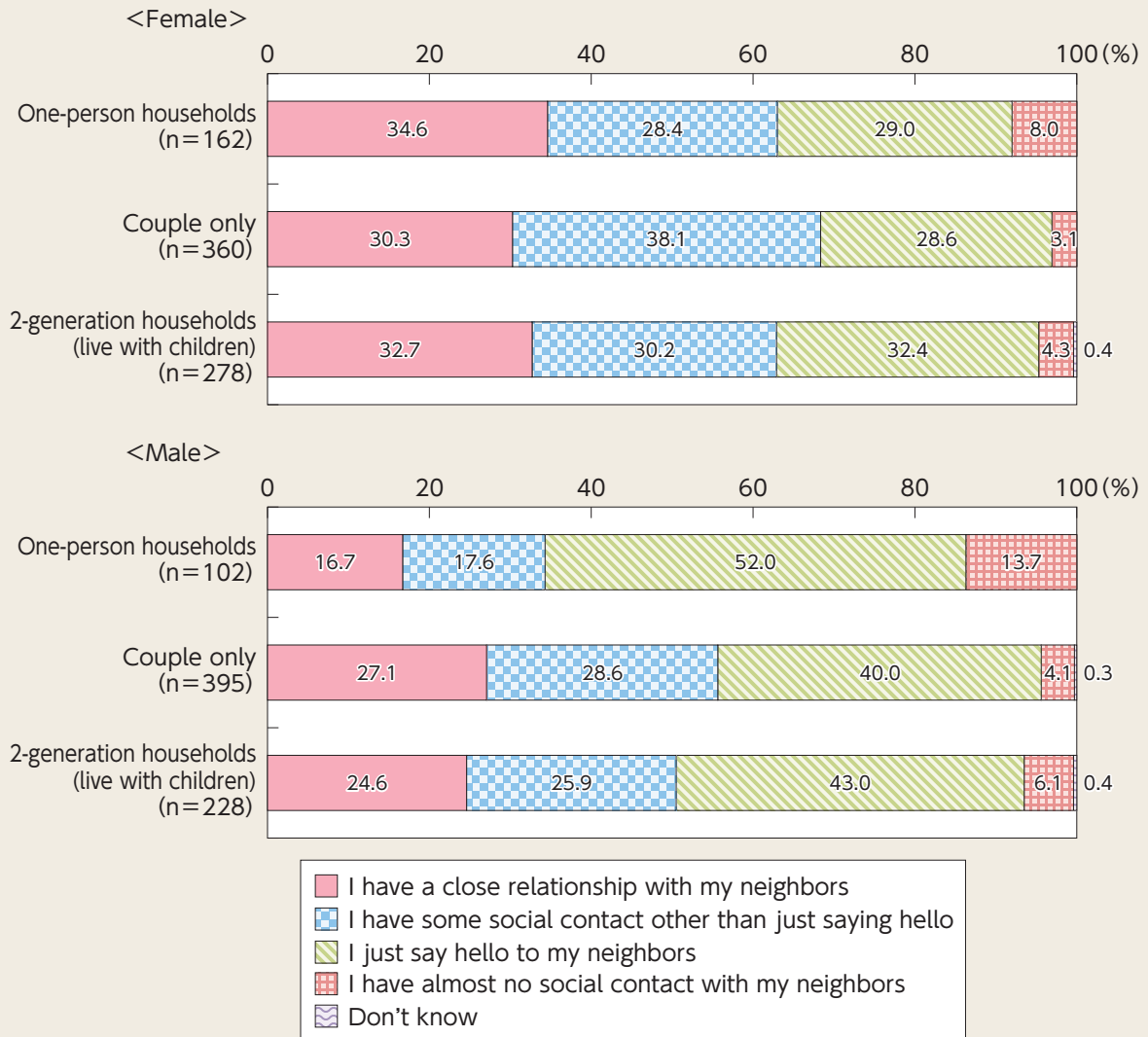


<Live alone, by age group>



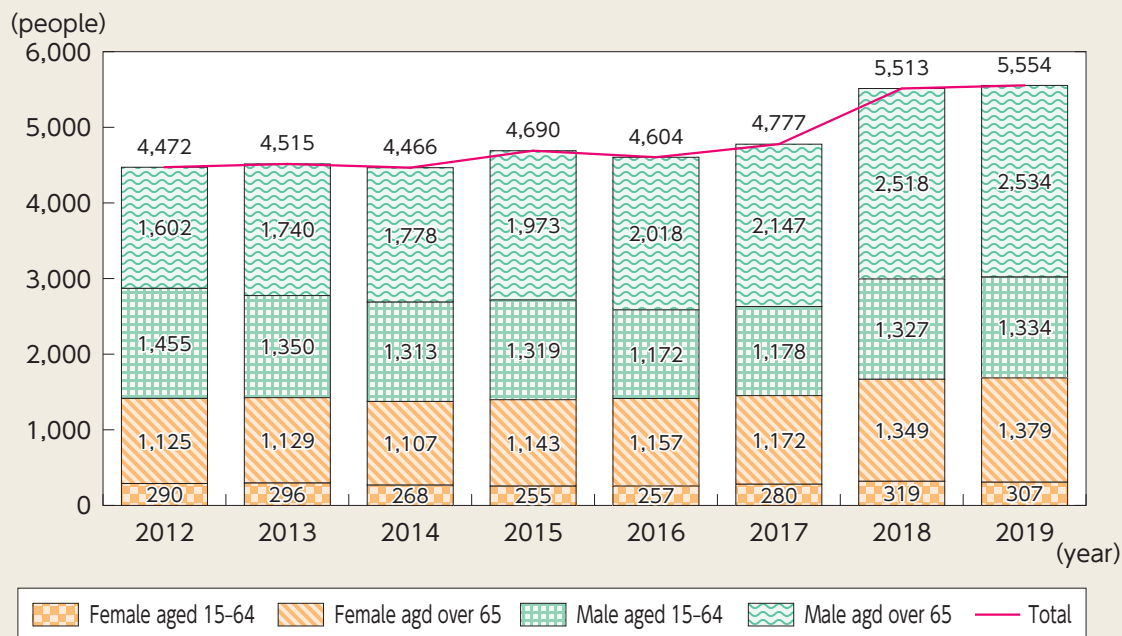
(Note) Prepared from "the Basic Survey on Human Connection (2021)," by Office for Policy on Loneliness and Isolation, Cabinet Secretariat.

Figure SF-26: Level of Socializing with Neighbors



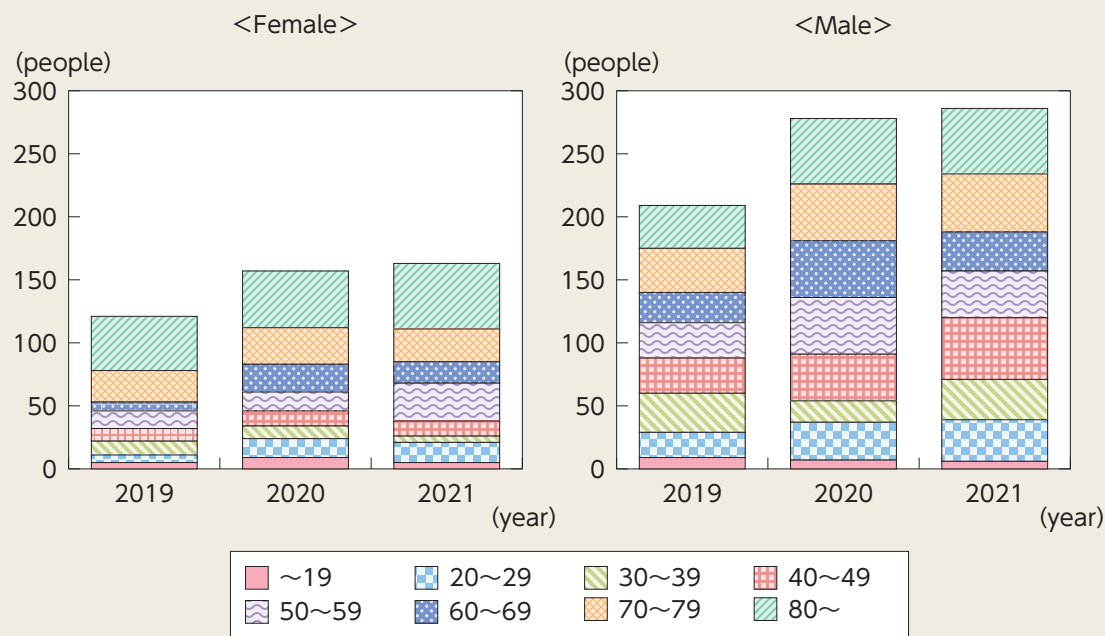
(Note) 1. Prepared from "Survey on Older People's Housing and Living Environments (2018)," by Cabinet Office.
 2. Survey of men and women aged 60 years and older throughout Japan.

Figure SF-27: Number of Cases of People Dying Alone, by Age Group, in the Wards of Tokyo



(Note) 1. Prepared from "Statistics on Persons Living Alone who Died at Home," by Tokyo Medical Examiner's Office, Tokyo Metropolitan Government.
 2. In this data, the term "dying alone" is defined as an unusual death of a person living alone who died at home.
 3. An "unusual death" is a case of death in which the cause of death is unknown. Unable to be determined by a physician to be a death due to illness, it is suspected to be related to an incident or accident, and must be reported to the police.

Figure SF-28: Number of Suicides by Age Group (Cases Where Loneliness is a Factor)



(Note) 1. Prepared from "Suicide Statistics" Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's website.
 2. For each suicide, up to three causes/motives are recorded which can be clearly inferred from suicide notes or other materials provided as evidence for the suicide. For this reason, the sum of suicides by cause/motive does not match the total number of suicides or the number of persons for whom a cause/motive is identified. In addition, many suicides have unspecified causes/motives.

3. Opinion toward Participation in Housework, Childcare and Long-term Care, and Changes in Long-term career

Here, we look at the opinion toward housework, childcare and long-term care, which have predominately been carried out within the family by women, and the changes in long-term career amid the changing family structure.

(1) Changing opinion toward participation in housework, childcare

(Housework)

Regarding housework, the younger the generation, the higher the percentage of both men and women who would prefer to “split the housework 50/50 with my spouse.” In particular, more than 70% of men in their 20s and 30s would prefer to share the housework 50/50 with their wives. On the other hand, 20–30% of women would prefer to “I do more than my spouse,” matching the 20–30% of men in their 30s and older who would prefer that “my spouse does more than me” (Figure SF-29).²⁷

(Childcare)

Regarding childcare, more than 70% of women in their 20s and men in their 20s and 30s would prefer to “split the child rearing 50/50 with my spouse.” On the other hand, 20–40% of women would prefer to “do more than my spouse,” while 20–30% of men in their 30s and older would prefer that “my spouse does more than me.”

As indicated above, the younger the man, the more likely he is to want to share the housework and childcare roles with his wife. In particular, this is true for more than 70% of men in their 20s and 30s. Being a generation of men who studied home economics in junior

high school and high school, this may be result of the coeducation of home economics which started in the 1990s.

In reality, however, even among dual-income households, the time spent by husbands on housework and childcare is extremely small. Even if his wife is a regular employee and their children are still young, the reality is that husbands spend considerably less time than their wives on housework and childcare (Figure SF-30). In particular, an international comparison clearly indicates a fixed division of roles in Japan, with men working longer hours while time spent on housework, childcare and other unpaid work is heavily skewed toward women (Figure SF-31).

A variety of factors appear to be underlying this large disconnect between wants and reality, including the problem of long working hours which is commonly seen among men, understanding at the workplace and among people around them, and an environment that makes it difficult for fathers to participate in childcare. In surveys and opinion polls conducted by the Cabinet Office, opinions were solicited on familiar issues that prevent fathers from participating in childcare.²⁸ Some pointed out that at kindergartens and nursery schools, sometimes fathers are being discouraged because communication is only sent to mothers, or fathers are asked to relay a message to the mother. Others suggested that fathers cannot participate in parent-teacher meetings because they are held on weekday afternoons, and that since only mothers attend the parent-teacher meetings and class visits, there is an atmosphere that makes it awkward for them to participate.

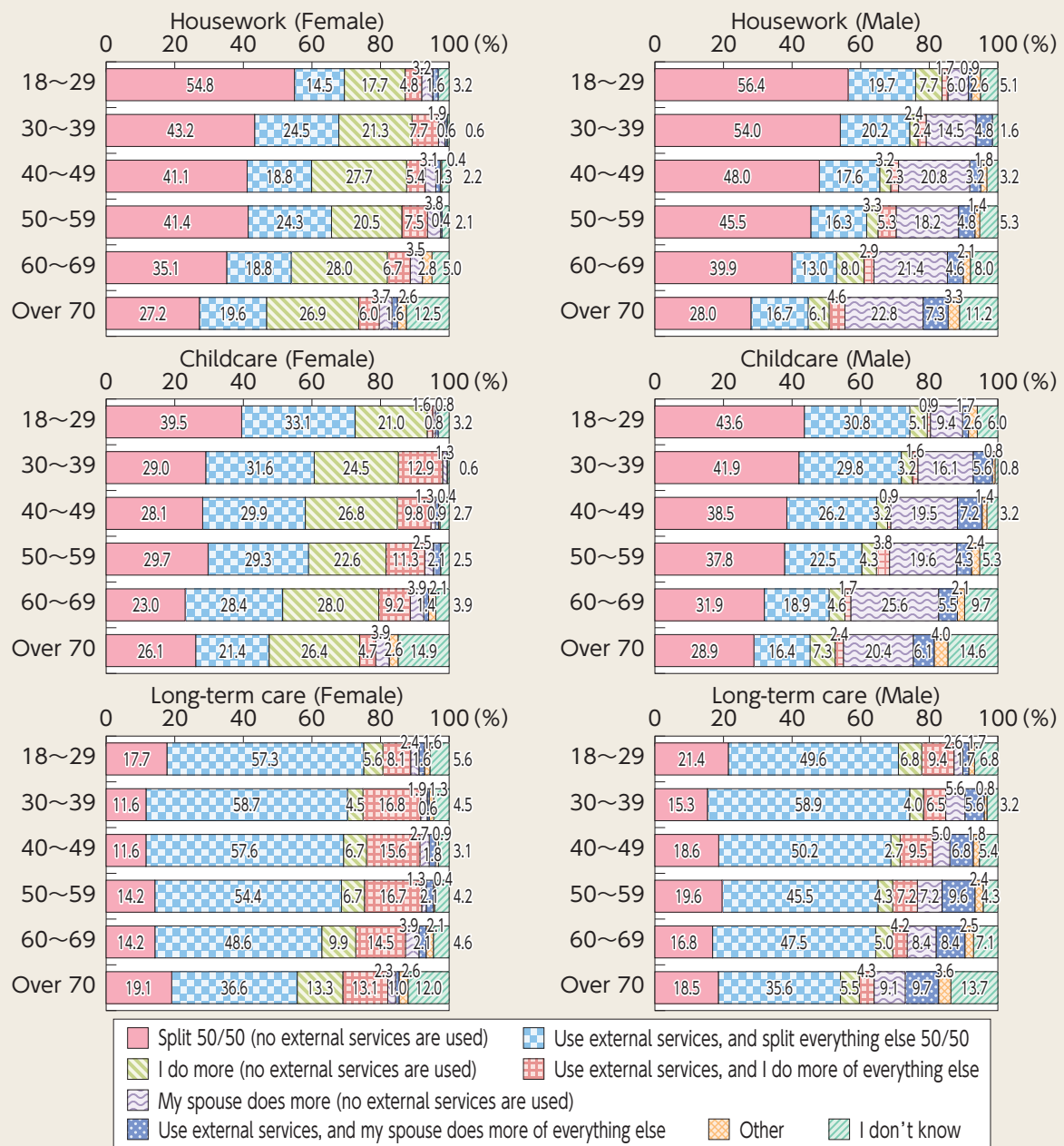
²⁷ Here, “20s” refers to responses from those aged 18–29.

²⁸ In the Cabinet Office’s “*Survey on Customary Practices that Interfere with Balancing Work and Raising Children, etc.*,” examples of everyday customary practices that interfere with balancing work and raising children or which prevent fathers from participating in childrearing were collected and analyzed. Specifically, an individual online survey of registered survey respondents was conducted (December 23–28, 2021), followed by a solicitation of opinions (January 18–28, 2022), primarily from members of the general public who are currently raising children, on problems related to childrearing in specific situations, such as at “kindergartens, nursery schools and centers for early childhood education and care,” “elementary schools and after-school childcare centers,” and “lessons, practice and extracurricular activities,” and on ways to overcome these problems.

Many respondents also commented that there are no diaper-changing facilities or baby chairs in men's rest rooms on public transport or in commercial establishments. In order to

promote men's participation in childcare, these issues need to be steadily tackled one by one, such as reviewing these everyday customary practices and improving facilities.

Figure SF-29: Attitudes toward Participation in Housework, Childcare and Long-term Career (by Gender, by Age)



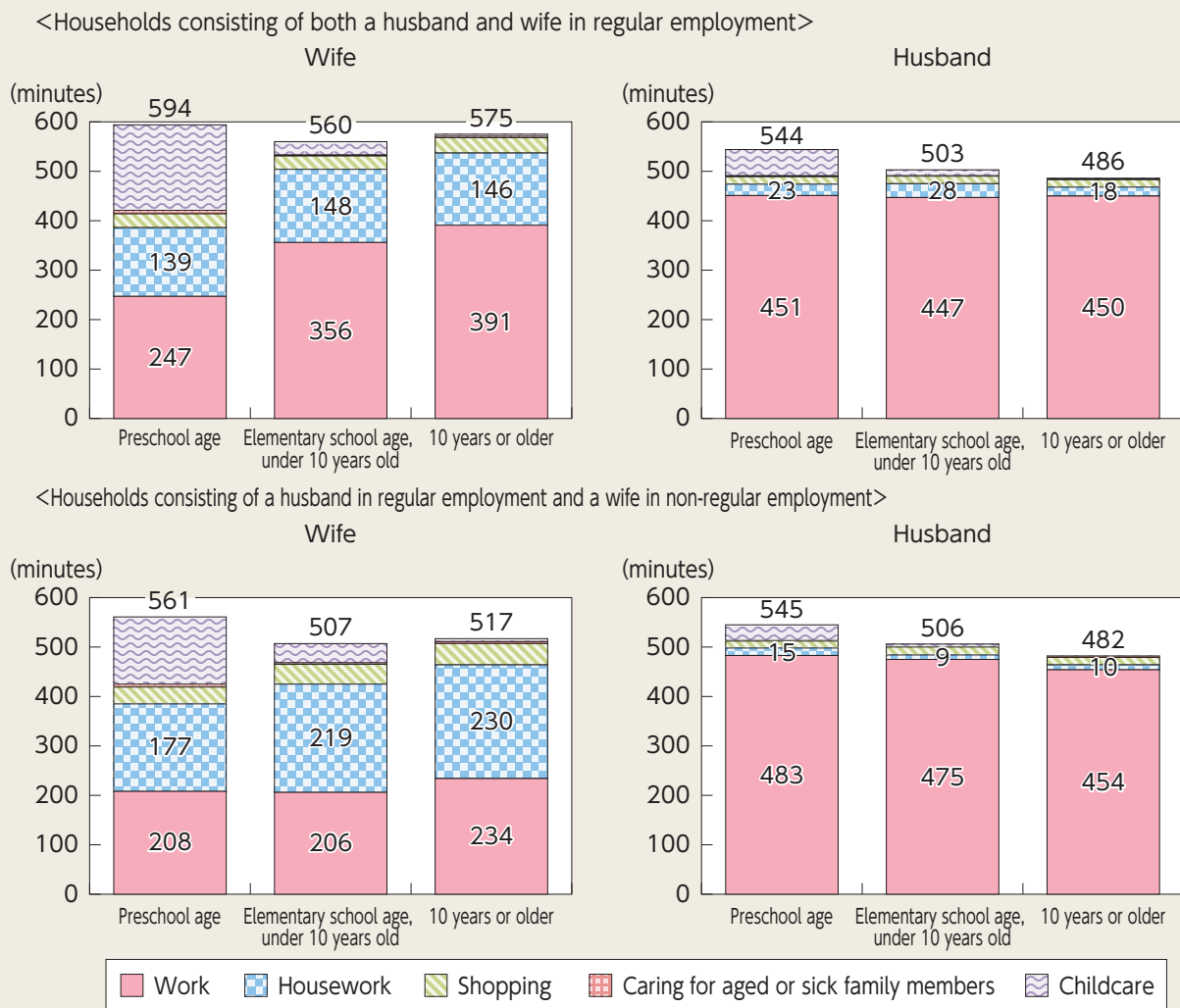
(Note) 1. Prepared from "Public Opinion Poll on a Gender Equal Society" by Cabinet Office (September 2019).

2. The questionnaire is as follows:

Q9. In your opinion, how would you like the roles of childrearing, caregiving and other family activities to be shared between yourself and your spouse? Regardless of whether or not you are caring for your children or other family members, select the response from (a) to (f) below which most closely describes how you feel, including your use of external services such as childcare centers, home-visit long-term care, and domestic help services. If you do not have a spouse, please answer supposing you had one. (1) What about child rearing? (2) What about caring for your family members? (3) What about other housework apart from child rearing and caring for your family members?

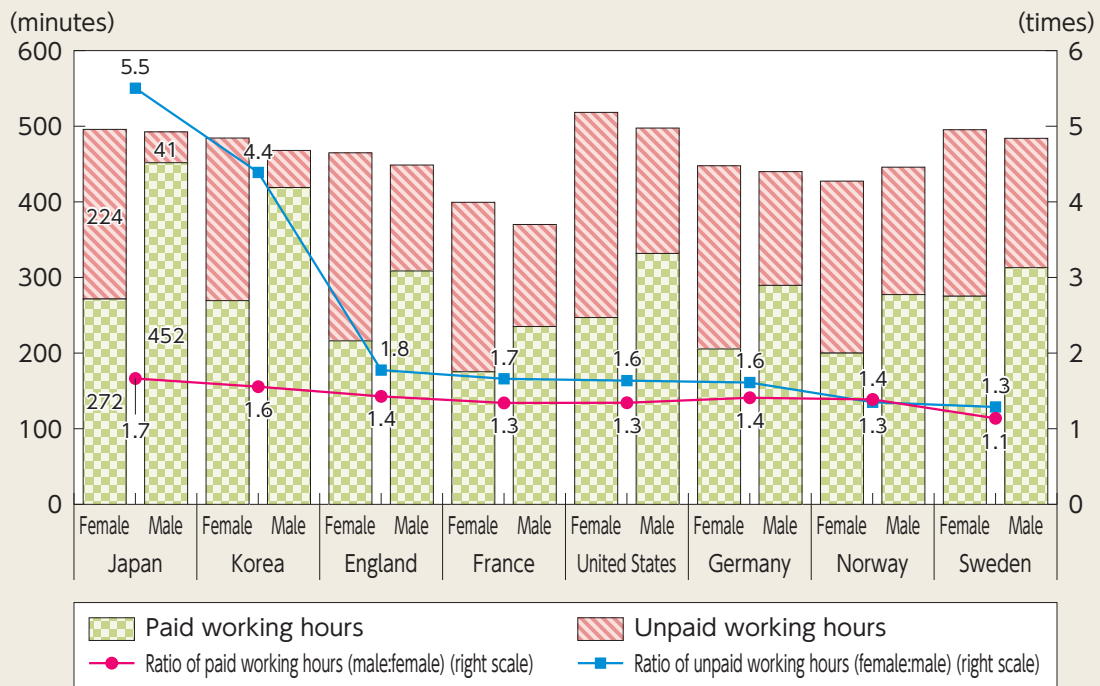
- (a) Split activities 50/50 with my spouse (no external services are used)
- (b) I do more than my spouse (no external services are used)
- (c) My spouse does more than me (no external services are used)
- (d) Use external services and split everything else 50/50 with my spouse
- (e) Use external services and I do more of everything else than my spouse
- (f) Use external services and my spouse does more of everything else than me
- Other
- Don't know

Figure SF-30: Time that Couples Spend at Work and on Housework/Childcare (by Age of Youngest Child), Dual-Income Households (2016)



(Note) 1. Prepared from "Survey on time use and leisure activities" by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.
 2. The term "non-regular employment" is employment other than as a "regular employee," and specifically refers to part-time employees, casual staff, contract-based employees, temporary employees, dispatched workers from temporary labor agencies, and other employees.
 3. Time spent on housework/childcare is the total of housework, shopping, caring for aged or sick family members, and childcare (weekly average).

Figure SF-31: Time Spent in Daily Activities by Men and Women (Overall Weekly Average, Hours Per Day, International Comparison)



- (Note) 1. Prepared from “Balancing Paid Work, Unpaid Work and Leisure (2021),” OECD.
 2. Paid work is time spent in “paid work or study,” and unpaid work is time spent in “unpaid work.”
 3. “Paid work” is the sum of time spent in “paid work (all jobs),” “travel to and from work/study,” “classes, lectures, school activities, etc.,” “research/homework,” “job search activities,” and “other paid work or study-related activities.” “Unpaid work” is the sum of time spent in “daily housework,” “shopping,” “caring for household members,” “caring for non-household members,” “volunteer activities,” “travel for housework-related activities,” and “other unpaid work.”
 4. Figures for Japan are for 2016, figures for Korea are for 2014, figures for the United Kingdom are for 2014, figures for France are for 2009, figures for the United States are for 2019, figures for Germany are for 2012, figures for Norway are for 2010, and figures for Sweden are for 2010.

(2) Changes in long-term career

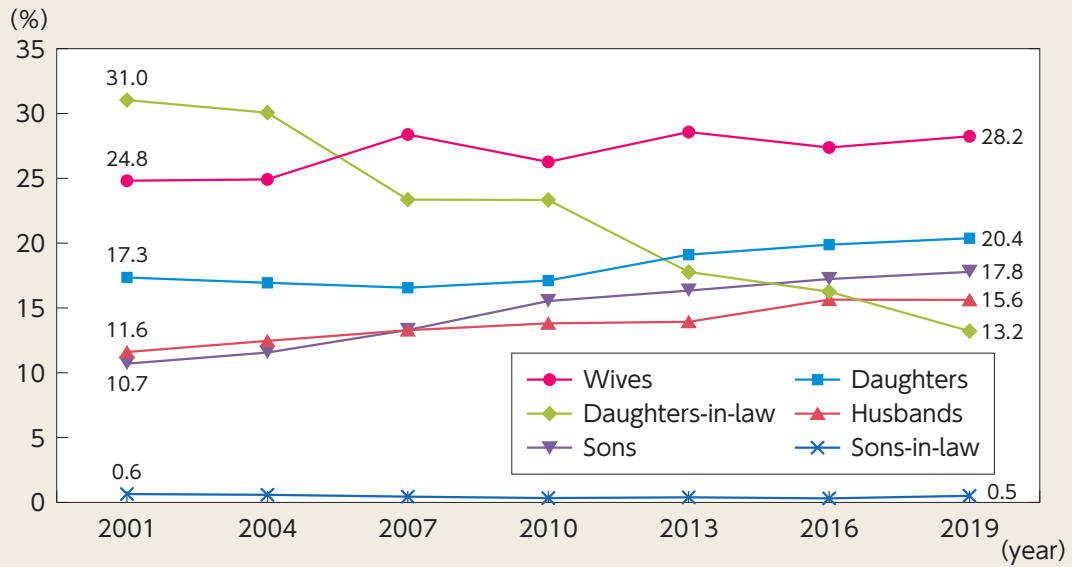
When asked about their preference for sharing long-term caring responsibilities, 60–80% of both men and women in their 20s through 60s said that they would prefer to share long-term care 50/50 with their spouse. On the other hand, 20–30% of women in their 30s and older would prefer to do more of the long-term care than their spouse (husband), while about 20% of men in their 50s and older would prefer that their spouse do more of the long-term care (Figure SF-29, see above).

As for who actually provides the care, the number of daughters-in-law as a percentage of family caregivers who live together has declined significantly over the past 20 years,

while the number of husbands and sons providing care has increased. The magnitude of the increase is particularly large for sons who provide care (Figure SF-32). Looking at the employment rate of caregivers by age group, men aged 45–49 had the highest employment rate at 88.0%, followed by men aged 55–59(87.8%) (Figure SF-33).

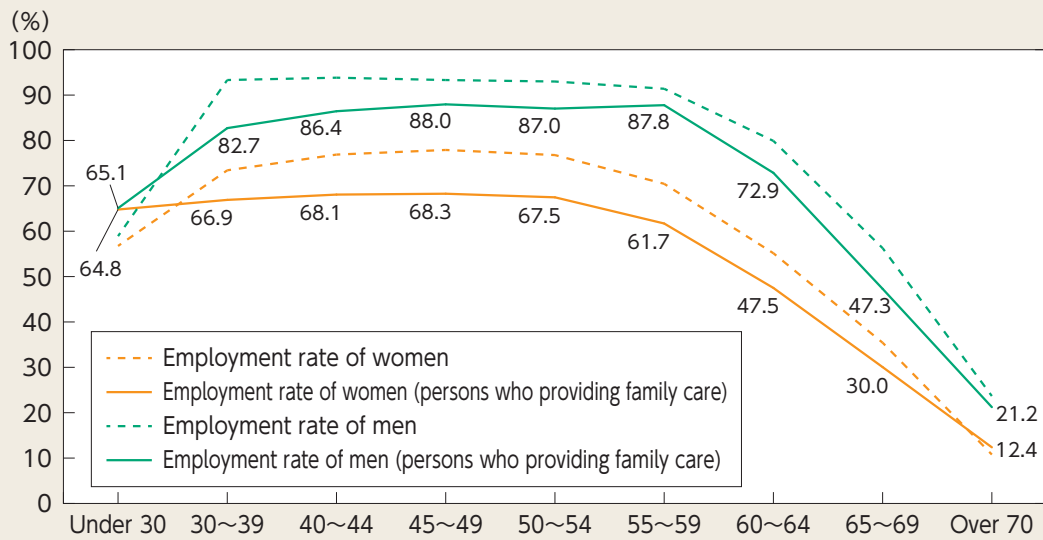
Middle-aged and older generations who are actually faced with long-term care may be actively doing housework for the first time when they reach the stage of caregiving. Others may face challenges such as balancing long-term care with work. There is also the possibility that this stress may lead to abuse (Figure SF-34).

Figure SF-32: Long-term Carers



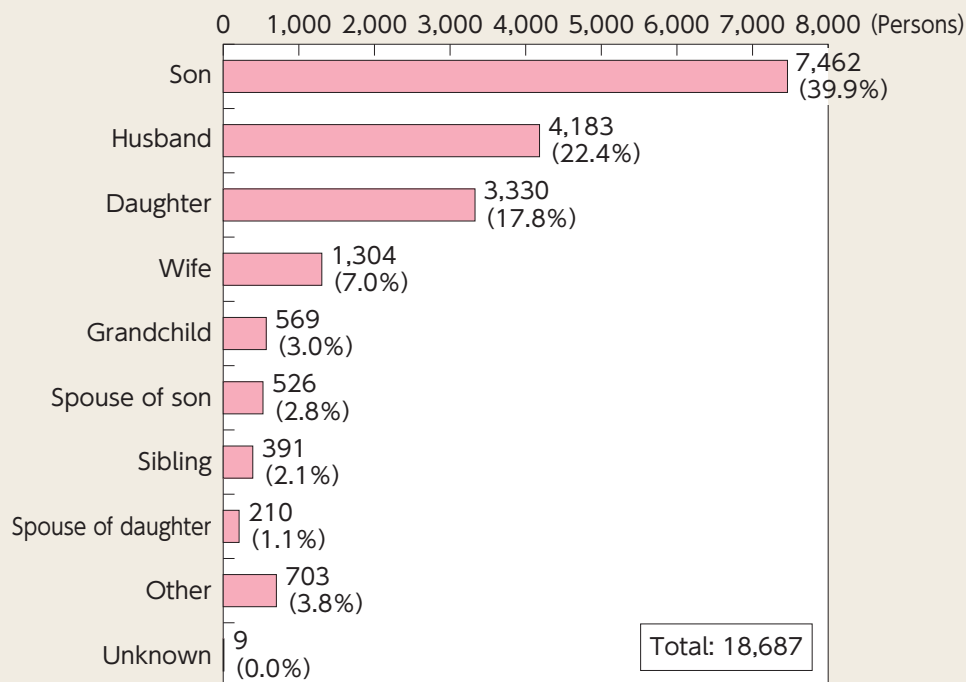
(Note) Prepared from “the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

Figure SF-33: Employment Rate of Persons Who Providing Family Care (by Gender, by Age Group) (2017)



(Note) Prepared from “the Employment Status Survey” by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

Figure SF-34: Relationship of Abusers from the Perspective of the Abused Elderly Person



(Note) Prepared from “Results of the Survey of FY2020 Responses, etc. Based on the Act on the Prevention of Elder Abuse and Support for Caregivers of Elderly Persons,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

Section 2. Circumstances Surrounding Marriage and Family

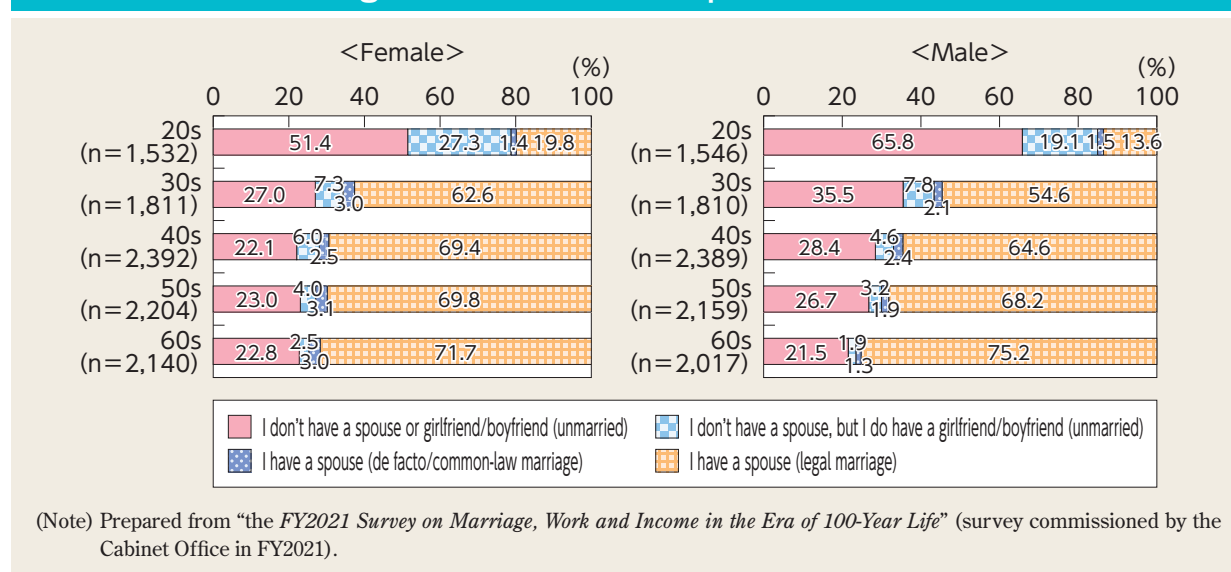
This section provides a more in-depth examination of the circumstances surrounding marriage and families, based on surveys and other studies conducted by the Cabinet Office.²⁹

1 Circumstances Surrounding Marriage (Spousal status)

Section 1 confirmed that the percentage of people who have never married or who have divorced is increasing both for men and women. According to a survey conducted by the Cabinet Office,³⁰ more than 20% of both

men and women of all generations responded, “I don’t have a spouse or girlfriend/boyfriend (unmarried).” In particular, about 50% of women and 70% of men in 20s responded, “I don’t have a spouse or girlfriend/boyfriend (unmarried).” About 20% of women in their 20s, 60% in their 30s, and 70% in their 40s and older responded “I have a spouse (legal marriage).” This was 14% of men in their 20s, about 50% for men in their 30s, and 60–80% in their 40s and older. In addition, about 1–3% of both men and women responded “I have a spouse (de facto/common-law marriage).” (Figure SF-35).

Figure SF-35: Current Spousal Status



Nowadays, about 90% of marriages in Japan are love marriages (Figure SF-36). When asked about the number of people they have “been in a romantic relationship with as boyfriend/girlfriend,” 24.1% of single women and 37.6% of single men in their 20s and 30s responded that they have never been in a romantic relationship. In particular, close to 40%

of men in their 20s have never experienced a romantic relationship.

Comparing single and married respondents, more married people than single people in their 20s and 30s responded that they have had romantic relationships with three or more partners: 31.0% of single women, 53.9% of married women, 24.5% of single men, and

²⁹ Refers to study groups, surveys, etc. conducted by the Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office.

³⁰ “The FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021). Hereinafter all references to “survey” in this text without a specific survey name refer to this survey.

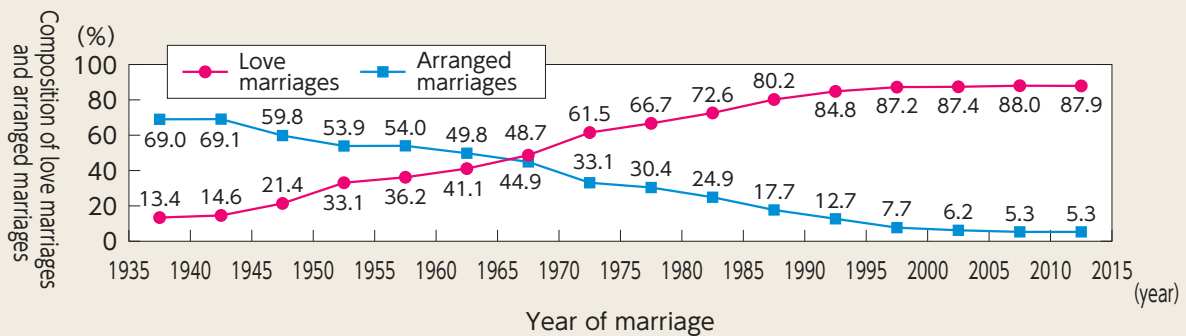
52.7% of married men.

In addition, of those aged 40–54, 36.0% of single women, 45.8% of married women, 30.4% of single men, and 51.1% of married men responded that they have had romantic relationships with three or more partners. Accordingly, approximately 50% of married men and women aged 20–54 have been in

romantic relationships with three or more partners (Figure SF-37).

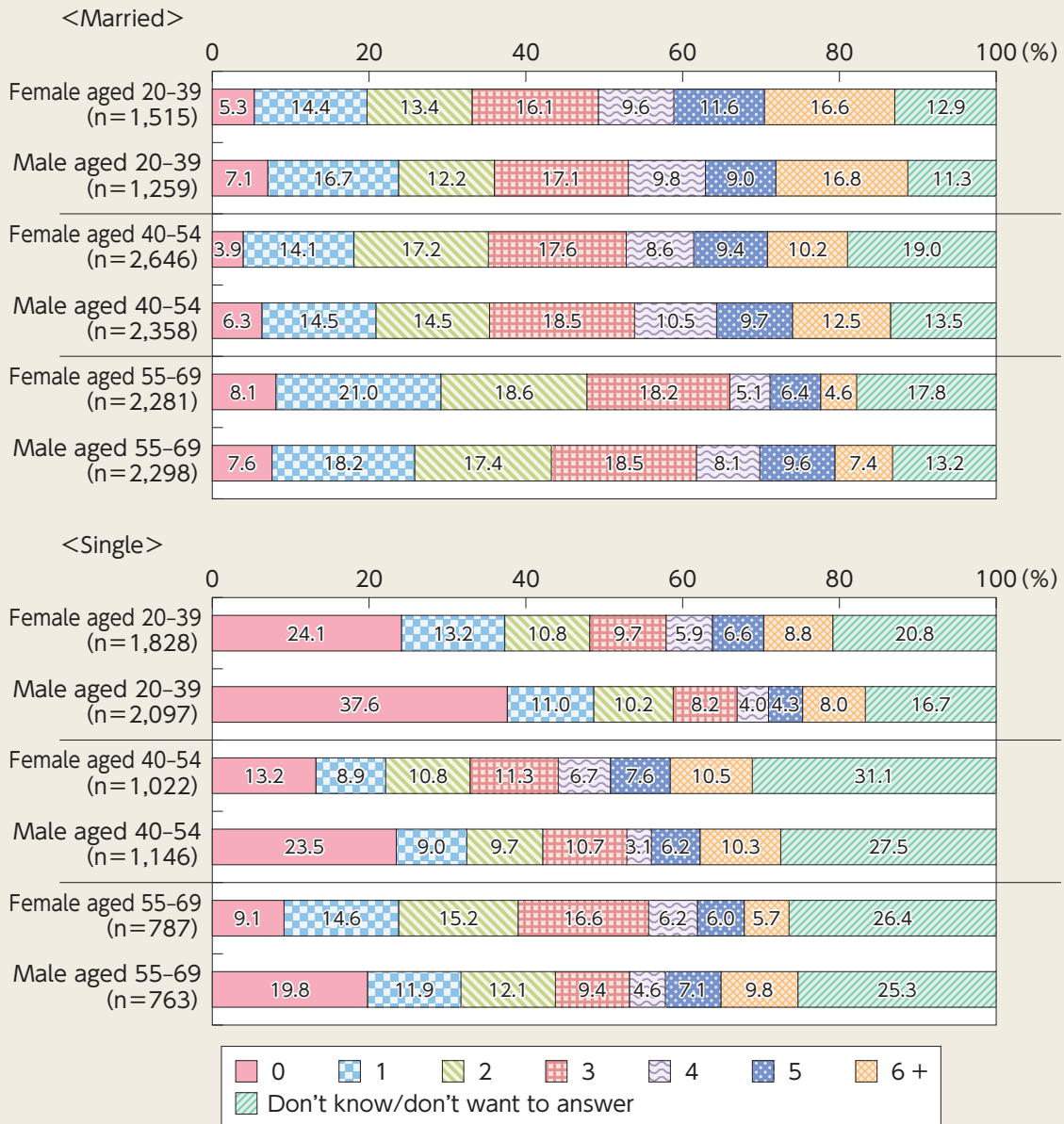
Looking at the “number of romantic partners” and “number of people dated” so far, the percentages were generally higher for married people than for single, both for men and women, and across all age groups (Figure SF-38).

Figure SF-36: Changes in the Percentage of Love Marriages and Arranged Marriages



(Note) 1. Prepared from “Annual Population and Social Security Surveys (Japanese National Fertility Survey) (Married Couples Survey),” by National Institute of Population and Social Security Research.
 2. This survey targets couples for whom the current marriage is the first one for both husband and wife. Based on the 7th Survey (from 1930–39 to 1970–74), the 8th Survey (1975–79), the 9th Survey (1980–84), the 10th Survey (1985–89), the 11th Survey (1990–94), the 12th Survey (1995–99), the 13th Survey (2000–04), the 14th Survey (2005–09), and the 15th Survey (2010–14). As to how/where couples met, data was compiled by classifying those who responded “through an arranged introduction” or “through a marriage agency” into “arranged marriages”; and those who gave other responses—i.e., “at school,” “at the workplace or through work,” “childhood friend/neighbor,” “through club activities or lessons outside of school,” “through friends or siblings,” “around town or during a trip,” or “through a part-time job”—into “love marriages.” Couples who responded “other” or “not known” are included in the composition but are omitted from the graph.

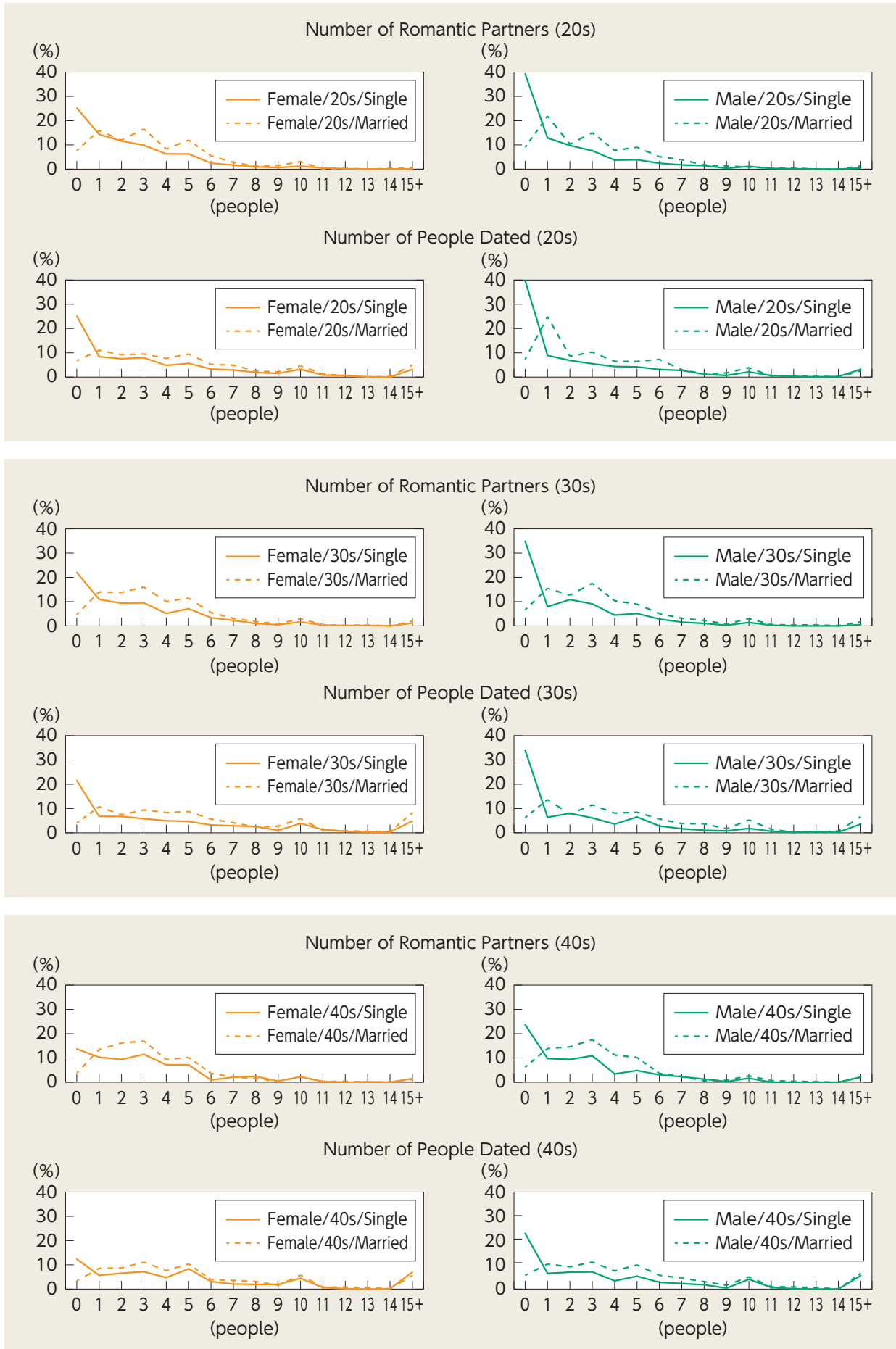
Figure SF-37: Number of Romantic Partners

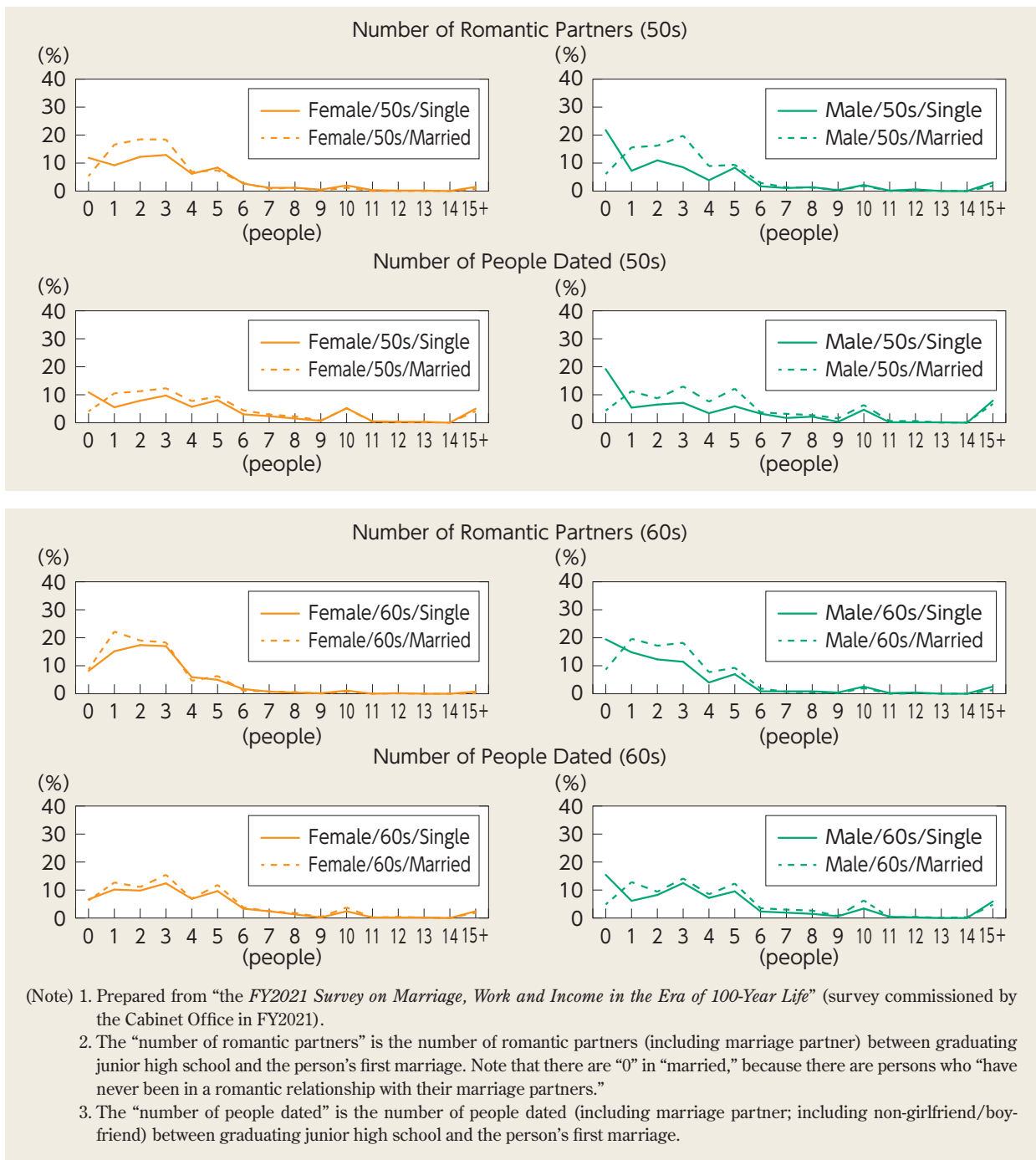


(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in Era of the 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

2. The number of romantic partners (including marriage partner) between graduating junior high school and the person’s first marriage. Note that there are “0” in “married,” because there are persons who “have never been in a romantic relationship with their marriage partners.”

Figure SF-38 : Number Romantic Partners · Number of People Dated





(Intention to marry)

Looking at single people (those who have never married before) and their intention to marry, more women (64.6%) than men (54.4%) in their 20s responded that they “intend to get married,”³¹ whereas the figure was 46.4% for both men and women in their 30s. The percentage tends to decrease among women in

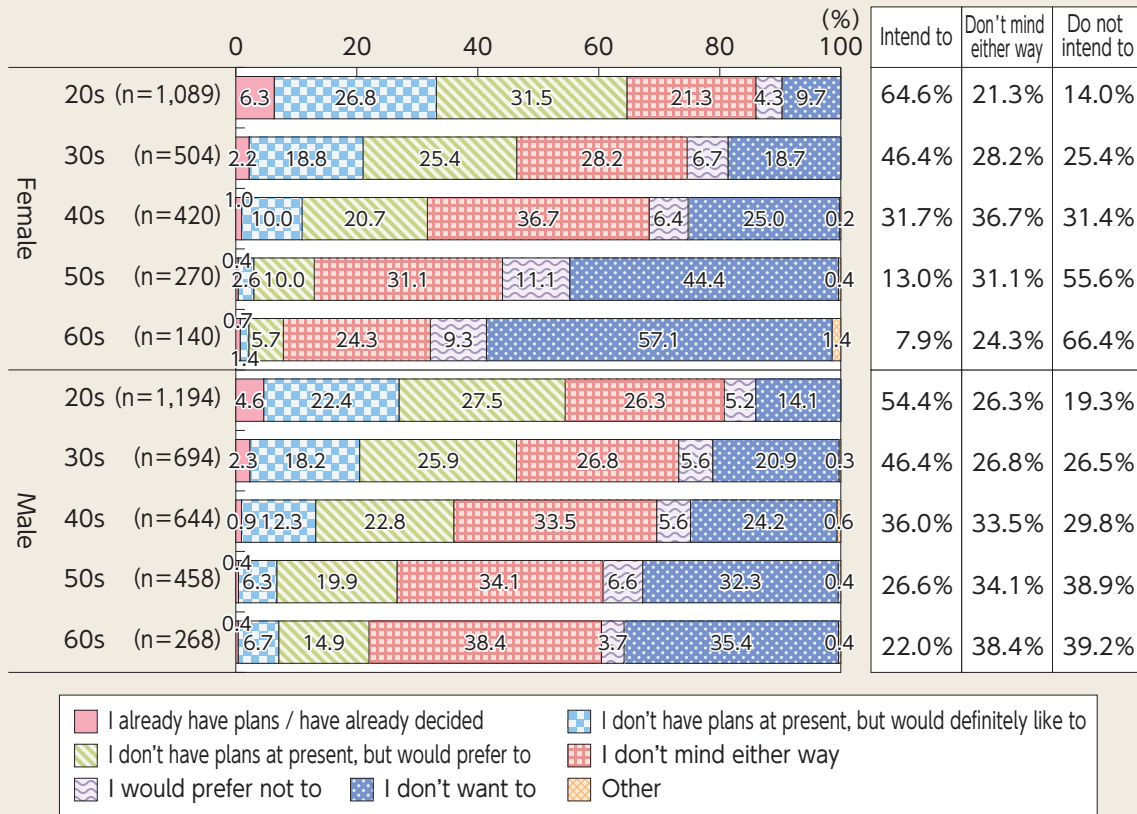
their 40s and older. In contrast, the percentage of men in their 40s to 60s that hope to marry was 20–40%.

The percentage of singles who responded that they “do not intend to get married”³² was 14.0% for women in their 20s, 25.4% for women in their 30s, 19.3% for men in their 20s, and 26.5% for men in their 30s (Figure SF-39).

³¹ “Intend to get married” is the cumulative total of “I already have plans / have already decided,” “I don’t have plans at present, but would definitely like to” and “I don’t have plans at present, but would prefer to.”

³² “Do not intend to get married” is the cumulative total of “I would prefer not to” and “I don’t want to.”

Figure SF-39: Desire to Get Married in the Future (Singles)



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
 2. This question targets singles who have never been married before.
 3. “Intend to” is the cumulative total of “I already have plans / have already decided,” “I don’t have plans at present, but would definitely like to” and “I don’t have plans at present, but would prefer to.”
 4. “Do not intend to” is the cumulative total of “I would prefer not to” and “I don’t want to.”

A comparison of single men and women about why they want to get married shows that about 50% of both men and women in their 20s to 30s and in their 40s to 60s want to get married because they “want to live with the person they love.” This is followed by about 20–30% of singles in their 20s and 30s who “want to have children,” “want to have a family,” “want to have a place of spiritual serenity,” or “feel lonely by themselves,” and about 20% of singles in their 40s to 60s who “want to have a family” or “want to have a place of spiritual serenity.”

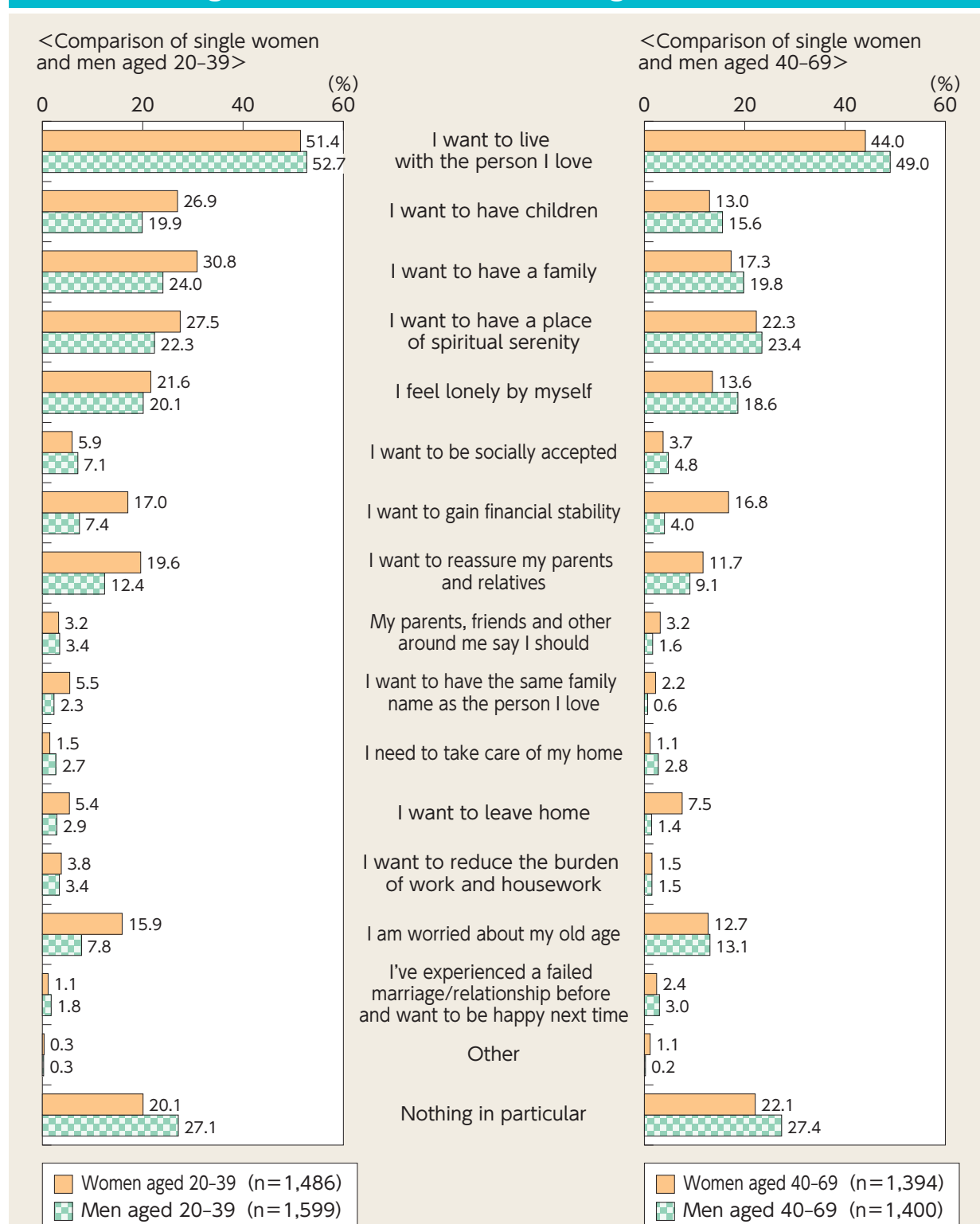
Looking at differences between single men and women in their reasons for wanting to get married, among those in their 20s and 30s, reasons that a higher percentage of women

mentioned in decreasing order of difference were: “I want to gain financial stability” (women: 17.0%, men: 7.4%), “I am worried about my old age” (women: 15.9%, men: 7.8%), “I want to reassure my parents and relatives” (women: 19.6%, men: 12.4%), and “I want to have children” (women: 26.9%, men: 19.9%); and while the difference was not all that great, a higher percentage of men mentioned “I want to live with the person I love” (women: 51.4%, men: 52.7%), “I want to be socially accepted” (women: 5.9%, men: 7.1%), and “I need to take care of my home” (women: 1.5%, men: 2.7%). Among those in their 40s to 60s, a higher percentage of women mentioned “I want to gain financial stability” (women: 16.8%, men: 4.0%) and “I want to leave home” (women: 7.5%,

men: 1.4%), while for men, it was “I want to live with the person I love” (women: 44.0%, men: 49.0%) followed by “I feel lonely by

myself” (women: 13.6%, men: 18.6%) (Figure SF-40).

Figure SF-40: Reasons for Wanting to Get Married



(Note) Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

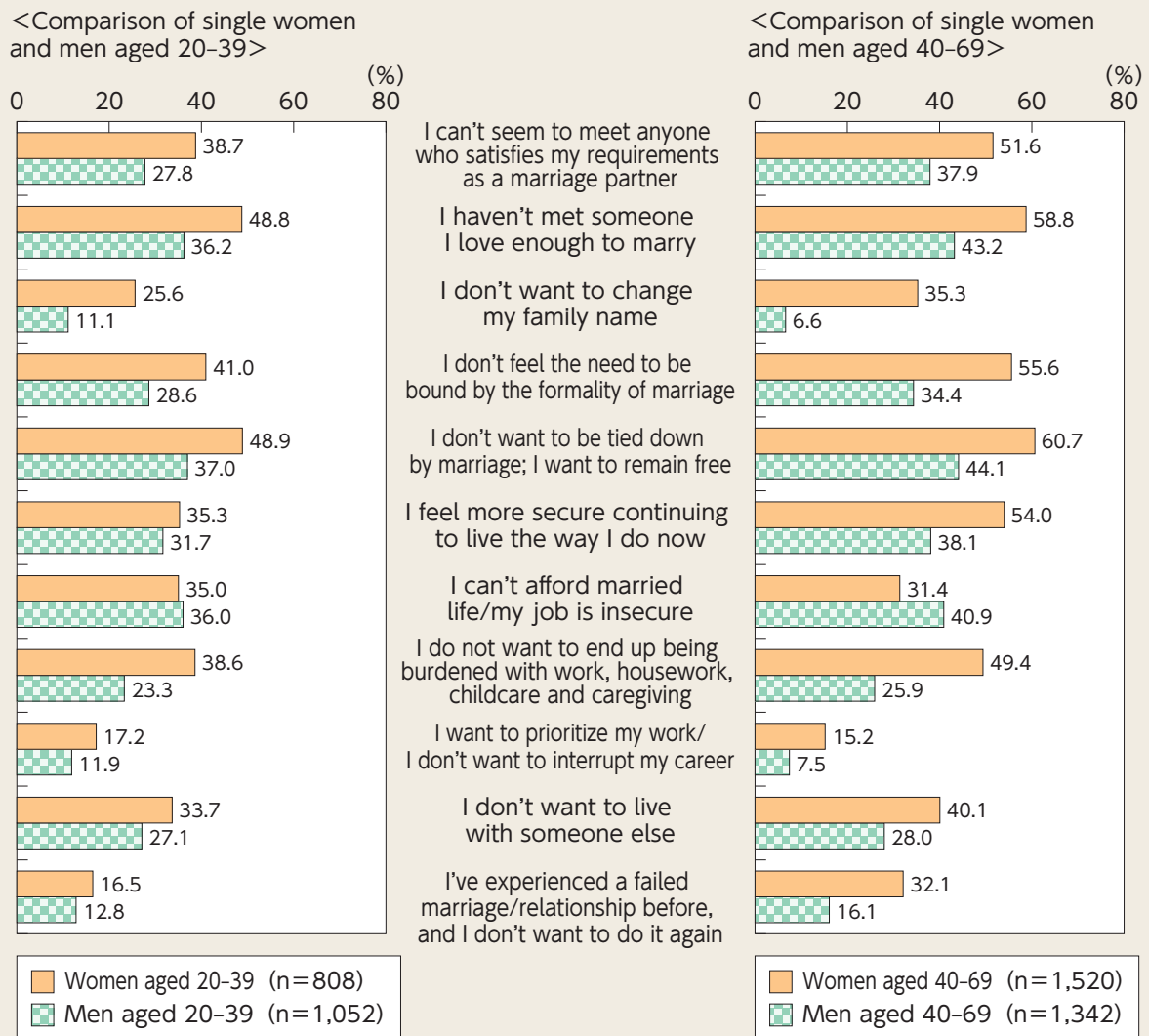
As for reasons for not actively wanting to get married, a comparison of single men and women shows that around 50% of women in their 20s and 30s responded, "I don't want to be tied down by marriage; I want to remain free," and "I haven't met someone I love enough to marry." In addition to these responses, around 50% of women in their 40s to 60s also mention, "I can't seem to meet anyone who satisfies my requirements as a marriage partner," "I don't feel the need to be bound by the formality of marriage," "I feel more secure continuing to live the way I do now," and "I do not want to end up being burdened with work, housework, childcare and caregiving." As for men, while no responses scored 50% or higher, about 40% of respondents in their 20s to 30s and in their 40s to 60s mentioned, "I don't want to be tied down by marriage; I want to remain free," "I haven't met someone I love enough to marry," and "I can't afford married life/my job is insecure."

When comparing the differences between women and men, a higher percentage of women mentioned "I do not want to end up being burdened with work, housework,

childcare and caregiving" (women in their 20s to 30s: 38.6%, men in their 20s to 30s: 23.3%, women in their 40s to 60s: 49.4%, men in their 40s to 60s: 25.9%) and "I don't want to change my family name" (women in their 20s to 30s: 25.6%, men in their 20s to 30s: 11.1%, women in their 40s to 60s: 35.3%, men in their 40s to 60s: 6.6%). The biggest point of difference for men was, "I can't afford married life/my job is insecure" (women in their 20s to 30s: 35.0%, men in their 20s to 30s: 36.0%, women in their 40s to 60s: 31.4%, men in their 40s to 60s: 40.9%). The disparity in these reasons is larger for those in their 40s to 60s than for those in their 20s and 30s (Figure SF-41).

One of the reasons given by single women for not actively wanting to get married is, "I do not want to end up being burdened with work, housework, childcare and caregiving." In addition to an unconscious bias on the part of society, the people around them and the women themselves, it is possible that they are making this judgment based on the image of married women struggling to find a balance between work and housework, childcare and caregiving.

Figure SF-41: Reasons for Not Actively Wanting to Get Married



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
 2. Cumulative values of “agree” and “somewhat agree.”

Looking at the unconscious bias mentioned above from the perspective of marriage, children to family, a majority of women in their 20s to 30s were opposed to the notion that “people should get married (legally married) rather than live in a de facto marriage or cohabit,” whereas women and men in their 40s to 60s were more likely to agree with the notion. As for the notion that “once married, couples should take the same family name,” women, especially those in their 20s to 30s

were more likely to be opposed, whereas men, especially those in their 40s to 60s were more likely to be in favor. Furthermore, a much larger percentage of women disagreed with the ideas that “the eldest son should maintain the family grave,” “the eldest son should take over the family name and protect the family,” and “the eldest son’s wife should fulfill the role of the eldest son’s wife” (Figure SF-42). According to another survey by the Cabinet Office,³³ a higher percentage of men, especially

³³ “FY2021 Survey and Research on Unconscious Bias Based on Gender,” Cabinet Office (published in September 2021).

those in their 50s and 60s, “agree” or “somewhat agree” that “a man becomes a man when

he marries and has a family” (Figure SF-43). Women are more likely to disagree with

Figure SF-42: Attitudes toward Family (Marriage, Children, Family)



		Female aged 20-39 (n=3,343)		Female aged 40-69 (n=6,736)		Male aged 20-39 (n=3,356)		Male aged 40-69 (n=6,565)	
		Agree + Somewhat agree	Disagree + Somewhat disagree	Agree + Somewhat agree	Disagree + Somewhat disagree	Agree + Somewhat agree	Disagree + Somewhat disagree	Agree + Somewhat agree	Disagree + Somewhat disagree
Marriage, children	People should get married (legally married) rather than live in a de facto marriage or cohabit	22.9%	25.1%	27.1%	17.3%	23.3%	18.5%	29.8%	12.8%
	Natural love marriages are preferable to arranged marriages, marriage websites, etc.	25.2%	22.9%	25.2%	13.5%	26.9%	15.8%	28.8%	10.7%
	Both men and women should get married (legally married) to be recognized as full-fledged members of society	15.1%	39.2%	17.8%	31.3%	19.8%	26.8%	21.0%	22.7%
	Both men and women should have children to be recognized as full-fledged members of society	12.2%	45.0%	12.8%	39.8%	17.9%	28.8%	16.3%	27.6%
	Once married, couples should take the same family name	20.0%	31.0%	21.4%	25.0%	23.9%	19.7%	27.1%	15.8%
Family	The eldest son should maintain the family grave	9.7%	46.4%	8.6%	42.7%	17.0%	28.4%	14.2%	26.2%
	The eldest son should take over the family name and protect the family	9.8%	46.1%	7.8%	44.4%	16.6%	27.4%	13.6%	26.2%
	The eldest son's wife should fulfill the role of the eldest son's wife	10.4%	48.1%	9.0%	46.9%	17.3%	27.4%	13.5%	27.3%

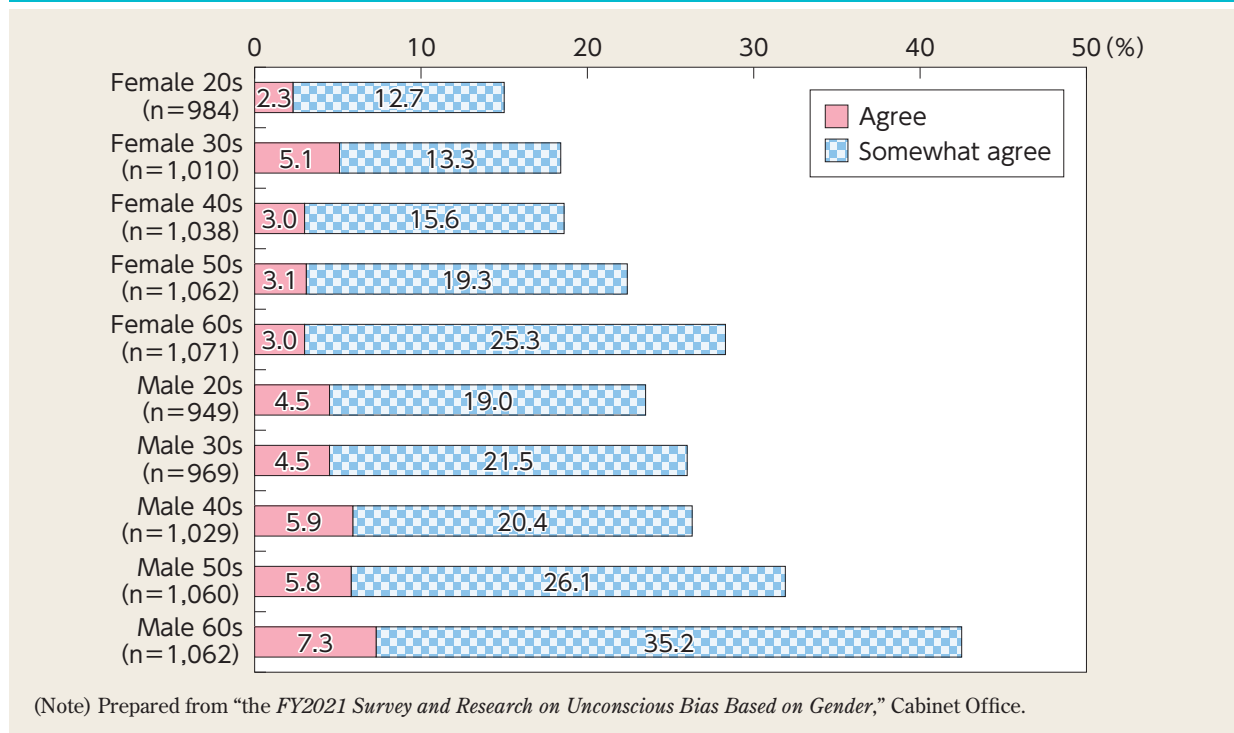
(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

2. Blue shading: The larger percentage of “Agree + Somewhat agree” and “Disagree + Somewhat disagree”
 Red letters: The difference between “Agree + Somewhat agree” and “Disagree + Somewhat disagree” is 10 percentage points or more.

existing systems and ideas, but men, especially middle-aged and older men, are more likely

to agree or less likely to disagree.

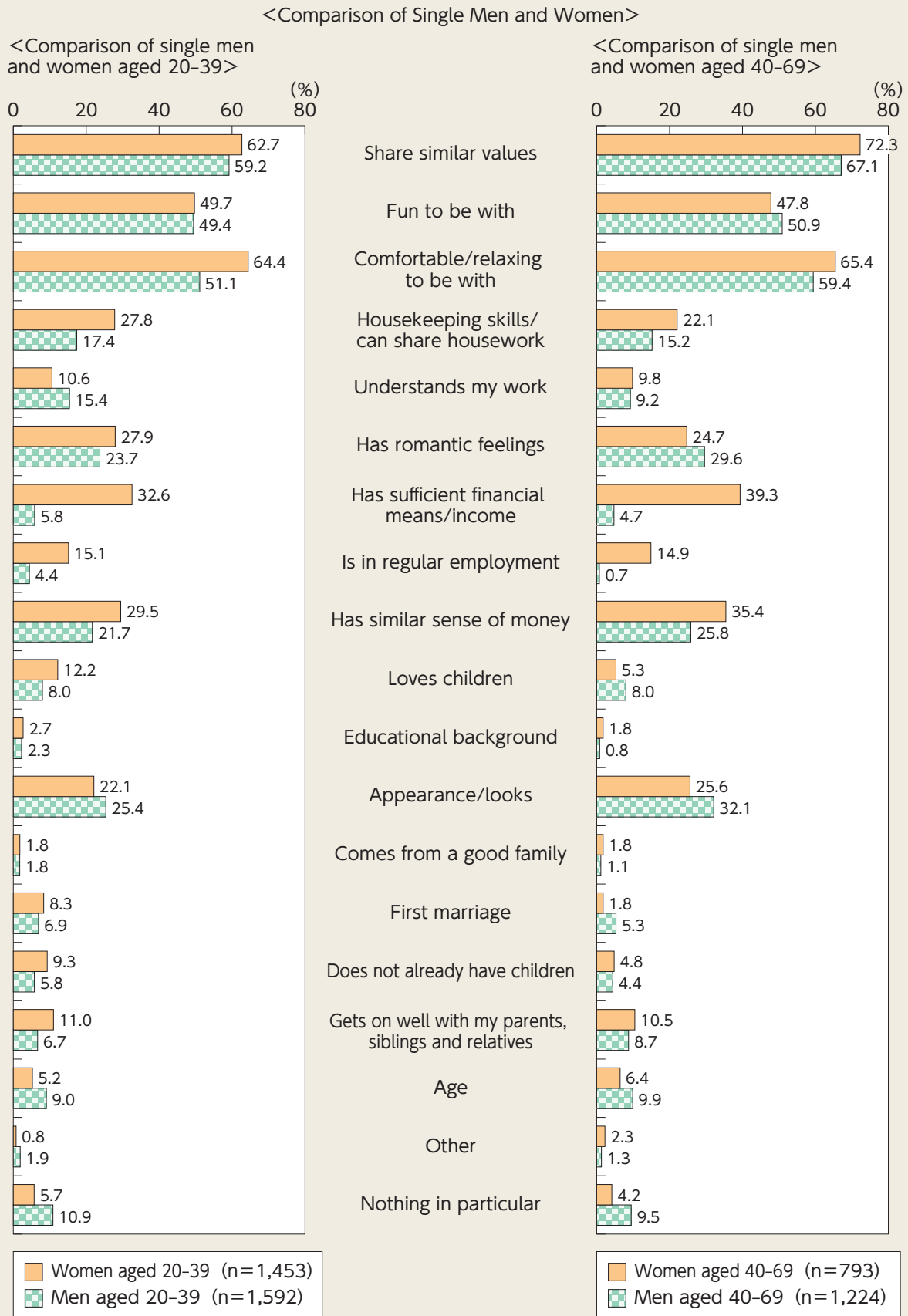
Figure SF-43: Attitudes toward Gender Roles (A man becomes a man when he marries and has a family)



Regarding the question of what they are looking for in a marriage partner (ideal), 50–70% of single men and women in their 20s and 30s and in their 40s to 60s all selected “share similar values,” “comfortable/relaxing to be with,” and “fun to be with.” As for married men and women, while 50–70% of them in their 20s and 30s and in their 40s to 60s also selected “share similar values,” “comfortable/relaxing to be with,” and “fun to be with” as things they were looking for in a marriage partner (ideal), when asked about what they want in their current partner (reality), the scores for those same items decreased to 40–60%.

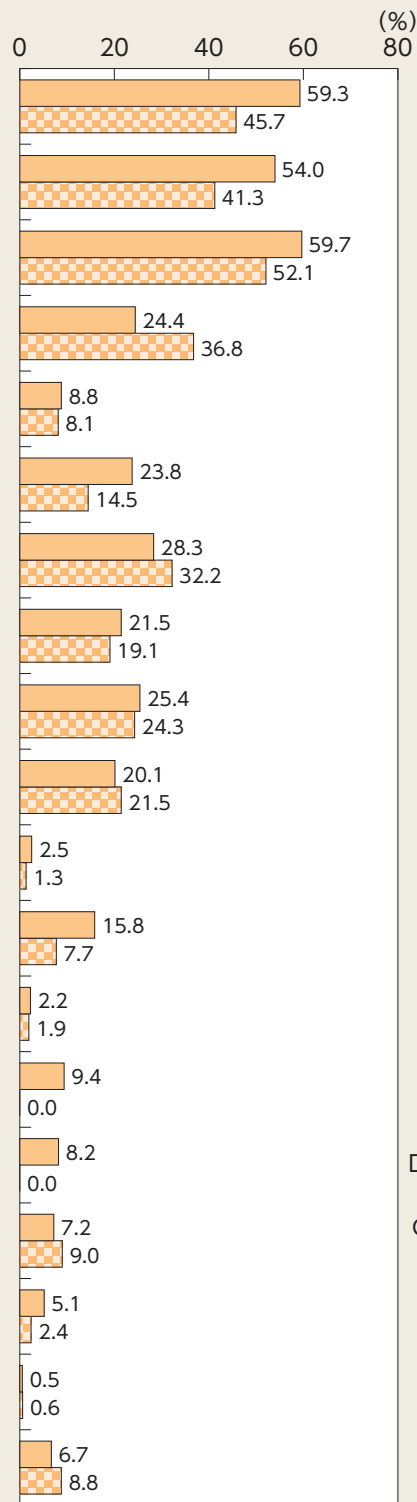
There were significant differences between single women and men. The biggest points of difference for women were: “has sufficient financial means/income” (20s–30s: women: 32.6%, men: 5.8%, 40s–60s: women: 39.3%, men: 4.7%) and “is in regular employment” (20s–30s: women: 15.1%, men: 4.4%, 40s–60s: women: 14.9%, men: 0.7%). There were similar trends among married men and women both in terms of their ideal and reality, but an additional point of difference in what women and men are looking for in their current partners (reality) was “housekeeping skills / can share housework” (Figure SF-44).

Figure SF-44: Things I Am/Was Looking for in a Marriage Partner



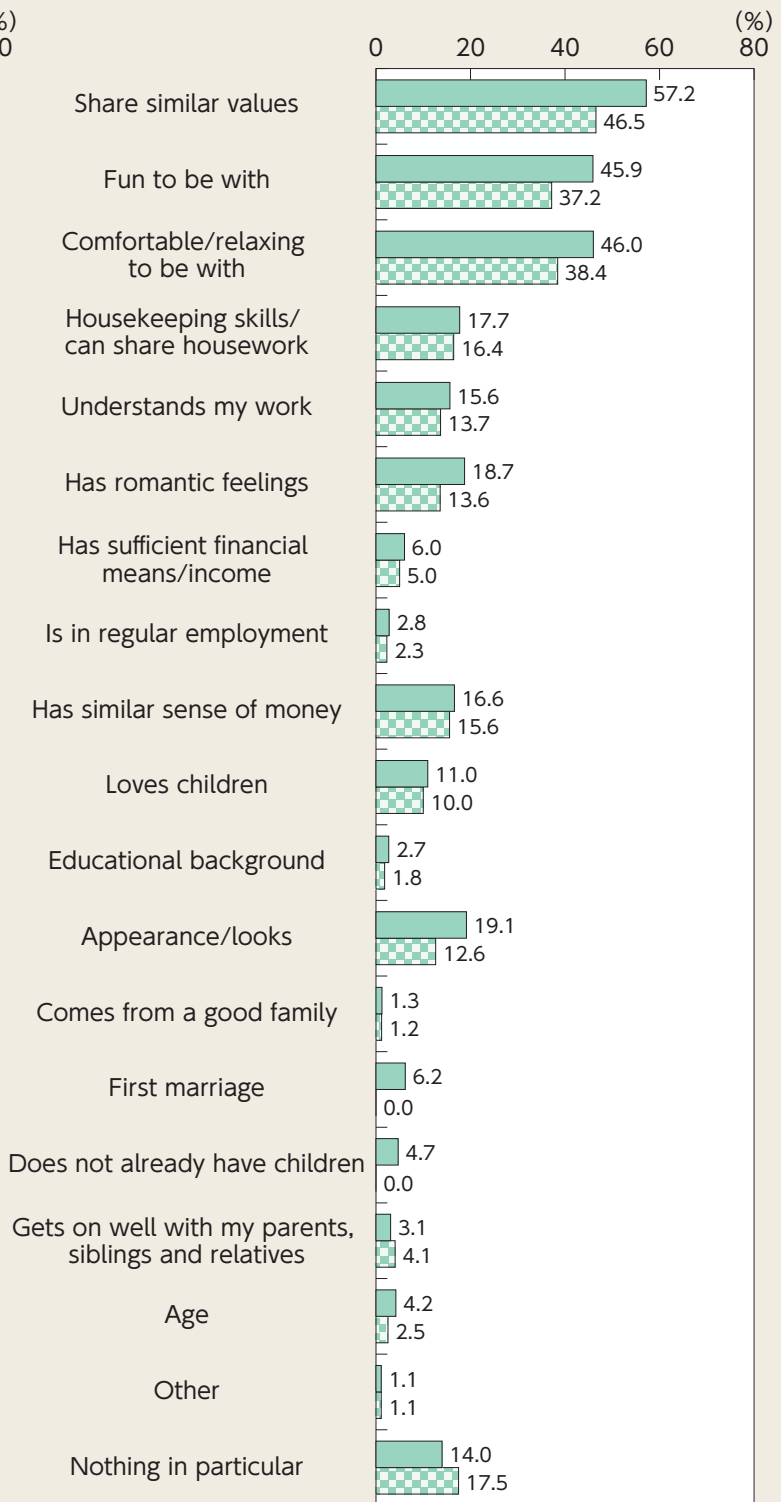
<Comparison of Ideal versus Reality among Married Men and Women Aged 20-39>

<Married women aged 20-39 (n = 1,515)>



■ Things I was looking for in a marriage partner (ideal)
 Things I am looking for in my current partner (reality)

<Married men aged 20-39 (n = 1,259)>

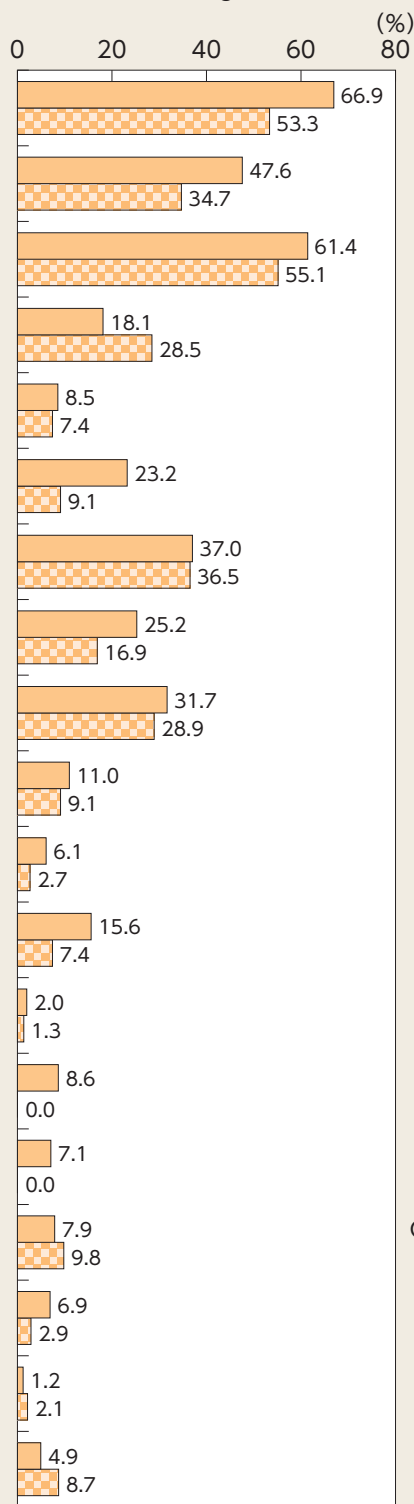


■ Things I was looking for in a marriage partner (ideal)
 Things I am looking for in my current partner (reality)

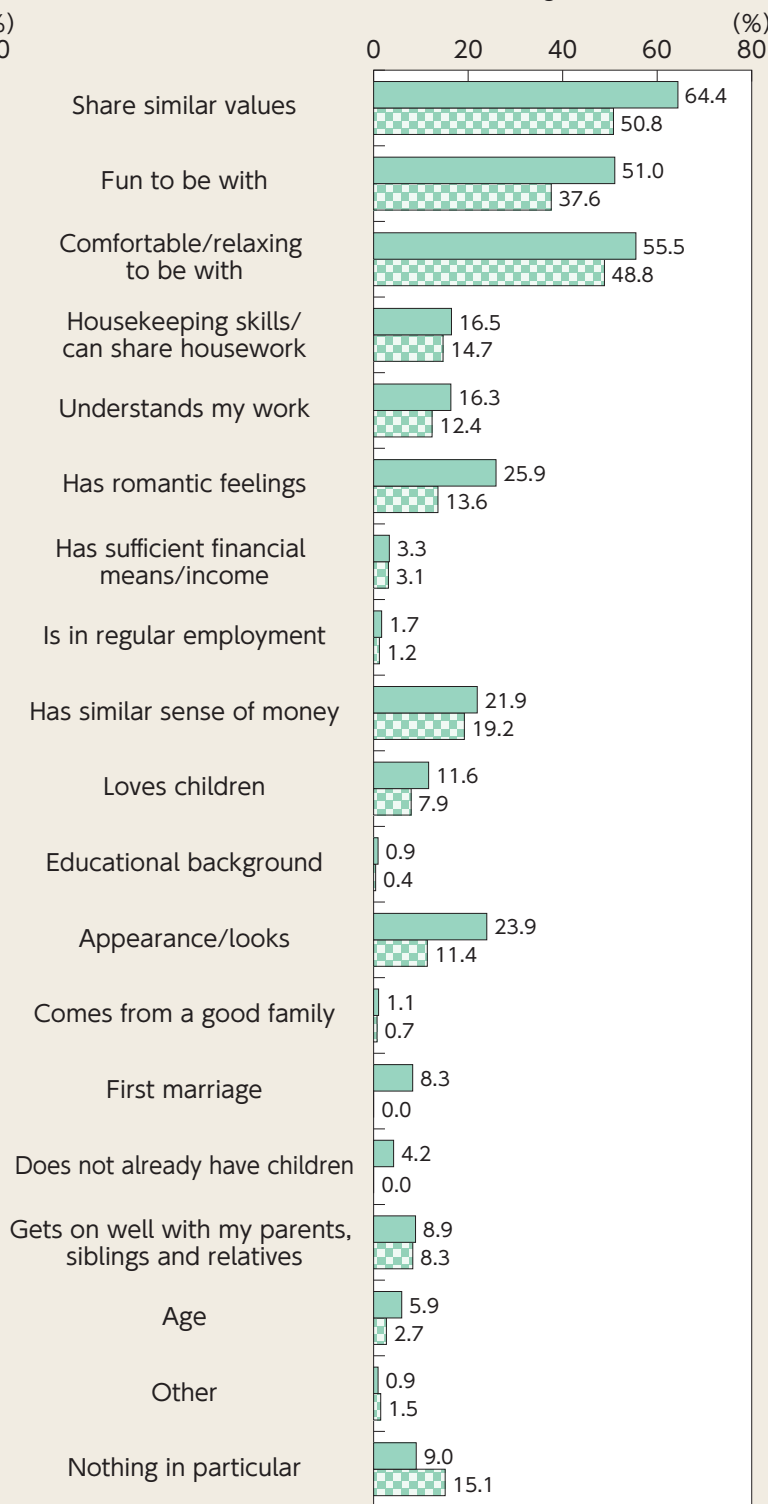
<Comparison of Ideal versus Reality among Married Men and Women Aged 40-69>

<Married women aged 40-69 (n = 4,927)>

<Married men aged 40-69 (n = 4,656)>



■ Things I was looking for in a marriage partner (ideal)
▨ Things I am looking for in my current partner (reality)



■ Things I was looking for in a marriage partner (ideal)
▨ Things I am looking for in my current partner (reality)

(Note) 1. Prepared from "the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life" (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

2. Married persons includes those in de facto/common-law marriages.

3. Respondents select five highest priorities.

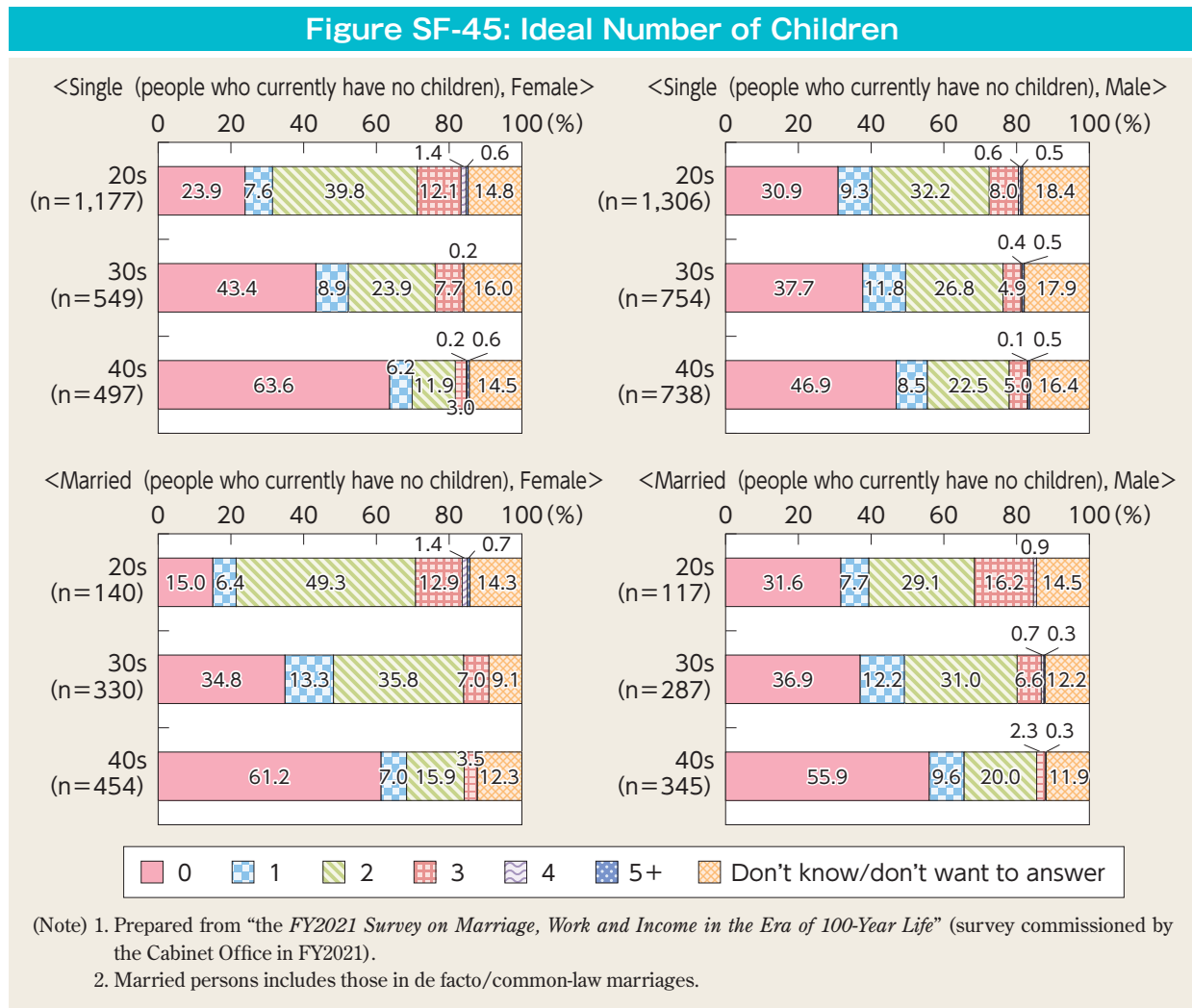
Based on the reasons for wanting to get married and the things that people want/wanted in their marriage partner (ideal versus reality), it can be inferred that a certain proportion of women still consider marriage as a means of financial security.

(Willingness to have children)

Looking at the views of single and married men and women who currently have no children, their “ideal number of children” tends to be split between “zero (I don’t want children)” and “two.” The percentage of “zero” respondents was 23.9% for single women in their 20s and 43.4% for single women in their 30s, and

30.9% for single men in their 20s and 37.7% for single men in their 30s.

On the other hand, the percentage of those who responded “two” was highest among single women in their 20s (39.8%). It was 23.9% for single women in their 30s, 32.2% for single men in their 20s and 26.8% for single men in their 30s. Among married women, it was highest among married women in their 20s (49.3%). It was 35.8% for married women in their 30s, 29.1% for married men in their 20s and 31.0% for married men in their 30s (Figure SF-45).



2 Circumstances Surrounding Divorce

(1) Divorce

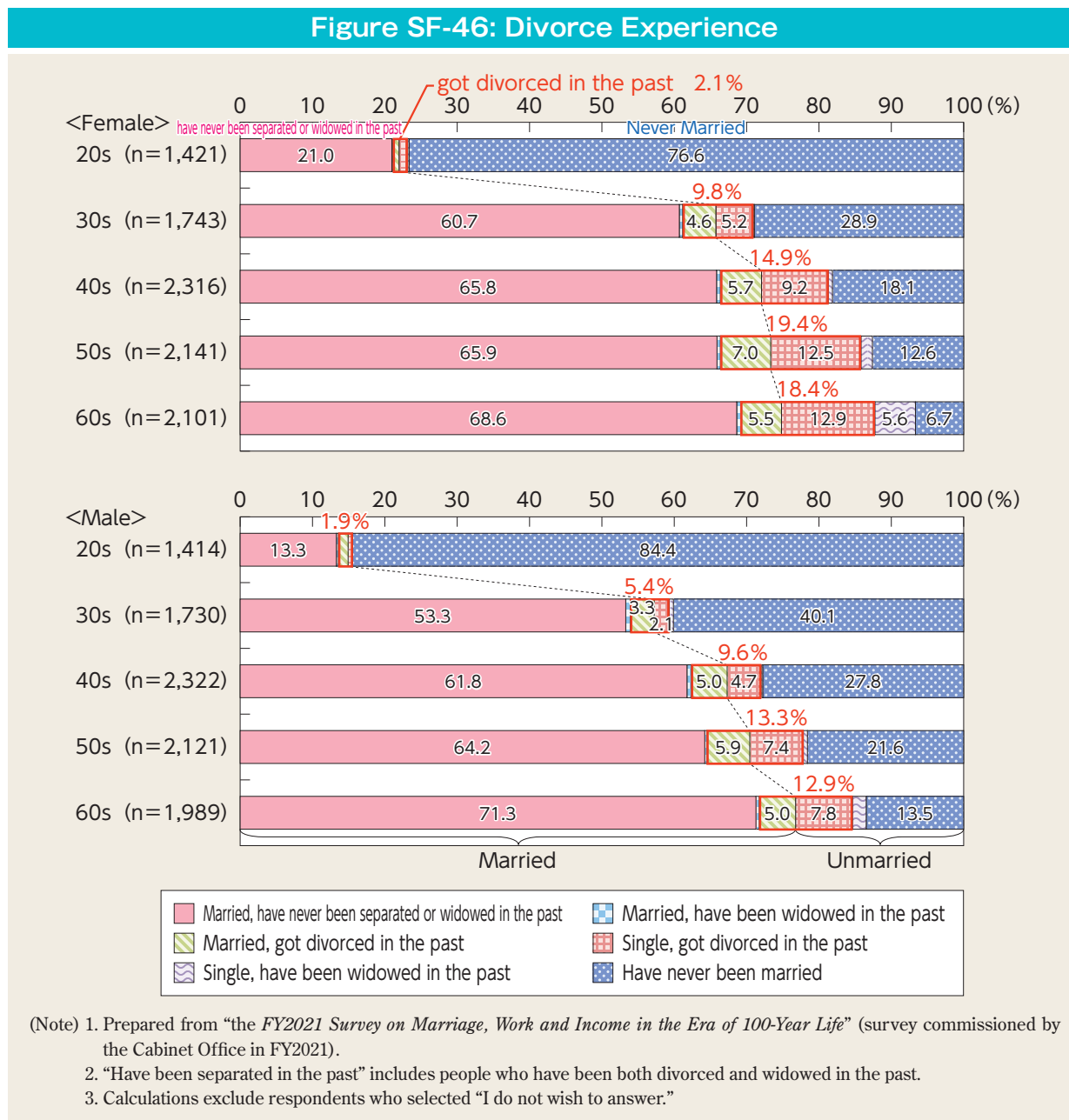
(Circumstances around divorce)

Section 1 confirmed that, since 2015, the number of divorces has remained at about 200k each year, or about one-third of the number of marriages. In conjunction with this, the circumstances around divorce has also become more diverse. Looking at the breakdown of people in their 50s and 60s who have been divorced, 19.4% of women in their 50s have been divorced, including 7.0% who currently have a spouse and 12.5% who are currently single.

18.4% of women in their 60s have been divorced, including 5.5% who currently have a spouse and 12.9% who are currently single.

As for men, 13.3% of men in their 50s have been divorced, including 5.9% who currently have a spouse and 7.4% who are currently single, while 12.9% of men in their 60s have been divorced, including 5.0% who currently have a spouse and 7.8% who are currently single.

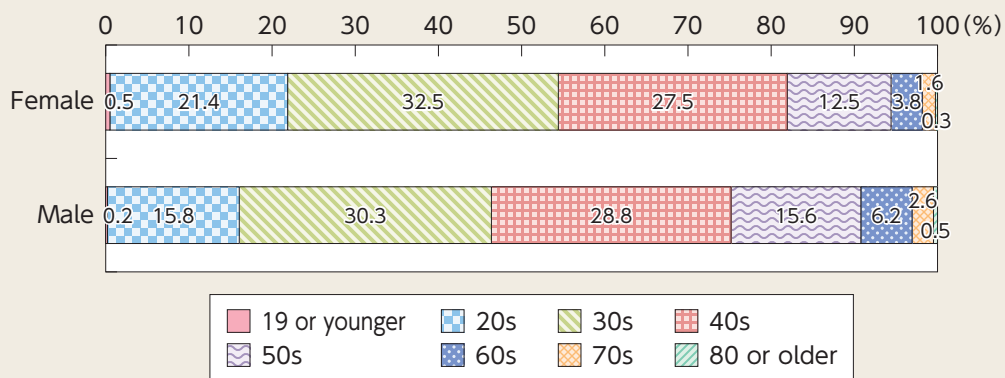
Among people in their 50s and 60s who are currently single, about half of the women have got divorced in the past, and more than half of the men have never been married. (Figure SF-46)



Looking at people’s circumstances at the time of divorce, both men and women who began living separately and divorced in 2020 were most likely to be in their 30s when they began living separately (female: 32.5%, male: 30.3%), followed by those in their 40s (female: 27.5%, male: 28.8%) and those in their 20s (female: 21.4%, male: 15.8%) (Figure SF-47).

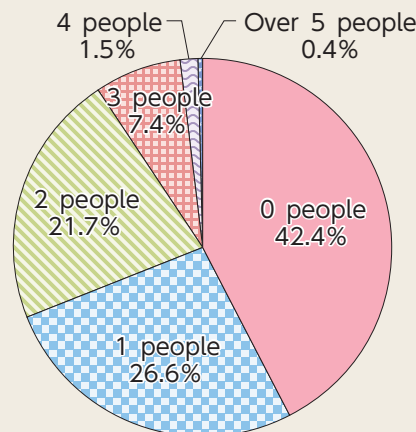
In addition, of those who divorced in 2020, close to 60% had children over whom they exercise parental authority (Figure SF-48). Over the past 20 years, the number of minors whose parents divorce has remained between 200k and 260k each year, or roughly 10 out of every 1,000 minors (Figure SF-49).

Figure SF-47: Number of Divorces by Age at Separation (2020)



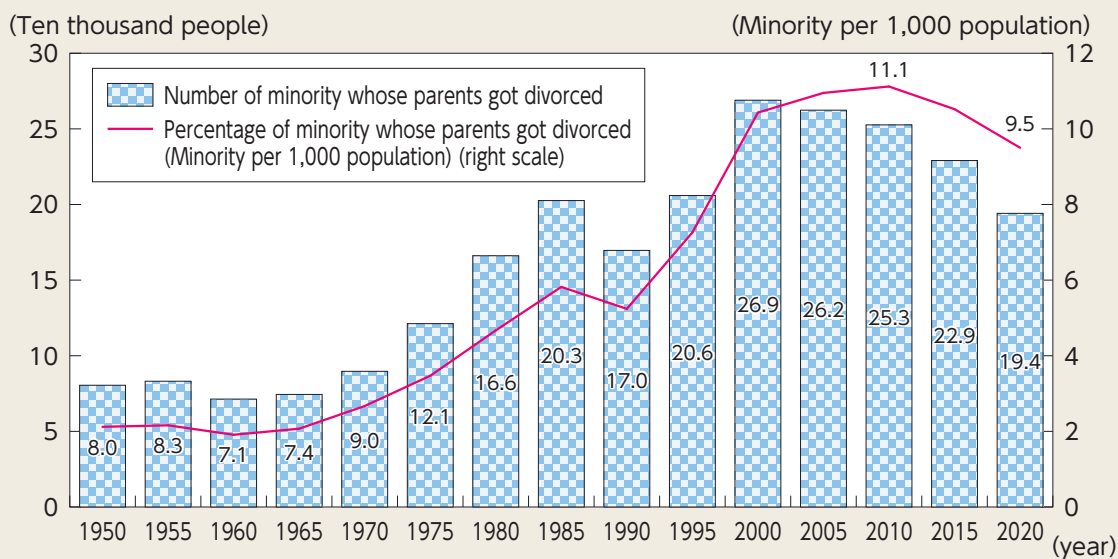
(Note) 1. Prepared from “the *Vital Statistics of Japan*” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.
 2. This question targets only those who separated and divorced in the same year.

Figure SF-48: Percentage of Divorces by Number of Children over Whom the Couple Exercises Parental Authority (2020)



(Note) Prepared from “*Vital Statistics of Japan*” by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

Figure SF-49: Minority Whose Parents Got Divorced

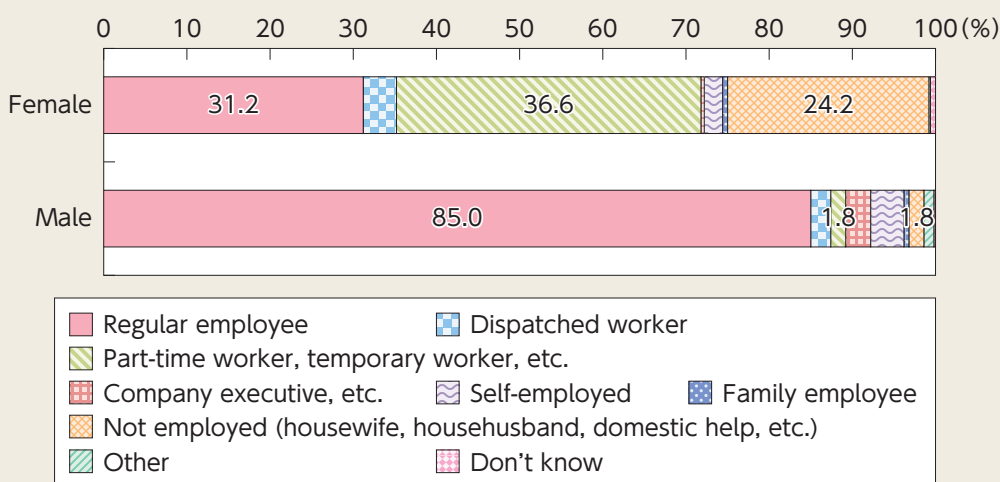


(Note) Prepared from "Vital Statistics of Japan" by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

According to a survey by the Ministry of Justice,³⁴ looking at the employment status of people who went through a divorce by agreement, the majority of men (85.0%) were in regular employment at the time of their

divorce, while women were most likely to be part-time workers or temporary workers, etc. (36.6%), followed by regular employees (31.2%) and not employed (housewife, househusband, domestic help, etc.) (24.2%) (Figure SF-50).

Figure SF-50: Employment Status at Time of Divorce



(Note) Prepared from "Research and Study on the System of Divorce by Agreement" (commissioned by the Ministry of Justice in FY2020).

Looking at the causes of marital breakdown, "personality conflict" was the most common

response for both women (57.6%) and men (69.6%), at about 60–70%. For women, this was

³⁴ Prepared from "Research and Study on the System of Divorce by Agreement," Ministry of Justice (conducted in March 2021, published in April 2021).

followed by “psychological violence” (29.8%) (Figure SF-51). The term “psychological violence” refers to the continuous use of cruel words and actions to hurt the other person’s feelings, such as shouting jeers or abusive language, berating the person loudly, or using foul language to criticize the victim. If, as a result, the mental disorder is severe enough to be considered an injury under the Penal

Code, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), it is a gross violation of human rights that may be punishable as an injurious assault under the Penal Code. One in three women cite “physical violence” and/or “psychological violence” as reasons for divorce, demonstrating the importance of support for survivors of domestic violence (DV) and measures against DV (Figure SF-52).

Figure SF-51: Causes of Marital Breakdown

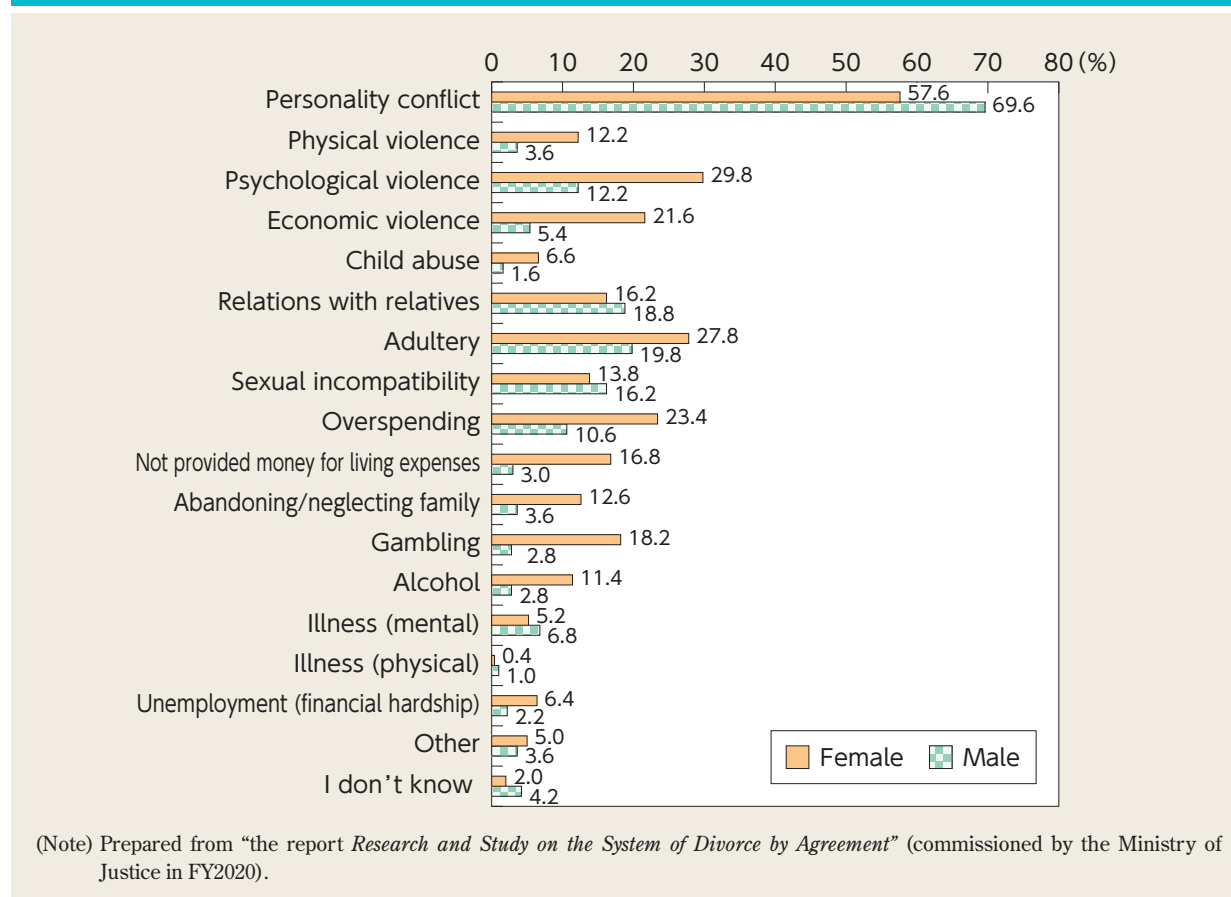
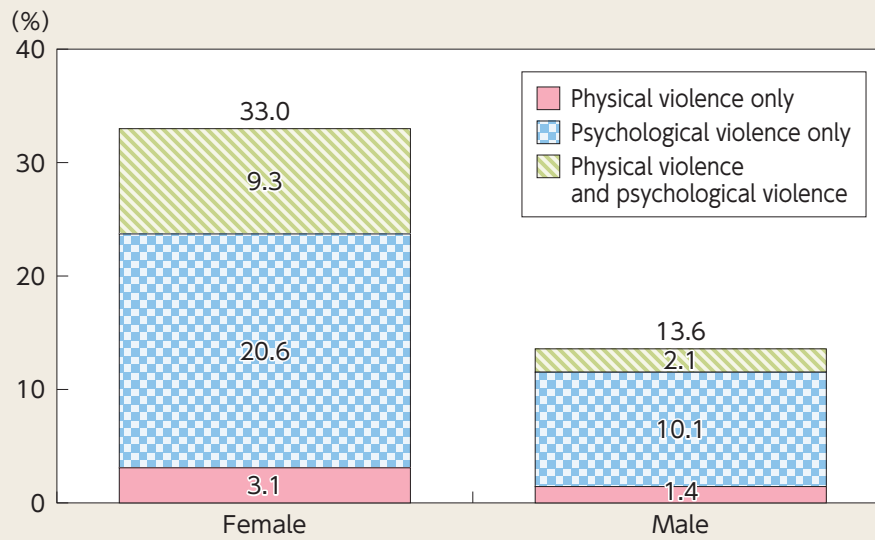


Figure SF-52: Percentage of People Citing Physical or Psychological Violence as a Reason for Divorce



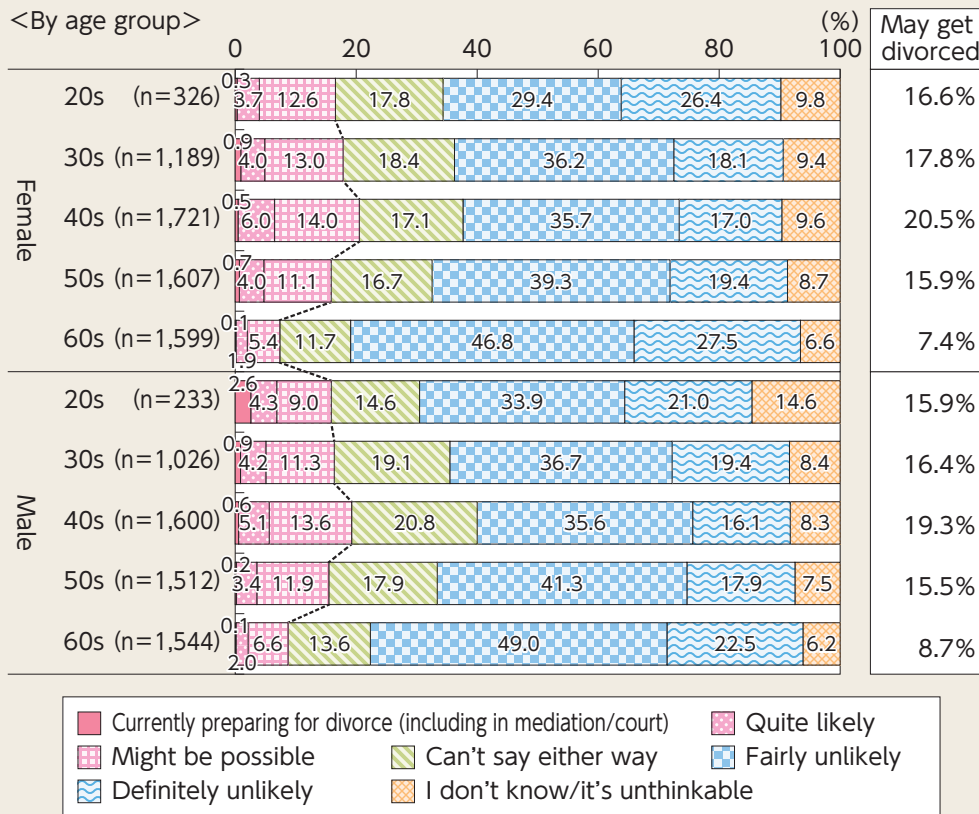
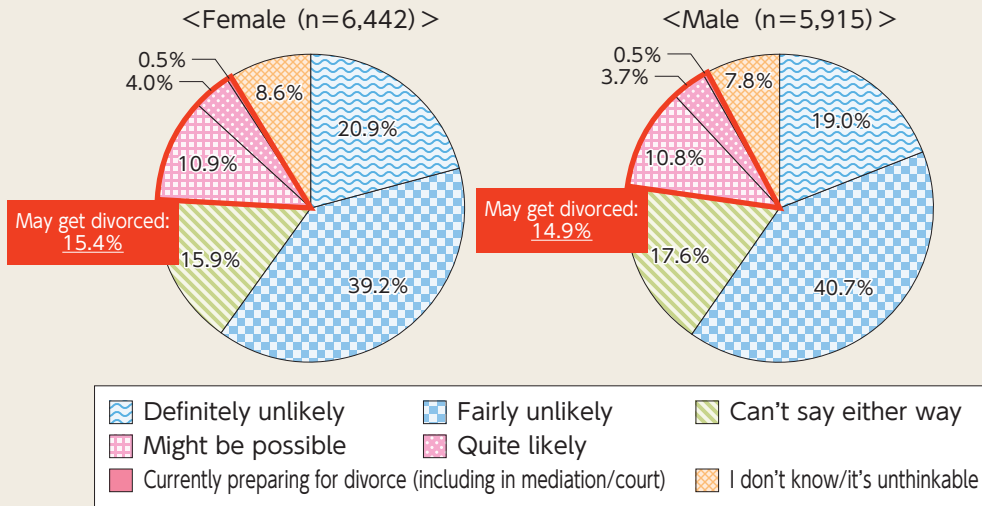
(Note) Prepared from the recalculated results from “*Research and Study on the System of Divorce by Agreement*” (commissioned by the Ministry of Justice in FY2020).

Next, looking at the likelihood of divorce in the future, about 15% of both men and women responded that they are “may get divorced”³⁵

in the future. By age group, the percentage peaks at around 20% for both men and women in their forties (Figure SF-53).

³⁵ “May get divorced” is the cumulative total of “currently preparing for divorce (including in mediation/court),” “quite likely” and “might be possible.”

Figure SF-53: Likelihood of Divorce in the Future

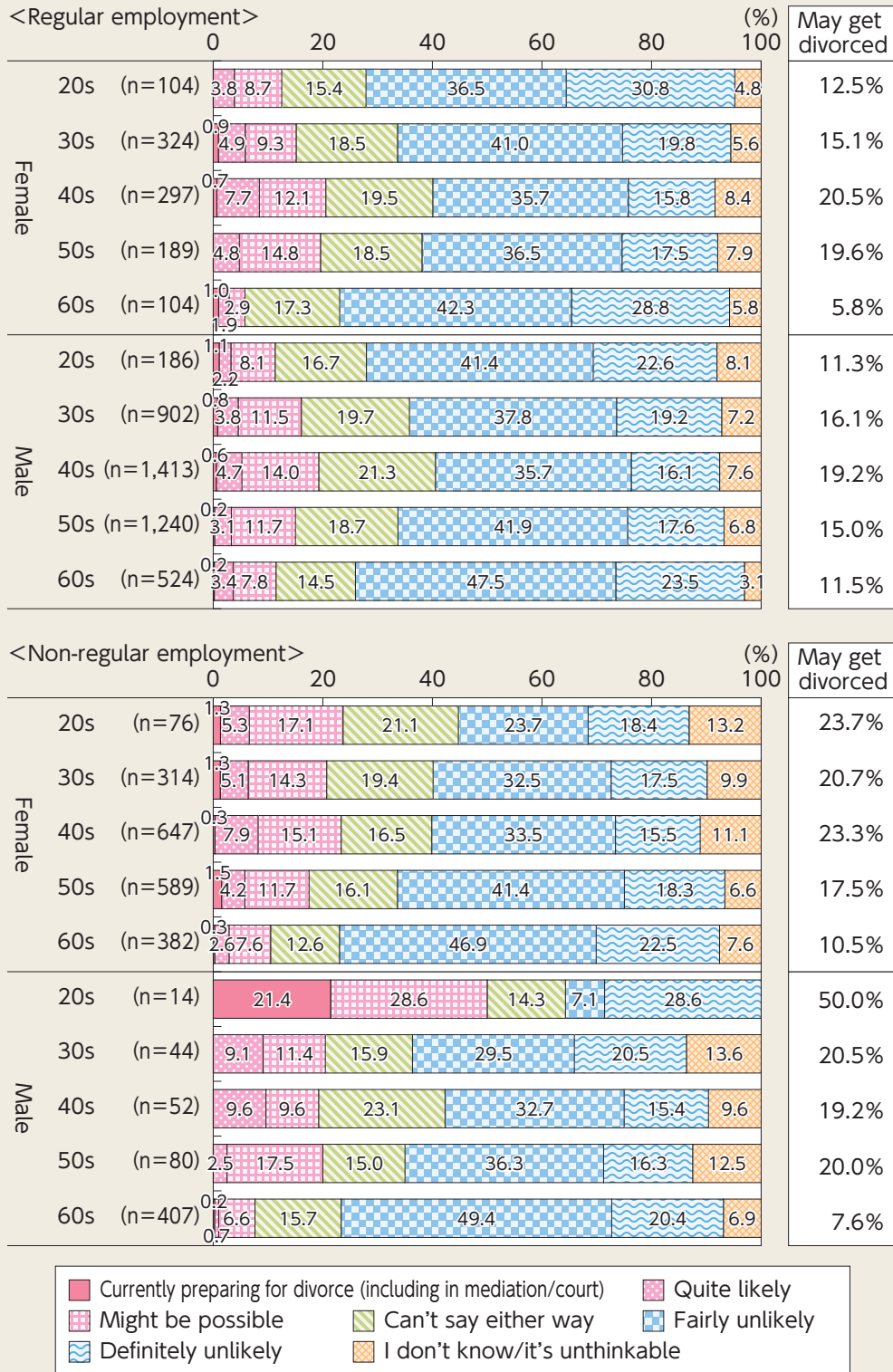


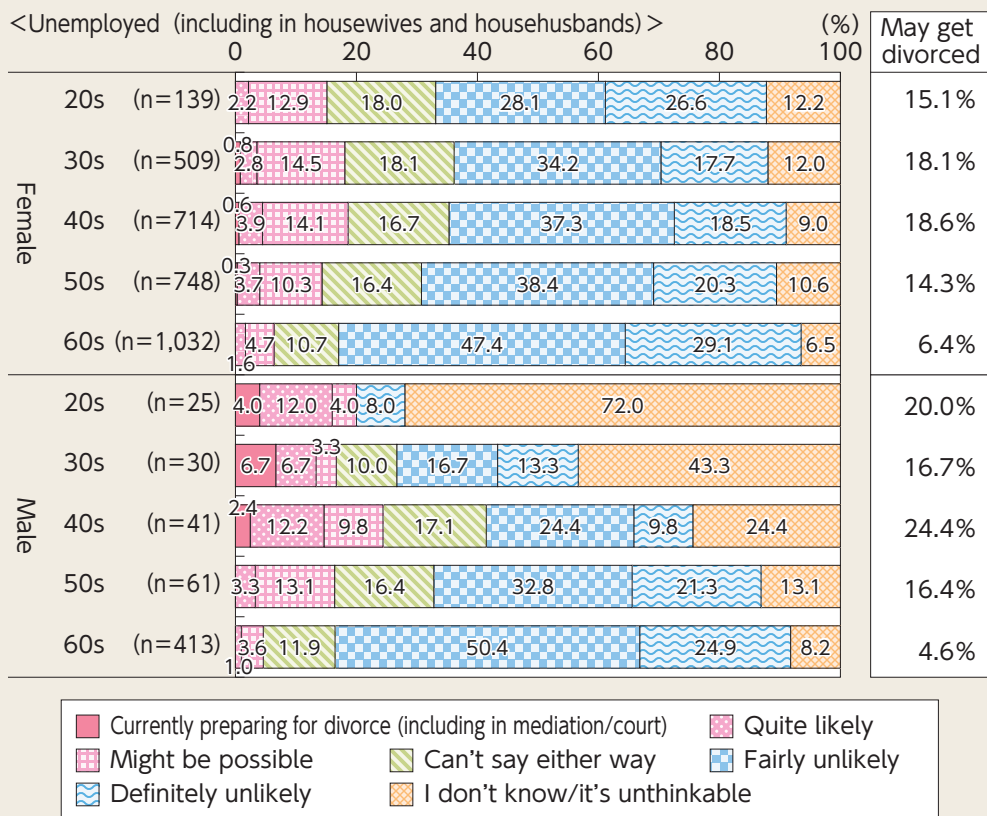
(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
 2. This question targets those who are currently married (including (de facto and common-law marriages).
 3. “May get divorced” is the cumulative total of “currently preparing for divorce (including in mediation/court),” “quite likely” and “might be possible.”

Looking at a breakdown of those who responded “may get divorced” by type of employment, the percentage was generally slightly higher for non-regular employees than for regular employees for both male and female. For example, for female in their 20s and 30s,

in decreasing order of responses, it was non-regular employees (20s: 23.7%, 30s: 20.7%), wives without paid work (20s: 15.1%, 30s: 18.1%), and regular employees (20s: 12.5%, 30s: 15.1%) (Figure SF-54).

Figure SF-54: Likelihood of Divorce (by Type of Employment)



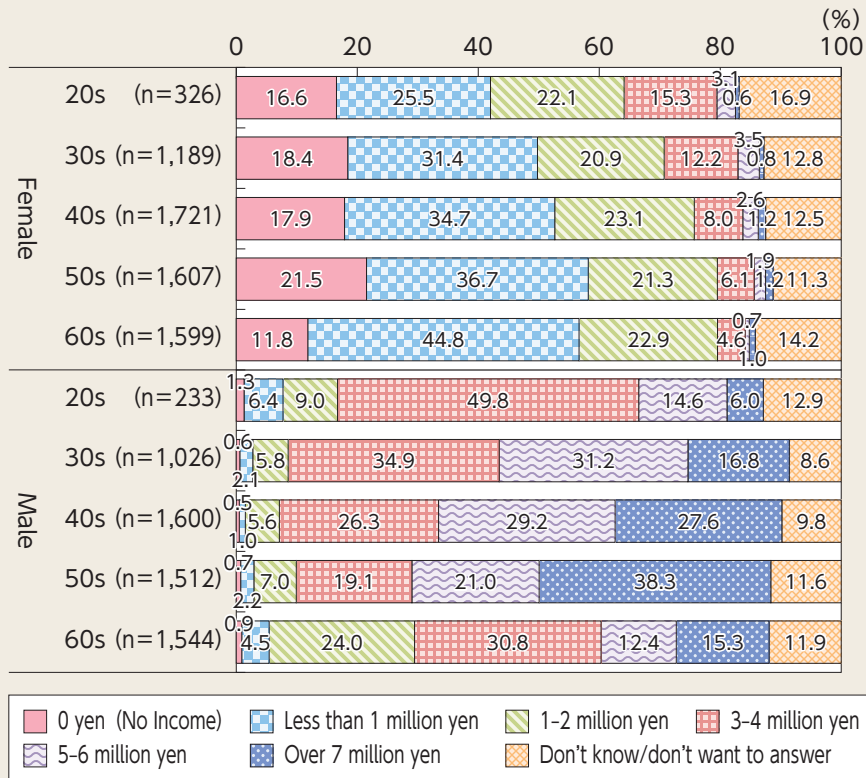


(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
 2. This question targets those who are currently married (including (de facto and common-law marriages)).
 3. “May get divorced” is the cumulative total of “currently preparing for divorce (including in mediation/court),” “quite likely” and “might be possible.”

Given that the results of this survey also indicate that individual annual income is less than 3 million yen (including “0 yen (no

income)”) for 60–80% of married women, women are at risk of falling into poverty after divorce (Figure SF-55).

Figure SF-55: Individual Annual Income of Married Persons (by Age Group)



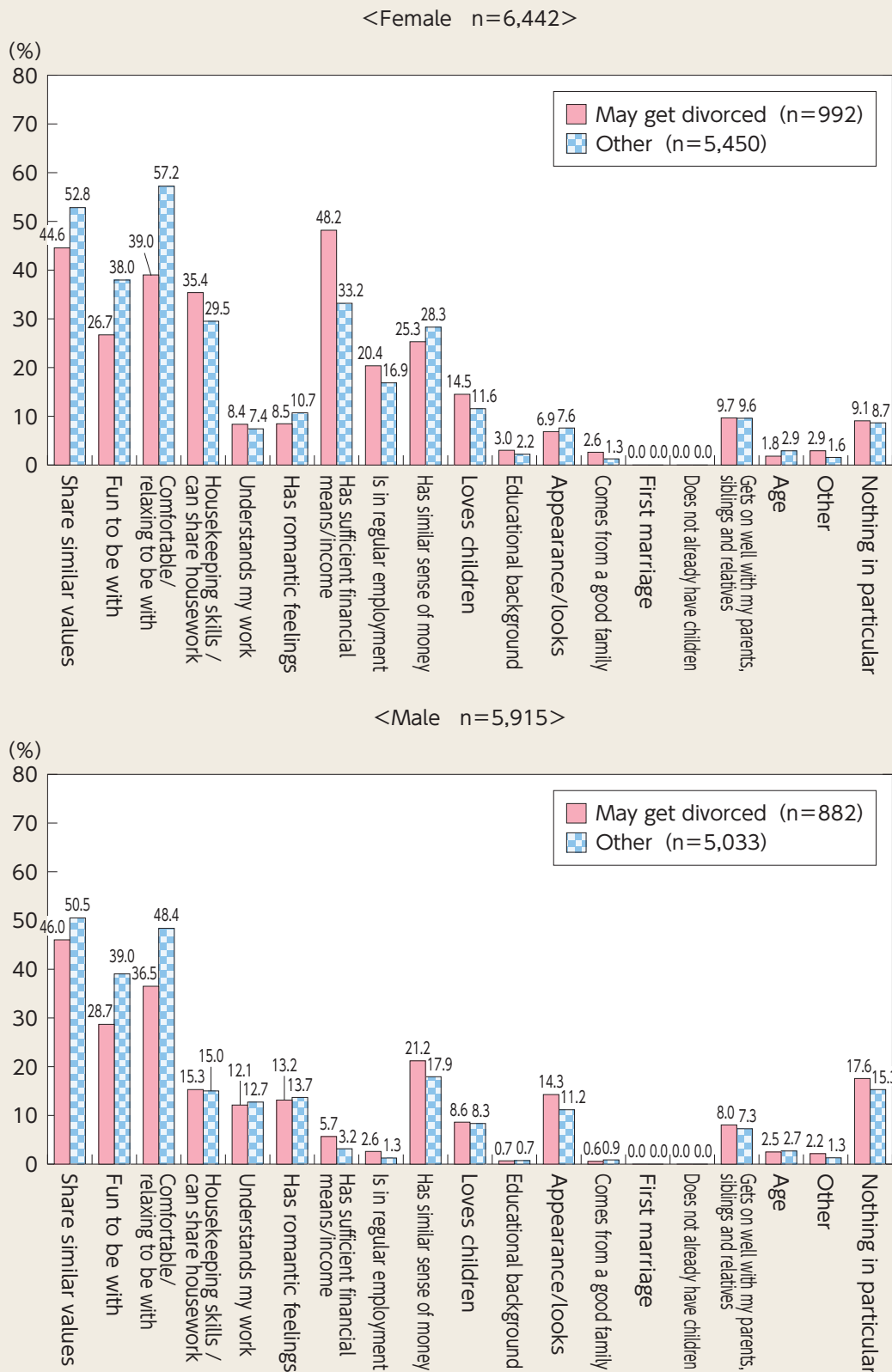
(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

2. Married persons includes those in de facto/common-law marriages.

In a comparison between “may get divorced” and “other” (the cumulative total of “definitely unlikely,” “fairly unlikely,” “can’t say either way,” and “I don’t know/it’s unthinkable”), the most common wants in a marriage partner, both for men and women, were: “comfortable/relaxing to be with,” “fun to be with,” and “share similar values.” Those who responded “other” were more likely to have these wants than those who responded “may get divorced .”

On the other hand, women who responded “may get divorced” were more likely than those who responded “other” to want a marriage partner who: “has sufficient financial means/income,” “housekeeping skills / can share housework,” “is in regular employment,” and “loves children”; while for men, the requirements were: “has similar sense of money” and “appearance/looks” (Figure SF-56).

Figure SF-56: Things I Am Looking for in a Marriage Partner (Comparison between “Likely to Divorce” and “Other”)



- (Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
2. This question targets those who are currently married (including (de facto and common-law marriages).
3. “May get divorced” is the cumulative total of “currently preparing for divorce (including in mediation/court),” “quite likely” and “might be possible.”
4. “Other” is the cumulative total of “I think it’s definitely unlikely,” “I think it’s fairly unlikely,” “I can’t say either way,” and “I don’t know/it’s unthinkable.”

(2) Single-mother³⁶

Section 1 identified trends among single-parent households. Here, we focus on single mothers and look at their circumstances in terms of turning points, ages and employment status.

Comparing age groups, women who became single mothers in their 20s, on average,

married for the first time at age 21.9, had their first child at age 22.8, divorced at age 25.8, and remarried (if at all) at age 30.7. In contrast, women who became single mothers in their 40s, on average, married for the first time at age 26.8, had their first child at age 29.1, divorced at age 43.3, and remarried (if at all) at age 42.0 (Table SF-57).

Table SF-57: Age of Single Mothers at Turning Points

Actual age	Single mothers (n=449) Average age : 51.7	Women who became single mothers in their 20s	Women who became single mothers in their 30s	Women who became single mothers in their 40s	Women other than single mothers
Age at first marriage	24.5 (n=447)	21.9 (n=141)	25.2 (n=208)	26.8 (n=98)	26.8 (n=6,757)
Age at first child	25.9 (n=449)	22.8 (n=141)	26.6 (n=210)	29.1 (n=98)	28.1 (n=5,127)
Age when became single mother (at first divorce)	33.4 (n=449)	25.8 (n=141)	33.9 (n=210)	43.3 (n=98)	34.1 (n=821)
Aged at remarriage	35.0 (n=76)	30.7 (n=33)	37.2 (n=33)	42.0 (n=10)	35.8 (n=547)

(Note) 1. Analysis by Professor Jun Kobayashi, Faculty of Humanities, Seikei University and member of the "the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life" (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021) Survey Review Committee.

2. Average age of all response values.

3. The term "single mother" in this section refers to a woman who has been divorced or widowed and who has children, and: who answered both her age at the time of divorce and her age at which she had her first child; who was with her first child at the time of her first divorce (her age at the time of divorce is older than her age at which she had her first child); whose child at the time of divorce was 19 years of age or younger; and who currently does not have a spouse.

Regarding women's first jobs after their final education, the highest percentage of "non-regular employment" was among women who became single mothers in their 20s (35.7%). On the other hand, "regular employment" accounted for 75.5% of women who became single mothers in their 40s.

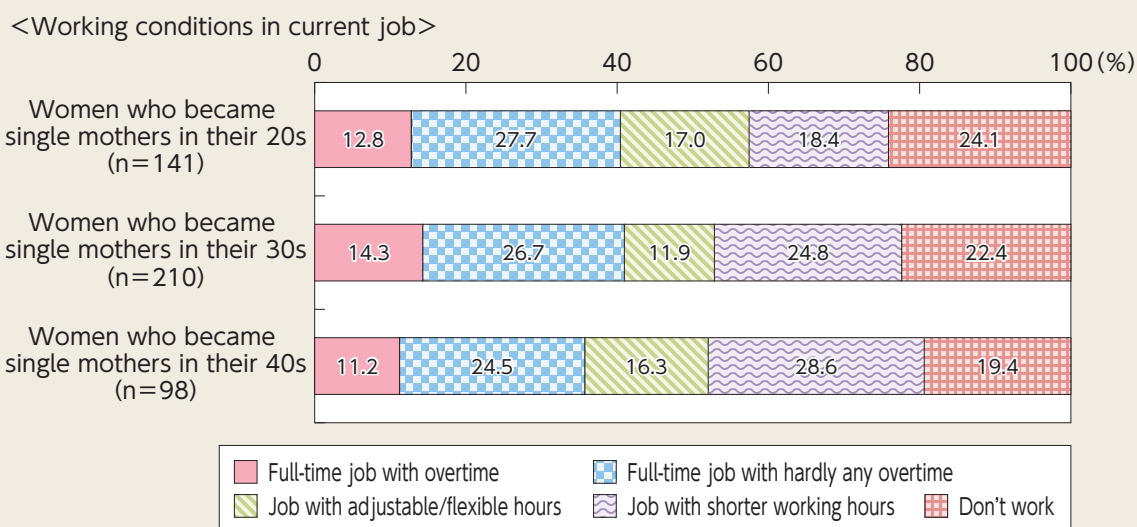
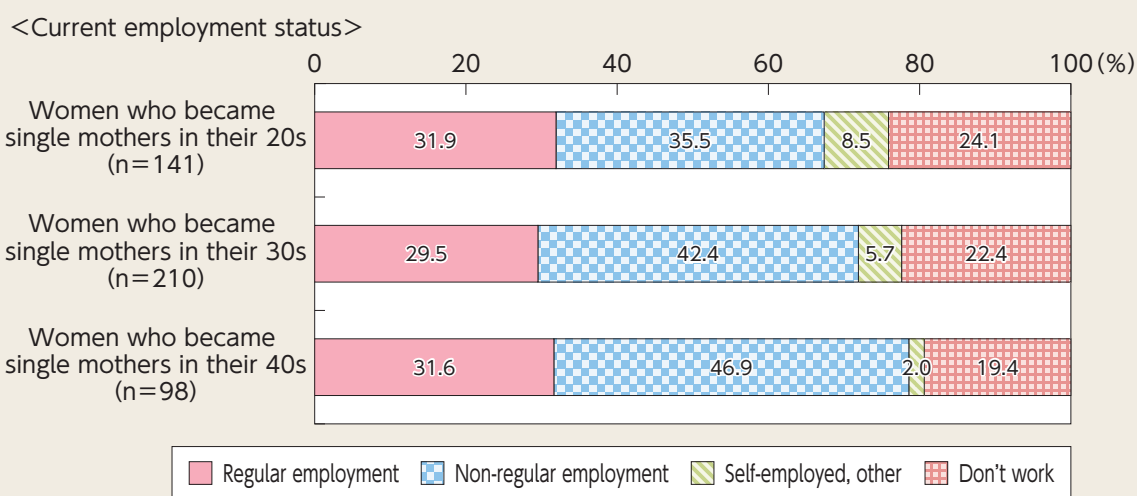
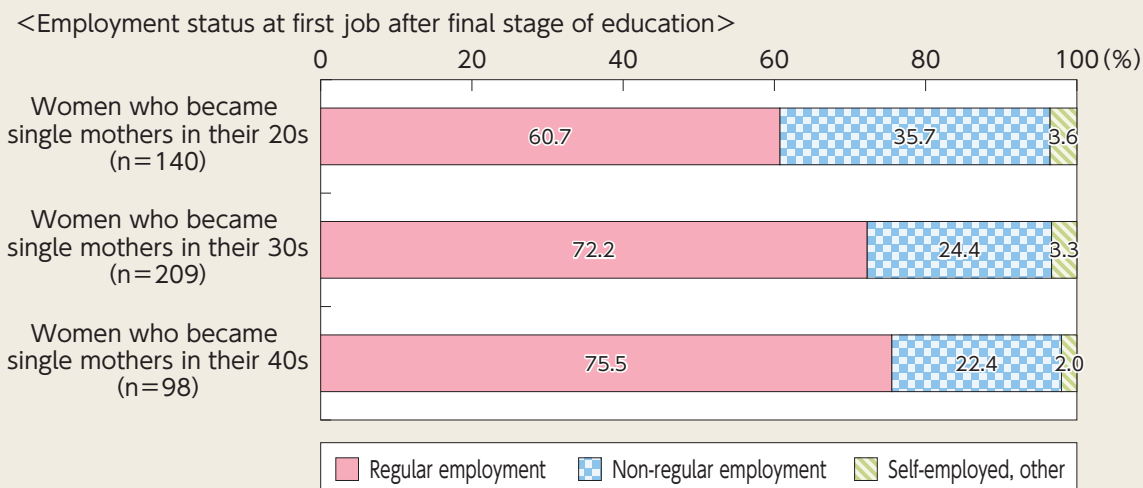
As for women's current employment status, "regular employment" accounted for around 30% for all age groups. Although there are no significant differences in terms of the age at which women became single mothers, the highest percentage of "non-regular employment"

was among women who became single mothers in their 40s (46.9%). Looking at the working conditions of women in their current jobs, again in connection with the rates of non-regular employment, a higher percentage of women who became single mothers in their 40s (28.6%) are in a "job with shorter working hours" (Figure SF-58).

As the above shows, the employment type of single mothers in their first job, as well as their ages of marriage, childbirth and divorce, vary widely.

³⁶ Although synonymous with women in single-parent households and mothers in single-mother households, which were referred to in Section 1, for convenience, the term "single mother" is used here.

Figure SF-58: Employment Status of Single Mothers

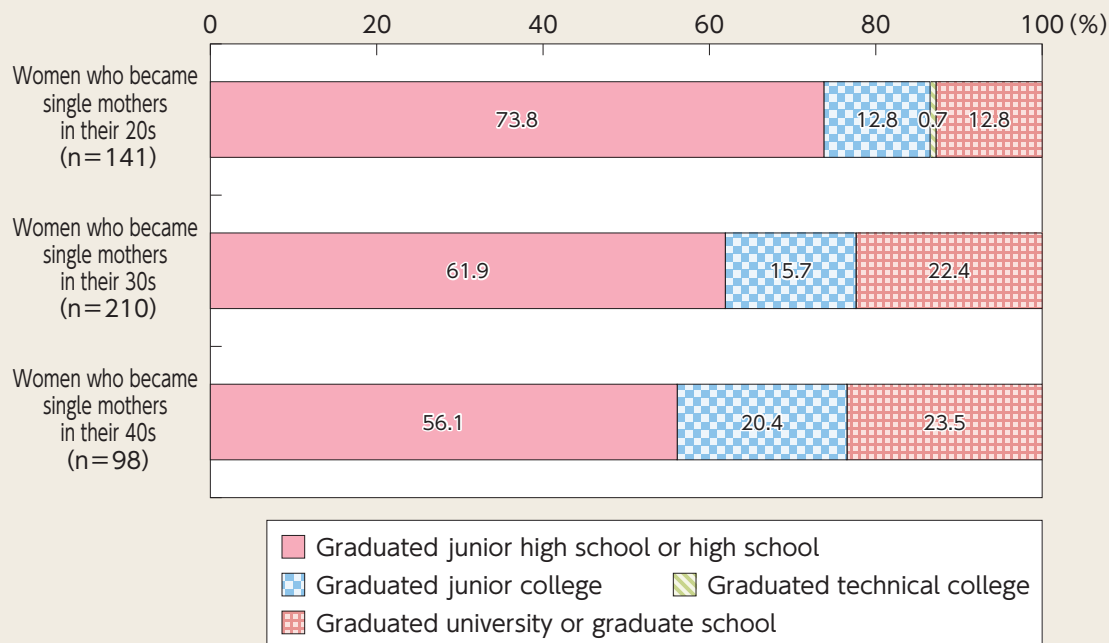


(Note) 1. Analysis by Professor Jun Kobayashi, Faculty of Humanities, Seikei University and member of the “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021) Survey Review Committee.

2. The term “single mother” in this section refers to a woman who has been divorced or widowed and who has children, and: who answered both her age at the time of divorce and her age at which she had her first child; who was with her first child at the time of her first divorce (her age at the time of divorce is older than her age at which she had her first child); whose child at the time of divorce was 19 years of age or younger; and who currently does not have a spouse.

3. Regarding “employment status at first job after final stage of education,” two women who have not worked at their first job are excluded from the count.

Figure SF-59: Final Education of Single Mothers



(Note) 1. Analysis by Professor Jun Kobayashi, Faculty of Humanities, Seikei University and member of the “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021) Survey Review Committee.

- The term “single mother” in this section refers to a woman who has been divorced or widowed and who has children, and: who answered both her age at the time of divorce and her age at which she had her first child; who was with her first child at the time of her first divorce (her age at the time of divorce is older than her age at which she had her first child); whose child at the time of divorce was 19 years of age or younger; and who currently does not have a spouse.
- Regarding “employment status at first job after final stage of education,” two women who have not worked at their first job are excluded from the count.

3 Circumstances Surrounding Income

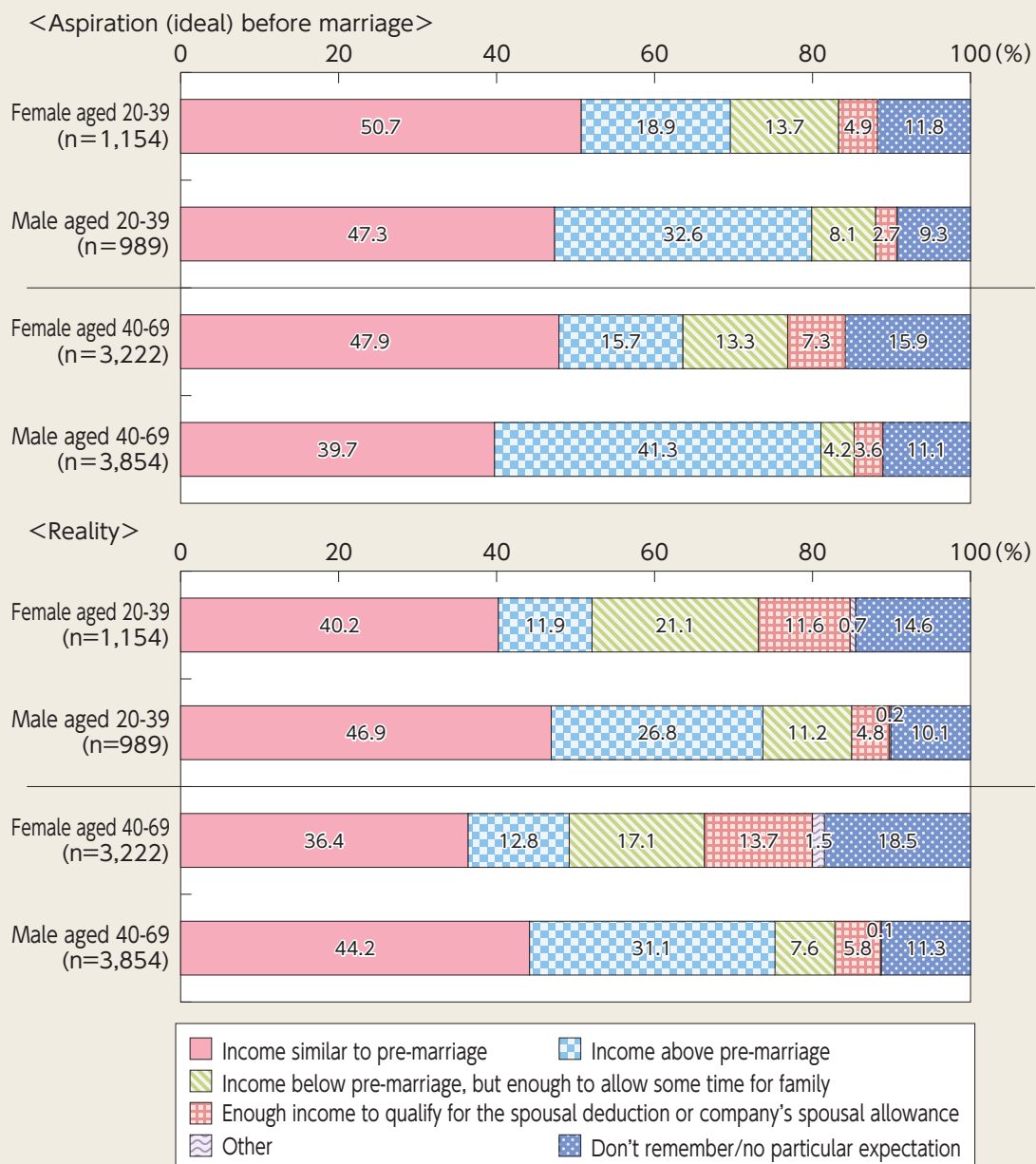
Following is a summary of circumstances surrounding income, including the ideal and reality before and after marriage and before and after the birth of the first child, and the current situation for middle-aged and older people.

(Income after Marriage)

Looking at people’s aspirations before marriage (ideal) for income after marriage, 60–70% of women in their 20s and 30s and in their 40s

to 60s wanted their income to be either similar to or above their pre-marriage income. However, in reality, the percentage of women whose income was either similar to or above their pre-marriage income was about 50%. Another 17–21% of women reported an “income below pre-marriage, but enough to allow some time for family” and 12–14% of women reported “enough income to qualify for the spousal deduction or company’s spousal allowance” (Figure SF-60).

Figure SF-60: Income after Marriage (Aspiration (ideal) before Marriage versus Reality)



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
 2. This question targets those who are married (including de facto and common-law marriages). Assumes after marriage (first marriage) and with no children.

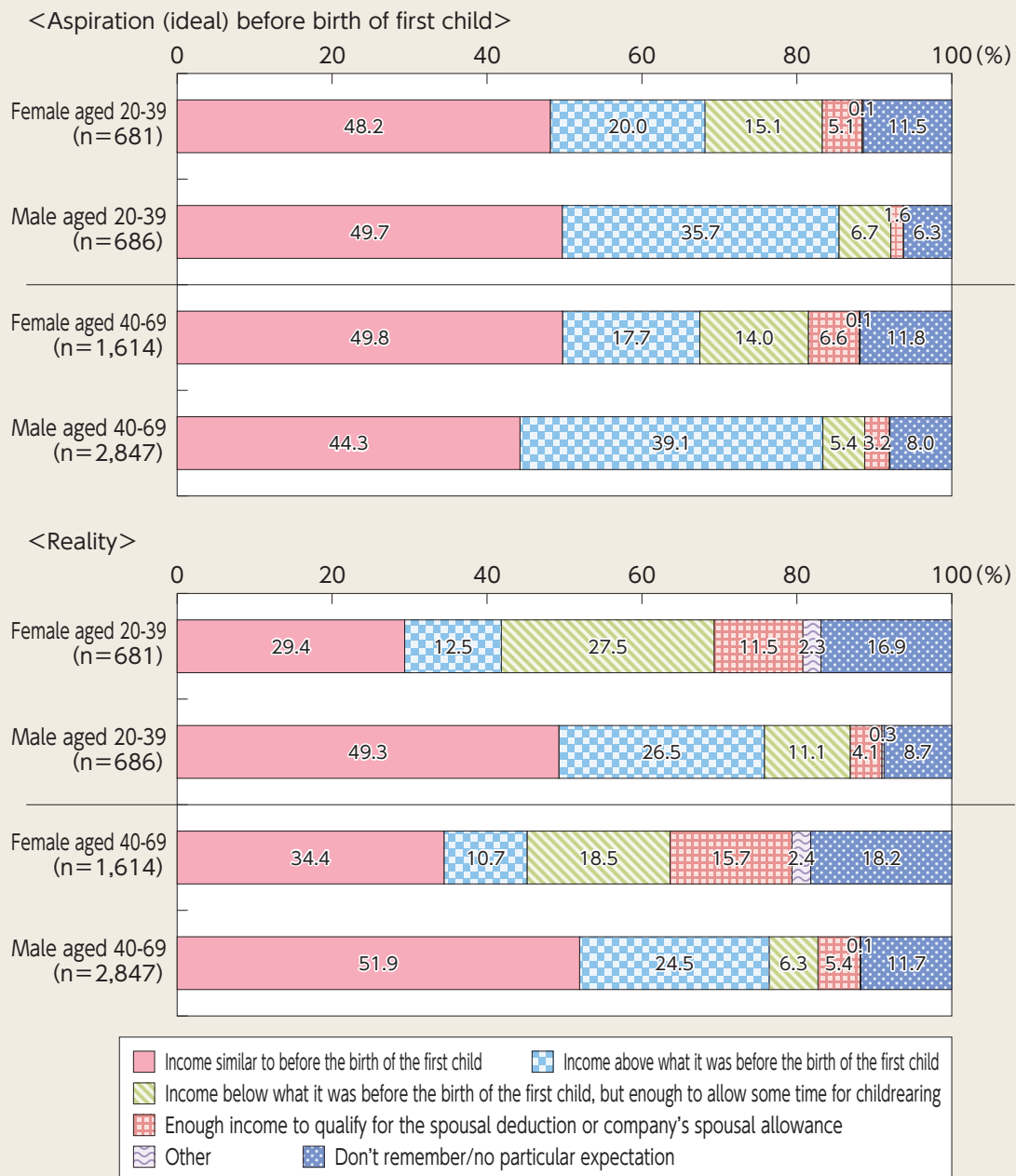
(Income after Birth of First Child)

Looking at people's aspirations before the birth of their first child regarding their ideal income after the birth of that child, about 70% of women in their 20s and 30s and in their 40s to 60s wanted their income to be either similar to or above what it was before the birth of their first child. However, in reality, the percentage of women whose income was either similar to or above what it was before the birth of their first child was about 42–45%. Another 19–28% of women reported an "income below what it was before the birth of the first child, but enough to allow some time for childrearing" and 12–16% of women reported "enough

income to qualify for the spousal deduction or company's spousal allowance."

At the beginning of marriage and before children are born, the level of awareness about adjusting working hours or days to take into account spousal deductions and company spousal allowances is not high. However, in reality, about 10–20% of women adjust their working hours or days so that their income is low enough to receive these benefits (Figure SF-61). It is thought that women's low wages, the high proportion of non-regular employment, and unconscious bias are intricately intermeshed.

Figure SF-61: Income after Birth of First Child (Ideal Prior to Birth of First Child versus Reality)



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
 2. This question targets people who have children, and assumes a time after the first child is born and reaches 2–3 years of age.

(Work Style after Birth of First Child)

Regarding the respondent’s own work style and that of their spouse after marriage and after the birth of their first child, a comparison of “ideal” versus “reality” shows that “husband works full-time in principle / wife does house-work full-time (does not work)” is the increasing

“reality” for both men and women in both the 20s and 30s and 40s to 60s age groups. On the other hand, “both husband and wife work full-time in principle” was the “ideal” selected by about 50% of married men and women in their 20s and 30s (Table SF-62).

Table SF-62: Work Styles of Self and Spouse after Marriage and after Birth of First Child (Ideal versus Reality)

		Respondent category			Both husband and wife work full-time in principle (%)		Husband works full-time in principle / Wife does housework full-time (does not work) (%)	
					Ideal	Reality	Ideal	Reality
After marriage	Married	Aged 20-39	Female	(n=1,515)	46.9	40.7	8.5	17.3
			Male	(n=1,259)	52.5	43.0	5.2	11.0
		Aged 40-69	Female	(n=4,927)	39.2	32.8	19.5	25.7
			Male	(n=4,656)	40.6	32.1	16.0	22.1
	Single	Aged 20-39	Female	(n=1,453)	37.4		6.6	
			Male	(n=1,592)	29.8		3.4	
		Aged 40-69	Female	(n=793)	28.5		13.6	
			Male	(n=1,224)	24.4		7.7	
					Ideal	Reality	Ideal	Reality
After birth of first child	Married	Aged 20-39	Female	(n=1,147)	38.6	28.2	22.7	33.8
			Male	(n=892)	54.6	43.9	8.9	16.1
		Aged 40-69	Female	(n=4,628)	20.7	14.0	41.9	49.2
			Male	(n=4,049)	27.8	21.7	29.2	35.7

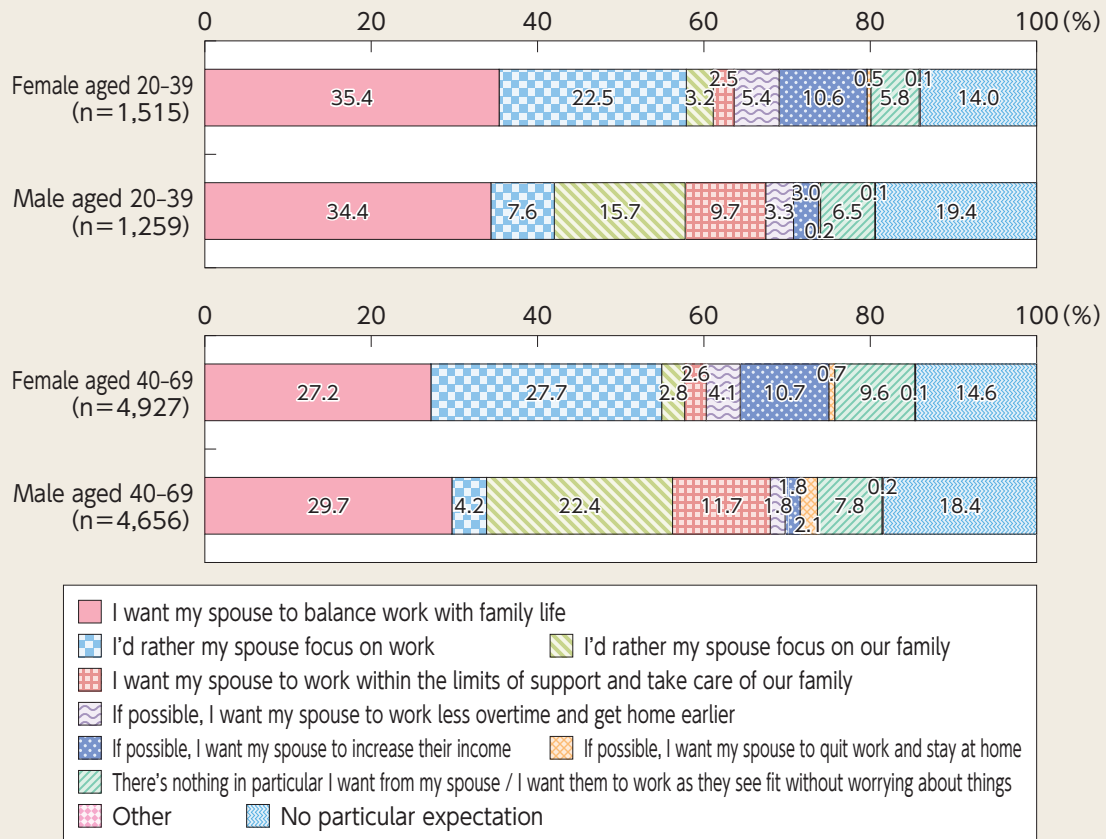
- (Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
 2. Only “both husband and wife work full-time in principle” and “husband works full-time in principle / wife does housework full-time (does not work)” have been sampled.
 3. Regarding work styles after the birth of their first child, “both husband and wife work full-time in principle” is the sum of “both husband and wife take childcare leave, etc., and both work full-time in principle after returning to work” and “only the wife takes childcare leave, etc., and both husband and wife work full-time in principle after returning to work.” This question targets people with children.

When asked about their spouse’s (husband’s) ideal work style after marriage, the most common response among married women in their 20s and 30s was “I want my spouse to balance work with family life” (35.4%), followed by “I’d rather my spouse focus on work” (22.5%) and “If possible, I want my spouse to increase their income” (10.6%). In comparison, fewer married women in their 40s to 60s wanted their spouse to balance work with family life, instead wanting their husbands to focus on work (both about 27%).

On the other hand, the most common

response among married men in their 20s and 30s was “I want my spouse to balance work with family life” (34.4%), followed by “I’d rather my spouse focus on our family” (15.7%) and “I want my spouse to work within the limits of support and take care of our family” (9.7%). In comparison, fewer married men in their 40s to 60s wanted their spouse to balance work with family life, instead wanting their wives to focus on their family or wanting them to work within the limits of support and take care of the family (Figure SF-63).

Figure SF-63: Work Styles of Spouse after Marriage (Ideal)



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

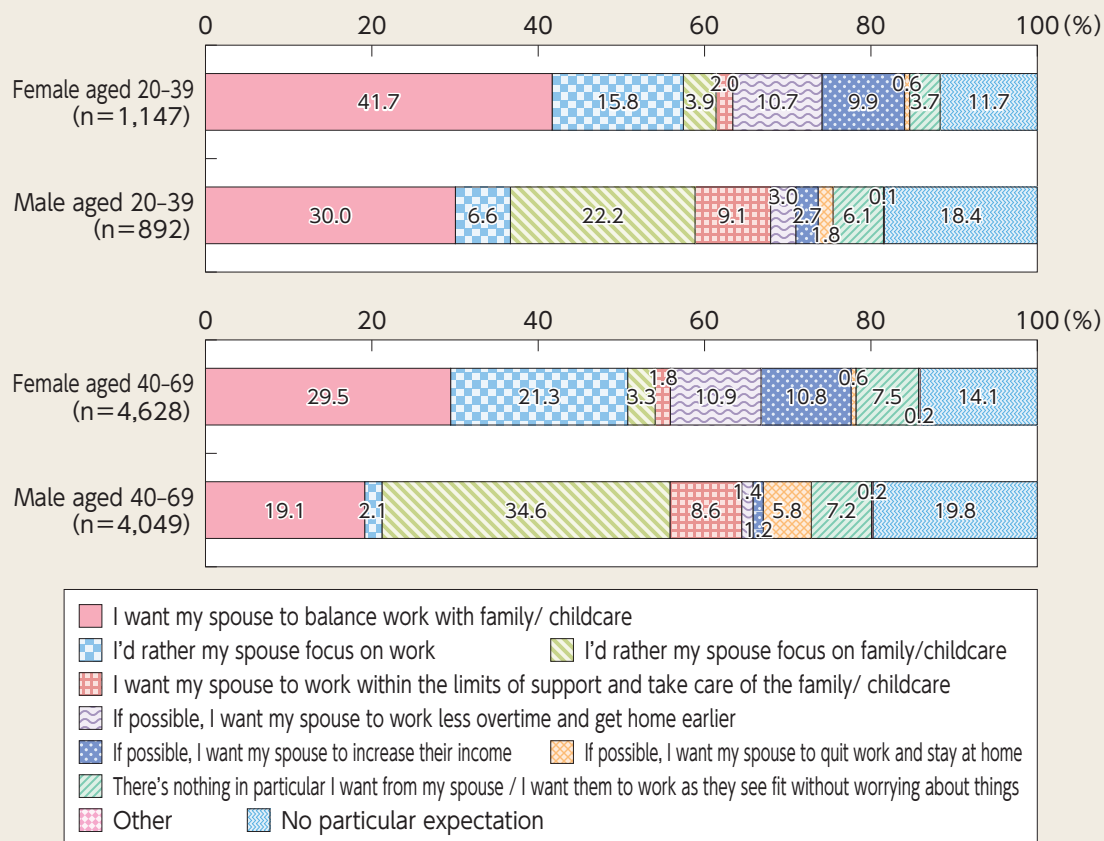
2. This question targets married people (including de facto/common-law marriage), and assumes a time after their first marriage when they have no children.

When asked about their spouse’s (husband’s) ideal work style after the birth of their first child, the most common response among mothers in their 20s and 30s was “I want my spouse to balance work with family/childcare” (41.7%), followed by “I’d rather my spouse focus on work” (15.8%), “If possible, I want my spouse to work less overtime and get home earlier” (10.7%), and “If possible, I want my spouse to increase their income” (9.9%). In comparison, about 12% points fewer mothers in their 40s to 60s wanted their spouse to balance work with housework/childrearing, while about 5% points more of these mothers would have rather had their husband focus on

work.

On the other hand, the most common response among fathers in their 20s and 30s was “I want my spouse to balance work with family/childcare” (30.0%), followed by “I’d rather my spouse focus on family/childcare” (22.2%) and “I want my spouse to work within the limits of support and take care of the family/childcare” (9.1%). In comparison, about 11% points fewer fathers in their 40s to 60s wanted their spouse to balance work with family/childcare, while about 12% points more of these fathers would have rather had their wife focus on family/childcare (Figure SF-64).

Figure SF-64: Work Styles of Spouse after Birth of First Child (Ideal)



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
 2. This question targets people with children.
 3. It assumes a time after the first child is born and reaches 2–3 years of age.

In addition to there being a fair number of both men and women thinking it would be ideal for both husband and wife to work full-time in principle and to balance work with housework and childcare both after marriage and after the birth of their first child, there are some women thinking they would rather their husbands focus on work and some men thinking they would rather their wives focus on housework and childcare, showing that the views on how married couples should work are diversifying even among generations, age groups and genders.

(Difference in Annual Income with Spouse/ Girlfriend/Boyfriend)

Looking at differences in annual income with spouse/girlfriend/boyfriend, 30–49% of women in all age groups responded, “I would prefer my partner’s income to be higher,” while 20–39% of men in all age groups responded, “I don’t mind if my partner’s annual was lower.”³⁷ Furthermore, about 10% of women in all age groups thought, “I feel that I have to do the housework, care for the children and so on if possible when considering the gap between my income and that of my partner (Figure SF-65).

³⁷ Cumulative total of “I don’t mind if my partner’s annual income remains the same or goes down” and “Considering that my partner would receive support, I don’t mind if his/her annual income remains the same or goes down.”

Looking at unconscious bias from the perspectives of work, income, and housework, women in their 20s and 30s agreed more than disagreed by at least 10% points regarding the statement “men should work outside the home and women should support the household at home.” Disagreement also outnumbered agreement among women in their 40s to 60s and among men in their 20s and 30s, but a greater percentage of men in their 40s to 60s were in agreement. As for the statement “men should not get married unless they have at least a certain

income,” both men and women agreed more than disagreed by at least 10% points (Figure SF-66).

According to another survey by the Cabinet Office,³⁸ with regard to the division of duties among married couples, there is a gap in attitudes between men and women in their 20s and 30s, with men more likely to agree with the statements “even in dual-income households, men should prioritize work over family” and “housework and childrearing should be done by women” (Figure SF-67).

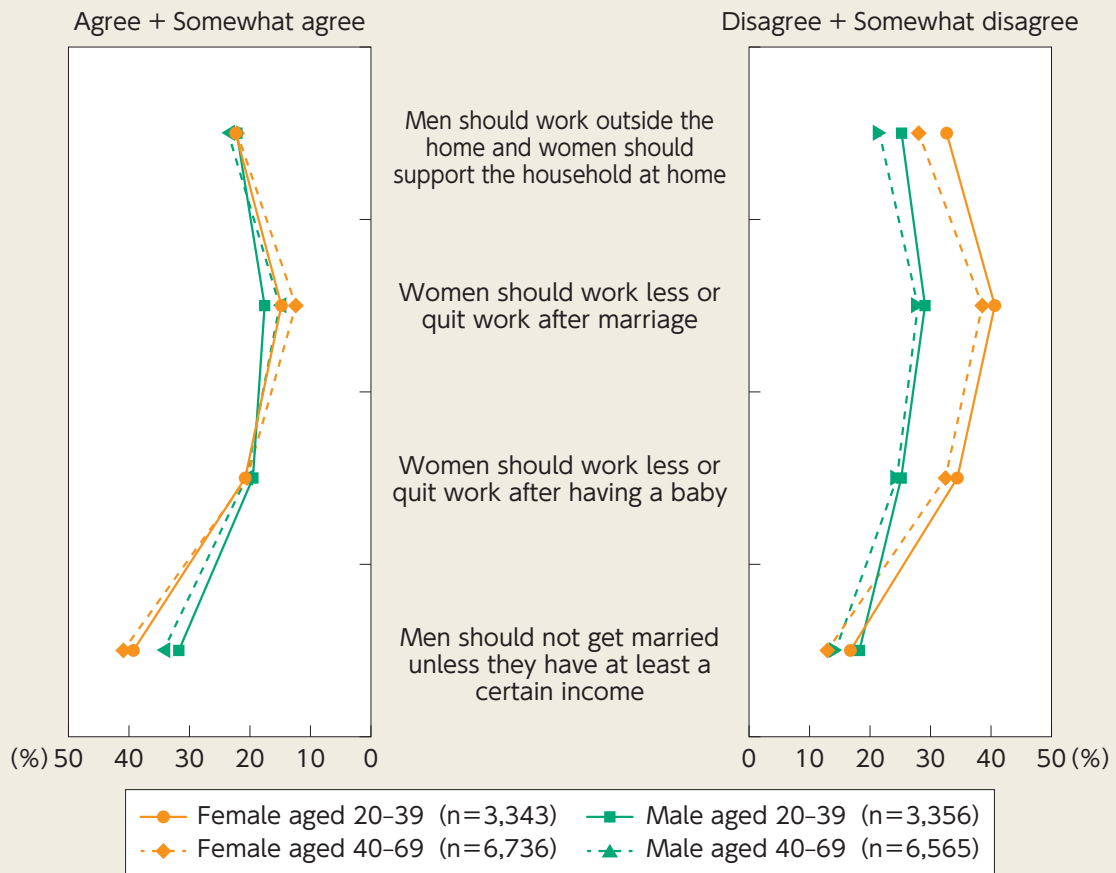
Figure SF-65: Difference in Annual Income with Spouse/Girlfriend/Boyfriend



(Note) Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

³⁸ “FY2021 Survey and Research on Unconscious Bias Based on Gender,” Cabinet Office (published in September 2021).

Figure SF-66: Attitudes toward Family (Work, Income, Housework)



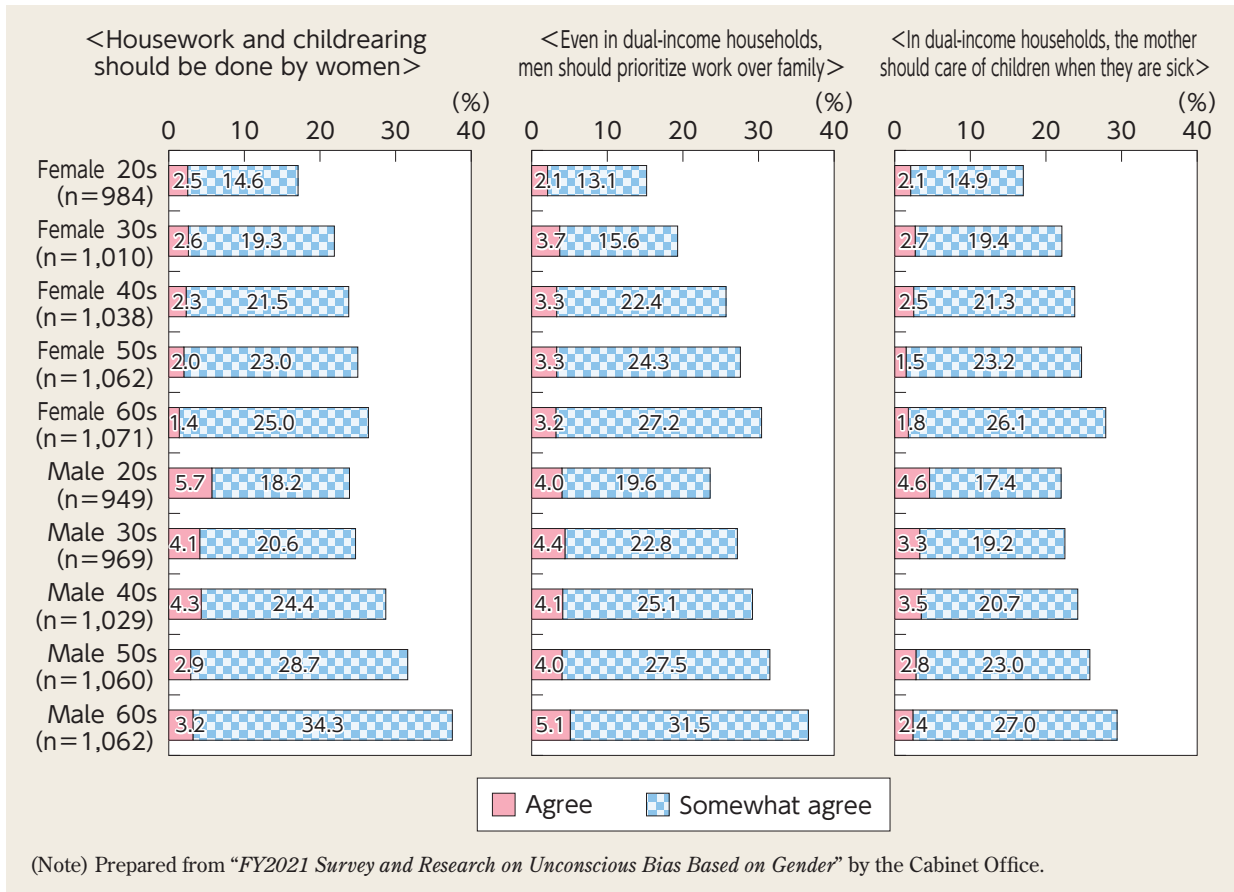
		Female aged 20-39 (n=3,343)		Female aged 40-69 (n=6,736)		Male aged 20-39 (n=3,356)		Male aged 40-69 (n=6,565)	
		Agree + Somewhat agree	Disagree + Somewhat disagree	Agree + Somewhat agree	Disagree + Somewhat disagree	Agree + Somewhat agree	Disagree + Somewhat disagree	Agree + Somewhat agree	Disagree + Somewhat disagree
Work, income, housework	Men should work outside the home and women should support the household at home	22.3%	32.7%	22.1%	28.0%	22.2%	25.2%	23.6%	21.6%
	Women should work less or quit work after marriage	14.8%	40.6%	12.4%	38.6%	17.6%	29.1%	15.1%	27.9%
	Women should work less or quit work after having a baby	20.8%	34.4%	20.5%	32.5%	19.5%	25.1%	20.6%	24.5%
	Men should not get married unless they have at least a certain income	39.3%	16.8%	40.9%	12.9%	31.8%	18.2%	34.3%	14.3%

(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

2. Blue shading: The larger percentage of “Agree + Somewhat agree” and “Disagree + Somewhat disagree”

Red letters: The difference between “Agree + Somewhat agree” and “Disagree + Somewhat disagree” is 10% points or more.

Figure SF-67: Attitudes toward Gender Roles (by Gender and Age Group)



(Circumstances Surrounding Middle-Aged and Older People)

In Section 1, it was confirmed that approximately 60% of married women in gainful employment have an income of less than 2 million yen, at least 50% of women in single-person households have an income of household of less than 3 million yen, and 23.9% of employed, single (never married) women have an income of household of less than 2 million yen (see Figure SF-11, Figure SF-23, and Figure SF-24 above).

The results of this survey also show that 60–80% of married women have an individual annual income of less than 3 million yen, including 10–20% with no income, while 50–60% of single women have an annual income of less than 3 million yen. On the other hand, among married men, only 10–30% have an income of less than 3 million yen (including

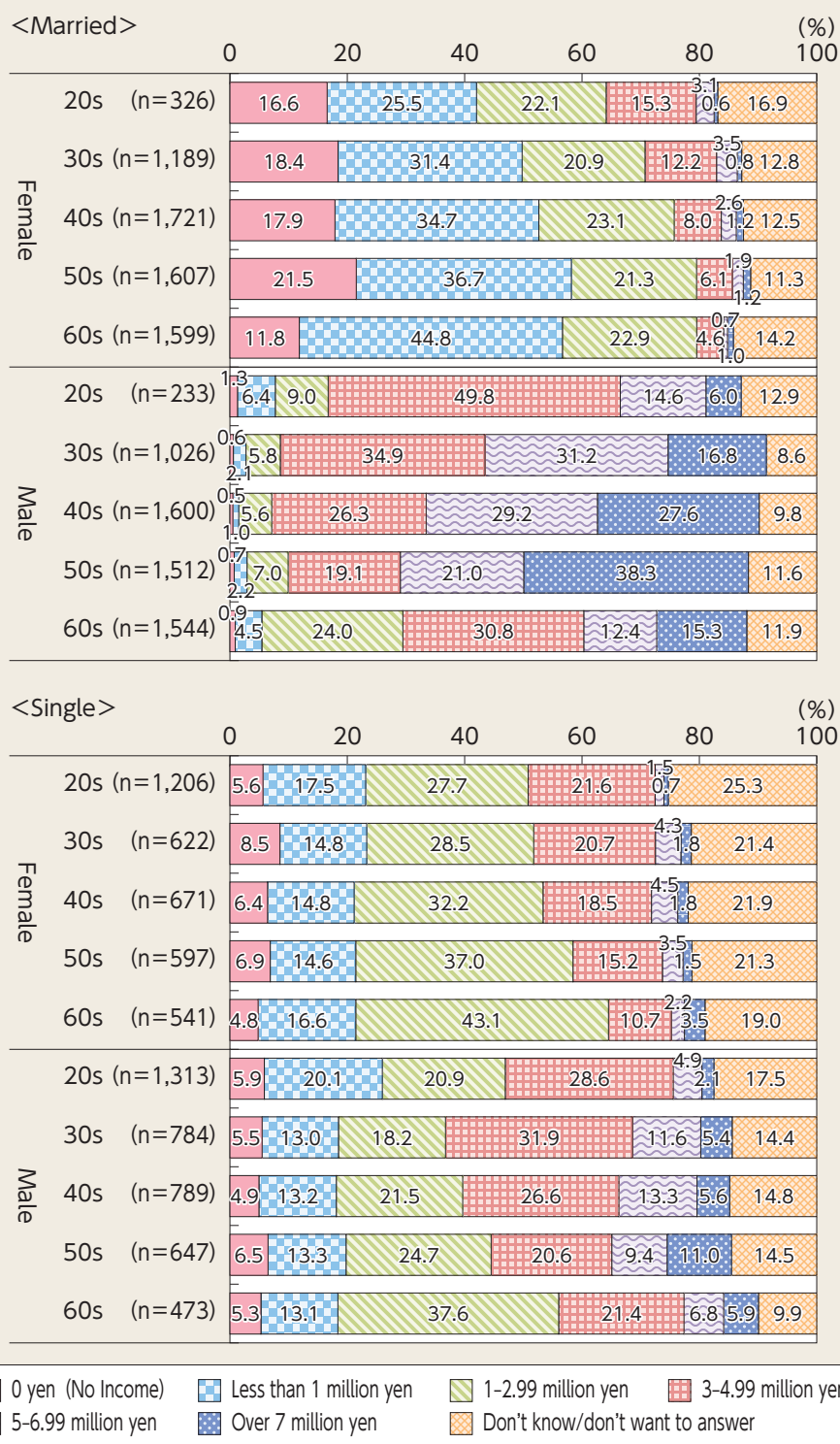
no income), while 40–60% of single men have an income of less than 3 million yen (including no income) (Figure SF-68).

As for men and women in their 40s and 50s, looking at the individual annual incomes of married and single people (by type of residence), the percentage of married women with an income of “less than 1 million yen (including no income)” was higher than that of single women given the higher proportion of housewives (who don’t work). On the other hand, among single women, about 50% of those who live alone and about 60% of those who live with their parents have an individual annual income of less than 3 million yen (including no income). A low percentage of married men have an income of “less than 1 million yen (including no income),” while among single men who live with their parents, “less than 1 million yen

(including no income)” was the most common response at 25.7%. This was also the response for 18.9% of other single men. In addition, a low percentage of single men have an income of “7 million yen or more” (Figure SF-69).

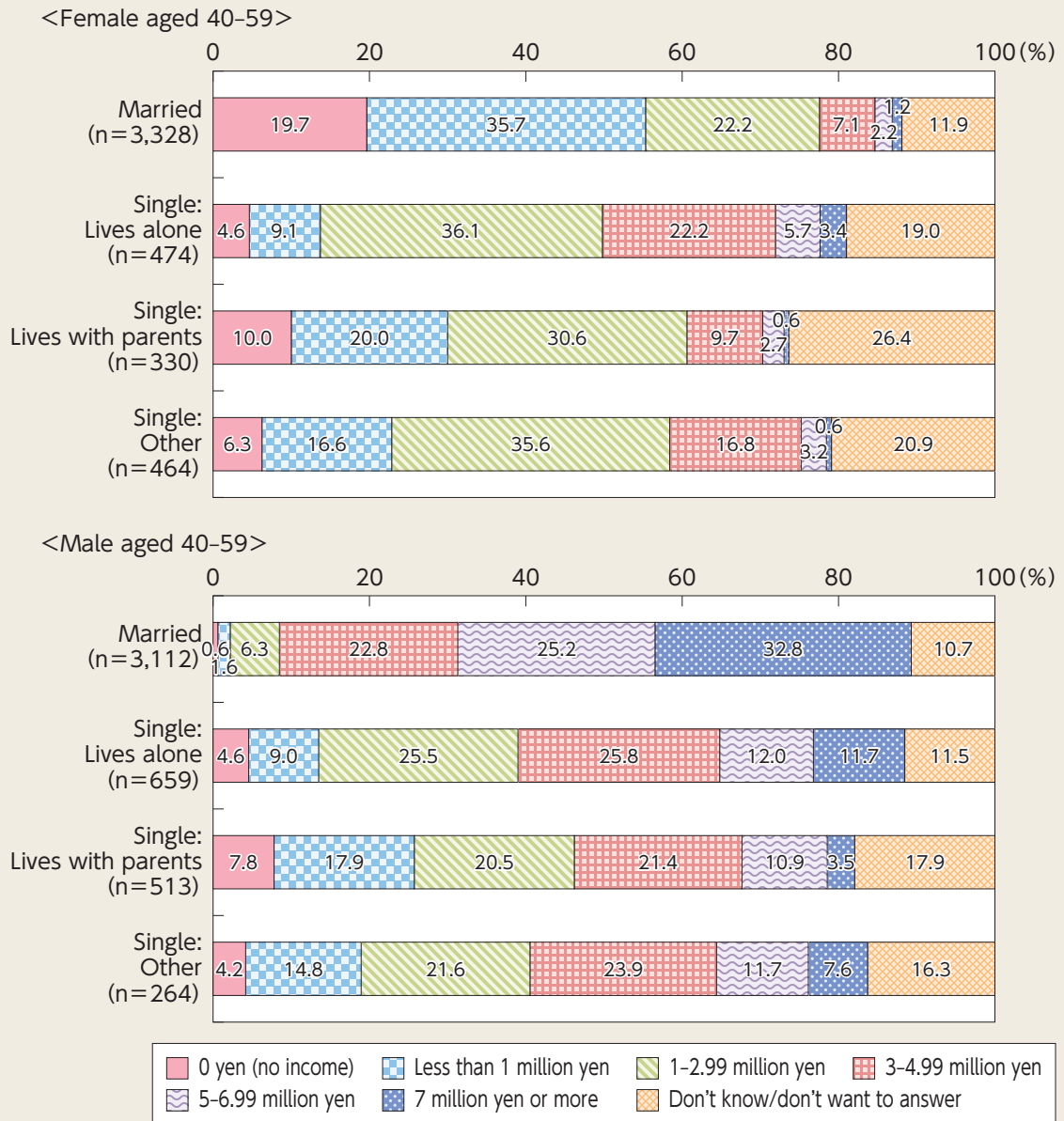
This suggests that many middle-aged and older single women are living at risk of poverty, and many married women too are at risk of falling into poverty after divorce or death of a spouse.

Figure SF-68: Individual Annual Income (by Age Group)



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
 2. Married persons includes those in de facto/common-law marriages.

Figure SF-69: Individual Annual Income (Comparison of Married and Single Persons (by Type of Residence))



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in Era of the 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

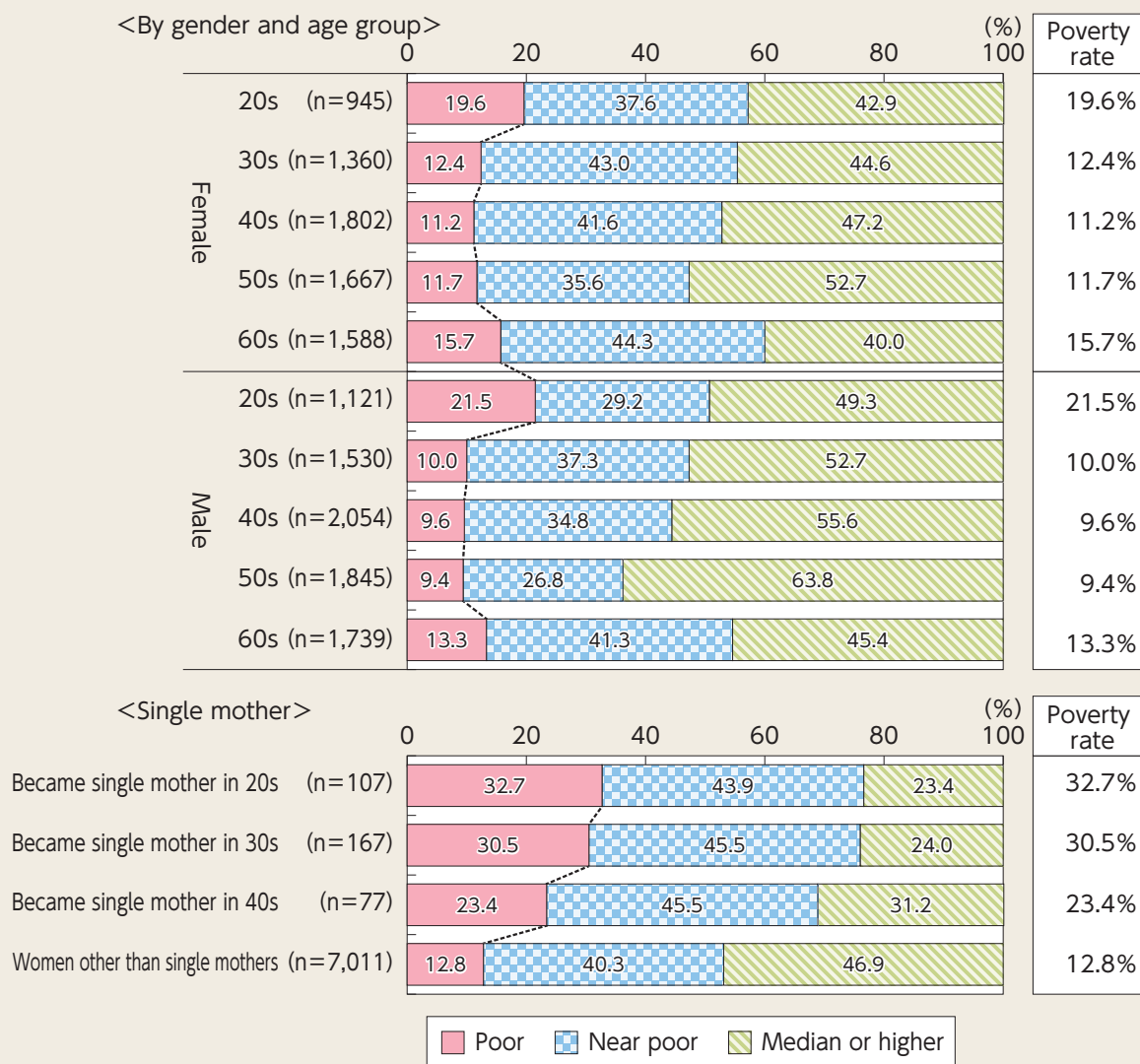
2. Married persons includes those in de facto/common-law marriages.

(Poverty Rate)

Looking at the poverty rate by age group, the poverty rate is higher among those in their 20s. It is highest among men in their 20s (21.5%), followed by women in their 20s (19.6%). Poverty rates are lower for both men and women in their 30s to 50s, but rise again

for those in their 60s, especially women (15.7%). In the case of single mothers, the poverty rate is higher among women who became single mothers at a younger age: 32.7% for women who became single mothers in their 20s, 30.5% for those in their 30s, and 23.4% for those in their 40s (Figure SF-70).

Figure SF-70: Poverty Rate (by Gender and Age Group) (Single Mothers)



(Note) 1. Prepared from "the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life" (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

2. Half of the median equivalent disposable income (the income of the person exactly in the middle) is called the "poverty line." Households whose equivalent income is less than this are generally referred to as "poor," and the percentage of such households is called the "poverty rate." In this survey, since disposable income is not measured, household income is used instead. Household income divided by the square root of the number of household members (4-person household = 2) is called "equivalent income." In this survey, average equivalent income was 3.799 million yen and median equivalent income was 3.500 million yen (n = 15,651) (In calculating household income, the median value of each response was used (such as 250,000 yen for the 1-500,000 yen range), and 20 million yen was used if the household income was 20 million yen or more.) This resulted in a poverty line of 1.75 million yen. Here, households with an equivalent income less than the poverty line are referred to as "poor," households with an equivalent income equal to or greater than the poverty line but less than the media are referred to as "near poor," and households with an equivalent income equal to or greater than the median are referred to as "median or above." (The concept of "near poor" is based on a suggestion by Yumiko Watanabe, Board Chair of NPO Kidsdoor.)

3. The term "single mother" here is defined as a woman who has been divorced or widowed and has children, who answered both her "age at the time of divorce" and her "age when she had her first child," who had had her first child at the time of her first divorce (i.e., her age at the time of divorce is older than her age when she had her first child), whose children were under the age of 19 years at the time of her divorce, and who does not currently have a spouse.

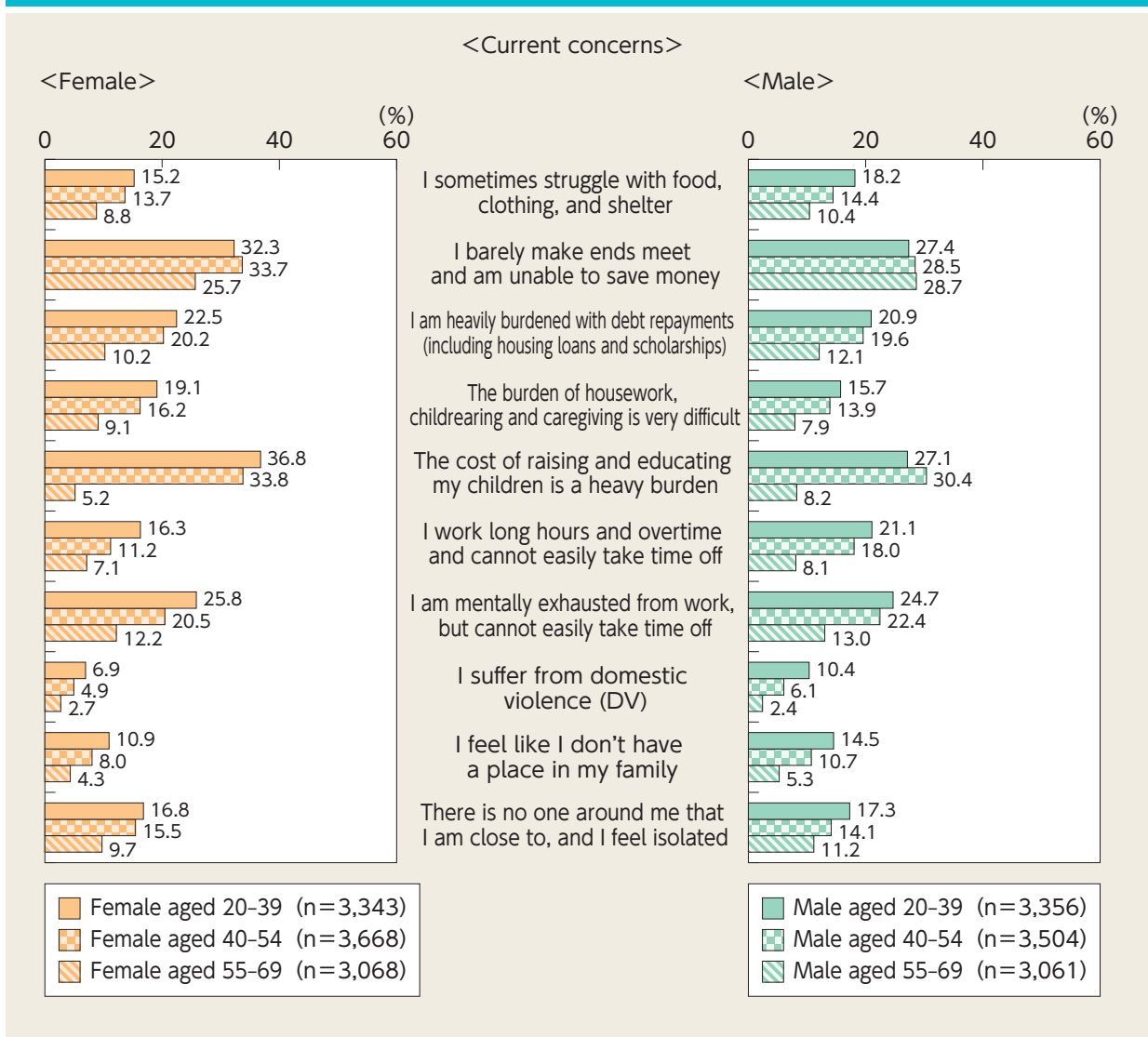
(Current and Future Concerns)

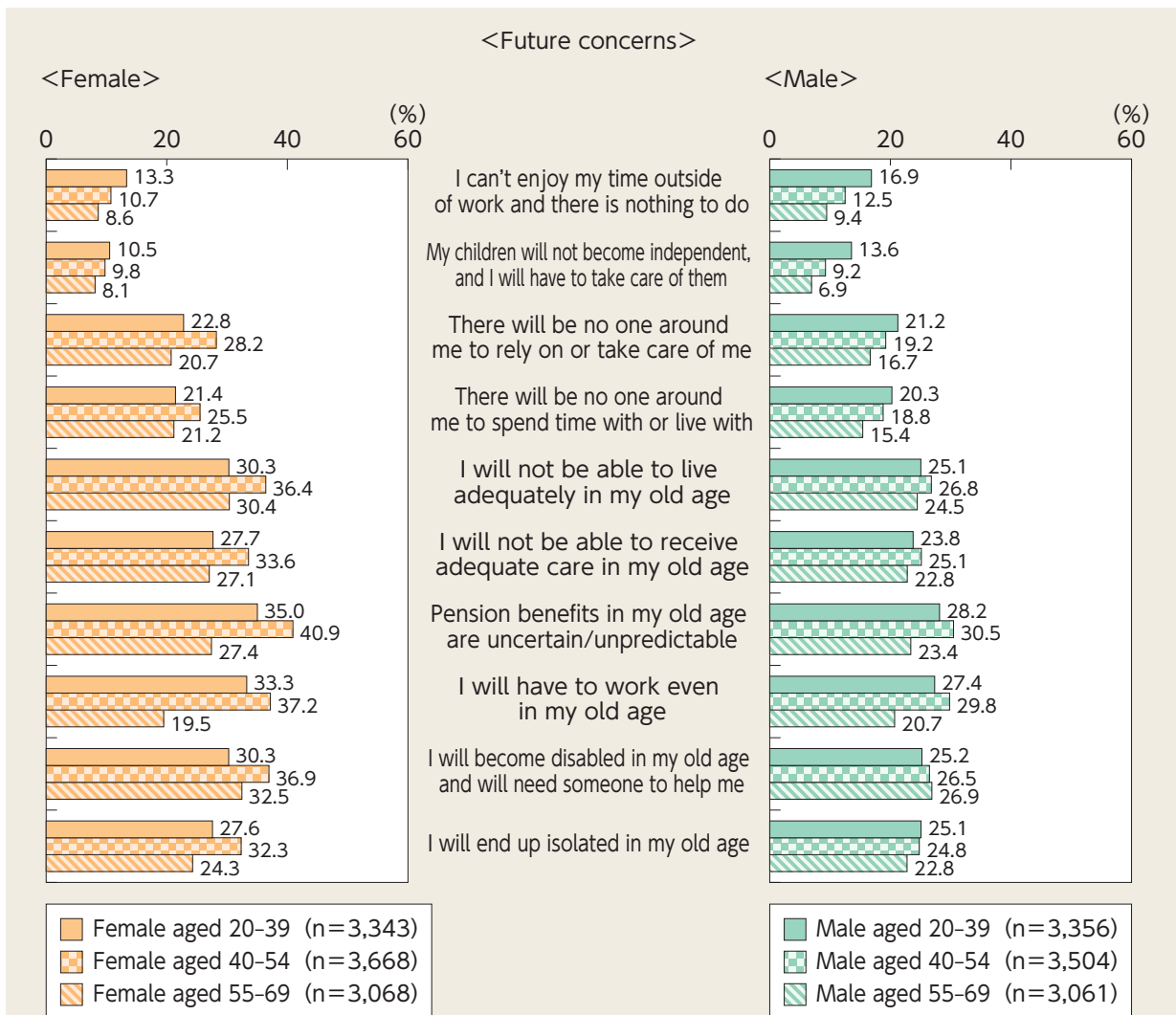
Low income and poverty also affect feelings of unease.

Looking at current and future concerns by age group, both for men and women, current concerns tend to be higher among people aged 20–39, while future concerns tend to be higher among those aged 40–54. The most common current concerns for both men and women aged 20–39 are: “The cost of raising and educating my children is a heavy burden,” “I barely make ends meet and am unable to save money,” and “I am mentally exhausted from work, but cannot easily take time off.” The most common future concerns among

those aged 40–54 are: “pension benefits in my old age are uncertain/unpredictable,” “I will have to work even in my old age,” “I will become disabled in my old age and will need someone to help me,” and “I will not be able to live adequately in my old age” (Figure SF-71). Furthermore, looking at the current concerns of those in their 40s and 50s, both for men and women, a higher percentage of single people than married people reported: “I sometimes struggle with food, clothing, and shelter,” “I barely make ends meet and am unable to save money,” and “there is no one around me that I am close to and I feel isolated” (Figure SF-72).

Figure SF-71: Current and Future Concerns





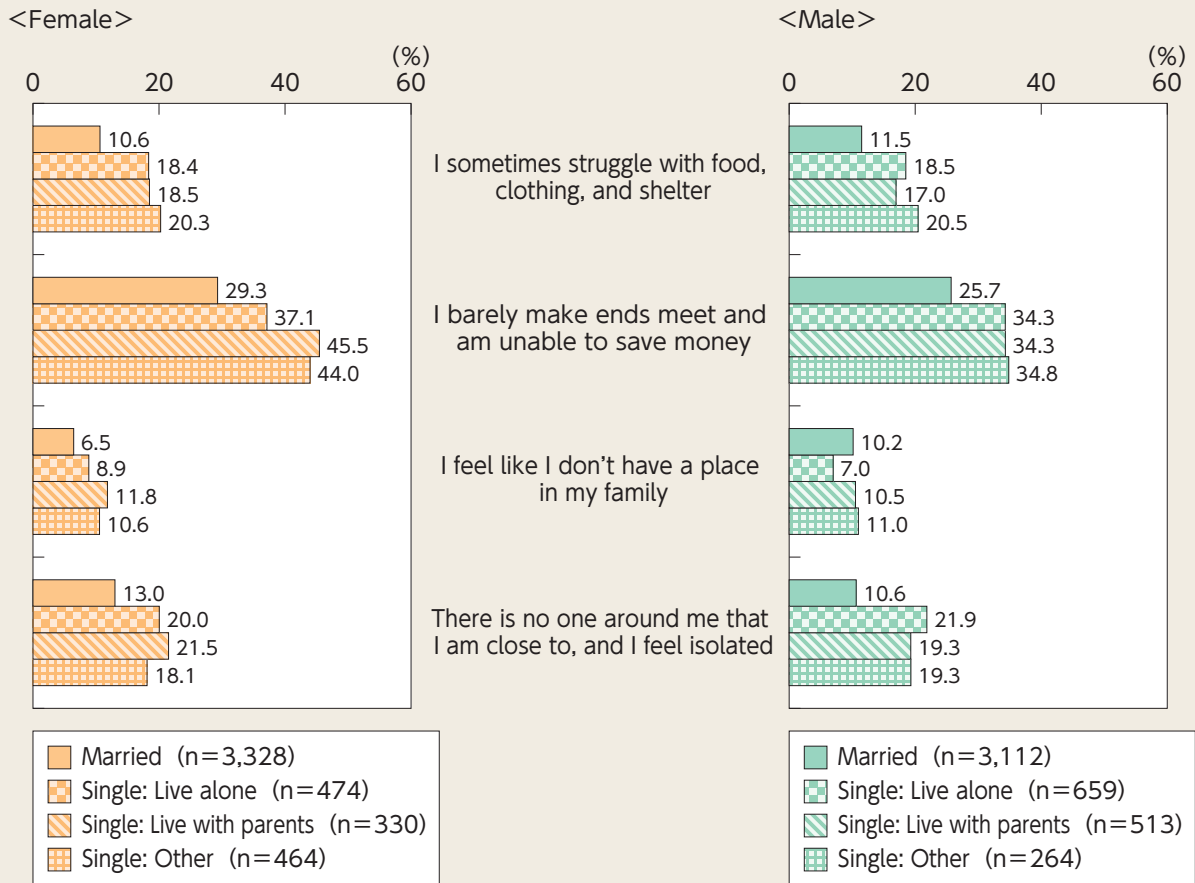
(Note) 1. Prepared from "the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life" (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).

2. The statement "the cost of raising and educating my children is a heavy burden" targets only people with children.

3. The statements "I work long hours and overtime and cannot easily take time off" and "I am mentally exhausted from work, but cannot easily take time off" only targets the gainfully employed.

4. Cumulative total of "agree" and "somewhat agree."

Figure SF-72: Current Concerns (40s-50s)



(Note) 1. Prepared from “the FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life” (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office in FY2021).
 2. Married persons includes those in de facto/common-law marriages.
 3. Cumulative total of “agree” and “somewhat agree.”

Challenges for Gender Equality in the Era of 100-year Life

In the past, families in Japan played a function of social security, and with three generations or multiple generations living in the same house, financial security, housework, childcare and care for the elderly were accomplished within the family. Then during the high economic growth period of the Showa Era, in urban areas, nuclear families consisting of a married couple with children, with the husband working a job and the wife without paid work doing the housework and raising the children increased, while in rural areas, three generations or multiple generations continued to live in the same house, maintaining the family's social security function. Japan's current tax, social security and other national systems have basically been built premised on this shape of the family.

As time changed and Japan went from the Showa Era to the Heisei Era and now the Reiwa Era, as shown in Sections 1 and 2, the family structure and attitudes toward family changed, and families are no longer able to completely fulfill the social security function. Although modifications have been made to the tax, social security and other systems to address these changes, they do not adequately accommodate the current shape of families, and many people are unable to fully benefit from the systems.

Women's lives have diversified, and marriage is no longer a "permanent place of employment" for women. Nevertheless, although options in life have increased, the risks women are confronted with have also become more diverse, and the development of systems and other arrangements addressing the diversified risks has not kept up. On the other hand, since women's means for economic independence remain limited, they are often in unstable

situations, unable to avoid or mitigate the risks. Married women who are not employed (full-time housewives) are at risk of falling into poverty after separation from or death of a spouse. The same is true for married women who are gainfully employed as they often have low incomes. And if the couple have children, the risk of the mother falling into poverty is even higher as they become a single parent after separation from or death of a spouse. Furthermore, if someone suffers domestic violence (DV), unless they can achieve economic independence, they are unable to escape, and risk being physically and psychologically cornered. Many unmarried (single) women also have low incomes. In addition, there are no means available to them for hedging risk, making them financially insecure and at risk of an uncertain future.

The survey results reflect the reality that a certain proportion of women still view marriage as an economic means. However, with the current changing shape of families, marriage is no longer a safety net that necessarily guarantees a secure life.

As the family structure and the lives of women become increasingly diverse, and as we face an era of 100-year life, there is a variety of policy issues that need to be addressed in order for women to be able to live life with dignity and pride over the course of their long lives, without falling into economic hardship. The following five issues, though, are considered to be of particular priority.

First is the development of an environment that enables economic independence for women.

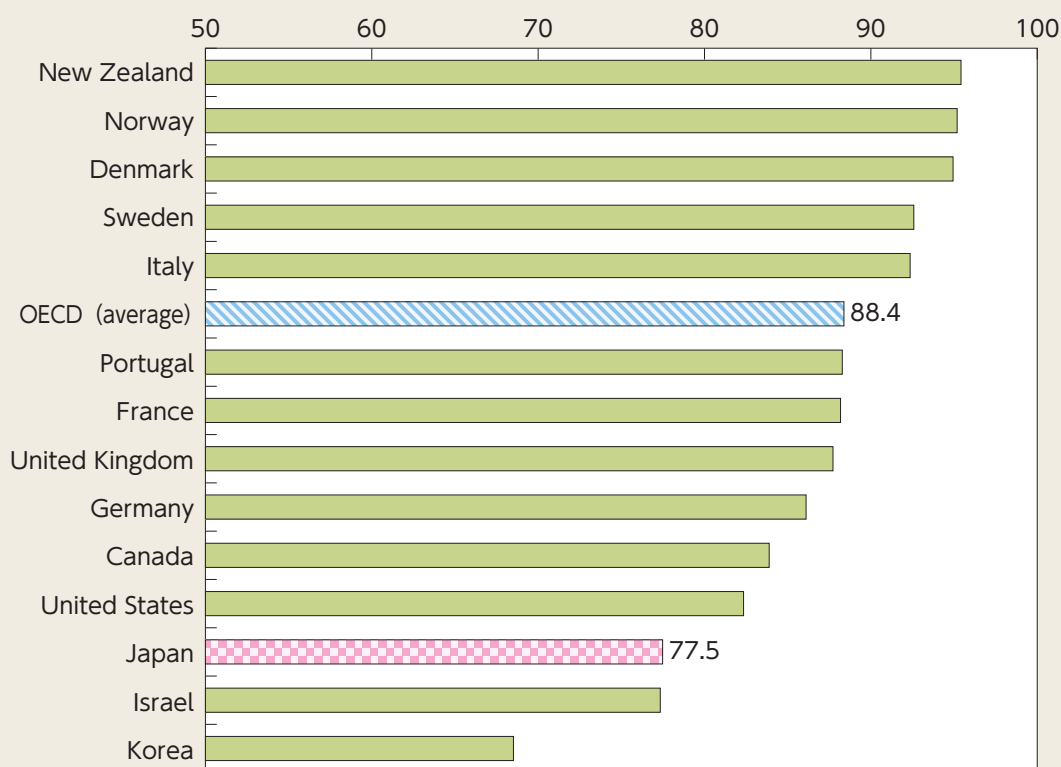
The first step in reducing the risk of poverty for women is to close the wage gap between men and women. Currently, assuming the median wage for men working full-time in Japan is 100, the median wage for women is

77.5. This is much lower than the OECD average of 88.4, and internationally, places Japan in the category of countries with a broad gender wage gap (Figure SF-73). In order to rectify this disparity, unreasonable differences in treatment between regular and non-regular employees need to be eliminated through equal pay for equal work, and companies should be required to disclose information on gender wage gaps and close any gaps that cannot be reasonably explained.

It is also important to encourage the mobilization of female labor from industries with small growth potential to growth industries, and from industries with low wage levels to those with high wage levels and wages that grow with work experience. One example is the advancement of women in the digital

sector. While the accommodation and food/beverage services industry, the lifestyle-related services and entertainment industry and other industry sectors that have a high proportion of non-regular female workers have been hit hard by COVID-19, the IT industry has performed strongly, there is a great demand for workers, and flexible work styles are on offer. Given this, the IT industry is attracting attention as a place of employment for women seeking economic independence. In April 2022, the government established the Plan for Development of Female Human Resources with Digital Skills. In line with this plan, in addition to providing opportunities to acquire digital skills directly related to employment, the public and private sectors will need to work together to promote the

Figure SF-73: International Comparison of the Gender Wage Gap



(Note) 1. Prepared based on “*OECD. Stat.*” OECD.

2. “Gender wage gap” here refers to full-time workers and is defined as the median wage level for women as a percentage of the median wage level for men, assuming the median wage for men is 100.

3. Figures for Israel and France are for 2018, figures for Italy, Denmark, and Germany are for 2019, and figures for all other countries are for 2020.

employment of women in the digital sector and to produce results during the three-year period of intensive efforts.³⁹

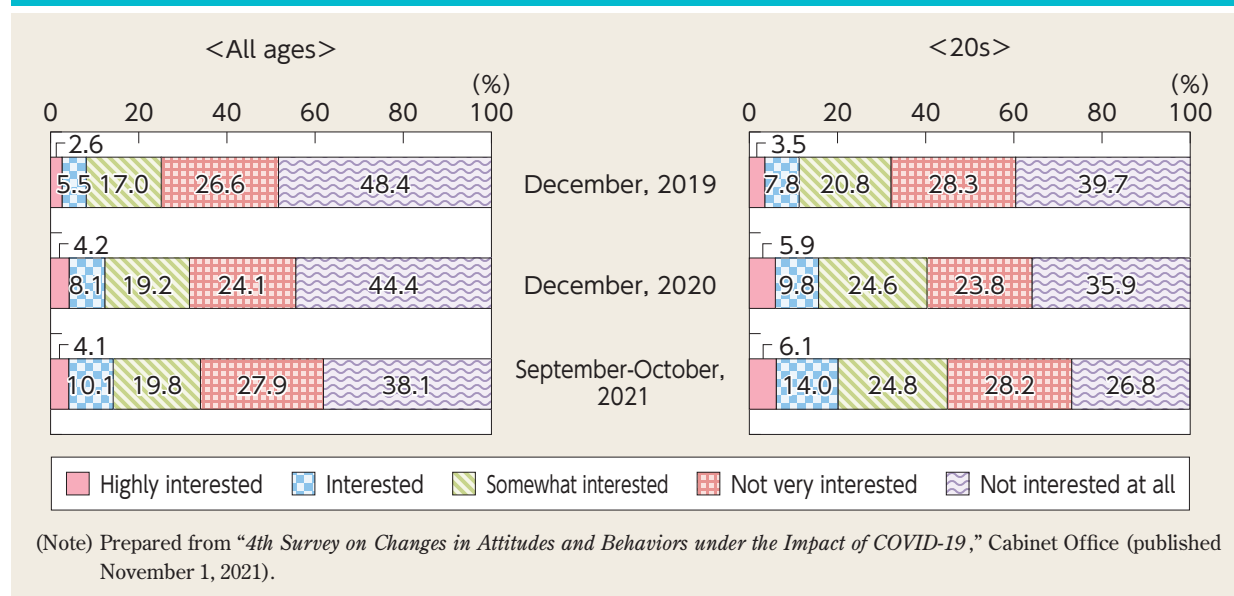
In addition, employment in childcare, long-term care and other areas of work related to care have been dominated by women, in part because of the unconscious bias that care work is the province of women. Acknowledging such care work and improving wages, which are a public value of such work, is also important.

In regional areas, from the perspective of stemming the outflow of young women and preventing population decline, employment opportunities need to be created so that women can be actively involved and earn enough income to be economically independent. Among the younger generation, more women than men are continuing to migrate to metropolitan areas. Analysis shows that the reasons for this trend include a lack of attractive places of employment and limited job opportunities

for women in regional areas.⁴⁰ On the other hand, a trend among people living in the Tokyo area is the increasing number of people who are considering using COVID-19 as an opportunity to leave the expensive rent and high living costs of the big city and live in the provinces (Figure SF-74). This should be viewed as a golden opportunity to promote the active involvement of women in regional areas.

Second, the fact that families are becoming increasingly diverse in form needs to be kept in mind in the system design of various policies. Specifically, it is time to shift guarantees and protection from a household basis to an individual basis, and also when considering those who are responsible for unpaid care work, such as childrearing and long-term care, to shift from consideration of full-time housewives in general to consideration of the people who are engaged in unpaid care work. As divorces increase and households themselves

Figure SF-74: Interest in Moving to a Rural Area (Residents of Tokyo Area)



³⁹ In addition to promoting the digital sector as a place of employment for women, policies from the perspective of preventing the so-called "digital divide" are also important. Public services are also promoting more convenient services utilizing PCs and smartphones, thus support is needed, including for elderly people in single-person households, so that they know how to use these digital devices as proficiently as possible.

⁴⁰ Analysis based on "Regional Economies 2020-2021: Creating New Inflows of People to the Regions," Cabinet Office (published September 3, 2021), materials from the Fifth Plan Subcommittee, National Land Council (dated February 21, 2022), and "Survey of Attitudes toward Social Decline in Population and Retention of Women," Tohoku Regional Advancement Center (published March 2021).

become more fluid, if systems based on the household unit are kept unchanged, the problems stemming from distortions in the systems will worsen. For example, a woman who has continued to adjust her working hours or days in order to remain within the limits of her husband's support may be faced with a low pension if they divorce.⁴¹ Furthermore, if measures are taken premised on the household unit, there is potential for various problems to arise, such as not being able to receive benefits that should be available immediately after a divorce. Such problems have in fact become apparent under COVID-19. Policies should be considered on a basis of system designs based on the individual while also taking into account systems such as the Individual Number System, etc.

Third is the importance of early career education for women.

Female students also need to be provided with information early on that contributes to their choices of future occupation, and they need to be educated so that they can properly appreciate the importance of economic independence for women in the era of 100-year life and the need to acquire vocational abilities. Furthermore, it is also important to provide women with recurrent education and reskilling opportunities directly related to employment to help any women who have temporarily left the labor market to get married, have children or at other turning points in their lives to reenter the labor market at any time and receive the same treatment as when they left. Keeping a woman's career from being disrupted at various turning points in her life will reduce her risk of poverty. Women, too, should recognize that the times have changed.

Fourth, it is necessary to instill flexible work styles and not to return to pre-COVID-19 ways of working.

Creating an environment in which both men and women can work while also doing housework, childcare, long-term care and other unpaid care work is also an important issue for the economic independence of women. Under COVID-19, as teleworking has become more prevalent and as telecommuting and other work styles have become more diverse, more men and women are finding it easier to balance work and family compared to pre-COVID-19. For instance, people have more time to spend at home on weekdays outside of work (Figure SF-75) (Figure SF-76). Even after the COVID-19 situation has settled down, it will be important to further promote telework and telecommuting and to achieve a work-life balance for both men and women, based on the determination not to return to pre-COVID-19 ways of working.

In comparison to other countries, men in Japan work long hours (Figure SF-31, see above). If this can be rectified, and if men's participation in housework and childrearing can be promoted, not only will the burden on their wives be reduced, but it will also help create an environment in which women, who had given up taking managerial positions because they had considered long working hours of the past to be an implicit requirement, can aim for promotion and advancement.

Fifth, policies are needed which bear in mind that, along with the diversification of women's lives, men's lives are also becoming more diverse.

During the postwar period of the Showa Era,

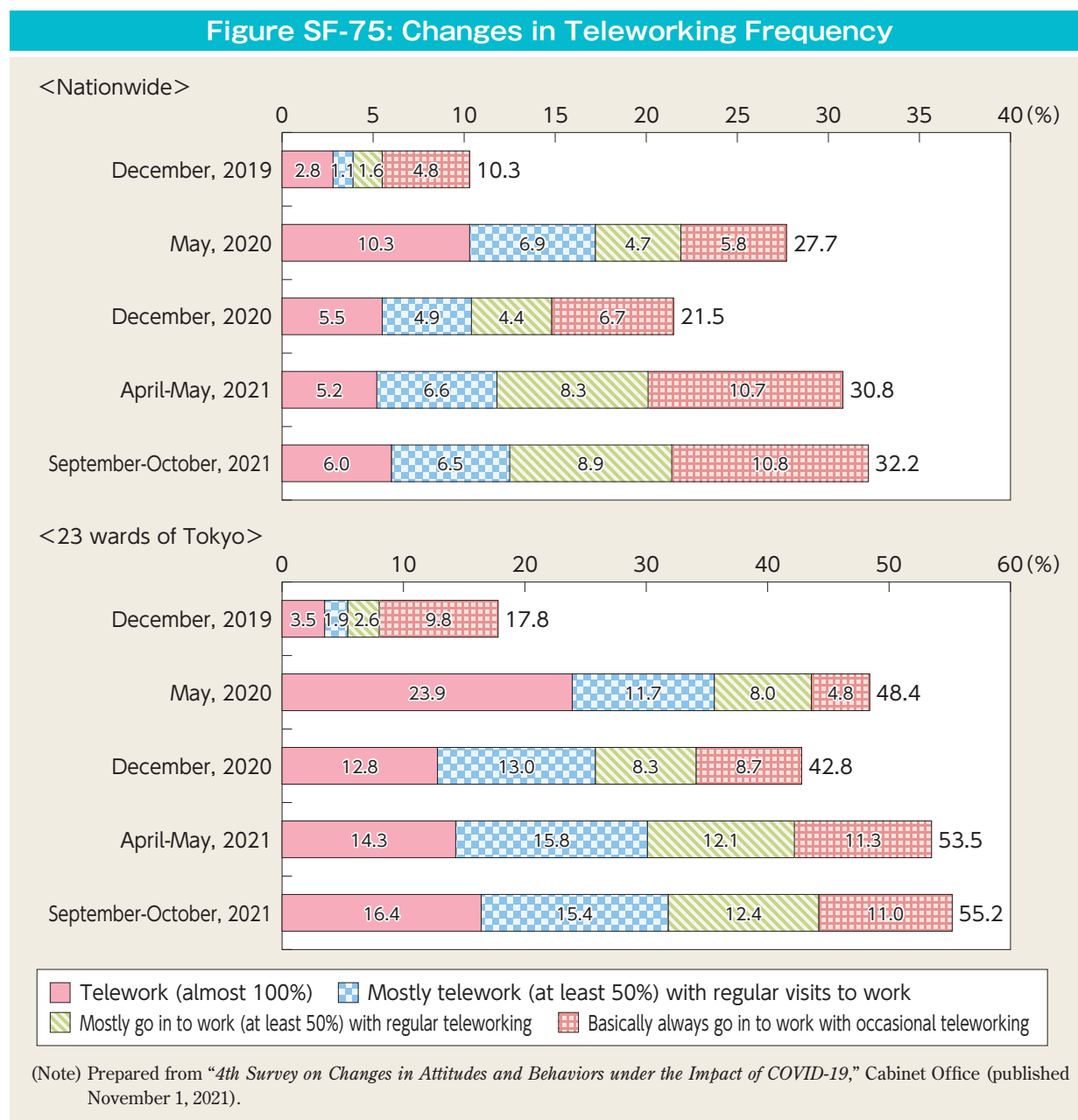
⁴¹ The expansion of employee insurance to part-time workers mentioned earlier has been implemented to resolve this problem of low pensions. There is also a pension-splitting system whereby the record of premium payments for Employees' Pension (standard monthly remuneration) related to the period of marriage is divided between the parties in the event of divorce.

Japan used to be a so-called “marriage-oriented society,” with more than 95% of men getting married. The typical family image of that era was one in which the husband devoted himself to work while leaving his full-time housewife to take care of the household. The idea was that the stability of lifetime employment and seniority-based wages would eventually lead to a stable middle and old age. However, nowadays, the number of people who have never married, and the number of divorcees is increasing. The number of dual-income households has far exceeded the number of households with full-time

housewives. Furthermore, the risk of men falling into loneliness/isolation in the local community is also increasing. For these reasons, it is important to establish and enhance consultation services for men at gender equality centers and other facilities operated by local governments.

Along with the changing shape of families, views toward marriage and having children are also becoming more diverse among both men and women. On the other hand, in order to address the worsening declines in birthrate and population, it is important to create an environment in which people who want to marry can

Figure SF-75: Changes in Teleworking Frequency



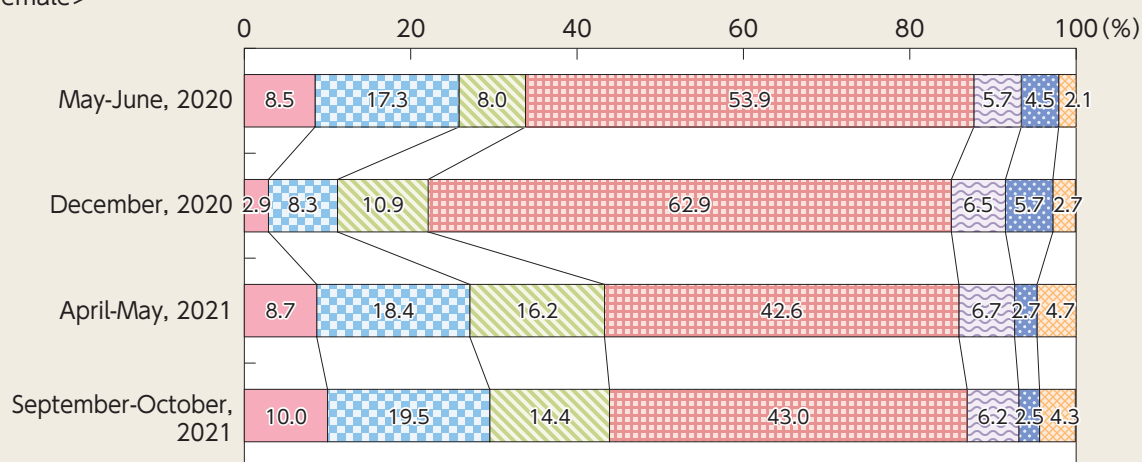
marry and people who want to have children can have children. Up to now, national and local governments have provided support for marriage, support for children, and support for raising children, and such support is still needed. Furthermore, since love marriages currently account for close to 90% of all marriages in Japan, in the context of education and awareness-raising, it is also vital to learn about the importance of mutual respect in the process of love, dating, and marriage, as well as about the minimal

important rules to be upheld, such as those related to dating violence and harassment issues.

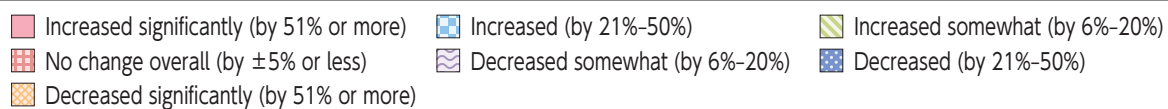
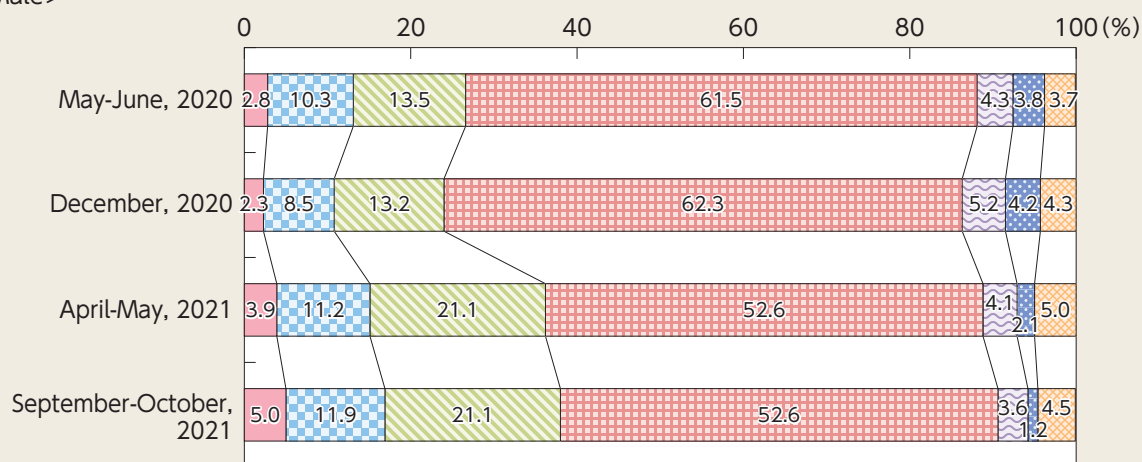
Facing the era of 100-year life, the family structure and people's lives in Japan have diversified and completely changed from the post-war high economic growth period (1954–1973) in the Showa Era (1926–1989). In promoting gender equality, the government should always aim to realize a society in which no one is left behind and as it checks and reviews systems and policies across a wide range of fields.

Figure SF-76: Changes in Time Spent on Housework and Childrearing

<Female>



<Male>



(Note) 1. Prepared from “4th Survey on Changes in Attitudes and Behaviors under the Impact of COVID-19,” Cabinet Office (published November 1, 2021).

2. This question targets parents with children under 18 years of age.

3. This question concerns changes since December 2019 (before the spread of COVID-19).

Reference: FY2021 Survey on Marriage, Work and Income in the Era of 100-Year Life (survey commissioned by the Cabinet Office)

(1) Purpose of Survey

Delays in gender equality once again became evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been pointed out that two of the factors that have contributed to these delays are that, despite the transformation in family structures and the changes in social structure, work styles, the tax system, the social security system and other systems and practices remain unchanged since the Showa Era and do not match the reality of today's marriages and families, and that there are structural problems based on fixed attitudes toward gender roles, including unconscious bias.

With awareness of these problems in mind, the purpose of this survey is to provide materials for examining the work styles and systems in the era of 100-year life, by conducting awareness surveys on marriage, work, and income, identifying differences between men and women, between age groups, between educational backgrounds, and between regions, and by clarifying some of the causes of the gender wage gap and whether or not work styles, systems, and practices are suited to the reality of today's marriages and families.

(2) Survey Method

Questionnaire survey of registered online survey respondents

(3) Survey Period

Monday, December 27, 2021 – Tuesday, January 11, 2022

(4) Survey Items

The following items 1 through 6 were surveyed under the title "A Survey about Yourself."

1. Circumstances surrounding marriage and family
2. Circumstances surrounding work
3. Marriage, having children and work styles
4. Circumstances surrounding income
5. Lifestyle in old age
6. Views on life in general, degree of satisfaction, and future concerns

(5) Number of respondents, etc.

- Number of respondents: 20,000
- This survey targets registered online survey respondents who live in Japan (aged 20–69)