



Why Are Younger Women Leaving Regional Areas?

Wed., Dec. 10, 2025 FPCJ

Ren Yamamoto, Founder, Regional Women Project

1. Introduction

Profile

Hometown Nirasaki, Yamanashi

Career

2021

Special Prize winner, Cabinet Office backed Business Plan Contest for Lifelong Active City Tsuru

2022

Joined IT startup in Yamanashi,
worked as Web director

2023

Participated in the Uncharted Girls Discovery Project GRIT, a METI-selected project, and founded the Regional Women Project

2025

Currently a freelance IT instructor

Member of the Nirasaki City Gender Equality Promotion Committee

Member of the Cabinet Office Council for Promotion of Regional Work Style and Workplace Reform



Ren Yamamoto

Founder, Regional Women Project

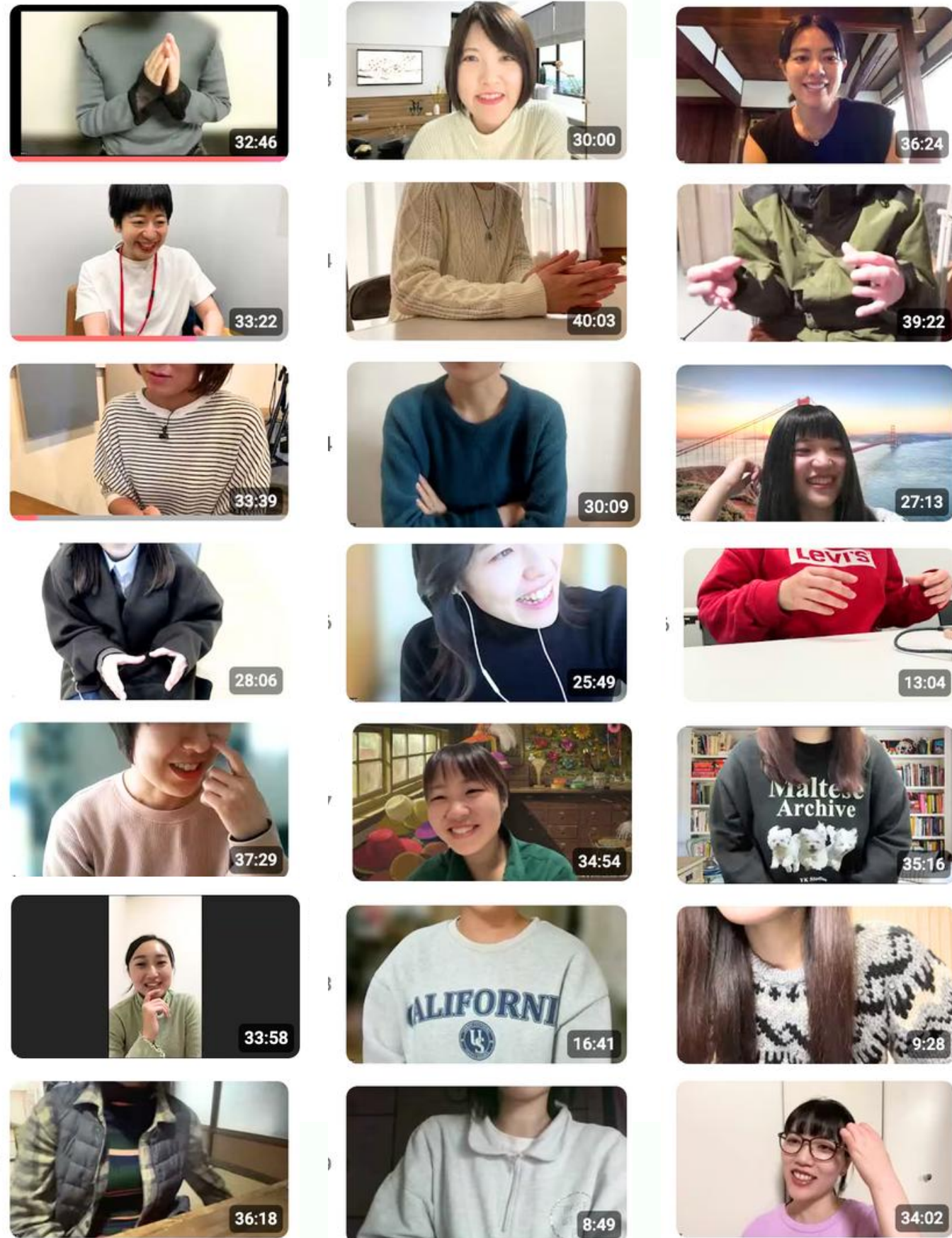
What Is the Regional Women Project?

A project approaching the issue of **women leaving regional areas** by interviewing women in or from those areas, and uploading videos of their comments on social media

Organizational structure: Volunteer group, 20 volunteers



Collected Interviews with Over 120 Women



Media Appearances



June 2024



NHK Close-up Gendai

“Women Leaving: 10 Years of Regional Revitalization—The Gap Between Policy and Reality”

The episode received approximately 800 comments, the most in series history



September 2025



NHK Close-up Gendai

“Although Minimum Wage Is Over 1000 Yen... What To Do About Low Wages for Regional Women”

Media Appearances

0テレ



■地方から消えていく若い女性

「東京が令和だったら、地方は江戸時代って思ってる。家のことは女の人がやって、外のことは男の人がやるみたい。男だから女だからっていうのをやめてほしい」

朝日新聞

連載：フロントランナー＞

(フロントランナー) 「地方女子プロジェクト」代表・山本蓮さん 性別による役割解消したい

2025/10/18 (土) 3:30



「若い女性」といっても、多様。地方と都市の二項対立でもない。「それぞれの複雑な思いを知ってほしい」＝山梨県韮崎市



HUFFPOST なぜ若い女性は地方を去るのか



それって「女性の問題」？

読売新聞

毎日新聞

AERA

Discussion on Creating Regional Areas Chosen by Youths and Women



**Member of the Cabinet Office Council
for Promotion of Regional Work Style
and Workplace Reform**



[Source]

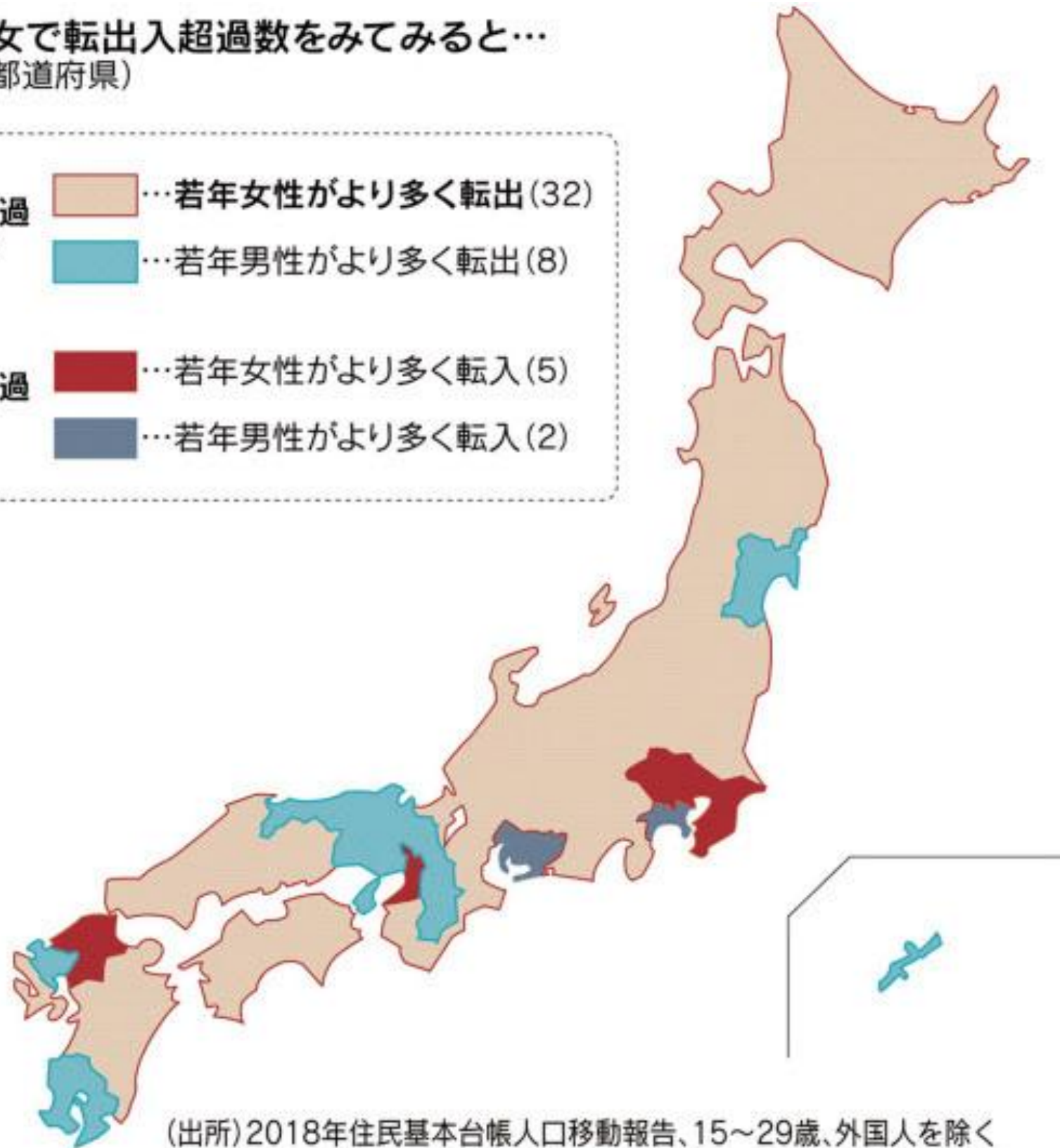
March 31, 2025

https://www.gov-online.go.jp/press_conferences/prime_minister/202503/video-295541.html

2. Current State of the Issue of Younger Women Leaving Regional Areas

The Issue of Younger Women Leaving Regional Areas

若年男女で転出入超過数を見てみると…
(数字は都道府県)



In approximately **80%** of Japan, **younger women** are leaving to move to the Tokyo area

There are concerns this phenomenon is a factor in population decline and the decline of regional areas

[Source]

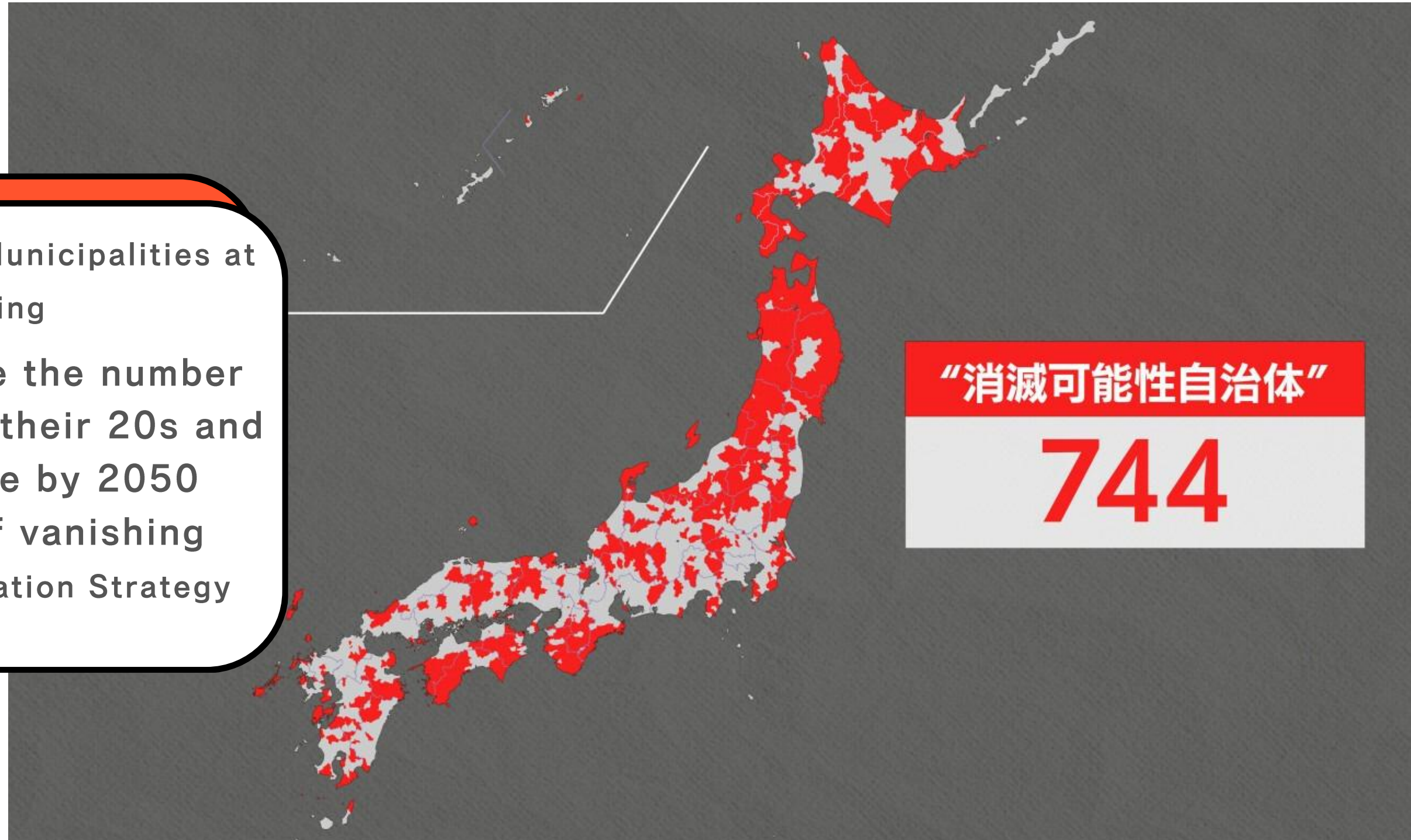
September 6, 2019

<https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGKKZO49491730W9A900C1EAC000/>¹⁰

The Issue of Younger Women Leaving Regional Areas

Definition of Municipalities at Risk of Vanishing

Places where the number of **women** in their 20s and 30s will halve by 2050 are at risk of vanishing
(Per the Population Strategy Council)



“消滅可能性自治体”

744

[Source]

June 17, 2024

<https://www.nhk.jp/p/gendai/ts/R7Y6NGLJ6G/episode/te/LJZ9Y93LN9/>

3. Discoveries from Interviews

Why Younger Women Are
Leaving Regional Areas

Trends from Interviews

90
%

1. No work I want to do/wages are low

40
%

2. Pressure to get married/have children

50
%

3. Regional roles for women are stifling

The more rural, the more standardized
the view of how a woman should act



Reasons Women Leave Regional Areas ①

**No Work I Want To
Do/Wages Are Low**

Comments About Work

- “There is a culture of older people telling us to hurry up and marry to have children, **but many of us want to work.**”
(30, from Iwate)
- “My hometown has **no place for working parents, so it is a difficult environment to raise children in.**”
(35, from Kyoto)
- “The work in my hometown is just, **nurse, care worker, daycare, government employee, bank worker, teacher, or part-time.** There was no work I wanted to do there.”
(25, from Miyazaki)

Comments About Work

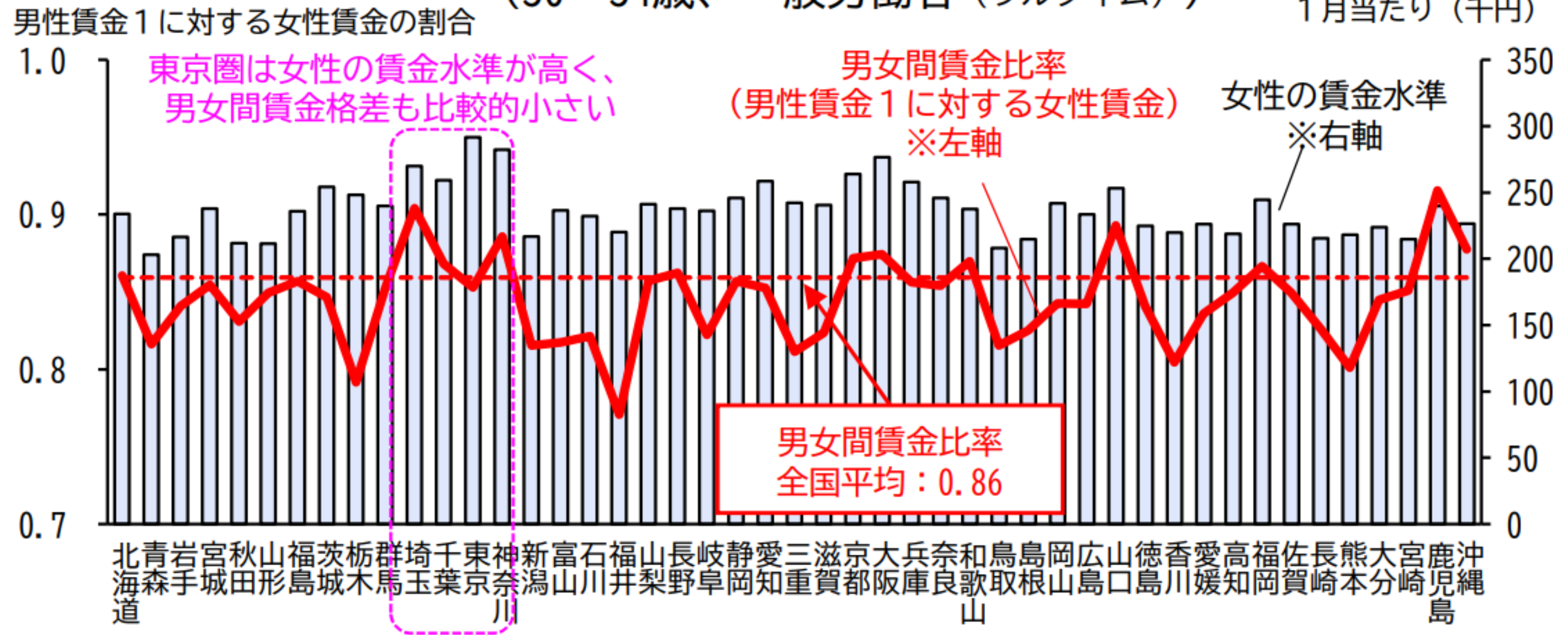
- “Above all, wages are low. Even with only one day off a week and working overtime, I only get **around 150,000 yen after tax**. Even so, I make more than others. My friend with a small child works part time and only makes around 100,000 yen. This isn’t because the work is easy, **since there are not enough workers each individual has a heavy burden.**”
(38, returned home to Akita)

- “I worked at a daycare, but only made **about 130,000 yen**. When I say I’d like at least 200,000, the only responses I get are **‘What would you use it on?’ or ‘Just get married.’** Ideally, I would like to make enough to live in a one-room apartment by myself, even if it is small.”

(36, living in Shiga)

Regional Areas & the Gender Wage Gap

2図：男女間賃金格差と女性の所定内給与の地域差（2023年）
（30～34歳、一般労働者（フルタイム））

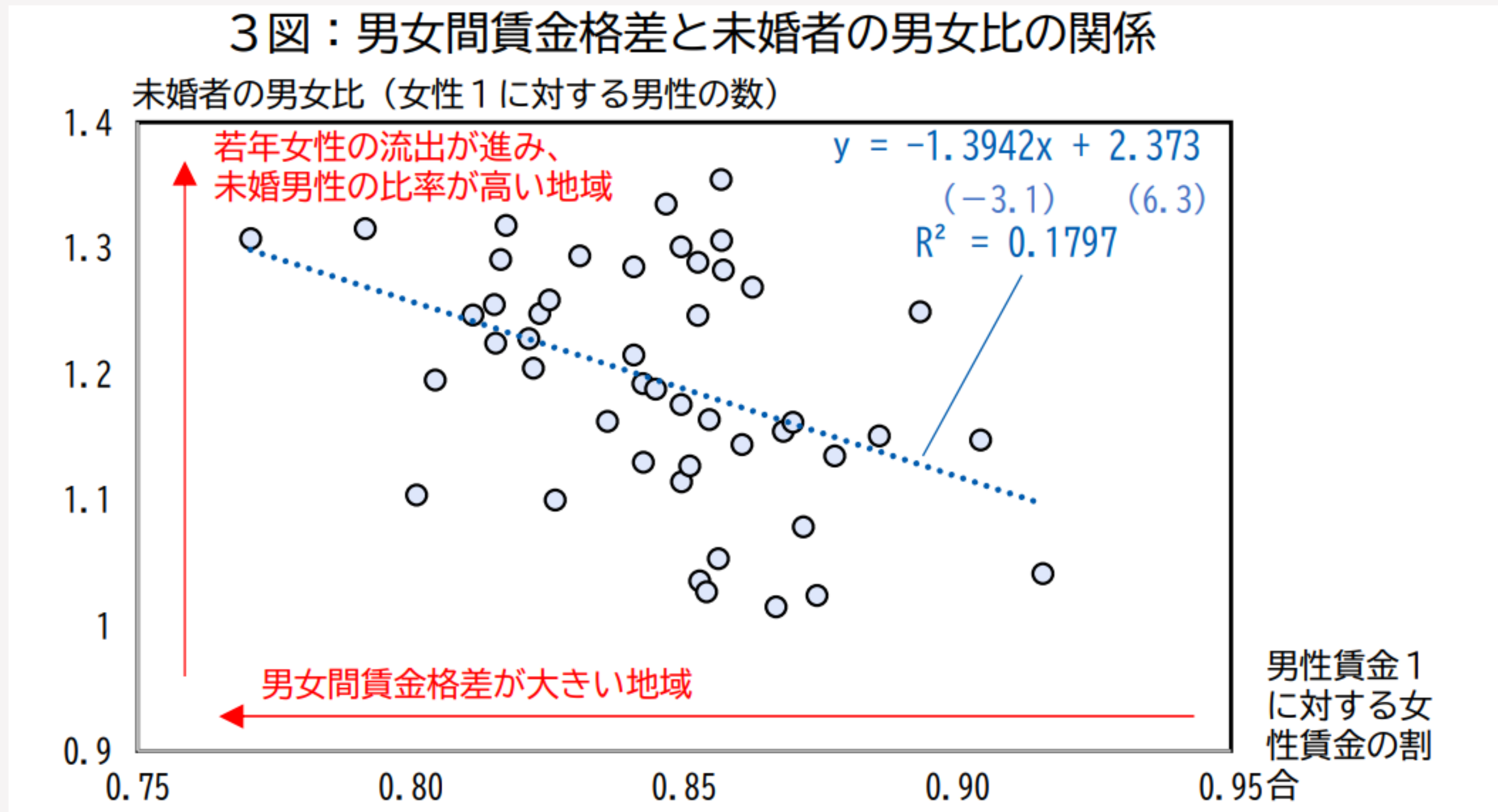


[Source]

Women's Working Conditions by Prefecture, MHLW

<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/11909000/001298022.pdf>

The Gender Wage Gap May Lead to Women Leaving Regional Areas

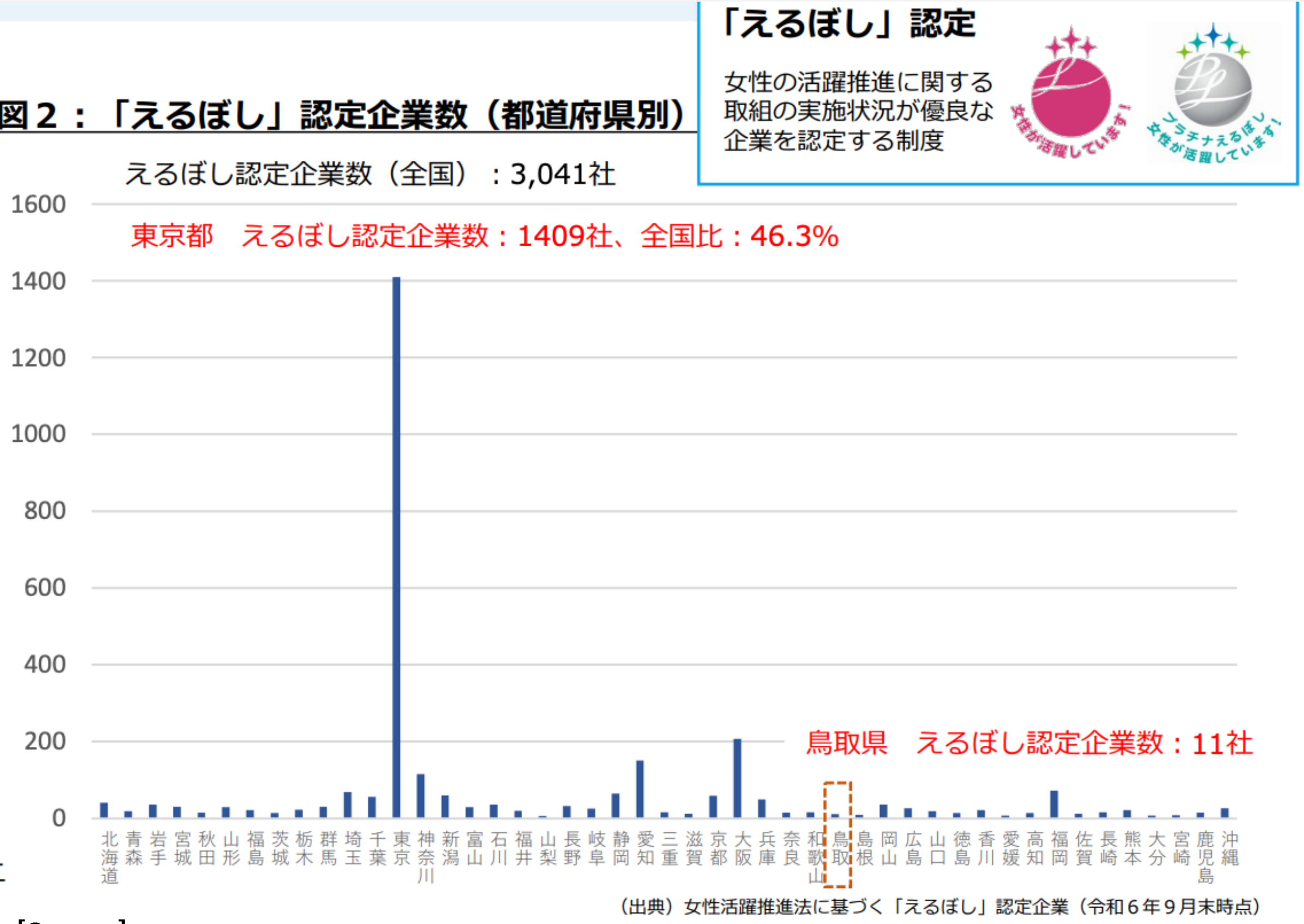


[Source]

Women's Working Conditions by Prefecture, MHLW

<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/11909000/001298022.pdf>

National Comparison of Companies with Eruboshi Certification

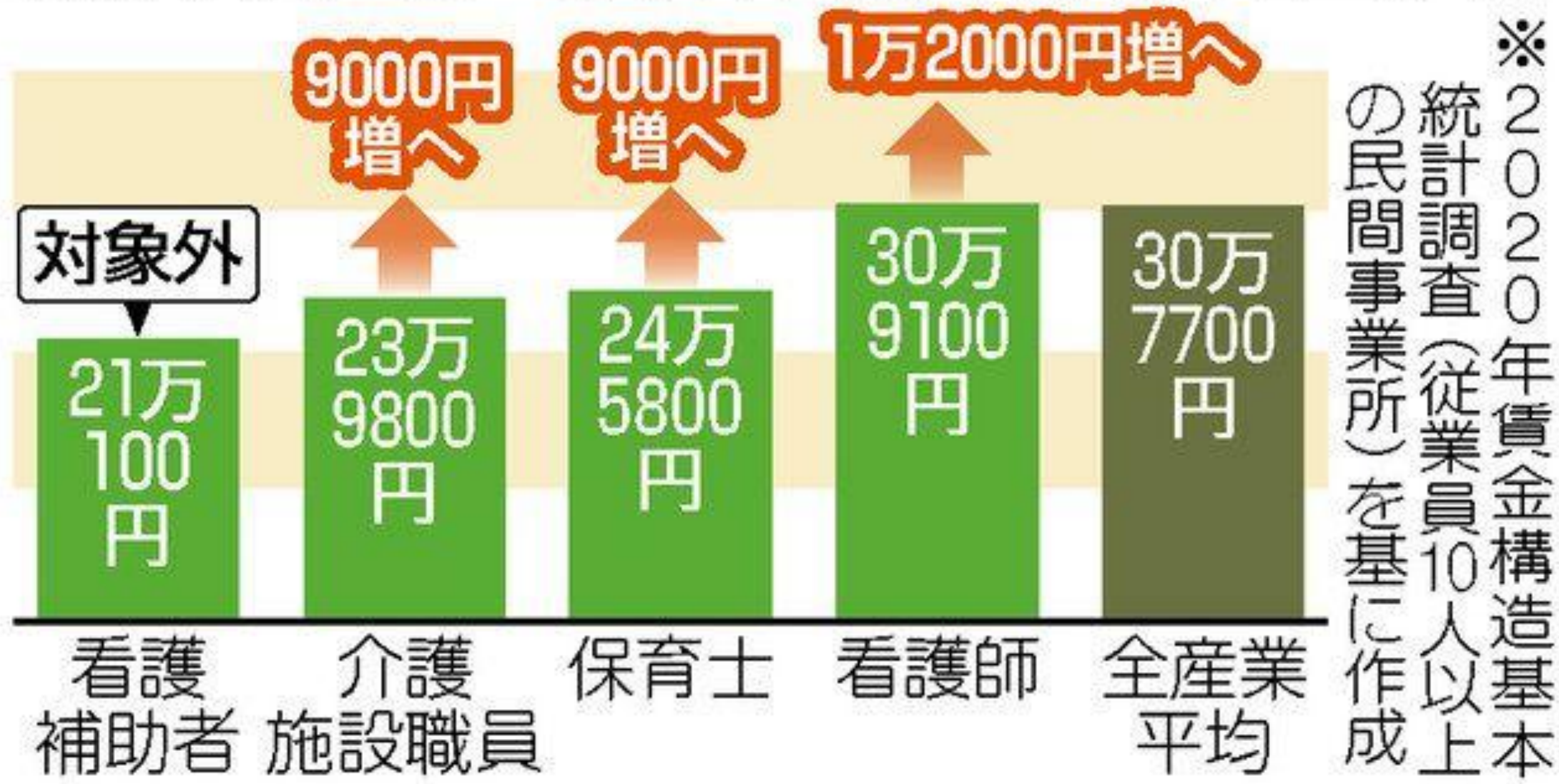


[Source]

<https://www.cas.go.jp/jp/houdou/pdf/20241130siryou.pdf>

The Issue of Low Wages for Care Work

政府が賃上げを決めた職種の月給と上げ幅



A large percentage of care workers are women

[Source]

December 26, 2021

<https://www.chunichi.co.jp/article/390847>

Reasons Women Leave Regional Areas ②

**Pressure to Get
Married/Have Children**

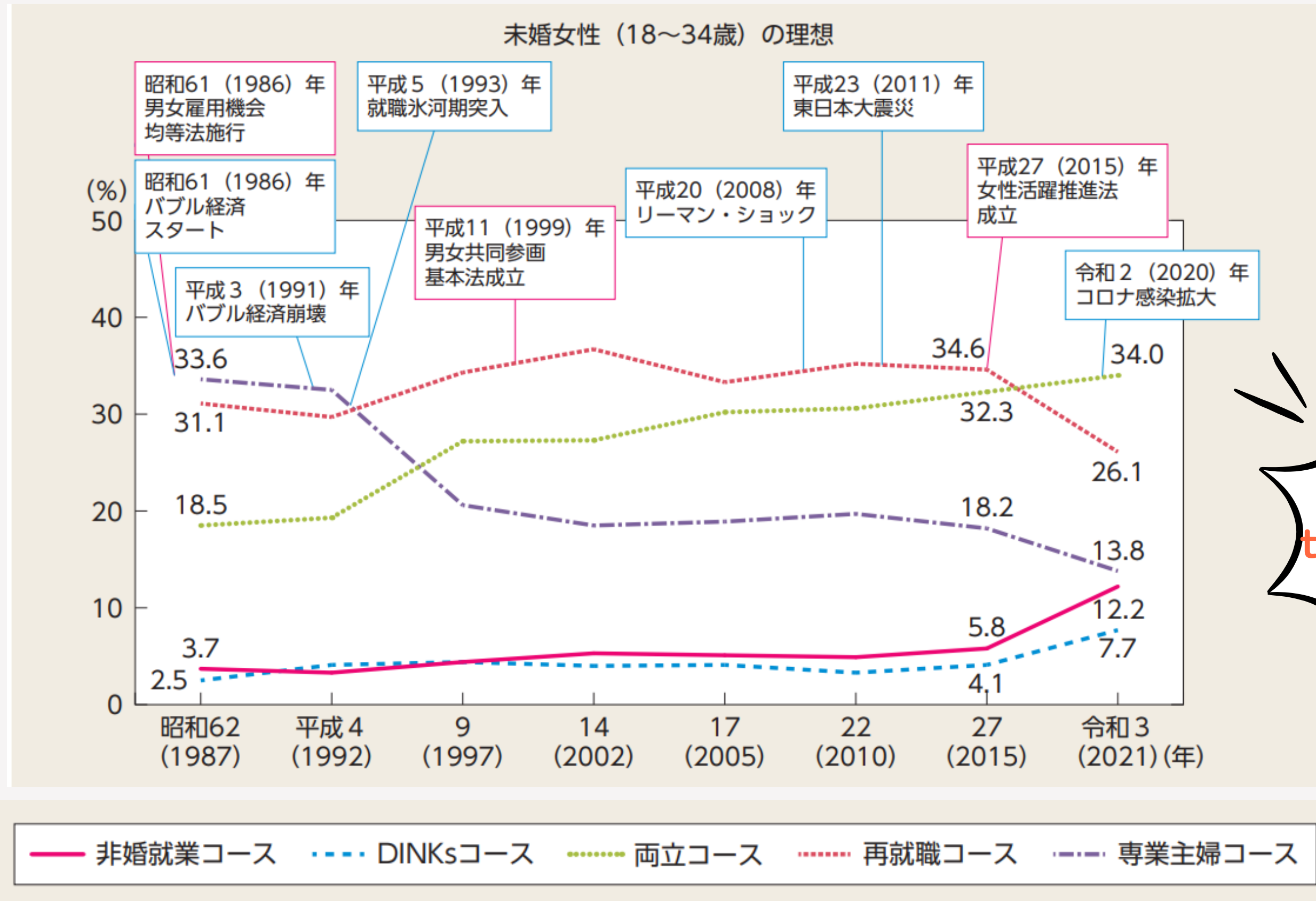
Comments on Pressure to Marry/Have Children

- “When I told my parents I was going to work in Tokyo, they were against the idea and told me ‘**Women don’t have to work so hard.** You should find a nice man and **get married instead.**’”
(30, from Okinawa)
- “I moved here as a **volunteer for regional revitalization,** but locals told me ‘**You aren’t a real woman until someone takes you as their wife.** You should try harder so men will like you. Japan is having problems because less people are marrying.’”
(28, living in Nagasaki)

Comments on Pressure to Marry/Have Children

- “While I was undergoing **treatment for infertility**, it was hard to hear almost daily from neighbors, ‘**You’re a newlywed, you should have children soon.**’ It felt like everyone was my enemy when I left my home. **It is hard to be part of the local community without any children.**”
(32, living in Toyama)
- “In my hometown, **women without children are invisible.** There were a lot of difficult times when I felt like I would become invisible at that rate. It is not that there is no prejudice in the Tokyo area, but it is easier than back home.”
(32, from Mie)

Women's Desired Life Course

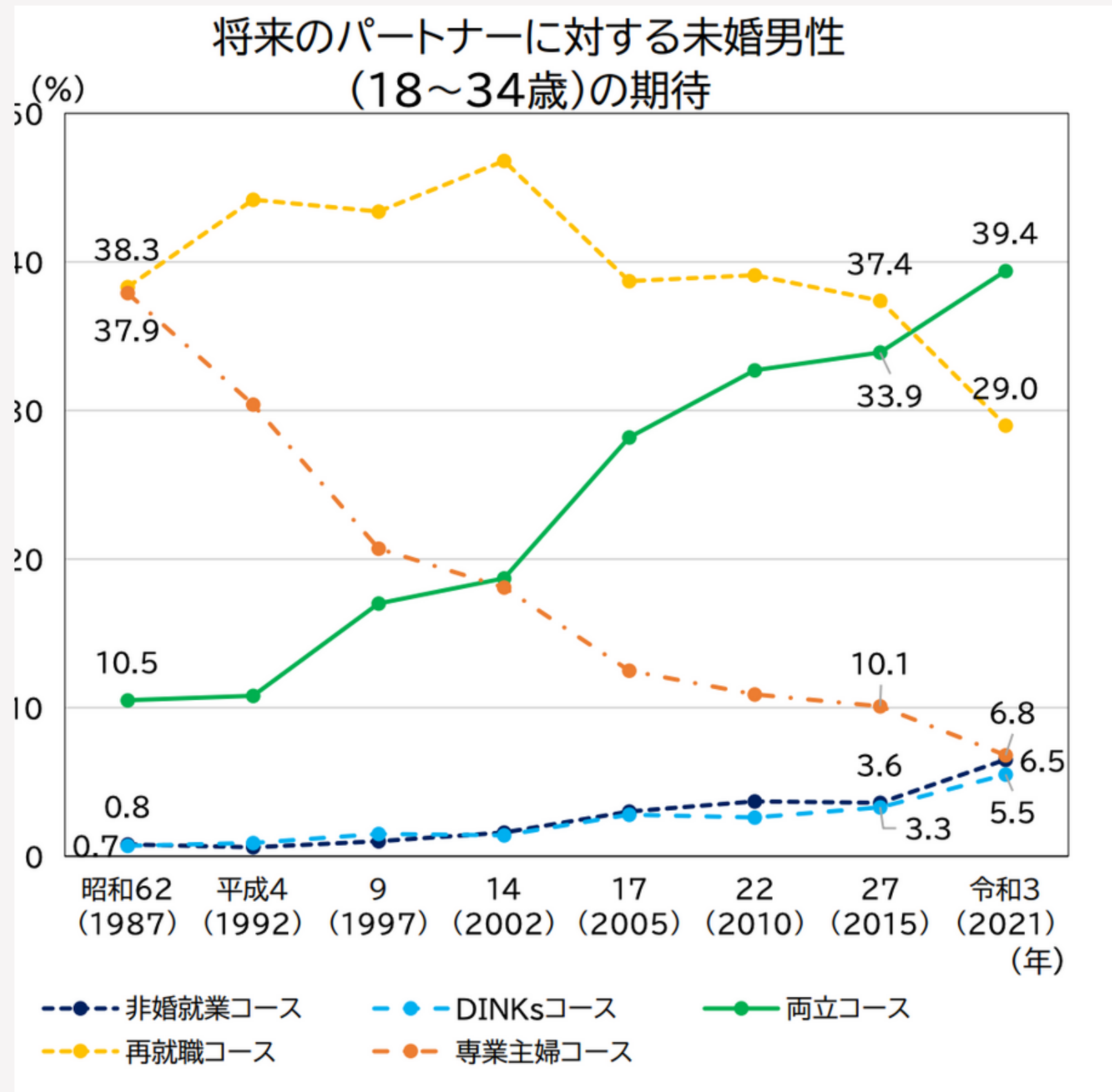


Most would like
to both work and
raise a family

[Source]

https://www.gender.go.jp/about_danjo/whitepaper/r05/zentai/pdf/r05_tokusyu.pdf

Men's Desired Partner and Life Course

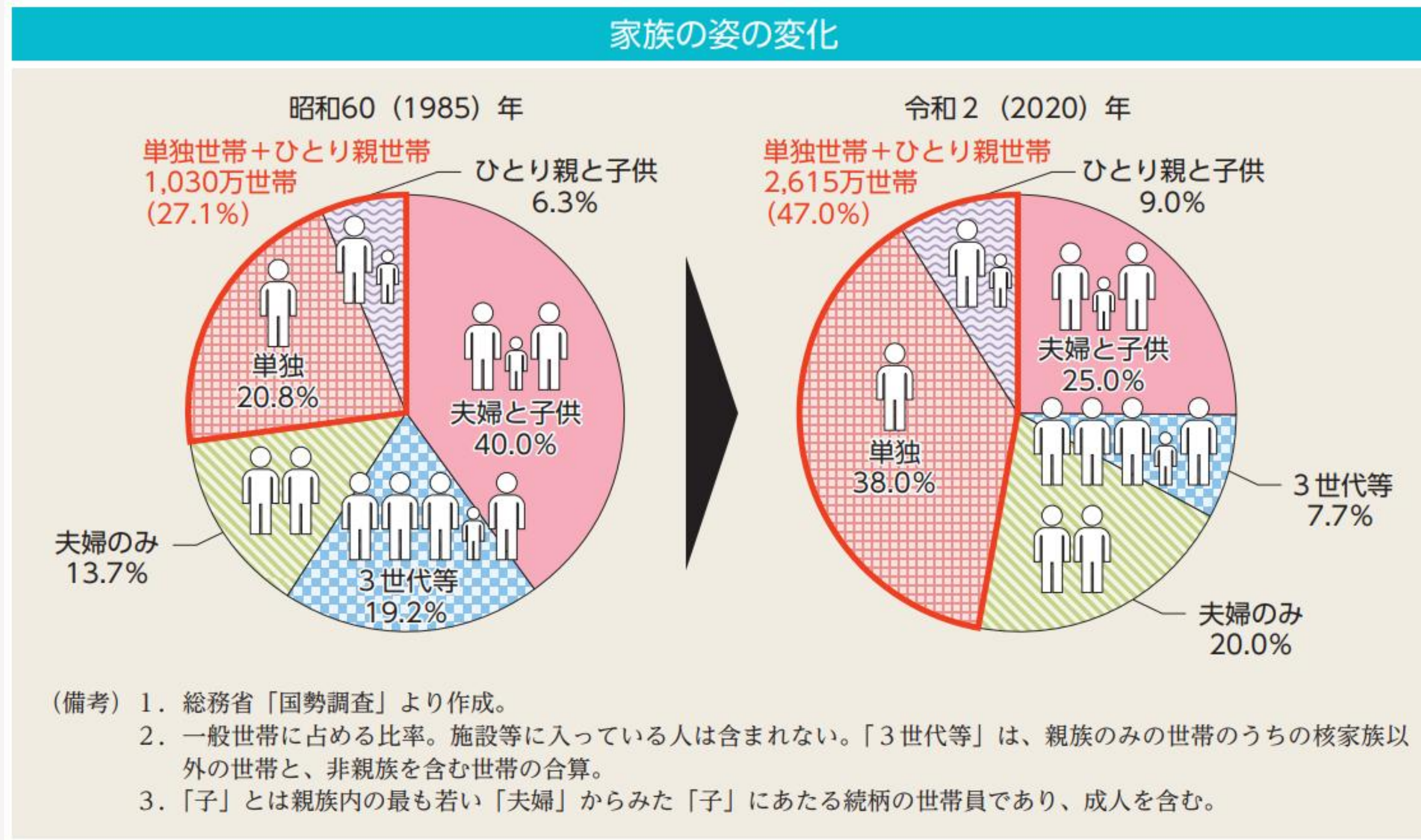


Most would like
their partner to
both work and
raise a family

[Source]

https://www.gender.go.jp/about_danjo/whitepaper/r07/zentai/pdf/r07_gaiyou.pdf

Changes to Family Structure



[Source]

https://www.gender.go.jp/about_danjo/whitepaper/r05/zentai/pdf/r05_tokusyu.pdf

Reasons Women Leave Regional Areas ③

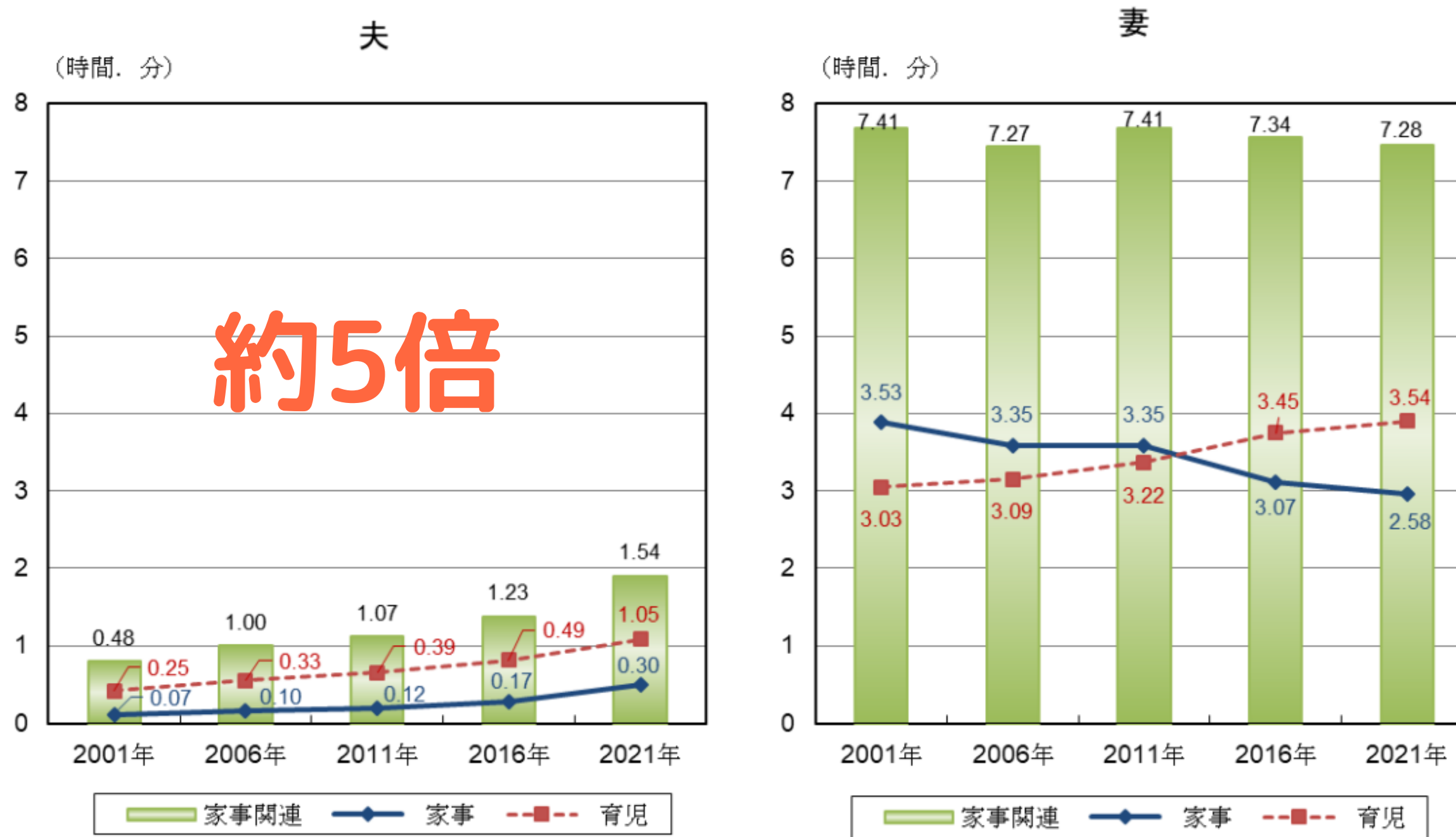
Regional Roles for Women
Are Stifling

Comments on Regional Roles for Women

- “At local events and gatherings, watching women prepare the food as men just sit and eat... I thought to myself, will I have to do this too in the future?”
(19, from Yamagata)
- “During Obon and the New Year, I watched women be busy making and serving food, while men just sit, eating and drinking. When I was told, ‘You’re a girl, so you better be attentive in the future,’ I felt life was hard for women.”
(25, from Niigata)

Gender Gap in Time Spent on Chores

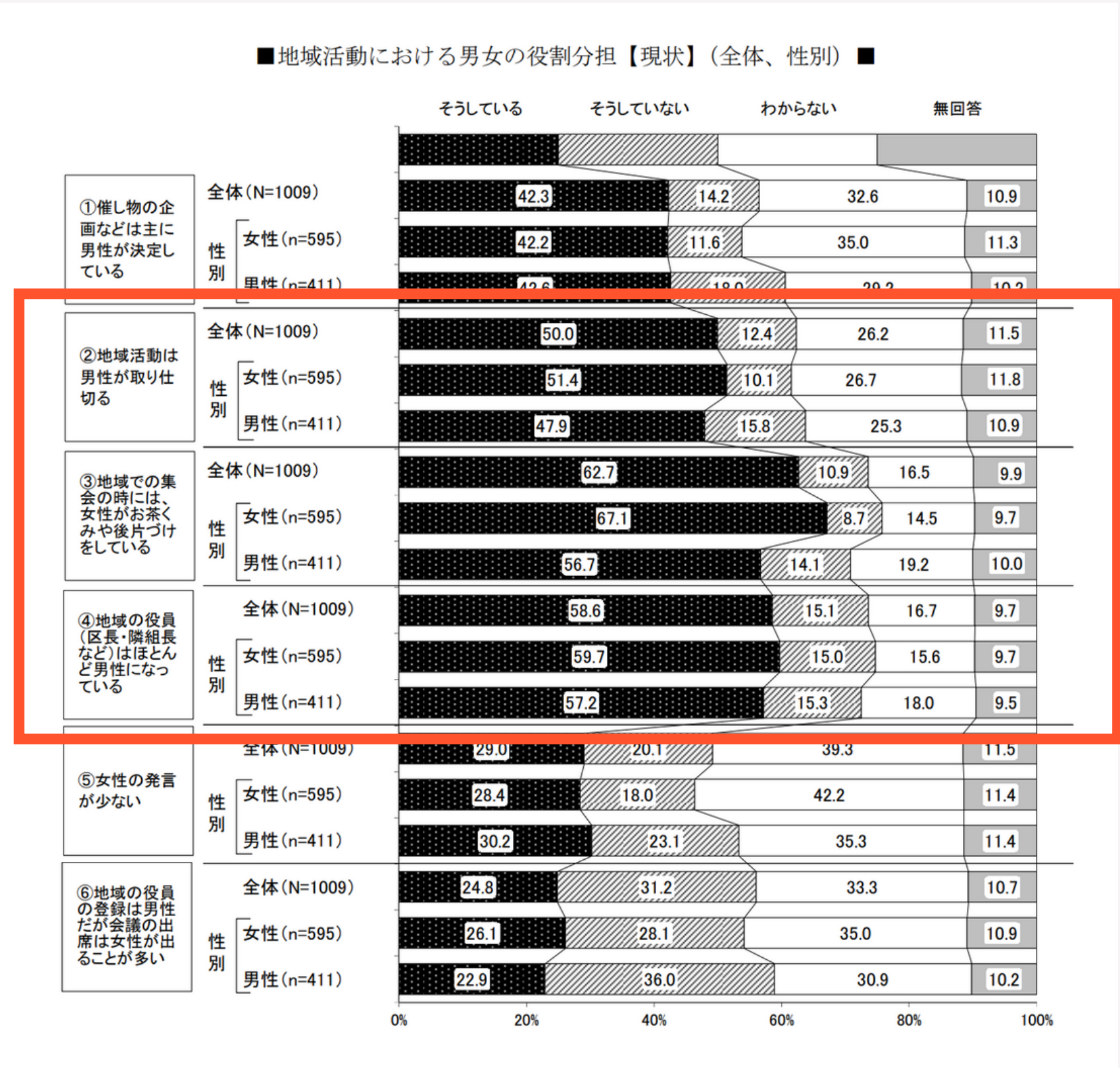
図1 夫・妻の家事関連時間の推移（調査票Aによる結果）
（2001年～2021年）－週全体平均、6歳未満の子供を持つ夫婦と子供の世帯



[Source]

https://www.gender.go.jp/about_danjo/whitepaper/r05/zentai/pdf/r05_tokusyu.pdf

Division of Roles in Local Activities by Gender



[Source]
<https://www.city.okawa.lg.jp/s006/content/8.pdf>

4. What Would a Regional Area Where Women Want To Live Look Like?

Towards Building Communities
Without Gender Inequality

Regional Systems Predicated on Being “Feminine”



Part-time
Low wages
Few
management
positions
Act as
support



Chores
Caring for
children
Role as a wife



Act as servants
Expectation of
marriage/children
Few leaders in
community
associations

Regional Revitalization 2.0 “Regional Areas Youth and Women Want to Live”

2. 地方創生 2.0 の基本姿勢・視点

○ 人口減少を正面から受け止めたうえでの施策展開

- ・ 少子化対策等により、今後の人口減少のペースが緩まるとしても、当面は人口・生産年齢人口が減少するという事態を正面から受け止めたうえで、人口規模が縮小しても経済成長し、社会を機能させる適応策を講じていく。
- ・ 厳しい状況の中にあっても、限られた財源や人材を最大限に活かしながら、地域にとって本当に必要なサービスを、過不足なく、かつ持続可能な形で提供し続

2

けられる体制や制度を構築していく必要がある。

- ・ これからの 10 年だけでなく、さらにその先の 10 年を見据えて生じる課題等に対し備えておくべき観点も含め、分野横断的に幅広い視点で検討がなされる必要がある。

○ 若者や女性にも選ばれる地域づくり

- ・ 若い世代の意識と、「男は仕事・女は家庭」に代表されるような地域社会に残るアンコンシャス・バイアスとのギャップが、若者や女性の地方からの転出行動に繋がっている面がある。
- ・ 地方の強みを生かしつつ、若い世代の行動や意識の変化を直視し地方が抱える弱みを克服していくための大胆な改革に取り組んでいく。
- ・ 若者や女性にも選ばれる地域づくりとは、若者や女性のための必要なものと考えるべきではなく、性別や世代にかかわらず誰もが活躍できる可能性と選択肢を確保するものである。

One of the five policy pillars

The key is

workplace and working style
reform and eliminating
unconscious bias

[Reference]

https://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/atarashii_chihousousei/yusikishakaigi/dai9/shiryō.pdf

Thank you for listening!



YouTube

Instagram

X



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