

The Household Changes in Contemporary Japan * **Overview of the Results of the Fifth National Survey on Household Changes (2004)**

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I Introduction

1. Overview

Ever since the late 1970s, Japan's birth rate has remained firmly below the population replacement level, and it now has one of the lowest birth rates among the advanced nations. Nonetheless, the Japanese population has continued to increase due to the momentum of the past population increase. However, this momentum is now almost exhausted and Japan is entering an era of long-term population decline. With such development, the rapid population aging will further accelerate in the 2010s when the baby boomers would reach the age of 65. Furthermore, changes in the traditional gender relations have led to delays in marriage, an increase in the percentage of never-married adults and rising divorce rate.

These changes have exerting impacts on the static distribution of household size and composition as well as on the dynamic process of household formation and dissolution. Such household changes as increase in the propensity to live alone among the elderly, the growth in the number of one-parent family households, and the growing propensities of young adults to stay longer in their parental households are of great concern both for academic and political worlds.. The National Surveys on Household Changes are conducted to measure these demographic changes in households and to project future household changes.

The Fifth National Survey on Household Changes was conducted on July 1, 2004, succeeding the previous round conducted five years before. This series of household surveys are designed to study various household changes and to obtain important parameters for household projections. The survey covered a similar set of topics as in the previous survey, which included the size and the composition of the households, individuals' experiences of assuming and resigning headship, timing of young adults' leaving parental home, transitions between marital states, and so forth.

2. Samples and Responses

This survey was conducted as a "rider" of the *Comprehensive Survey of the Living Conditions of*

People on Health and Welfare conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare in 2004. Out of survey areas sampled for the Comprehensive Survey, 300 were assigned for this survey. Designated interviewers distributed and collected questionnaires, which were, in principle, requested to be filled out by household heads.

Out of a total of 15,972 target households, questionnaires were returned from 11,732 households. Among the questionnaires collected, those without any entries and those missing essential information were treated as invalid, yielding a final total of 10,711 valid responses, on which the analysis was based. Thus, the overall questionnaire return rate was 73.5% and the rate of valid response was 67.1%.

Table I-1 shows the age distribution of household heads. Compared to the result of the Population Census in 2000, there are more household heads of ages 55 years and older, while less heads of younger age groups. Although this difference can be attributed in part to the population aging during the intervening 4-year period, it should also be noted that there was a sizable number of persons living alone and difficult to contact in younger age groups.

This survey enumerated and analyzed data by individual members aged 18 years old and up as well as by household units. Table I-2 shows the age composition of household members aged 18 years old and up. Since the age distribution of the population not limited to household heads can be obtained each year, this data was compared with the total population in 2004. Compared to Table I-1, the differences are small because they were taken for the same year, but still it cannot be denied that there are some response biases, primarily among samples in the 20-34 age groups.

Table I-1 Number of Household Heads by Age

Age of household Head	The 5th National Survey (2004)		Population Census (2000)		Difference in Percentage (%)
	Number of Households	Percentage (%)	Number of Households (in thousands)	Percentage (%)	
All households	10,711	100.0	46,782	100.0	-
18-19	71	0.7	508	1.1	-0.4
20-24	287	2.7	2,289	4.9	-2.2
25-29	428	4.0	3,215	6.9	-2.9
30-34	617	5.8	3,496	7.5	-1.7
35-39	754	7.0	3,516	7.5	-0.5
40-44	791	7.4	3,565	7.6	-0.2
45-49	869	8.1	4,397	9.4	-1.3
50-54	1,102	10.3	5,533	11.8	-1.5
55-59	1,277	11.9	4,811	10.3	1.6
60-64	1,238	11.6	4,316	9.2	2.3
65-69	1,060	9.9	3,969	8.5	1.4
70-74	952	8.9	3,223	6.9	2.0
75-79	697	6.5	2,096	4.5	2.0
80-84	374	3.5	1,161	2.5	1.0
85 years old and up	194	1.8	687	1.5	0.3

Source: Statistics Bureau (2000), the Population Census.

Table I-2 Number of Household Members Aged 18 Years Old and Up by Age

Age	The 5th National Survey (2004)		Population Estimate (2004)		Difference in Percentage (%)
	Number of household members	Percentage (%)	Population (in thousands)	Percentage (%)	
Total household members					
18 years old and up	24,336	100.0	106	100.0	-
18-19	614	2.5	3	2.7	-0.2
20-24	1,557	6.4	8	7.4	-1.0
25-29	1,781	7.3	9	8.6	-1.3
30-34	1,949	8.0	10	9.2	-1.2
35-39	1,866	7.7	8	8.0	-0.4
40-44	1,870	7.7	8	7.4	0.2
45-49	1,888	7.8	8	7.5	0.2
50-54	2,227	9.2	10	9.5	-0.3
55-59	2,403	9.9	9	8.7	1.2
60-64	2,206	9.1	8	7.9	1.2
65-69	1,918	7.9	7	7.0	0.9
70-74	1,617	6.6	6	6.0	0.6
75-79	1,229	5.1	5	4.6	0.4
80-84	706	2.9	3	2.9	0.0
85 years old and up	505	2.1	3	2.5	-0.4

Source: Statistics Bureau, Population Estimates.

II Households in 2004

1. Individuals' Memberships in Different Types of Households

The average size of households in Japan is becoming smaller and smaller. One out of four people in this survey belonged to households comprised of two persons.

Looking at the size of households with household heads and members aged 18 years old

and up (Table II-1, Section A), the percentage of respondents belonging to households comprised of two persons is the highest (24.6%), followed by households composed of three persons (23.4%), four persons (22.5%) and five persons (11.7%). Compared to the previous survey, the percentage of four-person households dropped from first to third place, while two-person households rose from third to first. In terms of proportion, one to three-

person households increased from the previous survey, while households with four or more persons decreased. Significant changes were seen for the percentages of people belonging to two-person households and three-person households, which went up by 3.0 and 0.7 percentage points, respectively, while the percentage of people belonging to four-person and six-person households went down by 2.4 and 0.8 percentage points, respectively. The average size of households individuals belong to is 3.3 people in this study, a decline of 0.2 people from the 3.5 people in the previous survey.

Looking at the number of households by household size (Table II-1, Section B), the largest number of households contained two persons, representing 28.7% of all households. The second most common type of households was those that contained three persons (20.6%), which was comparable with one-person households and four-person households, representing 20.0% and 18.1%, respectively. Compared to the previous survey, the positions of one-person households and four-person households were switched. The proportions increased for one-person to three-person households and decreased in four-person or larger households. Noticeable changes were seen for two-person households, which went up by 3.0 percentage points, as well as four and five-person

households, which saw decreases of 2.0 and 0.6 percentage points, respectively. Overall, the average household size declined by 0.1 persons, from 2.9 in the previous survey to 2.8 in the present survey.

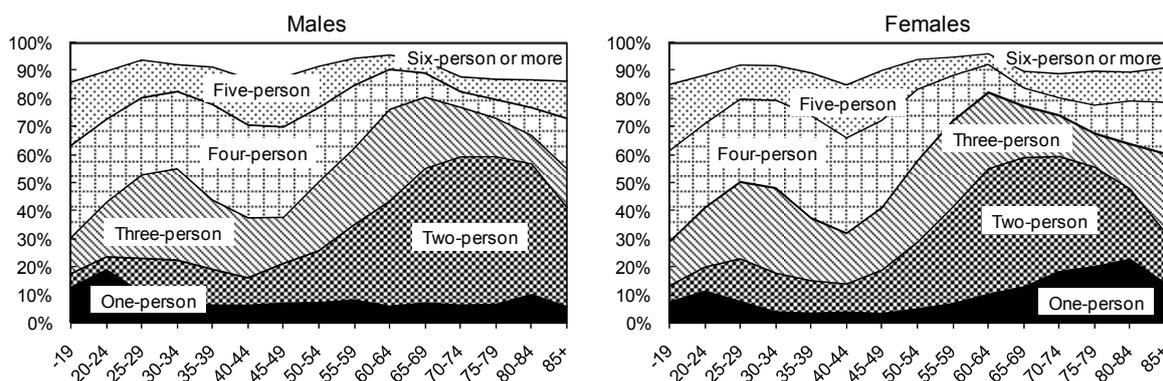
- The average size of households to which individuals belong peaked among the 40- to 44-year olds.

Figure II-1 represents the size of households to which household heads and household members (aged 18 years old and up) in different age groups belong. The most common household size among male respondents are four persons for respondents aged up to 24 years old, three persons for the 25-34 age groups, four persons for the 35-54 age groups, three persons for the 55-59 age group and two persons for age groups 60 years old and up. Among the female respondents, the most common household size is four persons among all respondents up to 49 years of age, three persons for the 50-54 age group, two persons for the 55-84 age groups, and three persons for those aged 85 years old and up. Although age differences of 5 years are seen between the sexes, the percentages of three or four-person households account for high shares until around the 50s; thereafter, the percentage

Table II-1 Distribution of Household Sizes

	Total	Household Size									Average (persons)
		One-person	Two-person	Three-person	Four-person	Five-person	Six-person	Seven-person	eight-person		
A	5th survey (people) (2004) (%)	24,336 100.0	2,140 8.8	5,993 24.6	5,698 23.4	5,474 22.5	2,852 11.7	1,387 5.7	636 2.6	156 0.6	3.3
	4th survey (persons) (1999) (%)	28,767 100.0	2,456 8.5	6,229 21.7	6,525 22.7	7,149 24.9	3,446 12.0	1,856 6.5	813 2.8	293 1.0	3.5
B	5th survey (households) (2004) (%)	10,711 100.0	2,140 20.0	3,069 28.7	2,202 20.6	1,936 18.1	841 7.9	350 3.3	142 1.3	31 0.3	2.8
	4th survey (households) (1999) (%)	12,434 100.0	2,456 19.8	3,184 25.6	2,543 20.5	2,501 20.1	1,053 8.5	464 3.7	179 1.4	54 0.4	2.9

Figure II-1 Individual Memberships in Different Sizes of Households by Sex for Different Age Groups



of two-person households rapidly increases. The proportions of two-person households among the elderly generations are as high as 52.7% for males (70 to 74 years old) and 46.2% for females (65 to 69 years old). Such a concentration of population into particular household sizes is not seen for either sex in any age groups under 60 years old. However, the percentage of households containing three or more persons increases again among respondents older than 80 years. The percentage of one-person households consisting of elderly females is higher than the corresponding percentage for males.

Figure II-2 examines the average size of households to which members of different age groups belong. Comparing the data by sex, the average size tends to be larger for females in age groups up to 44 years of age and in the 65-69 age group, and larger for males in age groups 45 years old and up, with the aforementioned 65-69 age group the exception. When data is compared by age for each sex, the average household size fluctuates for both sexes, starting with the 0-19 age group and decreasing as the respondents get older, then increasing, decreasing, and again increasing thereafter. In the case of males, the household size first decreases from 3.9 persons among respondents in the 0-19 age group to 3.4 people in the 30-34 age group, and next increases to its peak at 3.9 persons in the 40-44 age group, then decreases again to its minimum of 2.8 persons in the 65-69 age group, and finally increases to 3.5 persons for respondents aged 85 years old and up. In the case of females, the household size decreases from 4.1 persons in the 0-19 age group to 3.5 in the 25-29 age group, and next increases to its peak at 4.1 persons in the 40-44 age group, then decreases again to its minimum of 2.7 persons in the 60-64 age group, and finally increases up to 3.3 persons for female respondents aged 85 years old or higher. Compared to the previous surveys, the average size

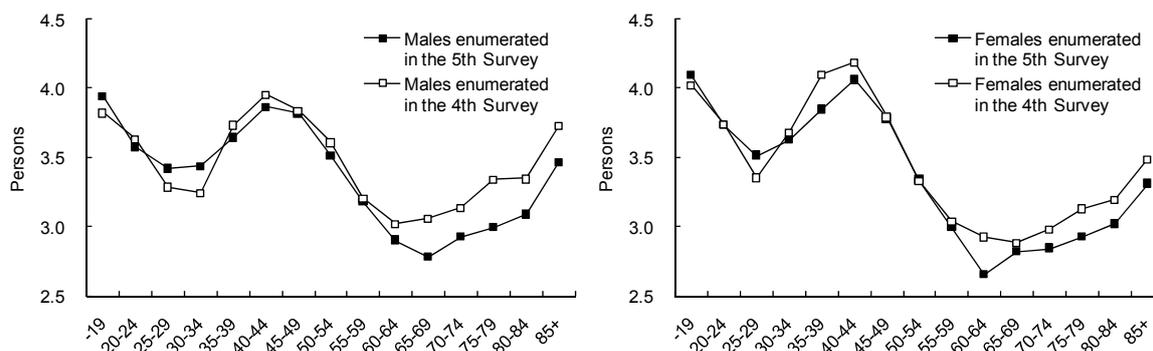
of households to which the respondents belong to tend to be smaller in the present survey, except for males up to 34 years old (not including the 20-24 age group) and females in the 0-19, 25-29 and 50-54 age groups. The decreasing trend is most significant among males aged 65 years old and up as well as females from 35 to 44 years old and 60 years old and up.

- Two thirds of the respondents belonged to family nuclei. The majority was found in households consisting of a married couple with their children.

Table II-2, Section A shows the family types to which household heads and other family members aged 18 years old and up belong. It reveals that “family nuclei” is the most common (66.1%), followed by “other households” (24.7%) and “one-person household” (8.8%). Although the order was the same as in the previous survey, in terms of proportions, both “family nuclei” and “one-person household” increased by 1.8 and 0.3 percentage points, respectively, while “other households” decreased by 0.6 percentage points. It can thus be said that the present survey shows a trend toward simpler family types compared to the previous survey.

When looking at household types in more detail, it is found that the largest percentage of the respondents lived in households consisting of “a married couple with their children” (40.0%), while households consisting of “a married couple only” (19.5%) and households consisting of “a married couple with their children and parent” (14.2%) were the second and third most common types of households, respectively. The order is the same as in the previous survey. Looking at the proportion of the four types of households classified as “family nuclei,” the percentages of “a married couple only” (2.9 points), “father with his children”

Figure II-2 Average Household Size by Sex for Different Age Groups



(0.1 points) and “mother with her children” (0.9 points) increased, while the proportion of households composed of “a married couple with their children” decreased by 2.2 percentage points.

On the other hand, an analysis of the number of households by family type (Table II-2, Section B) shows that the majority of the households are composed of “a married couple with their children” (34.3%), followed by “s married couple only” (22.4%) and “one-person” (20.0%) as the second and third most common family types, respectively. This result differs from the result of analysis for individual family members. Comparing the order with the previous survey, the increase of the frequency of households consisting of “a married couple only” (3.0 points) far exceeded that of “one-person” households (0.2 points), meaning that the second and third most common household types in effect traded places. Note that the proportion of households consisting of “a married couple with their children” decreased by 2.4 percentage points.

- The elderly population belongs to households consisting of “a married couple only” and “other households”.

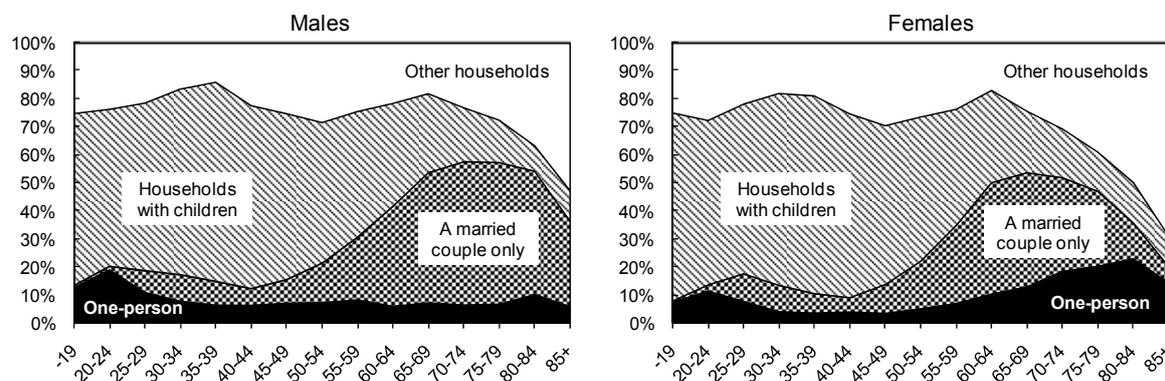
Figure II-3 shows family types to which household heads and household members aged 18 years old and up belong, by age group and sex. For both males and females, households containing “a married couple with their children” account for the highest proportions among the respondents up to 59 years of age, while households containing “a married couple only” and “other households” account for higher proportions among the respondents of 60 years old and up. Closer examination of the 60 and over age group by sex reveals that the most common family type for males is households of “a married couple only” for those aged 60 to 84 and “other households” for those aged 85 or over. On the other hand, the majority of females aged 60 to 74 years old lives in households of “a married couple only,” while those aged 75 and up tend to live in “other households.” The highest percentage of households of “a married couple

Table II-2 Distribution of Members and Households by Family

	Total	Household type														
		Single person	Nuclear family	Married couples without children	Householders with children				Other households					Un-known		
					Total	Married couples with children	Single father family	Single mother family	Total	Householders with married children	Householders with married and unmarried children	Householders with married children and grandchildren	Other family households		Non family households	
A																
The 5th survey (people)	24,336	2,140	16,084	4,748	11,336	9,746	237	1,352	6,007	864	46	3,466	1,445	186	105	
in 2004 (%)	100.0	8.8	66.1	19.5	46.6	40.0	1.0	5.6	24.7	3.6	0.2	14.2	5.9	0.8	0.4	
The 4th survey (people)	28,767	2,456	18,509	4,771	13,738	12,140	262	1,336	7,280	925	54	4,459	1,657	185	522	
in 1999 (%)	100.0	8.5	64.3	16.6	47.8	42.2	0.9	4.6	25.3	3.2	0.2	15.5	5.8	0.6	1.8	
B																
The 5th survey (people)	10,711	2,140	6,881	2,395	4,486	3,675	115	695	1,647	276	12	868	419	72	43	
in 2004 (%)	100.0	20.0	64.2	22.4	41.9	34.3	1.1	6.5	15.4	2.6	0.1	8.1	3.9	0.7	0.4	
The 4th survey (people)	12,434	2,456	7,769	2,406	5,363	4,568	128	667	1,966	293	13	1,124	462	74	243	
in 1999 (%)	100.0	19.8	62.5	19.4	43.1	36.7	1.0	5.4	15.8	2.4	0.1	9.0	3.7	0.6	2.0	

Note: The total percentage of households with children includes single-parent families with a parent of unknown sex.

Figure II-3 Distribution of Households by Sex, Age and Family Type (Four Types)



Note: Cases with missing value are excluded from the denominator.

only” found for males is 51.5% (70-74 age group) and 40.8% for females (65-69 age group). Moreover, the proportion of “one-person” households is high among the young generations in the case of males, accounting for 19.1% among the 20-24 age group. The value for females is high among the elderly generation, reaching 23.0% in the 80-84 age group.

2. Housing

- The percentage of respondents who are living in a housing they own is the lowest among males aged 30 to 34 and females aged 25 to 29, while 80% or more of the older-old population are homeowners.

Table II-3 shows different types of housing in which household heads and household members aged 18 years old and up live. As can be seen, the majority live in owned detached houses (67.9%), while 12.0% live in rented apartment or houses, 8.3% in owned condominiums and 6.6% in public housing. Although the proportions exhibit roughly similar trends for both males and females, there is

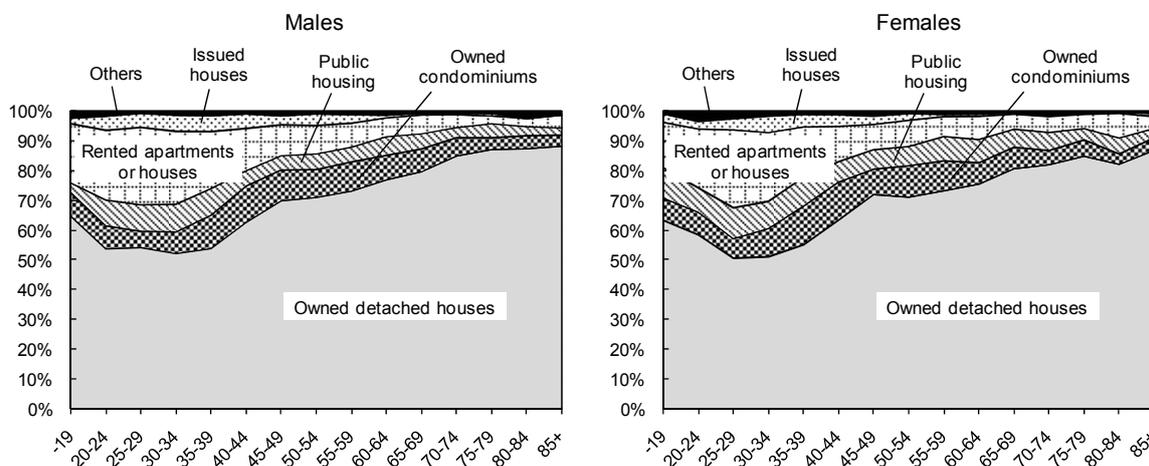
a larger percentage of females than males among those who live in owned detached houses, owned condominiums and public housing. The order and trends of differences between males and females are the same as in the previous survey. Looking at the changes in proportion compared to the previous survey, the percentages of those who live in owned detached houses, owned condominiums and public housing increased by 1.7, 1.3 and 2.2 percentage points, respectively, while that for rented apartments or houses decreased by 3.3 points.

Figure II-4 shows the variation in housing in which household heads and members aged 18 years and up in different age groups live by sex. In all age groups, the majority of both males and females live in owned detached houses. It should be noted that while the proportion of those living in owned detached houses is lower among the younger generations for both genders, marking the lowest value for males in the 30-34 age group (52.3%) and females in the 25-29 age group (50.6%), the corresponding value exceeds 80% for both males and females in their late adulthood. Other types of housing accounting for high

Table II-3 Distribution of Respondents by Housing Type and Sex

		Total	Owned detached houses	Owned condominiums	Public housing	Rented apartments or houses	Issued houses	Others	Unknown	
		(people)	(%)							
The 5th Survey in 2004	Both sexes	24,336	100.0	67.9	8.3	6.6	12.0	2.5	1.2	1.4
	Males	11,586	100.0	67.7	8.2	6.0	12.6	3.0	1.1	1.4
	Females	12,750	100.0	68.1	8.4	7.2	11.5	2.1	1.3	1.4
The 4th Survey in 1999	Both sexes	28,767	100.0	66.2	7.0	4.4	15.3	2.5	1.3	3.4
	Males	13,853	100.0	65.4	6.8	4.2	16.1	2.8	1.3	3.4
	Females	14,914	100.0	66.9	7.2	4.6	14.5	2.3	1.2	3.4

Figure II-4 Distribution of Respondents by Housing Type and Age



Note: Cases with missing value are excluded from the denominator.

percentage ratios among the younger generations are rented apartments or houses, as well as public housing: the percentage of rented apartments or houses is the highest among the 25-29 age group for both males and females (26.0% and 26.3%, respectively), and the percentage of public housing is the highest among males in the 30-34 age group (9.2%) and females in the 25-29 age group (10.3%).

III Kinship and Living Arrangement

1. Living Arrangements of Older Adults

- 80.8% of the population aged 50 years and up have at least one child aged 18 years or older, which is actually lower than in the previous survey.

Figure III-1 shows the percentages of respondents living with their children and those living apart from their children. The percentage of the population having at least one child aged 18 years old or older is 53.4% among people aged 20 years old and up, and 92.7% if restricting the target group to people aged 65 years old and up. In general, it can be said that the proportion increases with age, reaching 80.8% among those in the 50-54 age group.

- Overall, the proportion of people living with their children after they turn 18 years old is on a downward trend. It bottoms out at 43.1% among the population aged 65 to 74 years old, and then increases with age.

The percentage of people living with their children after they turn 18 years old (co-residence rate) is 32.0% out of the entire adult respondents aged 20 years old and up and 48.1% when looking only at respondents aged 65 years old and up. Looking at the data by age, the percentage of respondents co-residing with their children is 60.4% and the percentage of respondents living apart from their children is 20.3% among the 50-54 age group. In older age groups, the percentage of respondents co-residing with their children declines with age, dropping down to 43.1% in the 60-69 and 70-74 age groups. The trend reverses after this age group, however, and begins to increase with age again, peaking at 71.0% among the generation aged 85 years old and up. Conversely, the percentage of people living apart from their children increases from the 50-54 age group, peaks at 49.9% in the 70-74 age group and turns to a downward trend from there on.

- The proportion of respondents living together with their children is higher for males until the age of 69, but higher for females from the age of 70 and onward.

Figure III-2 shows the proportion of respondents who have children, along with the percentage of those co-residing with their children in different age groups by sex. For both male and female respondents, over 90% of the people over age 60 have children. However, the percentage of parents co-residing with their children is higher among younger adults and starts to decrease gradually

Figure III-1 Proportions of Respondents Living with/without their Children (18 Years Old and Over) by Age

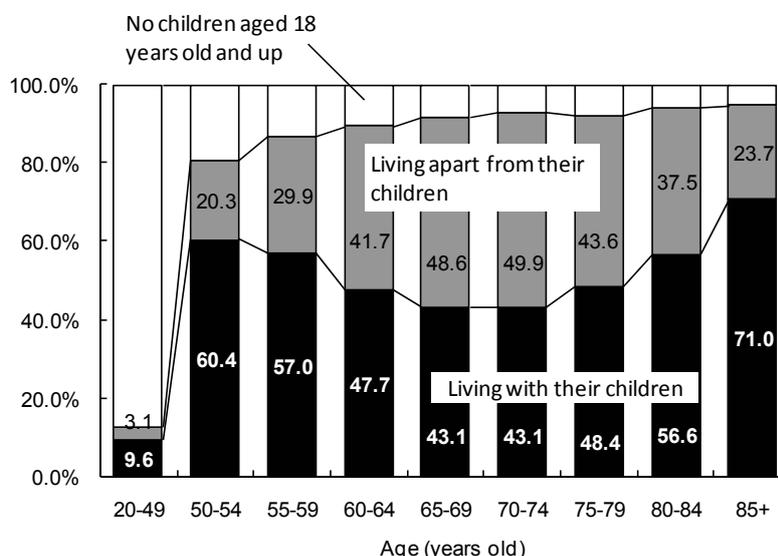
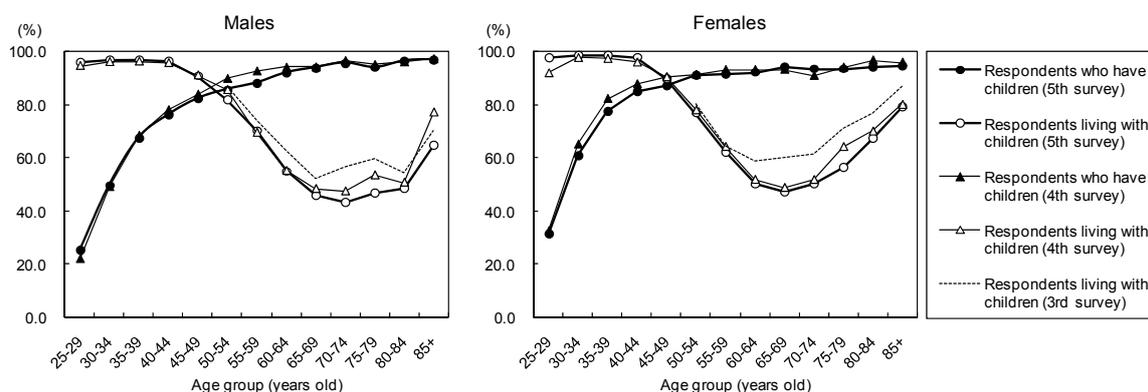


Figure III-2 Distribution of Respondents with/without Children and Those Living with Children by Age



from their late 40s, when their children start leaving home. Although there are slight differences between males and females, the percentage bottoms out (decreasing to the vicinity of 40%) for both sexes in their late 60s to early 70s, a period known as “the empty nest period.” Compared to the data from the previous survey, the percentage of respondents co-residing with their children is found to have decreased in almost every age group. In other words, it appears that there is a tendency for elderly people not to co-reside with their children. Nonetheless, we still see the tendency for the proportion of elderly people living with their children to bottom out during their later 60s and early 70s and once again increase as they approach the older elderly period. This can be seen as a general development where more people tend not to live with their children for significant parts of their lives, preferring to be independent while they are in good health, but then choose to live together with their children in their closing years. Moreover, it is noted that the proportion of respondents co-residing with their children is higher among males until the age of 69, but higher among females aged 70 years old and up. This is because females bereaved of their husbands tend to live with their children; changes in marital status thus contribute to the percentage of respondents living with their children as well. From these results, it can be said that the population as a whole does not necessarily harbor any negative attitude toward the notion of living together with their children under the right circumstances.

- The percentage of older adults co-residing with their grown-up daughters is increasing.

Another question one might ask is, which of the children do most parents choose to live with? Do

sex and seniority of siblings affect their parents’ decisions regarding which of their children they choose to live with? Figure III-3 shows the proportions of parents living together with children categorized by their relationships with the children. The proportion of respondents living with their eldest sons is 17.6% (18.8% in the fourth survey), making it the most common practice (representing 56.3% of all children living together with parents in the present survey and 58.8% in the previous survey) followed by eldest daughters at 7.3% (7.3% in the fourth survey - representing 23.3% and 22.6% of all children living together with parents in the present and the previous survey, respectively). Looking at the data by age group, the proportion of parents living with their eldest sons shows a similar development as the trend of the overall proportion of parents living together with children, and the proportion of parents living together with their sons (including sons other than the eldest sons) becomes higher with advancing age. However, the percentage of elderly people aged 65 years old and up co-residing with their sons is only 33.1% in this survey, which is lower than 38.0% in the fourth survey and 41.2% in the third survey. Conversely, the corresponding percentage of parents living with their daughters is 14.0% in this survey, slightly higher than the 13.2% and 10.6% of the fourth and third surveys, respectively. Among all parents living with children, 29.1% are living with their daughters, showing a slightly increasing trend in the percentages of parents living with their daughters from 25.4% and 18.8% of the fourth and third surveys, respectively. Although the proportion of parents living with their sons remains higher, more and more parents are choosing to live with their daughters.

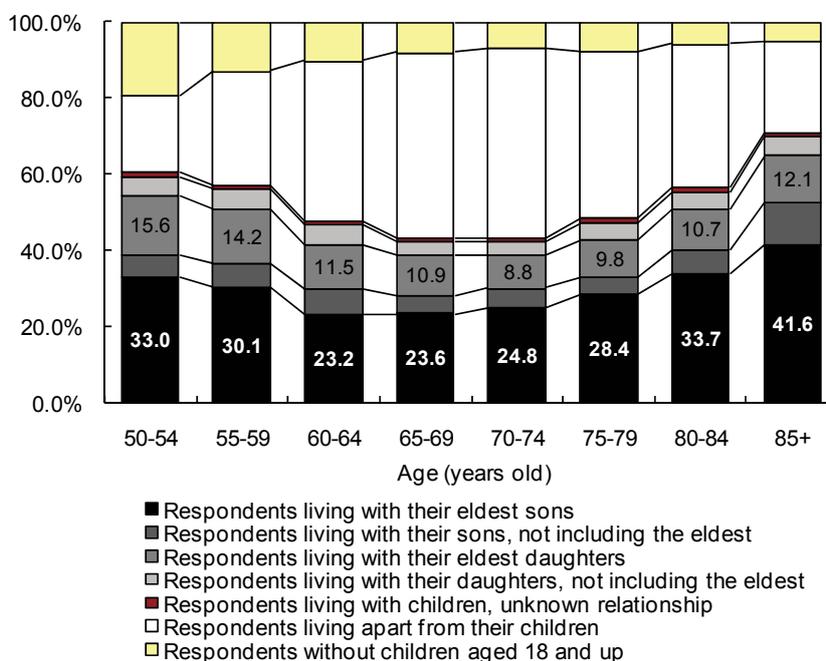
- Among the population aged 65 years old and

up, the percentage was higher for those who had moved in with their children after living apart for a period, than those who had continuously co-resided with their children.

Table III-1 examines the history of married individuals living together with their parents, in terms of whether they have continuously co-resided without leaving home (co-residing continuously) or have lived apart at one point (live separately) before once again co-residing (co-residing again). In the case of male respondents, the percentage of respondents living with parents rises with age,

reaching 23.9% in the 50-54 age group (32.5% in the fourth survey). In the case of female respondents, the percentage is highest among the 45-49 age group at 7.8% (11.0% in the fourth survey). Next, looking at the respondents' history of co-residing with parents, the percentage of male respondents "co-residing again" with their parents increases between the 30-39 and 40-49 age groups (from approximately 8% to 15%), and then decreases slightly to 13.5% in the 50-54 age group. Approximately one in seven married men in this generation is "co-residing again" with their own parents. The percentage of respondents in

Figure III-3 Proportion of Older Adults Living with Their Children (18 Years Old and Up): Distribution by Age and Relationship



Note: Respondents living with both their sons and daughters are included among those living with their sons.

Table III-1 Distribution of Respondents Co-residing with Parents with/without Experience of Leaving Home

	Married males			Married females		
	Percentage of respondents co-residing with parents	co-residing again	co-residing continuously	Percentage of respondents co-residing with parents	co-residing again	co-residing continuously
25 to 29 years old	15.9	8.1	7.7	5.1	2.7	2.4
30 to 34 years old	12.4	8.8	3.5	3.8	2.4	1.4
35 to 39 years old	12.3	8.0	4.3	4.7	2.7	2.0
40 to 44 years old	21.3	12.8	8.5	7.0	5.3	1.8
45 to 49 years old	23.6	15.5	8.1	7.8	4.7	3.1
50 to 54 years old	23.9	13.5	10.3	5.2	3.5	1.7

Note: Respondents "co-residing again" have experience of leaving home while respondents "co-residing continuously" have no experience of leaving home.

each age group “co-residing continuously” with their parents decreases as they age, which is quite natural. Hence, the actual proportion of respondents in the 25-29, 30-34 and 35-39 age groups “co-residing continuously” with their parents would be lower than what the data indicates. For females, the relationship between aging and an increase in the response of “co-residing again” with parents is not necessarily clear. Moreover, there are very few cases of married females “co-residing continuously” with their parents. Nonetheless, as seen from the child generations’ point of view, the likelihood of co-residing with one’s parents is increasing. Even so, the overall proportion of co-residing with parents does not increase. Although perhaps contradictory at first glance, this is a consequence of the ongoing development where fewer and fewer people among the younger generations choose to live with their parents.

2. Living Arrangements of Younger Adults

- One third of the respondents state that none of their parents were alive at the time of the survey. The percentage of respondents with one or both

parents alive increased slightly.

Among the respondents aged 20 years old and up, 64.4% have at least one parent alive while 35.6% reported that none of their parents are alive (Table III-2). Among those who have at least one parent alive, 42.4% have both of their parents alive, whereas the percentages of those who have only their mothers alive and that of those who have only their fathers alive are 18.7% and 3.3%, respectively.

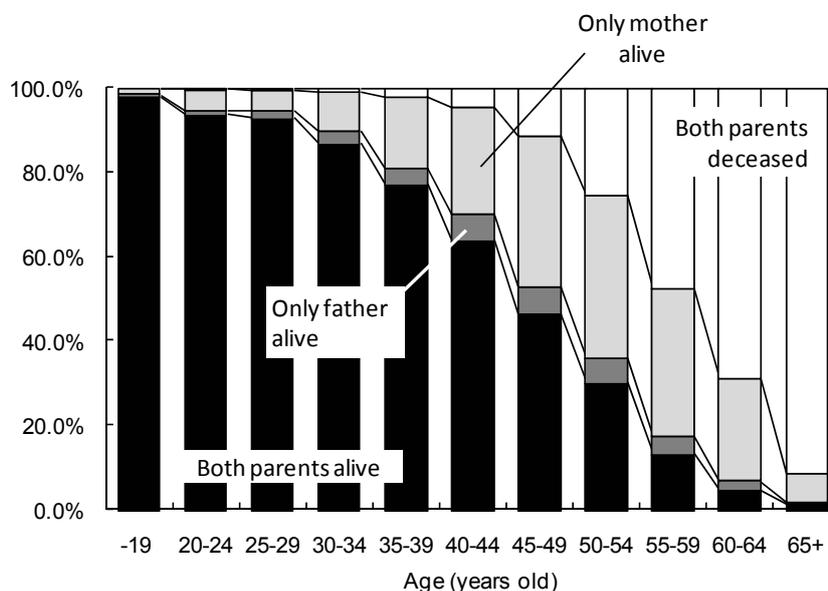
Figure III-4 shows the living status of parents of different age groups. Naturally, the percentage of those with surviving parents decreases with age, while the percentage of respondents who have lost at least one of the parents increases. As can be seen, the percentage of respondents with both parents alive decreases quite rapidly: 97.7% of the respondents in their 20s still have both parents alive (92.7% in the fourth survey and 91.4% in the third survey), dropping to 63.7% of the respondents in their early 40s (59.8% in the fourth survey and 52.7% in the third survey) and only 1.3% of the respondents aged 65 years old and up (1.2% in the fourth survey, and 0.4% in the third

Table III-2 Distribution of Respondents by Living Status of Parents

	Total population	At least one parent alive			Both parents deceased	
		Both parents	Only father	Only mother		
Total population (people)	19,877	12,796	8,429	647	3,720	7,081
Percentage (%)	100.0	64.4	42.4	3.3	18.7	35.6

* Cases with missing value are excluded.

Figure III-4 Distribution of Respondents by Living Status of Parents and Age



survey). On the other hand, more than half of the respondents in their 50s and 31.2% of those in the 60-64 age group (28.5% in the fourth survey) have at least one parent alive. Among the population aged 65 years old and up, 8.6% have at least one parent alive (8.2% in the fourth survey and 4.9% in the third survey). The percentage of those with surviving parents has increased in each of the age groups compared to five years ago.

- If parents-in-law are included, 70% of all respondents have at least one parent alive.

Figure III-5 shows the distribution in terms of numbers of surviving parents (including parents-in-law) for different age groups. Among the population aged 20 years and up, 29.1% have no surviving parent, whereas 70.1% have at least one parent alive, 15.6% have one parent alive, 29.2% have two parents alive, 11.1% have three parents alive, and 14.9% have four parents alive. Looking at this data by the respondents' age, among

the population aged 65 years and up, the majority have no surviving parent, whereas 13.8% have at least one parent alive (13.3% in the fourth survey and 9.2% in the third survey), with 11.3% (10.9% in the fourth survey and 7.9% in the third survey) having one surviving parent and 1.7% (1.7% in the fourth survey and 1.1% in the third survey) having two surviving parents. Thus, one in every seven respondents aged 65 years old or up has at least one surviving parent or parent-in-law who are older than themselves.

- 30.2% of the male and 19.6% of the female respondents live with their own parents. Overall, it is becoming less common for both males and females to live with their parents.

Table III-3 shows the status of whether the respondents live together with their parents or not. The proportion of those who co-reside (namely, share the same residence and household budget) with at least one own parent (including the case

Figure III-5 Distribution of Respondents by Own Age and Number of Surviving Parents

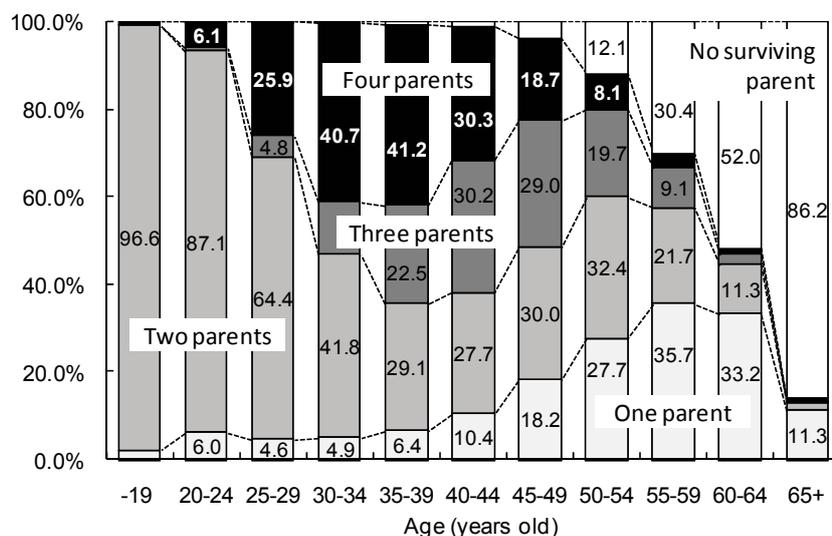


Table III-3 Living Status of Parents and Living Arrangements by Sex (Respondents Aged 20 Years Old and Up)

Gender	Total		Co-reside with parents				Living apart from parents	Both parents deceased
	Number (persons)	Percentage	With both parents	With fathers	With mothers			
Both sexes	20,133	100.0%	24.3%	16.3%	1.3%	7.1%	40.1%	35.2%
Males	9,782	100.0	30.2	18.9	1.8	9.5	35.9	33.9
Females	10,351	100.0	19.6	13.8	0.9	4.8	44.0	36.4

* Cases with missing value are excluded.

in which the other parent is deceased) is 24.3%, whereas 40.1% live apart from their parents and 35.2% have no surviving parent. The percentage of respondents co-residing with their parents is 30.2% for males and 19.6% for females, while the percentage of those living separately from their parents is 35.6% and 44.0% for males and females, respectively.

Figure III-6 shows the percentage of respondents who co-reside with their parents, compared with that of those who maintain separate households from their parents, by age group and sex. Significant differences between males and females can be observed after age 30. While nearly 80% of both the male and female respondents in the 20-24 age group co-reside with their parents, the proportion drops rapidly among females in their 20s and 30s. This is considered to be caused by females leaving home for the reason of marriage. However, the proportion of the people living with

their parents in the 30-34 age group actually show an increase from the previous survey, with 45.4% of the male respondents (39.0% in the fourth survey) and 33.1% of the female respondents (22.9% in the fourth survey) living with their parents. This trend is consistent with phenomena such as the rise in the proportion of never-married adults and the trend of delay in the timing of leaving home. Moreover, although the proportion of the respondents living together with their parents decreases with age, 2.9% of males and 0.8% of females co-reside with their own parents among respondents aged 65 and over.

- 4.4% of married males live with their parents-in-law while 14.7% of married females live with their parents-in-law. The percentage of married respondents co-residing with their parents-in-law decreased slightly.

Figure III-6 Proportion of Respondents Who Have Lost Both Parents, Who Co-reside with Parents, and Who Live Apart from Parents: Distribution by Sex and Age

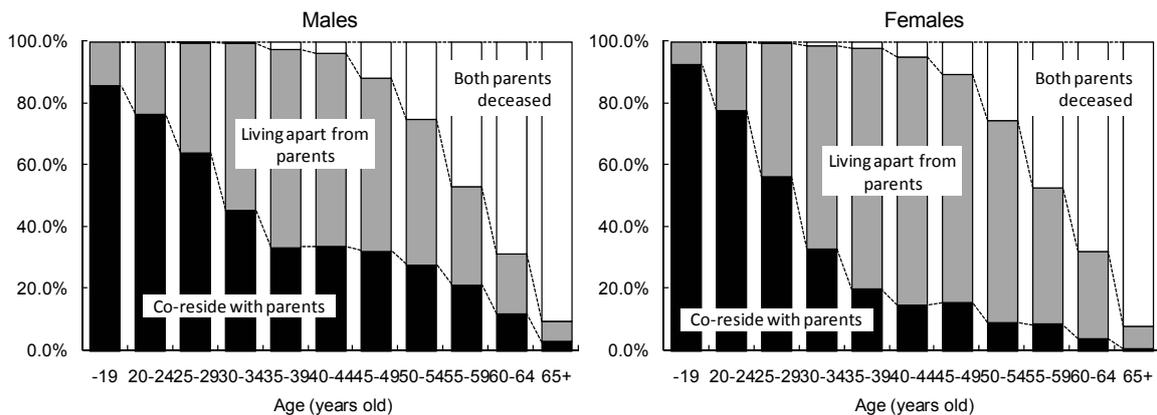


Figure III-7 Proportion of Married Respondents Who Lost Both Parents-in-Law, Who Co-reside with Parents-in-Law, and Who Live Apart from Parents-in-law: Distribution by Sex and Age

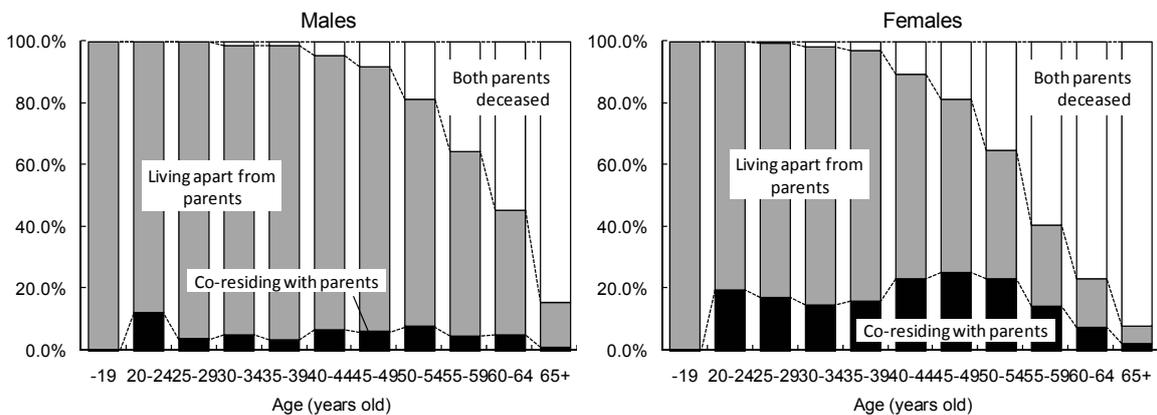


Figure III-7 shows the percentage of the married respondents co-residing with their parents-in-law. Overall, 9.6% of the entire married population lives with at least one of their parents-in-law (10.6% in the fourth survey), while 51.3% live apart from their parents-in-law (53.4% in the fourth survey), and 39.0% have no surviving parent-in-law (36.0% in the fourth survey). In the case of married males, the percentage of respondents living together with their wives' parents is 4.4% (4.8% in the fourth survey), and that of respondents living separately from them is 59.5% (60.8% in the fourth survey). The same proportions for females living together with and separately from their husbands' parents are 14.7% (16.3% in the fourth survey) and 43.5% (46.0% in the fourth survey), respectively. This result reflects one of the most important characteristics of the formation of

Japanese households, i.e., it is significantly more common for wives to live together with the parents of their husbands than the other way around. However, when compared to the previous survey, while the change in the percentage of married males who live with their parents-in-law is negligible, the corresponding percentage decreased slightly for females. Looking at the data by age, the percentage of respondents living together with the parents of their spouses shows a curve peaking at the 50-54 age group at 7.7% in the case of males and at the 45-49 age group at 25.4% for females (while the curve peaked at the 45-49 age group in the fourth survey for both males and females at 7.3% and 23.7%, respectively). The percentage of females living together with their husbands' parents are expected to peak at this age group since the majority of their parents are still alive,

Table III-4 Average Number of Siblings by Birth Cohort

Year of birth	Number of respondents (persons)	Average number of siblings (persons)		
		5th survey	4th survey	3rd survey
Total	24,197	3.10	3.21	3.44
~1929	2,547	3.15	3.36	3.77
1930 to 34	1,666	3.92	4.19	4.58
1935 to 39	1,905	4.09	4.31	4.59
1940 to 44	2,200	3.98	4.12	4.21
1945 to 49	2,462	3.61	3.70	3.80
1950 to 54	2,174	3.20	3.28	3.31
1955 to 59	1,819	2.81	2.77	2.88
1960 to 64	1,915	2.45	2.52	2.57
1965 to 69	1,827	2.40	2.44	2.46
1970 to 74	1,961	2.41	2.43	2.43
1975 to 79	1,716	2.42	2.38	
1980 to 84	1,557	2.46		

Note: Cases with missing value are excluded.

Figure III-8 Average Number of Siblings by Birth Cohort

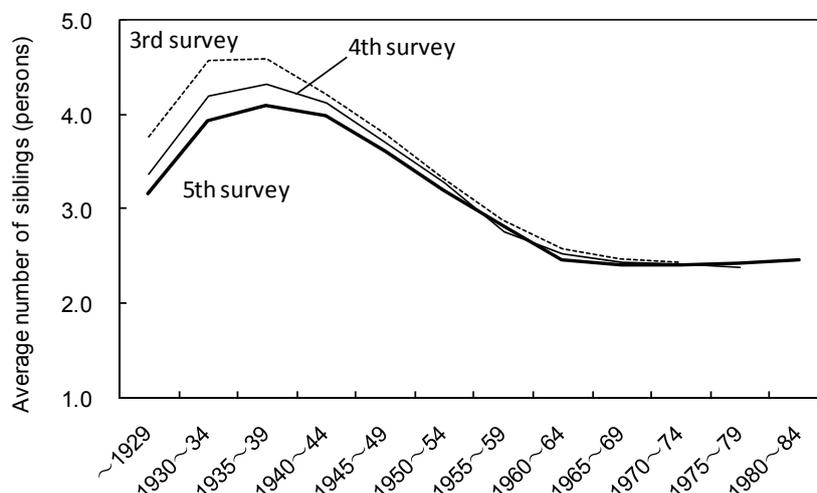


Table III-5 Distribution of Respondents by Birth Cohort and Relationship with Parents (Based on Number of Living Siblings)

Year of birth	Males			Females			
	Number of respondents (persons)	Eldest sons	Not eldest sons	Number of respondents (persons)	No brothers		With brothers
					Eldest daughters	Not eldest daughters	
Total population	11,462	64.1%	35.9%	12,582	22.6%	14.3%	63.1%
to 1929	1,024	81.1	18.9	1,521	39.1	10.5	50.4
1930 to 34	781	64.7	35.3	873	20.2	13.4	66.4
1935 to 39	880	58.1	41.9	1,017	17.0	11.0	72.0
1940 to 44	1,095	53.0	47.0	1,090	16.0	10.6	73.4
1945 to 49	1,171	54.1	45.9	1,271	16.6	11.6	71.8
1950 to 54	1,046	56.0	44.0	1,120	16.5	12.9	70.6
1955 to 59	889	61.4	38.6	912	21.5	16.6	62.0
1960 to 64	938	69.3	30.7	968	27.4	13.7	58.9
1965 to 69	886	72.3	27.7	930	23.8	17.5	58.7
1970 to 74	927	69.9	30.1	1,018	22.8	16.2	61.0
1975 to 79	827	68.3	31.7	876	21.3	21.6	57.1
1980 to 84	761	65.2	34.8	780	24.1	21.2	54.7

* Cases with missing value are excluded.

but would be in the latter-stage old generation (75 years or older).

3. Relationships with Other Relatives

- The average number of siblings per person declined slightly.

This section examines the development of the number of siblings still living by birth cohort (Table III-4, Figure III-8, and Table III-5). The average number of living siblings (including the respondents themselves) peaks at 4.09 persons among the respondents born between 1935 and 1939 and decreases in younger generations down to around 2.4 in the 1960 cohort. The overall average number of siblings per person, 3.10, in the present survey is lower than the 3.21 in the fourth survey. This is primarily due to the aging of the cohorts born before World War II and the decrease in the number of their living siblings. Among the birth cohorts born in the 1960s and later, the average number of siblings remains around 2.40 to 2.46.

- Among the younger generations, nearly half of all females have only sisters. More than 60% of males are eldest sons.

As the number of siblings decreases, the number of people not having siblings of the opposite sex is increasing. The percentage of females who do not have any brothers is the lowest among those born between 1940 and 1944 at 26.6%, and increases gradually to 45.3% in the generation born between

1980 and 1984 (Table III-5). Moreover, the percentage of respondents who are the eldest child increased as well. Among males born between 1980 and 1984, 65.2% are eldest sons.

IV Changes and Survival of Households

1. History of Current Household Heads

- Among all current household heads, 12.8% have newly become household heads within the last five years.

The history of households involves various experiences and events, such as formation, merger, and extinction. The present survey does not investigate extinct households, but attempts to understand other changes by investigating the history of the household heads, which can be defined broadly as the representatives of each household (see the history of household heads outlined in Table IV-1). First of all, the current household heads can be divided into those who were already household heads five years ago and those who newly became household heads within the last five years. The former category represented 87.2% of all the household heads (respondents classified as household heads, but with unknown history, were excluded from the calculation; the same principle applies hereinafter) and the latter 12.8%. Furthermore, the heads of previously existing households could be divided into heads of “unchanged households” (83.6%), which were not merged with other households during the 5-year period, and “merged households” (3.5%), which had absorbed at least one other household during the same period. The

new household heads could be divided into heads of “replaced households,” where the new household heads replaced the former heads of existing households (4.4% of all households) and heads of “new households” who created new households away from the original households (8.4% of all households). It should be noted that those households that are not classified as “new households” are sometimes collectively called “continued households,” because they have existed for at least five years. These “continued households” accounts for 91.6% of all the households.

Compared to the previous survey, heads of “unchanged households” increased from 82.1% to 83.6%, while those of “replaced households” and “new households” decreased from 5.1% to 4.4% and 9.5% to 8.4%, respectively. In general, the number of households decreases due to merger and extinction of households, but increases due to formation. Although the specific number of extinct households is not known, it is apparent from looking at only new and merged households that the

number of heads of “new households” is more than double the number of “merged households” and consistent with the overall trend of increase in the number of households. However, the proportion of heads of “new households” decreased from the previous survey and the contribution of formation of new households to the increase in the number of households is thus becoming smaller. This is partly due to the decreasing population in younger generations who would form new households, caused by the declining birth rate.

- A large proportion of the people who have newly become household heads are either young males starting out on their own or widowed elderly females.

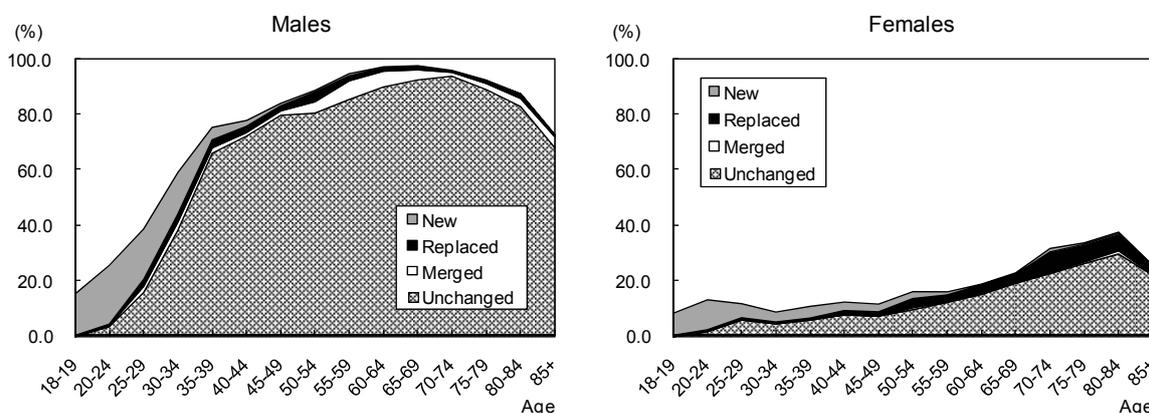
Figure IV-1 shows the proportion of household heads out of the overall number of survey subjects in different age groups, broken down by their history as household heads. Here, the proportion of household heads is obtained by adding the

Table IV-1 History of Current Household Heads

	People	%	4th survey (%)
Total household heads	10,711		
(1) Already household heads 5 years ago	8,923	87.2	85.4
(1-1) Unchanged households	8,560	83.6	82.1
(1-2) Merged households	363	3.5	3.3
(2) Newly became household heads within the past 5 years	1,313	12.8	14.6
(2-1) Replaced households	449	4.4	5.1
(2-2) New households	864	8.4	9.5
Household heads with unknown history	475		
Heads of continued households (1) + (2-1)	9,372	91.6	90.5

* Household heads with unknown history are not included in the calculation.

Figure IV-1 Distribution of Household Heads by Type



* Respondents with unknown history as household heads and members other than household heads are not included.

proportion of four different types of heads, from unchanged to new (headship rate). The proportion of household heads increases steadily with age for males from age 18 to 65-69. In the age groups from 25 to 34 years old, in particular, many males tend to form new households as they become independent from their parents, due to marriage and so on, and the proportion of household heads increases rapidly in these generations. Among the respondents aged 70 years old and up, on the other hand, the proportion gradually decreases. Data on the history of household heads reveal that up until their late 20s, the most common type of headship are heads of new households. Thereafter, heads of "unchanged households" account for the majority (especially among household heads in their late 30s and older). The percentage of heads of merged households and replaced households is relatively small overall, but the former accounts for a relatively high percentage among the 55-64 age group, while the latter accounts for a relatively high percentage among people in their 30s and early 50s.

The percentage of household heads among the females is far lower than that for males. After reaching 13.1% among respondents in their early 20s, the proportion temporarily drops until ages 30 to 34. Thereafter, the percentages generally show a steady increase up to the 80-84 age group (37.4%). Data on the history of household heads reveal that up until the 20-24 age group, the most common type of household heads are that of new households, while older female household heads are mainly that of unchanged households. The percentage of female heads of merged households is less than 1% among all age groups except the 80-84 age group. The percentage of those replacing previous household heads is small among females younger than 40, but increases somewhat after age 50 and exceeds 5% among females aged 70 to 84. The proportion of female household heads replacing the previous household heads in fact exceeds the male counterpart among people aged 55 years old and up.

Compared to the previous survey, the proportion of household heads shows a decline among males between ages 25 to 59, and an increase among males aged 60 and up. In the former case, the decline, which is particularly noticeable among the 25-29 and 30-34 age groups (from 42.2% to 38.8% and 65.7% to 59.2%, respectively), is considered to reflect the increase in the unmarried population to remain at home. The change observed among people aged 60s and up is related to the fact that the number of households consisting of single elderly persons and elderly couples without children is increasing due to a general

decline of three-generation families. In the case of females, the proportion of those who are household heads is low to begin with, but the percentage has increased in all age groups except for 18 and 19 year-olds. The increase is especially large among the age groups from 25 to 29 years old (from 8.1% to 11.7%), 35 to 39 years old (from 7.3% to 10.8%), 40 to 44 years old (from 7.6% to 12.3%) and 70 to 84 years old (e.g., from 31.3% to 37.4% in the 80-84 age group). This is considered to be related to the increase in the celibacy rates and divorce rates as well as the fact that it is becoming increasingly common for elderly people to live alone.

Looking at prominent changes by the type of household heads, in the case of males, the proportion of heads of merged households decreased in the 45-54 age groups and increased in the 55-69 age groups (e.g., from 2.7% to 3.6% in the 65-69 age group). A stronger trend of merging with other households is observed among the older generations. The households they merge with are often their children's households, but there are also cases where they merge with their parents' households. In the latter case, mergers may lead to cases of elderly offsprings taking care of more elderly parents. Other significant changes include that the percentage of unchanged households dropped in the 30-34 age group and increased among household heads aged 70 years old and up, while the proportion of household heads replacing previous heads and those forming new households decreased in the 25-49 age groups and in the 25-39 age groups, respectively.

For females, there is a notable increase in the proportion of new household heads in the 25-39 age groups. This trend is the opposite of that observed among males (Figure IV-2). Although the proportion of household heads replacing previous heads dropped among respondents from 55 to 69 years old, it increased among those from 70 to 84 years old (e.g., from 3.8% to 5.8% in the 80-84 age group). The latter change is considered to have been caused by an overall decline of three-generation families, resulting in more females taking over their husbands' households, rather than their children. Note that the proportion of heads of unchanged households increased overall. The number of heads of merged households is very small and no clear trends can be observed for this category.

- The household heads who had replaced the former heads were found most among males in their late 20s to their 30s and the female elderly. Males most likely replaced their parents when

they moved in with them, whereas females most likely replaced their spouses.

Looking at the relationship between the current household heads and previous household heads of replaced households, 52.2% of the new household heads replaced their spouses who were heads, while 40.4% replaced their parents (unknown relationships are not included in the calculation). Other types of relationship accounts for a very small portion: 2.5% took over from their grandparents, 1.7% from their parents-in-law, 1.7% from their children, etc. Looking at the data by sex, 80.9% of the male household heads took over the households from their parents and 6.9% from their spouses. In contrast, 85.5% of female household heads took over the households from their spouses and 10.6% from their parents. Compared to the previous survey, the overall percentage of household heads replacing their parents dropped (45.5% in the previous survey; unknown relationships are not included in the calculation) and

the percentage of those replacing their spouses increased (the same value is 44.9%). Looking at the data by sex, however, it should be noted that there are few changes other than the fact that the percentage of female household heads replacing their spouses increased slightly (83.0% in the previous survey). This means that the trends of males taking over households from their parents as well as females taking over from their spouses do not change. The overall proportion taking over households from their spouses increased due to the rise in the number of female household heads.

The previous heads, upon their replacement, may either be deceased or living in the same household. Among replaced household heads, 37.2% live with the previous head, while 62.8% became heads following the deaths of the former heads. The majority of the male household heads replaced their previous heads with whom they live together (58.5%), while the majority of the female heads took over their previous 'heads' households upon their deaths (79.1%). Comparing the total

Figure IV-2 Distribution of New Household Heads

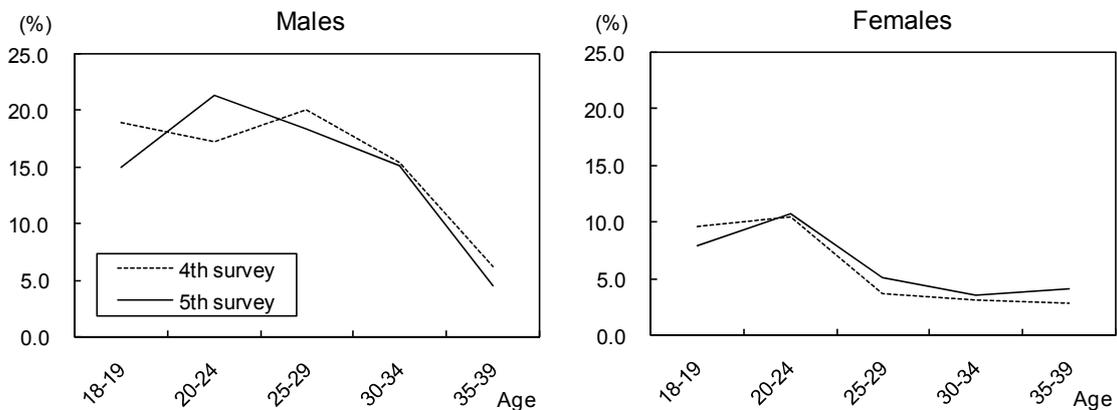
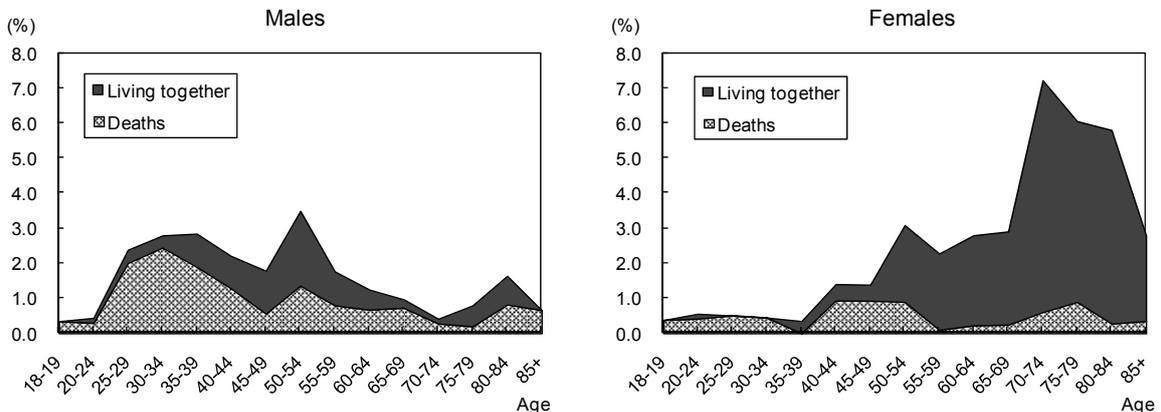


Figure IV-3 Replacement Rate by Status of Former Household Heads at Time of Replacement



results of males and females to the previous survey, it is found that the proportion of respondents living together with their previous heads at the time of replacement decreased (43.1% in the previous survey) and the proportion of those replacing deceased previous heads increased (56.9% in the previous survey), which is probably due to the increase in the number of female household heads. It should be noted, however, that the percentage of males living together with previous heads also decreased (65.6% in the previous survey), indicating that the pattern of household succession is changing. Finally, it is noted that the proportion of female household heads replacing deceased previous heads was 80.6% in the previous survey, which is almost the same as the present survey.

In the following, we define the proportion of household heads of replaced households out of all the survey subjects as “replacement rate” and observe the status of previous householders by age of new household heads in Figure IV-3. In the case of males, the replacement rate for those living together with previous heads are high in the 25-44 age groups, while the rate of those taking over after the death of the previous heads is high in the 45-59 age groups. Among females, the replacement rate is noticeably high for ages 50 and up. The value among those aged 70 to 84 is particularly high and exceeds 5%. Compared with the previous survey, the replacement rate of male household heads decreased in almost all age groups, possibly reflecting the decline in the three-generation families. Data reveals that the replacement rate of females taking over due to the deaths of the former household heads decreased among the 65-69 age group and increased in age groups 70 and over. Combined with the data on relationship with previous household heads, it can be understood that more and more elderly females take over the households of their spouses after their spouses’ deaths. With the rising life expectancy in Japan and ongoing changes in the family structures, there is a tendency for more elderly females to become household heads at old ages.

2. Arrivals and Departures of Household Members

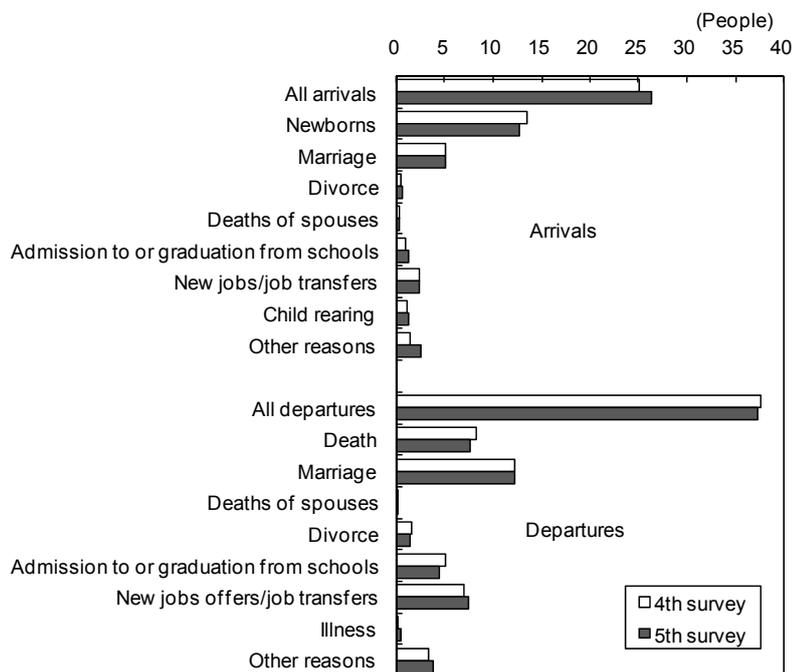
- Among the households that have been in existence for five years, 19.1% experienced arrivals of new members for various reasons such as births, marriage, new jobs/job transfers, etc., while 26.1% experienced departures of their members mainly due to marriage, new jobs/job transfers and deaths.

Among the households that have been in existence for last five years, 19.1% experienced arrivals of new members, while 26.1% experienced departures of their members. Since the questionnaires treat arrivals and departures differently, it is not possible to compare them directly in a consistent manner, but the fact that more households had experienced departures of their members than arrival of new members is consistent with the trend of shrinking household size.

Figure IV-4 shows the distribution of various reasons for joining or leaving households. The values in the graph are obtained by dividing the number of arrivals and departures for each reason by the total number of continued households that apparently have experienced arrivals and/or departures. The most common reason for new members to join a household is newborn babies, followed by marriage, other reasons, and new jobs/job transfers. Caution must be taken in this analysis, however, since all children born within the past five years has automatically been considered as having joined households as newborn babies as in the previous survey.

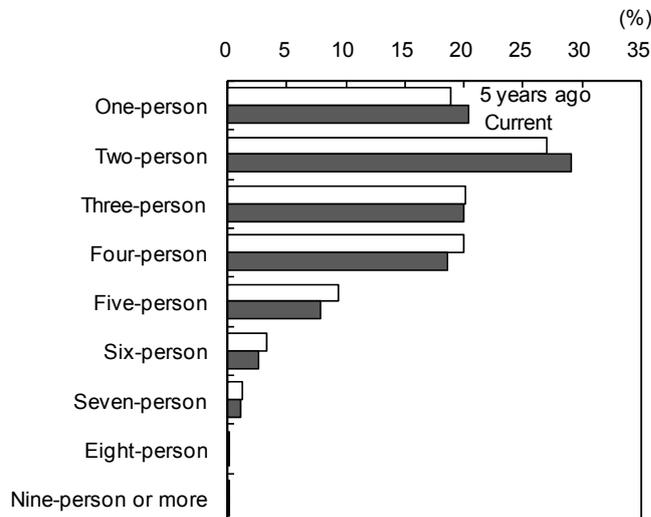
On the other hand, the main reasons for leaving households are marriage, new job offers/job transfers, deaths etc., in the order of frequency. One of the major changes from the previous survey is that, in the case of reasons of arrival, the percentage of new-born babies decreased, reflecting the ongoing decline in the birth rate, while “other reasons” and admission to or graduation from schools increased slightly. The exact breakdown of admission to or graduation from schools is not known, but there is a possibility that the number of young people returning home after graduating from schools increased. Factors such as current economical conditions and changes in people’s intentions regarding U-turn migration may have contributed to the fact. Meanwhile, reasons for departures attributable to deaths, admission to or graduation from schools, and divorce decreased, while “other reasons” and new jobs/job transfers increased slightly. It is noted that departures due to deaths decreased, although the absolute number of deaths is on an upward trend. One possible explanation for this is that extinction of elderly one-person households due to deaths cannot be enumerated through this survey.

Figure IV-4 Numbers of Arrivals and Departures for Different Reasons (per 100 Continued Households)



* Questionnaires that did not state clearly whether or not there were any arrivals to or departures from the households are not included.

Figure IV-5 Distribution of Households by Size (Continued Households)



* Proportions out of all continued households whose sizes are known for 1999 and 2004 (7,735 households)

3. Changes in the Size of Households

- Among all continued households, 22.5% decreased in size, while 13.9% became larger during the past five years.

It was found that the average size of continued households decreased from 2.90 to 2.78 during the past five years by comparing the current

household size with that of five years ago. Figure IV-5 shows the distribution of different household sizes. The proportions of households consisting one person and two persons increased, while those of households consisting three or more persons decreased in general. Since the ratios of three-person households had shown an increase in the previous survey, this result reveals that the recent trend in shrinking household size is advancing

further. According to the data on net change in the household size, the size increased in 13.9% of all households, decreased in 22.5%, and did not change in 63.6%, which further underlines that trend. Upon closer examination, there have been significant changes in the size in those households which had contained three or more persons five years ago. While the size had stayed the same in more than 70% of the households consisting one or two persons, it had stayed the same only in 53.9% of three-person households and 49.2% of five-person households. In terms of increases/decreases in the household size, among the households that had two members five years ago, there are more for which size had increased compared to those that decreased, not to mention the same for those which were one-person households five years ago. In contrast, for households that had three or more persons five years ago, a greater number have decreased in size compared to those that have increased.

Compared to the previous survey, out of the households consisting three or more members five years ago, the proportion of those that have remained the same in size decreased, while the proportion of those that have become smaller increased dramatically. Further breakdown of data shows that among the households that decreased in size, the proportions have risen significantly for cases where households consisting six or more persons became four-person households (from 9.3% to 15.5%) and where four-person households became two-person households (from 7.9% to 12.1%). Among the households that increased

in size, the proportions have dropped for cases such as where three-person households became four-person households (from 16.7% to 14.5%) and where one-person households became three-person households (from 5.3% to 4.2%).

4. Changes in the Family Types of Households

- Among continued households, the most common change is for households of a married couple with children to turn into households of a married couple only.

Table IV-2 shows the changes in family types among continued households that have been in existence for the last five years. Table IV-2 (1) indicates the proportions out of the total number of continued households. It shows that the family type has not changed in many cases (represented by the diagonal entries in the table; 79.3% in total). Among households for which the family type changed, the greatest number was those cases where households of a married couple with their children became households of a married couple only (4.9%), followed by the cases where households of a married couple only became households of a married couple with their children (3.1%), and cases where households of a married couple with children became one-person households (2.3%). The first two types of changes move in an exactly opposite direction to each other, and in the table, they are positioned on the opposite sides of the aforementioned diagonal line. Note that, in such paired changes, the greater of the changes are

Table IV-2 Changes in Family Types (Continued Households)

(1) Ratios/Proportions out of the total number of continued households

Present \ 5 years ago	Number of households	One-person households	A married couple only	A married couple with their children	Other households	Total
One-person households	1,454	15.6	1.5	1.3	0.4	18.8
A married couple only	1,630	1.9	15.6	3.1	0.4	21.1
A married couple with their children	3,471	2.3	4.9	36.3	1.5	45.0
Other households	1,165	0.6	0.9	1.8	11.8	15.1
Total	7,720	20.4	22.9	42.5	14.2	100

(2) Proportions out of the number of households by family type 5 years ago

Present \ 5 years ago	Number of households	One-person households	A married couple only	A married couple with their children	Other households	Total
One-person households	1,454	82.7	8.1	6.9	2.3	100
A married couple only	1,630	9.1	74.0	14.8	2.0	100
A married couple with their children	3,471	5.2	10.8	80.7	3.3	100
Other households	1,165	4.0	5.8	11.9	78.2	100
Total	7,720	20.4	22.9	42.5	14.2	100

* Households with unknown family types are not included.

placed in the sub-diagonal part of the table while the lesser change is placed above. As for “other households,” although the category includes various types of households, large households such as three-generation households generally represent the majority here. Thus, it can be concluded that the characteristics observed above reflect the recent trends of shrinking household size and simplification of household structures.

Compared to the data from the previous survey, the proportions of households remaining one-person and those remaining married couples without children increased slightly. On the contrary, the proportions of households remaining a married couple with their children and those remaining “other households” decreased (from 40.2% to 36.3% and 13.4% to 11.8%, respectively). Prominent changes include cases where households of a married couple with their children split up into those of a married couple only and one-person households (from 4.2% to 4.9% and from 1.8% to 2.3%, respectively), as well as cases where “other households” become households of a married couples only (from 0.6% to 0.9%). On the contrary, the percentage of households of a married couple with their children becoming “other households” decreased (from 1.8% to 1.5%).

Table IV-2 (2) examines the changes in households by their family type five years ago. For any family type, 70 to 80% of the households in the category remained the same. Where the family type did change, the most prominent change for each type was: for one-person households, change to those of a married couple only (8.1%); for a married couple only, change to a married couple with their children (14.8%); for a married couple with their children, change to a married couple only (10.8%); and for “other households,” change to a married couples with their children (11.9%).

The general trend that can be observed here is that formation of households of a married couple with their children is slowing down due to the recent trends of increasing frequency of never marrying and marrying later among the general population. Furthermore, due to changes in the standard model of family structure, etc., already existing households of a married couple with their children are showing a stronger tendency to split up into households of a married couple only and one-person households, rather than evolving into three-generation families.

5. Leaving Household Head Positions

- The frequency of household heads leaving their positions due to merger of households is the

highest for both males and females in the latter half of their 20s.

The survey defines respondents who were the heads of households five years ago, but not household heads at the time of the present survey, as “former household heads.” These “former household heads” can be classified into those who had left their position when merging with other households, upon which one household had absorbed the other (these will be called “absorption type” here), and those who have been replaced by another member in the same household (“replacement type”). The proportions of each type out of the survey targets (aged 18 and up) are, among males, 1.84% for “absorption type” and 0.22% for “replacement type.” Among females, the corresponding proportions are 2.57% and 0.24%, respectively (former heads with unknown history were not included in the calculation). The high proportion of “absorption type” former heads among females may be because females are more likely to give up their positions as heads of their one-person households when they get married and merge with their spouses’ households, where they become non-household head members. Compared to the previous survey, the proportion of the “absorption type” male former household heads increased slightly (from 1.52% in the previous survey). As for “replacement type” of former heads, no clear trends of changes could be identified, due to insufficient number of samples.

When the proportions of “absorption type” and “replacement type” of former household heads out of the survey targets are distributed by age group, the percentage of the “absorption type” is high among respondents aged 20 to 34 years old for both males and females, peaking in the 25-29 age group (8.8% for males and 10.5% for females). The percentage of “replacement type” former heads is high among the elderly generations, but they are under 1% in all age groups except for males in the 75-79 age group and males aged 85 and over. Compared to the previous survey, the percentage of “absorption type” male former heads in the 25-29 age group increased significantly (from 6.7% in the previous survey), while the same proportion shows little change in the case of females (10.9% in the previous survey). The “absorption type” cases in this age group include, in addition to the aforementioned marriage, cases where respondents go back to their parents’ home after graduation from schools and due to U-turn migration. Changes in socioeconomic conditions are expected to have had a significant influence on how the trend of going back to one’s parents’ home

changed in recent years. However, the influence appears differently between males and females. Although the number of samples is insufficient to analyze this situation with certainty, it can be seen that a significantly higher proportion of males returned to their parents' home by the time of the present survey compared to the previous survey.

V Household Formation and Expansion

1. Leaving Parental Households

- The proportion of those remaining at home with their parents is higher for males than females from the age of 25 years old and up. Furthermore, the proportion increased compared to five years ago for both sexes except in the age group in their early 20s.

Figure V-1 compares the proportion of males and females who lived with their parents at the time of the present survey with the data from the fourth survey five years ago. Young, unmarried people who do not live with their parents tend to live alone, in which case the response ratio to the questionnaires is quite low. For this reason, it is necessary to take into consideration that there is some response bias in the results, and thus the survey will show a higher percentage of respondents living with their parents than in reality. Here, it is assumed that the response bias has not changed in the last five years. Among both males and females, the percentage of the respondents living together with their parents increased, indicating that the trend of delaying leaving home is dominant. It should be noted that a similar increase is not observed among the respondents in their early 20s; here, the percentages decreased, albeit slightly, from 77.7% to 76.5% in the case of males and from 78.3% to 77.5% in the case of females. This may be a sign

that the recent trend of delaying leaving home will eventually cease, but on the other hand the percentage of the young people living with parents among those who are 18 to 19 years old increased, making it quite difficult to come to any clear conclusion from the data.

- The average age at home-leaving is higher among younger generations.

Figure V-2 shows the average age at which respondents in different cohorts, who have experience of leaving home, left parental household for the first time by sex. The data obtained from those born in 1970-74 does not reflect the actual situation, as quite a large share of them still lived at home with their parents in 2004. Taking this into consideration, it could be said that females who were born in 1945-49 left their home at the youngest age on average, with the average age of leaving home becoming higher among younger cohorts. In the case of males as well, the cohort born in 1950-54 left their home at the youngest age and the average age of leaving home became higher thereafter. However, the average age at which the cohort born in 1965-69 gained independence from their parents is 21.0 years old, which is slightly younger than the corresponding age of 21.1 years old for the cohort born in 1960-64. Since subjects born from 1965 to 1969 were 35 to 39 years old at the time of the survey, this reversal is likely to indicate an actual decrease in those who delayed leaving home.

- The proportion that leaves home to attend school, etc. remains relatively stable for both sexes. The female respondents who continued living at home with their parents until marriage declined down to about 40%.

Figure V-1 Distribution of Respondents Living Together with Their Parents

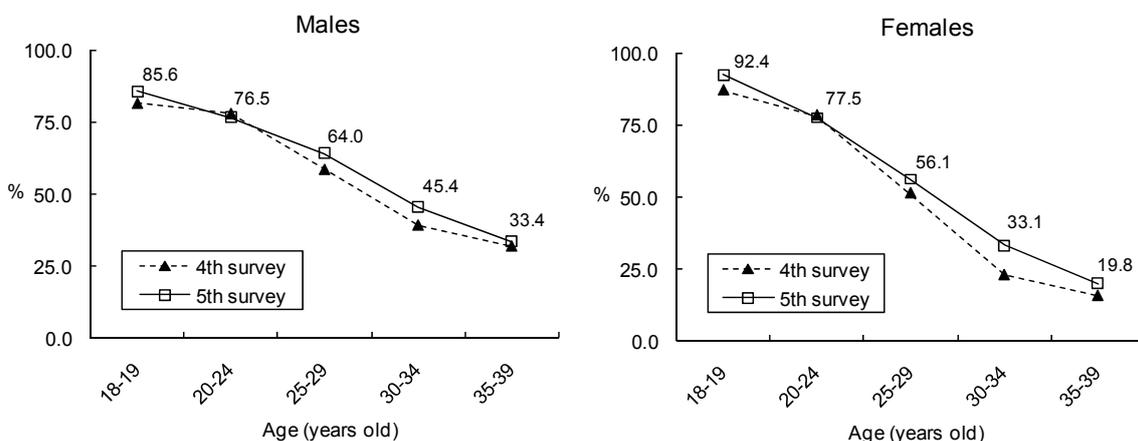


Figure V-2 Development of Average Age at Which Different Age Groups Left Home

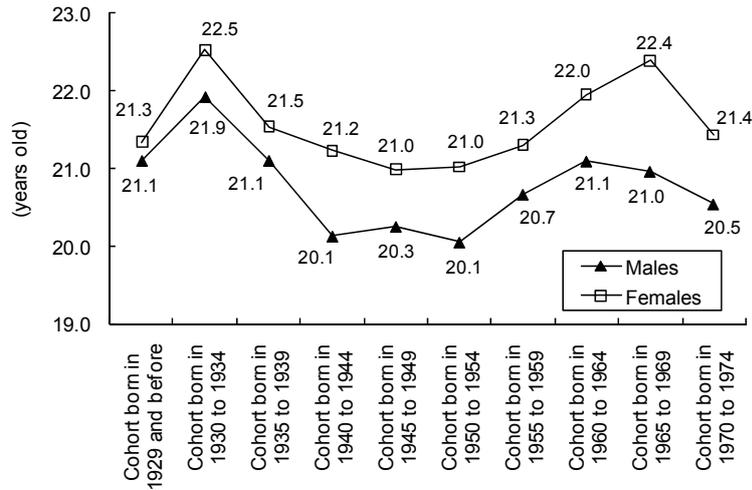


Figure V-3 Different Reasons for Leaving Home

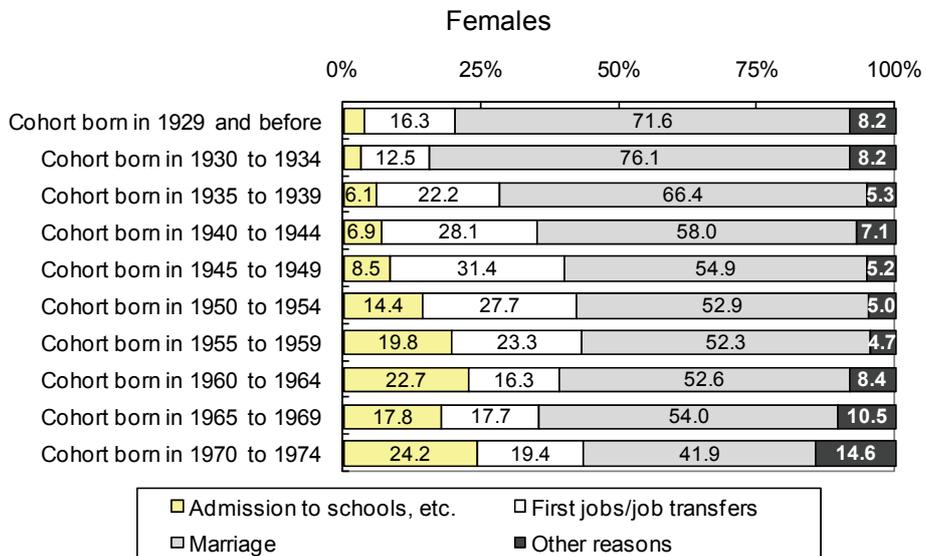
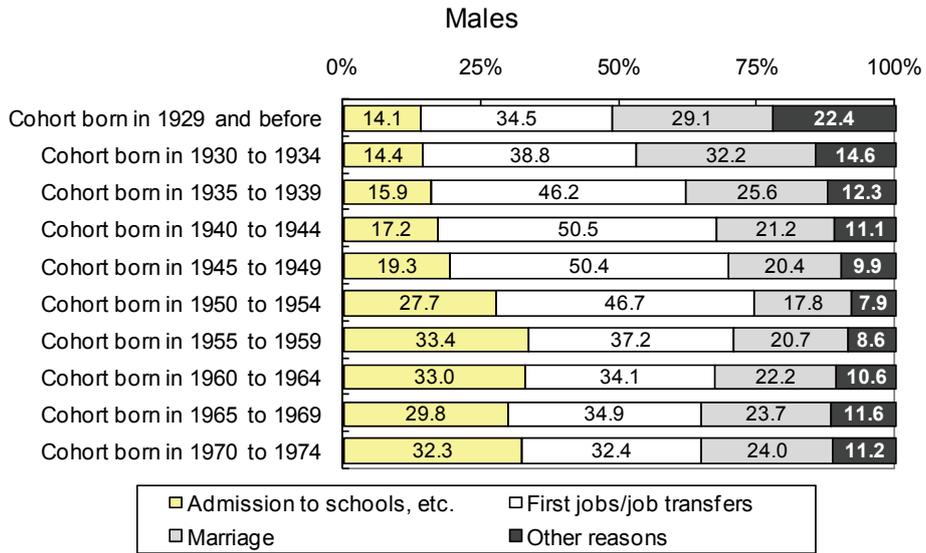


Figure V-3 shows the variation in distribution of different reasons for the first home-leaving by birth cohort and sex. There are significant differences between males and females, in particular regarding whether they left their home before getting married. Among those who had already left their parents' home, 70% of the males are considered to have left before marriage, while the majority of the females lived at home with their parents until marriage. Nonetheless, the proportion of females leaving their home before marriage has been on the rise over the long term, and the percentage of females who continued living at home with their parents until marriage has dropped from over 70% to just above 40%.

In general, home-leaving for education or first jobs are thought to that before marriage. In the old days, when only a relatively small portion of the population received higher education, those who left home for their first jobs outnumbered those who left home to enter schools, by an overwhelming majority. However, in recent years, the gap between these two groups is becoming smaller and smaller, as obtaining higher education is becoming increasingly more common. Although those who left home to attend schools increased significantly among both males and females born in 1945 or later, in the period since the 1960s, the growth has leveled off lately.

2. Cohabitation

- Although the number of unmarried couples living together increased, cohabitation still remains very rare.

At present, there is a strong positive correlation between fertility and the prevalence of extramarital births in advanced nations. The birth rate is relatively high in nations where extramarital births are common such as Scandinavia, Western Europe and English-speaking advanced countries, while it is very low in nations where extramarital births are rare such as Southern Europe, Eastern Europe, the former Soviet-bloc European areas and Eastern Asia. Many extramarital births occur among unmarried couples living together. This means that countries in which cohabitation is still very rare only stand a slim chance to recover their birth rate. It is of course possible for fertility to recover in countries where conventional institutions of marriage are maintained, but such examples have not been observed yet.

There are no questions asking about cohabitation directly in this survey, but it is possible to estimate indirectly from the following questions

regarding relationship with household heads and marital status.

Question 4

How are you related to the head of your household?

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Head | 8 Parent of spouse |
| 2 Spouse | 9 Grandparent |
| 3 Child | 10 Sibling |
| 4 Spouse of child | 11 Other relative |
| 5 Grandchild | 12 Lover, friend, etc. |
| 6 Spouse of grandchild | 13 Other |
| 7 Parent of head | |

Question 6

What is the marital status of that person?

- 1 Single
- 2 Currently married
- 3 Widowed
- 4 Divorced

In the situation where cohabiters were to state their difference from normal marriage, household heads may choose "lover, friend, etc." as the relationship with the people they live together with or choose an alternative other than "married" as their marital status, or both. For this reason, Table V-1 lists the marital status and relationship with partners less than 35 years old who have a "spouse" or a "lover, friend, etc." of the opposite sex living in the same household.

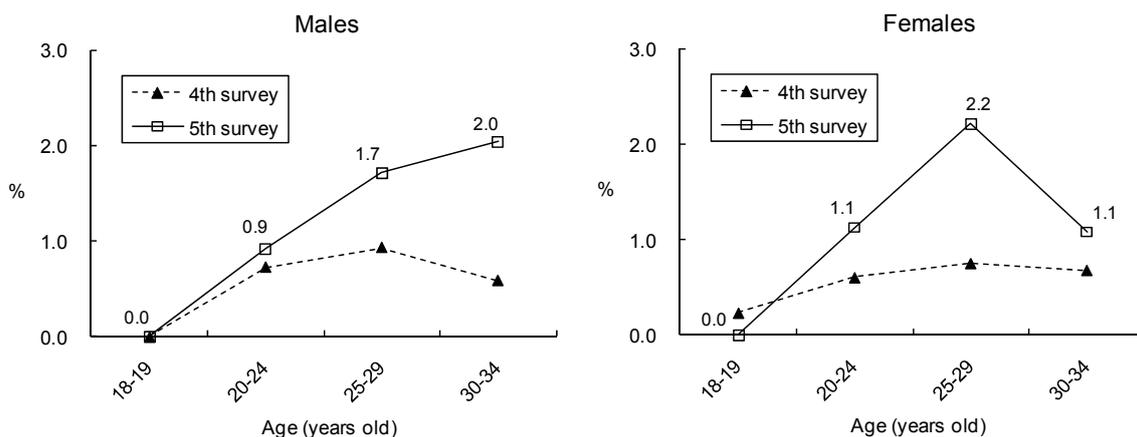
According to this table, of the 721 household heads less than 35 years old living together with partners of the opposite sex, 677 (93.9%) could be regarded as having a conventional marriage, while the remaining 44 (6.1%) responded differently from the responses expected from those who are married. Of these, it would be safe to regard 15 people who stated they were single or widowed/divorced and the partner was lover, friend, etc. clearly as unmarried couples living together. In addition, there are 28 household heads who answered that their partners are spouses but they themselves are single or widowed/divorced, as well as 1 household head who answered that the person him/herself is married, but the partner was a lover, friend, etc. These 29 people are also considered to have stated relationships different from conventional marriage. Thus, we decided to regard all of these 44 couples as cohabiters.

Figure V-4 shows the proportion of cohabiters out of the total respondents for each 5-year age group. Note that the denominator of the calculation includes married respondents as well. The proportion of cohabiters among the total respondents from 18 to 34 years old in the present survey is 1.4% for males and 1.3% for females, which are

Table V-1 Marital Status and Relationship with Partner Less than 35 Years Old

	Lover, friend, etc.	Spouse	Total
Single	12	24	36
Widowed/divorced	3	4	7
Currently married	1	677	678
Total	16	705	721

Figure V-4 Percentage of Cohabitors Among the Singles Population



higher than 0.7% and 0.6%, respectively, in the previous survey. Looking at the data by age, there are no cohabiters in their teens and the percentage of cohabiters increases as the respondents ages. Compared to the previous survey, the increase is particularly prominent among respondents aged 25 years old and up. Nonetheless, the proportion of cohabiters never exceeds 3%, indicating that long-term cohabitation continues to be a very rare custom in Japan, and that this is not likely to change in the near future.

3. Marriage

- The proportion of never-married adults increased in many age groups for both males and females, indicating advancement of the recent trends of delaying marriage and never-marrying. However, the proportion of never-married decreased among males less than 30 and females from 20 to 24 years old.

The trend of females delaying marriage is a long-term process that has been advancing throughout most of the 20th century. ‘The trend of delaying marriage was temporarily halted in the late 1940s when the sex ratio was severely squeezed during

the post-war marriage boom, and in the 1960s and early 1970s when fulltime housewife was the dominant life style during the rapid economic growth in Japan. Since the late 1970s, however, the trend has been advancing again for both genders, however, and the average age at the first marriage according to the Vital Statistics in 2004 was 29.6 years old for husbands and 27.8 years old for wives, an increase of 2.6 years and 3.1 years, respectively, compared to 1975. Correspondingly, the proportion of the never-married at age 50 did not exceed 5% for either sex until the 1980s, but the proportion rapidly increased and reached 13% for males, while that for females also exceeded 5% and is increasing steadily.

Table V-2 shows the changes in the proportion of the never-married by age and sex in this survey and in the previous round. It is noted that the percentage of never-married increased dramatically for both sexes in their 30s, clearly showing the recent trend of delaying marriage and never-marrying. Looking at the data for the 20-24 age group, however, the proportion of the never-married decreased for both sexes, albeit by a very small amount, which goes against the overall trend. In other words, as a whole, it can be said that while the probability of getting married

Table V-2 Proportion of the Never-married by Age Group and Sex

Age	Males		Females	
	4th survey (1999)	5th survey (2004)	4th survey (1999)	5th survey (2004)
18 to 19 years old	98.5	97.9	97.6	98.5
20 to 24 years old	93.4	92.4	88.4	87.9
25 to 29 years old	64.4	64.3	51.3	56.3
30 to 34 years old	34.2	39.4	20.7	28.1
35 to 39 years old	20.9	23.3	9.7	14.1
40 to 44 years old	16.3	15.5	6.1	8.8
45 to 49 years old	10.7	10.7	4.6	6.6
50 to 54 years old	5.4	8.4	4.4	3.4
55 to 59 years old	3.8	5.9	3.2	3.8
60 to 64 years old	2.2	3.0	2.7	3.4
65 years and over	0.9	0.9	2.3	2.6

Table V-3 Proportion of the Respondents Living Together with Their Children by Age Group and Sex

Age	Males		Females	
	4th survey (1999)	5th survey (2004)	4th survey (1999)	5th survey (2004)
18 to 19 years old	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.4
20 to 24 years old	3.6	4.5	6.0	7.0
25 to 29 years old	19.1	21.9	28.5	28.7
30 to 34 years old	43.8	44.4	60.9	57.1
35 to 39 years old	63.1	61.4	78.6	73.8
40 to 44 years old	72.1	70.4	82.7	82.2
45 to 49 years old	73.4	72.2	80.7	76.6
50 to 54 years old	74.6	67.6	70.0	68.4
55 to 59 years old	62.9	59.3	58.2	54.4
60 to 64 years old	50.0	48.3	46.3	43.6
65 years and over	46.5	41.5	52.8	49.3

is decreasing, the probability of getting married at a very young age is in fact increasing. While the majority follows the trend of delaying marriage, the percentage of those who get married extremely early is also increasing; the polarization of marital behaviors is advancing.

4. Childbirth

- The proportion of those, for both males and females, who are living with their children decreased among the majority of the age groups, and the recent trend for people to have fewer children and at older ages is advancing. However, the proportion of those living with their children increased among males aged 20 to 34 and females younger than 30.

Traditionally, many married couples had babies within several years after getting married and their households thus started to expand. However, the

recent demographic changes such as the aforementioned tendencies to marry later, not marrying at all, having children later and having fewer children are expected to suppress this expansion of household sizes.

Table V-3 compares the proportion of the respondents living together with their children with the previous survey by age group. The overall proportions of respondents living together with their children decreased for both sexes: from 50.1% in the previous survey to 47.8% in the present survey for males and from 54.5% in the previous survey to 52.8% in the present survey for females. The decline is observed consistently among males aged 35 and up and among females aged 30 and up. However, the proportion of the respondents living with their children increased among males from 20 to 34 years old as well as among females younger than 30 years old. While the decline in the proportion of the never-married respondents occurs primarily in the 20-24 age group, the

increase in the proportion of those living together with their children extends to a wider range. One possible reason for this may be that the aforementioned increase of extremely early marriage occurred among a very limited age group whereas pregnancy before marriage occurred in a wider selection of age groups. That is, the time period from marriage to the birth of the first child is generally becoming shorter and shorter, although the trend is not strong enough to reverse the dominant trend to have fewer children at later ages.

VI Household Dissolution and Reduction

1. Deaths of Spouses and Divorces

- Widows and widowers were most often found either in households of people living alone, or in single-parent households with children.

The respondents whose marital status was “currently married” five years ago but “widowed” in the present survey had experienced deaths of their spouses within the past five years. The proportion of those who were widowed within the past five years are 1.4% for males and 4.4% for females. The proportion of widowed females decreased slightly compared to the past two surveys, but no significant changes can be observed. As a whole, the proportion of those who experienced death of spouse tends to be higher for females than for males. This is considered to be mainly due to the difference in life expectancy between males and females. Examining the percentage of the widowed population among different age groups, it is seen that the percentage gradually increases for males in their 50s and thereafter, with a relatively significant increase in their 80s. In the case of females, the increase starts in their 50s and exceeds 10% in the 65-69 age group. In the older age groups, the percentage increases dramatically and reaches 37.1% among females aged 85 years old and up. Among the female elderly groups, the proportion of widowed females went down compared to the previous survey, however, and the percentage out of all respondents aged 65 years old and up is 13.3%, which is lower than 16.7% of the previous survey. On the other hand, the corresponding percentage among males aged 65 and up is 3.1%, which is only slightly lower than during the previous survey. Moreover, the corresponding percentage of widowed males aged 85 years old and up dropped dramatically from around 20% in the previous survey to only 8.0% in the present survey.

Table VI-1 shows the development of these family types in more detail. Among males, the

most common change is a shift from households of a married couple only to one-person households (29.9%), accounting for approximately one third of all cases. The second most common change is a shift from households of a married couple with their children to single-parent households with children, comprising a large share of 19.5%. Moreover, 23.0% of the households were classified as “other households” both five years ago and at present. These three types of development account for approximately three fourths of the total. As for females, the change from households of a married couple only to one-person households was the most common type of change, representing 33.6%. The change from households of a married couple with their children into single-parent households with children represented 17.1%, while the percentage of “other households” without changes in the family type amounted to 29.3%. Thus, although there are some differences in the individual percentages, females show similar trends as males. Overall, approximately 90% of the households of a married couple only had turned into solitary households through bereavement, while approximately three fourths of the households containing a married couple with their children had turned into households of single-parent with children. These developments will naturally manifest themselves in the changes of the distribution of family types examined earlier. Moreover, looking at respondents who used to be living with their spouses but are currently living alone, it is found that nearly 80% of these respondents are females living alone. Note that respondents who were married but living alone or with children only five years ago are considered to have been living separately from their spouses, for example because their spouses were in nursery home or hospitalized.

- Divorced males are most likely to live alone, whereas divorced females are most likely to live in single-parent households with children.

The respondents whose marital status was “currently married” five years ago but “divorced” in the present survey had experienced divorce from their spouses within the past five years. The proportion of those who were divorced within the past five years are 1.3% for males (1.2% in the previous survey) and 2.4% for females (1.7% in the previous survey), indicating a greater increase among females. Looking at the distribution by age, it is noted that the percentage is the highest among respondents younger than 30 for both genders. For males, the percentage was 16.4%, which is higher than the 12.4% of the previous survey,

Table VI-1 Development of Household Types in the Past Five Years (Bereaved)

		Males (N=87)				
5 years ago \ Present	Present	One-person households	A married couple only	A married couple with their children	Single parent and children	Other households
	One-person households		8.0	-	-	-
A married couple only		29.9	-	-	1.1	1.1
A married couple with their children		4.6	-	-	19.5	1.1
Single parent and children		1.1	-	-	6.9	-
Other households		1.1	-	-	2.3	23.0

		Females (N=280)				
5 years ago \ Present	Present	One-person households	A married couple only	A married couple with their children	Single parent and children	Other households
	One-person households		3.6	-	-	1.1
A married couple only		33.6	-	-	2.5	1.4
A married couple with their children		2.9	-	-	17.1	2.5
Single parent and children		-	-	-	1.8	0.4
Other households		0.7	-	0.4	2.5	29.3

* Proportions out of all continued households whose sizes are known for 1999 and 2004 (7,735 households)

while the percentage of females was 17.0%, which is lower than the 20.3% of the previous survey, resulting in roughly similar levels for both sexes. The percentage drops considerably for both sexes in the 30-34 age group compared to that of the age groups up to age 29 (4.9% and 9.6%, respectively) and decreases further with age, although there is a brief reversal in the development among the age group in the early 70s. The value is relatively high, exceeding 2% among males until their 40s and among females until the 50-54 age group, but shrinks to below 1% for the older generations.

Table VI-2 shows changes in the types of households to which respondents belonged at around the time of their divorce. Among the respondents who went through changes in family types, divorced males most typically moved from living with their spouses and children to living alone (15.4%), from living with their spouses only to living alone (9.0%), or from living with their spouses and children to living only with their children (9.0%).

Additionally, the proportion of males who did not experience changes after divorce in the 5-year period include those in households with a married couple and their children (15.4%) and other households (14.1%). The cases where the current family is still composed of a married couple and their children even after divorce, as well as cases that changed to single-mother households,

are considered to include cases where respondents moved back to their parents' households due to divorce. For females, on the other hand, the shift from households composed of married couples and children to single-mother households stands out, accounting for 42.2%, followed by a shift from living only with their spouses to living alone (11.6%). The total for both sexes shows that approximately 70% has shifted from households of a married couple only before the divorce and to one-person households after the divorce. The proportion of male and female divorcees living alone indicates that, in contrast to the case of death of spouses, males account for nearly 80% of the one-person households. 17.1% of households containing married couples without children shifted to either single-parent households or households containing a married couple with their children. This can be explained by one of the members of the divorced couple moving back to his/her parents' households. Moreover, approximately 50% of the respondents living in households composed of a married couple and their children five years ago changed to households of single mothers and children, while approximately 10% changed to other households. Divorce and widowhood thus lead to shift toward one-person households and households composed of single parent and children, or formation of new such households, hence promoting the trends of separation and shrinkage

Table VI-2 Development of Family Types in the Past Five Years (Divorce)

		Males (N=78)					
5 years ago \ Present		One-person households	A married couple only	A married couple with their children	Single parent and children		Other households
					Single father	Single mother	
One-person households		7.7	-	-	-	6.4	-
A married couple only		9.0	-	1.3	1.3	-	1.3
A married couple with their children		15.4	-	15.4	9.0	1.3	5.1
Single parent and children	Single father	1.3	-	-	1.3	-	-
	Single mother	-	-	-	-	2.6	-
Other households		1.3	-	1.3	-	5.1	14.1

		Females (N=147)					
5 years ago \ Present		One-person households	A married couple only	A married couple with their children	Single parent and children		Other households
					Single father	Single mother	
One-person households		1.4	-	-	-	1.4	0.7
A married couple only		11.6	-	1.4	-	1.4	2.7
A married couple with their children		4.8	-	2.7	-	42.2	5.4
Single parent and children	Single father	-	-	-	0.7	-	-
	Single mother	0.7	-	-	-	4.1	0.7
Other households		2.0	-	-	-	6.8	9.5

* Percentage out of total number (N) excluding unidentified household types

of households. In case of widowhood, some shifts toward larger household size can also be observed, for example from households of a married couple only to households of a married couple and their children, and from households of a married couple and their children to “other households.”

2. Departure of Children and Empty Nest

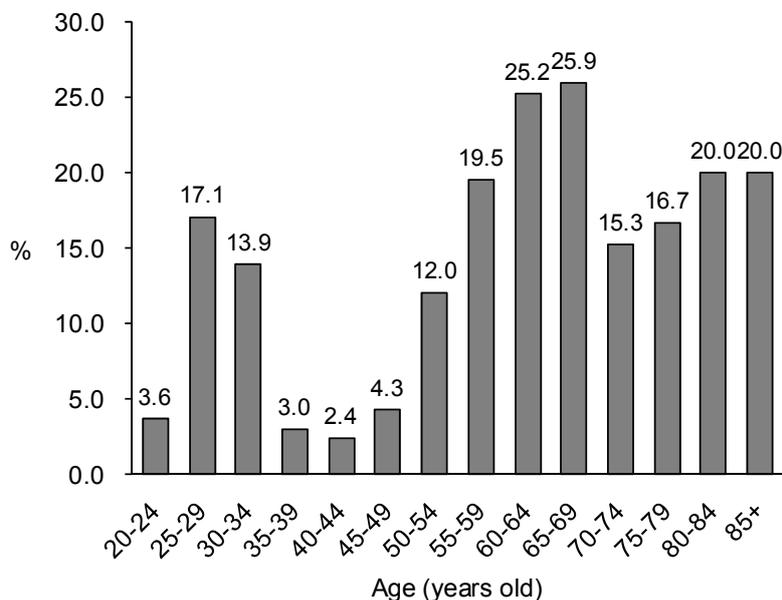
- More than 20% of all households containing the heads of households in their 60s had changed from households of a married couple with their children into those consisting of a married couple only during the last 5-year period.

Households where children left home due to employment, marriage, etc. leaving behind married couples only are called “empty nests.” Empty nests are common targets of social interest, considering their roles in residential environments as well as in terms of reasons for living of married couples, health and care of parents and the married couples themselves and so on. Due to the growing life expectancy, the empty nest period tends to extend as well. In the present survey, the percentage of households containing a married couple with their children five years ago that had changed into households consisting of a married couple only by the time of the current survey represented 12.9% (12.7% of continued households).

Changes from households composed of a married couple and their children to households composed of a married couple only can be classified into two categories depending on the position of respondents. In the case where the respondents are a “married couple” (i.e., parents), the changes can be considered to be family type changes in the household separation period, while in the case where the respondents are “children,” the family type changes occur during the household formation/expansion period. Figure VI-1 examines proportion of households shifting from households composed of a married couple and their children to households composed of a married couple only by age (current age) of heads.

Looking at the figure, a small peak is observed when the household heads are in the latter half of the 20s, in addition to a larger peak in the 60s. The former case of the young generation can be explained by the fact that the household heads, who were “children” in households composed of a married couple and their children, formed their own households of a married couple only due to marriage. The portion corresponding to so-called empty nests is thus generally found among the household heads in their 40s and over. The generation of empty nests accelerates from the 50s and reaches approximately 25% among the age groups in their 60s. Thus, it can be said that empty nests are being generated actively among households

Figure VI-1 Distribution of Households Shifting from Households Composed of A Married Couple and Their Children to Households Composed of A Married Couple Only by Age of Household Heads



whose heads are in their 50s to 60s. The generation of empty nests slows down afterwards, but eventually goes up again. The reason for this situation among the older elderly generation has not been clarified yet because there are only a few case samples, but it is clear that children being separated from parents due to deaths and reasons other than leaving home are included in these cases as well.

- Becoming an “empty nester” was most common among males in their early 60s and females in their late 50s.

In the following, we examine how households shift to empty nests by focusing on parents who let their children leave home. Here, we divided the process by which grown-up children leave their home into the following four stages.

Looking at the percentage of individuals in each stage, 41.5% were in stage I (compared with 45.5% and 47.2% in the fourth and third surveys, respectively), 29.2% were in stage II (compared with 30.0% and 32.1% in the fourth and third surveys), 7.6% were in stage III (compared with 6.2% and 8.3% in the fourth and third surveys), and 21.7% were in stage IV (compared with 18.3% and 12.4% in the fourth and third surveys). Compared to the previous surveys, the growing trend of the proportion of parents who finished letting

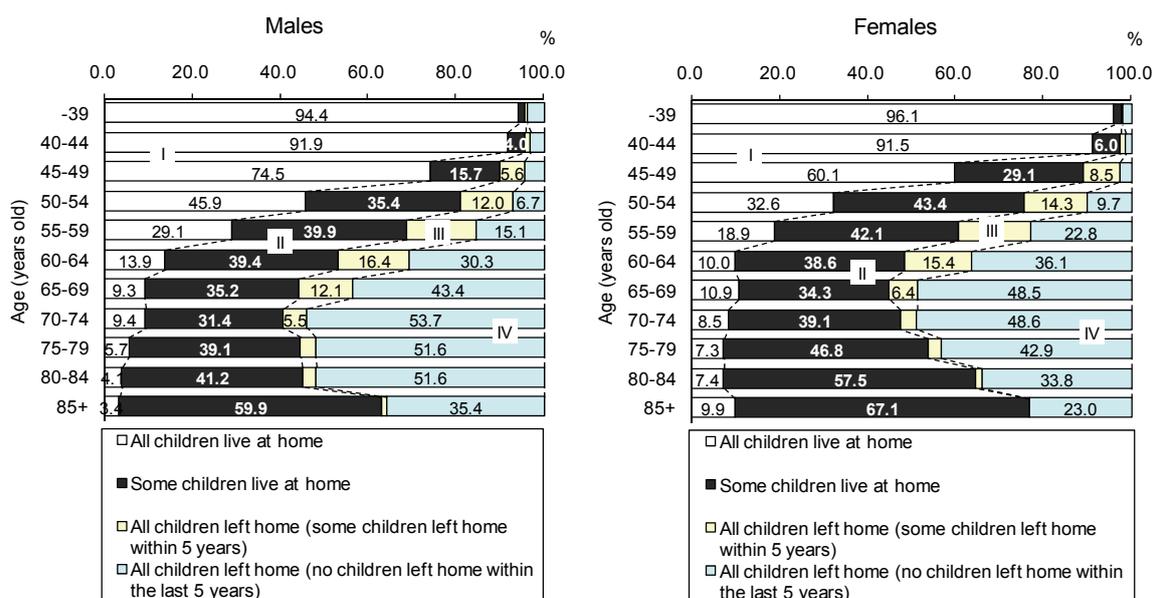
children go their own way five years ago or earlier (IV) continued. On the contrary, the percentage of parents still living together with their children, i.e., (I) not started yet and (II) partly started, keeps on decreasing. Moreover, the percentage of parents whose last children left home within the last 5-year period (III) among parents whose children have already left home increased slightly.

In these four stages, III and IV represent parents who live separately from all their children regardless of the previous household type and are said to be parents belonging to the empty nest category in a broad sense. The proportion of these empty nesters is 29.3% (24.5% in the previous survey) and, looking from the parent side, it can be said that a little more than one in four parents belongs to the empty nest category. Moreover, parents currently living separately from all children (III) out of those who were living with at least one child in the survey five years ago (I, II and III) represent 9.7%. It is safe to say that approximately 10% of parents living with their children became empty nesters in this 5-year period.

Figure VI-2 shows the distribution of these four stages by sex and age. The proportion of respondents in stage III or IV (those living separately from all children) rose rapidly among males in their early 50s and females in their late 40s to 50s, and reach about 50% among either sex in their 60s. In other words, it can be said that about half

Symbol	Meaning/situation	Status of living with children
I	Not started yet (no children have left home yet, and all children live at home with parents)	All children live at home
II	Partly started (some children left, while others are still at home)	Some children live at home
II	Finished within the recent 5-year period (all children left home since July 1999 and are no longer at home)	All children left home
IV	Finished more than 5 years ago (all children had already left their home before July 1999)	

Figure VI-2 Distribution of Four Stages by Which Parents Become Empty Nesters by Sex and Age



of the population in this age group were empty nesters. The shift to empty nests within the past 5 years (III) was particularly conspicuous among males in the 60-64 age group (16.4%) and females in the 55-59 age group (16.2%).

The proportion of empty nesters peaks out in the 70-74 age group for males and in the 65-69 age group for females, then decreases gradually, as more and more people resume living with some of their children (stage II). This tendency is particularly salient among females. The proportion reaches 67.1% among females aged 85 and over. This is considered to be due to a pattern where children who left home once start living together with their parents due to the old age of the parents. Figure VI-3 shows the result of asking parents who are in stages I and II, i.e., those who live together with all or some of their children, about their children's experience of leaving home. The proportion of those whose children have experience of leaving home increases with age for both males and females in general, and reach around 50% or

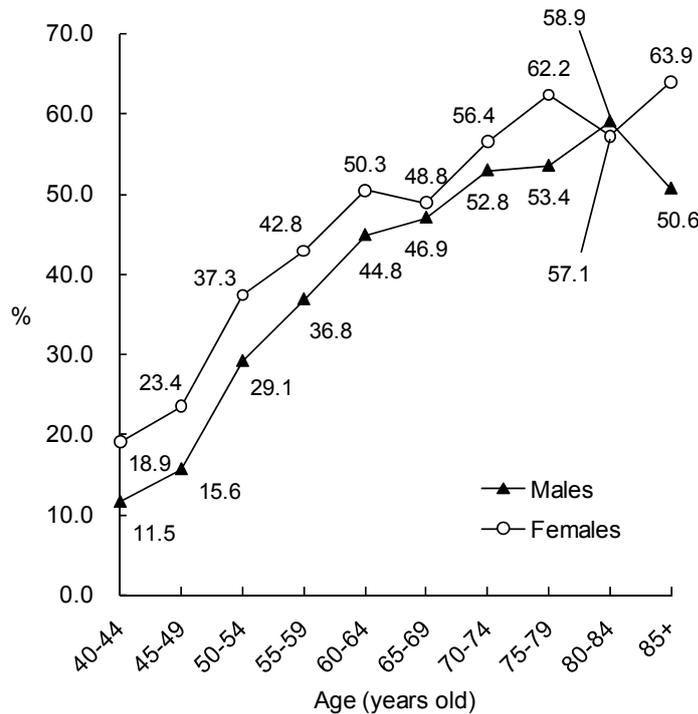
more among females aged 65 years old and up and males aged 70 years old and up. This pattern of parents starting to live together with their children again in their old ages can be considered to be for purposes of special care and support of parents, but considering the changes in family types due to widowhood and divorce discussed earlier, changes on the child side are also inferred to be related.

3. Health of the Elderly and Their Households

- Few elderly needing s care live in one-person households and households of a married couple only. Many live in “other households.”

In the following, we categorize the respondents in need of help/special care into the categories “some help is required,” “bedridden or in need of full support,” or “hospitalized” based on the alternatives related to health conditions of household members. Looking at the proportion by sex and age, it is seen that the percentage starts to rise from

Figure VI-3 Proportion of Parents Living Together with Children with Experience of Leaving Home



the late 50s for both sexes, and 9.7% of males as well as 16.6% of females aged 75 to 79 years, i.e., 10% or more of the entire respondents in this age group, require some form of support. After this age group, the percentage rises dramatically, reaching as high as 46.4% and 56.3% for males and females aged 85 years old and up, respectively. Among the entire respondents aged 65 years old and up, the proportion of the respondents requiring care is 11.5% for males (10.7% in the previous survey) and 16.2% for females (14.9% in the previous survey).

Looking at the distribution of family types of households among the respondents aged 65 years old and up according to the need of special care (Figure VI-4), it is noted that both males and females in need of special care are likely to live together with children, etc. rather than living alone or living with spouses only, and the proportion is particularly high among “other households.” Moreover, the percentage of females requiring special care and belonging to households of a married couple only or households of a married couple with their children is around half of those not requiring special care. In general, females play greater roles in special care at home, including wives taking care of husbands. The present survey is unable to compare family types before and

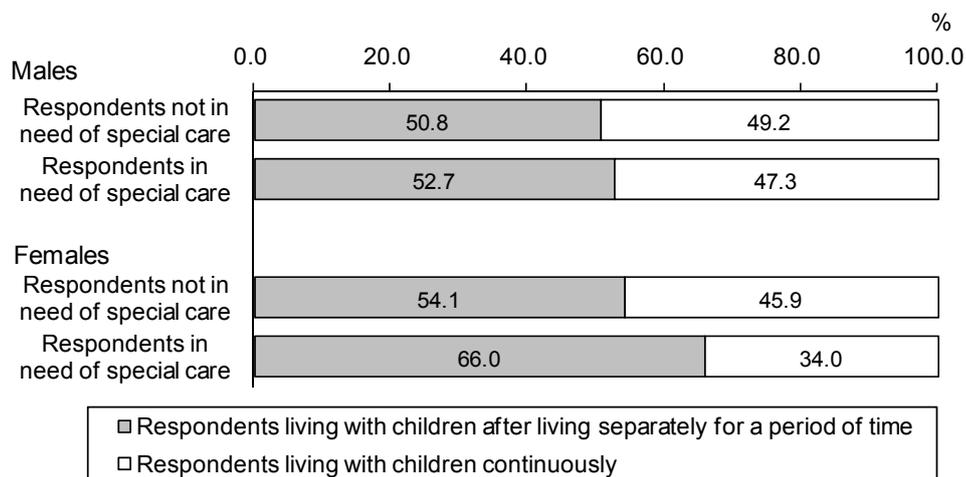
after some family members start to require special care. Nonetheless, the data suggests that if a wife belonging to a household of a married couple only begins to need special care, for instance, the household is likely to go through some shift in the family type. On the other hand, it is worth paying attention to the fact that 8.7% of males and 16.4% of females requiring special care are living alone.

It was mentioned above that more of the elderly requiring special care belong to “other households” compared to those who are healthy. The majority is considered to be living together with children and their spouses. Figure VI-5 shows a breakdown, by need of special care, of the results of asking respondents aged 65 and up living with children if their children have experience of leaving home. The percentage of the respondents living with children with experience of leaving home, i.e., who left the home at least once, is 52.7% for males requiring special care as opposed to 50.8% for healthy males. The corresponding values for females are 66.0% and 54.1%, respectively, showing a larger gap than males (the gap in this distribution is significant at a significance level of 1% in a chi-square-test in the case of females). Since the needs for special care rise with age, it is difficult to find a direct relationship between children living together again with aged

Figure VI-4 Distribution of Household Types of Respondents Aged 65 Years and Up, by Need of Special Care



Figure VI-5 Distribution of Respondents Aged 65 Years and Up Living Together with Children with/without Experience of Leaving Home, by Need of Special Care



parents and health conditions of the parents, but the survey suggests that there is some relationship between these factors.

The following interesting pattern can thus be pointed out: households are formed and expand, then go through a period of separation and shrinking, and then show a tendency of expansion again, in a sense. Considering the tendency of declining

number of children, households of aged people in the future may exhibit entirely new behaviors as well.

Note

* This paper is based on the material published on July 21, 2006.