Japanese Economy Monthly Forecast

March 2024

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Headlines

<u>Review of latest official data</u>

► This forecast reflects data released through the end of March. About two-thirds of all data necessary for an accurate estimate of 2024 Q1 GDP are available. Data on household consumption-related indicators, public works, and the balance of payments have not been released yet.

► According to the second official advance estimate, the 2023 Q4 real GDP growth rate was revised upward from the first advance estimate to annualized +0.4% QoQ. As a result, GDP growth turned to positive for the first time in two quarters, following two consecutive quarters of negative growth.

► The Index of Industrial Production index in February declined by -0.1% MoM, marking the second consecutive month of negative growth. As a result, the January-February average was -6.2% lower than the 2023 Q4 average. METI's assessment of the production trend is "seesawing turning into weakening".

Comparing the January-February average with the 2023 Q4 average, planned construction expenditures fell by -3.0%, while the index for shipments of capital goods declined by -11.4%. Compared to the October-December average, The real consumption trend index decreased - 0.6% in January, but public works increased +1.8%. The slump in consumption, housing investment, business facilities, and private-sector demand is noticeable.

Comparing the January-February average with the 2023 Q4 average, real exports declined by -4.0%, while real imports shrank by -7.3% (BOJ basis). Since the latter declined more, the contribution of net goods exports to real GDP growth was positive.

2024 Q1 real GDP growth forecast update

▶ APIR's expenditure-side CQM forecast for real GDP growth in 2024 Q1 is an annualized -3.0% QoQ. On the other hand, the production-side forecast figure is an annualized -4.2%. The average of the two forecasts is an annualized -3.6%, which is significantly lower than the market consensus forecast figure of -0.36% (Figure 1).

<u>2024 Q1 inflation forecast update</u>

▶ In February, the nation-wide Core CPI rose by +2.8% YoY. Inflation accelerated from the previous month for the first time in four months. Meanwhile, the core-core CPI index (excluding fresh food and energy) rose for the 23rd consecutive month, by +3.2% YoY. However inflation decelerated for six consecutive months.

Our CQM forecasts for the private final consumption expenditure deflator and the domestic demand deflator in 2024 Q1 are respectively +0.1% and +0.2% QoQ. However, since the terms of trade are deteriorating, our forecast for headline inflation in Q1 (GDP deflator) is +0.0% QoQ (Figure 2).

Fig 1 CQM Forecast: Real GDP Growth Rate Jan-Mar (Q1) 2024 (%, QoQ annualized growth)

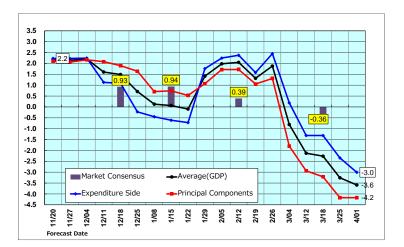
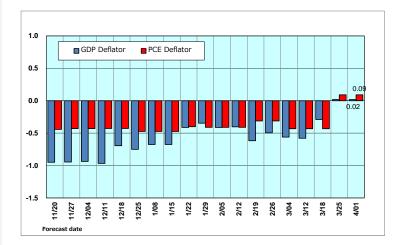


Fig 2 CQM Forecast: Inflation Jan-Mar (Q1) 2024 (%, QoQ growth)



We used the Current Quarter Model (CQM) methodology developed by Professor Emeritus L. R. Klein to create two forecasting models for the Japanese economy: a demand-side model and a production-side (principal component analysis) model. We refer to the forecasts by the former model as the main series, and those by the latter model, as well as the average of both models, as the reference series. Forecasts made using the CQM model are renewed continuously, incorporating the latest weekly data, which makes it possible to determine and trace the impacts of the latest short-term trends on macroeconomic conditions.

Re-	Data	Economic Indicator	Value/ Index	Cha	nge
lease Date	Month		Score	МоМ	YoY
3/29	February	Labor Force Survey			
		Total employment (millions)	67.83	+0.22	
		Total unemployment (millions)	1.82	+0.12	
		Unemployment rate (%)	2.6%	+0.2%pt	
	February	General Job Placement Situation			
		Job offers-to-applicants ratio	1.26	-0.01%pt	
	February	Indices of Industrial Production (preliminary figures, 2020=100)			
		Production	97.9	-0.1%	
		Shipments	96.2	-0.4%	
		Inventories	101.6	+0.6%	
	February	Current Survey of Commerce (preliminary figures)			
		Retail trade (billion JPY)	12,937.0	+1.5%	+4.6%
	February	New Housing Starts			
		New housing starts (SA, Unit)	59,162	-0.9%	-8.2%
		Planned residential construction expenditure (billon JPY)	1,143.9	-2.9%	-2.2%
	March	Tokyo Region Consumer Price Index (2020=100)			
		Core	106.5	+0.2%	+2.4%
	January	Construction Costs Deflator (2015=100)			
		Housing construction	123.0		+1.1%
		Public works	122.2		+2.8%
3/28	February	Producer Price Index for Intermediate and Final Demand (2015=100)			
		Capital goods	108.4		+3.7%
		Consumer goods	112.6		+2.4%
3/27	January	Index of Business Conditions (revised, 2020=100)			
		Leading indicators	109.5	-0.4	
		Coincident indicators	112.1	-3.8	
		Lagging indicators	106.0	-1.6	
3/26	February	Corporate Services Price Index (2015=100)			
		Overall index	110.0		+2.1%
3/22	February	National Consumer Price Index (2020=100)			
	,	Core index	106.5	0.0%	+2.8%
3/21	February	Trade Statistics (customs clearance level)			
0,		Trade balance (billion JPY)	-379.4	-451.6	-59.2%
		Exports (billion JPY)	8,249.2	-1.5%	+7.8%
		Imports (billion JPY)	8,628.6	+3.8%	+0.5%
3/19	January	Indices of Industrial Production (final figures, 2020=100)	0,020.0	10.070	10.07
0,10	bandary	Production	98.0	-6.7%	
		Shipments	96.6	-7.5%	
		Inventory	101.0	-1.7%	
		Production capacity index	98.5	1.7 /0	+0.1%
		Capacity utilization ratio	98.5 98.6	-7.9%	+0.17
			0.00	-1.3/0	
3/18	January	Private Core Machinery Orders (billion JPY)	823.8	-1.7%	

Table 1: Main Economic Indicators (latest)

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		Private non-residential construction (billion JPY)	924.4		-3.8%
		Public works (billion JPY)	2,151.7		+3.1%
3/15	January	Tertiary Industry Activity Index (2015=100)	100.9	+0.3%	10.170
5/15	February	Public Works Advanced Securities Statistics	100.5	+0.070	
	TEDIUALY	Contract amount (billion JPY)	891.7		-0.7%
		Number of contracts	10,653		-0.7%
3/12	February	Domestic Corporate Price Index (2020=100)	10,000		-0.078
5/12	TEDIUALY	Corporate Price	120.3	+0.2%	+0.6%
		Export Price	136.9	+0.2 %	+8.8%
		Import Price			
			164.4	+1.1%	+0.2%
3/8	January	Family Income and Expenditure Survey (households with 2 or more people)			
		Nominal consumption expenditure (JPY)	289,467	-1.2%	-4.0%
		Real consumption expenditure		-2.1%	-6.3%
	January	Consumption Trend Index (2020=100)	103.3	-0.2%	
	January	Index of Business Conditions (preliminary figures, 2020=100)			
		Leading indicators	109.9	-0.6	
		Coincident indicators	110.2	-5.8	
		Lagging indicators	105.5	-2.0	
	January	Information Services Industry Sales (billion JPY)	1,220.7		+4.8%
	February	Economy Watchers Survey			
		Current Conditions Diffusion Index	51.3	+1.1	
		Business Outlook Diffusion Index	53.0	+0.5	
	January	Balance of Payments			
		Current account (billion JPY)	438.2	+50.7%	+2,451.8
		Exports (billion JPY)	7,340.3	-7.5%	+7.6%
		Imports (billion JPY)	8,783.0	-10.9%	-12.1%
3/7	January	Monthly Labor Statistics (preliminary figures)			
	_	Gross average salary per worker (JPY)	282,270		+2.0%
		Total working hours	127.1		-0.6%
	January	Consumption Activity Index (2015=100)	95.5	+0.3%	
3/5	February	Tokyo Region Consumer Price Index (2020=100)			
		Core	106.2	+0.1%	+2.5%
3/4	February	Food Balance (billion JPY)	-16.2		+9.8
3/1	February	New Car Sales (vehicles)	298,491		-16.2%
	February	Consumer Confidence Index (SA)	39.1	+1.1	
2/27	Decem- ber	Monthly Labor Statistics (final figures)			
		Gross average salary per worker (JPY)	572,334		+0.8%
		Total working hours	136.1		-0.9%

	Real GDP			Deflator		Real GDP			Defla	Deflator		Real GDP			Deflator	
Forecast date	Expenditure side	Production side (PCA)	Average	GDP	PCE	Expenditure side	Production side (PCA)	Average	GDP	PCE	Expenditur e side	Production side (PCA)	Average	GDP	PCE	
uute			2023Q4					2024Q1					2024Q2			
		SAAR (%)		QoQ (%)		SAAR (%)		QoQ ((%)		SAAR (%)		QoQ ((%)	
11/20	-1.1	0.5	-0.3	-0.6	0.3	2.2	2.1	2.2	-0.9	-0.4						
11/27	-1.1	-0.2	-0.7	-0.3	0.9	2.2	2.1	2.1	-0.9	-0.4						
12/04	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	0.9	2.2	2.2	2.2	-0.9	-0.4						
12/08																
12/11	2.7	1.0	1.8	-0.1	1.0	1.1	2.1	1.6	-1.0	-0.4						
12/18	2.6	1.0	1.8	0.1	1.0	1.1	1.9	1.5	-0.7	-0.4						
12/25	1.4	0.8	1.1	0.0	0.9	-0.2	1.6	0.7	-0.8	-0.5						
1/08	0.7	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.9	-0.4	0.7	0.1	-0.7	-0.5						
1/15	1.8	2.1	1.9	0.1	0.9	-0.6	0.7	0.1	-0.7	-0.5						
1/22	1.8		1.7	0.2	1.0		0.5	-0.1	-0.4	-0.4						
1/29	2.5		2.2	0.2	1.0			1.4	-0.3	-0.4						
2/05	3.2		2.4	0.2	1.0			2.0	-0.4	-0.4						
2/12	2.0	1.7	1.9	0.2	1.0	2.4	1.7	2.0	-0.4	-0.4						
2/15	<u>-0.4</u>			<u>0.4</u>	<u>0.2</u>											
2/19						1.6		1.3	-0.6	-0.3	0.6		0.6		-0.1	
2/26						2.4		1.9	-0.5	-0.3	0.4				-0.1	
3/04						0.2	-1.8	-0.8	-0.6	-0.4	0.1	0.9	0.5	-0.3	-0.1	
3/11	0.4*			0.4*	0.2*											
3/12						-1.3		-2.1	-0.6	-0.4	0.6				-0.1	
3/18						-1.3		-2.3	-0.3	-0.4	0.6		0.9	-0.1	-0.1	
3/25						-2.3		-3.3	0.0	0.1	-0.5			0.0	0.2	
4/01						-3.0	-4.2	-3.6	0.0	0.1	-0.8	0.6	-0.1	0.1	0.2	

Table 2: CQM Forecast: GDP Tracking

Note: Underlined figures are 1st preliminary estimates.

Table 3-1: Gross Domestic Product at Chained 2015 Price: Y Billion

	Quarterly			Forecast		CY		FY	
	2023Q2	2023Q3	2023Q4	2024Q1	2024Q2	2022	2023	2022	2023
GDP/GDE									
Gross Domestic Products	562,578	557,983	558,510	554,266	553,197	548,375	558,921	551,920	558,334
Private Consumption	297,936	296,921	296,172	295,550	296,216	295,859	297,748	298,114	296,645
Residential Investment	18,733	18,615	18,433	18,251	18,095	18,346	18,546	18,288	18,508
Nonresidential Investment	89,713	89,605	91,439	89,492	88,996	88,623	90,474	89,874	90,062
Change in Private Inventory	3,655	994	279	730	933	2,927	2,279	3,025	1,415
Government Consumption	119,737	120,072	119,876	119,915	120,416	118,857	119,890	119,327	119,900
Public Investment	26,884	26,614	26,413	26,886	26,783	25,807	26,523	25,853	26,699
Change in Public Inventory	-33	-43	-51	-43	-31	22	-12	37	-42
Net Exports	5,121	5,108	6,195	3,731	2,035	-1,358	3,374	-1,842	5,039
Exports of Goods & Services	111,249	112,288	115,188	107,975	107,134	108,215	111,484	108,739	111,675
Imports of Goods & Services	106,127	107,179	108,993	104,244	105,099	109,572	108,109	110,581	106,636
Gross National Income	583,870	580,132	581,377	581,343	578,951	564,726	579,244	567,174	581,680
Memo:									
Total Demand	668,705	665,163	667,503	658,510	658,296	657,948	667,030	662,502	664,970
	Upper Row	: % chang	e from the	previous qu	arter Low	er Row: %	change froi	m a year ea	rlier
Gross Domestic Products	1.0	-0.8	0.1	-0.8	-0.2		, i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i		
SAAR	4.2	-3.2	0.4	-3.0	-0.8				
% Change Year Ago	2.3	1.6	1.3	-0.5	-1.7	1.0	1.9	1.5	1.2
Private Consumption	-0.7	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	0.2				
% Change Year Ago	0.3	-0.1	-0.5	-1.5	-0.6	2.2	0.6	2.7	-0.5
Residential Investment	1.8	-0.6	-1.0	-1.0	-0.9				
% Change Year Ago	3.1	2.1	0.4	-0.8	-3.4	-3.5	1.1	-3.4	1.2
Nonresidential Investment	-1.4	-0.1	2.0	-2.1	-0.6				
% Change Year Ago	1.2	-0.9	2.5	-1.7	-0.8	1.9	2.1	3.4	0.2
Government Consumption	-0.1	0.3	-0.2	0.0	0.4				
% Change Year Ago	0.8	1.0	0.1	0.0	0.6	1.7	0.9	1.4	0.5
Public Investment	2.2	-1.0	-0.8	1.8	-0.4				
% Change Year Ago	5.4	3.2	2.4	2.2	-0.4	-9.6	2.8	-6.1	3.3
Exports of Goods & Services	3.8	0.9	2.6	-6.3	-0.8				
% Change Year Ago	3.7	2.5	3.7	0.8	-3.7	5.3	3.0	4.7	2.7
Imports of Goods & Services	-3.6	1.0	1.7	-4.4	0.8				
% Change Year Ago	-1.4	-5.0	-2.6	-5.3	-1.0	7.9	-1.3	6.9	-3.6
Gross National Income	2.1	-0.6	0.2	0.0	-0.4				
SAAR	8.7	-2.5	0.9	0.0	-1.6				
% Change Year Ago	3.5	3.2	2.0	1.7	-0.8	-0.1	2.6	0.4	2.6
Total Demand	0.3	-0.5	0.4	-1.3	0.0				
SAAR	1.1	-2.1	1.4	-5.3	-0.1				
% Change Year Ago	0.0	14.4	0.6	-1.3	-1.6	2.0	1.4	2.4	0.4
Contribution to GDP Grow th Ra	ate								
Domestic Demand	-0.6	-0.7	-0.1	-0.3	0.1	1.5	0.9	2.0	-0.3
Private Demand	-0.7	-0.7	0.0	-0.4	0.0	1.6	0.6	2.0	-0.5
Public demand	0.1	0.0	-0.1	0.1	0.1	-0.2	0.3	0.0	0.2
Net Exports	1.7	-0.1	0.2	-0.4	-0.3	-0.5	1.0	-0.4	1.4

	Quarterly			Forecast		CY		FY	
	2023Q2	2023Q3	2023Q4	2024Q1	2024Q2	2022	2023	2022	2023
GDP/GDE									
Gross Domestic Products	595,043	594,848	598,006	593,553	592,725	559,710	591,881	566,481	595,362
Private Consumption	321,721	322,837	322,627	322,243	323,470	311,062	322,411	315,843	322,357
Residential Investment	22,215	22,074	21,917	21,688	21,509	21,780	22,018	21,800	21,973
Nonresidential Investment	98,498	99,336	102,247	100,744	100,836	94,591	99,756	96,889	100,206
Change in Private Inventory	5,352	978	325	704	1,096	3,596	2,433	3,616	1,840
Government Consumption	123,307	124,054	124,429	124,706	125,233	120,881	123,889	122,092	124,124
Public Investment	30,990	30,871	30,788	31,346	31,328	28,944	30,645	29,278	30,999
Change in Public Inventory	-31	-56	-63	-33	-24	-96	-10	-64	-46
Net Exports	-7,011	-5,246	-4,262	-7,843	-10,723	-21,047	-9,261	-22,973	-6,091
Exports of Goods & Services		130,799	137,201	130,826	131,314	120,571	128,660	123,245	131,169
Imports of Goods & Services	132,861	136,045		138,669	142,037	141,618	-	146,218	137,260
Gross National Income	-		141,463			-	137,921		
	629,796	629,087	633,366	633,970	632,373	593,729	625,825	600,549	631,555
Memo:	707.004	700.000	700 400	700.000	704 700	704 000	700.000	740.000	700.000
Total Demand	727,904	730,892	739,469	732,222	734,762	701,328	729,802	712,699	732,622
Compensation of Employee	300,975	300,449	301,510	303,406	304,226	295,385	300,499	296,382	301,585
						D 01			
						er Row:%	change fro	m a year ea	rlier
Gross Domestic Products	2.6	0.0	0.5	-0.7	-0.1				
SAAR	10.7	-0.1	2.1	-2.9	-0.6				
% Change Year Ago	6.3	6.7	5.4	2.3	-0.4	1.3	5.7	2.3	5.1
Private Consumption	-0.3	0.3	-0.1	-0.1	0.4				
% Change Year Ago	3.3	3.0	2.2	-0.1	0.5	5.1	3.6	5.9	2.1
Residential Investment	1.6	-0.6	-0.7	-1.0	-0.8				
% Change Year Ago	2.7	1.3	0.0	-0.8	-3.2	3.4	1.1	1.5	0.8
Nonresidential Investment	-0.5	0.9	2.9	-1.5	0.1				
% Change Year Ago	4.6	2.3	5.6	1.8	2.4	6.2	5.5	7.8	3.4
Government Consumption	-0.5	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4				
% Change Year Ago	3.3	1.9	0.9	0.7	1.6	2.9	2.5	2.8	1.7
Public Investment	3.2	-0.4	-0.3	1.8	-0.1				
% Change Year Ago	8.6	6.2	4.9	4.4	1.1	-5.2	5.9	-1.7	5.9
Exports of Goods & Services	4.5	3.9	4.9	-4.6	0.4				
% Change Year Ago	5.6	4.1	7.5	8.6	4.3	20.4	6.7	18.7	6.4
Imports of Goods & Services	-5.9	2.4	4.0	-2.0	2.4				
% Change Year Ago	-4.2	-11.9	-6.0	-1.7	6.9	37.4	-2.6	32.3	-6.1
Gross National Income	3.0	-0.1	0.7	0.1	-0.3				
SAAR	12.5	-0.4	2.7	0.4	-1.0				
% Change Year Ago	6.5	6.3	4.5	3.7	0.4	2.5	5.4	3.1	5.2
Memo:									
Total Demand	0.9	0.4	1.2	-1.0	0.3				
SAAR	3.7	1.7	4.8	-3.9	1.4				
% Change Year Ago	0.0	32.9	3.0	1.5	0.9	0.0	7.0	0.0	7.3
Compensation of Employee	0.8	-0.2	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.0		0.0	1.0
% Change Year Ago	2.4	1.6	1.2	1.7	1.1	2.3	1.7	2.4	1.8
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Table 3-2: Gross Domestic Product at Current Prices: Y Billion

	Quarterly			Forecast		CY		FY	
	2023Q2	2023Q3	2023Q4	2024Q1	2024Q2	2022	2023	2022	2023
GDP/GDE									
Gross Domestic Products	105.8	106.6	107.1	107.1	107.2	102.1	105.9	102.6	106.6
Private Consumption	108.0	108.7	108.9	109.0	109.2	105.1	108.3	105.9	108.7
Residential Investment	118.6	118.6	118.9	118.8	118.9	118.7	118.7	119.2	118.7
Nonresidential Investment	109.8	110.9	111.8	112.6	113.3	106.8	110.3	107.8	111.3
Government Consumption	103.0	103.3	103.8	104.0	104.0	101.7	103.3	102.3	103.5
Public Investment	115.3	116.0	116.6	116.6	117.0	112.2	115.5	113.1	116.1
Exports of Goods & Services	113.1	116.5	119.1	121.2	122.6	111.3	115.3	113.3	117.5
Imports of Goods & Services	125.2	126.9	129.8	133.0	135.2	129.0	127.6	132.2	128.7
Unit Profit	113.4	114.5	115.2	113.6	113.2	104.6	113.1	106.2	114.2
Unit Labor Cost	99.3	99.9	100.2	101.6	102.1	100.0	99.8	99.7	100.2
	Upper Row	: % change	e from the	previous qu	arter Low	er Row : % o	change fro	m a year ea	rlier
Gross Domestic Products	1.5	0.8	0.4	0.0	0.1				
	3.9	5.0	4.0	2.8	1.3	0.3	3.8	0.8	3.9
Private Consumption	0.4	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.2				
	3.0	3.1	2.7	1.4	1.1	2.9	3.0	3.2	2.6
Residential Investment	-0.2	0.0	0.3	-0.1	0.0				
	-0.4	-0.8	-0.4	0.0	0.2	7.2	0.0	5.1	-0.4
Nonresidential Investment	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.7				
	3.3	3.2	3.0	3.5	3.2	4.2	3.3	4.3	3.3
Government Consumption	-0.4	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.0				
	2.5	0.9	0.8	0.6	1.0	1.2	1.6	1.3	1.2
Public Investment	1.0	0.6	0.5	0.0	0.3				
	3.0	2.9	2.5	2.1	1.5	4.9	3.0	4.7	2.6
Exports of Goods & Services	0.6	3.0	2.3	1.7	1.2				
	1.8	1.6	3.7	7.8	8.4	14.3	3.6	13.4	3.7
Imports of Goods & Services	-2.4	1.4	2.3	2.5	1.6				
	-2.8	-7.2	-3.6	3.7	8.0	27.3	-1.2	23.8	-2.6
Unit Profit	0.0	0.9	0.6	-1.4	-0.4				
	0.0	14.1	8.6	3.5	-0.2	-0.8	8.2	0.7	7.5
Unit Labor Cost	0.0	0.6	0.3	1.4	0.5				
	0.0	14.0	-0.1	2.1	2.8	1.3	-0.2	0.8	0.6

Table 3-3: Deflator : 2015=100