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Population Aging and International Migration Policy in South Korea

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Abstract

South Korea todays enjoys a demographic dividend, or bonus, resulting from its abundant working age population. In the near future, however, this may turn into a demographic onus with a high potential support ratio, according to the *Population Projections for Korea 2015-2065*, released by Statistics Korea. Fears will spread about stagnant population growth and the aging population and about the consequent graying of the workforce. This paper examines four aspects of the question of whether international migration can ameliorate the shock of population aging in Korea or at least slow the aging trend. First, it looks at the relationship between migration policy and pronatalist policy as methods of dealing with the aging shock. Second, it identifies the scale and trend of international migration in Korea and assesses the government's migration policy. Third, it analyzes future population estimates to identify Korea's demand for immigration, or in other words, the size of the population required for the Korean economy to keep growing, known as replacement migration. Finally, it discusses the future direction of Korea's migration policy while reviewing current issues related to the use of such policy to counter population aging.

Keywords

International migration, migration policy, replacement migration, migrant workers, marriage-based immigrants, foreign students, diaspora

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Introduction

The movement of people across national borders is known as immigration, overseas movement, or international migration. Several criteria are used for determining international migration—including nationality, place of residence, length of stay, purpose of stay, and place of birth—and each country has its own set of criteria. The UN Population Division uses the criteria of place of residence and length of stay in drafting its international migration statistics so as to create indices that enable international comparisons. The United Nations defines long-term migration as moving one's routine place of residence across national borders for more than a year, and short-term migration as moving one's place of residence for more than six months but less than one year (United Nations, 1998a). When these two categories are combined, immigration is defined as people moving their place of residence to another country for more than six months. The UN's definition of immigrant includes migrant workers and students whose stay lasts more than three months but does not include commuters or seasonal migrants, cross-border traders, travelers, and tourists whose stay lasts less than six months.

International migration policy can be divided into state policy about allowing its own citizens to cross the national borders and state policy about allowing foreign citizens to enter those borders. Each government determines its migration policy in consideration of such factors as conditions in the domestic labor market and attitudes prevalent in its society (Zolberg, 1999; Seol, 2000: 57–66). However, the actual phenomenon of migration is affected by various factors, including the global labor market and the varying economic conditions in different countries. For example, even if a government implements a policy of attracting immigrants to compensate for its shrinking domestic population, there will be little actual inflow of immigrants if that country's labor market is not capable of absorbing foreign workers. Likewise, even if a government implements a policy of aggressively sending workers overseas out of concern for its surplus population, such an attempt to reduce the population is unlikely to succeed if foreign countries are unwilling to accept immigrants from that country. International migration, therefore, can be understand as a social phenomenon that occurs through the choices of migrants and their families under institutional conditions that are formed by the markets, societies, and governments of the countries out of which, and into which, those migrants are moving. In short, the flow and the scope of international migration can be explained through the choices of individuals and families; the developmental disparity between countries; and the nexus between historical and social structures, as well as state policy (Portes, 1987; Castles, De Haas, & Miller, 2013; Seol, 2015).

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that various governments use international migration policy as a kind of demographic policy, and to good effect. Migration policy can be understood as action by the state to control the movement of people across its borders in consideration, either selectively or comprehensively, of the needs of the market and society. In this context, "control" can mean actively encouraging or suppressing the movement of people, but in some cases it can also mean ignoring such movement. The majority of countries today strictly control their national borders so as to let in the wanted and keep out the unwanted, especially foreigners from the poorest of countries. By controlling the influx and efflux of people, in other words,

migration policy has the effect of managing the volume and quality of international migration (United Nations, 1998b, 2013b).

Since South Korea has not only achieved economic growth and political democracy, but also enjoys a sophisticated culture, it possesses economic and social conditions that are attractive to migrants from other countries. However, the Korean government has remained reluctant to welcome immigrants because of the long-standing homogeneity of Korean culture and society. If the government were to clear the obstacles to immigration, therefore, it would immediately increase the population to an extent that far exceeds its measures to address the low birthrate.

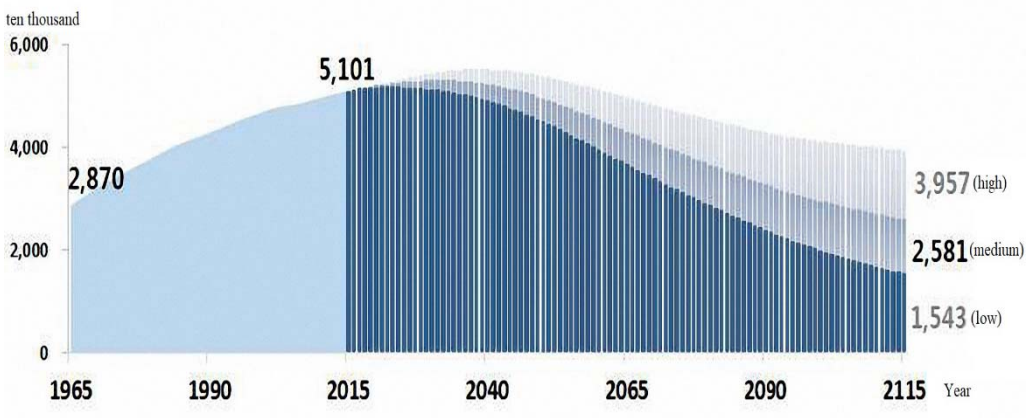
Although the Korean government asserts that its citizens have the choice to go abroad if they wish, it pursues a policy of discouraging international adoptions, maintaining a hands-off approach to studying overseas, and encouraging overseas employment. In that sense, an examination and assessment of the current status of the Korean government's international migration policy would also be meaningful for establishing a basis for Korea's continuing economic and social development.

The goal of this paper is to examine and assess the content of the Korean government's international migration policy. This consists of four sections. First, it will look at the relationship between migration policy and pronatalist policy as methods of dealing with the aging shock. Second, it will examine in detail the scale of Korea's international migration and the related trends. Koreans go to other countries with such goals as residing there, getting a job, investing, and studying, while foreigners come to Korea with such goals as getting married, finding a job, investing, and studying. This paper will identify and assess migration trends and the government's migration policy. Third, it will analyze future population estimates to identify Korea's demand for immigration, or in other words, the size of the population required for the Korean economy to keep growing (known as replacement migration). Finally, this paper will conclude by discussing major debates related to using migration policy as a way to counter population aging.

Dealing with the Shock of Population Aging

The storm of population aging is raging. In 2013, Korea had a total fertility rate of 1.19. If aging continues according to current trends, it will have a huge impact on the Korean economy and society. According to *Population Projections for Korea 2015-2065*, which was composed by Statistics Korea using the data from the 2015 population and housing census according to medium-variant assumptions about population growth, Korea's total population will grow from 51.01 million people in 2015 to 52.96 million in 2031 and then subsequently decline (Statistics Korea, 2016:1). As can be seen in Figure 1, the total population peak could come a little earlier or later than that, depending on the components of population change, but it is certain that the total population will began to decline after a certain period of time. Korea's working age population (15–64) will reach a peak of 37.63 million in 2016 and then decline rapidly after that (Statistics Korea, 2016:1). This means that the working age population, or in other words the workforce, will begin to shrink much sooner than the total population.

Figure 1. Population projections for Korea, 1965–2115.



Note 1: Statistics Korea provides population estimates for past years, reflecting the mid-year population (as of July 1), and population projections that account for future components of population change (births, deaths, and international migration).

Note 2: The future levels of the components of population change (births, deaths, and international migration) are defined as being high-variant, medium-variant, and low-variant. When all assumptions for each component of population change are combined, they produce 27 (3x3x3) scenarios, but this graph focuses on three scenarios that exhibit a large difference with respect to the amount of future population growth. Medium-variant population growth was chosen as the basic scenario for our projections by combining the medium-variant assumptions for each component of population change. In addition, the low-variant and high-variant assumptions for population growth were defined by combining the low-variant and high-variant assumptions for each component of population change.

Source: Statistics Korea, *Population Projections for Korea, 2015–2065: Press Release*, 2016, p. 45.

A decrease in the working age population leads to a decrease in the potential support ratio (PSR), or in other words, the ratio of the working age population to the elderly population calculated on the assumption that the working age population (aged 15–64) supports the elderly population (aged 65 and above). That is likely to drag down the potential economic growth rate: put more starkly, people will spend less, and the economy will lose its vitality. There have also been warnings about a demographic cliff (Dent, 2014), in which one generation reaches its "peak spending," giving way to a rapidly shrinking population and sluggish economy until the emergence of the next generation of big buyers. Korea's social welfare programs—including its national pension service and national health insurance service—are currently posting a surplus. At some point, however, that will switch to a deficit, and the accumulated deficit will continue to balloon. That is the gloomy outlook for Korea as its society ages. And that is not in the distant future, but in the near term.

The Korean government has enacted programs designed to avert the catastrophe of population aging, but their results have been meager. A government committee charged with devising countermeasures for the aging population has been in place since the presidency of Kim Dae-jung (1998–2003), and a basic plan for low fertility and aging society that was drafted in 2006 has been implemented in stages since then. The government spent KRW 42.2 trillion during the five years of the first stage and KRW 56.5 trillion during the three years of the second stage, which began in 2011, but the fertility rate remains very low. Despite wide-ranging efforts by the government to overcome low fertility by laying the foundation for child care, strengthening

incentives for corporations, and encouraging parents to take child care leave, Korea had a total fertility rate of 1.3 over the past decade, leaving it near the bottom of OECD member states.

What is the cause of low fertility, and why have the government's policies had hardly any effect? Six causes can be identified.

First, women are getting married at an older age and have a higher social status because of their greater educational attainment and their increased participation in economic activity. As a result, the proportion of women who are getting married later or not at all is gradually rising.

A second cause is changing attitudes toward having children. The weakening of the traditional belief that the family line must be carried on through offspring has altered the value attributed to childbirth. Another cause is that people are more likely to prefer having a few children and raising them well to having lots of children. In addition, the cost of raising and educating children has become a burden, creating an incentive to have fewer children.

A third way to explain low fertility is as the effect of a slowing economy. One Korean newspaper coined the term "*sampo* generation," meaning the generation that abandons three things. This *sampo* generation, the newspaper said, consists of "young people who have indefinitely postponed or even abandoned romance, marriage, and childbirth because of unstable jobs, outstanding student loans, a seemingly unending job search, and the excessive cost of living, including soaring housing prices" (Yoo & Park, 2011). As suppressed spending and a stagnant domestic economy drag on, young Koreans have put off having children or given up the idea altogether.

Fourth, Koreans can be regarded as having strategically chosen "low fertility" or a "baby strike" in an attempt to survive the extreme competition for survival in Korean society. When risk and anxiety increase in society, individuals tend to make choices that minimize that risk and anxiety. This means that individuals are more likely to choose survival through competition in the market over having children.

Fifth, some scholars have argued that, while economic and social development have typically exhibited a negative correlation with fertility in the twentieth century, this development has caused fertility to rebound in a J-curve in the early twenty-first century (Myrskylä, Kohler & Billari, 2009; Goldstein, Sobotka, & Jasilioniene, 2009; Luci, & Théveron, 2010). Since low fertility is a structural phenomenon that underdeveloped countries undergo for a certain period of time when rapid growth is bringing them into the ranks of the developed countries (Robey, 1991), fertility is unlikely to rebound in the short term, but it could rebound eventually if economic and social development progresses even further. According to this perspective, Korea's current stage of development leaves it with no choice but to endure an extremely low level of fertility.

Sixth, it is also necessary to note that low fertility is a contemporary social phenomenon that the entire world has been experiencing in the early twenty-first century. The phenomena of low fertility and the resulting aging of the population are observed not only in the Western developed world but also in a number of developing countries in Asia, such as Thailand, China, and Vietnam (United Nations, 2013a; Longman, 2010; Lee & Lee, 2011).

Low fertility ought to be regarded as being the result not of any single cause but of a combination of causes (Eun, Kwon, Kim, Park, Cho & Choi, 2011). It is obvious, therefore, that the problem of population aging cannot be resolved through short-term

measures such as introducing a bachelor tax or running campaigns to encourage childbirth. It is essential that the society as a whole works to identify the structural and individual causes of low fertility and eliminate the obstacles to childbirth.

In 2018, Korea is enjoying the effects of the demographic dividend, or bonus. The demographic dividend is the beneficial economic effect of having an increasing working age population, which pushes down the cost of supporting the young and old. For now, Korea's working age population is still increasing. But according to *Population Projections for Korea 2015-2065*, which was released by Statistics Korea, Korea's demographic dividend will soon come to an end. Korea's working age population will peak in 2016 and rapidly decline after that. This will cause the demographic bonus to vanish and be replaced by a demographic onus. This means that the population will become a strain on the economy.

From that point, the impact of population aging will gradually become more palpable. Mortality will continue to decrease, which will further accelerate aging. A dramatic boost of fertility levels in the future could definitely reverse the aging trend, but the effect of that reversal would not become tangible for at least twenty years. If fertility is maintained at the current level or falls even lower, it will further accelerate the aging trend. Examining Korea's current fertility and mortality levels shows that it would be very difficult to reverse the aging trend in the short or mid-term. If that is true, immigration is the only way to reduce the trend of population aging while buying time for demographic restructuring.

Korea's International Migration Policy and the Current State of Migration

International Migration Trends in Korea

Since 2000, Statistics Korea has been counting and releasing the number of Korean citizens and foreign nationals who are international migrants (that is, who have spent more than 90 days outside of their country of usual residence, according to the Departures and Arrivals Control Act) based on data and statistics maintained by the Korea Immigration Service, under the Ministry of Justice. The statistics include not only individuals who entered or left the country after receiving visas for a stay of more than 90 days but also those on a short-term visa (of 90 days or less) who either overstayed their visa or altered their original period of sojourn to allow them to stay longer than 90 days. Table 1 shows migration trends in Korea during the 2000s. In 2000, the number of foreigners entering Korea exceeded the number of Koreans leaving the country by 8,000, but between 2001 and 2005, this trend reversed, resulting in a net outflow. The inflow of foreigners once again exceeded the outflow of Koreans in 2006, with the gap between the two figures gradually increasing since then. The years with the largest number of net migrants since the switch to a net inflow in 2006 were 2014, with 142,000 migrants, and 2017, with 107,000 migrants.

Since international migration has a direct impact on demographic fluctuation, careful consideration should be given to which factors are driving migration. I will be examining those factors in respect to two directions of migration: incoming and outgoing.

Table 1. The scale of international migration[1] in Korea between 2000 and 2017: flow

(unit: thousands)

Year	Total migration[2]			Net migration[3]			No. of immigrants			No. of emigrants		
	Total	Korean	foreign	Total	Korean	foreign	Total	Korean	foreign	Total	Korean	foreign
2000-2017	20,383	11,388	8,997	625	-640	1,264	10,504	5,374	5,131	9,879	6,013	3,868
2000	734	473	262	8	-76	84	371	198	173	363	274	89
2001	780	507	273	-32	-87	55	374	210	164	406	297	109
2002	790	518	272	-16	-62	46	387	228	159	403	290	113
2003	851	528	323	-42	-57	15	404	236	169	447	293	154
2004	894	565	329	-49	-77	28	423	244	179	471	321	151
2005	1,155	637	518	-95	-84	-11	530	277	254	625	360	265
2006	1,180	703	477	48	-81	129	614	311	303	566	392	174
2007	1,183	731	452	78	-71	148	630	330	300	553	401	152
2008	1,262	750	512	55	-37	92	659	356	302	603	393	210
2009	1,163	697	466	20	21	-1	592	359	233	571	338	233
2010	1,182	693	489	82	-15	97	632	339	293	550	354	196
2011	1,226	701	525	91	1	90	658	351	307	568	350	218
2012	1,279	689	590	7	-4	10	643	343	300	636	346	290
2013	1,307	679	629	85	-7	92	696	336	360	611	343	268
2014	1,329	651	678	142	5	137	735	328	407	594	323	271
2015	1,306	632	674	61	-10	72	684	311	373	622	321	301
2016	1,353	626	727	75	-2	77	714	312	402	639	314	325
2017	1,409	608	801	107	3	104	758	305	453	651	303	349

Note 1: International migration: the number of people who have left their country of usual residence and stayed elsewhere for more than 90 days.
Note 2: Total migration = number of immigrants + number of emigrants
Note 3: Net migration = number of immigrants - number of emigrants
Source: Statistics Korea, 2017 *Annual Report on International Migration Statistics*, 2018

Outgoing Migration

Emigration by Koreans began in the 1860s, in the late Joseon Dynasty, when starving people in Hamgyong Province crossed the border into Manchuria, Jiandao, or Primorsky Krai. But on an official level, migration can be traced back to 121 coolies who left Incheon for the sugarcane plantations of Hawaii in 1902 according to an agreement between the governments of the United States and the Korean Empire. During the Japanese colonial occupation of Korea, many Koreans migrated to various parts of Japan, Manchuria, and Primorsky Krai. A substantial portion of these returned home after Korea's liberation from Japanese rule in 1945, but quite a few remained where they were. Their descendants settled permanently in those countries and formed communities known respectively as *Zainichi* (Koreans in Japan), *Joseonjok*

(Korean-Chinese), and *Goryeoin* (ethnic Koreans in post-Soviet states). Returnees continued to stream into Korea while the Korean Peninsula was being divided and separate governments were being established in the northern and southern halves in 1948, but this migration was cut off during the Korean War, which was fought between 1950 and 1953 (Seol, 2000).

After the Korean War ended in 1953, the only international migrants were a tiny number of people going overseas because of adoption or marriage. Overseas adoption took off in 1954 in connection with international relief efforts designed to deal with the issue of war orphans. On orders from the president, a bill was passed in 1955 that legalized international adoption, called the Act on Special Measures for Orphans and Adopted Children. When the number of international adoptions began to soar, the National Assembly passed the Act on Special Cases for the Adoption of Orphans in 1961, which formalized the procedures by which foreigners could adopt Korean orphans. At the time, the bulk of the children being given up for adoption were abandoned poor children, rather than war orphans (Hübinette, 2009; Kim, Kim, Jun, Ahn, Kim, Shin & Lim, 2013). Since American troops with United States Forces Korea (USFK) remained stationed in major cities in Korea after the Korean War, an increasing number of Korean women got married to these soldiers and later accompanied their spouses back to the United States (Yuh, 2004). During the 1950s, however, there were just a few overseas adoptees and international marriage emigrants.

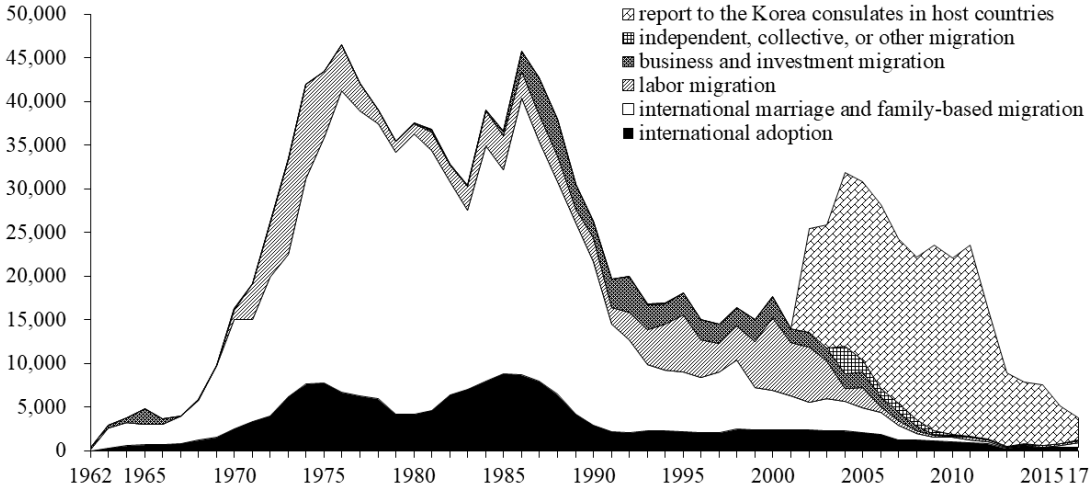
In the early 1960s, the Korean government pursued a policy of sending Korean workers overseas with the hope of relieving demographic pressure at home, reducing the surplus workforce, assisting the unemployed, and earning foreign currency. In 1962, the National Assembly passed the Emigration Act, which sought to suppress population growth and stabilize the national economy by encouraging Koreans to go overseas. It was through this Act that 92 Koreans emigrated to Brazil in December 1962 as agricultural migrants.

In 1976, the National Assembly replaced the Act on Special Cases for the Adoption of Orphans with the Act on Special Cases Concerning Adoption. After this new act took effect in January 1977, the government changed its stance to encourage domestic adoption over international adoption. Then on January 1, 1983, the government began issuing tourist passports good for one trip a year to Koreans aged 50 and above on the condition that they make a one-year deposit of KRW 2 million. This was the first time that Korea had liberalized overseas travel for the purpose of tourism, albeit with age and asset requirements. Subsequently, the government lowered the age at which overseas travel was permissible a little more each year. In 1984, the government transferred the responsibility for emigration from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and cleared obstacles to investment migration by helping exchange money to cover the cost of relocation. Around this time, the government regarded the emigration of Koreans as an opportunity for reciprocal international cooperation.

As great strides were being made toward the democratization and liberalization of Korean society as a whole after 1987, the government began to regard emigration as being connected with the "basic rights" of the individual to choose their place of residence. Over the course of a decade, the government boldly lifted regulations. In 1989, it fully liberalized overseas travel for Korean citizens; in 1991, it lifted the requirement for would-be emigrants to get permission for their emigration through the introduction of the notification system); and in 1999, it allowed emigration brokers

to simply register their business without getting a permit and also abolished restrictions on the regions to which emigration was allowed (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2009: 311–312).

Figure 2. Number of emigrants from Korea each year, 1962–2017: flow



Note 1: *Emigration Statistics* was compiled by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs between 1962 and 1983, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between 1984 and 1991, by the Korea International Cooperation Agency between 1992 and 1995, and by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs again since 1996.

Note 2: When the Emigration Act took effect in 1962, it established a permit system under which the government reviewed the suitability of applicants for emigration and decided whether or not to issue a permit. This was replaced in 1992 with a system under which individuals intending to emigrate only needed to notify the Minister of Foreign Affairs of their intention. In 1991, new emigration brokers were exempted from the requirement of applying for a permit and were allowed to simply register their business instead, while the restrictions on the regions to which emigration was allowed were abolished at the same time.

Note 3: The statistics for international adoptions are taken from *Emigration Statistics* from 1962 to 1983 and from *Statistics on the Current Status of International Adoption* from 1984 to 2017.

Note 4: The government only tracked the number of individuals granted permission to emigrate from 1962 to 1991 and the number of individuals reporting their intention to emigrate from 1992 to 2001. But in 2002, computerized statistics became available for individuals who reported their emigration in other countries, and since then the government has tracked both individuals reporting their intention to emigrate (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and individuals reporting their emigration in other countries (Korean consulates in host countries).

Sources: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Emigration Statistics*, each year; Ministry of Health and Welfare, *Statistics on the Current Status of Internal Adoption*, each year.

Figure 2 shows the number of migrants who left Korea each year since 1962, when the Emigration Act took effect. In December 1962, 17 families composed of 92 individuals went to Brazil as agricultural migrants, and in 1963 and 1965, Koreans went to West Germany to work as miners and nurses. The number of emigrants reached its peak in 1976, at 46,533. The largest category in that year was family-based emigration (that is, people living in Korea who are invited to join relatives who have already migrated), which amounted to 28,885. This was followed by international adoption, at 6,671; international marriage, at 5,667; and employment migration, at 5,310. The year with the second largest amount of emigration was 1986, totaling 43,957 people. The largest category in that year was family-based emigration, which

amounted to 27,218; international adoption, at 8,680; international marriage, at 4,456; employment migration, at 3,098; and business and investment migration, at 2,325. Business and investment migration began to rapidly increase in the mid-1980s, numbering 2,325 in 1986 and 4,269 in 1987.

But the number of emigrants fell rapidly after 1987. This rapid decline can be attributed to several causes. First, the governments of the main countries receiving immigrants (such as the United States) tightened their requirements for immigration. Second, Korea's economic development brought an overall improvement in the standard of living, which reduced the appeal of emigrating and living overseas. Third, globalization and the information age made it easier for people to engage in transnational activities without permanently changing their place of residence.

At the same time, there was a rapid increase in the number of people residing overseas for long periods of time for purposes such as employment and study. Another kind of emigration is called *locally obtained emigration*, referring to Koreans who went to another country to work or study and then acquired permanent residency or an equivalent status in that country. In such cases, individuals who notify their emigration from overseas can apply for a *residential passport* (formerly called an *emigration passport*).[1] That is, individuals who migrate overseas to work or study can become emigrants through the overseas emigration notifying system. Figure 2 shows that, after the introduction of this system, the number of people using it steadily increased to a peak of 21,875 in 2011 and then fell rapidly after 2012.

Known as "manpower exports" in the 1960s, overseas employment means going to another country temporarily to work there for a certain period of time. This concept is distinguished from employment migration, which is intended to be permanent. The first example of the Korean government sending migrant workers overseas with the hope of resolving the domestic unemployment issue and acquiring foreign currency was the assignment of nurses and miners to West Germany in the early 1960s. A total of 10,226 nurses were dispatched to West Germany between 1960 and 1976, along with 6,546 miners between 1963 and 1976. In addition, 19,587 Koreans were employed in Vietnam by Korean companies between 1966 and 1973, and large numbers of Koreans have worked on deep-sea fishing vessels trawling the world's oceans since the late 1960s. The Koreans who worked in West Germany and Vietnam were greatly outnumbered by the Korean migrant workers who worked on construction sites in the Middle East between 1974 and 1995, totaling 1,112,611 altogether. The number of Korean migrant workers in the Middle East rapidly increased from 395 in 1974 to 151,583 in 1982, but this number plunged as Koreans' enthusiasm for overseas employment rapidly cooled during the mid-1980s (Seol, 2000).

In recent years, Koreans have also been finding employment overseas, though the occupations and arrangements are different. Three of these arrangements will be introduced here. First is the working holiday, a route to overseas employment that is available to young Koreans. Under this arrangement, which is based on intergovernmental agreements, young people are given special permission to work for up to one year in a host country (Kim, 2009). A working holiday visa to the country in question can be issued one time to young people between the ages of 18 and 30, with a one-year period of sojourn. This unique system was set up to promote exchange and mutual understanding between countries, by providing young people with the

[1] The residential passport program was abolished in 2017.

opportunity to explore the unknown. As of May 2014, 20 countries had concluded working holiday agreements with Korea, including Australia, Japan, Canada, and New Zealand.

Second, there is the WEST (Work, English Study and Travel) program for Korean and American university students. Under this program, up to 5,000 Korean university students and recent graduates each year are allowed to stay in the United States on the J-1 cultural exchange visa for 18 months while they study English, do internships, and travel on their own. Participants in WEST take classes that are focused on systematic English language study, business duties and practices in the United States, corporate culture, and routine office work. After studying the English language, students are placed into an internship in an area that corresponds to their academic field, interests, and abilities.

The third such arrangement is K-move, a program organized by the Human Resources Development Service of Korea that helps Korean young people go overseas. The administration of former president Lee Myung-bak created the 100,000 Global Youth Leaders Training Initiative, which focused on helping young people find employment abroad. Under the next president, Park Geun-hye, this program was renamed "K-move." This overseas activity brand integrates a hodgepodge of programs initiated by various government departments. A range of programs for overseas employment are provided under the K-move umbrella, including the worldjob.or.kr online job portal, the K-move mentoring program, a program that arranges jobs in the private sector, overseas internships that strengthen capabilities through practical work experience, a job training program called K-move School, and an incentive given to those who line up work overseas.

In fact, Koreans have a long history of studying overseas. Back in 1955, the Korean government created a test that assessed applicants' qualifications for studying overseas with the goal of creating an elite workforce, and the government issued another set of regulations about studying overseas in 1957. The government strictly limited studying abroad in the 1950s but began to gradually ease those restrictions after the Passport Act took effect in the 1960s. But because of the government's financial limitations and its policy of preventing citizens from traveling overseas, the government did little to promote study abroad until the mid-1970s.

The government finally started paying attention to studying abroad when it set up a study abroad scholarship program in 1977 and updated its regulations for studying abroad in 1979. In subsequent years, the government managed state-funded and self-funded studies separately. Demand for self-funded studies began to soar in the 1980s, which prompted the government to completely overhaul its regulations for studying overseas in November 1983. Taking effect in 1984, the revised regulations got a new name and opened the door to Koreans studying overseas at their own expense.

In 1986, the government temporarily tightened the qualifications for self-funded study abroad by requiring applicants to have completed at least one semester in university or to have been in the top 10% of their high school graduating class. But in 1988, it once again eased these qualifications, allowing individuals with a high school diploma or higher and those recognized as having the academic equivalent thereof to study abroad. While the Korean government under former president Kim Young-sam was promoting a policy of globalization in the 1990s, the regulations for studying abroad were further eased in what basically constituted complete

liberalization. According to the *Statistical Yearbook of Education*, there were 150,000 Koreans studying at foreign institutions of higher education in 2000. That number has been above 200,000 since 2007 and reached 239,824 in 2017.

Table 2. Number of overseas Koreans by region, 1991–2017: stock

(unit: thousands)

Year[1]	Total	Asia-Pacific Ocean				The Americas				Europe			Middle East	Africa
		Subtotal	Japan	China[2]	Misc.	Subtotal	United States	Canada	Central & S. America	Subtotal	Former Soviet Bloc	Misc.		
1991	4,602	2,655	695	1,921	40	1,486	1,337	63	86	460	437	23	0	1
1993	4,705	2,644	680	1,923	41	1,577	1,421	68	88	483	457	25	0	1
1995	5,229	2,724	697	1,940	87	1,965	1,802	73	90	527	461	66	9	3
1997	5,544	2,801	703	1,986	113	2,209	2,000	110	99	523	450	72	7	3
1999	5,645	2,811	660	2,044	108	2,271	2,058	111	103	551	487	64	6	4
2001	5,654	2,671	640	1,888	143	2,376	2,123	141	111	595	522	73	7	5
2003	6,077	2,980	639	2,145	196	2,433	2,157	170	106	652	558	94	7	5
2005	6,638	3,590	901	2,439	250	2,393	2,087	198	107	640	533	108	8	7
2007	7,042	4,040	894	2,762	384	2,341	2,017	217	108	645	534	111	8	6
2009	6,823	3,711	913	2,337	461	2,433	2,102	223	107	656	538	118	14	10
2011	7,176	4,071	913	2,705	453	2,420	2,076	231	113	657	536	121	16	11
2013	7,013	3,953	893	2,574	486	2,408	2,091	206	111	616	492	124	25	11
2015	7,185	3,953	856	2,586	511	2,568	2,239	224	105	627	497	130	26	12
2017	7,431	3,925	819	2,548	558	2,840	2,492	241	107	631	482	149	25	11

Note 1: The statistics between 1970 and 1990 show that the number of overseas Koreans increased from 672,660 in 1970 to 920,358 in 1975, 1,470,916 in 1980, 1,905,181 in 1985, and 2,320,099 in 1990. When exchange with China and the countries of the former Soviet Bloc resumed after the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, ethnic Koreans with citizenship in China and the post-Soviet states were added to the statistics for overseas Koreans in 1991, nearly doubling the number. Since 2005, this figure has also included ethnic Koreans who have been naturalized as Japanese.

Note 2: The Korean Chinese in this table include not only people on the Chinese mainland but also residents of Hong Kong. In 2007, 2011, and 2013 there were tabulation errors in the number of Korean Chinese. In 2013, for example, the eight consular offices in China (not including Hong Kong) stated that there are a total of 2,561,655 Koreans in China, the sum of 338,256 Korean nationals and 2,223,399 Chinese nationals. But the sixth population census carried out in 2010 by China's statistics bureau found that there were 1,830,929 Korean Chinese (*Joseonjok*). Presuming there was no major population fluctuation in the meantime, 392,470 people appear to have been duplicated in the statistics.

Sources: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Status of Overseas Koreans*, each year.

In short, as we can see in Table 2, more than a century's emigration has caused the number of Koreans overseas to increase from 46.02 million in 1991 to 66.38 million in 2005 and 68.23 million in 2009. After remaining around the same level from 2005 to 2015,[2] this figure spiked again in 2017, to 74.31 million. This can be attributed to the major increase in the number of Koreans living in the United States.

[2] Although the 2013 issue of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' *Status of Overseas Koreans* reported that there

Incoming Migration

1987 was the year when Korea's democratization really took off, but it was also the year that international migration in Korean society changed directions. Since that year, the number of Koreans going overseas has rapidly decreased even as the number of foreigners coming into the country has soared. In the 1980s, the Korean government basically had no policy for incoming migrants, and as a result, most of the foreigners at this time became undocumented migrant workers (Seol, 1999; Seol & Skrentny, 2004). In the early 1990s, the Korean government pondered whether or not to allow foreign migrant workers to legally enter the country. Ultimately, it adopted the Industrial Technical Training Program for Foreigners (ITTP) as a way to sidestep resistance from domestic labor unions, which were opposed to importing foreign workers, while still supplying workers to small and medium-sized enterprises that had trouble finding workers. But the ITTP was crippled by illegal immigration, corruption by job brokers, and human rights violations, causing the government to switch to the Employment Permit Program for Foreigners (EPP) in 2004. The EPP is Korea's current system for less-skilled foreign workers.

The EPP is based on five basic principles (Seol, 2010). The first of these is the principle of complementing the domestic labor market by only admitting migrant workers when there are gaps in the market. The second principle is banning employers from discriminating against migrant workers on the basis of their nationality. The third principle is preventing less-skilled migrant workers from settling permanently in Korea by limiting their period of employment to a maximum of 4 years and 10 months. Toward that end, migrant workers must come to Korea on their own, unaccompanied by their families. The fourth principle is ensuring the transparency of the selection process for migrant workers and eliminating corruption in the recruitment process. The fifth principle is ensuring that bringing in migrant workers does not have a negative impact on the restructuring of domestic industries or corporations, which is accomplished by controlling the length of employment permits and the number of migrant workers admitted to each industry.

In a similar vein, the government implemented the Service Sector Employment Management Program for Ethnic Koreans with Foreign Citizenship in December 2002, which permitted employment for a fixed period in areas of the service sector that Koreans tend to avoid, such as restaurants, caregiving, and cleaning, as a way of ensuring a steady supply of workers in those areas. This program was part of the government's policy of prioritizing the employment of ethnic Koreans with passports from other countries, such as China, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. In 2007, that program was relaunched in an expanded form as the Visit and Employment Program for Ethnic Koreans with Foreign Citizenship (VEP), which effectively opened up all occupations to them. The VEP was adopted as part of a policy of embracing ethnic Koreans in China and the post-Soviet states who had been at a comparative disadvantage in the practical application of the Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans. Regardless, this program has been criticized for being discriminatory in comparison to the preferential treatment given to Korean-

were 7.013 million overseas Koreans, this number can be adjusted to 6.62 million if we take into account the duplication of ethnic Koreans with Chinese nationality (see Seol, 2014d).

Americans (Seol & Skrentny, 2009).

The biggest categories of Korea's less-skilled migrant workers are migrant workers with the visit and employment (H-2) and non-professional employment (E-9) visas and undocumented migrant workers. The majority of ordinary foreign migrant workers with the E-9 visa are employed in the manufacturing sector, and the majority of foreign nationals of Korean descent with the H-2 visa work in the service, construction, and manufacturing industries. In terms of company size, a very large percentage of both regular foreigners and foreign nationals of Korean descent are working at small companies, with fewer than 30 employees. In terms of the distribution of country of origin, regular foreigners tend to come from Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka, in that order, while 98% of foreign nationals of Korean descent are from China, compared to 2% from Russia and the other post-Soviet states. In terms of gender distribution, foreign migrants are 90% male and 10% female, while foreign nationals of Korean descent are 51% male and 49% female. Undocumented less-skilled migrant workers are employed in the same areas, industries, and occupations as their documented counterparts, and it is not uncommon for them to even work at the same company (Seol, 2012, 2014c).

Seol & Rhee (2006) analyzed the substitute and complementary relationship between domestic workers, foreign nationals of Korean descent, and foreign migrant workers in a number of industries, including manufacturing and construction. Their study found that foreign migrant workers and domestic workers form a substitute relationship in some parts of the manufacturing industry and that foreign nationals of Korean descent and domestic workers form a substitute relationship in the construction industry. After analyzing how the employment of migrant workers affects Koreans, Choi (2013) reported that migrant workers cause unskilled young Koreans to receive lower wages and worse jobs. Such studies suggest that particular care should be taken in the operation of the EPP to prevent the loss of Korean jobs.

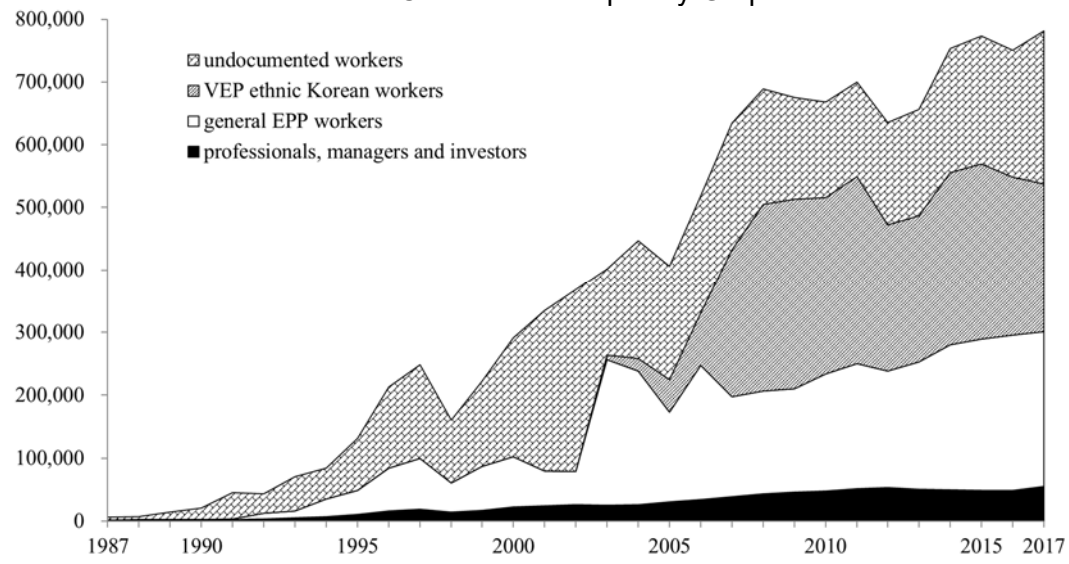
Moving on to professional migrant workers and foreign investors, the most widely held visas, ranked numerically, are foreign language teacher (E-2), specially designated profession (E-7), corporate investor (D-8), entertainer (E-6), researcher (E-3), and university professor (E-1). Most of the people holding these visas are either from developed countries or from countries that satisfy the relevant requirements. Some of the typical countries of origin are the United States, Japan, Canada, and China. One of the programs for high-skilled workers and professionals from abroad is the preferred immigration card system, which includes the "Gold Card" issued by the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Energy and the "Science Card" issued by the Ministry of Science and ICT. These are essentially a multiple-entry visa for exceptionally talented workers.

There are two systems for investment immigration, one focused on real estate and the other on public welfare projects. Under the first system, foreigners who invest a certain amount of money in domestic real estate are given long-term resident status (F-2), which enables freedom of economic activity, and if they maintain their investment for five years, their status is upgraded to permanent residency (F-5). Since this program was first implemented on Jeju Island in February 2010, it has been applied at six sites, including Alpensia in Pyeongchang, Gangwon Province; the

Figure 3. Number of foreign migrant workers in Korea, 1987–2017: stock

A. Line Graph

B. Cumulative Frequency Graph



Note 1: The category of professionals, managers and investors is defined as legal aliens whose status of sojourn is one of the following: university professor (E-1), foreign language teacher (E-2), researcher (E-3), technical instructor (E-4), professional consultant (E-5), entertainer (E-6), specially designated profession (E-7), short-term employment (C-4), and corporate investor (D-8).

Note 2: The category of general (non-Korean) workers in the Employment Permit Program for Foreigners (EPP) is defined as legal aliens whose status of stay is one of the following: non-professional employment (E-9), vessel crew (E-10), industrial trainee (D-3), post-training employment (E-8), and working holiday (H-1).

Note 3: The category of ethnic Korean workers in the Visit and Employment Program for Foreigners (VEP) is defined as legal aliens whose status of stay is one of the following: visit and employment (H-2) and employment management (F-1-4).

Note 4: Undocumented migrant workers are defined as illegal aliens between the ages of 16 and 59 in this figure.

Source: Ministry of Justice, *Korea Immigration Service Statistics*, calculated for each year.

Table 3. Number of immigrants in Korea, 2005–2017: stock

(units: thousands, %)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total population	48,782	49,092	49,355	49,594	49,773	50,516	50,734	50,948	51,141	51,328	51,069	51,270	51,423
Immigrants (=A+D)	654	819	986	1,102	1,111	1,203	1,325	1,338	1,451	1,647	1,497	1,706	1,816
Share of total population (%)	1.3%	1.7%	2.0%	2.2%	2.2%	2.4%	2.6%	2.6%	2.8%	3.2%	2.9%	3.3%	3.5%
Immigrants and their children (=A+D+E)	679	863	1,044	1,210	1,233	1,354	1,494	1,529	1,655	1,855	1,694	1,897	2,028
Share of total population (%)	1.4%	1.8%	2.1%	2.4%	2.5%	2.7%	2.9%	3.0%	3.2%	3.6%	3.3%	3.7%	3.9%
Foreign residents (A)	614	765	920	1,029	1,015	1,092	1,202	1,204	1,305	1,489	1,347	1,547	1,646
Migrant workers with work visas (B)	255	260	438	576	559	553	589	521	539	608	573	542	496
Marriage migrants	62	88	103	126	125	142	144	148	150	147	145	160	161
Foreign students	21	30	56	77	81	87	87	83	81	84	82	96	117
Foreign nationals of Korean descent	25	29	35	44	50	84	135	188	233	286	216	236	277
Other foreigners	147	253	171	103	106	137	162	181	217	250	202	381	429
Undocumented foreigners with short-term visas (C)	104	104	118	103	94	89	84	84	86	113	128	133	167
Naturalized residents (D)	40	54	66	74	96	111	124	134	146	158	150	159	170
Children with immigrant background (E)	25	44	58	108	122	151	169	191	204	208	198	191	212
Migrant workers (=B+C)	359	364	556	679	652	642	673	605	625	721	701	674	663

Note 1: The reference time point for the Justice Ministry's *Korea Immigration Service Statistics* is 24:00 on December 31 of each year. The reference time point used to tabulate the number of foreign residents living in the various administrative regions by the Ministry of the Interior and Safety has varied over the years: from 2005 to 2008, it was 00:00 on May 1 of the next year; from 2009 to 2014, it was 00:00 of January 1 of the next year; and in 2015, it was 00:00 of January 1 of the same year. Though the reference time points for the two statistics are identical between 2009 and 2014, the years displayed are one year apart. In this table, therefore, the years displayed were synchronized to the Justice Ministry's reference time point (namely, the end of the year). Incidentally, the Ministry of the Interior and Safety overhauled its data collection standards for foreign residents living in administrative regions in 2015 to match the UN's migration statistics by omitting those who were not residing in the country for at least three months around the survey reference point. That could make it problematic to directly compare the 2015 figures with previous years.

Note 2: Immigrants = foreign residents + naturalized residents

Note 3: Foreign residents = registered foreigners + registered foreign nationals of Korean descent + undocumented foreigners with short-term visas

Note 4: The figures for marriage migrants in 2005, foreign students in 2005–2006, foreign nationals of Korean descent in 2005–2007, marriage migrants in 2005, and other naturalized residents in 2005 were estimated using the *Statistical Yearbook of the Korean Immigration Service* for the years in question.

Note 5: The figures for undocumented foreigners with short-term visas in 2005-2014 were calculated using the *Korea Immigration Service Statistics*. In 2015, this figure was calculated using the values provided by the Ministry of the Interior and Safety's report on foreign immigrants, with the figure for "other foreigners" reduced accordingly.

Note 6: The figure for "children with immigrant background" refers to minors (below 19 years of age) and does not include the children of undocumented foreigners with short-term visas. "Korean parent" refers to cases in which at least one parent is a naturalized resident.

Note 7: Since the category of "foreign migrant workers" in Figure 3 includes not only "migrant workers with work visas (B)" and "undocumented foreigners with short-term visas (C)" but also portions of this table's category of "other foreigners," it greatly outnumbers "migrant workers (=B+C)" in this table.

Sources: Ministry of the Interior and Safety, *Status of Foreign Residents by the Administrative Regions in Korea*, each year; Ministry of Justice, *Korea Immigration Service Statistics*, each year; Seol (2011, 2014a).

Daegyeongdo Tourism Complex in Yeosu, South Jeolla Province; Yeongjong District in Incheon; the Haeundae Tourism Resort in Busan; and the East Busan Tourism Complex. Under the second system, foreigners who invest at least KRW 500 million in eligible areas, including public welfare funds, are also given residency, which can once again be upgraded to permanent residency if the investment is maintained for five years.

As can be seen in Figure 3, the number of foreign migrant workers in Korea has steadily increased overall, despite dipping several times because of slowdowns in the domestic economy (Seol, 2014c). The 2017 figures for foreign migrant workers in Korea break down as follows: 55,235 professional workers and investors, 406,801 less-skilled migrant workers not of Korean descent, 246,185 less-skilled migrant workers of Korean descent, and 243,272 undocumented migrant workers, adding up to 781,157.

In addition to foreign migrant workers, Korea is also home to at least 238,000 marriage migrants. As of 2015, 145,000 of them were still foreign nationals while 93,000 had been naturalized as Koreans. Although a change of statistical practices has made it impossible to precisely determine the number of migrants married to Koreans who have been naturalized since 2016, it is safe to assume that this number has steadily increased since 2015.[3] The surge in international marriages between Korean men and foreign women since 1990 has led to a rapid increase in the number of marriage migrants residing in the country. Since international marriage is regarded as being part of citizens' constitutionally protected privacy, the government has taken no measures to either suppress or encourage it, but the government does regulate the actions of international marriage brokers through the Act on Regulation of Marriage Brokerage Agencies (Seol, Han, Kim, Park, Shim, Park, Shim & Cho, 2014). As the number of marriage migrants has increased, there has also been a dramatic increase in the number of their children. In 2017, there were 212,000 children with immigrant backgrounds, an overwhelming majority of whom were the children of such marriage migrants. The Korean government provides services for multicultural families (including family education, counseling, and cultural programs) to help marriage migrants adapt more quickly to Korean society while also taking measures to help multicultural families enjoy a stable family life (Seol, Suh, Lee & Kim, 2009; Seol & Lee, 2013; Seol, 2011).

In 2017, the number of foreign students in Korea reached 117,000. The Korean government regards its foreign student policy as being connected not only with educational policy but also with its policy for attracting skilled workers and helping migrants integrate into Korean society (Seol & Kim, 2013; Seol & Lee, 2011; Lee, 2014). Foreign students serve as a pipeline that provides various organizations, including domestic corporations, with a steady supply of talented workers. The government regards foreign students as a potential source of talents and is exploring ways to use them more effectively.

[3] Since changing its statistical standards in 2016, the Ministry of the Interior and Safety has been publishing statistics about the number of people acquiring citizenship without distinguishing between those who were naturalized through marriage and those who acquired citizenship through other means.

Table 4. Number of foreigners in Korea by visa status, 2000–2017: flow

(units: thousands, %)

Year	Total[1]	Long-term/permanent residency and overseas Koreans				Employment[3]			Study and training			Short-term and visiting[4]	Miscellaneous
		Subtotal	Marriage migration[2]	Permanent residency	Overseas Koreans	Subtotal	Professional workers	Low-skilled workers	Subtotal	Study	Ordinary Training		
'00-'17	5,131	850	510	39	301	2,102	271	1,831	449	251	198	1,652	78
2000	173	13	12	0	1	55	11	44	3	2	1	100	2
2001	164	17	15	0	2	37	13	25	4	2	1	101	5
2002	159	19	17	0	2	42	14	29	4	3	1	88	5
2003	169	24	22	0	2	67	11	56	6	4	2	67	5
2004	179	35	32	0	2	62	11	51	10	7	4	67	4
2005	254	35	32	0	3	130	13	117	13	9	4	70	5
2006	303	35	32	0	3	167	15	153	21	13	8	75	4
2007	300	36	32	0	3	161	17	145	28	15	14	71	4
2008	302	36	31	1	4	176	19	157	28	15	14	58	3
2009	233	34	29	1	5	124	19	104	26	15	11	46	3
2010	293	50	33	1	16	131	19	112	29	17	12	80	3
2011	307	55	32	3	21	126	19	107	29	16	13	93	4
2012	300	54	31	4	19	121	19	101	28	15	12	92	6
2013	360	65	31	5	29	151	16	135	32	19	12	108	5
2014	407	74	28	6	41	165	15	150	37	22	15	126	5
2015	373	80	28	6	46	137	14	123	40	23	17	111	5
2016	402	94	36	6	52	128	14	114	53	27	25	122	6
2017	453	94	36	6	52	121	12	109	58	28	30	175	5

Note 1: These statistics refer to foreigners who have left their country of usual residence and stayed in Korea for at last 90 days, including both legal residents and undocumented migrants.

Note 2: The visas covered by "marriage migrant" include long-term resident (F-2), foreign spouse (F-6), visiting or joining family (F-1), and accompanying spouse (F-3).

Note 3: "Professional workers" in the "employment" category includes the visas of university professor (E-1), foreign language teacher (E-2), researcher (E-3), technical instructor (E-4), professional consultant (E-5), entertainer (E-6), specially designated profession (E-7), short-term employment (C-4), and corporate investor (D-8), and while "less-skilled workers" includes the visas of non-professional employment (E-9), vessel crew (E-10), industrial trainee (D-3), post-training employment (E-8), visit and employment (H-2), and employment management (F-1-4).

Note 4: The category of "short term and visiting" includes the visas of visa exempted (B-1), tourist/transit (B-2), and short-term general (C-3).

Source: Statistics Korea, *International Migration Statistics in 2017: Press Release*, 2018, calculated on p. 38.

Along with this, there were 277,000 foreigners with the status of "overseas Koreans" in accordance with the Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans and 429,000 legal aliens in the miscellaneous category. The visa for "overseas Koreans" offers the widest range of benefits of any visa that is issued to foreigners. Not only does it provide a two-year period of sojourn that is normally renewable, but it also permits all employment activities in the country aside from manual labor and speculation. As such, this visa is reserved for foreign nationals of Korean descent who meet the given requirements. When this system was first introduced, "overseas

Korean" visas were typically only issued to ethnic Koreans from developed countries (Seol & Skrentny, 2009), but in more recent years, eligibility has gradually been extended to Korean-Chinese as well.

A large percentage of legal residents in the miscellaneous category have permanent residency. When the permanent residency system was first introduced in 2003, 99% of permanent residents were Taiwanese, but the share of Chinese and Korean-Chinese grew rapidly after foreign nationals of Korean descent were allowed to acquire permanent residency in 2010. As of 2017, permanent residents' nationalities consisted of 57.5% Korean-Chinese, 20.8% non-Korean Chinese, and 9.6% Taiwanese, confirming that the percentage of permanent residents with Taiwanese nationality is gradually decreasing.

It is also necessary to note the phenomenon of reverse migration, in which Korean emigrants return to Korea from overseas. Such returnees represent one of the subcategories in the miscellaneous category of legal foreign residents in Table 4. There has been a steady increase in reverse migration since 1980. This trend was temporarily halted by the severe economic slowdown caused by the Asian financial crisis in 1997, but reverse migration picked up once more after the economic recovery in the 2000s. The *Korea Immigration Service Statistics* tracks the number of Koreans who recover their nationality each year: 648 in 2006, 3,740 in 2007, 2,265 in 2011, 1,978 in 2012, 2,686 in 2013, 2,886 in 2014, 2,610 in 2015, 2,303 in 2016, and 2,775 in 2017. The primary reasons for reverse migration to Korea can be identified as old age and employment. In other words, the elderly have a tendency to want to spend their final years in their home country, and second- and third-generation Korean immigrants are increasingly finding jobs in Korea.

Table 4 shows the total number (flow) of foreigners who entered Korea each year and stayed for 90 days or more. When foreign visitors between 2000 and 2017 are analyzed by their purpose of entry, the most common purpose is employment migration (by migrant workers), followed by marriage migration, overseas Koreans, studying, normal training, and permanent residency.

The Korean government's current policy toward incoming migration can be summed up as "passive." While the government claims to be strictly preventing settlement by less-skilled migrant workers and actively encouraging settlement by investors and migrant workers with professional skills, there are no programs in place to implement those goals. Since 2015, however, the government has tried to move away from its passive migration policy (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2014). In a document titled the *Direction of Economic Policy in 2015*, which was jointly drafted by relevant ministries in December 2014 under the lead of the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the government emphasized the need to open the doors to foreign workers.[4] This document calls for bringing in professional foreign workers to counter Korea's shrinking working age population and to revise the EPP to adjust the workforce ratio in each industry and thus increase the utility of skilled workers. The two basic ideas can be summarized as follows.

The first idea is revising the visa system and expanding the point system for immigration. Since 2010, the government has been running an immigration point system that encourages foreigners with professional jobs in Korea who satisfy certain

[4] This report does include several innovative ideas, but it is limited by the fact that these ideas are only proposed as policy directions and are not actually being implemented.

requirements to settle down in the country. After being assessed for their abilities and qualifications, including academic attainments and income, eligible applicants are allowed to convert to the long-term resident visa (F-2) after a one-year stay and to the permanent resident visa (F-5) after a three-year stay. The government announced that, in the future, it will expand the immigration point system so that high-scoring professional workers can be given permanent residency after staying in the country for just one year. In the mid- and long-term, the government said, it will furthermore be introducing an "employment visa point system" that combines the professional visas (E-1 to E-7), which are currently divided by industries. Visa holders will be given points according to their income, age, and academic background, and these points will then be taken into account during future applications for permanent residency. In addition to this, not only outstanding workers and investors who meet certain criteria, such as income level and investment amount, but also students who excel in undergraduate and graduate programs at Korean universities will be allowed to bring their parents to Korea to live with them. The government will also be pursuing a plan to expand industry-academy connections and ease requirements to encourage foreign students to settle in Korea. By providing talented foreigners with such generous treatment, the government seeks to pave the way for them to find work and become established in the country.

Second, the EPP for less-skilled migrant workers will be improved to enable the workforce to be utilized more efficiently. The method of allocating migrant workers will be altered to prevent the appearance of idle manpower, and additional industries will be selected to have access to migrant workers. This will redress the manpower mismatch between the manufacturing industry, which has too many workers, and the agriculture, fishing, and livestock industries, which have too few. A carrot-and-stick policy will also be adopted for companies that hire less-skilled migrant workers. In industries with growth potential, the government is pushing to allow companies to hire as much as 140% of their normal quota of migrant workers. Currently, each industry is assigned a quota of workers that can be hired for simple jobs. In contrast, the government is considering the idea of imposing a "levy" on companies that hire low-wage migrant workers for ten or more years in industries without growth potential (Seol, Lee & Nho, 2011). In the mid- and long term, the government will also pursue a policy of embracing foreign nationals of Korean descent and adding them to the workforce to combat the shrinking working age population. This will mean augmenting the VEP for foreign nationals of Korean descent while easing the employment restrictions on people on the "overseas Koreans" visa. Furthermore, the Foreigner Policy Committee, which is chaired by the Prime Minister, will be empowered to set immigration policy overall.

Future Demand for Immigrants in Korea

Before making a concrete prescription for Korea's future migration policy, it is necessary to ascertain the extent of demand for immigration here. Immigration is given the lowest priority among the various ways of dealing with the shortage of workers resulting from population aging. First priority is given to using the Korean workforce and improving its quality, while immigrants will be used to compensate for any shortfall that may arise (Seol, 2005; Yoo, Lee, Seol & Park, 2005). Korea's demand for immigration can be assessed by measuring how many immigrants would have to be accepted while regarding immigrants as the last resort for dealing with a shortage of workers in the labor market in Korea.

In 2000, the UN Population Division published the results of a study of how many immigrants each country would need to receive over the next fifty years in order to offset the effect of population aging (United Nations, 2000). This study defined *replacement migration* as the international migration necessary to counteract the decline in the total population and the working age population and the aging of the population overall. In this paper, the amount of replacement migration is defined as the number of people entering the country in a given year minus the number of people leaving it, or in other words net immigration. That can be determined in terms of person-years.

Drawing upon population projection methods, the UN report calculated the size of replacement migration for eight countries with comparatively large populations whose total fertility rate is much lower than 2.1 (that is, which have a low fertility rate), namely France, Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, along with the two regions of Europe and the EU. In order to obtain figures that could be compared across different countries, this study assumed that the immigrants to each country would have an identical age composition, that immigrants and locals would exhibit an identical fertility pattern, and that those values would remain approximately the same for 50 years into the future.

The UN report subdivided its projections for immigration demand in each of these countries into six scenarios. Table 5 shows that the amount of net immigration must be increased not only in South Korea but also in the other countries and regions in the study if they are to achieve their target population.

Scenario I estimates the amount of migration between 2000 and 2050 using the median variant assumption of demographic growth from the 1995 population figures in the UN's *World Population Prospects: 1998 Revision* (United Nations, 2013a). In the twentieth century, more people were leaving Korea than entering it, and that trend is assumed to continue in Scenario I. Under that scenario, an average of 7,000 people a year, or 350,000 people over the course of 50 years, would migrate overseas.

Scenario II adds the assumption of "zero migration" to the median variant of population growth after 1995. Under this scenario's assumptions, no international migration occurs in Korea.

Scenario III estimates the net migration necessary to maintain the total population at the highest level that would be reached assuming no immigration since 1995. Between 2000 and 2025, Korea would have no demand for immigrants, but from 2025 to 2050, it would have to accept around 60,000 immigrants every year. Averaged

across a 50-year period, Korea would have to accept 30,000 people each year between 2000 and 2050, or a total of 1,509,000 immigrants over that entire period.

Table 5. Net number of migrants, 1995–2050, by scenario and country or region

(unit: thousands)

Scenario	Ⅰ	Ⅱ	Ⅲ	Ⅳ	Ⅴ	Ⅵ
Country or Region	Medium variant	Medium variant with zero migration	Constant total population	Constant age group 15-64	Ratio 15-64/65+ not less than 3.0	Constant ratio 15-64/65 years or older
A. Total number						
France	325	0	1,473	5,459	16,037	89,584
Germany	10,200	0	17,187	24,330	40,481	181,508
Italy	310	0	12,569	18,596	35,088	113,381
Japan	0	0	17,141	32,332	94,837	523,543
Korea	-350	0	1,509	6,426	11,595	5,128,147
Russia	5,448	0	24,896	35,756	26,604	253,379
United Kingdom	1,000	0	2,634	6,247	13,674	59,722
United States	38,000	0	6,384	17,967	44,892	592,572
Europe	18,779	0	95,869	161,346	235,044	1,356,932
European Union	13,489	0	47,456	79,375	153,646	673,999
B. Average annual number						
France	7	0	29	109	321	1,792
Germany	204	0	344	487	810	3,630
Italy	6	0	251	372	702	2,268
Japan	0	0	343	647	1,897	10,471
Korea	-7	0	30	129	232	102,563
Russia	109	0	498	715	532	5,068
United Kingdom	20	0	53	125	273	1,194
United States	760	0	128	359	898	11,851
Europe	376	0	1,917	3,227	4,701	27,139
European Union	270	0	949	1,588	3,073	13,480

Note: Scenario VI is considered to be unrealistic.
Source: United Nations, *Replacement Migration: Is It a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations?*, 2000, p. 27.

Scenario IV estimates the amount of migration necessary to maintain the working age (15–64) population at the highest level that would be reached assuming no immigration since 1995. According to this scenario, a yearly average of 41,000 immigrants would have to be admitted between 2000 and 2025 and an average of 216,000 a year between 2025 and 2050. This would mean admitting an average of 129,000 immigrants a year and a total of 6,426,000 immigrants between 2000 and 2050.

Scenario V estimates the amount of migration necessary to prevent the potential support ratio (that is, the ratio of the population aged 15–64 to the population aged 65 and over) from falling below 3.0. The potential support ratio is taken into account because issues related to population aging and financing social welfare in particular are connected to policies aimed at sustaining economic growth and supporting the elderly by admitting working age immigrants. According to this scenario, there would be no need for immigration between 2000 and 2025, while an average of 464,000

immigrants would be needed per year between 2025 and 2050. Averaged across a 50-year period, Korea would have to admit 232,000 immigrants per year between 2000 and 2050, or a total of 11,595,000 immigrants during that period.

Scenario VI estimates the amount of migration necessary to maintain the potential support ratio at the highest level that it would reach assuming no immigration since 1995. According to Scenario VI, the average number of immigrants needed each year would be 4.16 million between 1995 and 2000, 15.15 million between 2000 and 2025, and 189.97 million between 2025 and 2050. According to this scenario, Korea would have to admit a yearly average of 102,563,000 people between 2000 and 2050, or a total of 5,128,147,000 people during that period. Even granting that this figure represents person-years, this scenario has been criticized as unrealistic because it implies that half of the world's population would have to immigrate to Korea. Demographers have responded by suggesting that the exact figure is less important than the implication that there is an enormous demand for immigrants (United Nations, 2000; Keely, 2001; Coleman, 2002; Bijak, Kupiszewska & Kupiszewski, 2005).

Table 6. Amount of net migration needed to meet Korea's population targets, 2010–2060: flow

(unit: thousands)

Scenario[1]	Ⅲ	Ⅳ	Ⅵ	Ⅶ
	Constant total population	Constant age group 15-64	Constant ratio 15-64/65 years or older	Constant spending class[2]
A. Total number	106,923	323,937	2,928,569	382,759
B. Average annual number for 50 years	2,138	6,479	58,571	7,655
C. Average annual number since initial acceptance	3,564	7,362	58,571	7,655
D. Annual number				
Year 2011	0	0	973	0
Year 2012	0	0	2,312	9
Year 2015	0	0	6,761	131
Year 2017	0	21	9,961	266
Year 2020	0	476	16,786	772
Year 2025	0	2,137	33,276	2,482
Year 2030	0	4,145	50,861	4,655
Year 2031	43	4,522	53,935	5,078
Year 2035	423	6,149	66,454	6,986
Year 2040	1,379	8,166	80,024	9,533
Year 2045	2,823	9,867	88,104	11,781
Year 2050	4,670	11,692	93,381	13,993
Year 2055	6,809	13,222	93,078	15,712
Year 2060	9,099	15,174	94,424	17,786

Note 1: The scenario numbers were added for purposes of comparison with Table 5.

Note 2: The spending class is defined as the population aged 64 and below. The figures here assume there is a ratio of 1:1 between per capita spending in the population aged 19 and below and in the population aged 20–64.

Note 3: The "annual number" is only provided for major years.

Source: Chung, Jun, Eun, Kim, Kang, Rhee & Choi, *Research on Policy Direction of Immigration and Social Integration: A Response to Demographic Changes in Korea*, Ministry of Justice (2011: 139–168, 178, 182).

On the other hand, Jun and his colleagues (Jun, 2014; Chung, Jun, Eun, Kim, Kang, Rhee & Choi, 2011) have recalculated the size of replacement migration using a population projection based on the results of Korea's 2010 census. The latest figures were used in this recalculation since the data used by the UN dates back to 1995. The researchers provided not only the UN's scenarios but also a scenario in which replacement migration compensates for the decline of the consumer population. Table 6 shows the results of estimating the replacement migration in four scenarios that assume the median variant of population growth.

Under Scenario III, in which the goal is a constant total population, Korea would have to start accepting 43,000 immigrants a year in 2031 and gradually increase that number to 423,000 in 2035, 1,379,000 in 2040, and 9,099,000 in 2060. Between 2031 and 2060, Korea would have to admit an average of 3,564,000 immigrants a year. That amounts to 7.2% of the Korean population in 2010. The scale here is far greater than the United Nation's projections seen in Table 5. The demographic changes that have occurred between 1995 and 2010 have increased Korea's demand for immigrants.

In Scenario IV, where the goal is a constant working age population, the replacement migration between 2017 and 2060 amounts to an average of 7,362,000 a year. That is the amount of net migration that Korea must admit in order to maintain economic vitality and prevent its growth drivers from slowing. That is an extremely large amount of people, representing 14.9% of Korea's population in 2010.

In Scenario VI, the replacement migration needed to keep the potential support ratio constant is a total of 2,928,569,000 people during the fifty years between 2010 and 2060, or a yearly average of 58,571,000. The number of immigrants that Korea would have to admit every year is greater than the total population of Korea in 2010. In short, this amount is unrealistically large. It would be meaningless, therefore, to establish policy based on that figure. Instead, this should be taken as evidence that Korea will have to open up its borders and accept huge numbers of immigrants in order to prevent its economic vitality from declining because of population aging.

Scenario VII calculates the replacement migration necessary to maintain a constant spending class (64 and below). According to projections that assume a 1:1 ratio between per capita spending by minors (0–19 years old) and by adults (15–64 years old), Korea would have to admit a yearly average of 7,655,000 immigrants during the 50 years between 2010 and 2060 in order to reach its demographic goals. On the assumption that replacement migration began in 2010, the yearly average of net immigration amounts to 17.4% of the Korean population in 2010.

In short, the size of replacement migration can be calculated for different scenarios reflecting a range of goals, such as keeping the total population constant, keeping the working age population constant, preventing the population from aging further, and keeping the spending class constant. It is not advisable, therefore, to treat the amount of replacement migration or the necessary size of the population calculated through a replacement migration analysis as the actual number of workers needed to compensate the shortfall in the labor market (Lee, Park & Nakagawa, 2012). At any rate, these two calculations of replacement migration in Korea demonstrate that Korea will have to boldly pursue an open immigration policy if it is to sustain the demographic dividend it currently enjoys.

Discussions of Issues in Migration Policy

Pursuing Migration Policy Alongside Pronatalist Policy

If Korea's complacency with its current demographic dividend and its abundant and well-trained workforce lead it to maintain superficial policies without fully appreciating the severity of the impending crisis, it will gradually sink deeper and deeper into the bog of population aging. Two steps that can be taken to counteract the problems caused by population aging are expanding the workforce and improving productivity. The workforce can be expanded by delaying the retirement age to keep the working age population in the labor market longer and by moving women and those aged 55–64 out of the economically inactive population and into the labor market.[5] Productivity can be improved by using organizational reform to increase the amount of work done per hour by each worker (Magnus, 2008). In addition to that, the paradigm of migration policy needs to be changed in two respects.

First, social institutions should be reformed to help Korean society escape the low fertility trap. Rather than short-term prescriptions, the key here is making fundamental changes to social institutions (including employment, education, family, and welfare) to engineer a rise in fertility. We must bear in mind that economic and social development can bring about a rebound in fertility (Myrskylä, Kohler, & Billari, 2009). Second, the talented workers that Korea's economy and society need should be actively recruited from around the world. That will require a major upgrade of Korea's migration policy, which currently does little more than support marriage migrants' integration into society (Kwon, 2014; Mo, 2013).

There are some who say it is too soon to adopt migration policy, which they regard as being in a substitute relationship with pronatalist policy. But the impossibility of keeping our economy closed in the present day shows that this argument is not even worthy of consideration. There are others who cite the increasing likelihood of South and North Korea's reunification to argue that there is no need to pursue migration policy since unification will make it easy for Korea to avoid the shock of population aging. What must be taken into account is the fact that population aging is already underway in North Korea, too, and that people aged 65 and above accounted for 7.2% of the North's total population as of 2003 (Statistics Korea, 2010: 23–24). While it is undeniable that Korean reunification would help mitigate the shock of population aging, it would still only earn us a few years' respite. The Korean government needs to begin pursuing pronatalist policy and migration policy at the same time.

[5] The requirements for this are different in countries like Korea that can increase women's economic participation rate and countries like China that cannot. In order to increase the economic participation rate for women and the middle-aged, it is necessary to eliminate age- and gender-based discrimination in the workplace and to create the conditions under which women can enjoy work-life balance. Companies must be convinced to keep middle-aged workers employed for longer.

Re-establishment of Migration Policy

Immigration alters the composition of the citizenry and changes the social structure. Research is needed on the question of how such change transforms a society's engine for growth. As Koreans enter an "age of immigration," they need to be able to redefine the concept of citizenship and turn cultural diversity into a driving force for social development. If they do so, immigration will enrich Korea's economy and society, rather than threatening Koreans' identity (Seol, 2014b; Cho, 2012).

There are two aspects of migration policy: immigration and emigration. The first thing to assess is the list of policies related to emigration. As a country that espouses a free market economy, Korea long ago liberalized its citizens' emigration. Koreans' sphere of activity extends around the world, and if a large number of Koreans left the country, it could further exacerbate population aging. In that sense, it is necessary to define the foundation of policies related to Koreans' overseas activities (that is, emigration policy, overseas adoption policy, overseas study policy, overseas employment policy, and diaspora policy) and to accurately assess their current status.

Next, Korea should define its immigration policy as the selective admission and continuing supervision of immigrants who are young, passionate, diligent, and talented on a scale that is appropriate and necessary for the Korean economy and should devise a multistage plan to implement that policy. If Korea is to shed its reclusive reputation as the "hermit kingdom" or "land of the morning calm" and become one of the world's key countries, it is essential that it open its doors to immigration. Considering that a closed-door policy and national isolation are not an option, the important thing is not which path we will choose but rather how we can eliminate the obstacles in our way.

Migrant workers are constantly being recruited to fill the gaps in the domestic labor market. Workers who are recognized as diligent are guaranteed continuing employment, increasing the possibility that they will settle in Korea. Marriage migrants, foreign students, and foreign investors are also increasing rapidly in number. In other words, Korea has effectively become a *de facto* immigration country. Since the social situation has changed, institutions should be changed accordingly. The various foreigner and multicultural policies need to be reorganized under a basic framework of immigration policy. The government's *Second Basic Plan for Foreigner Policy* in 2012 stated that the time had come to begin using the term "immigration policy," but the title of that document remained "foreigner policy." With the basic concepts of policy undefined and the legal regime disorganized, there is sometimes confusion about which departments play which roles and about what those roles involve. While the inefficient duplication of policies between departments is one problem, an even more serious problem is that various areas are not covered by policy. The first step toward untangling these knots is to combine the Departures and Arrivals Control Act and the Refugee Act. The state should be made responsible for educating immigrants about social integration, and foreigners who seek Korean nationality should be required to receive such education as well. The government should use the Korea Immigration Service at the Ministry of Justice as a template for a new service that could be called the "Ministry of Naturalization and Immigration Service" (Seol, 2017).

Outgoing Migration Policy

Following democratization in 1987, the Korean government liberalized its emigration policy and lifted all restrictions on its citizens' overseas, travels, studies, and emigration. Even if population aging worsens, the government will not be able to stop its citizens from moving overseas. Since it is certain that the global economy will become ever more closely integrated, the number of Koreans going overseas will increase even further. That means the departure of even more citizens from a country that already has the world's lowest birth rate and its highest level of population aging. It is essential, therefore, to create legal and institutional mechanisms to manage "outgoing migration" and to build a network capable of tying those individuals to Korean society. As part of such measures, the National Assembly revised the Nationality Act in 2010 and introduced a system of *multiple citizenship* for select individuals, including males who have completed their military service. This creates the institutional framework for keeping talented Koreans in the country and attracting talented foreign workers as well (Seol, 2013).

Koreans' leaving the country can be a "brain drain," but that should not be regarded as being entirely negative. A brain drain has several positive effects on the source country. By demonstrating the possibility of getting jobs in high-income countries and making a lot of money, the brain drain has the effect of motivating young people in the source country to get a good education. When there is a crowd of young people dreaming of winning the lottery, so to speak, by studying and working overseas, it can create an opportunity for underdeveloped countries to escape from the poverty trap. The enthusiasm in Korean society for studying abroad is connected to the fact that such studies are a short cut to advancement, or in other words to upward mobility in society. In an economy based on information and knowledge, Koreans who find jobs overseas are likely to produce research that is of much higher quality than if they had remained in Korea. Overseas employment by professional workers also serves as a social "safety valve" that mitigates unemployment for professionals at home. It goes without saying that wire transfers by Koreans working overseas directly benefit the domestic economy, and when those workers eventually return to Korea, they bring with them a skill set that has been refined through employment overseas. For these reasons, Koreans overseas can be an asset for Korea. Even Koreans who have gone overseas and taken up residence there will retain Korean society as the reference group for their thoughts and actions (as long as they continue to identify as Korean), and such individuals should be regarded as serving to expand Koreans' scope of activity around the entire world. If this diagnosis is correct, the negative term of "brain drain" should be changed to "brain expansion." This idea could even be expressed as "brain circulation," as Saxenian proposed (2007). After working for a certain period of time at competitive companies in Silicon Valley, professional entrepreneurs have gone back to their home countries to launch businesses, establish R&D centers, and operate startups with the support of their home government. Considering that young people who get jobs overseas tend to return home at some point to integrate the domestic economy into the global network of technology and product manufacturing, the "brain drain" turns out to be merely the first phase of "brain circulation."

In that regard, attention should be given to the plan for encouraging overseas

talent to start businesses in Korea that the government announced in 2015 (Park, 2015). Overseas talent as mentioned here includes both Koreans and foreigners. Under the plan being considered by the government, Koreans living overseas as students, researchers, or executives of foreign companies who return to Korea to start a business would be provided with as much residential, educational, and medical support as they needed to establish themselves in Korea.

Koreans finding work overseas is a phenomenon that will continue in the future. Considering that overseas employment clearly helps improve the individual's skills and qualifications and serves as an investment in human resources from the long-term perspective of Korean society as a whole, there is absolutely no reason to see it in a negative light. In order to maximize the positive effect of Koreans going overseas, a close relationship needs to be maintained between overseas Koreans and Korean society. In that sense, creating a network for overseas Koreans must be an important component of migration policy.

Incoming Migration Policy

An active migration policy presumes that immigrants will be admitted on a selective base. Korea ought to accept both talented workers who will serve the national interest and the public welfare and foreigners who deserve admittance on humanitarian grounds in keeping with Korea's national prestige. It is necessary to orient the policy framework on the selective recruitment of immigrants, their efficient utilization, and their effective integration into society. It is also necessary to promote policies that distinguish between temporary migrants, who will be sent back to their home countries after a certain period of sojourn, and permanent migrants, who will be provided with wide-ranging services for social integration on the assumption that they will settle down in Korea.

All countries compete to bring in foreign professionals, skilled workers, and investors. In today's winner-take-all capitalistic global economy, a creative economy has become established in which a small number of talented workers support a large number of people. The US Congress revised its immigration legislation to greatly increase the number of employment visas available to foreigners with degrees in the STEM fields, namely science, technology, engineering, and math. And while the United States is a nation of immigrants, countries like Germany and Japan with a stronger sense of ethnic nationhood have also been working hard to attract talented immigrants. This is a particularly striking change for Japan, considering its consistent support of what was nearly a closed-door policy.

What about Korea? Despite the ubiquitous slogans about attracting foreign talent, actual progress has been miniscule. Although there are around 50,000 professional and skilled visa holders in the country, the majority of them teach foreign languages like English, Chinese, and Japanese at cram schools. Other types of professional and skilled workers represent only a small fraction of the total. The reason is that relatively few corporations and universities have the resources to aggressively recruit foreign talent by offering them high wages and various incentives. This means that corporations and universities have in fact continued their closed-door employment practices despite the lip service they pay to globalization.

One alternative that is being explored is making better use of foreigners studying at Korean universities, but little headway has been made even there. The top graduates move on to global corporations or universities, and only a few remain in Korea to work. That is why it is necessary to make institutional changes, such as running employment programs for foreign students, extending their period of sojourn upon graduation and making it easier to change their visa status when they are hired.

The government's programs for foreign professionals are dispersed across several ministries, with the result that they are not being managed coherently. The government also seems to assume that the more foreign professionals that are employed in Korea, the better, without even measuring the effect they have on the domestic labor market and economic development. The government brings up its preferred immigration card system (including the "Gold Card" and "Science Card") every time it makes an announcement about its policy of recruiting foreign talent, but it is a mistake to assume that this system will actually aid recruitment. Incheon Airport has been ranked number one in the world for several years in a row for its immigration and logistics services, and even economy-class passengers make their way through airport security faster than their luggage, whether or not they have a preferred immigration card. What the government should be paying attention to is finding and eliminating the obstacles to recruiting foreign talent at corporations, universities, and research institutes while simultaneously creating a system to aid the search for foreign talent.

To shift focus a little, Korea has been running the EPP since 2004 as a way of mitigating the labor shortage at small and medium-sized enterprises. When the EPP was first instituted, migrant workers were allowed to work in the country for a maximum of three years. But later, the maximum stay was extended to four years and ten months, and in 2012, the government made it possible for good workers to be "reemployed," which resets that clock. In short, migrant workers are now able to remain legally employed in Korea for almost ten years.

This is reminiscent of the situation in West Germany in the 1960s. The increasing number of migrant workers at the time caused social tension to rise. The West German government's principle of rotating workers out met fierce resistance from employers, NGOs, and the migrant workers themselves. Employers took issue with the inefficiency of the foreign worker system, which sent skilled workers home and replaced them with unskilled workers. They emphasized the need for a skilled workforce and asked the government to give migrant workers a chance to settle down. For their part, NGOs argued that migrant workers should be allowed to settle in West Germany on humanitarian grounds. Furthermore, many of the migrant workers preferred to settle in Germany and make their fortune there rather than returning to their home countries after their period of employment. The West Germany government accepted the NGOs' demands. Migrant workers' period of employment was extended; they were allowed to bring their spouses with them to Germany; and the visa system was altered to enable migrant workers and their families to settle in the country. In recognition that the migrant workers were contributing to economic growth by offsetting the labor shortage in West German society, the country implemented institutional changes, throwing open the doors to migrant workers and letting them settle down.

But migrant workers who enter Korea under the EPP are not allowed to bring their spouses or minor children with them. The Korean government does not issue the

dependent family (F-3) visa to the family members of less-skilled migrant workers. Action will have to be taken about this policy, which violates the international norm stating that legally employed migrant workers have the right to enjoy the company of their family members. The policy can also be interpreted as infringing the right to enjoy family life, which is enshrined in the Korean constitution

But that is not all. The migrant workers who are in the re-employment system began reaching their ten-year maximum several years ago, and the government has to seriously consider whether to allow them to settle in the country. After ten years of work, a machine turns into scrap metal, but a person who has held the same job for ten years becomes a master of their responsibilities, or in other words, a skilled worker. Koreans will have to decide whether to treat these people as professionals or skilled workers or to keep regarding them as unskilled workers.

Korea's EPP currently stands at a crossroads. There are a number of possible paths, and only one can be chosen. The key question is whether Korea will stay on the current path of rotating out workers or whether it will walk down the path once chosen by West Germany by expanding the re-employment system for good workers. The fact that reuniting legal migrant workers with their families is an international norm of human rights narrows the government's options even further.

Conclusion

The state has a crucial role to play in overcoming the crisis brought about by population aging. This problem cannot be resolved by leaving it to the free market or civic society; it demands changes spanning public policy in its entirety. The government will have to play an active role if Korea's migration policy is to secure a substantial number of highly educated and skilled workers while maximizing the beneficial effects of migration and minimizing its negative ones. The first step must be taken by the government, as it frames and implements its migration policy.

First, the Korean government needs to recognize the importance of outgoing migration and actively manage it. Young people and professional and skilled workers who get jobs overseas can become permanent or family-based emigrants at any time. When they emigrate permanently or bring family members to join them, the benefits accrued from wire transfers back home shrink or disappear altogether. If the Korean government is not proactive in implementing a policy for the Korean diaspora and does not attempt to draw foreign talent and entrepreneurs to Korea, the conversion from the "brain drain" to the "brain circulation" will not occur. In that regard, it is necessary to encourage Koreans to go overseas while developing a wide range of programs to prevent a brain drain.

Next, migration policy needs to be adjusted in light of the effect that "incoming migration" has on Korea's society and economy. This policy debate should focus on how many migrants should be accepted, in what way, and in what fields in consideration of the migrants' level of training and conditions in the domestic labor market. Obviously, there should be different methods in place for low-skill migrant workers, professional and skilled workers, and marriage migrants, which will require making definite decisions about what policies to implement.

In general, an influx of migrants expands the domestic market. When the

domestic market expands, R&D profitability and consequently R&D investment expand along with it, which has the long-term effect of increasing productivity and per capita GDP. When migrant workers become long-term residents, they assume a larger role not just as workers but also as consumers. When migrants spend part of their income in their host country, it has a ripple effect on labor. Furthermore, the low labor cost of migrant workers boosts the supply of products, which causes product prices to drop and enables Koreans to buy goods for less (U.K. House of Lords, 2007; Bodvarsson & Van den Berg, 2009; Nam & Jung, 2014; Kim, Jun, & Nam, 2015; Cho & Kang, 2015). On top of that, the influx of migrants has the effect of increasing the society's cultural diversity.

But if the productivity of the migrant workers is so low that it drags down labor productivity overall or if government transfer payments to migrants increase rapidly, the influx of migrants cannot be expected to bring about an increase in the per capita GDP. Since migrants typically bring their family members with them rather than staying alone, the state is obliged to provide their family members with social welfare benefits. And since migrants are entitled to receive social welfare benefits when they retire, the state might end up spending more on migrants' social welfare than the migrants' previously contributed to the host society through their economic activity, given the increase in life expectancy. Considering further that most of migrants' jobs are in poorly paid sectors, the percentage that they contribute to the host society might be even lower (Magnus, 2008; Chun, 2012). For Korea to maximize the effect of an influx of immigration in light of these considerations, it needs to run a worker rotation system similar to that currently used by migrant workers while simultaneously letting in long-term migrants who have the option of settling down permanently. Furthermore, there needs to be a social integration policy to help long-term migrants settle down successfully. The state needs to upgrade its civil rights system to ensure that migrants can enjoy all their social, economic, and political rights and duties.

Along with this, the government must strive to reduce the social conflict and cost that result from incoming migrants (Seol, 2014b). Immigrants have an impact on their host country in a wide range of areas, including lower wages for domestic workers, unemployment, housing, the school-age population, crime, the breakdown of culture and community, welfare spending, public services, and public finance. The Korean government must identify the negative effects that could be caused by the influx of immigrants and make an effort to prevent or resolve them. The government must bear in mind that tardiness in these efforts or failure to integrate migrants into society could cause the conflict between migrants and Koreans to emerge as a social problem.

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