The population growth can be explained by the natural population growth of birth and death and the social population growth of immigration and emigration. In Korea, a natural decrease in the population with more deaths than births is relatively recent. At the provincial level, natural population decrease was first recorded in Jeollabuk-do in 2001. As of 2020, population naturally decreases in all provinces except for Gyeongsangbuk-do, Incheon, Ulsan, and Jeju. Therefore, an important factor in determining the increase or decrease of a region’s population is population migration.

Population migration has begun to surface through industrialization. In 1975, the migration rate reached 23.5%, and in 1988, 9.97 million people migrated. However, since the late 1990s, the total migrant and emigration rates have decreased. As of 2020, the proportion of intraregional migration within -si/-gun/-gu areas, international migration between -si/-gun/-gu areas, and intraregional migration were 30%, 30%, and 30%, respectively.

Until the late 1980s, the Seoul Metropolitan Area was the main immigration region, while the Hanam, Yangpyeong, and Chungjuhong regions were the main out-migration regions. However, there have been changes since the late 1980s. Seoul has become the region with the largest population outflow to Gyeonggi and Incheon. On the other hand, the Chungju region has become an influx of population since the mid-1990s, which is becoming the region with the largest population outflow to Gyeonggi and Incheon.

Intraregional migration within -si/-gun/-gu areas had decreases in population compared to 1975, of which 76 areas had population decreases of more than 10% compared to 1975. In 2020, more than 2/3 of the population had decreased. In addition, 26% of the 109 areas where the population decreased did not reach the national population growth rate of 49.3% during the same period, so it can be evaluated as an area where the population actually flowed out. Therefore, 146 of 229 -si/-gu/-gun areas are regions with an outflow of population. The populations decreased in large cities, such as the central areas of Seoul, Busan, Daegu, Incheon, Gwangju, and Daegu.

At the -si/-do area levels, administrative districts with higher population growth rates were Gyeonggi-do (13%), Uijeongbu (26%), Incheon (20%), and Ulsan (14%). On the other hand, administrative districts with higher population decrease rates were Jeollabuk-do (-45%), Jeollabuk-do (-27%), Gyeongsangbuk-do (-31%), and Gyeongsangnam-do (-11%). From 1975 to 2020, the population increased from 47.4 million to 51.83 million, an increase of about 14.43 million (19.4%). The population of Gyeonggi-do decreased from 7.97 million in 1975 to 5.82 million in 2020, an increase of 10.64 million, which is about 61% of the population increase during the same period. In the case of Jeollabuk-do, the population decreased from 2.35 million in 1975 to 1.79 million in 2020, a decrease of about 1.56 million. As a result, the proportion of the population, which had reached 8.8% of the national population in 1975, decreased to 3.3% in 2020.
In 1970, the net migrants, by subtracting out-migrants from in-migrants in Seoul, Gyeonggi, and Jeon, were positive (+), and the net migrants were negative (-) in other regions. During the 1980s and 1990s, net migrants increased in the Seoul Metropolitan Area, metropolitan cities, and the Yeongnam region due to urbanization and industrialization. Meanwhile, in Yeon and Incheon, out-migrants outnumbered in-migrants due to the development of surrounding areas after the 1990s. Since 2000, the net migration rate has sharply decreased in Jeonbukdo, Jeollabukdo, and Gyeongsangbuk due to continuous population outflows. Since 2010, the Chungbuk region and Jeonbukdo have recorded net inflows.

The phenomena represent Korea’s population migrations during the 50 years from 1970 to 2020. The first is from the Honam, Yeongnam, and Chungnam regions to Seoul, and the second is from Seoul to Gyeongbuk and Incheon. The migration from the Honam, Yeongnam, and Chungnam regions to Seoul was particularly noticeable from the 1970s to the 1990s. The migration from Seoul to Gyeongbuk and Incheon started predominantly after the 1990s. Looking at the pattern of net migrations by period, Seoul has been a net emigrant area since the 1960s, and its outflow has been bound to Gyeongbuk and Incheon. The Gyeongnam and Bucheon regions had net inflows for the entire period from all regions, but since the 2010s, net outflows have occurred to the Chungbuk region and Jeon Special Self-Governing Province. Gangwondo had a list of net outmigrants until the 2000s, but since the 2010s, it has recorded a net inflow. The Honam region recorded net outflows to all regions for the entire period except for the net inflows from the Yeongnam region in the 2010s. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Yeongnam region had a net outflow to the Seoul Metropolitan Area but a net inflow from other regions. However, since the 1990s, net outflows to the Chungnam region have been recorded. Jeon Special Self-Governing Province had a net outflow until the 1980s. However, its migration inflows and outflows were generally balanced in the 2000s, and net inflows have been recorded for all regions since the 1960s.
In 2020, the number of annual migrants reached 7.74 million. At the -si/-gun/-gu area level, the ratio of population migration change due to social and economic issues occurring in the region, as well as migration rates, out-migration rates, and net migration rates, vary greatly from year to year. In general, migration rates and out-migration rates are high in urban areas and low in rural areas. As of 2020, the top five -si/-gun/-gu areas with higher migration rates were Gwangyang-si in Gyeongsangnam-do (7.9%), Gwangju-si in Gyeonggi-do (7.8%), GWN-si in Gyeonggi-do (6.8%), Jeongseon-gun in Gangwon-do (6.7%), and Cheorwon-gun in Gangwon-do (6.5%). The top five -si/-gun/-gu areas with lower out-migration rates are Yeongju-si in Gyeongsangbuk-do (3.8%), Gwangju-si in Gyeonggi-do (3.7%), GWN-si in Gyeonggi-do (3.5%), Gwangyang-si in Jeollanam-do (3.4%), and Changwon-si in Gyeongsangnam-do (3.2%). The top five -si/-gun/-gu areas with lower external migration rates are Yeongju-si in Gyeongsangbuk-do (7.5%), Ganghwa-gun in Gyeongsangnam-do (6.1%), Daejeon-si in Chungcheongbuk-do (5.7%), and Cheorwon-gun in Gangwon-do (5.7%).

The number of migration cases was 5.18 million in 2020, with 4.48 million moving per permanent case. As the share of household members decreases, the average number of people in a migration case goes down. The proportions of single-person migration rate out of the total number of migrations increases. As of 2020, the number of single-person migration reached 3.50 million, or 74% of the total.

Due to population migration, there is a significant difference between the population based on the place of birth and the population based on the place of residence. For example, in 2019, only 15.7% of Korean residents had been born in the Seoul Metropolitan Area, but 26.2% of Korean residents lived in the Seoul Metropolitan Area. In particular, the proportion of people living in Seoul (17.7%) is more than double that of those born in Seoul (8.4%), indicating that Seoul was a destination for population migration. In 2020, 20 years later, the proportion of people born in the Seoul Metropolitan Area increased to 33.6%, and the proportion of people living in the Seoul Metropolitan Area increased to 49.0%. On the other hand, of 2019, the proportion of people born in the Hwasun region was 23.8%, the second highest after those born in the Yeongdeungpo-gu region. However, in 2020, it decreased to 13.0%, similar to the proportion of people born in Seoul. In addition, the proportion of people living in the Hwasun region in 2020 has decreased to 9.0%, indicating that about 60% of people born in the Hwasun region are in other areas.

By city, in 1995 and 2020, the proportion of people born in the city of Seoul increased from 10.0% to 16.3%, indicating that the city of Seoul is a destination for population migration. In addition, the proportion of people born in the city of Jeju increased from 0.7% to 2.3%, indicating that the city of Jeju is a destination for population migration. In 1995-2020, the population composition by place of birth can explain the characteristics of the regional population migration of a region. For example, the proportion of people born in the Seoul and Yeongdeungpo-gu regions increased in the Seoul Metropolitan Area. The proportion of people born in Seoul increased rapidly in Gyeonggi-do and Incheon. In the case of other regions, the proportion of people born in neighboring -si/-gun/-gu areas was high in 1995, but the proportion of people born in the Seoul Metropolitan Area has been low in 2020. Even at the -si/-gun/-gu area level, there is a clear pattern of differences in place of birth and residence. In 1995, 89% of 152 in 222 -si/-gun/-gu areas nationwide had more than 80% of births in residential areas to which the municipalities belong. However, in 2020, the percentage was reduced to 73% (23 of 314 in 319 -si/-gun/-gu areas nationwide). Nationally, the proportion of people born in the residential area to which the -si/-gun/-gu areas belong has decreased, and it can be seen that these regions are expanding around the Seoul Metropolitan Area. In addition, it can be said that these regions are expanding around the Seoul Metropolitan Area. The number of migration cases was 5.18 million in 2020, with 4.48 people moving per permanent case. As the size of household members decreases, the average number of people in a migration case goes down. The proportions of single-person migration rate out of the total number of migrations increases.

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Interregional Out-Migrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Interregional Out-Migrants</th>
<th>Net Migrants</th>
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<tr>
<td>Busan</td>
<td>122</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Gyeongsan</td>
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<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeolla</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Interregional Migration by Provinces

According to the interregional migration in 2020, Gyeonggi-do, Sejong, Gangwon-do, Chungcheongbuk-do, Jeju Special Self-Governing Province, and Chungcheongnam-do have net inflows, and the remaining regions have net outflows. The migration in the Seoul Metropolitan Area occurs mostly within the Seoul Metropolitan Area. Regarding the interregional migration of the Seoul Metropolitan Area, the immigrants from the Honam and Yeongnam regions are not as high as in the peninsular regions. The interregional migrations of Gangwon-do to and from the Seoul Metropolitan Area are large, and the interregional migrations to and from the neighboring Chungcheongbuk-do are also large. In the case of the Chungcheong region, most interregional migration occurs to and from the Seoul Metropolitan Area and within the Chungcheong region. Interregional migration of the Honam region to and from Gangwon, Chungcheongbuk-do, and the Yeongnam regions are very low. Interregional migrations of the Yeongnam region to and from the Seoul Metropolitan Area and neighboring regions are high. Jeju Special Self-Governing Province has high migration rates to and from the Seoul Metropolitan Area and Gyeongsangbuk-do.

The out-migration regions are outside of the Seoul Metropolitan Area. For example, in Gangwon-do, Chungcheongbuk-do, Jeolla-do, and Jeju Special Self-Governing Province, more than 50% of the out-migrants are in the Seoul Metropolitan Area. However, in the case of the remaining regions outside the Seoul Metropolitan Area, the migration rates to the Seoul Metropolitan Area Account 20 to 30%, but the migration rates to the Seoul Metropolitan Area are decreasing.
In 2020, 28.01 million people, or 61.8% of the nation's 45.34 million people aged 14 and over are commuting to work or school. Of these, 23.29 million are work commuters, and 4.73 million are school commuters. In the Seoul Metropolitan Area, the daytime population index is high in areas with obvious business facilities in Seoul and industrial facilities outside of Seoul, while the daytime population index is very low in residential areas of Seoul and in the wi-yeo-gu areas of Gyeonggi-do adjacent to Seoul. In other provinces, the daytime population index of wi-yeo-gu areas, where industrial facilities are located, is high, and the daytime population index of cities with large populations, the major provincial cities, is low. At the wi-yeo area level, Seoul (189.3) has the highest daytime population index as of 2020 because of the influx of commuting from Gyeonggi-do (94.2) and Incheon (94.2). In most metropolitan areas, the daytime population index is less than 100 because people commute to the surrounding provincial areas than to the metropolitan areas. Due changes occurred in the daytime population index between 2015 and 2020. First, the daytime population index for 2015 has a smaller deviation from 100 compared to 2015 in most regions. This change is due to a decrease in the commuting population as a result of the impact of COVID-19. Second, there is the change of Sejong. Recent large-scale residential complexes developed in Sejong changed the daytime population index from 97.0 to 109.6 in 2020. The daytime population index is very different even within metropolitan areas. For example, the daytime population index of Seoul is the highest nationwide at 198.9, but 12 out of 27 towns of Seoul have a daytime population index of 109 or less. Inui-gu (177), Yuseong-gu (161), Dobongsan-gu (161), Fangyang-dong (161), Yangju-gu (151) are the five municipalities with the lowest daytime population index. On the other hand, Gyeonggi-do (233), Jung-gu (233), and Gwangju (158) belong to the three municipalities with the highest daytime population index. In the metropolitan areas, the daytime population index is high in the old downtown areas, while there is a decrease in the urban population and the concentration of business facilities, or in the outskirts of the city where large-scale industrial facilities are located.

The daytime population index also differs by gender. For example, in areas where males' daytime population index exceeds 190, women's daytime population index also often exceeds 190. In other words, in regions where males tend to commute to work due to commuting, there are many cases of net inflows from both men and women. However, since men's commuting areas are larger than women's, men's daytime population index has a greater deviation from women's daytime population index in most regions.
Overseas Koreans are categorized into Korean nationality and foreign nationality. Korean nationality refers to Korean nationals who have acquired permanent residence in a foreign country or who reside in a foreign country for the purpose of permanent residence. A Korean citizen with foreign nationality is a person prescribed by Presidential Decree among those who have acquired foreign nationality as a direct descendant of the Korean national.

International Migration of Korean Overseas Koreans

Overseas Koreans have changed over time. Until the 1970s, the number of overseas Koreans residing in Japan was the largest. Since the 1970s, the number of overseas Koreans residing in the United States increased the most due to immigration to the United States and an increase in the number of descendants of immigrants. In the 1990s, after establishing diplomatic ties with China, overseas Koreans in China were included in the statistics of comparison. In the 2000s, overseas Koreans in the former Soviet Union were included in the statistics of comparison. Since the mid-2010s, overseas Koreans living in Southeast Asia such as Vietnam and the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand have increased rapidly. Meanwhile, from 1962 to 2020, 1.5 million domestic Koreans immigrated abroad. By country, the largest number went to the United States (840,000 people), Canada (130,000 people), and Japan (100,000 people). Among the 810,000 foreign nationalities, Chinese nationalities and 80,000 Korean nationalities. Among the 810,000 foreign nationalities, Chinese nationalities and Koreans (F-4) are in the order of Overseas Koreans (F-4), Working Visit (H-2), Permanent Resident (F-2), and Long-Term Reciprocal (F-5). Overseas Koreans, 70% of the 450,000 F-4 visa holders who should report their place of residence in Korea, live in (Gyeonggi-do) (152,800), Seoul (103,800), and Jeonbuk (36,800). In 2020, the number of overseas Koreans with foreign nationality decreased significantly compared to the previous year due to the impact of COVID-19.

Overseas Koreans with Korean nationality living in Korea may register as overseas Koreans. In this case, economic activities such as identification through resident registration and financial and real estate transactions are convenient. When entering and leaving Korea for the purpose of staying for more than 30 days, they report their arrival and departure. As of 2020, the number is 360,000, of which 55,000, or 15%, are in Seoul (29,000), Incheon (23,000), and Busan (6,000). The number of Koreans residing in Korea is significantly lower than that of Koreans (residence rate: 71%). On the other hand, the number of North Korean defectors entering Korea, which had increased between the 1,000 and the late 2000s since 2003, was only 229 in 2020.
The number of foreigners residing in Korea was around 400,000 until the 1980s but increased rapidly to a record-high 2.82 million in 2018. However, due to the impact of COVID-19 in 2020, the number of foreigners decreased by 480,800. As of December 2020, 2.34 million foreigners were staying in Korea. By nationality, the Chinese had the most with 860,000 (750,000 Chinese and 150,000 Korean Chinese), followed by 250,000 Vietnamese and 160,000 Thais.

In 2020, the number of foreigners who left Korea was greater than those who entered Korea except for a few countries such as the United States and Vietnam as a result of COVID-19. In 2020, 250,000 foreigners entered Korea, and 350,000 foreigners left Korea, recording a net-outflow of 100,000. The year 2020 recorded the highest net-outflow of foreigners since 2000. In 2020, a total of 2.04 million foreigners resided in Korea (1.3 million men and 910,000 women, sex ratio: 102.7). By age, the proportion of foreigners aged 25-54 is high. However, the proportion of foreigners residing in Korea varies greatly by country, gender, and age. For example, among Chinese, Korean Chinese have more women than men, but non-Korean Chinese have more men than women. Also, most Korean Chinese are over the age of 50, while most non-Chinese are under the age of 50.

African, Central Asian, and Southeast Asian countries have a high proportion of men, with the exception of a few countries such as Thailand. The United States also shows a similar pattern. A higher sex ratio of the Indonesian population in Korea is due to religious reasons. On the other hand, the proportion of female Japanese in Korea is overwhelmingly high. By the status of residence based on visa, foreigners living in Korea can be categorized as follows: Overseas Koreans (F-4), Non-professional Employment (E-9), Visa Exempted (B-1), Permanent Resident (F-5), and Work and Visit (H-2). As of 2020, 390,000 illegal immigrants stayed in Korea after their visas expired. The rate of illegal immigrants was highest in the order of Visa Exempted (B-1), Permanent Resident (F-5), and Working Visit (H-2). In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for foreign workers to return to their home countries, the rate of illegal foreigners residing in Korea was 4.8%, the highest since 2008.