A household is a living unit of one or more persons who share a dwelling. Households are divided into general, collective, and foreign households. As the population increases, the number of households also increases, but the number of households grows faster than the number of persons. As of 2020, there were 21.5 million households in Korea, and the growth rate of foreign households is the highest among households. In Korea, stoves and gas are mainly used for cooking; other households are mostly used for storage.

The number of persons who make up a household has changed over time. Households with six or more persons were most common in 1970, accounting for 44 percent of all households. As of 2020, among a total of 26.9 million households, single-person households (6 million households) account for 31 percent of all households, while two-person households (5.9 million households) accounted for 20 percent. The number of households with two or fewer members was 12.4 million, or 48 percent of the general households. The average number of persons per household was 5.2 in 1970 but fell to 2.3 in 2020. The low birth rate, the aging population, and the increase in per household was 5.2 in 1970 but fell to 2.3 in 2020. The low birth rate, the aging population, and the increase in

The number of households is increasing very rapidly. From 2015 to 2030, the number of households increased in most areas of the country, except for rural areas, border areas, and old downtown areas. The annual average change in the number of households is very high, especially in new areas, such as Hanam-si in Gyeonggi-do (20.2%), Busan-si in Busan Metropolitan City (19.9%), Gwangju-si in Gwangju Metropolitan City (19.6%), and Daegu-si in Daegu Metropolitan City (19.5%). Changes in the number of households can be easily recognized by comparing those in 1980 and 2020 based on the 2020 administrative districts. Over the 40 years, the number of households increased by 3.4 million, and the number of households increased by 12.9 million, almost the same population growth. Moreover, the number of households increased even in the areas where the population decreased significantly, such as Jeollanam-do, Gyeongbuk-do, Jeollabuk-do, Gyeongsangbuk-do, and Gyeonggi-do.

Changes in Household Composition changes in the population and number of households can be

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Foreign households have been increasing rapidly since the 2000s due to the influx of foreign workers and the change in overseas Korean policies. The number of foreign households increased 2.5 times, from 266,000 households in 2000 to 659,946 households in 2010. The proportion of foreign households reached 2.54 percent in 2019 before the net outflow of foreigners due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among provinces, Jeollanam-do, which recorded 52 percent of the households living in detached houses, is the only region where the occupancy rate of detached houses exceeds 50 percent. On the contrary, Jeju recorded 75 percent of the occupancy rate of apartments. Seoul does not have a high occupancy rate of apartments compared to other regions. However, in Seoul, the occupancy rate of multi-unit dwellings is steadily rising, while the occupancy rate of detached houses is by detached houses, multi-unit dwelling houses (apartments, ten-bases, apartment units in a private house), houses and apartment units in private houses is the highest in the nation, and the proportion of households with more than 2.5 persons the most.

In the case of the gross floor area of houses, detached houses had the highest ratio of the housing that has a gross floor area exceeding 130 m², apartment and lower homes had a high ratio of the housing that has a gross floor area between 60 m² and 90 m², and apartment units in private houses had a high ratio of the housing that has a gross floor area between 40 m² and 60 m². Apartments had the highest living area at 94 m² per household. Detached houses, multi-unit dwellings, and studio apartments had a similar living area at 27-29 m² per person. The average number of occupants per household was lowest in studio apartments at 1.5 persons, followed by the detached houses with 1.9 persons, and the apartments with 2.7 people the most.

Housing Tenure Type (2020)

Housing is largely divided into detached houses, multi-unit dwelling houses (apartments, ten-bases, apartment units in a private house), houses and apartment units in private houses as well as shopping malls or factories, and residences other than housing, such as schools, apartments and dormitories. The occupancy rate of multi-unit dwelling houses is steadily rising, while the occupancy rate of detached houses is steadily declining.

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Housing Tenure Type (2020)
The increase of single-person households is a worldwide phenomenon, occurring not only in Korea but also in developed and developing countries. In Korea, the number of single-person households has been increasing very rapidly. The proportion of single-person households increased rapidly from 9.8 percent in 1998 to 31.7 percent in 2020. Single-person households had the highest proportion among all types of households, accounting for 27.2 percent in 2015, and this proportion is expected to reach 30.4 percent by 2040.

As of 2020, the proportion of single-person households was over 15 percent in 41 provinces and metropolitan cities, excluding Chungcheongnam-do, and in 2040, the proportion of single-person households is expected to reach 48 percent in Daegu, Gwangju, and Jeonju metropolitan cities.

As of 2020, regions with a high proportion of single-person households were metropolitan cities where many young adults in their 20s and 30s reside, such as Kwangju-si, Jeju-do, and Gangneung-si in Gangwon-do, Incheon, and Ulsan, in the Seoul Metropolitan Area. Single-person households show various distributions by gender, age, and marital status. As of 2020, single-person households have more men than their female counterparts and women in their 70s and older. As a whole, the proportion of women (50.3%) is slightly higher than that of men (49.7%). By age, those in their 20s or younger have the most, followed by those in their 70s. In their 60s, 50s, 40s, and 30s, single-person households are the most common. In 2040, single-person households in their 50s and younger are more distributed in cities, while elderly single-person households are more distributed in rural areas. In addition, the sex ratio of single-person households varies greatly depending on the characteristics of the region.

The number of single-person households and elderly households have increased, while the number of households with children has decreased. The number of households with elderly people aged 65 and up increased from 4.07 million in 2010 to 5.47 million in 2020, accounting for 14.9 percent of the households. The proportion of elderly households rose from 21.5 percent in 2010 to 28.0 percent in 2020. As of 2030, the proportion of elderly households in households of all ages will rise to 19 percent. In addition, the proportion of households only the elderly and elderly households with only elderly reaches 14.2 percent and 7.9 percent, respectively, indicating the development of economic supporting elderly households. Of the 22 metropolitan cities, 41.7% of single-person households and elderly households account for more 30 percent of the elderly households, and the proportion of elderly households in low urban cities and the Seoul Metropolitan Areas. However, the proportion of elderly households is expected to increase rapidly in these urban areas. The number of households with minors under the age of 18 decreased by 11 percent from 5.57 million in 2010 to 4.95 million in 2020, and the proportion of households with minors dropped from 28.7 percent in 2010 to 23.6 percent in 2020. Households with children under age 15 experienced the greatest decline, falling 15 percent from 2.06 million in 2010 to 1.69 million in 2020. Although policies to encourage childbirths have been implemented, the number of births is expected to decrease due to various social and economic factors. Accordingly, the number of households and household members also is expected to decrease. However, the proportion of households with minors generally shows the opposite trend of change to the proportion of elderly households. As of 2020, in 177 out of 229 single-person areas, the proportion of households with minors was less than 20 percent. On the other hand, there are only 11.8 single-person areas where the proportion of households with minors was greater than 35 percent.

Households of the Elderly and Minors

Households of the Elderly-Aged 65 or Older (2020)

Households with the Elderly and Minors (2020)

Changes in the Number of Household Owners by Family and Age

Changes in Number of Household Owners by Family and Age (1998-2020)

Household with the Elderly and Minors (2020)