Manufacturing in Korea has gone through tremendous continuous growth during the last 40 years, placing a pivotal role in the nation’s economic development and upgrading the overall industrial foundation. In the early period of industrialization during the 1960s and the early 1970s, the government chose to promote and nurture light industries such as textiles, clothing, and shoes. Moreover, since the mid-1970s, the government’s industry promotion has shifted to the heavy and chemical industries that served the relatively large domestic markets and provided the foundation for industrialization to take off. In the 1990s, there was a shift in investment emphasis to high-tech industries. Significant high-tech growth, including the development of semiconductors, computers, and information and communication technology, was accompanied by advanced technology training. Since the mid-2000s, structural growth in the manufacturing sector has grown in a new direction for a different development strategy. Especially concerning growth, including the development of semiconductors, computers, and information and communication technology, has dramatically increased.

The nominal value added in manufacturing which was only 490 billion won in 1970, sharply increased dramatically. Considering the value added in manufacturing increased from about 210 trillion won to about 557 trillion won during the same period, the gross value added of enterprises with over 300 workers increased quite considerably.

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The manufacturing shipment values by region in 2019 were the highest in Gyeonggi-do (976 trillion won), followed by Incheon (275 trillion won), Chungnam (259 trillion won), and Gyeongsangbuk-do (206 trillion won). The manufacturing shipment values per worker in 2019 were the highest in Incheon (1.2 million won/worker), followed by Gyeonggi (1.1 million won/worker), Chungnam (1.0 million won/worker), and Gyeongsangbuk (0.9 million won/worker).

The number of workers in manufacturing increased from about 2.7 million people in 1970 to about 4.8 million people in 1990, the highest since 1970. Since then, the number has steadily tended downward. In 2020, the number of workers in manufacturing fell to 4.38 million people. Literature includes the percentage of the number of workers in manufacturing increased until 1990, after that, it has shown generally downward trends.

According to the changes in value added by the size of worker groups in manufacturing from 2000-2019, the share of gross value added of enterprises with over 300 workers was about 77 trillion won during the same period, the gross value added of enterprises with over 300 workers increased quite dramatically.
In the 10th Korean Standard Industrial Classification (KSIC), the manufacture of motor vehicles is listed as “Manufacture of motor vehicles, radars, and radionavigation equipment,” including “Manufacture of motor vehicles and engines for motor vehicles,” “Manufacture of bodies for motor vehicles,” “Manufacture of motorcycles,” “Manufacture of trailers and semi-trailers,” “Manufacture of motor vehicles and engines for motor vehicles,” “Manufacture of aircraft,” “Manufacture of materials for motor vehicles,” “Manufacture of vehicles and vessels,” “Manufacture of motor vehicles and engines for motor vehicles,” “Manufacture of marine vessels,” and “Manufacture of motor vehicles and engines for motor vehicles.” The location quotients of bodies for motor vehicles, “Manufacture of trailers and semi-trailers,” “Manufacture of motor vehicles and engines for motor vehicles,” “Manufacture of aircraft,” “Manufacture of motorcycles,” and “Manufacture of vehicles and vessels” are very unevenly distributed. The number of workers for the shipbuilding industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Gyeongsangnam-do, Daegu, Gwangju, Jeonbuk, and Gyeongbuk. The top two shipbuilding regions indicate a relatively high level of the location quotient (over 30), suggesting that the shipbuilding industry is mainly concentrated in Gyeongsangnam-do, Gwangju, and Jeonbuk. The value added for the shipbuilding industry ranked by descending order were Gyeongsangnam-do, Ulsan, and Busan. The number of employees for the shipbuilding industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Gyeongsangnam-do, Gwangju, Jeonbuk, and Gyeongbuk. The number of employees for the general purpose machinery manufacturing ranked by descending order were Gyeongsangnam-do, Gyeongbuk, Ulsan, Incheon, and Chungcheongbuk-do. The value added for the general purpose machinery manufacturing ranked by descending order were Geochang-gun, Gangseo-gu in Busan, Yeongju-si, Haman-gun, Jinju-si, Uiryeong-gun, and Ulsan. The highest concentrations of manufacturing motor vehicle frames and manufacturing of tires and semi-tires are in (descending order) Gyeongsangnam-do, Ulsan, Changwon-si, and Gyeongju-si. The production costs for the manufacture of motor vehicles ranked by descending order were Ulsan, Gyeongsangnam-do, Changwon-si, Gyeongju-si, Youngju-si, and Gyeongju-si. The production costs for the manufacture of motor vehicles ranked by descending order were Ulsan, Gyeongsangnam-do, Changwon-si, Gyeongju-si, Youngju-si, and Gyeongju-si.

Number of Employees in Motor Vehicle Manufacturing (2019)

Value Added in Shipbuilding Industry (2019)

Value Added in General Purpose Machinery Manufacturing (2019)
In the 10th Korean Standard Industrial Classification (KSIC), the steel industry is listed as "Manufacture of basic iron and steel," including "Manufacture of basic iron, steel, and ferro-alloys;" "Manufacture of steel products by rolling, extrusion and drawing;" "Manufacture of pipes, tubes and hollow profiles of iron or steel;" and "Manufacture of other basic iron and steel." The location quotients for the steel industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggido, Pohang-si, Donghae-si, Incheon, Suncheon-si, Gunsan-si, Donhea-si, and Gangseo-gu in Busan. The shipment values for the steel industry ranked by descending order were Ulsan, Jeollanam-do, Incheon. The value added for the steel industry ranked by descending order were Ulsan, Jeollanam-do, Gyeongsangnam-do, Gyeongsangbuk-do, and Chungcheongnam-do, Gyeongsangnam-do, Gyeongsangbuk-do, Busan, and Gyeonggi-do. The number of workers for the chemical industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggido, Gyeonggi-do, Chungcheongnam-do, Gyeonggido, Chungcheongnam-do, and Incheon. The highest production concentrations of chemical industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggido, Gyeonggi-do, Chungcheongnam-do, and Incheon. The percentage of value added in the manufacturing sector for the steel industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggido, Gunsan-si, Gyeonggido, Chungcheongnam-do, and Incheon. The percentage of value added in the manufacturing sector for the oil refining and chemical industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggido, Gyeonggi-do, Chungcheongnam-do, Gyeonggido, Gyeonggido, and Incheon.
In the 10th Korean Standard Industrial Classification (KSIC), the household electric appliances industry is listed as "Manufacture of domestic appliances," "Manufacture of magnetic and optical media," "Manufacture of electric tubes and bulbs and lighting equipment," and "Manufacture of domestic appliances." The location quotients for the household electric appliances industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Chungcheongbuk-do, Chungcheongnam-do, and Gwangju. The shipment values for the household electric appliances industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Gyeongnam-do, Gyeongbuk-do, and Incheon. The production costs for the household electric appliances industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Gyeongnam-do, Gyeongbuk-do, and Incheon. The value added for the household electric appliances industry ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Gyeongnam-do, Gyeongbuk-do, and Incheon. The number of workers for communication and broadcasting apparatuses manufacturing ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Seoul, Incheon, and Gwangju. The value added for communication and broadcasting apparatuses manufacturing ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Seoul, Gwangju, and Incheon.

In the 10th Korean Standard Industrial Classification (KSCI), semiconductor manufacturing is listed as "Manufacture of semiconductors," including "Manufacture of chips," and "Manufacture of electronic components." The location quotients for semiconductor manufacturing ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Jeju-do, Gwangju, Gyeongnam-do, and Incheon. The shipment values for semiconductor manufacturing ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Gyeongnam-do, Gwangju, and Incheon. The value added for semiconductor manufacturing ranked by descending order were Gyeonggi-do, Gyeongnam-do, Gwangju, and Incheon.