



2021 Survey on Immigrants' Living Conditions and Labour Force

- The number of de jure foreigners was 1.332 million persons in 2021, remaining the same as 2020.
- The employed foreigners was 855 thousand persons in 2021, which rose by 7 thousand persons from 2020. The employment-population ratio of foreigners stood at 64.2% in 2021, up 0.5%p from 2020.
- The number of employed foreigners with the 'Overseas Korean' visa increased by 32 thousand persons from 2020. The number of employed foreigners with the 'Non-professional Employment' visa decreased by 35 thousand persons from 2020.
- The number of employed naturalized Koreans was 31 thousand persons, rising by 3 thousand persons from 2020. The employment-population ratio of naturalized Koreans stood at 63.6% in 2021, up 4.5%p from 2020.

1. De jure immigrants

(Foreigners)

As of May 2021, the number of de jure foreigners aged 15 or more in Korea was 1.332 million persons, remaining the same year-on-year.

- As for foreigners by nationality, Korean-Chinese and Vietnam increased by 21 thousand persons (4.3%) and 4 thousand persons (2.1%), respectively. Whereas, 'Other countries in Asia' dropped by 26 thousand persons (-6.2%).
- As for foreigners by status of sojourn, 'Overseas Korean' (44 thousand persons, 13.1%), 'Permanent Residency' (14 thousand persons, 11.8%), 'Student' (6 thousand persons, 4.7%) and 'Marriage Migrant' (6 thousand persons, 4.5%) recorded a year-on-year increase.
- 'Work and Visit' (-38 thousand persons, -23.5%) and 'Non-professional Employment' (-36 thousand persons, -14.1%) recorded a year-on-year decrease.

(Naturalized Koreans)

Based on the de jure population as of May 2021, the number of Koreans aged 15 or more who were naturalized for the past 5 years was 49 thousand persons. As for nationality before naturalization, 36.8% and 36.2% of naturalized Koreans were Vietnamese and Korean-Chinese, respectively.

2. Major employment indicators

De jure foreigners

(Economically active population)

The economically active foreigners totaled 910 thousand persons in 2021, which declined by 8 thousand persons (-0.9%) from 2020. Their labor force participation rate stood at 68.3% in 2021, down 0.6%p from 2020.

(Employed foreigners)

The number of employed foreigners was 855 thousand persons in 2021, which grew by 7 thousand persons (0.9%) from 2020. The employment-population ratio of foreigners stood at 64.2% in 2021, up 0.5%p from 2020.

- (Status of sojourn)

The number of employed foreigners with the 'Overseas Korean' visa increased by 32 thousand persons (15.5%) from 2020. The number of employed foreigners with the 'Non-professional Employment' visa and the 'Work and Visit' visa decreased by 35 thousand persons (-14.0%) and 24 thousand persons (-20.1%), respectively, from 2020.

- (Industry)

As for employed foreigners by industry, 'Construction' and 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing' increased by 17 thousand persons (19.4%) and 4 thousand persons (7.2%), respectively, compared to the previous year. In the meantime, 'Mining and Manufacturing' and 'Wholesale and Retail Trade, and Accommodation and Food Service Activities' decreased by 9 thousand persons (-2.4%) and 3 thousand persons (-1.7%), respectively, compared to the previous year.

(Wages)

The share of wage workers earning '2 million won or more' stood at 74.1% in 2021, up 6.6%p from 2020. The share of wage workers earning 'less than 2 million won' stood at 25.9% in 2021, down 6.6%p from 2020.

(Unemployed foreigners)

The number of unemployed foreigners was 54 thousand persons in 2021, falling by 15 thousand persons (-21.9%) from 2020. Their unemployment rate marked 6.0% in 2021, down 1.6%p from 2020.

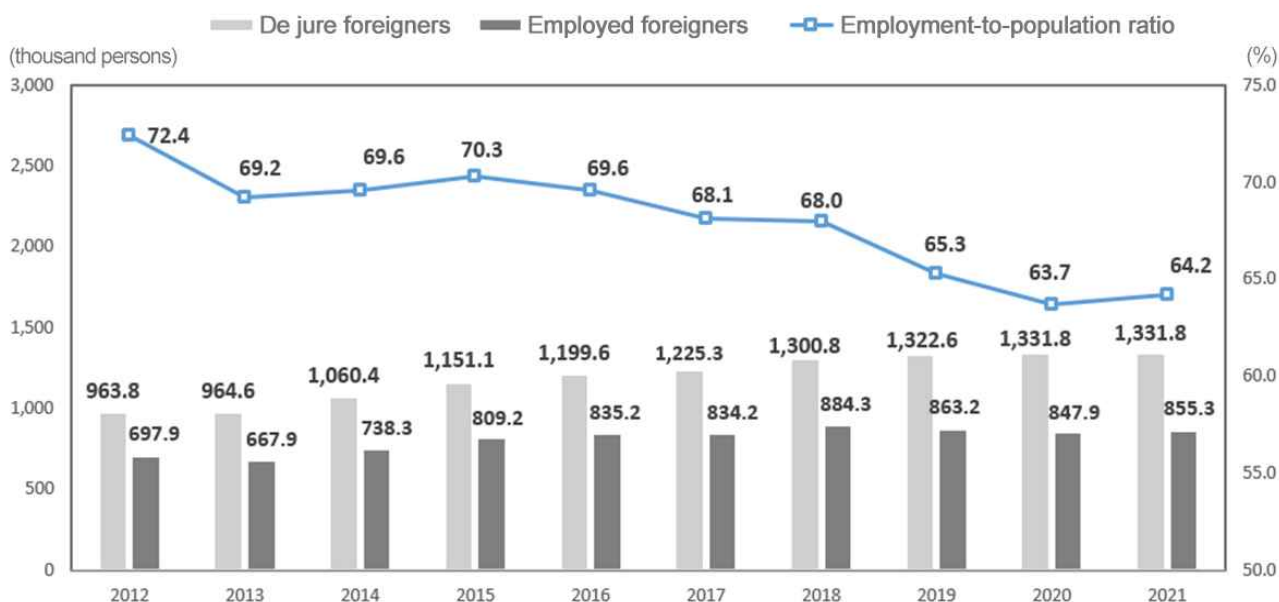
(Economically inactive foreigners)

The economically inactive foreigners totaled 422 thousand persons in 2021, rising by 8 thousand persons (1.9%) from 2020.

(Naturalized Koreans)

The number of employed naturalized Koreans was 31 thousand persons in 2021, rising by 3 thousand persons from 2020. The employment-population ratio of naturalized Koreans stood at 63.6% in 2021, rising by 4.5%p from 2020.

< Trend in de jure foreigners, employed foreigners and the employment-to-population ratio >



3. Immigrant's living conditions

(Total income)

For the past 1 year, foreigners earning the monthly income of '2 million ~ less than 3 million won' on average occupied the largest share at 34.2% of the total foreigners in Korea. In the meantime, naturalized Koreans of 'No income' occupied the largest share at 31.6% of the total naturalized Koreans.

(Share of expenditures)

The largest share of foreigners spent their income on living expenses (41.0%), which was followed by wire transfers (22.0%). On the other hand, the largest share of naturalized Koreans spent their income on living expenses (53.1%), which was followed by savings (19.2%).

(Overseas wire transfers)

35.4% of foreigners wired money overseas. 19.8% of naturalized Koreans wired money overseas. As for the frequency of wiring money overseas on average, '12 times or more per year' occupied the largest share.

(Continuous sojourn)

In 2021, 88.2% of foreigners (excluding permanent residents (F-5)) wanted to stay in Korea continuously after the expiration of sojourn, rising by 1.7%p from 2020.

(Method to extend sojourn)

As for the method to extend sojourn, 'Extension of stay' occupied the highest share at 53.6%, which was followed by 'Obtaining permanent residency' (14.6%) and 'Acquiring Korean citizenship' (11.1%).

4. Foreigners with the status of 'Work and Visit (H-2)' and 'Overseas Korean (F-4)'

(Residence region)

The largest share of foreigners with the status of 'Work and Visit' (45.9%) and 'Overseas Korean' (45.1%) resided in Gyeonggi.

(Foreigners by age group)

The largest share of foreigners with the status of 'Work and Visit' were in the group aged 50~59 (51.6%). The largest share of foreigners with the status of 'Overseas Korean' were in the group aged 60 or more (35.4%).

(Preparation period)

The largest share of foreigners with the status of 'Work and Visit' and 'Overseas Korean' prepared for less than 3 months to obtain the H-2 or F-4 visa.

(Information on jobs)

As for the method to obtain job information in Korea, 'Friends or acquaintances living in Korea' occupied the largest share, which was followed by 'Family members or relatives living in Korea'.

(Commission when finding a job)

16.3% of foreigners with the status of 'Work and Visit' paid commission to the agency when finding a job in Korea. 13.2% of foreigners with the status of 'Overseas Korean' paid commission to the agency when finding a job in Korea. The largest share of them paid less than 150 thousand won.