

THE REALITIES OF SOUTH KOREA'S MIGRATION POLICIES

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Introduction

Migration issues in the Republic of Korea (Korea or South Korea hereafter) are classified into two parts: (1) those that deal with Korean emigration (i.e., issues of overseas Koreans); and (2) those that deal with foreign immigration to Korea, both legal and illegal.

In regards to Korean emigration, the number of overseas Koreans has already reached over 6 million. Given the scope of Korean nationals overseas, the South Korean government has come under increasing demands for taking a decisive role in promoting the status of Korean diaspora in both their countries of residence and Korea. Although many overseas Koreans have successfully settled into their new environments with their inborn integrity and diligence, others have been unable, despite their efforts, to adjust themselves due to external political and social conditions. One significant case is that of the Korean Russians, who had left for *Yonhaeju* (the Maritime Provinces of the Russian Far East) in 1863 due to a crop failure at home (they are viewed as the first Korean emigrants). In 1937, descendants of these Korean Russians suffered from the forced migration policies of Stalin and were deported to the regions of Central Asia. Because of the manifestation of ethnic conflicts and civil war in Central Asia in the wake of the Soviet breakup, many of these emigrants have recently moved back to *Yonhaeju*.

On the other hand, with regards to the trend of foreign immigration into Korea, the most prominent and pressing issue at the moment is how the government will deal with the influx of foreign workers. Since foreign laborers first started to immigrate to Korea a decade ago, their

number has increased greatly to the current estimate of over 300,000. However, both legal and illegal immigrant workers have suffered from discrimination, human rights abuses, and social mistreatment in their working environments. There is also the problem of legal and institutional inadequacies, which has increased the illegal immigrant labor pool in the country. Several religious organizations and research institutions have been established in order to protect those foreign workers that are being exploited, but the Korean government has remained passive in addressing their needs. It is encouraging to note that in 2003 the Korean National Assembly passed a bill related to the employment of foreign workers. While the passage of the bill has surely provided a benchmark in the protection of foreign workers in accordance with international standards, it is still uncertain if this law can be effective because of its numerous restrictions, which are discussed below. In addition, the sexual exploitation of female illegal immigrants in Korea is a growing concern. These female immigrants usually come to Korea with the purpose of realizing the “Korean dream,” but usually get unintentionally involved in the sex industry, at times selling themselves for almost nothing in return. Such practices must be eradicated at all levels of society, with the government taking an active initiative.

This paper will first examine the present situation of Koreans living overseas and look at how government policies towards them have evolved. The paper will then discuss the debates and future tasks related to Korean emigration policies. Next, the paper will discuss the current situation of foreign immigration in Korea, with particular reference to legal and illegal immigrant workers in Korea. The paper will conclude with some comments on recommended government action plans.

Korean Emigration: Past and Present

The History of Overseas Koreans

Koreans first started to go abroad approximately 140 years ago. The history of Korean emigration can be divided into four waves of mass immigration to the following countries or regions, respectively: (1) Manchuria; (2) *Yonhaeju*; (3) Japan; and (4) the United States.

The first wave of immigrants to Manchuria started in the late 18th century, with the objective of seeking land as a result of domestic political unrest in Josun, Korea's last dynasty. Later on, immigration increased as Manchuria became the base for the resistance movements against Japan that aimed to achieve national independence for the Korean nation. Subsequently, national schools were established with the role of stirring up anti-Japanese sentiments and Korean patriotism. The cultivation of barren land in Manchuria was another important achievement. However, immigrants in Manchuria suffered greatly under Japanese oppression (e.g., the tragic incident of the *Gando* massacres in 1920) and the *Mitsuya* Agreement, which was signed in 1925 by Director Mitsuya Miyamase from the Government-General of colonized Josun and the head of the northeastern provinces of China, Jang Jeorin, with aims to eliminate the Korean national independence struggle in Manchuria. Moreover, the subsequent invasion of China by the Japanese army in the early 1930s weakened the activities of Korean armed forces in the region.

Immigrants in *Yonhaeju* participated in the Japanese resistance movement after 1905, by establishing national groups and schools, as well as by recruiting loyal troops. These immigrants also contributed to the establishment of the government of the Liberation Army in Vladivostok in 1914 and to the organization of the national rally during the "March 1st Movement" in 1919. These very immigrants and their children were victims of Stalin's forced migration to Central Asia in 1937.

The history of Korean immigrants in Japan began in the late 18th century when a handful of Korean intelligentsia went to Japan for study. After the colonization of Joseon in 1910, the wave of new immigrants to Japan was usually made up of farmers looking for work in Japanese industries. Women, who were commonly referred to as "comfort women," were also subject to forced migration in order to provide sexual services to Japanese soldiers. After the earthquake in the Kanto region of Japan in 1923, 6,000 Korean immigrants were massacred for supposedly causing social unrest in the country.

Korean immigration to the United States started in the early 20th century, when immigrants, mostly composed of male farmers, went to work in the sugar cane plantations of Hawaii, as well as railroad construction sites and vegetable farms located on the country's west coast. In addition, some Koreans went to Mexico and Cuba. These laborers, especially those in Mexico and Cuba, were exploited for their labor, receiving negligible wages in return for work close to that of slavery. Korean immigrants in the United States also contributed to the anti-Japanese resistance movement by organizing patriotic groups, establishing newspaper and magazine agencies, and forming a Korean army in the United States after World War II.

Another important aspect of Korean emigration is related to the adoption of children from Korea. Between 1958 and 2002, a total of 150,499 Korean children were adopted by citizens of the United States and European countries (see Table 6).

In brief, the history of Korean emigration started as a means of surviving difficult living conditions in Joseon or contributing to the execution of anti-Japanese movements. Korean emigration has changed in character over the past couple of decades, stimulated by a yearning for a better quality of life and education.

Current Trends in Korean Emigration

The number of overseas Koreans increased from 0.7 million in 1971 to 2.32 million in 1990 and 4.83 million in 1991. The main cause of the sharp increase between 1990 and 1991 was the fact that after the end of the Cold War ethnic Koreans living in China and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries were included for the first time in the statistics of the total number of overseas Koreans. The number has continuously increased, with an estimated 6.08 million as of July 2003. About 88 percent of these Korean emigrants are concentrated in Asia (mostly in China and Japan) and North America (mostly in the United States). Out of the 2.14 million overseas Koreans living in China, approximately 90 percent have obtained Chinese citizenship (see Tables 1 and 2).

Currently, 151 countries accommodate Korean immigrants, 24 of the receiving countries having a population of over 2,000 overseas Koreans. Over 2 million Korean immigrants live in the United States and China, 640,000 in Japan, and 560,000 in the CIS countries. It is worth noting that though the number of Korean immigrants living in Canada was only 170,000 in 2003, this represented a 20.74 percent increase from the previous year (see Table 3). Immigration to Canada is expected to increase in the future. This trend seems to reflect the economic downturn and high level of unemployment in Korea. Sales of Canadian imports over home shopping channels have reached a record high. For example, Hyundai Home Shopping TV Channel netted a profit of 17.5 billion won in August 2003, when 983 consumers raced to buy an imported Canadian product during the 80 minutes it was on the air.² This is interpreted as a response to the increased difficulties in obtaining immigration permits or student visas to the United States after the 9-11 terrorist attacks. Indeed we notice increased immigration preferences towards Anglophone countries with relatively lenient immigration requirements.

Koreans go abroad for various reasons (see Table 4). Since the introduction in 1989 of government policy that allowed the freedom to travel overseas, there has been a sharp increase in overseas travel, with the exception of a decline during the financial crisis of the late 1990s. In 2001, the main reasons for going abroad included tourism (43.5%), commercial business (25.6%), personal visits (10.3%), and language studies (4.4%). Figures vary from year to year, but as of early 2003, the order remained more or less the same. However, more and more people have tended to go abroad for longer periods of time during the past couple of years, usually for the purpose of further study or quality living. In 2003, a trend in immigration swept Korea. One of the main reasons for emigration is the pressure Korean parents feel to give their children the best education possible, which in turn induces many young Koreans to settle abroad permanently. Several commercials for immigration-related imports have been broadcast since the success of the Hyundai Home Shopping Channel. Despite the rainy weather, over 15,000 people visited the International Emigration Fair arranged by the Korea Trade Fair Co. The majority of visitors, who were interested in receiving consultation on U.S. or Canadian immigration, were in their thirties or forties with young children.

The present trend in emigration is a natural phenomenon brought about by the current wave of globalization. The presence of overseas Koreans must thus be viewed as an asset in making Korea an influential country in the globalized world. However, if emigration is mainly due to dissatisfactions with the Korean educational system or society, the government must offer a more active plan to counter Korean emigration.

The Status of Overseas Koreans' Associations

One characteristic that makes the situation of overseas Koreans unique compared to that of other nationals is the propensity towards settling in a certain region. Because many Koreans

emigrate for political-economic reasons, large segments of them end up settling in countries such as Japan, China, the United States, and the CIS countries. This trend is also reflected in the recent argument that the Korean ethnic network can include only a limited number of regions. That is, there are innate limitations in the formation of a network that would include all the regions and countries of the world. As shown in Table 5, the United States is home to the largest number of overseas Korean associations. This reflects the fact that these associations have the ability and the connections to exercise influence on the U.S. government. However, in the midst of the conflict with North Korea, the South Korean government has shown its preference and support for *Mindan* (a pro-South Korean association) in order to gain advantage over *Jochongryon* (a pro-North Korean association) in the conflict between these groups in Japan, instead of focusing on lobbying for a North Korean policy that would be favorable towards the South Korean government in U.S. Congress. This kind of attitude from the South Korean government has brought about discontent among overseas Koreans living in other countries, particularly the United States.

Currently, the Overseas Koreans Foundation (OKF) acts as the cornerstone for over 6 million overseas Koreans. As a non-profit public corporation that is affiliated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT), the OKF was established by an agreement concluded on May 3, 1996 by the 1st Commission of Overseas Koreans and the “Overseas Koreans Foundation Bill” that came into force on March 27, 1997. On October 30, 1997 the Overseas Koreans Foundation was launched. The OKF aims at promoting a sense of commonness among ethnic Koreans and works to expand the cyber ethnic Korean community, Korean.net. In addition, in October 2002, the OKF launched the Hansang Network, which is made up of a network of commercial and industrial experts, information technology specialists, and science and technology-related organizations, with the aim to generate substantial economic profits.

The Hansang Network planned to hold its 2nd Korean World Business Convention in October 2003 for exchange of information on markets and products between Koreans living in and out of Korea.

Overseas Koreans Policies: Progress and Tasks

Development of Korean Emigrant Policy

There was practically no standard policy towards Korean emigrants in Korea during the periods of the 1st and 2nd Republics, when government leaders were preoccupied with resolving the problem of post-colonial social instability and reconstructing the country from the destructive impact of the Korean War. The 3rd Republic under President Park Chung Hee encouraged Koreans to migrate by enacting the “Emigration Law,” but the law failed to achieve its goal because of a lack of management by the government. Meanwhile, as complaints concerning the legal status of Korean residents in Japan increased, proposals were put forth for investigations of the actual conditions of Korean immigrants in Japan. In June 1971, then-presidential candidate Kim Dae Jung pledged to establish a Department of Overseas Koreans. However, fierce diplomatic competition between South and North Korea during the 1960s and 1970s prevented the South Korean government from developing a national policy towards overseas Koreans, as the government focused on how to prevent South Koreans from defecting to North Korea.

The new constitution of the 5th Republic under President Chun Doo-Whan, promulgated in 1980, stimulated the nation’s interest in overseas Koreans. Clause 2 of Article 2 of the constitution prescribed the government’s duty to protect overseas Koreans. The expansion and increased role of overseas Koreans, along with the strengthened political and economic position

of Korea in the world, as demonstrated during the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, helped the South Koreans realize the important role of Korean emigrants. There was also a positive change in the attitudes of overseas Koreans towards South Korea. During their campaigns for the 13th presidential elections in 1987, the three candidates, Roh Tae Woo, Kim Young Sam, and Kim Dae Jung, all pledged to enhance the rights of Korean emigrants and ensure efficient implementation of immigration policies. The post-Cold War environment, in which ideological prejudices no longer were a major obstacle, further facilitated good will and support of the South Korean public and decision-makers towards overseas Koreans. For instance, with President Roh's *Nordpolitik*, which aimed to pursue wide-ranging relations with socialist countries and contacts and dialogue with North Korea, the government and the people of South Korea showed greater interest in ethnic Koreans living in China, Russia, and the CIS countries.

In the early 1990s, the Kim Young Sam administration presented a "New Policy for Overseas Koreans" that was in line with its globalization policy. Subsequently, in December 1995, the government announced a plan in relation to supporting the Korean emigrant society. The objective of this plan was to strengthen ties between Koreans and ethnic Korean communities and promote the participation of overseas Koreans in the process of developing globalization policies and strategies, in recognition of the significance of their roles and status. These efforts were manifested in the legislation of the "Overseas Korean Foundation Bill" in March 1997 and the subsequent establishment of the Overseas Koreans Foundation (OKF) that is under the auspices of the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was the first official policy providing a systematic approach to protecting the rights and interests of Koreans living abroad. In September 1999, the Kim Dae Jung administration established the foundation for the protection of the rights and interests of Korean emigrants through a Special Act on the Legal Status of Overseas Koreans ("Overseas Koreans Law" hereafter).

In brief, the number of Korean emigrants has increased over the past several decades. The Korean government's policy has also become more emigrant-friendly in the wake of the end of the Cold War. Yet, such development was far from being satisfactory to the overseas Korean associations. They asked for not only governmental and financial support appropriate for the needs of each overseas Korean community but also the creation of the Department of Overseas Koreans to deal effectively with their needs and interests. The government has maintained it cannot grant such requests because they might possibly cause diplomatic frictions. Indeed, both Presidents Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung failed to implement the public pledges they made during election campaigns regarding overseas Koreans. President Kim Young Sam (1993-97) only succeeded in establishing the OKF, instead of establishing a Department of Overseas Koreans, while President Kim Dae Jung (1998-2002) only managed to pass an Overseas Koreans Law instead of passing a bill permitting dual citizenship. The task of establishing a Department of Overseas Koreans seems to continue to be difficult for the current Roh Moo-Hyun administration.

Limitations of Policies towards Korean Emigrants

The policy towards Korean emigrants has been executed with a view to "helping overseas Koreans fully adapt and settle in foreign countries without losing their national identity." According to an official of the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the assumption underlying this policy is that the integration of ethnic Koreans into foreign societies would help in promoting the rights and interests of overseas Koreans. However, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the academic community have criticized the government policy for promoting assimilation and not integration. The director of the Institute of Overseas Koreans Study, Lee Soo Hong, has pointed out that the current policy implies that

the government is unwilling to implement a policy towards Korean emigrants, since Koreans living abroad will naturally assimilate into the societies in which they live. He argues that the government's policy neglects the needs and interests of the 2nd and 3rd generation ethnic Koreans who have fully assimilated into foreign societies.³

Some also assert that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade should not be in charge of government policies towards overseas Koreans. They say that the ministry has concentrated on minimizing diplomatic conflict with other countries rather than dealing with issues regarding ethnic Koreans. The ministry's only efforts on behalf of overseas Koreans have been limited to the cultural dimension, focused on issues such as language education, and have stayed away from controversial, but more important dimensions, e.g., political, economic, judicial, and human rights issues. For example, the government has hardly shown any concern for new emigrants seeking employment or for computer and other technical training for the 2nd and 3rd generation ethnic Koreans living in CIS countries and China. The Korea Education Institute has also been criticized for concentrating on projects related to language and cultural education rather than helping bring up responsible citizens of the countries in which they live

Proposals for the establishment of a Department of Overseas Koreans have been met with opposition from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. In fact, the ministry was even opposed to the creation of the OKF in 1997. The ministry also opposed the passage of the Overseas Koreans Law in 1999. From the start, the party in power and the Ministry of Justice had defined an overseas Korean as a person of ethnic Korean origin who has obtained the citizenship of a country other than South Korea. However, due to opposition from MOFAT, the government had to choose the more restrictive definition of an overseas Korean as "a person who either had Korean citizenship in the past or who was the direct relative of a foreign national that had been designated by the president." Accordingly, a total of 2.6 million ethnic Koreans,

who were the descendants of migrants that had moved to the Soviet Union, China, and Japan 48 years ago, have been excluded. This definition also runs counter to the “Overseas Koreans Foundation Bill.” Because the bill defines an overseas Korean as “a person that is of ethnic Korean origin, regardless of his/her nationality, who is currently living in a foreign country,” the Foundation and NGOs have called for the revision of the current definition that excludes overseas Koreans in the Soviet Union, China, and Japan. Even in the midst of the debate concerning the Special Act for overseas Koreans in 1999, the Policy Commission of Overseas Koreans, which includes the participation of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, failed to meet. Therefore, it is difficult for the government to avoid the criticism that it regards issues concerning overseas Koreans as secondary to other diplomatic affairs. Korean emigrant organizations have shown their discontent by criticizing the government’s behavior of taking advantage of the issue of overseas Koreans only when it suits the government’s needs.

In November 2001, the Constitutional Court ruled that the definition of ethnic Koreans with different nationalities in the Overseas Koreans Law (Clause 2 of Chapter 2) violated the principle of equality and called for amendment of the clause by December 31, 2003. As a result, public and political debates over how to set the boundary of overseas Koreans intensified, as did the government’s efforts to develop subsequent policy plans.

It is regrettable that there is no single governmental organization representing the interests of people who make up 11 percent of the whole Korean population around the world. A change in the government’s behavior is necessary in order to promote the welfare of overseas Koreans and also take advantage of the resources the ethnic Korean populations represent. In addition, it should be pointed out that while there are 6 million ethnic Koreans living in 151 countries, there are only 25 Korean schools located in 15 countries, most of them in Asia.

Despite the fact that 2.4 million people, more than one-third of overseas Koreans, live in North America, there is only one Korean school in the region. In contrast, with the majority of Korean language schools located in North America (1,085 out of 1,923 schools located in 96 countries), it is apparent that overseas Koreans are very interested in teaching their children the Korean language while relying on American educational institutions for standard education. This sentiment can also be observed in Europe and the CIS, where there is only one Korean school compared to 593 Korean language schools (See Table 5).

Furthermore, as of July 2001, the government had dispatched only twelve officials to support and monitor Korean educational institutions abroad. In order to enhance the diplomatic position of South Korea and the national identity of overseas Koreans by promoting standard and extracurricular educational programs in Korean schools and language institutes, enhanced support from the government (including increased dispatches of government officials and teachers) should be considered.

Future Tasks for Korean Emigrant Policies

Proposed Revision of the "Overseas Koreans Law"

The main objective of the proposed revision of the "Overseas Koreans Law" is to include ethnic Koreans living in China and Russia in the definition of "overseas Koreans," thus promoting the rights and economic activities of these people. However, despite the efforts of political, government, and NGO representatives, there has been little agreement on how to achieve this objective since it was first proposed in November 2001. Although the revision of the law is currently supported by the moral and legal justifications provided by the Constitutional Court, it is not a simple task. This is because the revision itself presents several problems, the following two being the most serious. First, offering special privileges to

overseas Koreans in the form of a special law, such as the “Overseas Koreans Law,” goes against the spirit of international law, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. These international laws prohibit the discrimination of people on the basis of ethnic, religious, or racial backgrounds and advocate the principle of equality for both people at home and abroad. Second, the issue of including ethnic Koreans living in China into the definition of overseas Koreans, which is the main purpose of the proposed revision, could bring about a diplomatic conflict with China and in turn instability in the domestic labor market.

Still, if the people and the social circumstances require a revision, it will be appropriate to overcome the obstacles to amending the law. The first problem can be eased by adopting a system or law that best suits the interests and needs of overseas Korean residents in the short run and still conforms to international norms and standards in the long run. The second problem is more difficult to tackle as diplomatic tensions with China concerning the definition of overseas Korean residents can possibly cause serious damage to Korea’s national interests considering the high degree of interdependence between the two countries in the political, diplomatic, security, and economic sectors. Yet, it would be wise for the Korean government to make its Chinese counterparts aware that in this age of increasing interdependence, China depends on Korea nearly as much as the latter depends on the former. The Korean government should constantly remind the Chinese government that the *Josunjok* (Chinese of Korean descent) that come into South Korea play an important role in increasing the foreign earnings in China and in enhancing the productivity of China’s work force. Moreover, the strengthening of the *Josunjok* community will have a positive effect on improving the relations between South and North Korea. It must also be pointed out that this will ultimately bring peace and stability in Northeast Asia and eventually be beneficial for China. Korea must also convince China that dual nationality is becoming a general international trend, and that the “Overseas Koreans Law” is

not a system that is against China's minority policy.

Several suggestions for the revision and improvement of the current "Overseas Koreans Law" have been put forth. First, it is imperative to establish a comprehensive institution that is granted the executive power to handle the affairs of overseas Korean residents. This institution will need to have access to experts who have the professional knowledge, willingness, and commitment to help overseas residents and can execute policies in a consistent and effective manner. For this to happen, the Policy Commission of Overseas Koreans, which has now become rather dormant,⁴ should be revived and the overlapping tasks of the MOFAT and the Ministry of Justice rearranged. Some concrete solutions to this issue would include the establishment of a secretariat in the commission as a permanent entity. This would allow the commission to provide the basic guidelines and foundations for a policy towards overseas Koreans that would eventually lead to the creation of a body independent from the MOFAT in order to formulate more concrete policy plans and provide stronger executive measures. Therefore, a revised law should include provisions for an executive body that would implement policies towards overseas Koreans independently from the MOFAT. This agency would have to be integrated into the Bureau of Overseas Koreans Affairs under the auspices of the Prime Minister or become an independent body under the Policy Commission of Overseas Koreans.

Better Policies towards Overseas Koreans

Up until now, the government policy towards Korean residents overseas has been criticized for being self-serving because the government has placed large demands on overseas Korean communities without doing anything for them in return. In addition, the policy has been criticized for being passive because it has concentrated only on cultural exchange projects and ignored the violation of the human rights of Korean nationals abroad due to discrimination and inequality, for fear of worsening diplomatic relations with the host countries. At the beginning

of 2003, the Roh Moo Hyun administration designated Korea as a “core nation in Northeast Asia.” In order for the administration to realize this goal, it must recognize that overseas residents are “assets to their homeland.” Both South and North Korea should collaborate in establishing cooperative policies towards overseas Korean residents. Additionally, overseas residents must be recognized for their role and status as mediators that could stimulate exchange and cooperation and help to ease the mistrust and hostility between the two Koreas. For these reasons, the government should pursue a policy towards overseas Koreans that would establish mutual and reciprocal relations between home and overseas residents. Furthermore, it is essential that the principle of equality be maintained at all times, thus preventing social, political, and economic discrimination between overseas residents.

Another major issue facing the Roh Moo Hyun administration concerns the restoration of the political participation rights of Korean nationals residing overseas. Korean nationals overseas should be able to vote in Korean elections, much as U.S. soldiers and civilians stationed at the *Yongsan* garrison in Korea are able to vote during U.S. presidential elections. All civilized nations grant their nationals living abroad the right to participate in domestic politics. Korea allowed this in the past as well. However, the Constitution for *Yushin* (Revitalizing Reforms) under President Park Chung Hee took this right away. The restoration of this right should be the first priority on the foreign policy agenda of the current administration. Korean nationals overseas should propose this change to the government. Restoring the political participation rights to Korean nationals overseas can be more easily justified than creating an overseas resident foundation or enacting a special overseas residents law. Along with overseas students, Korean citizens working or traveling overseas, as well as those with permanent residence status should also be able to participate in elections in South Korea, since they still have Korean citizenship. Moreover, participation in elections by means

of absentee ballot has become much easier with the spread of the Internet, as well as conventional mail. Though it might be difficult to grant these rights to overseas Koreans for magistrate and mayoral elections, the voting rights of Korean nationals for presidential elections should be honored.

The proposed change can be facilitated by promoting the sense of national identity and pride among overseas Koreans through the enhancement of the country's international standing, active protection of overseas residents from discrimination and human rights abuses, and expansion of cultural performances supported by the Korean government. Of course, this must be pursued while at the same time respecting the interests and rights of other ethnic groups and nationalities. Koreans at home and abroad, as worldwide citizens, must share in humanity's goal in the 21st-century of "prosperity under democracy and the market economy" and work together to combat global problems, such as poverty, environmental pollution, ecological issues, global warming, epidemics such as HIV/AIDS, drugs, terrorism, and the depletion of water and energy resources. The ideal of "open nationalism" and "open Korean community" will play a pivotal role in establishing a Korean community that is in step with the information age, which emphasizes freedom, individuality, equality, and sharing. In addition, efforts must be made towards the expansion of government-sponsored training and exchange projects, increased support for Korean interest groups and schools, and reinforcement of Korean language education.

Foreign Migrants in Korea

During the past decade, Korea, one of the few ethnically homogeneous nation-states in the world, was indifferent to the interests and concerns of foreign migrants. In 1992, the number of foreigners that entered the country remained in the thousands. This was a result of

strict immigration controls on the part of the Korean government, which reflected the fear that foreign workers could depress the working conditions of Korean workers and eventually displace marginal workers in Korean society. However, Korea slowly changed its perspective and started to accept foreign workers in the early 1990s, when factory operations faced serious shortages in labor. As the Korean economy experienced a severe blow in the wake of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the demand for foreigner workers continued to increase. When China, South Korea's neighboring competitor, joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2000, the need to attract foreign businesses and investment to South Korea further increased. In an attempt to attract foreigners to Korea, the South Korean government, in partnership with many large-scale businesses, introduced an industrial training program that provided more incentives to foreign workers to come to the country. Consequently, these programs attracted large crowds of foreigners to South Korea for various reasons, including employment, business and investment, education, tourism, and migration. The 2002 World Cup Soccer Games brought a large number of foreigners to South Korea, which also attracted international attention and brought a large income of foreign currency to the country. Although the number of international migrants declined by two percent that year, it still represented more than a 100 percent increase from the levels during the 1990s. As of December 31, 2002, the number of foreign residents in South Korea was estimated to be 629,006, comprising 339,767 legal and 289,239 illegal foreigners. This was an increase of 11 percent over the previous year.

Foreigners in South Korea can be divided into three different categories: (1) legal and illegal workers; (2) migrants and asylum seekers; and (3) tourists and other foreigners. The following sections will briefly discuss the issues of asylum seekers and North Korean defectors, but will focus more on the situation of foreign workers who account for the majority of the foreign presence in Korea.

The State of Foreign Workers in Korea

Foreign workers officially began to enter Korea when the industrial training system was launched in 1993. In an effort to offset the shortage of labor, these foreign workers were permitted to work in the sectors of manufacturing, garment/footwear, textiles, rubber and plastics, synthetic metal, automotive equipment, and coastal fisheries. Coming from China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Myanmar (Burma), Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Pakistan, the foreign workers were originally permitted to stay for one year, earning salaries in the range of 2000~3000 won per hour (approximately US\$2), whereas illegal workers earned approximately 3,580 won per hour. However, as the number of foreigners continued to grow, the limit on the length of stay was extended to two years. For foreigners to qualify for the training program in South Korea, they must comply with Korean laws and regulations. For instance, they must be between 18 and 35 years of age, have no criminal record and be from one of the 14 countries designated by the South Korean government.

The history of foreigners entering South Korea during the past decade shows that foreign workers have experienced various policy discriminations and social prejudices. For example, it was found that more than 70 percent of all foreign trainees worked over-time (50~60 hours a week), in comparison with the average working hours of Korean citizens in the manufacturing industry, which was 40~44 hours. Also, due to poor working conditions and malnutrition, several foreign trainees suffered health problems such as tuberculosis and pneumonia. These poor social surroundings can be blamed on the presence of a huge number of illegal foreign laborers, who are officially labeled as “unregistered foreign laborers.” These illegal workers often enter Korea on a tourist or visitor visa and find employment, or replace foreign trainees in small and medium-sized firms, who have deserted their posts due to highly

unsatisfactory working conditions.

However, becoming an illegal worker is not a wise decision. Most illegal workers are employed or re-employed in poorly equipped firms with 5~10 workers near the metropolitan area. The violations of human rights and labor laws are common in these small-scale firms. A protest initiated by the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice in 1994 provided the momentum for the passage of a bill requiring employers to provide financial compensation, up to a certain level, to illegal workers who were injured on the job. However, illegal workers rarely get their compensations because of their disadvantaged status. Many illegal foreign workers are afraid of being forcefully deported from the country if their employers report their illegal status to the government. In many cases, illegal workers either give up receiving compensations or receive only a small proportion of what they are entitled to. Another problem arises when an illegal foreign worker wishes to marry a Korean citizen. In the case of foreign women, they are able to legally marry Korean men and become naturalized citizens of Korea. However, foreign men cannot acquire Korean citizenship when they marry Korean women. The foreign husband would have to continually apply for a three-month visitor's visa and repeatedly enter and exit the country in order to legally stay with his spouse. Otherwise, he would live with his Korean wife without registering their marriage. These cases have created additional social problems because the couple's children are not able to acquire Korean citizenship as they are classified as illegal immigrants like their father.

Nevertheless, the number of illegal migrants in Korea has continued to increase, from 68,000 in 1992 to 115,000 in 1999, and to more than 300,000 today. The increase in the number of illegal migrants has been partly associated with the Korean government's policies on foreign workers. In the face of a labor shortage, the government has permitted and even promoted the inflow of foreign workers. The Ministry of Justice concluded that the increase in employment

driven by economic development has resulted in the employment of people from Southeast Asia and China in the so-called “3D jobs,” which the Koreans are reluctant to hold. However, the government has assumed no responsibility by classifying all foreign workers as illegal migrants and granting them no rights. Critics argue that the government has only “used” foreign labor, but has refrained from assuming any responsibility for the social burdens that result from its policies.

As labor strife has sharply increased in Korea in recent years, the demand for foreigners has also rapidly increased. The demonstrations in front of *Myongdong* Cathedral in 1995 provided an opportunity to make the serious human rights violations of foreign workers a prominent social issue. As a result of this movement, the government has proposed some measures to improve the working conditions of foreign trainees. In July 2003, with an approval by the National Assembly, the Ministry of Justice introduced “Laws Concerning the Employment of Foreign Workers,” which will grant 227,000 unregistered foreign laborers legal status. If this law is properly implemented, the number of foreign workers, including officially recognized employees and industrial trainees, is expected to reach between 300,000 and 400,000 in 2004.

Policies towards Foreign Workers

In 1992, the Korean government began to offer amnesty to undocumented foreign workers. At that time, 61,126 foreign workers out of about 68,000 were officially registered and allowed to stay in Korea until the end of 1992.⁵ In September 1993, there was a shortage of 120,220 workers in the manufacturing sector. For the country’s entire economy, a 4 percent shortage of production workers translates to about 250,000 workers. As a result, in November 1993, the government introduced the industrial training system, which allowed 20,000 foreign

trainees into Korea that year. In 1994, 30,000 industrial trainees entered Korea, and the number increased to 50,000 in 1995, 70,000 in 1996, 80,000 in 1997, and 85,000 in 2002. These foreign trainees have been managed by the Korea International Training Cooperation Corps (KITCO), which was established in 1992 under the Korea Federation of Small Businesses.⁶

The position of the government on the import of foreign labor has been mixed. While the Ministry of Labor called for the introduction of a work permit system for foreign workers in 1994, the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Resources claimed that the foreign trainee system should be maintained in order to prevent the cost increases of authorized foreign labor resulting from the proposed work permit system.⁷

In 2002, the Korean government provided a two-month registration period for the estimated 265,848 unauthorized foreigners; the majority of them had entered Korea legally but had overstayed or violated the terms of their visas. During this period, 255,978 foreigners registered (151,313 Chinese, including 91,726 ethnic Korean Chinese, followed by 17,087 Bangladeshis, and smaller numbers of Filipinos, Mongolians, and Vietnamese) and were permitted to stay in the country until March 2003. Most of these registered workers (77%, or 220,000) were in Seoul and its suburbs, working in manufacturing (89,174), construction (55,907), restaurants and private houses (34,573), and farming (2,400).⁸

Since its establishment, the International Labor Organization (ILO) has advocated for the rights of foreign workers as “migrant workers,” not “foreign labor,” calling for the protection of those who are currently working or searching for employment abroad due to economic or other reasons. According to the ILO, the human rights policies for foreign workers should be based on the principle of equality, i.e., equal treatment between foreign and domestic workers. Therefore, the Korean government should comply with international standards for the protection of foreign workers by securing, for example, the protection of industrial trainees

under the Korean labor law.

The aforementioned fact that 227,000 illegal workers will gain legal status according to the newly approved law relating to the employment of foreign workers is a welcome development. However, it still remains to be seen if the implementation of this law will bring about the desired results. These workers must meet several conditions to obtain legal status. They must have lived in Korea for less than four years as of March 31, 2003 and be currently employed in one of the six specified areas: manufacture, construction, service, agriculture, livestock farming, and fishery. Otherwise, they must leave the country. Furthermore, a total of 900,000 illegal workers, who have lived in Korea for more than four years and those who attained illegal status after March 2003 are not entitled to apply for legal status. Starting from August 2005, all foreign workers will be required to take a Korean Language Proficiency Test, which will be the basis for selecting employees. In the long run, this requirement will help foreigners better participate in Korean society, yet it should not serve as another basis for discriminating against foreign workers.

Asylum Seekers, North Korean Defectors, and Human Trafficking Victims in South Korea

Foreign Asylum Seekers in Korea

According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), South Korea ranks among the lowest in the world in admitting asylum seekers.⁹ In 1994, the Korean government amended its immigration law, thus permitting individuals to file asylum appeals with the government. However, according to the UNHCR, the actual process of asylum application has been extremely problematic. Between 1994 and 1999, more than 50 persons from at least 14 countries, including Algeria, Iran, Afghanistan, and China, had applied for asylum in South Korea, but the government denied all applications.¹⁰

Under the UNHCR mandate, the Korean government finally granted an Eritrean man refugee status in February 2002. This was the first refugee the government had recognized since it joined the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Protocol of 1967. A Congolese asylum seeker was the second to be granted refugee status in December 2002.¹¹ As of September 2003, a total of 181 foreign nationals had officially requested refugee status, and fourteen of them were granted refugee status. Of the other applications, 37 were voluntarily withdrawn, and the rest were either denied or are still pending (see Table 8). A review of the status of asylum seekers by region reveals that 74 asylum seekers were from six Asian nations, 20 from two Middle Eastern countries, and 87 from fourteen African nations. In order to receive refugee status in Korea, the petitioner must go through a process of investigation by the Refugee Recognition Council under the Ministry of Justice. Despite the fact that Korean domestic law on refugees has received much international criticism for being excessively strict, it must be recognized that twelve cases out of fourteen had been granted during the nine months up to and including September 2003. This reflects the government's changing attitude towards refugees. It is particularly encouraging to know that on September 19, 2003, the Ministry of Justice granted refugee status to two male Arab nationals in their thirties, who had converted to Christianity. (A refugee applicant is granted refugee status when he/she had been persecuted because of the particular group he/she belonged to, or because of his/her different religious and ethnic background, nationality, or political affiliation). Almost all of the cases that had been recognized by Korea and other countries were of people who had fled political persecution. Given the fact that the granting of refugee status on religious grounds is rare, the Korean government's decision in September is worth noting.

North Korean "Food" Refugees

The sudden surge of North Korean defectors in recent years has been the result of the structural food crisis in North Korea since the 1990s. Despite international relief aid to North Korea, over 2 million people were estimated to have died from starvation, with hundreds of thousands of people leaving the country. According to the Korean Ministry of Unification, North Korean defectors that numbered below 100 before 1998 jumped to 148 in 1999, 312 in 2000, 583 in 2001, and 1,141 in 2002, showing an annual increase of almost 100 percent. As of July 2003, 705 North Koreans had made it to the South, showing a 12 percent increase over the same period of the previous year. At that rate, 1,200 to 1,300 defectors were expected to come to the South by the end of 2003.

In the past, North Korean defectors, mainly male political elites or soldiers, defected to the South for ideological and political causes. South Koreans welcomed them as *Kysun Yongsu* (so-called “brave soldiers,” who surrendered themselves to the South). However, the nature and types of North Korean defectors have been changing, particularly during the past decade. More and more North Korean defectors are coming to South Korea with their families for economic and social reasons. Another important point is that among the total number of North Korean defectors arriving in the South in 2003, 59.2 percent (354 people) were female, marking a steady increase from 42.3 percent in 2000, 49.6 percent in 2001, and 53.2 percent in 2002.¹²

Direct defection to the South through the heavily land-mined and tightly guarded Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), which divides the Korean peninsula, has been rare. The majority of defectors have illegally crossed the Yalu River or the northeastern Chinese border to enter China, and then sought refuge in foreign embassies or traveled to a third country in order to come to South Korea. Estimates of the number of North Koreans fleeing into China vary widely, ranging from tens of thousands by official accounts (100,000 by the UN and other international organizations) to as many as 300,000~400,000 by some NGOs. The defectors are now scattered

mostly in the Korean autonomous district of Yanbian in Jilin, in Heilongjiang, and in Liaoning, with some finding their way to larger cities such as Tianjin and Shanghai. According to UN refugee laws (the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol), these North Korean escapees, who are mainly in search of food, are not “refugees.” The Chinese government has without exception labeled all North Korean escapees as “illegal aliens.” Most escapees have been forcibly repatriated to North Korea based on the 1962 Sino-North Korean border treaty. Exceptions have been those cases that have received worldwide media attention, such as the North Korean family of seven, known as the Gil Su family, who sought refuge at the UNHCR office in Beijing in June 2000, the rush on the Spanish embassy in Beijing by 25 North Korean defectors in March 2001, and the group of 21 North Koreans, who traveled south aboard a wooden boat and defected to South Korea in August 2002.

Therefore, most North Korean “food” refugees live under the constant fear of being arrested and forcibly repatriated to North Korea by the Chinese police, North Korean espionage operatives or the Chinese *Josunjok* who have North Korean citizenship. Furthermore, these escapees in China are suffering human rights violations, such as being the objects of human trafficking or labor exploitation, but despite this, they remain silent, fearful of being deported. In particular, female victims of forced marriages or prostitution refrain from speaking out against their sexual exploitation. They not only fear forced repatriation, but they also wish to conceal their exploitation due to the high value placed on female virginity in East Asian cultures.

In the meantime, the South Korean government has been practicing “soft diplomacy” on the issue of North Korean food refugees in China by requesting that they be provided with “special treatment” based on humanitarian principles, while respecting the rights of China under international law. In recent years, many Korean escapees in China have voiced their desire to defect to South Korea, but the South Korean government has not been eager to help them

mainly due to its concerns for diplomatic relations with China.

The “Sunshine Policy” of the Kim Dae Jung administration and the succeeding “Peace and Prosperity Policy” of the Roh Moo Hyun administration were initiated with the hope of slowly changing North Korea into a partner of dialogue and reconciliation by showing continuous friendliness and favor towards the Kim Jong-il regime in terms of diplomatic relations. Still, diplomacy involves *both* the “carrot” and the “stick.” If aid and the Sunshine Policy are the South’s carrot for North Korea, the South Korean government needs to raise the stick, when the safety of escapees is not upheld. If the South is unwilling to take action and continues its pursuit of “quiet settlement,” the South will be criticized for losing sight of the original goals of the Sunshine Policy. Some argue that aid to North Korea, especially monetary cash relief, and the Sunshine Policy have actually ended up giving the North Korean government all the profit and the opportunity to strengthen its regime while leaving the starving North Korean citizens hanging out to dry. Therefore, in addition to the need for continued diplomatic talks, exchanges, and cooperation, South Korea should insist on the North’s adherence to universal principles of humanity, such as human rights and humanitarianism.

Furthermore, with no principles and strategies as anchors, the South Korean government will only be presenting a reactive response to Chinese and North Korean policies, without any advance analysis of the consequences of its policies. South Korea must try to persuade China to change its position on the North Korean defection issue by explaining that China’s involvement in resolving the issue will not lead to the collapse of North Korea and instability in the region and that acquiescence over the issue is sure to bring continued instability not only to the region but to China itself. South Korea must stress upon the Chinese government the need to ensure that humanitarian activities continue, such as providing security and funding for civilian humanitarian relief activities, and appeal for talks with civilian relief

groups. It is important to constantly remind the Chinese government that engaging actively in resolving the North Korean defection issue under humanitarian terms would not only support their image as “a responsible superpower” but also help them develop into a world-leading nation.

To conclude, if the ultimate goal of the South Korean policy towards North Korea is to secure the rights and well being of the North Korean people, the policy must be extended to include North Korean defectors as well. Given the seriousness and urgency regarding these escapees, it is high time for the South Korean government to set clear principles, develop concrete and comprehensive plans, and undertake preemptive measures to coordinate and lead international efforts

Trafficking of Women

It should also be mentioned that South Korea is one of the states serving as a source, transit, and destination country for the trafficking of women for prostitution. Victims come mainly from the Philippines, Thailand, China, Russia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. Women normally enter the country on “entertainer” visas and are forced to work as prostitutes in private clubs or bars. Meanwhile, South Korean women are kidnapped and sent to countries such as Japan and the United States. At present, the Korean government fully complies with all international laws and regulations on the prosecution and prevention of kidnapping (e.g. the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons). The government prosecutes traffickers through a variety of criminal statutes. In 2002, the government detained and investigated 450 suspected traffickers, of whom 90 were indicted and 68 convicted. Also, in cooperation with INTERPOL and foreign governments, South Korea has been one of the key players in identifying and arresting traffickers. NGOs advocating human rights and women’s

issues have also been actively engaged in protecting the victims of human trafficking and preventing further smuggling of women. It is thus important for the government to provide comprehensive guidelines to effectively coordinate the efforts of the parties concerned.

Conclusion

The migration policies of the South Korean government, past and present, have been mostly passive, despite some changes in recent years. This is the case whether the policies deal with the emigration of Korean citizens to foreign countries or the immigration of foreigners to South Korea. As a result, the policies have increased the vulnerability of both overseas Koreans and foreign immigrants residing in Korea to discrimination and violation of individual rights.

In the past, the government's passive approaches towards migration were justified by the logic of the Cold War, traditional diplomatic games, and state security. However, growing interdependence among states, one of the manifestations of globalization, like two sides of a coin, presents both opportunities and threats to the state.

This context holds many implications for South Korean migration policies. That is, interdependence can be an opportunity, in that the network of 6 million Korean diaspora could contribute to furthering the political and diplomatic interests of South Korea in the international arena. In order for this to be possible, the Korean government must undergo a change in its attitude, from regarding overseas Koreans as "former Korean citizens" to viewing them as "permanent Korean nationals," whose needs and rights should be addressed.

On the other hand, interdependence can pose a threat to the state, in that the state can no longer be a haven closed to international immigrants who wish to come to South Korea. Strict regulations under an immigration policy could have the unintended effect of increasing the number of "unauthorized" immigrants in the country. The fact that these immigrants are

“illegal” implies that they are equipped with a limited number of legal and institutional channels to help them make a living in the country in which they reside. The state not only subjects “unauthorized” individuals to a threat of personal insecurity, but can also pose a threat to the security of the society and even the state itself if these individuals decide to engage in unauthorized methods of making money. Therefore, considering the increasing number of illegal immigrants in the country in recent years, the South Korean government should attempt to incorporate these unauthorized individuals into the population of authorized migrants. This would also help the Korean government to respond more effectively to transnational crimes, such as human and drug trafficking.

In conclusion, the above examination on the realities of South Korea’s migration policies in the context of interdependence could be a guide to Korea’s future policies towards its nationals living abroad and immigrants in South Korea.

Table 1: The Number of Overseas Koreans

(unit: person)

Region	2003	Percentages (%) by region	Rate of Increase (compared to the preceding year)
Asia	2,979,736	49.03	11.73
Japan	638,546	10.51	-0.26
China	2,144,789 (1,923,800)*	35.29	12.03
Others	196,401	3.23	40.47
Americas	2,327,619	40.04	2.43
USA	2,157,498	35.50	1.62
Canada	170,121	2.80	20.74
Central and Latin America	105,643	1.74	-5.22
Europe	652,131	10.73	9.59
CIS	557,732	9.18	6.91
Europe	94,399	1.55	28.65
Middle East	6,559	0.11	-9.41
Africa	5,095	0.08	-3.28
TOTAL	6,076,783	100	7.56

Note: * Ethnic Koreans who have obtained Chinese citizenship

Source: Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT), *The Current Status of Overseas Koreans*, Seoul, July 2003.

Table 2: Increase in Overseas Korean by Year

(unit: person)

Year	Total	Change in Number	Rate of Increase (compared to the preceding year)
1971	702,928	(+)30,269	4.5%
1975	920,358	(+)48,953	5.6%
1980	1,470,916	(+)129,215	9.6%
1985	1,905,181	(+)126,474	7.1%
1990	2,320,099	(+)47,187	2.1%
1991	4,832,414	(+)2,512,315	108.3%
1995	5,228,573	(+)284,983	5.7%
1997	5,544,229	(+)315,656	6.0%
1999	5,644,558	(+)100,329	1.8%
2001	5,653,809	(+)9,251	0.16%
2003	6,076,683	(+)422,974	7.02%

Note: Ethnic Koreans living in China and CIS have been included since 1991.

Source: Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT), *The Current Status of Overseas Koreans*, Seoul, July 2003.

Table 3: Countries with More than 2,000 Overseas Koreans

Countries	Number of Overseas Koreans
USA	2,157,498
China	2,144,789
Japan	638,546
CIS	557,732
Canada	170,121
Australia	59,940
Brazil	47,227
Philippine	37,100
UK	35,000
New Zealand	33,000
Germany	29,814
Indonesia	23,485
Mexico	17,200
Argentina	15,500
Thailand	15,100
France	10,900
Guatemala	7,943
Paraguay	7,097
Viet Nam	6,821
Singapore	5,820
Italy	5,432
Malaysia	3,983
Spain	3,568
Taiwan	3,076
Countries with less than 2,000 Ethnic Korean	37,068
Total Number (151 countries)	6,076,783

Source: Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT), *The Current Status of Overseas Koreans*, Seoul, July 2003.

Table 4: Koreans “Temporarily” Going Abroad by Purpose

(unit: person)

Year	Total	Tourism	Commercial Business	Visit, Study	Government Business, Conferences	Other
1985	484,000	2,000	134,000	46,000	17,000	286,000
1990	1,561,000	590,000	401,000	203,000	30,000	337,000
1995	3,819,000	1,771,000	900,000	436,000	63,000	649,000
2000	4,342,000	1,387,000	1,239,000	655,000	69,000	990,000
2001	6,084,000	2,647,000	1,557,000	626,000	99,000	1,156,000

Source: Korea National Tourism Corporation <http://www.knto.or.kr/eng/07_statistics/07_01.htm> (28/09/03).**Table 5: The Number of Overseas Korean Associations**

Region	1997		2000		Increase/Decrease
	Number of Associations	Number of Countries	Number of Associations	Number of Countries	
Japan	291	1	286	1	-5
Other Asian Countries	188	24	280	22	92
North Americas	1,089	2	997	2	-92
Central and South Americas	182	19	164	14	-18
Europe	475	30	503	24	28
Middle East	50	16	32	13	-1
Africa	28	17	27	9	-1
Total	2,303	109	2,289	85	-14

Source: Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT), *The Current Status of Overseas Koreans*, Seoul, July 2003.

Table 6: The Number of Education Institutions for Overseas Koreans

(as of July 2001)

Region	Korean Schools			Korea Education Institutes			Korean Language Schools			Public Offices related to Education	
	Number of Schools	Number of Teachers (dispatch h)*	Number of Students	Number of Institutes	Number of Teachers	Number of Ethnic Koreans	Number of Schools	Number of Teachers (dispatch)*	Number of Students	Number of Offices	Public Officials (dispatch)+
Japan	4	167 (22)	1,672	14	22	640,234	46	123	1,552	3	5
Asia	12	439 (25)	3,448	1	1	2,030,489	111	1,111	10,243	1	1
North Americas	1	17(-)	164	7	8	2,264,063	1,085	8,758	64,363	2	2
Central & Latin Americas	3	81(4)	568	3	3	111,462	54	410	3,561	-	-
Europe & CIS	1	17(1)	62	10	12	595,073	593	1,467	30,590	4	4
Middle East & Africa	4	42(4)	108	-	-	12,488	34	215	994	-	-
Total	15 countries 25 schools	763 (56)	6,017	14 countries 35 schools	46	5,653,809	96 countries 1,923 schools	12,084	111,303	6 countries 10 schools	12

Notes:

“Korean schools” refer to the educational institutions which teach the standard educational curriculums in the Korean language.

“Korea education institutes” refer to the institutions that aim to promote the education of Korean history, culture, society, economy, etc.

“Korean language schools” refer to the institutions where the main focus is to teach the Korean language.

The number of Korean education institutes were counted in July 2001.

* Number of teachers directly dispatched from Korea

+ Number of public officers directly dispatched from Korea

Table 7: Number of Foreign Residents in South Korea, as of December 31, 2002

Legal Foreigners	Rate of Increase (compared to 2001)	Illegal Foreigners	Rate of Increase (compared to 2001)	Total	Rate of Increase (compared to 2001)
339,767	9%	289,239	13.3%	629,006	11%

Source: Korean Ministry of Justice, Press Release (in Korean), January 9, 2003.

Table 8: Status of Accepting as Refugees in Korea, as of September 2003

(unit: person)

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Number of Asylum-Seekers	5	2	4	12	26	4	48	32	33	15
Number of People Accepted as Refugees	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	12

Note: This information was acquired from the Korean Ministry of Justice by the author's request

Notes

¹ The author wishes to acknowledge Ms. Hyun Myoung Jae (Department of Political Science and International Relations, Korea University) for her valuable assistance in conducting research.

² <<http://hanireporter.hani.co.kr/section-004100001/2003/08/004100001200308300204328.html>> 2003-09-22.

³ 20,000 overseas Koreans annually give up the Korean nationality,” September 16, 2003, Mael Business Newspaper,

<<http://www.msn.co.kr/webinclude/exredir.asp?startid=edi&adgroup=KRMIVG&URL=http%3A//news.mk.co.kr>> 04-02-19.

⁴ It is a nominal organization that does not even have the physical presence of a secretariat. The Commission was last convened in December of 1997 and has been dormant since.

⁵ Asia Pacific Migration Research Network (APMRN), 1999, “Issue Paper from the Republic of Korea,” <<http://unesco.org/most/apmrnw12.htm>> 03-08-28.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Asia Pacific Migration Research Network (APMRN), 1999, *ibid.*

⁸ Korea Registration, 2002, “Migration News,” <http://migration.udavis.edu/mn/ARCHIVE_MN/julyM2002-16mn.html> 23-08-03.

⁹ Worldwide Refugee Information, 2003, “Country Report: South Korea 2001,” <http://www.refugees.org/org/world/countryrpt/easia_pacific.../south_korea.htm>, 03-08-28.

¹⁰ Worldwide Refugee Information, 2003, “SOUTH KOREA,” <http://www.refugees.org/org/world/countryrpt/easia_pacific.../south_korea.htm>, 03-08-28.

¹¹ UNHCR, 2003, “South Korea Grants Rare Refugee Status to African Asylum Seekers,” <<http://www.unhcr.ch/cqi-bin/texis/vtx/home/>> 2003-08-06.

¹² Korean Ministry of Reunification, <<http://www.unikorea.go.kr>> 13/09/03.