



- Labor Costs in South Korea -

PRIVATE & PUBLIC SECTOR

Updated: February 2020

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Labor costs are an important factor in establishing and operating a business in Korea. Wages in Korean companies often vary depending on several factors that usually remain vague to foreigners. We collected some hard data regarding the labor costs in Korea.

Tables and data presented in this overview focus on the salary level in Korea and tackle both, the private and the public sector, which may give readers an interesting perspective about the general labor market situation.

This report contains the updated information for 2019, which has been acquired in the course of a research at local institutions, ministries and other Korean sources such as job portals.

Overview South Korea						
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Population	50.750.000	51.010.000	51.250.000	51.450.000	51.640.000	51.810.000
Economically active population	26.195.000	26.747.000	27.247.000	27.836.000	27.582.000	28.095.000
Working population	25.398.000	25.879.000	26.235.000	26.754.000	26.638.000	27.154.000
Male	71,6 %	73,0%	71,1%	73,8%	73,0%	73,0 %
Female	49,7 %	51,2%	50,2%	53,4%	51,8%	53,1 %
OECD working population (average)	65,3 %	65,7%	66,1%	-	-	-
OECD Male	75,7 %	75,7%	75,8%	-	-	-
OECD Female	54,9 %	55,7%	56,2%	-	-	-

Source: Korean Ministry of Employment and Labor, for 2015-2019: Statistics Korea

As all salaries in this report will be given in Korean won (KRW), here are the exchange rate as of 18.02.2020 for an easy calculation:

- 1 USD – 1,176.80 KRW
- 1 EUR – 1,274.29 KRW

As far as the minimum wage in Korea is concerned, the increase to 7.530 KRW per hour for the year 2018 has been noted as the highest annual rise within the past 17 years (16,4%). The campaign pledge of the 2017 elected President Moon Jae-In and his intention to increase the minimum wage to 10.000 KRW by 2020 had initially been tackled quickly – but had then stalled. Rumors say that the goal is to be achieved by 2022, his final year in office¹.

¹ <https://asia.nikkei.com/Economy/South-Korea-s-minimum-wage-hike-campaign-deflates> (13.02.2020)

As of 2020, an amount of **8.590 KRW** has been set as the official **minimum wage per hour in South Korea**, a rise by approximately 2,9% comparing to the previous year. It is the third lowest rise since 1988.

Minimum wage per hour in KRW							
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Minimum wage	5.210	5.580	6.030	6.470	7.530	8.350	8.590
Difference in %	7,2	7,1	8,1	7,3	16,4	10,9	2,9

Source: Korean Ministry of Employment and Labor 2020, Korea Herald

The National Pension System in Korea was introduced in 1988. The **social contribution scheme** including the National Healthcare Insurance, an Employment Insurance and a Worker's Accident Compensation Insurance for 2020 have been set as presented in the following table.

Social contributions in Korea 2020				
Social contribution scheme	Employer (%)	Employee (%)	Total (%)	Comment
National Pension	4,5	4,5	9,0	Gross compensation x % = (Max. 210.600 KRW per month, per party) Minimum income for deductions: 300.000 KRW Maximum income for deductions: 4.680.000 KRW
National Healthcare Insurance				Gross compensation x %
National Health Insurance	3,23	3,23	6,46	Gross compensation x % = (Max. 3.182.760 KRW per month, per party) Minimum income for deductions: 278.950 KRW Upper limit of monthly remuneration: 98.537.462 KRW
National Care Insurance	4,255	4,255	8,51	National Health Insurance x %
Employment Insurance				Gross compensation x %
Unemployment insurance	0,65	0,65	1,3	
Employment stabilization insurance and occupational competency development insurance				
- less than 150 employees	0,25	-	0,25	
- more than 150 employees* (first support target company)	0,45	-	0,45	
- 150 - 1000 employees	0,65	-	0,65	
- more than 1000 employees	0,85	-	0,85	
Worker's Accident Compensation Insurance (depending on labor activity)	0,0115	-	0,0115	

Source: Social Insurance Information System, NHI, www.law.go.kr

* For manufacturing companies with less than 500 employees. Mines with less than 300 employees. Construction companies, logistics and telecommunication companies with more than 300 employees.

For various industries in 2019, a slight decrease in the total of working hours as well as an increase of the monthly salary at ca. 4% compared to 2018 can be observed. As far as the annual bonus is concerned, the overall trend was increasing with a slight decrease in some sectors.

The following table contain the average annual salary by industry and headcount for 2019.

Average annual salary by industry and headcount 2019				
Industry	Headcount	Total working hours	Total monthly salary (KRW)	Annual bonus (KRW)
Total	All (Over 5 employee)	181.8	3,405,769	373,851
	Over 5	179.9	2,785,477	149,396
	Over 10	183.6	3,144,359	256,282
	Over 30	184.5	3,388,723	212,499
	1-299	182.4	3,570,221	451,644
	Over 300	177.8	4,128,631	820,020
Production	All (Over 5 employee)	191.4	3,467,898	441,127
	Over 5	184.8	2,903,270	30,019
	Over 10	192.8	3,161,727	67,788
	Over 30	196.9	3,259,142	186,314
	1-299	196.9	3,582,823	627,519
	Over 300	182.9	4,243,481	1,200,023
Wholesale and retail	All (Over 5 employee)	179.2	3,516,240	363,168
	Over 5	182.1	3,035,093	231,151
	Over 10	181.7	3,502,406	385,714
	Over 30	177.3	3,897,031	472,111
	1-299	170.3	3,562,835	456,006
	Over 300	175.7	4,674,811	380,838
Transportation	All (Over 5 employee)	171.2	3,032,344	419,323
	Over 5	179.6	3,212,478	106,641
	Over 10	183.1	3,171,524	245,495
	Over 30	162.8	2,725,122	245,283
	1-299	168	2,658,866	489,844
	Over 300	173	4,094,038	988,144
Publishing, Communication & IT	All (Over 5 employee)	178	4,168,668	448,677
	Over 5	171.1	3,363,289	148,165
	Over 10	176.9	3,748,421	157,516
	Over 30	178.7	4,011,589	332,281
	1-299	180.6	4,238,368	433,806
	Over 300	179.3	5,005,577	970,665
Finance and Insurance	All (Over 5 employee)	173.8	4,496,547	1,819,201
	Over 5	174.2	3,966,910	1,659,628
	Over 10	174.1	4,349,272	2,340,512
	Over 30	173.1	4,260,984	471,625
	1-299	171.8	4,741,756	1,547,149
	Over 300	174.3	5,155,883	2,119,212
Engineering	All (Over 5 employee)	174.5	4,500,760	490,100
	Over 5	172.3	3,085,063	119,225
	Over 10	178.4	3,761,083	285,247
	Over 30	178.2	4,390,379	397,841
	1-299	175.7	5,029,403	514,787
	Over 300	170.1	5,418,731	832,877

Source: Korean Ministry of Employment and Labor, 2020

The data from the past years can be compared in the table below.

Average annual salary, annual bonus and working hours 2014-2019						
Industry	Average / Year	Total working hours	Total monthly salary (KRW)	Change (%)	Annual bonus (KRW)	Change (%)
Total	2019	181.8	3,405,769	4%	373,851	-0.14%
	2018	176.3	3,259,281	4%	374,381	-5%
	2017	173.2	3,125,273	3%	395,787	2%
	2016	176.7	3,030,286	4%	386,170	2%
	2015	187.9	2,926,186	3%	378,678	-3%
	2014	187.9	2,838,343		392,375	
Production	2019	191.4	3,467,898	5%	441,127	-4%
	2018	185.3	3,308,568	4%	458,162	-9%
	2017	183.6	3,176,539	4%	501,039	2%
	2016	186.9	3,053,716	4%	492,554	3%
	2015	197.3	2,938,589	4%	479,279	-5%
	2014	199.0	2,831,086		506,817	
Wholesale and retail	2019	179.2	3,516,240	6%	363,168	4%
	2018	173.6	3,322,282	4%	349,848	-1%
	2017	170.0	3,186,742	5%	352,078	-6%
	2016	172.5	3,044,794	5%	375,596	4%
	2015	184.9	2,908,227	2%	361,905	-14%
	2014	184.3	2,847,317		420,052	
Transportation	2019	171.2	3,032,344	3%	419,323	15%
	2018	169	2,942,034	5%	364,139	-23%
	2017	168.9	2,800,373	6%	475,313	19%
	2016	172.2	2,649,783	5%	400,275	-6%
	2015	180.8	2,534,964	4%	423,817	4%
	2014	182.2	2,427,547		407,764	
Publishing, Communication & IT	2019	178	4,168,668	4%	448,677	32%
	2018	169.4	3,994,859	3%	340,638	-9%
	2017	163.5	3,871,853	2%	372,690	-2%
	2016	162.9	3,789,222	4%	380,208	-5%
	2015	178.0	3,644,677	2%	402,208	27%
	2014	177.5	3,587,841		316,906	
Finance and Insurance	2019	173.8	4,496,547	3%	1,819,201	14%
	2018	166.7	4,346,513	4%	1,596,854	26%
	2017	159.6	4,189,478	3%	1,267,678	2%
	2016	161.4	4,062,672	4%	1,247,870	4%
	2015	175.6	3,894,984	3%	1,198,444	-1%
	2014	176.0	3,789,669		1,214,583	
Engineering	2019	174.5	4,500,760	4%	490,100	3%
	2018	167.4	4,324,868	3%	475,928	-6%
	2017	161.2	4,182,038	2%	505,410	7%
	2016	163.0	4,115,801	4%	474,434	14%
	2015	175.5	3,955,201	2%	415,131	-6%
	2014	176.8	3,885,515		441,616	

Source: Korean Ministry of Employment and Labor, 2020

The average salaries in Korea in 2018 in various industries based on Korean job portals were higher than in 2019. The difference in salary level is relatively scarce.

Average annual salary (Saram-in) by activity in KRW for 2018-2019				
Industry	Average salary (KRW) 2018	Average salary (KRW) 2019	Occupation	Average (KRW)
Law and finance	38,491,000	37,558,000	Law Legal Patent	37,350,000
			Tax accounting	34,650,000
			Bank	43,980,000
			Insurance	36,170,000
			Research and Advisory	35,640,000
Healthcare	35,775,000	35,722,500	Pharma	36,970,000
			Healthcare	34,475,000
Trade and Logistics	36,226,000	36,193,333	Distribution and Trading	37,780,000
			Sales	36,650,000
			Transport und Logistics	34,150,000
Production and Chemistry	37,915,000	37,320,000	Petrochemical Energy	37,030,000
			Hardware Automotive	37,030,000
			Shipbuilding, Aerospace	37,010,000
			Semiconductor Science	38,210,000
Customer Service	33,640,000	33,625,000	Automobile service	34,000,000
			Leisure	33,250,000
Media & Design	35,494,000	35,450,000	Broadcaster	37,230,000
			Display / Advertising / Promotion	35,120,000
			Publishing / Printing / Photography	35,690,000
			Design / Planning	34,610,000
			Entertainment	34,770,000
Real Estate and Construction	34,476,000	34,450,000	Architect	33,040,000
			Real Estate Rental	35,930,000
			Interior Decoration	34,380,000
IT & Communication	37,842,000	37,807,500	Network Communication / Mobile	36,240,000
			ERP / CRM	37,480,000
			IT Consulting	38,670,000
			Games	38,840,000

Source: Saram-in, 2019, 12.02.2020

Furthermore, a **regional wage gap** can be observed as well as differences in the working time. Please refer to the table below. The data for the average values of the 5 biggest regions combined (2015 to 2019) has been added in order to illustrate the overall market trend. After those average values you will find the specific average values for each region.

Average monthly wages and working hours by region 2019								
Region	Working days (days)	Working hours	Regular working hours	Overtime	Total salary (KRW)	Basic salary (KRW)	Overtime compensation (KRW)	Bonus and extra incentives (KRW)
Average 2015	22.2	187.9	174.9	13.0	2,926,186	2,710,026	216,160	378,678
Average 2016	20.8	176.7	163.7	13.1	3,030,286	2,801,094	229,192	386,170
Average 2017	20.5	173.2	160.9	12.3	3,125,273	2,896,038	229,235	395,787
Average 2018	21.1	176.3	165.3	11	3,259,281	3,030,795	228,486	374,381
Average 2019	21.8	181.8	170.9	10.9	3,405,769	3,164,630	241,140	373,851
Seoul	21.6	177.5	171.5	5.9	3,704,202	3,554,867	149,335	521,900
Busan	21.9	181.0	172.6	8.4	3,050,186	2,868,469	181,717	265,008
Daegu	22.2	184.7	172.6	12.1	2,908,433	2,679,240	229,192	185,373
Incheon	21.9	183.0	172.5	10.5	3,121,843	2,896,765	225,078	269,077
Gwangju	22	179.3	171.5	7.9	2,942,622	2,717,458	225,164	335,405
Daejeon	21.6	175.9	168.9	7.0	3,287,005	3,130,710	156,296	314,723
Ulsan	22	184.3	167.9	16.4	3,377,777	2,965,650	412,127	975,581
Gyeonggi	21.9	184.2	173.1	11.2	3,384,598	3,147,200	237,398	313,931
Gangwon	22.1	180.0	169.1	10.9	3,049,958	2,829,582	220,376	242,878
Chungbuk	22.1	184.8	169.1	15.7	3,142,720	2,791,914	350,806	339,559
Chungnam	22	187.3	169.6	17.7	3,372,295	2,970,746	401,549	406,035
Jeonbuk	21.8	184.9	170.6	14.4	2,992,628	2,683,884	308,744	388,463
Jeonnam	22.2	183.2	171.8	11.4	3,235,215	2,927,554	307,661	496,073
Gyeongbuk	21.8	184.9	168.6	16.3	3,262,945	2,919,379	343,566	436,804
Gyeongnam	21.8	187.9	169.5	18.4	3,190,336	2,864,073	326,263	390,246
Jeju	22	177.5	171.6	5.9	2,710,704	2,590,625	120,079	178,399

Source: Korean Ministry of Employment and Labor 2020

Below please find a summary of the salaries in the public sector for 2020. They are based on the “Public Officials Remuneration Regulations”, which are yearly published and updated by the Ministry of Personnel Management. Monthly salaries depend strictly on the years of service and are regulated in a separate document called “Articles of Remuneration”.

In all categories and all areas of occupation a slight decrease of salaries could be observed comparing to 2019, varying from 2,03% for the lowest salary class to 3,16% for the highest class.

Monthly salaries of public officials in general service and equivalent to the regular level in KRW (2020)									
Pay grade /year of duty	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4 Level 6	Class 5 Level 5	Class 6 Level 4	Class 7 Level 3	Class 8 Level 2	Class 9 Level 1
1	4,081,400	3,674,300	3,314,900	2,841,100	2,538,900	2,094,500	1,879,600	1,675,800	1,642,800
2	4,224,500	3,810,600	3,437,600	2,957,200	2,641,600	2,191,900	1,965,300	1,757,200	1,665,400
3	4,371,200	3,948,700	3,563,900	3,075,100	2,748,100	2,292,500	2,056,100	1,843,100	1,703,100
4	4,521,200	4,088,200	3,691,100	3,195,700	2,858,800	2,395,200	2,151,500	1,930,700	1,755,800
5	4,674,800	4,229,500	3,820,400	3,318,100	2,972,300	2,501,000	2,250,300	2,021,800	1,823,600
6	4,830,300	4,371,100	3,951,000	3,441,500	3,088,200	2,609,700	2,351,500	2,115,100	1,908,800
7	4,988,100	4,514,500	4,083,000	3,566,200	3,205,900	2,718,700	2,453,400	2,208,800	1,993,500
8	5,147,300	4,657,800	4,215,500	3,691,400	3,325,100	2,828,000	2,555,900	2,298,700	2,075,300
9	5,308,700	4,802,000	4,349,100	3,817,100	3,444,600	2,937,700	2,653,400	2,384,600	2,153,500
10	5,470,900	4,946,100	4,482,600	3,942,500	3,565,000	3,040,500	2,746,500	2,465,700	2,228,800
11	5,633,000	5,091,000	4,616,200	4,069,200	3,677,400	3,138,100	2,834,300	2,544,400	2,300,600
12	5,800,400	5,240,700	4,754,800	4,188,300	3,785,900	3,234,200	2,920,600	2,621,300	2,372,000
13	5,968,800	5,391,400	4,883,600	4,299,800	3,888,900	3,324,600	3,002,500	2,695,100	2,440,400
14	6,137,600	5,527,700	5,003,200	4,403,800	3,984,900	3,410,000	3,080,800	2,765,600	2,506,900
15	6,285,100	5,653,600	5,113,300	4,501,700	4,075,600	3,492,000	3,155,500	2,833,400	2,570,300
16	6,416,100	5,768,800	5,216,100	4,594,000	4,160,900	3,568,800	3,226,300	2,898,800	2,631,800
17	6,532,300	5,874,900	5,311,600	4,679,900	4,241,200	3,642,100	3,294,200	2,959,900	2,691,800
18	6,635,800	5,971,800	5,400,300	4,759,900	4,317,000	3,711,400	3,359,200	3,019,200	2,747,600
19	6,728,400	6,061,500	5,482,400	4,834,800	4,388,400	3,777,200	3,420,300	3,076,000	2,802,600
20	6,811,500	6,143,200	5,559,300	4,904,700	4,455,300	3,839,100	3,478,600	3,130,300	2,855,100
21	6,888,000	6,217,900	5,630,400	4,970,100	4,518,300	3,898,600	3,534,200	3,182,100	2,904,600
22	6,956,100	6,286,500	5,696,400	5,031,400	4,577,400	3,954,600	3,586,700	3,231,800	2,952,000
23	7,013,700	6,349,200	5,757,200	5,088,900	4,633,300	4,007,200	3,637,400	3,279,100	2,997,200
24		6,400,500	5,814,000	5,143,100	4,685,400	4,057,200	3,685,600	3,324,800	3,040,600
25		6,449,500	5,860,700	5,192,700	4,734,800	4,104,900	3,731,200	3,368,100	3,082,100
26			5,905,200	5,234,700	4,781,300	4,149,800	3,775,000	3,410,200	3,119,600
27			5,946,500	5,273,500	4,819,800	4,192,500	3,812,000	3,445,200	3,151,800
28				5,310,500	4,856,800	4,228,300	3,846,400	3,478,900	3,182,900
29					4,890,800	4,261,900	3,879,800	3,510,800	3,212,800
30					4,923,900	4,295,000	3,911,600	3,541,700	3,241,900
31						4,325,700	3,941,500	3,571,700	3,270,500
32						4,354,700			

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

Below please find a summary of the monthly salary levels of **government officials with professional career**.

Monthly salaries of government officials with professional career in KRW (2020)			
Position Group / Pay grade	Group A	Group B	Group C
1	2,538,900	1,879,600	1,642,800
2	2,659,400	1,981,400	1,666,300
3	2,780,100	2,084,900	1,705,100
4	2,901,900	2,189,200	1,759,700
5	3,026,000	2,292,600	1,829,800
6	3,147,200	2,398,200	1,916,000
7	3,264,500	2,505,300	2,001,500
8	3,383,400	2,609,500	2,083,700
9	3,503,200	2,700,600	2,163,800
10	3,625,300	2,790,200	2,242,600
11	3,733,900	2,878,400	2,314,600
12	3,839,500	2,957,000	2,378,200
13	3,933,700	3,036,400	2,445,600
14	4,030,800	3,105,700	2,514,000
15	4,132,400	3,174,900	2,579,700
16	4,209,500	3,246,600	2,642,400
17	4,286,000	3,318,700	2,697,900
18	4,354,000	3,383,300	2,754,700
19	4,425,700	3,443,400	2,812,500
20	4,492,700	3,507,600	2,871,300
21	4,564,400	3,572,600	2,926,800
22	4,632,900	3,629,700	2,983,800
23	4,704,700	3,689,300	3,036,000
24	4,778,600	3,751,700	3,091,800
25	4,850,700	3,808,900	3,142,600
26	4,928,300	3,866,300	3,197,500
27	5,003,400	3,926,400	3,250,100
28	5,076,600	3,986,900	3,297,000
29	5,153,100	4,043,200	3,343,100
30	5,225,000	4,099,100	3,386,600
31	5,298,900	4,154,700	3,426,900
32	5,374,900	4,210,000	3,465,400
33	5,450,100	4,266,700	3,501,700
34	5,525,200	4,320,500	3,537,700
35	5,599,600	4,376,300	3,575,600
36	5,674,300	4,428,000	3,612,900
37	5,749,600	4,479,400	3,650,200
38	5,825,000	4,530,900	3,687,400
39	5,898,900		
40	5,946,500		

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

The table below states the salary levels of officials related to **public security affairs**.

Monthly salaries of public security affair employees in KRW (2020)									
Pay grade/year of duty	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7	Class 8	Class 9
1	4,299,800	4,000,400	3,653,300	3,172,400	2,740,300	2,251,300	2,005,200	1,771,500	1,642,800
2	4,442,900	4,136,700	3,776,000	3,288,500	2,843,000	2,348,700	2,090,900	1,852,900	1,676,300
3	4,589,600	4,274,800	3,902,300	3,406,400	2,949,500	2,449,300	2,181,700	1,938,800	1,732,000
4	4,739,600	4,414,300	4,029,500	3,527,000	3,060,200	2,552,000	2,277,100	2,026,400	1,817,800
5	4,893,200	4,555,600	4,158,800	3,649,400	3,173,700	2,657,800	2,375,900	2,117,500	1,904,400
6	5,048,700	4,697,200	4,289,400	3,772,800	3,289,600	2,766,500	2,477,100	2,210,800	1,993,000
7	5,206,500	4,840,600	4,421,400	3,897,500	3,407,300	2,875,500	2,579,000	2,304,500	2,077,800
8	5,365,700	4,983,900	4,553,900	4,022,700	3,526,500	2,984,800	2,681,500	2,394,400	2,159,400
9	5,527,100	5,128,100	4,687,500	4,148,400	3,646,000	3,094,500	2,779,000	2,480,300	2,237,800
10	5,689,300	5,272,200	4,821,000	4,273,800	3,766,400	3,197,300	2,872,100	2,561,400	2,312,900
11	5,851,400	5,417,100	4,954,600	4,400,500	3,878,800	3,294,900	2,959,900	2,640,100	2,384,800
12	6,018,800	5,566,800	5,093,200	4,519,600	3,987,300	3,391,000	3,046,200	2,717,000	2,456,100
13	6,187,200	5,717,500	5,222,000	4,631,100	4,090,300	3,481,400	3,128,100	2,790,800	2,524,600
14	6,356,000	5,853,800	5,341,600	4,735,100	4,186,300	3,566,800	3,206,400	2,861,300	2,590,900
15	6,503,500	5,979,700	5,451,700	4,833,000	4,277,000	3,648,800	3,281,100	2,929,100	2,654,400
16	6,634,500	6,094,900	5,554,500	4,925,300	4,362,300	3,725,600	3,351,900	2,994,500	2,715,900
17	6,750,700	6,201,000	5,650,000	5,011,200	4,442,600	3,798,900	3,419,800	3,055,600	2,776,000
18	6,854,200	6,297,900	5,738,700	5,091,200	4,518,400	3,868,200	3,484,800	3,114,900	2,831,900
19	6,946,800	6,387,600	5,820,800	5,166,100	4,589,800	3,934,000	3,545,900	3,171,700	2,886,800
20	7,029,900	6,469,300	5,897,700	5,236,000	4,656,700	3,995,900	3,604,200	3,226,000	2,939,300
21	7,106,400	6,544,000	5,968,800	5,301,400	4,719,700	4,055,400	3,659,800	3,277,800	2,988,600
22	7,174,500	6,612,600	6,034,800	5,362,700	4,778,800	4,111,400	3,712,300	3,327,500	3,036,200
23	7,232,100	6,675,300	6,095,600	5,420,200	4,834,700	4,164,000	3,763,000	3,374,800	3,081,300
24		6,726,600	6,152,400	5,474,400	4,886,800	4,214,000	3,811,200	3,420,500	3,124,900
25		6,775,600	6,199,100	5,524,000	4,936,200	4,261,700	3,856,800	3,463,800	3,166,300
26			6,243,600	5,566,000	4,982,700	4,306,600	3,900,600	3,505,900	3,203,600
27			6,284,900	5,604,800	5,021,200	4,349,300	3,937,600	3,540,900	3,235,900
28				5,641,800	5,058,200	4,385,100	3,972,000	3,574,600	3,267,000
29					5,092,200	4,418,700	4,005,400	3,606,500	3,297,000
30					5,125,300	4,451,800	4,037,200	3,637,400	3,326,100
31						4,482,500	4,067,100	3,667,400	3,354,700
32						4,511,500			

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

The official salary system for government employees also includes the remuneration of employees related to the **research field** as well as the officials of the **national intelligence service field**. Please refer to the details below.

Monthly salaries in the research field and the national intelligence service field in KRW (2020)		
Pay grade	Senior Advisor	Instructor
1	2,538,900	1,879,600
2	2,663,400	1,998,000
3	2,787,700	2,116,100
4	2,912,000	2,234,500
5	3,036,000	2,353,000
6	3,215,500	2,468,600
7	3,394,300	2,584,500
8	3,572,800	2,700,500
9	3,750,700	2,815,500
10	3,928,500	2,930,700
11	4,086,800	3,017,300
12	4,244,900	3,104,200
13	4,400,900	3,191,300
14	4,558,300	3,278,200
15	4,714,100	3,364,800
16	4,865,900	3,434,000
17	5,016,800	3,502,400
18	5,168,400	3,571,700
19	5,318,300	3,640,000
20	5,468,400	3,709,000
21	5,593,500	3,775,300
22	5,717,700	3,842,200
23	5,842,300	3,908,800
24	5,966,500	3,975,100
25	6,090,800	4,041,300
26	6,194,800	4,087,200
27	6,300,000	4,132,900
28	6,404,200	4,178,800
29	6,508,000	4,223,200
30	6,612,200	4,268,900
31	6,692,800	4,314,400
32	6,773,600	4,354,300
33		4,394,200
34		4,433,500
35		4,472,900
36		4,509,600

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

The following table lists the salary level for public officials in the **agricultural sector**.

Monthly salaries of public officials in the agricultural sector in KRW (2020)		
Pay grade	Senior Advisor	Instructor
1	2,538,900	1,675,800
2	2,661,800	1,797,300
3	2,784,200	1,918,500
4	2,907,300	2,039,800
5	3,028,300	2,161,300
6	3,189,500	2,266,500
7	3,350,600	2,372,300
8	3,512,300	2,477,200
9	3,673,000	2,582,300
10	3,832,800	2,687,000
11	3,977,400	2,777,200
12	4,120,900	2,867,300
13	4,264,700	2,956,500
14	4,407,700	3,045,500
15	4,549,700	3,133,400
16	4,674,900	3,212,800
17	4,802,100	3,292,000
18	4,928,200	3,370,300
19	5,053,000	3,448,500
20	5,177,600	3,527,000
21	5,288,600	3,599,700
22	5,400,200	3,673,000
23	5,511,100	3,745,300
24	5,621,900	3,817,800
25	5,733,000	3,889,700
26	5,829,900	3,944,100
27	5,926,200	3,999,100
28	6,023,200	4,054,100
29	6,119,200	4,109,100
30	6,216,700	4,162,900
31	6,282,000	4,210,000
32	6,348,000	4,251,300
33		4,292,700
34		4,333,600
35		4,374,700
36		4,412,900

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

Furthermore, the documents published by the Ministry also present the salary levels for employees working at the **Korea Post**.

Monthly salaries at Korea Post in KRW (2020)									
Pay grade	Postal Class 1	Postal Class 2	Postal Class 3	Postal Class 4	Postal Class 5	Postal Class 6	Postal Class 7	Postal Class 8	Postal Class 9
1	3,010,200	2,802,500	2,611,100	2,427,600	2,253,400	2,094,500	1,879,600	1,675,800	1,642,800
2	3,124,200	2,912,400	2,717,100	2,531,400	2,353,800	2,191,900	1,965,300	1,757,200	1,665,400
3	3,242,700	3,026,400	2,825,700	2,637,200	2,457,300	2,292,500	2,056,100	1,843,100	1,703,100
4	3,366,400	3,144,600	2,935,900	2,745,800	2,563,100	2,395,200	2,151,500	1,930,700	1,755,800
5	3,493,900	3,266,500	3,048,100	2,854,500	2,671,900	2,501,000	2,250,300	2,021,800	1,823,600
6	3,624,300	3,391,100	3,164,500	2,964,300	2,780,600	2,609,700	2,351,500	2,115,100	1,908,800
7	3,759,100	3,517,800	3,281,700	3,073,800	2,889,900	2,718,700	2,453,400	2,208,800	1,993,500
8	3,895,000	3,646,700	3,401,800	3,184,000	2,999,300	2,828,000	2,555,900	2,298,700	2,075,300
9	4,031,900	3,776,000	3,522,100	3,294,700	3,109,700	2,937,700	2,653,400	2,384,600	2,153,500
10	4,169,200	3,906,100	3,642,400	3,405,900	3,220,300	3,040,500	2,746,500	2,465,700	2,228,800
11	4,307,500	4,036,000	3,762,800	3,517,700	3,323,900	3,138,100	2,834,300	2,544,400	2,300,600
12	4,438,700	4,152,800	3,872,500	3,624,900	3,424,300	3,234,200	2,920,600	2,621,300	2,372,000
13	4,561,200	4,261,700	3,974,000	3,725,200	3,519,900	3,324,600	3,002,500	2,695,100	2,440,400
14	4,674,800	4,364,800	4,071,200	3,819,700	3,610,300	3,410,000	3,080,800	2,765,600	2,506,900
15	4,780,300	4,460,500	4,161,100	3,909,200	3,695,900	3,492,000	3,155,500	2,833,400	2,570,300
16	4,878,800	4,551,300	4,246,800	3,994,000	3,776,800	3,568,800	3,226,300	2,898,800	2,631,800
17	4,969,700	4,635,200	4,327,300	4,073,700	3,853,600	3,642,100	3,294,200	2,959,900	2,691,800
18	5,053,900	4,714,400	4,403,600	4,148,900	3,925,800	3,711,400	3,359,200	3,019,200	2,747,600
19	5,132,400	4,788,200	4,475,100	4,219,500	3,993,700	3,777,200	3,420,300	3,076,000	2,802,600
20	5,205,300	4,857,700	4,542,400	4,286,700	4,058,900	3,839,100	3,478,600	3,130,300	2,855,100
21	5,273,400	4,922,000	4,605,900	4,349,500	4,120,000	3,898,600	3,534,200	3,182,100	2,904,600
22	5,335,700	4,983,200	4,665,500	4,408,700	4,176,900	3,954,600	3,586,700	3,231,800	2,952,000
23	5,387,600	5,040,100	4,722,200	4,464,300	4,231,200	4,007,200	3,637,400	3,279,100	2,997,200
24	5,436,000	5,087,900	4,774,700	4,517,300	4,282,800	4,057,200	3,685,600	3,324,800	3,040,600
25		5,132,600	4,819,100	4,566,600	4,331,800	4,104,900	3,731,200	3,368,100	3,082,100
26			4,861,200	4,607,600	4,377,200	4,149,800	3,775,000	3,410,200	3,119,600
27			4,901,400	4,646,500	4,415,700	4,192,500	3,812,000	3,445,200	3,151,800
28				4,684,300	4,452,600	4,228,300	3,846,400	3,478,900	3,182,900
29				4,718,800	4,486,500	4,261,900	3,879,800	3,510,800	3,212,800
30					4,519,600	4,295,000	3,911,600	3,541,700	3,241,900
31						4,325,700	3,941,500	3,571,700	3,270,500
32						4,354,700			

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

The salary system for **police officers, fire-fighters and auxiliary police officers** can be examined below.

Monthly salaries of police officers, fire-fighting officers and auxiliary police officers in KRW (2020)										
Pay grade / Rank	Chief Superintendent General / Fire marshal	Senior Superintendent General / Deputy Fire Marshall	Deputy Assistant Commissioner / Fire Sub-deputy Chief	Sr. Superintendent / Fire Chief	Chief Superintendent / Assistant Fire Chief	Inspector / Fire Captain	Lieutenant / Fire Lieutenant	Sergeant / Fire Sergeant	Corporal / Sr. Fire Sergeant	Constable / Firefighter
1	4,081,400	3,674,300	3,314,900	2,976,500	2,676,500	2,312,100	2,065,700	1,914,700	1,738,700	1,642,800
2	4,224,500	3,810,600	3,437,600	3,092,600	2,779,200	2,411,400	2,163,100	2,000,400	1,820,100	1,688,000
3	4,371,200	3,948,700	3,563,900	3,210,500	2,885,700	2,512,800	2,261,700	2,091,200	1,906,000	1,769,000
4	4,521,200	4,088,200	3,691,100	3,331,100	2,996,400	2,617,200	2,363,000	2,186,600	1,993,600	1,854,800
5	4,674,800	4,229,500	3,820,400	3,453,500	3,109,900	2,723,200	2,466,800	2,285,400	2,084,700	1,941,500
6	4,830,300	4,371,100	3,951,000	3,576,900	3,225,800	2,831,900	2,571,700	2,386,600	2,178,000	2,030,000
7	4,988,100	4,514,500	4,083,000	3,701,600	3,343,500	2,942,800	2,677,600	2,488,500	2,271,700	2,114,800
8	5,147,300	4,657,800	4,215,500	3,826,800	3,462,700	3,054,900	2,783,500	2,591,000	2,361,600	2,196,500
9	5,308,700	4,802,000	4,349,100	3,952,500	3,582,200	3,167,800	2,890,000	2,688,500	2,447,500	2,274,800
10	5,470,900	4,946,100	4,482,600	4,077,900	3,702,600	3,273,400	2,990,600	2,781,600	2,528,600	2,350,000
11	5,633,000	5,091,000	4,616,200	4,204,600	3,815,000	3,373,400	3,085,000	2,869,400	2,607,300	2,421,900
12	5,800,400	5,240,700	4,754,800	4,323,700	3,923,500	3,470,700	3,177,900	2,955,700	2,684,200	2,493,100
13	5,968,800	5,391,400	4,883,600	4,435,200	4,026,500	3,562,700	3,266,200	3,037,600	2,758,000	2,561,600
14	6,137,600	5,527,700	5,003,200	4,539,200	4,122,500	3,650,500	3,349,200	3,115,900	2,828,500	2,628,000
15	6,285,100	5,653,600	5,113,300	4,637,100	4,213,200	3,732,900	3,429,200	3,190,600	2,896,300	2,691,500
16	6,416,100	5,768,800	5,216,100	4,729,400	4,298,500	3,812,100	3,504,000	3,261,400	2,961,700	2,752,900
17	6,532,300	5,874,900	5,311,600	4,815,300	4,378,800	3,885,600	3,575,700	3,329,300	3,022,800	2,813,100
18	6,635,800	5,971,800	5,400,300	4,895,300	4,454,600	3,956,400	3,643,400	3,394,300	3,082,100	2,869,000
19	6,728,400	6,061,500	5,482,400	4,970,200	4,526,000	4,022,700	3,707,800	3,455,400	3,138,900	2,924,000
20	6,811,500	6,143,200	5,559,300	5,040,100	4,592,900	4,085,600	3,768,900	3,513,700	3,193,200	2,976,400
21	6,888,000	6,217,900	5,630,400	5,105,500	4,655,900	4,144,800	3,827,100	3,569,300	3,245,000	3,025,700
22	6,956,100	6,286,500	5,696,400	5,166,800	4,715,000	4,202,100	3,882,100	3,621,800	3,294,700	3,073,300
23	7,013,700	6,349,200	5,757,200	5,224,300	4,770,900	4,254,600	3,934,000	3,672,500	3,342,000	3,118,500
24		6,400,500	5,814,000	5,278,500	4,823,000	4,305,400	3,983,900	3,720,700	3,387,700	3,162,000
25		6,449,500	5,860,700	5,328,100	4,872,400	4,353,100	4,031,500	3,766,300	3,431,000	3,203,300
26			5,905,200	5,370,100	4,918,900	4,398,300	4,075,000	3,810,100	3,473,100	3,240,800
27			5,946,500	5,408,900	4,957,400	4,440,700	4,112,200	3,847,100	3,508,100	3,273,000
28				5,445,900	4,994,400	4,476,900	4,148,200	3,881,500	3,541,800	3,304,000
29					5,028,400	4,510,500	4,182,000	3,914,900	3,573,700	3,334,000
30					5,061,500	4,543,500	4,214,100	3,946,700	3,604,600	3,363,200
31						4,573,900	4,244,500	3,976,600	3,634,600	3,391,700
32						4,602,900				

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

The documents of the Ministry also define the salary of students of the National Police University. The salary is fixed accordingly at 621,600 KRW for a freshman of the first year, at 658,400 KRW for the second year, at 694,200 KRW for the third year and at 788,700 KRW for the graduate year.

The salaries for police officers (cadet level) and fire fighters (cadet level) will be fixed at almost 80% of the salary equivalent to class 1 in the rank which is expected to be applied.

The next table contains the information on the salary levels for **teachers (kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, and high school)** in Korea.

Monthly pay of teachers in KRW (2020)			
Pay grade	Monthly pay	Pay grade	Monthly pay
1	1,656,000	21	3,156,200
2	1,706,200	22	3,272,700
3	1,757,000	23	3,388,300
4	1,807,700	24	3,504,000
5	1,858,900	25	3,619,700
6	1,909,900	26	3,735,900
7	1,960,300	27	3,857,000
8	2,010,600	28	3,977,900
9	2,061,700	29	4,104,300
10	2,117,500	30	4,231,200
11	2,172,100	31	4,357,600
12	2,228,000	32	4,483,800
13	2,329,400	33	4,612,100
14	2,431,300	34	4,740,000
15	2,533,100	35	4,868,000
16	2,635,100	36	4,995,600
17	2,735,900	37	5,106,700
18	2,841,400	38	5,217,800
19	2,946,400	39	5,329,200
20	3,051,300	40	5,439,800

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

Salary level for teachers in kindergartens, elementary schools, middle schools and high schools are fixed and shall be paid and calculated according to Article 8 of the related Remuneration System document. There are also rules applying for teachers who are paid according to Article 32 paragraph 1 sub paragraph 4 of the “Educational Officials Act”, and their pay shall not exceed the 14th pay grade. Staff who are paid according to Article 13 paragraph 2 of an “Enforcement Decree of Educational Officials Appointment” shall be appointed as teachers on a part-time basis.

The salaries of **professors of national universities** are also defined.

Monthly salaries of professors at national universities in KRW (2020)			
Pay grade	Monthly pay	Pay grade	Monthly pay
1	2,088,600	21	4,109,400
2	2,154,300	22	4,235,800
3	2,220,500	23	4,400,400
4	2,286,200	24	4,564,700
5	2,352,400	25	4,729,000
6	2,424,900	26	4,893,000
7	2,497,200	27	5,057,100
8	2,569,900	28	5,221,100
9	2,678,900	29	5,345,900
10	2,787,900	30	5,470,900
11	2,897,100	31	5,595,700
12	3,005,700	32	5,720,400
13	3,114,000	33	5,845,300
14	3,222,500		
15	3,349,800		
16	3,476,900		
17	3,603,400		
18	3,729,900		
19	3,857,200		
20	3,983,100		

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

As an example, the salary levels as of 2020 were defined as follows:

- A. President of Korea National University of Welfare: **7,011,200 KRW.**

- B. President of Kumho National Institute of Technology, Mokpo National Maritime University, Hankyong National University, Korea National Sport University, Hanbat National University, Korea National University of Cultural Heritage, College of Education: **8,281,300 KRW.**

- C. President of Gangneung-Wonju National University, Kangwon National University, Gyeongnam National University of Science and Technology, Kyungpook National University, Gyeongsang National University, Kongju National University, Kunsan National University, Mokpo National University, Pukyong National University, Busan National University, Seoul National University of Science and Technology, Sunchon National University, Andong National University, Chonnam National University, Chonbuk National University, Jeju National University, Changwon National University, Chungnam National University, Chungbuk National University, Korea National University of Transportation, Korea Maritime and Ocean University,

Korea National University of Education, Korea National Open University, Korea National University of Arts: **8,431,600 KRW**.

Note: The salaries of the chief and education researchers working at the university, at the Ministry of Education, at the National Institute of Korean History, at the National Institute of Education, at the National Institute of International Education, at the Committee of Teacher Requestor and at the National Institute of Special Education, and those at the head of the education offices would be remunerated as Professors of National Universities.

The table below specifies the salary levels for **military personnel** in Korea.

Monthly salaries of Korean uniformed services / military personnel by rank in KRW 2020													
Pay grade / Rank	Major General	Brigadier General	Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	Major	Captain	1st Lieutenant	2nd Lieutenant	Warrant Officer	Sergeant Major	Master Major	Sergeant 1st Class	Staff Sergeant
1	5,346,400	5,043,700	4,094,500	3,599,200	2,965,300	2,411,900	1,871,200	1,710,000	2,230,300	3,127,700	2,163,200	1,744,800	1,661,200
2	5,478,600	5,174,700	4,232,200	3,736,800	3,099,700	2,538,600	1,977,400	1,810,800	2,336,400	3,227,700	2,259,100	1,834,500	1,689,600
3	5,610,800	5,305,700	4,369,900	3,874,400	3,234,100	2,665,300	2,083,600	1,911,600	2,442,500	3,327,700	2,355,000	1,924,200	1,718,000
4	5,743,000	5,436,700	4,507,600	4,012,000	3,368,500	2,792,000	2,189,800		2,548,600	3,427,700	2,450,900	2,013,900	1,746,400
5	5,875,200	5,567,700	4,645,300	4,149,600	3,502,900	2,918,700	2,296,000		2,654,700	3,527,700	2,546,800	2,103,600	1,774,800
6	6,007,400	5,698,700	4,783,000	4,287,200	3,637,300	3,045,400	2,402,200		2,760,800	3,627,700	2,642,700	2,193,300	1,803,200
7	6,139,600	5,829,700	4,920,700	4,424,800	3,771,700	3,172,100	2,508,400		2,866,900	3,727,700	2,738,600	2,283,000	1,831,600
8	6,271,800	5,960,700	5,058,400	4,562,400	3,906,100	3,298,800			2,973,000	3,827,700	2,834,500	2,372,700	1,860,000
9	6,404,000	6,091,700	5,196,100	4,700,000	4,040,500	3,425,500			3,079,100	3,927,700	2,930,400	2,462,400	1,888,400
10	6,536,200	6,222,700	5,333,800	4,837,600	4,174,900	3,552,200			3,185,200	4,027,700	3,026,300	2,552,100	1,916,800
11	6,668,400	6,353,700	5,471,500	4,975,200	4,309,300	3,678,900			3,291,300	4,127,700	3,122,200	2,641,800	
12	6,800,600	6,484,700	5,609,200	5,112,800	4,443,700	3,805,600			3,397,400	4,227,700	3,218,100	2,731,500	
13	6,932,800	6,615,700	5,746,900	5,250,400	4,578,100				3,503,500	4,327,700	3,314,000	2,821,200	
14			5,884,600	5,388,000	4,712,500				3,609,600	4,427,700	3,409,900	2,910,900	
15			6,022,300	5,525,600					3,715,700	4,527,700	3,505,800	3,000,600	
16									3,821,800		3,601,700	3,090,300	
17									3,927,900		3,697,600	3,180,000	
18									4,034,000		3,793,500	3,269,700	
19									4,140,100		3,889,400	3,359,400	
20									4,246,200			3,449,100	
21									4,352,300			3,538,800	
22									4,458,400			3,628,500	
23									4,564,500				
24									4,670,600				
25									4,776,700				
26									4,882,800				
27									4,988,900				

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

A General's salary as of 2018 was fixed at 8,009,400 KRW and a Lieutenant General's salary at 7,866,600 KRW. In 2019 respectively 8,172,800 KRW for the General and 8,027,100 KRW for the Lieutenant General. In 2020 the amount was 8,431,600 KRW and 8,281,300 KRW respectively, marking an increase of over 3%.

Below you will find the information regarding the salary levels for **constitution research officers** and **assistants of constitution research officers**.

Note: Constitution Researchers examine and study the data needed by constitutional judges to make decisions.

Monthly salaries of constitution research officers in KRW (2020)	
Pay step	Salary
16	8,403,100
15	7,926,400
14	7,452,000
13	7,026,400
12	6,667,300
11	6,494,100
10	6,290,400
9	5,950,000
8	5,544,400
7	5,194,700
6	4,866,500
5	4,549,800
4	4,230,900
3	3,922,700
2	3,615,300
1	3,208,600

Source: Ministry of Personnel Management 2020

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@nowak-partner.com.

All information is given to the best of our knowledge; however, we accept no liability for any errors or information provided by third parties.

About Nowak & Partner

Nowak & Partner is a management advisory firm focusing on market entry, executive search and project management in Korea.

We deliver customized turn-key solutions to international companies that are entering the Korean market, hiring key personnel (headhunting) to lead the business in Korea, and negotiating in M&A or joint-venture agreements with Korean counterparts.

We offer project management support across a wide range of areas, where commercial common sense, Korea expertise, and our reliability are winning factors. For established companies in Korea, we are a reliable ally for succeeding at difficult and unusual tasks. We provide locally adapted solutions and provide you with everything you need to make your business operations and market entry to Korea a remarkable success.

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Market Entry	Project Management	HR Services
<p><i>We structure your market entry and business development in Korea, including office search, office set-up and HR Services.</i></p> <p><i>We provide customized one-stop solutions for our customers, including providing freelancers – qualified professionals – who represent your company in Korea.</i></p>	<p><i>We tackle a variety of commercial and technical assignments, offer interim management and support you in difficult times.</i></p> <p><i>We negotiate with Korean business partners for you and deliver professional advice regarding your joint venture or M&A endeavours.</i></p>	<p><i>We select and recruit executives (C-level and mid-level), technical specialists and strategically critical professionals.</i></p> <p><i>We provide a shortlist of the most suitable candidates for your business objectives, leaving you to choose your preferred match.</i></p>
Turnkey Company Setup	Benchmark Audit	Executive Search
Business Incubation	Interim Management	Team Setup
Office Search & Setup	Crisis Management	HR Assessment
Freelancer Hosting	Negotiations	HR Consulting
Trustee Service	M&A / Joint Venture	Business Coaching

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