

A Critique of Government-Driven Multicultural Policy in Korea: Towards Local Government-Centered Policies

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Abstract

In a short period of time, multicultural policy driven by the central government in Korea seems to have made impressive achievements, including the implementation of various regulations and laws, and the provision of financial policies and programs. At the same time, however, it has produced many ill effects that have drawn much criticism. Some point out that Korea's multicultural policy has been driven excessively by the central government and its bureaucracy and failed to take a root in the local community.

This paper argues that local governments are most important in facilitating social integration and in building the long-term stability of a multicultural society. When one considers the problems caused by the central-government driven multicultural policies of Korea, the local government should also be involved, using a local-governance approach that entails cooperation with the central government, NGOs, and foreign residents. Korea's local governments need to develop policies that encompass various programs and services for their multicultural populations.

Keywords: Korea's multicultural policy, central government and local government, local government-driven policies in Europe, Japan, and Korea, local governance.

Introduction

THE INCREASE OF FOREIGNERS in industrialized countries is a worldwide phenomenon. It is most common in the United States, Canada, and Australia, all of which were founded by immigrants; in European nations, which either received the subjects of their former colonies as post-war immigrants; and in East Asian countries that have experienced rapidly expanding wage gaps, labor shortage, and lower numbers of a younger population. Since the 1990s, the populations of foreign workers, immigrants by marriage, and foreign students from China and Southeast Asian nations have skyrocketed in Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. This phenomenon—global migration—has challenged the central and local governments of these countries to develop more effective policy initiatives, social integration programs initiated by civil society, and the expansion of cultural diversity.

The central governments of OECD (Organisation for the Economic Cooperation Development) countries have paid a great amount of attention to immigrant policies such as education programs and welfare support, but cannot deal with the vast diversity of immigrants, whose status vary as well. The lack of appropriate policies and programs causes problems and concerns in local communities (Thomson 1998, 74). Therefore, local governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), universities, and private companies have brought their efforts together to close this policy gap. In this paper, which uses South Korea as a case study, I will point out the problems of multicultural policy initiated by the central government, and sketch an alternative: that of a local government-driven multicultural society.

The central government has had several inherent problems in implementing multicultural policies. Immigration policy can be easily turned into a political agenda during major national elections. Concerned with public opinions against immigration, the central government often limits itself to a passive response. Its immigration policy might fluctuate between acceptance and strict regulation. In contrast, local governments

have achieved better results by implementing flexible immigration policies that can be adopted in other contexts. This is because immigrants tend to concentrate in certain local areas and form local communities instead of spreading out nationally (Castles and Miller 2009, 229).

Since the early 1990s, European scholars have emphasized the role of the local government in a multicultural society (Caponio and Borkert, 2010), theorizing the local turn in immigrant policies.² And because local governments are important actors in the social integration of immigrants, OECD countries have recently emphasized their role in their policies for cultural diversity (OECD 2006, 1–7).³

Multicultural policy driven by the central government in Korea seems to have made an impressive achievement in a short period of time. It has quickly implemented various regulations and laws, and provided financial policies and programs. At the same time, however, it has produced many ill effects that have increasingly drawn criticism. Some point out that Korea's multicultural policy has been driven excessively by the central government and its bureaucracy, and that it has failed to take root in the local community. Others point out that the ill effects arise from the lack of unity of the fundamental philosophy of multicultural policy.

Nam-Kook Kim criticizes that there is not enough discussion on whether multiculturalism has been accepted in Korean society. Many Koreans don't agree on the kind of multicultural society where everybody, regardless of race and ethnicity, can live without discrimination and enjoy individual rights. Kim is uncertain if multiculturalism, like that adapted in Canada and Australia, can be chosen as a driving ideology in Korea (Nam-Kook Kim 2008, 348–350).

Hye-Soon Kim also provides several criticisms of the current multicultural policy of Korea: inefficiency because of the overlap of programs and budgets from various departments in the central government, an excessive concentration of regulations and budget on immigrants by marriage and multicultural families, and the lack of governance among the central and local governments and civil groups (Hye-Soon Kim, 2009, 618–620). Hee-

Jung Kim simply sees Korea's multiculturalism as driven by the central government and the bureaucracy. She adds that it does not offer a space for the voices of foreign residents themselves (Hee-Jung Kim 2007, 76–77).

The core of Korea's government-led multiculturalism is a social integration policy focusing on immigrants by marriage and their children to maintain ethnic homogeneity. It intentionally excludes foreign workers and unregistered foreigners (Kyung-Seok Oh, 2007, 33–35). Even this partial policy has many shortcomings: the uncertainty or overlapping of functions of organizations in charge of multicultural policies, the lack of a unified organization to monitor and evaluate various programs implemented by different government offices, and the absence of a coordinating system among the central, local governments, and civil organizations (Ho-Kyeong Lee 2010, 202–205).

In-Jin Yoon distinguishes between multiculturalism driven by the government and one by civil society. He identifies problems of the former: anti-foreigner sentiment,⁴ the exclusion of foreigners from the local community, and inefficiency of programs often overlapped by different institutions. According to Yoon, the policy should be transformed from government-driven to civil society-driven and to bottom-up or grass-root multiculturalism (In-Jin Yoon 2007, 282–288).

Another problem of the Korean government's multicultural policy is that each department seeks to attain budget and manpower for its own multicultural programs without communicating and coordinating with the others. The central government-driven multicultural policy also excludes local perspectives. According to Schalk-Soekar, the more active an exchange between local and foreign residents is, the more effective the policy can be (Schalk-Soekar. et.al, 2005, 533–550). It means that the entire local community should be included, instead of focusing on particular foreigner groups (Hong 2009, 172–185).

Central and local governments, civil organization, and the local residents are all essential to solving the various challenges of a multicultural society. The efficiency of multicultural policies can be improved through

legal and regulatory support from the central government, the building of a central-local-civil organization policy network, and mutual support among diverse actors coordinated by the local government (Sun-Mi Kim 2009, 220–221). Indeed, local governments can coordinate central and local actors to produce local-friendly policies for a multicultural population in different locations (Seung-Mi Han et.al, 2010). Needless to say, local government can help integrate fragmented multicultural policies at the local level, and energize interactions between foreign and local residents.

Because foreign residents actually live and work in local communities, the policies by the central government have to be implemented at this level. The monolithic multicultural policy imposed by the central government is limited because each locality has different types and origins of foreign residents, possesses different personal and material resources, and pursues unique development strategies (Ki-Sun Jung 2012, 7–11). Although many studies have criticized the central government-driven multicultural policy, few papers have advocated that such policies be transferred to local government. And not many have explored reasons, along with case studies and alternatives, for such a transfer.⁵

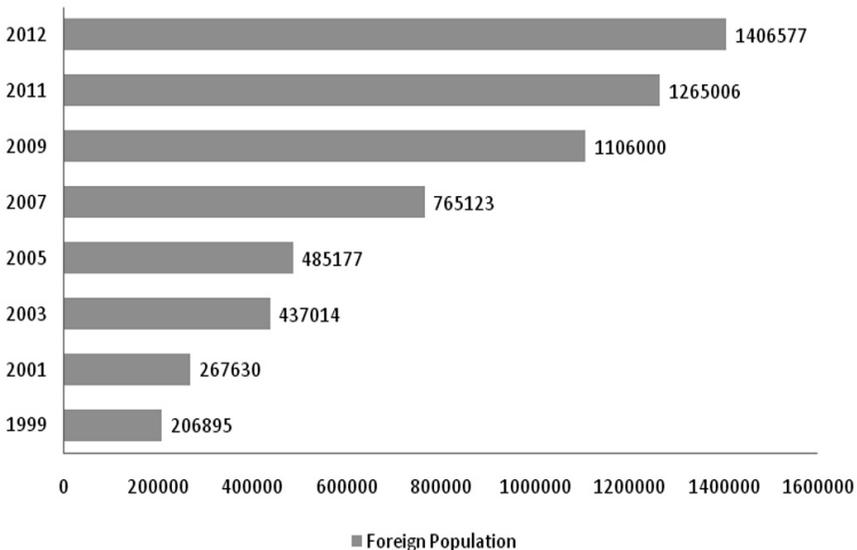
Multicultural phenomenon and local society in Korea

As of August 2013, there are 1.57 million foreigners in Korea, accounting for 3.1 percent of the total population. The influx of foreign labor since the early 1990s and the increase of foreign brides married to Korean men since 2000s have accelerated the multicultural demographic make-up of the country. The difficulty in finding brides in rural areas and the increase of marriage brokers have brought a surge in international marriages. Indeed, the number of marriage migrations has increased from a mere 25,182 in 2001 to 150,865 in 2013, accounting for 10.2 percent of the total foreign population in Korea. The influx of *Chosun-Jok* (Korean descendants from China) and foreign workers through the employment permit system have increased the number of foreign population up to 7 times between 1999 and 2012 (Figure 1).

The 2012 Statistics of Foreign Population in Korea by Ministry of Justice illustrates the number of foreigners in Korea according to nationality. They are Chinese and Korean Chinese (48.3 percent), Americans (9 percent), Vietnamese (8.3 percent), and Japanese (4 percent). After that, there are Thais (3.2 percent), Filipinos (2.9 percent), Indonesians (2.6 percent), Uzbekistanis (2.4 percent), Mongolians (1.8 percent), and others (17.4 percent).

FIGURE 1
Increase of Foreign Population by Year (1999-2012)
[Ministry of Justice 2012]

[To address printing requirements, the graph below was re-laid out – ed.]



More than two-thirds of foreigners in Korea are concentrated in the Seoul Metropolitan Areas, Gyeonggi Province, and Incheon Metropolitan Areas.⁶ Immigrants tend to live together or settle in more foreigner-friendly living environments like metro cities. As illustrated in Figure 3, derived from the Statistics of Foreign Population in Korea 2012, Seoul has the highest foreign resident ratio of 4 percent. It is followed by Gyeonggi Province (3.6 percent) and South Chungcheong Province (3.2 percent). Gangwon Province shows a relatively low ratio of 1.5 percent.

FIGURE 2
Ratio of foreign population in Korea by nationality in 2012
(Ministry of Justice 2012)

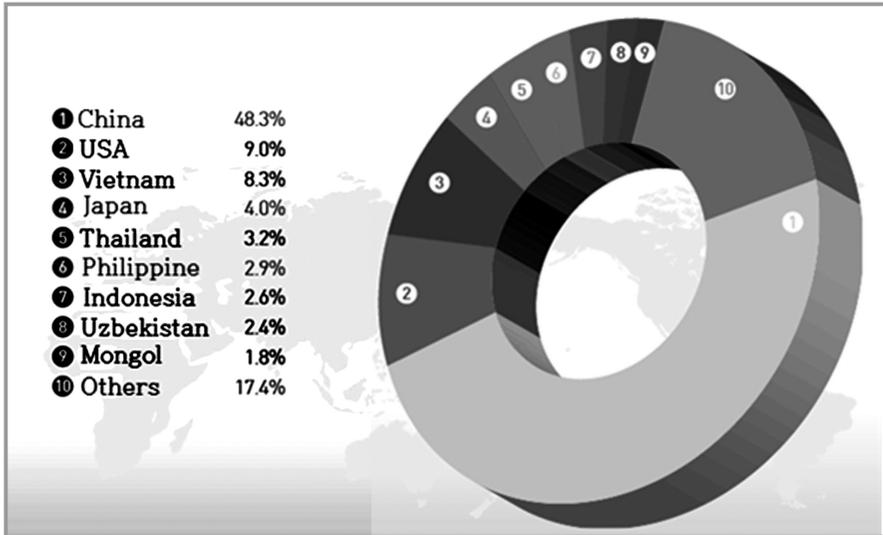


Table 1 below (derived source from the Statistics of Foreign Population in Korea, 1999–2012) shows there are forty-two local governments with more than 10,000 foreign residents. Ansan City has 60,583; Yeongdungpo City, 57,180; Guro City; 43,239; and Suwon City 40,537.

TABLE 1: Number of Local Governments Based on the Size of Foreign Residents (Ministry of Justice 2012)

Total	Over 20,000	20,000~ 10,000	10,000~ 5,000	5,000~ 1,000	1,000~ 500	500~ 100
230	13	29	41	97	42	8

FIGURE 3
Foreign Population Ratio in Province Areas (%)
 (Ministry of Justice 2012, Statistics of Foreign Population in Korea)
 [To address printing requirements, the graph below was re-laid out – ed.]

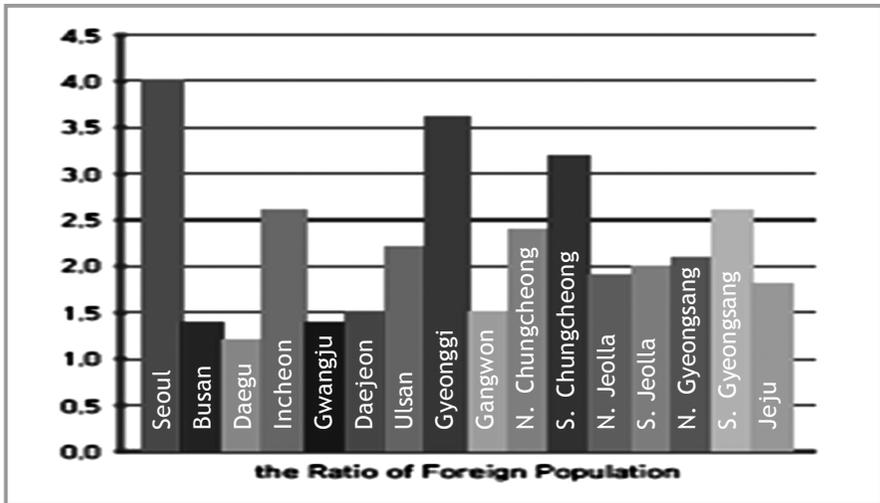


Figure 4 (next page) shows the classification of foreigners in Korea according to status. For example, working visa holders number 238,000 and overseas Korean residents total 189,000. Mostly Korean-Chinese, they work in restaurants or in construction. The Employment Permit System annually brings in about 230,000 foreign workers who can stay up to three years in Korea. They work in small or mid-sized business or manufacturing companies. Skilled foreign workers can stay up to four years and ten months. The permanent residents, the majority of whom are Korean-Chinese, overseas Chinese in Korea, and immigrants by marriage, are about 97,000.

Immigrants by marriage, including those naturalized, are about 230,000, and children of multicultural families are more than 191,000, with an annual increase of over 10 percent. According to 2013 statistics from the Ministry of Education, there are 56,000 students from immigrant families in elementary, middle, and high schools. The current foreign

population ratio of 3.1 percent in 2013 is expected to increase to 5 percent in 2020, and will reach to 9 percent in 2050, which is the current level in developed countries (Ministry of Justice 2012, 276).

The rapid increase of immigrants by marriage has been attributed to aging, low birthrate, and lack of labor in rural areas since 1990s. Initially, Korean-Chinese women have come to the metropolitan areas of Seoul and other rural areas, and later, more women from Southeast Asian countries have increasingly entered Korea after marrying a Korean man (Ministry of Justice 2006, 70).

The number of international marriages—more than 70 percent between a Korean male and a foreign female—reached its peak of 30,000 in 2005 and decreased to about 28,000 in 2012. It still accounts for 8.9 percent of total marriages in Korea. These couples live in rural villages or metropolitan areas across the nation.

FIGURE 4
Composition of Foreigners by Visa Status (2012)
[Ministry of Justice 2012]

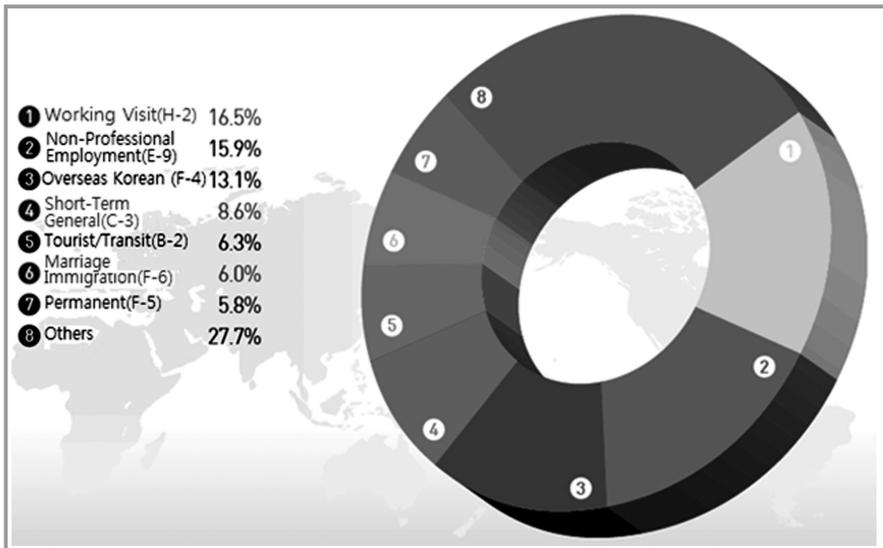
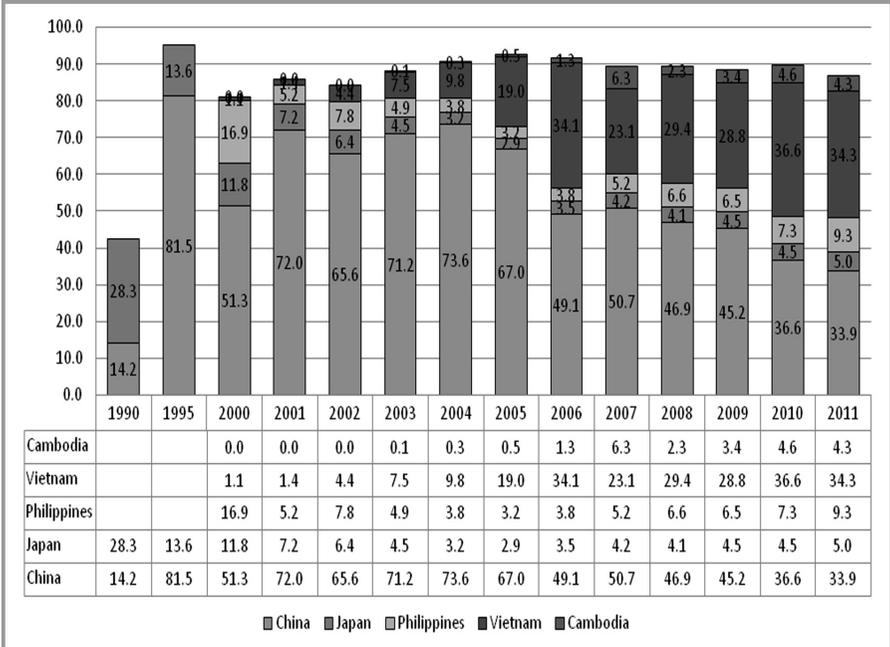


Figure 5 illustrates the nationalities of immigrants by marriage. In the early years, the majority of females were Korean-Chinese and Japanese, but later, more women arrived from Vietnam and the Philippines.⁷ In 2011, Vietnamese comprised the largest group with 34.3 percent, compared to Korean-Chinese, with 33.9 percent. Along with women from the Philippines 9.3 percent and Cambodia 4.3 percent, more than 47.9 percent of immigrants by marriage come from Southeast Asian countries whose language and culture differ from those of Korea. Hence, more culturally sensitive policies are required for immigrants by marriage (Yi-Sun Kim 2012, 77–93).⁸

As the number of foreign residents has increased in Korea, both the central and local governments have paid more attention to

FIGURE 5
Immigrants by marriage by nationality (Kim, Yi-Sun 2012, 81)
[To address printing requirements, the graph below was re-laid out – ed.]



multicultural policies. Starting with addressing human rights violations against foreign workers, Korean multicultural policy got on the right track in 2005 under Rho Moo-Hyun's regime. With initiative from the central government, multicultural policies showed substantial improvements in financial support and policies in law, budget, facilities, and programs. These include the introduction of Employment Permit System in August 2004, the permanent residents' right to vote in local elections in August 2005, the creation of the Committee of Foreigner Policy in May 2006, the implementation of the local government ordinance by Ministry of Security and Public Administration since 2007, the legislation of Multicultural Family Support Act in March 2008, and the enactment of the refugee law in July 2013.

The budget for multicultural programs from the central government increased to 96.9 million USD in 2009, and to 197.45 million USD in 2012. National support networks have also been well established. There are 217 Multicultural Family Support Centers, and more than 350 programs and consulting services by religious and civil institutions, all of whom cater to foreign workers, multicultural families, and international students. However, these supply-driven, results-oriented, and performance-oriented policies from the central government have many limitations.

The problems of central government-driven Policies

In April 2006, the Roh Moo-Hyun government mentioned that the transformation of Korea into multicultural and multiethnic society is unavoidable. Since then, government offices have competitively pursued for social integration and multicultural policies. However, there have been few in-depth discussions among the central government, civil society, and experts with regards to the setting of such policies.

The Korean government did not declare any form of multiculturalism, like those adopted in Canada or Australia, as an active and positive policy (Willett 1999).⁹ There was not much discussion on

whether multi-culture, multiculturalism, or multicultural society was the goal. The real objectives of the government were to increase the population with immigrants by marriage, conduct an assimilation-like social integration of immigrants and children of multicultural families, and guarantee the labor supply through the Employment Permit System. The state has blended these as its multicultural policy (Hye-Soon Kim 2009, 615–616).

Without any consistent and systematic vision for multiculturalism and multicultural policy, individual departments in the central government often already consider public service to foreigners as part of multicultural policy. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family and Ministry of Labor and others directly control their own budgets and programs at their respective local branch offices. They do not consider different types of foreign residents and the various living conditions of local communities. The central government also dominates multicultural policy through various channels of its own offices, often without coordinating with local authorities. It is not unusual to find the cases of overlapping policies, wasted resources, less efficiency, and conflicts between and among different government departments (Byeong-Doo Choi 2012, 30–31).

Since July 2012, the Ministry of Justice has implemented a social integration service that provides foreigners with the necessary education required for permanent residency and citizenship. To assist foreigners to adapt and settle in Korea, the service provides a range of general knowledge of Korean society, including Korean language, constitutional values, basic laws, and politics, and economy. There are 248 establishments for such purposes, including 45 designated service centers and 203 general offices.

Since 2008, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family has also provided various and specific programs for immigrants by marriage and their children based on the Multicultural Family Support Law. With a vision to build dynamic multicultural families and a harmonious society, the second phase of the basic plan for Multicultural Family Support Act (2013–2017) pursues a multicultural society that respects diversity and strengthens the foundation of the multicultural family. It focuses on supporting the employment of marriage immigrants and the education of

children from such marriages, as the residency period of immigrants by marriage in Korea has become longer.

As of January 2014, two hundred and seventeen multicultural family support centers nationwide provide Korean culture and language education, including lessons on tradition, custom, and cuisine. They also provide various counseling and information services for daily life and occupational training for multicultural families. Children of multicultural families can also receive after-school tutoring and Korean language classes.

The Ministry of Security and Public Administration enacted the “Standard Ordinance to Support Resident Aliens” in 2007, which more than 200 local governments have implemented. They offer Korean language education programs, services in different languages, establishment of a department dedicated for foreign residents, programs to improve the living environment of foreigner-concentrated areas, building support network for foreign residents, surveys and research, and hiring foreigners as government employees or advisors.

**TABLE 2: Subjects for Designing Multicultural Policies
(Hong Choi 2011, 7)**

Ministries in Charge	
Philosophy (Strategies)	Committee on Foreigner Policy Committee on Multicultural Family Policy Committee on Foreign Labor Policy
Accommodation Capacity (Infrastructure)	Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Security and Public Administration, Ministry of Health and Defense, Ministry of Employment and Labor, Ministry of Education
System (Action Plan)	Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Local Governments

As was cited above, some critics also point out that the multicultural policy has been led excessively by the central government and its bureaucracy, and that it has failed to take root in the local community. Others criticize the lack of unity in the basic philosophy of multicultural policy, policy infrastructure, and laws and regulations for action plans (Table 2).

Let's take a look at the case of Korean language program for immigrants by marriage. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family operates a Korean language program through multicultural family supporting centers. The Ministry of Education provides educational broadcasting programs to promote the learning of Korean language and culture through EBS (Educational Broadcasting System). The Ministry of Justice includes Korean language classes in its social integration program. The Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism offers home-visit Korean classes, Korean language textbook development, and infant education classes in rural areas. The Ministry of Security and Public Administration has its own Korean program and leadership program for immigrants by marriage in local community centers.

The Ministry of Employment and Labor also includes Korean language classes in its employment support program. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs dispatches social workers and Korean language teachers to the homes of multicultural families. The Ministry of Health and Welfare also operates a Korean society adaptation program, including Korean language classes. All in all, more than eight departments in the central government provide Korean language education, and actually compete to attract more attendees. These Korean language classes cause more confusion than certainty because they use different textbooks and require different criteria for teachers. For example, only 0.15 percent (2009), 0.48 percent (2010), and 0.66 percent (2011) of all immigrants by marriage have participated in the Korean language program by Ministry of Justice (Myeong-Hyun Kim 2013, 187).

Given this situation, criticisms focus on the evaluation of these different programs and the need to prevent any overlaps and inefficiency. If the local

government could control these initiatives, it will provide more consistent and systematic help for foreign residents in their city. One reason for this lies in the fact that foreigners tend to live in a concentrated area, where they form their own ethnic community. Faist explains this concentration through the theory of social capital. Immigrants live and work together in a place where they can find the necessary social capital: mutual assistance, ethnic alliances, ethnic understanding, and information networks. Immigrants away from their homeland form a new culture and identity based on the flow of capital, people, culture, and knowledge found in a transnational space (Faist 2000).

In Korea, many foreigners live and work in special areas. Most foreign residents in Youngdungpo City and Guro City are from China. Ansan City boasts of a diversity of foreign workers from different countries. Incheon Metropolitan Area also has many Overseas Chinese. More than twenty-two local governments have over 5 percent of foreign residents in their total population. There are forty-two local government areas, 18.5 percent of the total, with more than 10,000 foreigners.

The monolithic multicultural policy of the central government has not met the various demands of the local governments with different types of immigrants. There have been serious budget wastes and rampant inefficiencies in similar multicultural policies operated by several ministries of the state government. On the contrary, the local government can respond to different needs of the local communities that have different constituents: foreign workers and brides or Chinese immigrants. For instance, Ansan City has a large number of foreign workers and provides an overseas wiring service at banks during the weekend, the first and only such service in the nation. Guro City in Seoul has a large senior (50s and 60s) Chinese immigrant population and has the first center for such foreigners. The Gangneung city has a sizable number of immigrants by marriage and provides a mentoring program for children of multicultural families by college volunteers. Hence, the local government's multicultural policy can tailor diverse multicultural programs adapted for different demands of foreign residents in the local community.

While the Korean multicultural policy has been driven by the central government and is focused on short-term achievements, it is necessary for local governments and their residents to think of how to accept foreign residents gradually, and pursue a local-governance approach for multicultural policies (Pierre 2000).¹⁰

From central to local government: Europe, Japan, and Korea

It is a worldwide trend that the center of multicultural policy has shifted from central to local governments. In Europe, Japan, and other developed countries, local governments and NGOs often drive multicultural programs, and the central government implements laws and institutions to help them. In Europe, where debates on multiculturalism are common in national politics, local governments actively promote multicultural initiatives. For example, the United Kingdom promotes the social integration of immigrants through local governments. In Sweden, such governments raise funds to accommodate foreign refugees.

Essen in Germany has operated a multicultural network that involves the city government, civil organizations, university, and immigrant associations for over thirty years. The network provides language and multicultural programs for youths from immigrant families. The programs have become more efficient through a direct responsibility of the chief of Essen's social department for youth and a close collaboration with the local community.

Since 1990, Canada's Manitoba Provincial government has put one department in charge of all processes of immigrant services from selection to settlement. At that time, the central government of Canada preferred professional engineers while the provincial government wanted more general workers. Through an agreement in 1998, the provincial government now has an authority to recommend 200 immigrants annually. As of 2010, 77% of foreign residents in Manitoba arrive through the recommendation of the provincial government (Ki-Sun Jung et. Al., 2012, 13–52).

European states share a consensus that the future of Europe depends on its response to cultural diversity. Annually, they publish the European White Paper on Cultural Diversity, and started the Inter-Cultural City Project under the authority of the Council of Europe with financial support from the Comedia Foundation. Heads of European cities held annual meetings to share new visions of the city in which cultural diversity is the source of dynamics, innovation, creativity, and growth (Council of Europe 2013).

The European Union adopted the declaration of Faro, Portugal in 2005 to promote cultural and religious diversity and to facilitate dialogue among different groups. According to the declaration, a true Inter-Cultural City cannot be built on fragmented leadership or minor policy changes. It can be possible only by sharing visions and through the mutual efforts of institutionalized city governments and civil society. The Inter-Cultural City Project seeks to build alliances among cities and foster solidarity between central governments and international organizations. Twenty-three cities participate, including London, Lisbon, Amsterdam, Dublin, Copenhagen, and Oslo (Council of Europe, 2013).¹¹

Let's take a look at multicultural policies in Japan's local governments. As of June 2013, the number of registered foreign residents in Japan is about 2,049,123, accounting for 1.6 percent of the total population (Statistics Bureau of Japan 2013, no.13-06-01-1). Unlike Korean policies, which are driven by the central government, the local governments in Japan started their multicultural policies independently. It was in 1984 when the Kawasaki City initiated the program, "Inward Internationalization," to improve the situation of Korean-Japanese. The project was based on the rueful reflection on the pre-war colonial treatment of Koreans. From that experience, Japan started to build an organization dedicated to serving foreigners in Japan through programs such as the survey of foreign residents, abolishment of finger-printing, anti-discrimination, social welfare and pensions, elimination of nationality requirement for local government officials, enfranchisement, improving the environment for education, and housing and workforce development.

The Kawasaki City, which boasts of a large number of Korean-Japanese, established a committee of foreign citizen representatives through an ordinance in 1996. The city also added, to an amendment of the basic policy for foreigners, a subtitle of “Toward Intercultural Co-existence Society” in 1998. It enacted the basic principles for intercultural co-existence society such as the respect for human rights, encouragement of social participation, and support for independence. Hamamatsu City is one of the most populated cities in Japan, boasting of many Brazilian-Japanese. In 2001, the city established “Council of Municipalities with a Large Foreign Population” to build networks among local governments, and announced the Hamamatsu Declaration, which urges the central government to upgrade the acceptance system for foreigners. It also established “the committee for coexistence with foreign citizens” and started a campaign for the full enrollment of foreign children in local schools.

Multicultural policies of local governments in Korea follow the state’s lead. As the central government has focused on supporting of foreign residents, as has the local government (Kee-Ho Yang, 2006, 70–71). Partially because of population decline in rural and local areas, multicultural policy has become an important issue.¹² Local governments with either more than 50,000 foreign residents or over 2.5 percent of the foreign population created a department that serves foreign residents in the area (Committee on Foreigner Policy 2012). As of June 2011, twenty-six local governments had three department level offices and twenty-three team level multicultural offices. As illustrated in Table 3, the budget for local government-led multicultural programs has grown every year. It increased 1.7 times within four years from 93.28 million USD in 2008 to 166.85 million USD in 2012. This also entails an increase in independent action plans and programs. In 2012, the local governments had a 166.85 million USD budget for the programs, accounting for about 85 percent of the central government budget of 197.45 million USD (Table 3 next page).

TABLE 3: Annual Budget of Multicultural Programs for Central
and Local Governments 2008-2012 (unit: Million USD)
[Committee on Foreigner Policy 2012]

Central	Government	Local Governments	Total
2008	76.3	93.28	169.58
2009	96.9	224.47	321.37
2010	119.56	114.86	234.42
2011	181.40	146.58	327.98
2012	197.45	166.85	364.30

Table 4 below illustrates the different phases of programs of local governments with active multicultural policies in the metropolitan areas around Seoul. The first phase involves the most basic programs for Korean language, cultural experience, medical health services, and the publication of a community newsletter. The second phase includes job training, multicultural understanding classes, education for multicultural children, labor counseling, multicultural festivals, support for the early settlement, and the provision of temporary shelters. As the highest level at work in Ansan, Suwon, and Cheonan City, the third phase offers support for foreign communities and allows the operation of councils of foreign resident representatives and committees for foreign policies (Se-Hun Park et. al., 2010, 59)

Ansan City has about 60,000 foreign residents. It designated “Foreigner Street” as a “Multicultural Special Zone” in 2009. Ansan also built a three-story foreign resident center where city employees provide various services and programs. The center is open 365 days a year. A bank near the center is popular among foreign residents, who wire money to their home countries. It is the only bank open on weekends. The city’s “Little Multicultural Library” has about 10,000 books and magazines in 17 different languages and is popular among immigrants by marriage and children of multicultural families.

TABLE 4: Multicultural Policies in Major Local Governments
(Park Se-Hun et al. 2010, 59).

		Suwon	Seongnam	Bucheon	Ansan	Hwasung	Cheonan	Gimhae
First phase	Korean Language Education	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Cultural Experience	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Medical Services	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Newsletter	O			O	O		O
Second phase	Job Training	O	O	O	O		O	
	Education for Multicultural Understanding	O	O	O	O		O	O
	Education for Multicultural Children				O	O	O	O
	Labor Counseling	O			O		O	
	Multicultural Festivals	O				O	O	O
	Support for Early Settlement		O		O	O		
	Temporary Shelter						O	
Third phase	Support for Foreigner Community	O			O		O	
	Council for Foreign Resident Representatives	O						
	Operating Committee for Foreign Residents	O			O			

Suwon City has about 40,000 foreigners, 3.5 percent of its total population, and has the fifth highest concentration of foreigners among local governments in Korea. Foreign workers number 17,000, accounting for half of the total in the city. Immigrants by marriage have soared up to 34,000. The city helps foreign residents settle in the local community through Korean language education and consultation for Korean law. It provides English lessons, car maintenance training, and computer education. Other programs are teaching Korean language and how to cook Korean food. They also provide free medical services, and free haircut and make-up services courtesy of volunteers.

Gimhae City offers a program in which a Korean with more than five years of marriage experiences mentors other immigrants by marriage, helps them understand different national cultures, and assists them in resolving conflicts in multicultural families. Using conversational coaching method, a Korean mentor assists foreign spouses who have been married to a Korean for less than two years. They identify any issues in multicultural families through group interviews. For example, they share personal experiences with each other: a conflict caused by a lengthy phone usage and expensive phone bills during the early stage of immigration; issues of adapting to Korean cuisine, different sleeping and bathing customs; issues with Korean mothers-in-law or with a spouse, employment and money wiring, etc.

Pyeongtaek City is a typical hybrid city with urban and rural features. Its multicultural library provides information services to help immigrants by marriage and foreign workers adapt to an increasingly multi-ethnic community and to build a harmonious multicultural society. The library provides services and materials in fourteen different languages such as English, Chinese, Japanese, and Vietnamese. It also operates Korean language classes with the help of local universities.

Anyang City added Vietnamese as one of the languages of their city's website, in addition to English, Japanese, and Chinese. The number of content categories has expanded from thirty-three to ninety including

city news, multicultural support center, public library, tips for daily life, and announcement. A contracted translation service company updates this information in different languages.

Building local governance and future projects

As illustrated in the previous parts, it is necessary for local governments to drive and build multicultural governance, which is underpinned by three factors.

1) Local governance and its meaning

As for Korean multicultural policies in the future, I suggest three tasks: reviewing the capacity of local governments for multiculturalism; strengthening the communication among NGOs, foreign organizations, and local residents; and promoting the participation of local institutions and businesses. The self-empowerment of local governments, securing annual budget for programs and services, and building mutual exchange and networks are most important in building governance among actors of multicultural policies. In addition, the central government should provide continuing and enough resources to help local regions develop effective multicultural policies.

Local multicultural governance can facilitate social integration because it entails volunteerism from both foreign and local residents. Therefore, a local-governance model of multicultural policies should replace the current government-driven one in the long term. A multicultural model of interdependence between local residents and foreigners should also be pursued as an alternative.

A local-governance model includes general measures that aim to build a lasting multicultural society: the central government provides institutional, legal, and financial support for foreigners. At the same time, the local government, organizations, NGOs, and communities should cooperate in implementing policies and programs.

2) A model of multicultural policy led by local government

The central government is needed to pass some of its tasks in promoting social integration to local governments, and must rather focus on strengthening and financing the overall system. Local governments acknowledge, as their major problems, the lack of professional staff and their own, independent multicultural policy. This is in part due to an explosive expansion of departments dedicated to serve foreign residents within a short period of time. Considering an increasingly significant role of local governments in the future, the central government should not delay any necessary assistance. It should also help strengthen their capacities by presenting them with an appropriate policy model, supporting the professional training for local employees performing foreigner-related services, and introducing exemplary models from other countries to the local counterparts.

The local governments should also re-evaluate their own ability to implement multicultural policies, and reinforce their corporation with local and foreign residents. With the transfer of the central government's function to local government, the latter will be naturally the center of multicultural policies. Currently, the local governments play a central role in the social integration of foreign residents in worldwide. They embrace foreign residents with more flexible and adaptive policies while the central government focuses on a stricter immigration control.

In the future, local governments need to enlarge their capacity for and assertiveness in implementing multicultural policies. Most have been passive enforcers of policy guidelines and programs from the central government. Therefore, they are incapable of effectively responding to local challenges and of mobilizing internal resources such as residents' organizations and local businesses. The local governments should play a more active role; they can, for instance, survey foreign residents in the area and evaluate the support programs of NGOs for foreigners. They should also support professional enhancement efforts by employees.¹³

In order to be the control tower for the multicultural policy, local governments need to build a Governance Network with both government and civilian counterparts, as in the case of Cheonan, Suwon and Ansan Cities. In the Governance Network, public institutions and resident organizations, local and foreign residents, and representatives of foreign residents all participate equally, and evaluate and suggest policies accordingly.

3) Domestic and international networks among local governments

It is very important for local governments to build networks, where they can share their field experiences, information, and visions of a multicultural city. Such networks include the “Inter-Cultural City Project” by the Council of Europe, Japan’s “Council of Municipalities with a Large Foreign Population,” and Korea’s “National Council for Multicultural Cities,” which was initiated by Ansan City in November 2012. According to the founding prospectus, the Council will facilitate the exchange of information and help build close cooperation among local governments in actively handling increasing amounts of administrative demands of their constituents.

As mentioned before, local governments and foreign residents cannot capitalize on the sufficient benefits of multicultural policies for two reasons: waste of the budget and the inefficiency caused by separate policies by different ministries of the central government. Korean society has experienced a transitional state of conflicts and social issues around foreign residents. Therefore, close cooperation and coordinated countermeasures among local governments are seriously needed to solidify the direction of policies. The National Council for Multicultural Cities aims to discuss solutions for current issues faced by different local governments, and to build an organic relationship with the central government in implementing policies tailored for different regions, cases, and subjects.

The National Council for Multicultural Cities consists of cities with more than 5,000 foreign residents. Based on Article 152 of the Local Autonomy Law, it is an intercity council that promotes and improves on

research on programs on multicultural policies. A total twenty-four local governments are participating in the council, including five in Seoul, one in Incheon, fourteen in Gyeonggi-Province, two in South Chungcheong Province, one in Gwangju Metropolitan City, and one in South Gyeongsang Province. The Council aims to help improve multicultural policies, share experiences of local governments, and propose new policies to the central government. The Council is expected to lead multicultural policies of the local governments in the future.¹⁴

Conclusion

Korea's multicultural policy has been driven by various laws, regulations, and financial support from the central and local governments. Yes, it has been criticized because of its inefficiency arising from too many programs and regulations, and the lack of adequacy, balance, and focus on local conditions. Also, because of a heavy focus on immigrants by marriage and children of multicultural families, and the dearth of policies for foreign workers, there is an increasing gap of service programs among different regions, cases, and subjects.

In this situation, multicultural governance among the central and local governments is not working properly. The central and local governments have proposed various laws and regulations in a rather competitive and short-term-oriented fashion. This results in the absence of communication among policy makers, the overlap of budgets and tasks, and the lack of coherence with other programs for foreign residents. Therefore, the Korean government should change its current centralized multicultural policy, and its perspective of seeing foreign residents as only beneficiaries and objects of the policy. It should aim to build a multicultural society led by local governments and communities.

Korea's multicultural policy needs a system that reflects the experiences and situations of different regions and areas. It requires a balanced division of labor among the central and local governments, local offices and NGOs, local residents and foreign residents, and, public offices

and volunteer organizations. It also demands various policies and programs tailored to different needs for foreign workers, immigrants by marriage, and children of multicultural family in different regions. These policy makers and actors should build networks and continuously improve the system.

Multicultural governance of Korea's local governments is recommended to proceed with the following developmental stages. At the first stage, it should expand the scope of subjects from multicultural families to foreign workers, international students, and Korean Chinese. At the second stage, considering the tight budget situation of the local government, it should utilize local volunteers and provide programs and networks where multicultural families and local residents can share their experiences with each other. At the third stage, it takes a positive perspective on cultural diversity as the source of city creativity and dynamics, and aims to build a coexistence society where local and foreign residents live and work together.

Notes

- ¹ Thomson writes, "Multicultural policy is only needed where problems exist... If the Federal Governments had proper policies and programs in place there would not be any multicultural problems for local governments to worry about."
- ² Refer to the title of a seminar held in Barcelona, Spain in 20 October 2013. "Theorizing the local turn in immigrant policies: a multi-level approach." Accessed 30 January 2014. http://www.upf.edu/gritim/_pdf/GRITIM-EUR-IMISCOE_seminar_on_the_local_turn_-_Final_Program.pdf
- ³ OECD. 2006. "The integration of immigrants has a strong local dimension. While immigration applications are likely to be dealt with at the national level, migrants ultimately settle in local communities, and require support from local stockholders when integration proves difficult."
- ⁴ The problems of Korea's central government-driven policy have been unfolded in many areas. There are increasing numbers of internet cafes against the central government's top-down multicultural policy. They claim that the multicultural policy of the central government is capitalist's plot to force the poor for lower wages and define it as antipatriotic and antinational. It is concerned that the anti-multicultural claims seem to develop from a simple stereotype to a discourse.
- ⁵ See those articles. Keecho Yang. 2006.06; Seung-Mi Han et al. 2010; Ki-Sun Jung et al. 2012.

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- ⁶ Korea's local governments elect top positions of the administrative branch and members of the local council every four-year. As of January 2014, there are 16 large-scale local governments and 227 basic scale governments. The average population of the basic local government is about 224,000, the largest in the world.
- ⁷ Min-Jung Kim (2012) gives a detailed explanation on the process of being gendered for Filipino woman migrants in Korean who are divided into three groups of migrant worker, female music band singer, and migrant by marriage.
- ⁸ Refer to Yi-Sun Kim. "Women Migrants by Marriage and Gender Structure of South East Asia and East Asia: Experience of Korea and Japan", *The Asia Research Fund*, 2012:77–93 [in Korean]. Figure 5 is also cited from the same article.
- ⁹ Canada's multiculturalism is based on three principles: society with diverse race, ethnicity, and culture, acceptance and respect for cultural diversity, and equal opportunities for public policies and programs.
- ¹⁰ For Pierre (2000), governance means participating of various actors—the local government, local businesses, NGOs, and local residents—to solve public projects in the local community through official or nonofficial influences during the process of policy decision and implementation.
- ¹¹ The genuine intercultural city cannot emerge from disconnected initiatives or small-scale policy changes. It can only be the result of a shared vision and the concerted efforts of a range of institutional and civil society stakeholders. Therefore the Intercultural City Strategy includes a wide range of actors in the city: local authorities, professionals, social services, civil society organisations, and the media. Focusing on the sustainability and effectiveness of the results, the Intercultural City Strategy includes the establishment of partnerships and alliances within each city but also on national and international levels(Council of Europe, 2013).
- ¹² Compared to European countries, Korea has a small number of children out of wedlock. Hence, low marriage rate has a direct correlation with low birthrate in Korea and becomes a clear threat to the development of the local government. For example, Sweden has 55 percent, France 48 percent, Denmark 46 percent, England 43 percent, and the United States 37 percent of children out of wedlock. But, Japan has 2.0 percent (2005) and Korean has 1.6 percent (2007).
- ¹³ In order to enhance the capability of local governments, it might be a good idea to make a network of local governments such as Japan's 'Council of Municipalities with a Large Foreign Population.' There are few opportunities for local government officials working on foreigner related programs to exchange experiences and information with others. Founded in November 2011, National Council for Multicultural Cities is expected to provide such opportunities.
- ¹⁴ In April 2013, National Council for Multicultural Cities suggested forming a working committee for a better cooperation between the central and local government officials. The committee includes government officials and foreign residents. The central government accepted the proposal and decided to establish the central-local government working committee. Ministry of Security and Public Administration, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, Ministry of Justice will participate in the committee with five local governments including Ansan City and Guro City.
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