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NEW VALUES & OLD ORDERS

Where do North Koreans fit in the new South Korea?

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The researchers from the University of Toronto, Leiden University, and the University of Vienna surveyed 1,008 South Koreans and 350 North Korean defector-migrants. The surveys were designed and implemented in cooperation with a Canadian survey firm, Delvinia, and the South Korean state-run Hana Foundation.

The South Koreans were asked about their attitudes towards and preferences regarding immigrants and diversity. A primary focus of attention was attitudes toward people of the same ethnicity, in particular North Korean defector-migrants and Korean-Chinese, vs. non-ethnic Korean groups. Innovative survey experiments were conducted to better understand "true" preferences towards defector-migrant resettlement, who South Koreans prefer coming to their country, and to whom they do and do not wish to confer public assistance.

The North Korean defector-migrants were asked about their attitudes towards national membership and belonging, as well as democracy and components of state and society in South Korea. In order to establish the nature of resettled North Korean identities, they were also asked about factors of the North Korean lives they left behind. Their opinions were compared to native South Koreans on identical questions. The key findings are as follows:

WHAT DO SOUTH KOREANS THINK ABOUT IMMIGRATION AND DIVERSITY OVERALL?

- Most South Koreans support their new, multicultural national identity. While citizens show some uneasiness about immigration in general, there is no evidence that they are rejecting diversity.
- South Koreans express a preference for ethnic Korean immigrants, but not all ethnic Koreans. They are most at ease with the entry and resettlement of North Korean defector-migrants, whereas Korean-Chinese are among the least preferred immigrant groups.
- Among prospective immigrant attributes, language capacity and employment plans trump other considerations.

WHAT DO SOUTH KOREANS THINK ABOUT NORTH KOREAN DEFECTOR-MIGRANT NEWCOMERS?

- When provided complete information about prospective immigrants, North Koreans are, all else considered, highly regarded as potential newcomers to South Korea. Among a selection of context-relevant nationalities, North Korea ranks second behind the United States.
- South Koreans prefer to provide welfare distribution (in this case, public housing) to native-born Koreans over those born outside South Korea, and that includes defector-migrants. However, there is no evidence of targeted discrimination against newcomers from the North.
- Multiculturalism is not at odds with the resettlement of North Korean defector-migrants.

WHAT DO NORTH KOREAN DEFECTOR-MIGRANTS THINK?

- National identities of resettled North Korean defector-migrants and native-born South Koreans largely converge.
- Defector-migrants are somewhat less accepting of difference compared to native-born South Koreans, but not substantively so. Defector-migrants do not prefer a multicultural to an ethnically homogeneous country, but there is no opposition to the idea of a multicultural South Korea per se.
- Defector-migrants are just as supportive of democracy as native South Koreans but diverge somewhat from native South Koreans regarding democratic alternatives.
- North Korean defector-migrants are much more supportive of national reunification than are native-born South Koreans.
- Defector-migrants show greater pride in the accomplishments of South Korea than do native-born South Koreans.

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1. FOREWORD

The South Korean government's support of defector-migrants coming from North Korea is well known. Pending vetting of their background in the name of national security, North Korean migrants are granted South Korean citizenship on arrival. They then receive considerable support from the public purse. But when it comes to immigration in general and cultural diversity, contemporary South Korean public attitudes are not so clear. Accordingly, this research presents several surprises for scholars and casual observers alike.

South Korea has long been understood to be a country of negative immigration; that is, characterized by long-term patterns of emigration and return ethnic migration, with few pathways for ethnically dissimilar foreigners to create lives in the country. Scholars of Korean national identity – or even casual observers who have spent some time in the country – are quick to point out the strong vision of a millennia-long homogeneous *minjok* (Korean race) that mandates the reunification of the peninsula.

However, from the early 2000s the national government has not only sought to reform and institutionalize its guest worker program to fill gaps in the labor force; it has also sought to provide pathways for migration and integration programming for so-called "marriage migrants" (i.e. foreigners, predominantly women, who migrate with the main purpose of marrying a Korean national, a group that at its height in 2005 constituted 14 percent of marriages) as well as social welfare support for their children.

The country's recent promotion of a Korean brand of "multiculturalism" (*damunhwajuu*) and associated policies to integrate or assimilate certain types of incoming long-term residents seem at odds with a purportedly closed view of the nation.
In this fascinating new report that combines original and secondary survey research, Steven Denney, Christopher Green and Peter Ward present new data using direct questions and experimental survey methods to better interrogate public attitudes to the apparent growing diversity in South Korea, contrasting the attitudes of native South Koreans with defector-migrants from North Korea and looking at this apparent contradiction in more detail.

Some of the data corroborate popular conceptions about preferred ethnic or country origins of migrants. Extant research suggests that migrants from China or Southeast Asia are less desirable than those from Europe or North America, and the data in this report provides evidence to support those assertions.

But the report also has some surprises: South Koreans and defector-migrants are more supportive of a so-called "multicultural" future for the country than might be assumed by conventional accounts that privilege the *hanminjok* narrative. The report will also be of interest to students of governance and politics, in analyzing the discrepancies between native South Koreans' and defector-migrants' attitudes toward strongman leadership, military leadership, and drawing boundaries on national citizenry. The research project also deals with some of the limitations of survey design with innovative questions that attempt to deal with the social and political norms that favor entry and support for North Korean defector-migrants, and drawing from this reports' findings further research into the limits of these and larger pro-"multiculturalism" norms will certainly be warranted.

While it seems that Western Europe and North America are grappling with a backlash against the ideals of "multiculturalism" and debating where cultural diversity fits into contemporary democracy, South Korea is just beginning a version of that same national debate. If this report by Denney, Green and Ward is any indication, even if many South Koreans support opening their borders bit-by-by, the South Korean public has clear ideas and preferences for the future diversification of the country.

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Department of Political Science,
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2. PURPOSE, NECESSITY, & METHOD

There are two overarching objectives of the research presented in this report. First, to explore South Korean attitudes towards immigrants using observational and experimental survey techniques. Second, to investigate the preparedness of the South Korean people for a putative future national unification under conditions of a democratic and increasingly pluralistic society. More than 70 years have passed since the Korean peninsula was divided along the 38th parallel and, in the interim, there have been significant political, economic, and social changes in both Koreas, but especially the South and in particular since the turn of the century. As recently as 1998, there were barely 300,000 foreign residents in the country, whereas by 2017, there were nearly 2.2 million. More than 3% of the current population. As a country long defined by an ethno-cultural nationalism, this is a notable development and one with a number of policy implications.

Demographic realities and a new discourse on multiculturalism pose a challenge to the notion that Korean nationhood is defined by shared ancestry and culture. What are the implications for integration of North Korean defector-migrants? During the same period (1998-2017) the number of resettled North Korean migrants rose from fewer than 1,000 to more than 30,000. Compared with 2.2 million, 30,000 is a mere drop in the bucket. However, North Korean arrivals are a special case, a group that receives an unusual degree of attention and whose experiences are often assumed to offer a proxy measure for the ostensible willingness of today's South Koreans to unify with their increasingly different ethnic brethren.

Accordingly, we ask some searching questions. Are co-ethnic newcomers from North Korea warmly received or looked upon with suspicion? And how do South Koreans' attitudes towards defector-migrants compare to attitudes toward immigrants of both Korean and non-Korean descent? Furthermore, how do North Korean defector-migrants, who hail from an authoritarian regime, adapt to their new host democracy? What are their attitudes towards politics and nationality and how do these compare with native-born South Koreans?

In the context of a rising multiculturalism, and through the lens of contemporary South Korean national identity, this report uses experimental and conventional survey techniques to examine South Korean public attitudes towards resettling North Koreans versus other immigrants. It seeks to establish what South Koreans think of North Koreans who have defected from the North and resettled in South Korea, and why, then asks resettled North Korean defector-migrants a host of questions about their national identity (as resettled co-ethnic migrants) and their political opinion and behavior as (per the South Korean constitution, which grants them citizenship automatically) members of a democratic Korea. The survey also explores their attitudes towards characteristics of North Korean state and society.

2.1 ABOUT THE TWO SAMPLES

The native South Korean sample was drawn from a nationally representative panel of online participants during the month of January 2019. Quotas were set in order to ensure representativeness by region, age, and gender, with a balanced mix of education levels. The total number of participants equaled 1,008.

The North Korean defector-migrant sample was drawn from a South Korean Ministry of Unification database of defectors, managed by the state-run Hana Foundation, between the months of December and February 2018-2019. The total number of participants equaled 350.

Weighted averages were used, correcting for imbalances in the sample across gender, age, provincial origin, and educational background using population parameters provided by the Ministry. The results from these surveys (and others used) are estimates and can be read has having a 95% confidence interval of +/- 2.5%.

3. SURVEY OF SOUTH KOREANS: DIRECT QUESTIONS

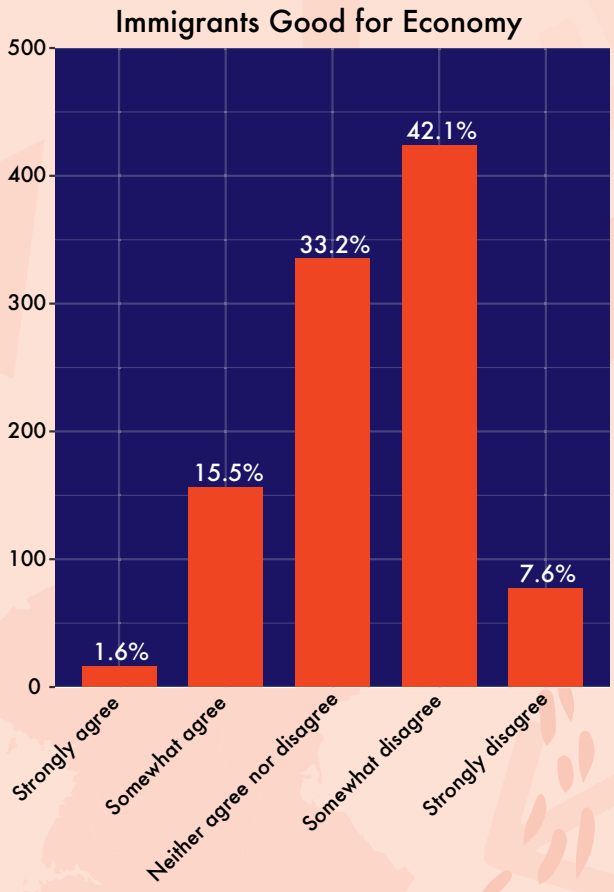
This section uses conventional direct questions to examine what South Koreans are prepared to openly state about all immigrants – co-ethnics (including North Korean defector-migrants) and non-ethnic Korean immigrants alike. The questions are not limited to the resettlement of North Korean defector-migrants; rather, the goal of the questions is to provide an overview of attitudes towards newcomers to society in general, and what South Koreans think about increasing demographic diversity.

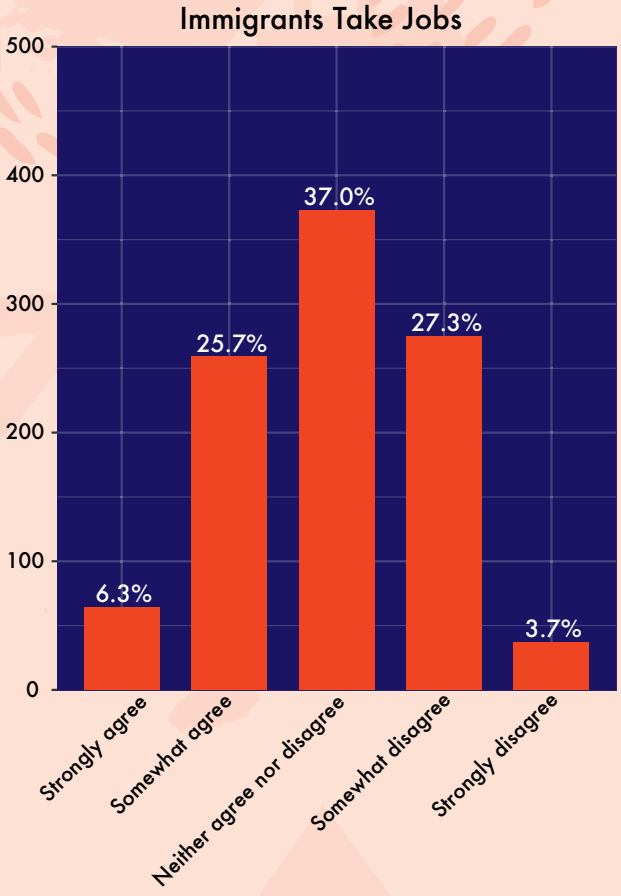
The results allow us to better understand attitudes toward North Korean settlers within the broader context of growing migration to the South from many other parts of the world. North Koreans comprise a relatively small minority of immigrants to South Korea today: approximately 32,000 among 2.2 million, or 1.45%. No matter how culturally and socially significant the defector-migrant community may be, it must be viewed through the lens of a broader move toward multiculturalism in South Korea overall.

3.1 GENERAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS

This section explores general sentiment towards immigration. Using common questions from the Korean General Social Survey and the International Social Survey Programme's national identity questionnaire, we asked respondents four questions about immigrants. Do crime rates rise as immigrants enter the country? Are immigrants good for the economy? Do immigrants improve society by bringing new ideas and cultures? And do immigrants take away jobs from native-born South Koreans? All questions provided answers ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."

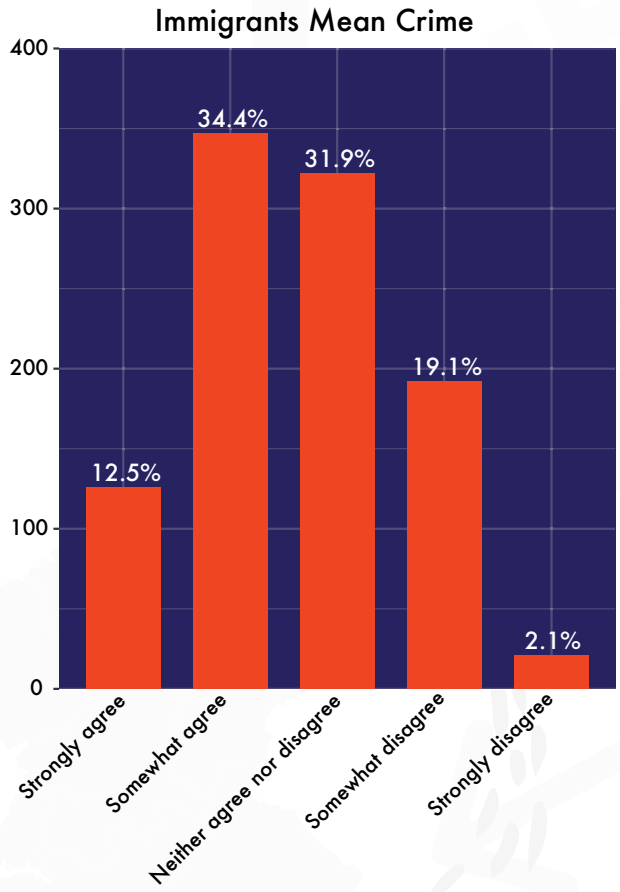
Responses indicate a complex mix of somewhat contradictory views. A plurality of respondents equate immigration with an increase in crime (46.9% either strongly or somewhat agree); only 21.2% strongly or somewhat disagree. Approximately half of all respondents strongly or somewhat disagree that immigrants are good for the economy (49.7%); only 17.1% agree.

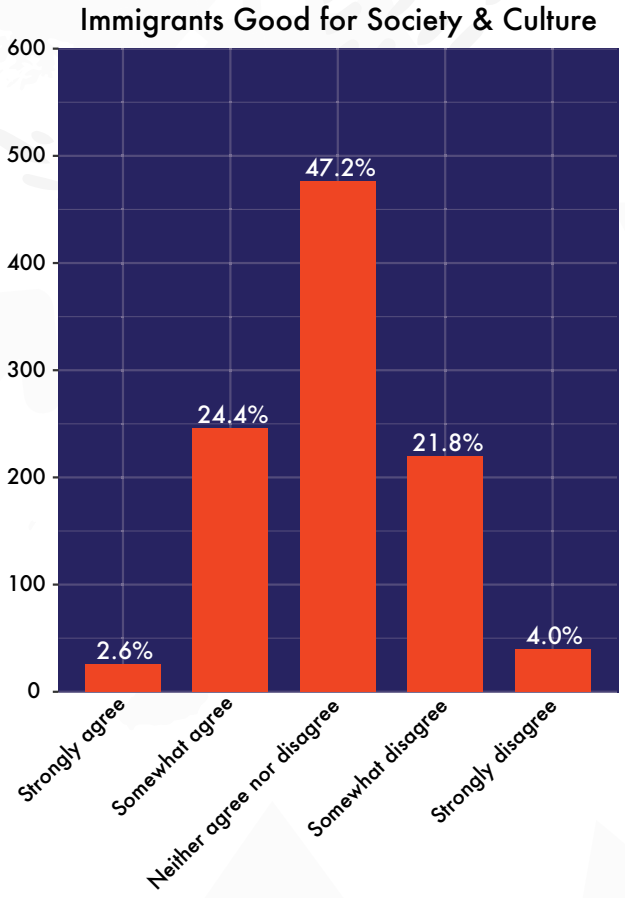


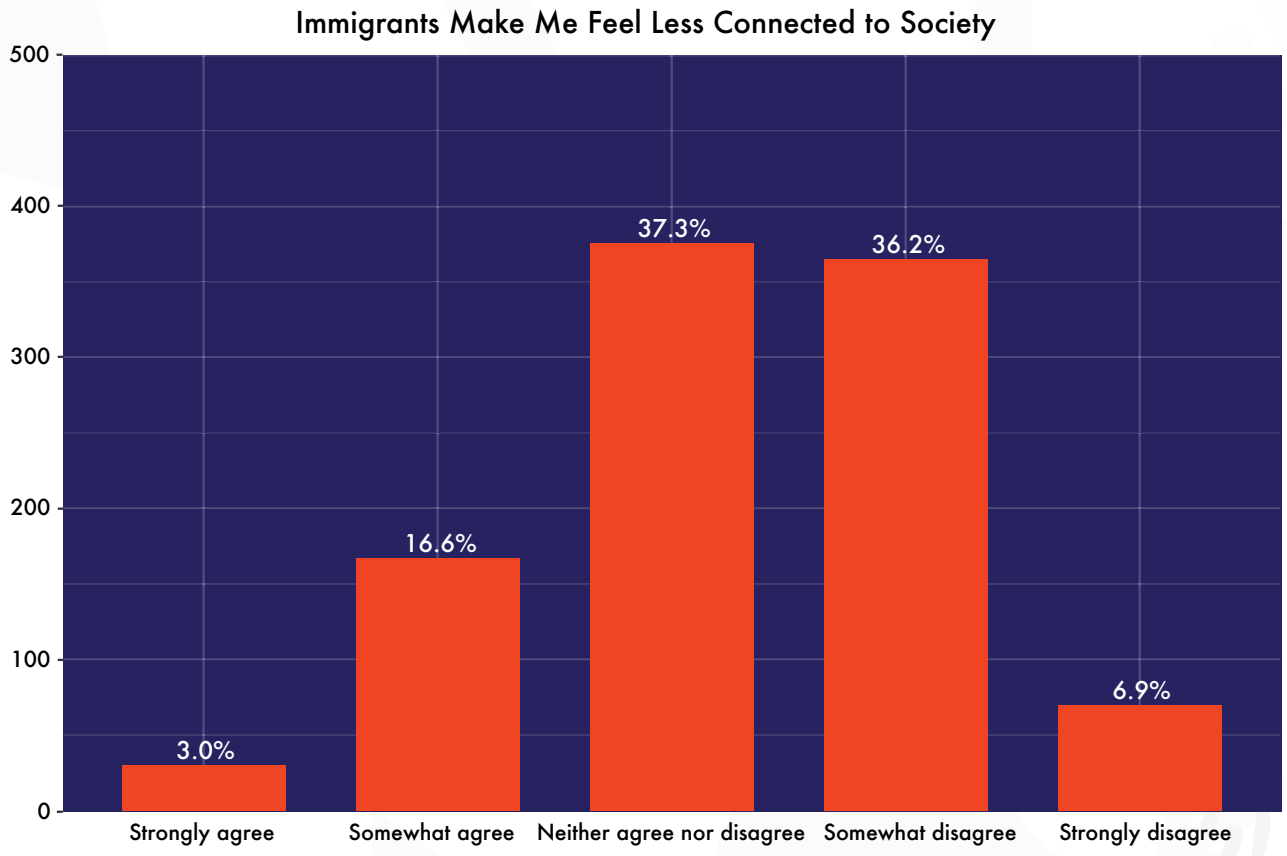


But this does not translate into the idea that immigrants are not good for society in general. Slightly more people strongly or somewhat agree (27%) than disagree (25.8%) with the proposal that immigrants are good for society and culture. Moreover, even as many say they do not think that immigrants are beneficial for the economy, respondents are divided as to whether immigrants are taking jobs from native-born South Koreans or not. 32% strongly or somewhat agree and 31% disagree (with 37% saying they neither agree nor disagree).

Then, do immigrants make South Koreans feel more or less connected to society as a whole? Do immigrants provide fresh sources of communal feeling, or weaken the social glue? The impression from responses to this amorphous question is that most people have yet to form a firm opinion. This perhaps reflects the fact that immigrants constitute just 3% of the South Korean population, far fewer than in the United States, Canada, or the countries of Western Europe, and that the history of immigration into South Korea is much shorter than in any of those locations. Either way, few people (9.9%) strongly agreed or strongly disagreed. A plurality of respondents either somewhat agreed or disagreed (52.8%), and more than a third (37.3%) sat down firmly on the fence. The jury, it would seem, is still out on the impact of immigration on community.



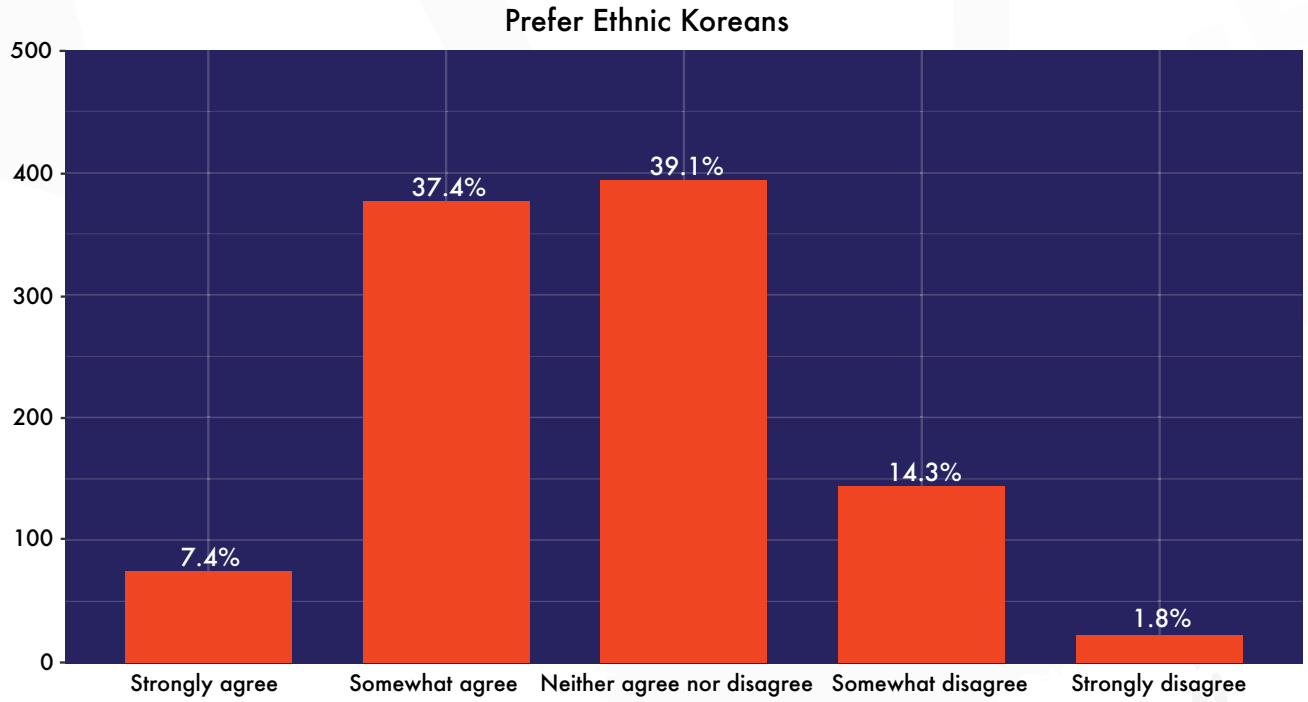




3.2 DIVERSITY & MULTICULTURALISM

We asked respondents to evaluate the following statement: "For new immigrants applying for admission to South Korea, I always prefer ethnic Koreans over non-ethnic Koreans," and found that few people, when asked directly in this way, show a strong opinion on the matter. A significant number of people said they neither agree nor disagree with the proposal (39.1%). Here, though, we begin to touch upon sensitive issues surrounding Korean ethnicity and its linkages to the historical make-up of Korean society, and so respondents may feel an imperative to give a socially acceptable response.

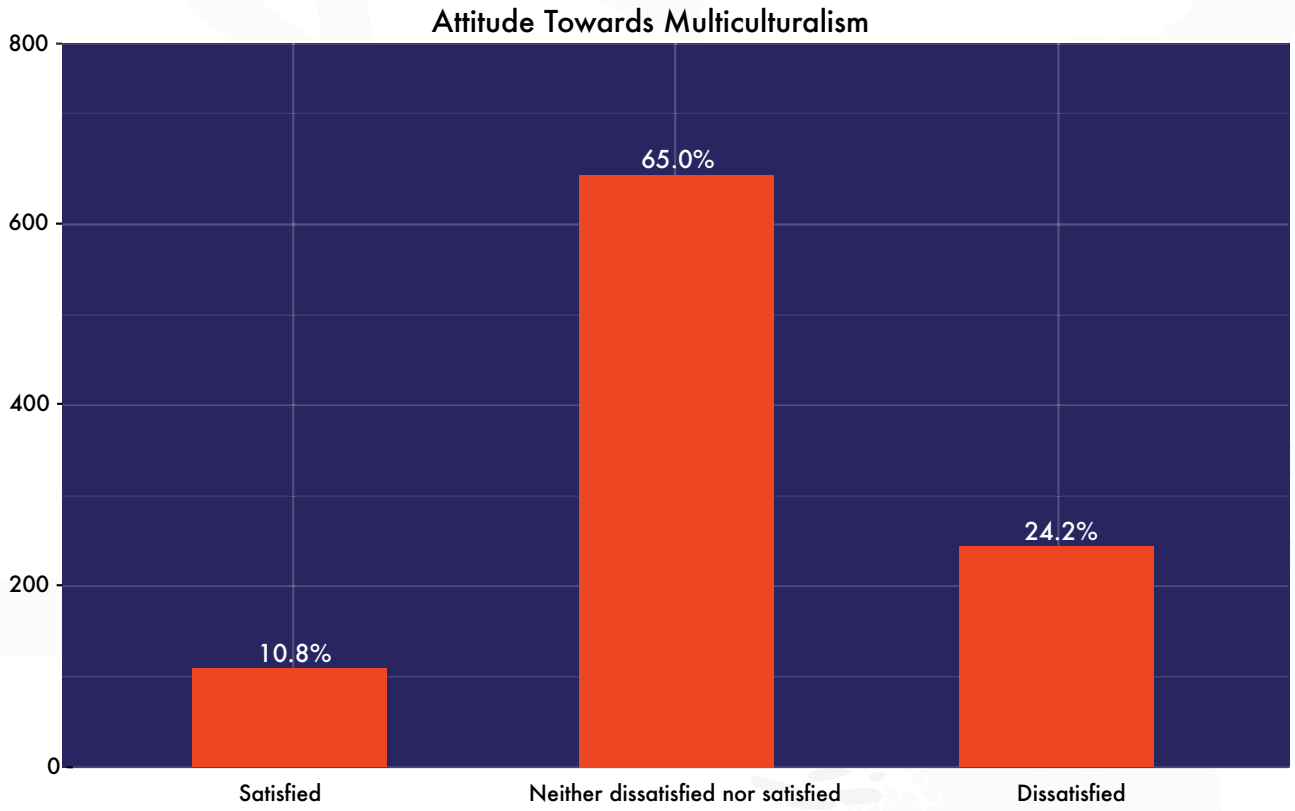
In addition to the cautious responses of the many, among those who *did* say they strongly or somewhat agree or disagree, significantly more say they would rather have ethnic Koreans over non-ethnic Koreans (44.8% to 16.1%). Taken together, those who strongly or somewhat agree constitute a plurality of respondents at 44.8%. This asserts the existence of a firm preference for ethnic Korean brethren over others.



Do South Koreans prefer to have a country that is ethnically homogeneous? Though it would appear logical for that to be the case, apparently, it is not. We asked respondents "Going forward, what kind of country should South Korea be?" They were given three choices: "An ethnically homogeneous one," "a multicultural one," or "don't know."

While a significant number of people didn't know (14.1%), more than half said they preferred a multicultural country (57.2%). Admittedly, this question does not tell us what multiculturalism means, but given the tenor of domestic media presentations on the subject, it is extremely unlikely that South Koreans believe it means an isolated national community constituted of native-born Koreans and third-country ethnic brethren. Then, this appears to show that even though people do prefer ethnic Koreans to non-ethnic Koreans when given a binary choice, thatdoesn't translate into wanting to stop non-ethnic Koreans from migrating to Korea, and relatively few people wish to return to a day when South Korean culture and society were homogeneous.

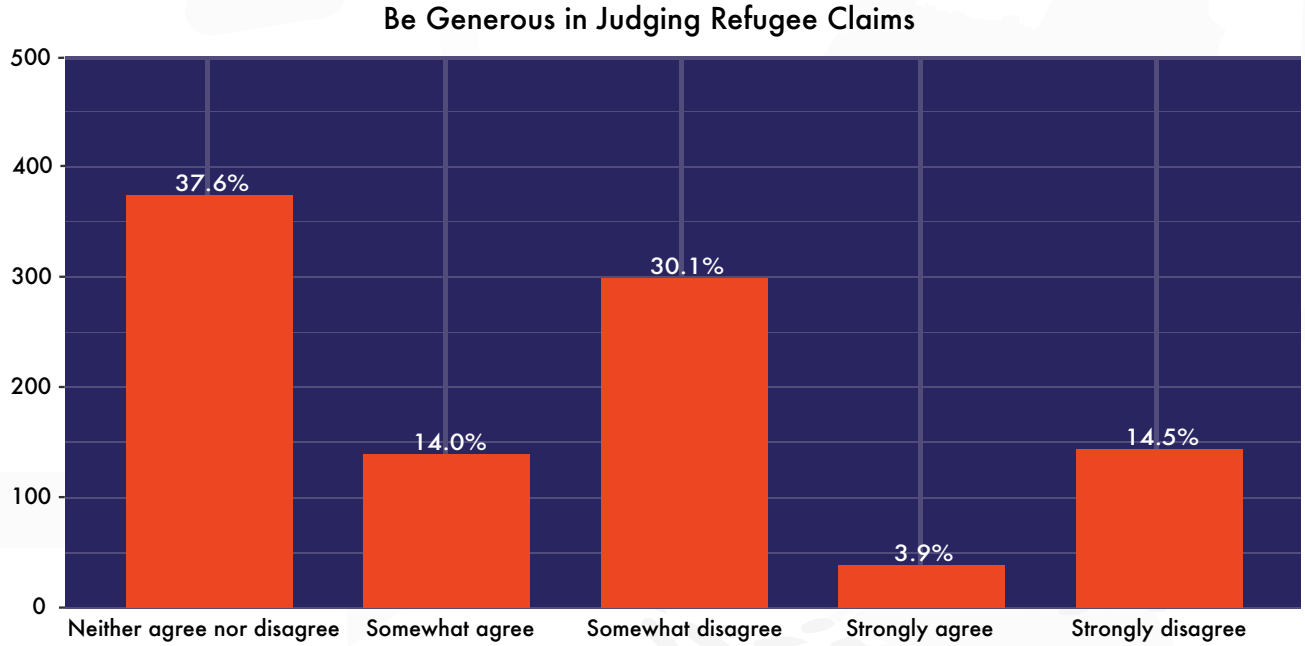
People prefer multiculturalism over cultural homogeneity, then; but that does not mean they are necessarily satisfied with government policy and thus the way multiculturalism works in South Korea. Respondents were asked just this question, given the response options "Dissatisfied, "Neither dissatisfied or satisfied," or "Satisfied." The answers show that most people don't have an opinion either way. Well over half (65%) are neither dissatisfied or satisfied. Again, the relatively young multiculturalism in Korea and similarly low numbers of immigrants overall may be playing a role, here. That said, there is some evidence of nascent discontent, with 24.2% saying they are dissatisfied



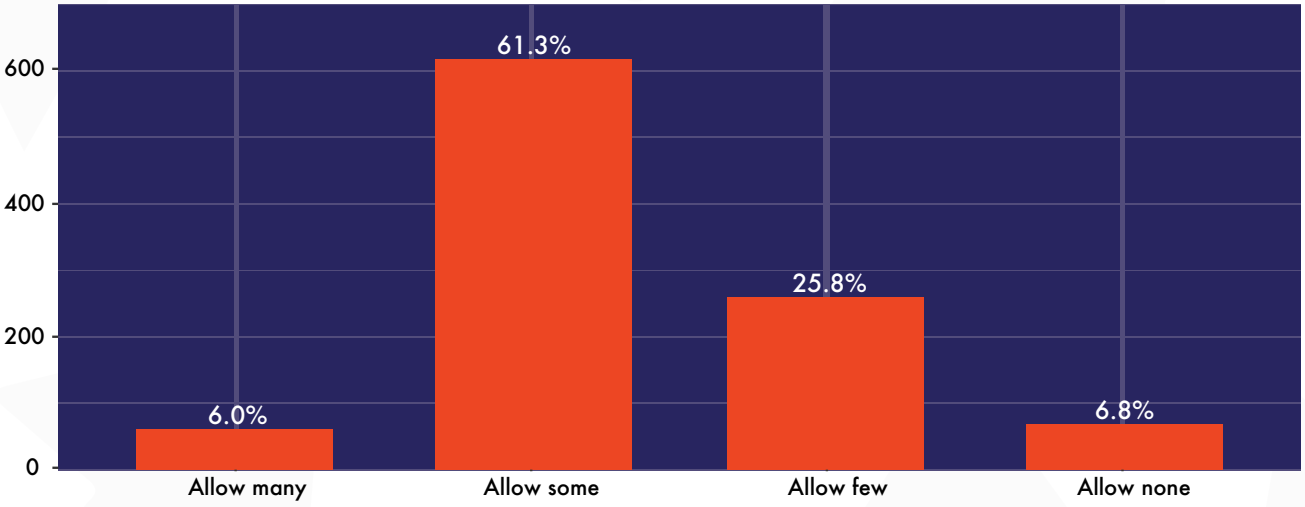
3.3 REFUGEES & THOSE LESS FORTUNATE

South Korea is the only Asian country to pass a standalone refugee bill through its national legislature (in 2013), in addition to signing the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (in 1992). But in addition to their views on immigration in general, what do South Koreans think about permitting refugees and the less well-to-do into South Korea?

First, we asked whether "the government should be generous in judging people's applications for refugee status." Respondents were given a selection of possible response options ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." At 45.6%, a plurality of people either somewhat or strongly disagree. There is no desire for Korea to become what is often branded a "soft touch" for refugees and asylum seekers. Fewer than 2/10 strongly or somewhat agreed that generosity ought to be part of the application assessment process, and 37.6% neither agree nor disagree.



Similarly, we also asked "To what extent should South Korea allow people from poorer countries to come and live" in South Korea? Choices range from "allow many" to "allow none," with choices in between. A majority of respondents (61.3%) opted for a moderate – and socially acceptable – choice with "allow some." Less than 10% want to allow either many or none and about a quarter of respondents want to allow few.



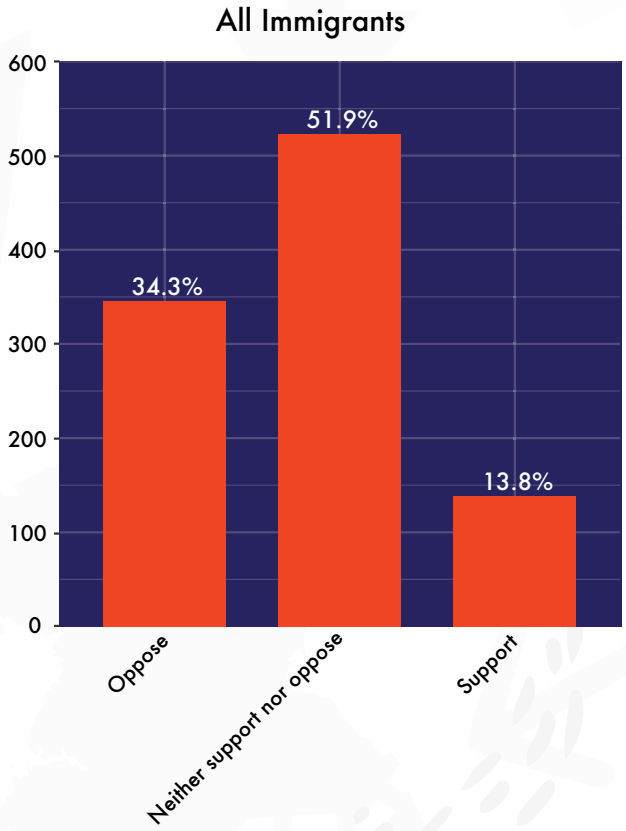
3.4 GROUP-SPECIFIC PREFERENCES

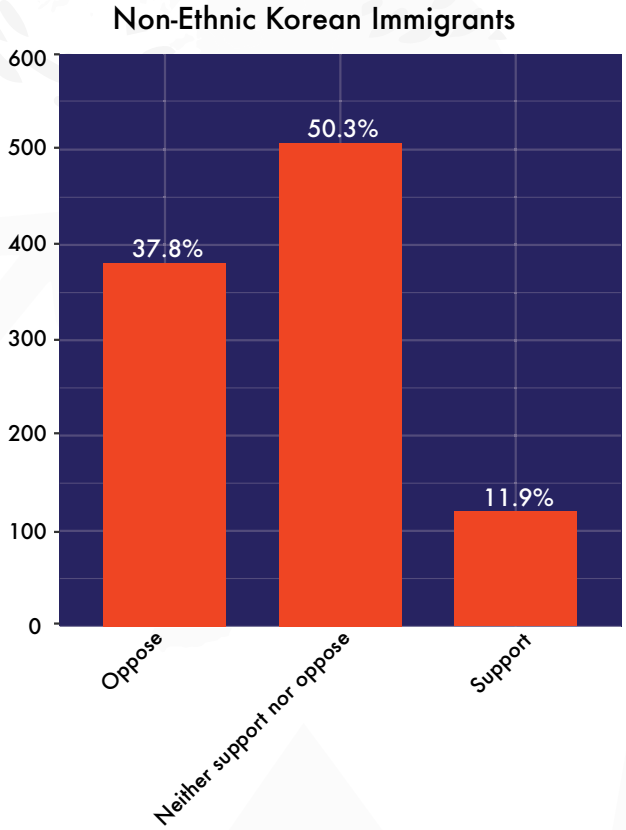
Lastly, we zoomed in a little, directly surveying respondents about specific immigrant groups and asking whether they wished to bar entry to South Korea for those groups. Three groups in particular were singled out: non-ethnic Koreans; North Korean defector-migrants, and Chinese-Koreans. For purposes of comparison, we also included the category of all immigrants. Respondents were asked whether they "support or oppose stopping all immigration of [group]." Possible responses included "oppose," "neither support nor oppose," and "support."

Significant variation shows across responses. Starting with support, we see that few people support barring entry to newcomers. However, a relatively large number (21.2%) of respondents said they are willing to support a policy that forbids Chinese-Koreans from entering, more than any other group, even including non-ethnic Korean immigrants.

North Korean newcomers are at the other end of the spectrum. Among those opposing the halting of immigration, the greatest opposition of all shows for North Korean defector-migrants. More than half, at 50.5%, want the flow of defector-migrants to continue come what may. More than a third oppose stopping entry of any of the identified immigrant groups, and a plurality are neither opposed to nor supportive of stopping immigrant flows for all groups except North Korean defector-migrants.

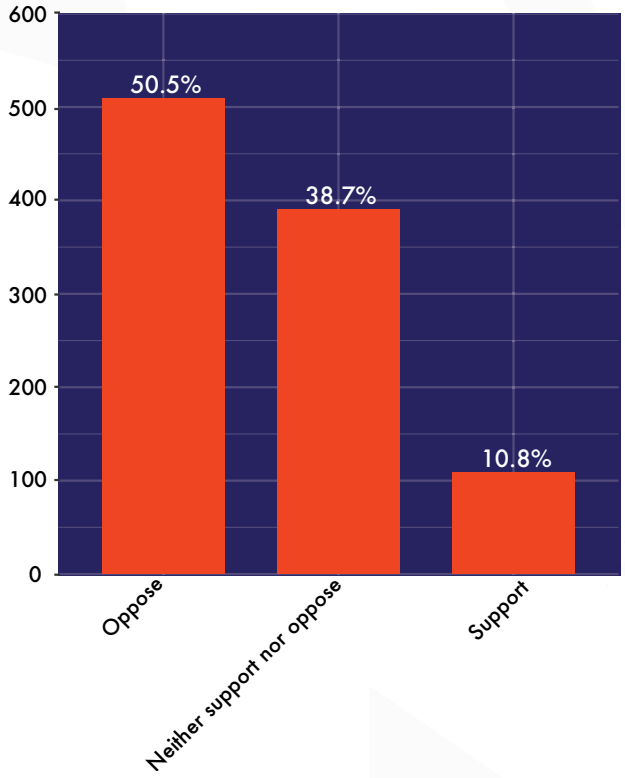
STOPPING IMMIGRATION FLOWS FOR...



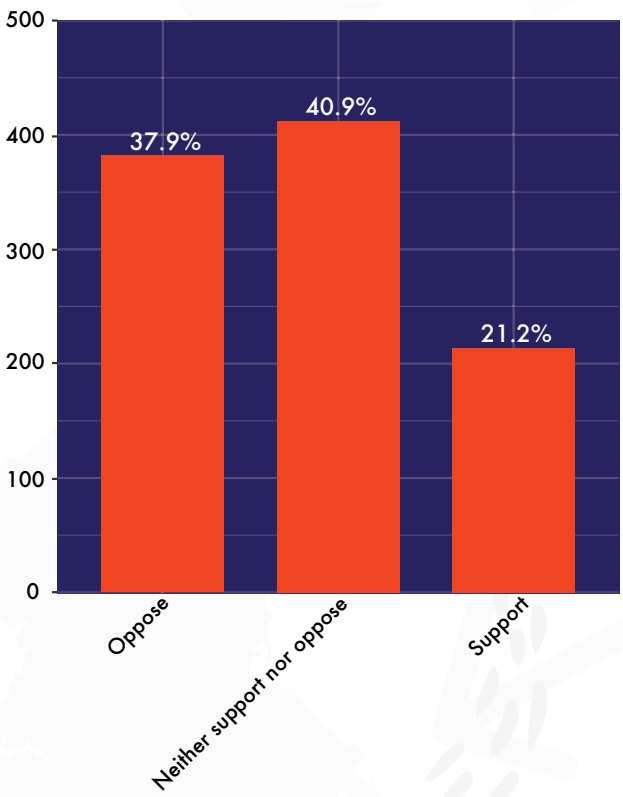


STOPPING IMMIGRATION FLOWS FOR...

North Korean Defector-Migrants



Chinese-Koreans



4. "TRUE" PREFERENCES: SURVEY EXPERIMENTS

The direct questioning method in section three is very common. It is cheap, meaning it can be done on a short turnaround, and simple to tabulate and analyze. However, exploring public opinion about immigration using observational data in this way is problematic, for the simple reason that immigration is a sensitive topic. Respondents are therefore often unwilling to reveal their true preferences, engaging instead in what is called "preference falsification." Social desirability is believed to play a large role here. A sense of what is and is not socially acceptable determines how people answer direct survey questions.

In order to mitigate the possibility of preference falsification in opinion about immigration and offer points of comparison with the direct questions, we conducted two types of randomized experiments: a list experiment and a choice-based conjoint. Each was designed in part to make respondents feel more comfortable in expressing their true preferences.

The first experiment is a **list experiment**. Here respondents are shown one of three lists (randomly assigned) that include things people might oppose or support. Of the three lists, two contain sensitive items (stopping all immigration and stopping entry of all North Korean defector-migrants). All lists contain mundane items (the control lists only contain mundane items). Respondents are then asked to report the number of items they are opposed to (not which ones), thereby giving respondents plausibility deniability in not opposing an item society would otherwise expect them to oppose (e.g., not accepting North Korean defector-migrants). The difference between the average number of items opposed in the treatment list (containing the sensitive item) and the control list (excluding the sensitive item) should provide a good estimate of the percentage of respondents actually opposed to the sensitive item.

The second experiment is a **choice-based conjoint**. The conjoint experiment asks respondents to choose among pairs of profiles containing randomly generated characteristics. For this research, respondents were asked to assess prospective immigrants and public housing applicants from varying origins. Since each profile contains varied immigrant/applicant characteristics, the respondent is free to discriminate while maintaining plausible deniability. These two conjoint experiments permit the researchers to isolate immigrant preferences and who native South Koreans prefer to assist with public funds.

4.1 LIST EXPERIMENT: WHAT DO SOUTH KOREANS REALLY THINK ABOUT IMMIGRANTS?

According to the "nationalist principle" that underpins South Korea's constitutional order, South Koreans are expected to be supportive of policies that promote the reunification of the Korean people.[1] The logic is that national division is a highly undesirable, historically unnatural condition and should be remedied. If this were so, it would follow that South Koreans would support the entry and resettlement of North Koreans who escaped, even more so given prevalent portrayals of North Korea as a repressive state in which life is invariably nasty, brutish, and short.

But to what extent are attitudes about a pan-Korean nation and support for the resettlement of North Korean defector-migrants a function of social norms, and not the true preferences of South Koreans? Asking people directly cannot and will not resolve this issue. But a list experiment can help. What happens when plausible deniability is presented as an option?

1 Albeit not under any and all conditions; it is socially acceptable to only support unification by peaceful methods, and also only when practically feasible.

Respondents were introduced to the list as follows: "Below is a list of things that some people oppose. Please count how many of them you oppose and enter the number below." The survey respondents were shown one of the three lists – two included sensitive items; stopping all immigration or halting entry for all North Korean defector-migrants):

- The Korean government increasing aid to the poor
- Movie stars making millions of dollars per year
- Large corporations polluting the environment

OR

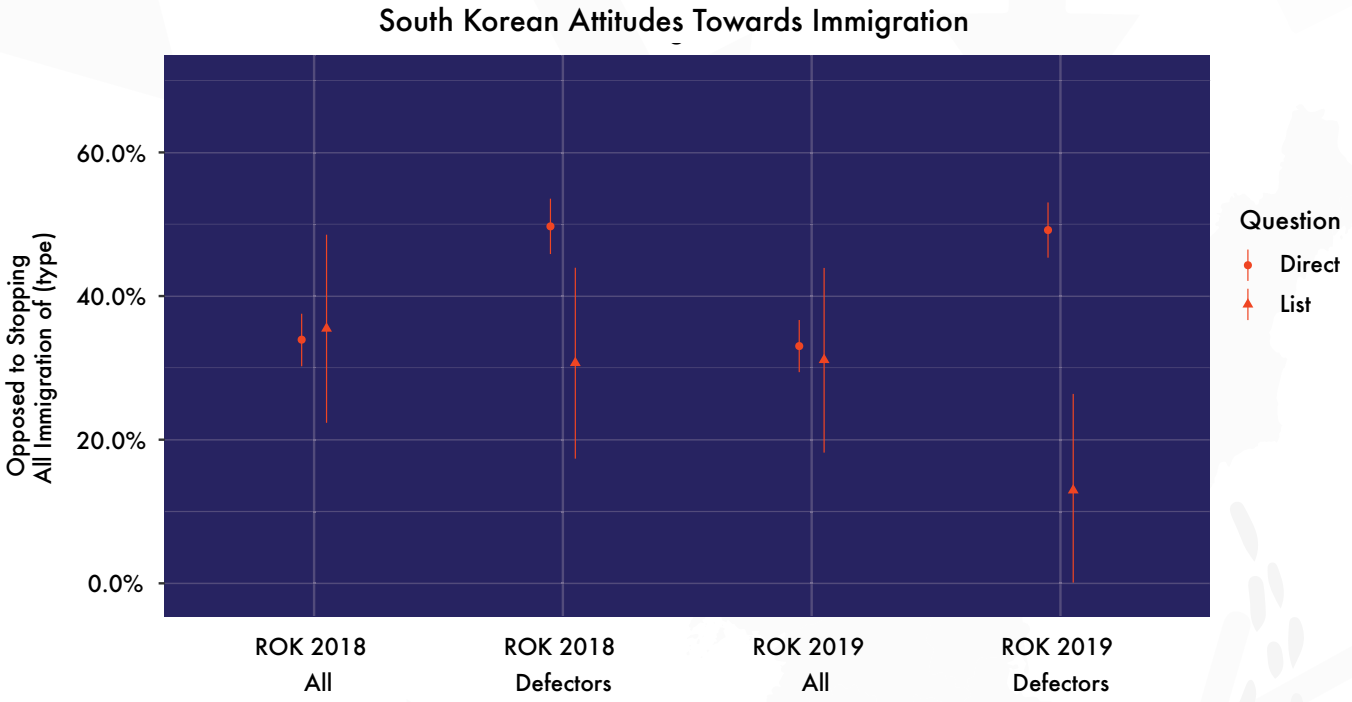
- The Korean government increasing aid to the poor
- Movie stars making millions of dollars per year
- Large corporations polluting the environment
- Stopping North Korean defectors from entering South Korea

OR

- The Korean government increasing aid to the poor
- Movie stars making millions of dollars per year
- Large corporations polluting the environment
- Stopping all immigration to South Korea

Since the question is about opposition, higher number estimates can be read as being more pro-immigrant/pro-North Korean defector migrant. The direct questions and list experiments were run twice – once at the end of 2018 and again in 2019 for the current research. The figure on the next page shows results from both.

The key finding is that, as expected, South Koreans are strongly motivated by social norms to provide a socially desirable answer regarding North Korean defector-migrants when asked about the issue directly, while their views on immigrants in general emerge untouched by social desirability concerns. Conversely, there is no difference in opinion when it comes to all immigrants – people will tell you what they think, and don't feel any need for plausible deniability. This finding shows for both the 2018 and 2019 panels, most strongly in the latter case.



Note: Bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

4.2 IMMIGRATION CONJOINT: WHO IS PERMITTED ENTRY?

Please read the descriptions of the potential immigrants carefully. Then, please indicate which of the two immigrants you would personally prefer to see admitted to South Korea.

(1 of 6)

	Immigrant 1	Immigrant 2
Reason for application	Claim asylum	Resettle
Country of origin	Yemen	Japan
Language skills	During admission interview, applicant spoke via interpreter	During admission interview, applicant spoke fluent Korean
Profession	Agriculture worker	Computer programmer
Employment plans	Will look for work after arrival	Has contract w/ Korean employer
Gender	Female	Male
Ethnicity	Non-ethnic Korean	Ethnic Korean
If you had to choose between them, which of these two immigrants should be given priority to come to South Korea to live?	Select	Select

It is one thing to notionally prefer ethnic Korean immigration over non-ethnic Korean immigration. But that is not how the world works, since choice in these matters is not unlimited,and context always counts. Multiple attributes inevitably overlap in each individual candidate. What happens when respondents are forced to choose between applicants for entry?

The first choice-based conjoint asks respondents to consider two prospective immigrants to South Korea. Following a brief introduction, where the respondent is told they are to assume the role of an immigration official, they are asked to choose which of the two prospective immigrants they prefer to admit to South Korea. The figure is an example of what respondents saw, translated into English.

The value of the choice-based conjoint is that it allows a respondent to assess a significant amount of information about each respondent – not simply where they are from, or their ethnicity, or their profession. Based on seven immigrant attributes, profiles are randomly generated for each pair (each respondent evaluates six pairs in total). The complete list of attributes and attribute levels is provided on the next page.

Reason for application

- Study
- Short-term work
- Claim asylum
- Resettle

Country of origin

- China
- Japan
- North Korea
- Vietnam
- United States
- Yemen

Language skills

- Speaks fluent Korean
- Speaks broken Korean
- Tries to speak Korean but unable
- Speaks via interpreter

Profession

- Agriculture worker
- Childcare provider
- Nurse
- Office worker
- Teacher (not professor)
- Research scientist
- Computer programmer
- Doctor

Employment plans

- Has contract w/ Korean employer
- Does not have contract, but has done job interviews
- Will look for work after arrival
- No plans to look for work

Gender

- Male
- Female

Ethnicity

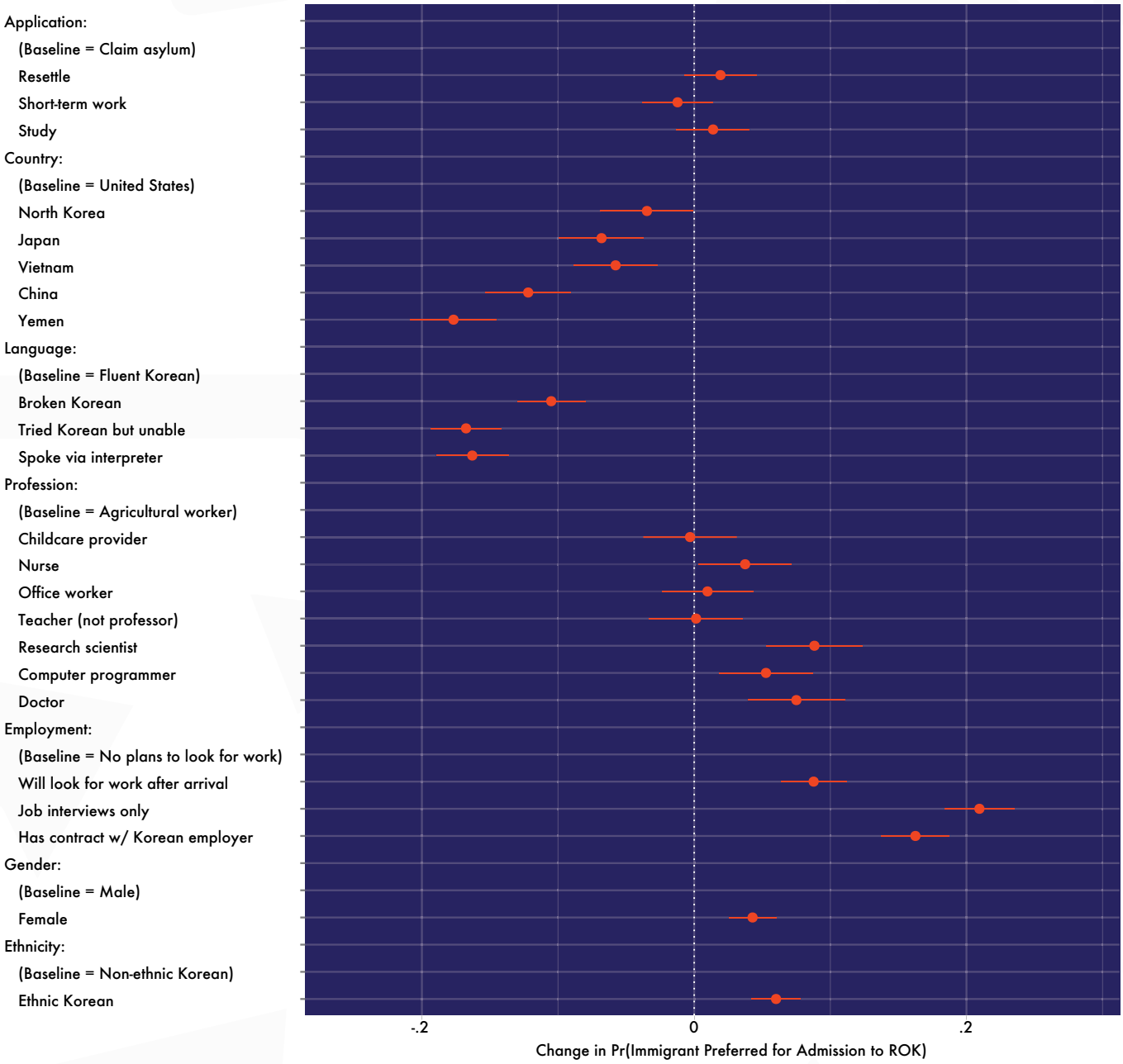
- Ethnic Korean
- Non-ethnic Korean

The results are produced below. The plot shows estimates of the effects of the randomly assigned attribute levels on the probability of our momentary immigration officials accepting the candidate for entry to South Korea. The estimates can be read as increase or decrease compared to the reference level.

What can be seen is that an individual's type of application (i.e. their reason for entry) matters little. Short-term workers take a hit compared to those with longer-term plans, but it is a minor one.

Conversely, country of origin matters greatly, with the United States most preferred, followed by North Korea, then China, Japan, Vietnam, and finally Yemen. Linguistic capacity is also very important, and profession matters too, but only for highly-skilled workers. The existence of employment plans is of great significance. Gender also matters (females preferred); and ethnicity is somewhat important as well (ethnic Koreans are preferred over non-ethnic Koreans).

Effects of Immigrant Attributes on Probability of Being Preferred for Admission



Note: Estimates based on the benchmark linear probability model with clustered standard errors
The bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

On balance, much of this is unsurprising. South Koreans have a demonstrated tendency to structure discrimination along two axes (gender and ethnicity), along with biases in favor of relatively developed countries of origin. Perception of a nation's wellbeing influences choices, except in cases where other factors intervene, such as Korea's historical antagonism with Japan.

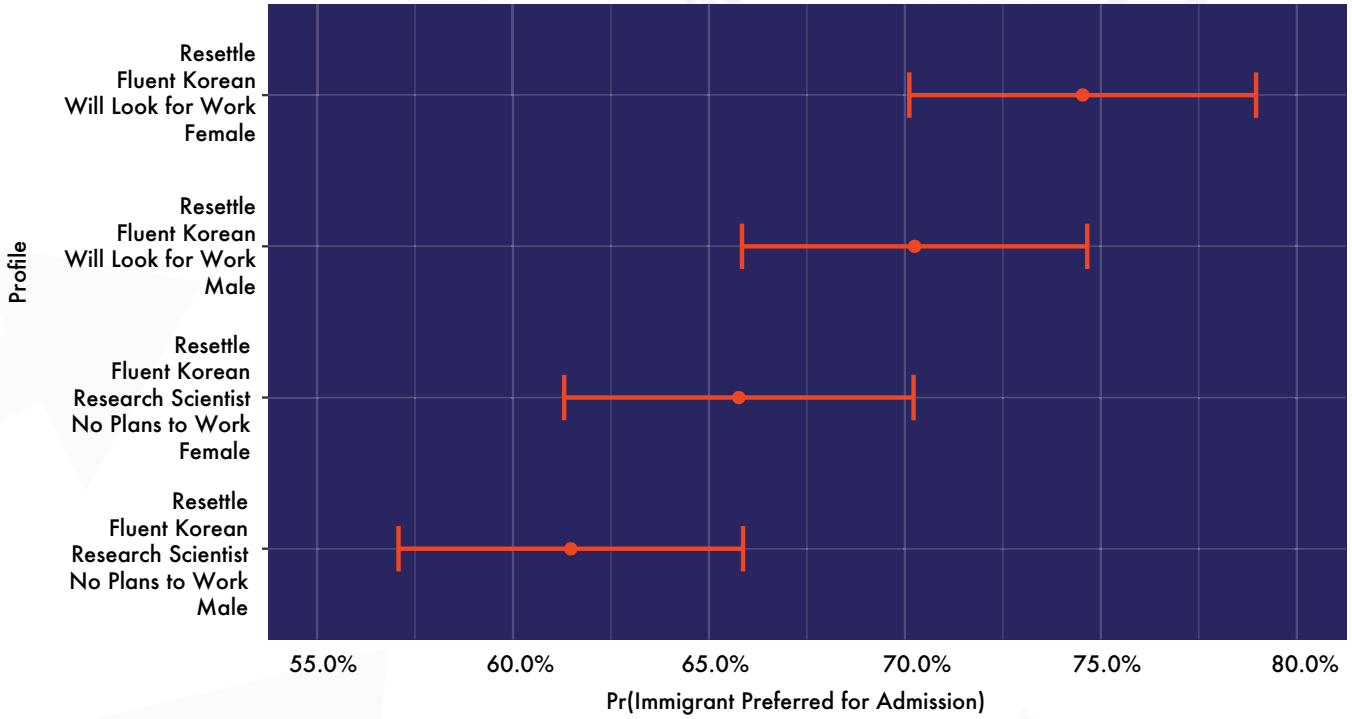
However, though the effects of gender and ethnicity do emerge in this research as well, verifying the continuing existence of historical patterns of discrimination, their effects are not nearly as significant as previous research into Korea's "ethnocentric nationalism" and patriarchal social structure would suggest.

What matters more to respondents are attributes linked to the functional capacities of the applicant. First, does the prospective immigrant speak Korean or not? Failure to communicate in Korean is punished heavily. And second, is the applicant willing to work and can therefore contribute to the economic wellbeing of the nation? An applicant with a signed employment contract in hand when they arrive gets a boost. In other types of research, the conflation of language skill with ethnic origins disguises this reality, whereas this methodology exposes it.

To better highlight the substantive implications of these findings, the predicted probabilities of being preferred for entry are shown for prospective North Korean migrants. Reason for application is held constant at "resettle", whilst language capacity is (logically enough) held constant at "fluent Korean." Occupation ("research scientist" – i.e. highly skilled) and ethnicity ("ethnic Korean") also remain the same. Only employment plans and gender are permitted to vary. The results show just how important one's ostensible willingness to work is for their estimated preference for selection; it also shows how gender intersects with country of origin.

As the results show, a highly skilled North Korean woman who is willing to work is seen as the ideal candidate. However, it is not the case that discrimination against males in favor of females trumps everything. A male who is willing to work is also preferred over a woman or man who is not. In other words, one's willingness to work is more important than whether one is male or female.

Estimated Probability of Being Preferred for Admission for Selected North Korean Profiles



Note: The estimates are based on the benchmark linear probability model.
The bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

4.3 PUBLIC HOUSING CONJOINT: WHO DESERVES ASSISTANCE?

Please read the descriptions of the applicants carefully. Then, please indicate which of the two applicants you would choose.

(1 of 4)

	Applicant 1	Applicant 2
Criminal Record	No record	No record
Current occupation	Bus driver	Part-time convenience store employee
Applicants' Origin	Gangnam, Seoul	Iksan City, North Jeolla
Gender	Female	Female
Yearly income (before taxes) in the previous year	31,200,000 won	26,400,000 won
Age	26	34
Health	Arthritis	High blood pressure
Family status	Single, 1 child	Married, 1 child
If you had to choose between them, which of these two applicants should be given priority to public housing?	Select	Select

The second choice-based conjoint asks respondents to choose between two applicants with the objective being the distribution of scarce public housing. Unlike the immigration conjoint, which has respondents saying who they want to have in South Korea, this conjoint seeks to understand how respondents feel about those already in the country. The figure above is an example of what respondents saw, translated into English.

How South Koreans wish to distribute welfare benefits such as public housing helps us better understand attitudes towards different groups in society, including North Korean defector- migrants. Respondents are provided with a brief introduction, where they are told to assume the role of public official deciding among applicants for public housing (an 85m^2 apartment unit) in their area. They are then asked to choose which of the two applicants they prefer. Based on eight applicant attributes, profiles are randomly generated for each pair (each respondent evaluates three pairs in total).[2]

The complete list of attributes and attribute levels is provided on the next page.[3]

2 We also introduced two treatment effects for public cost of maintaining the apartment unit. One cost was relatively expensive at 2M won/month. The other treatment was relatively cheap at 350,000 won/month. The control group was those exposed to no price for maintenance. The effects of these treatments were small, and we have opted not to explore them here, due to space considerations.

3 Regarding "Origins," If the respondent is actually from Gangnam, a symbolically wealth region of southern Seoul, they are shown the neighboring (also wealthy) district of Seocho. If they are from Iksan, a small provincial city, they are shown the provincial capital, Jeonju. Furthermore, the probability of a profile containing an applicant with a criminal record is not the same as one containing no criminal record. The randomization was weighted such that 70% of all profiles contain an applicant with no criminal record given that most people in society have never been convicted of a criminal offense.

Origin

- Local (based on respondent's place of residence)
- Gangnam, Seoul
- Iksan, North Jeolla
- Chongjin, DPRK
- Yanji, PRC
- Koreatown, LA

Age

- 25
- 28
- 33
- 36
- 42
- 45
- 56
- 62

Family status

- Single, no children
- Married, 1 child
- Married, 2 children
- Single, 1 child

Gender

- Male
- Female

Health

- Healthy
- High blood pressure
- Arthritis

Income (previous year)

- 9,600,000 won
- 12,000,000 won
- 18,000,000 won
- 26,400,000 won
- 31,200,000 won
- 38,400,000 won

Current Occupation

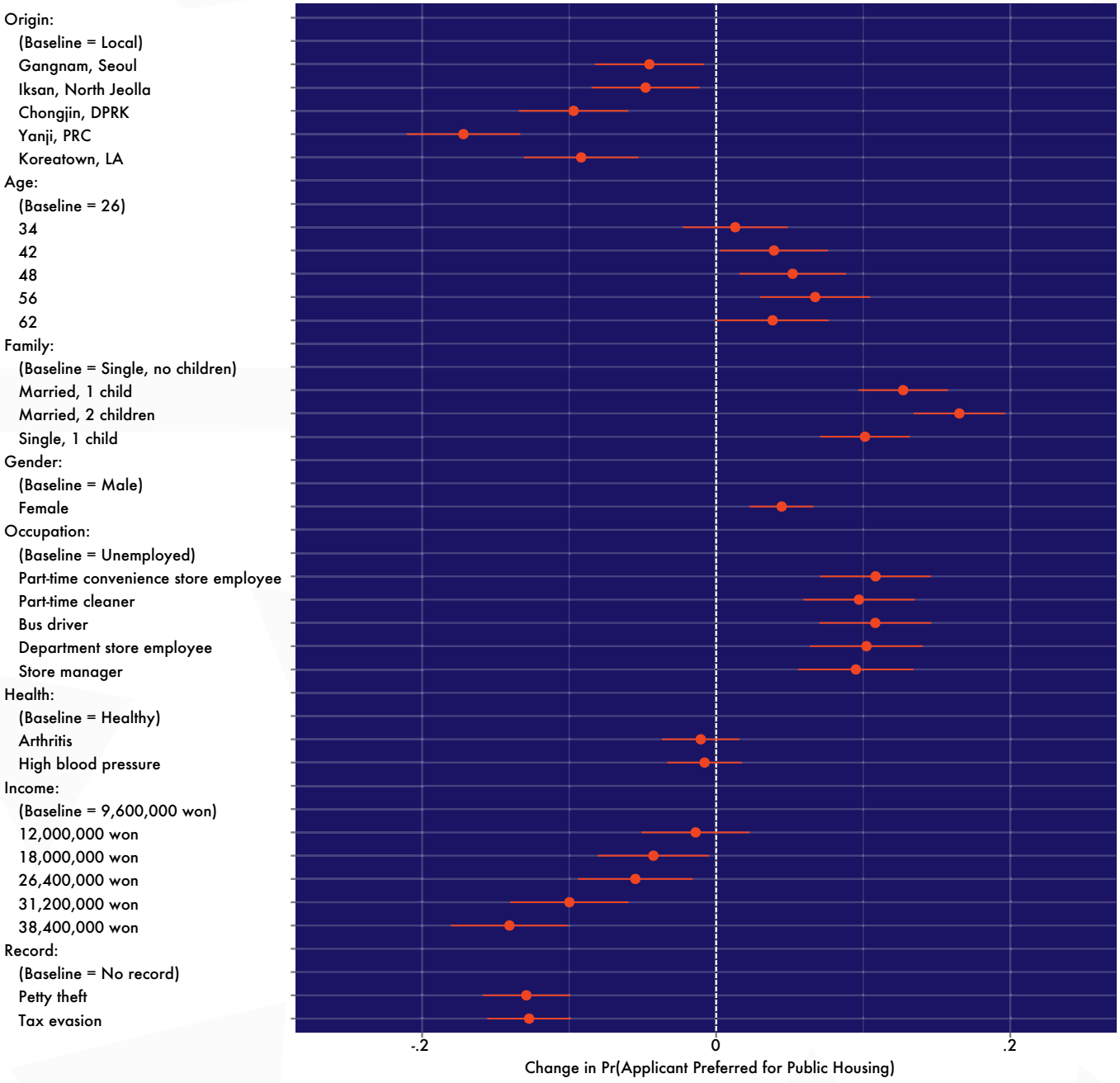
- Unemployed
- Part-time convenience store employee
- Part-time cleaner
- Department store employee
- Security guard
- Bus driver
- Store manager

Criminal Record

- No record
- Petty theft
- Tax evasion

The results shown below indicate that there is some origin-based discrimination in who is provided with public assistance. Respondents prefer applicants from their locality first and foremost. After that, native-born South Koreans are preferred, followed by those from North Korea and the United States. Those from Yanji in the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture of China are least preferred. The rest of the findings are largely in line with what we would expect. Families are preferred over single people; older applicants are preferred over younger ones (although the preference tapers off after 60); females are preferred over males; the less wealthy are favored over those making more; there is no health-based discrimination; and criminal records are highly undesirable. Notably, there is no occupation-based discrimination; so long as one is employed in some capacity, all is well. Employment, including part-time work, is preferred over being unemployed.

Effects of Applicant Attributes on Probability of Being Preferred for Public Housing



Note: Estimates based on the benchmark linear probability model with clustered standard errors. The bars represented 95% confidence intervals.

5. NORTH KOREAN DEFECTOR-MIGRANT SURVEY

A trickle of North Korean defector-migrants has been arriving and resettling in South Korea since the late 1990s. There are currently more than 32,000.[4] The values and attitudes of this group are of enormous long-run salience for the nation as a whole. First, they are an indicator of the capacity of the South Korean government to integrate North Koreans arriving today; and second, they imply the government's capacity to integrate the entire North Korean population in a hypothetical but plausible unification event at a time in the future.

Unfortunately, then, the values and attitudes of this group are more often assumed than tested, and though there is certainly a larger space in today's South Korean society – media and politics – for defector-migrant voices than in the first decade of the 2000s, the fact that defector-migrant opinion is shifting on a range of issues, in some instances dramatically, goes largely unnoticed.

Accordingly, this section examines what North Korean defector-migrants resettled in South Korea think about national identity and belonging, as well as political identification and single issues such as unification. It interrogates some of the big questions of politics everywhere -- the value of a political system based on democracy vs. alternative systems based on populist "strongman" leadership, technocracy or even military rule – and a small but vital one for South Korea: whether resettled North Koreans are proud to be citizens of the ROK, and why.

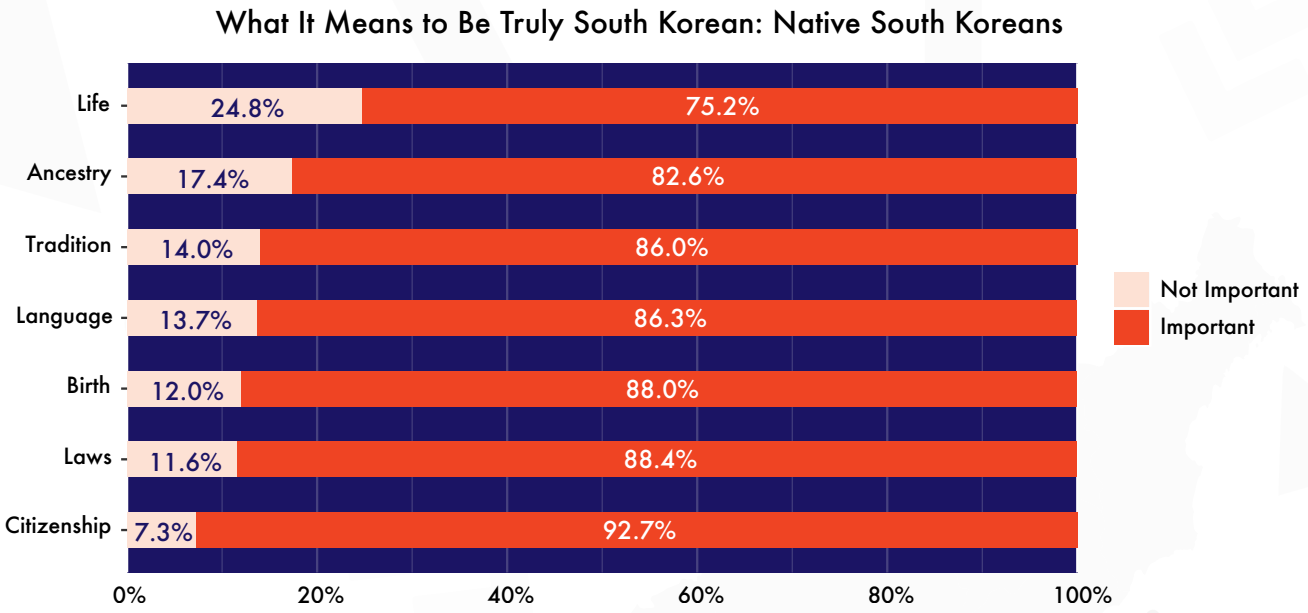
The section is comparative, in that it contrasts defector-migrant opinion against native-born South Korean opinion to establish areas of difference and shared opinion. The data for native South Koreans comes from two sources. The national identification responses were taken from the 2015 Korean Identity Survey, overseen by the East Asia Institute (EAI) and implemented with the Joongang Daily and Korea University (n=1,006). The data for political attitudes comes from the 2010 World Values Survey administered in South Korea (n=1,200). Data for national pride figures, however, comes from EAI's Korean Identity Survey (2015). For one question, on state identity (ethnically homogeneous/multicultural), the data for South Koreans comes from the survey implemented for this project. Averages reported from the North Korean defector-migrant sample are weighted. In the rare instances of missing variables, they were omitted.

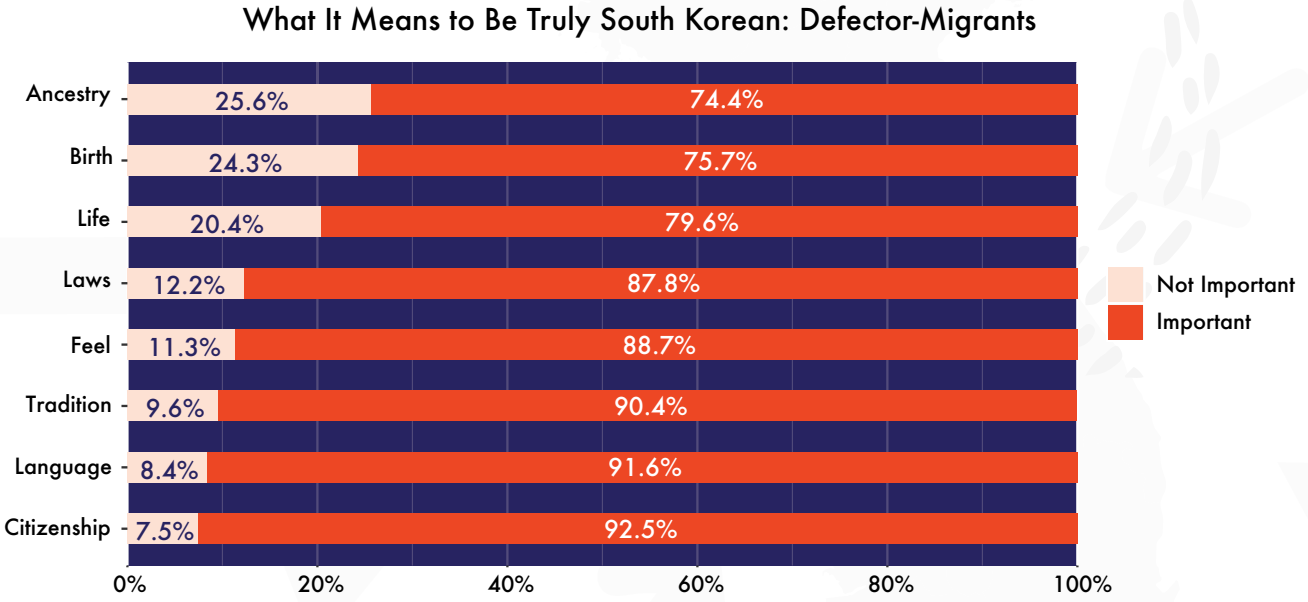
5.1 DEFECTOR-MIGRANT NATIONAL IDENTITY

First, what does it mean to be "truly South Korean?" The question asked whether certain items, were "very important," "somewhat important," "not particularly important," and "not important at all." Specifically, the question reads: "In order to be truly South Korean, how important is it to…"

1. Have Korean ancestry?
2. Be born in South Korea?
3. Live most of one's life in South Korea?
4. Have South Korean citizenship?
5. Speak the Korean language?
6. Act in accordance with South Korean laws and its political system?
7. Feel Korean?
8. Understand and follow Korean history and traditions?

4 The actual number is certainly lower than this. The official Ministry of Unification statistic does not take into account onward migration or deaths.



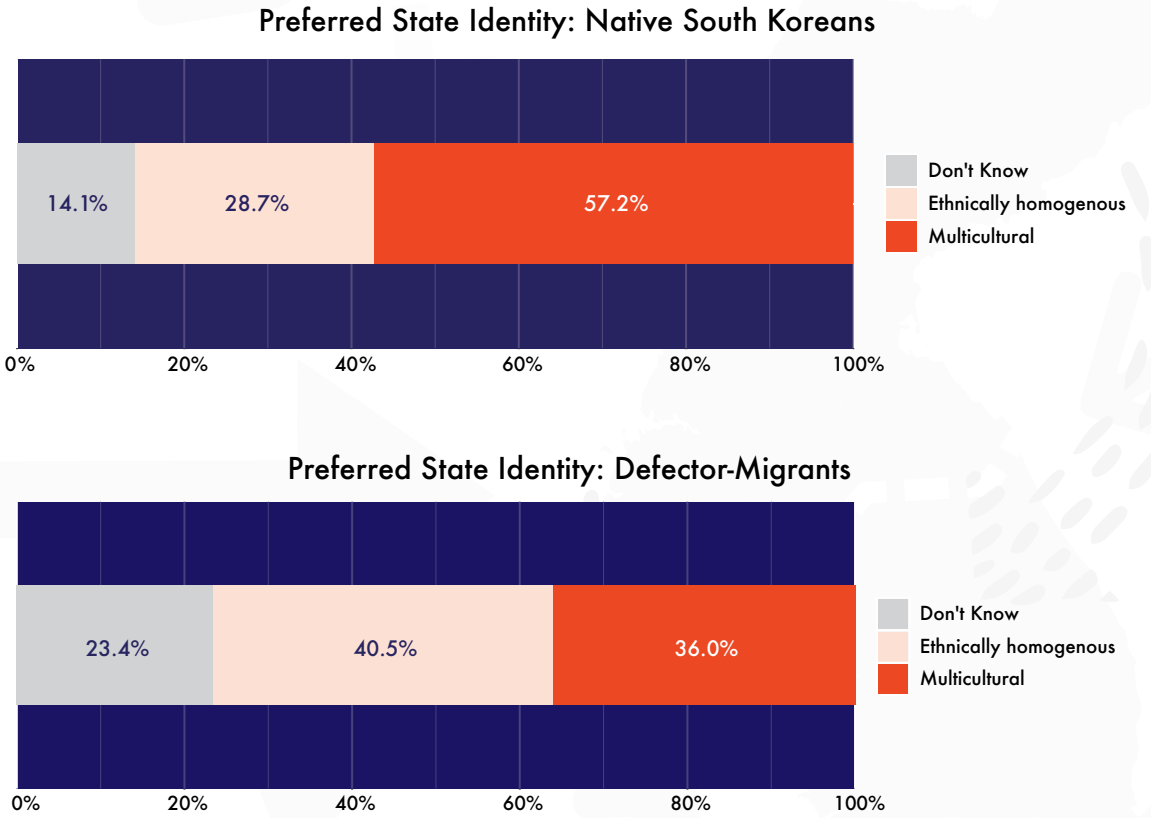


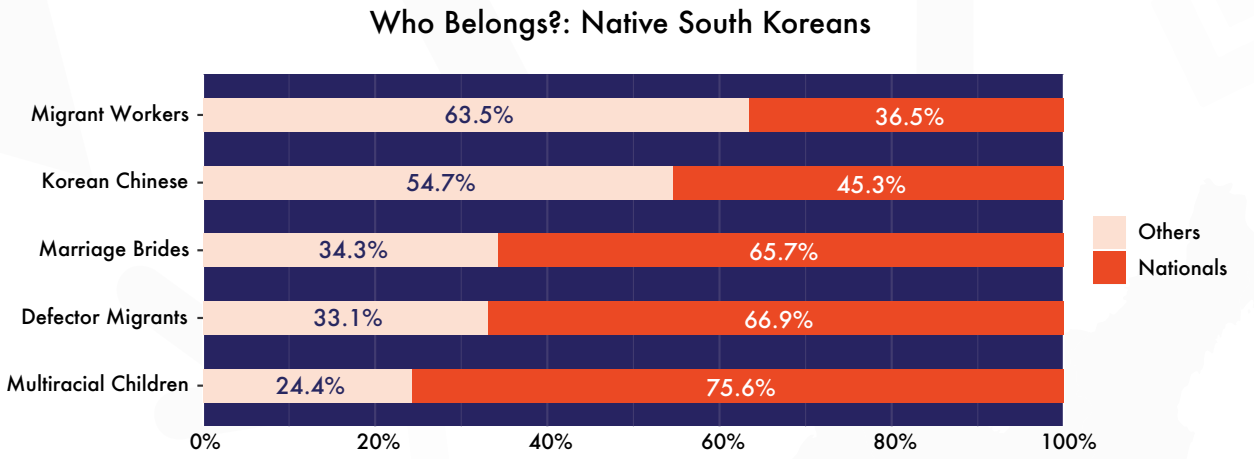
Responses were reordered as either "important" or "not important" and are shown by each item above. Native South Koreans were not asked about the "feel Korean" item.

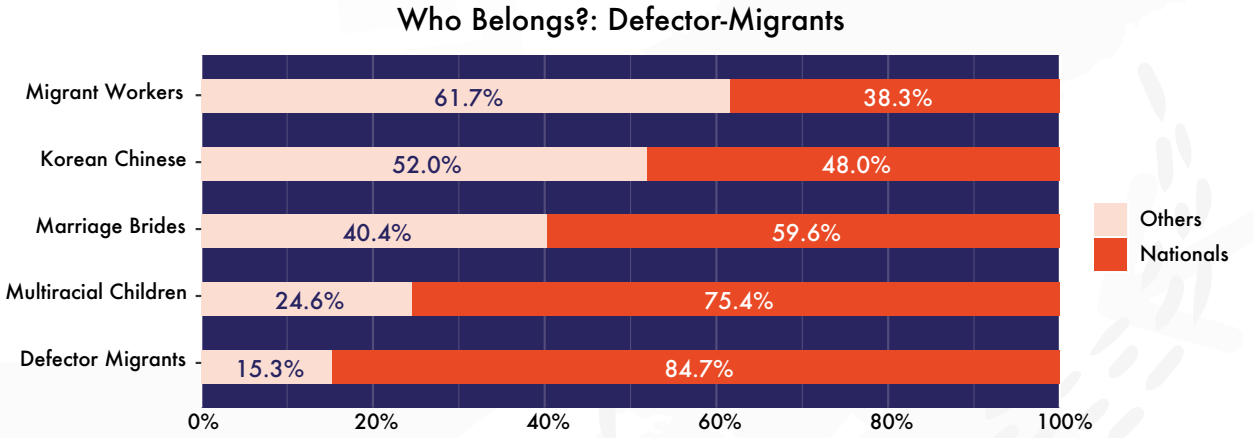
All items are seen as basically being important to the respondents' national identity – what can be referred to as national identity "credentialism" (i.e. having high barriers to national membership). However, there are some differences. Whereas there is universal agreement (92.5-92.7%) that having South Korean citizenship is important for full membership of the national community, and both groups agree on the need to adhere to local laws and social norms (87.8-88.4%), defector-migrants are not so inclined to view birth in South Korea as important (75.7% for defector-migrants, as opposed to 88% for native-born South Koreans). Of course, there is the full weight of communal self-interest behind this last response, since North Korean claims to South Korean national membership are premised on blood, not location – *jus sanguinis*, not *jus soli*.

On what is presumably another self-interested note, defector-migrants further demonstrate a much more limited enthusiasm for the notion of South Korea as a multicultural state than their native-born counterparts, but perhaps higher than we would otherwise have expected. Respondents were asked to state a firm preference for the kind of state that South Korea should become hereafter: an ethnically homogeneous one, a multicultural one, or don't know.

Just 36% of defector-migrant respondents said they support multicultural state identity, versus 40.5% who prefer South Korea to evolve in the direction of ethnic homogeneity – an evolution that would fence defector-migrants inside the national community, rather than outside with everyone else who is not ethnically Korean. This is in stark contrast to native South Koreans, unencumbered by the same concern for the fragility of their national membership, for whom 57.2% support the idea of a multicultural state identity, with a mere 28.7% supporting an ethnically homogeneous one.





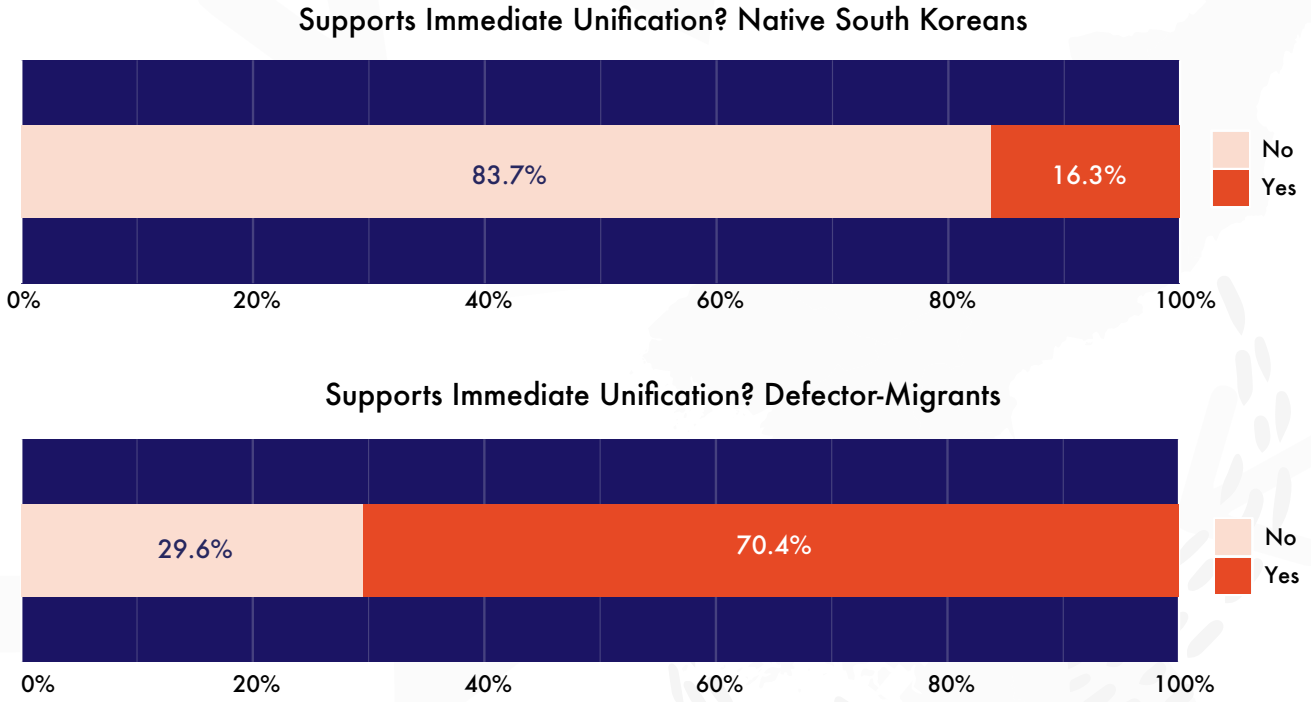


It is an open question whether defector-migrants need worry overly about the basis of their national membership, however. When native South Koreans were asked which categories of people were "nationals" or "Others," it was agreed by a robust 66.9% of respondents that defector-migrants were indeed fellow nationals, implying that when a South Korean says "Korean," that includes people from the North. Only multiracial children[5] with one Korean parent received a greater vote of confidence (75.6%). Noticeably, defector-migrants fare much better than Korean Chinese – a familiar tale in this research – whom a plurality of native South Koreans regard clearly as Others.

Do defector-migrants differ in opinion regarding "who belongs"? The data say they do not. Responses are strikingly similar for both groups, with the exception that defector-migrants say their own group are the most like South Korean nationals, which is to be expected.

5 The term "multiracial children" means having one ethnically Korean parent, and another who is not.

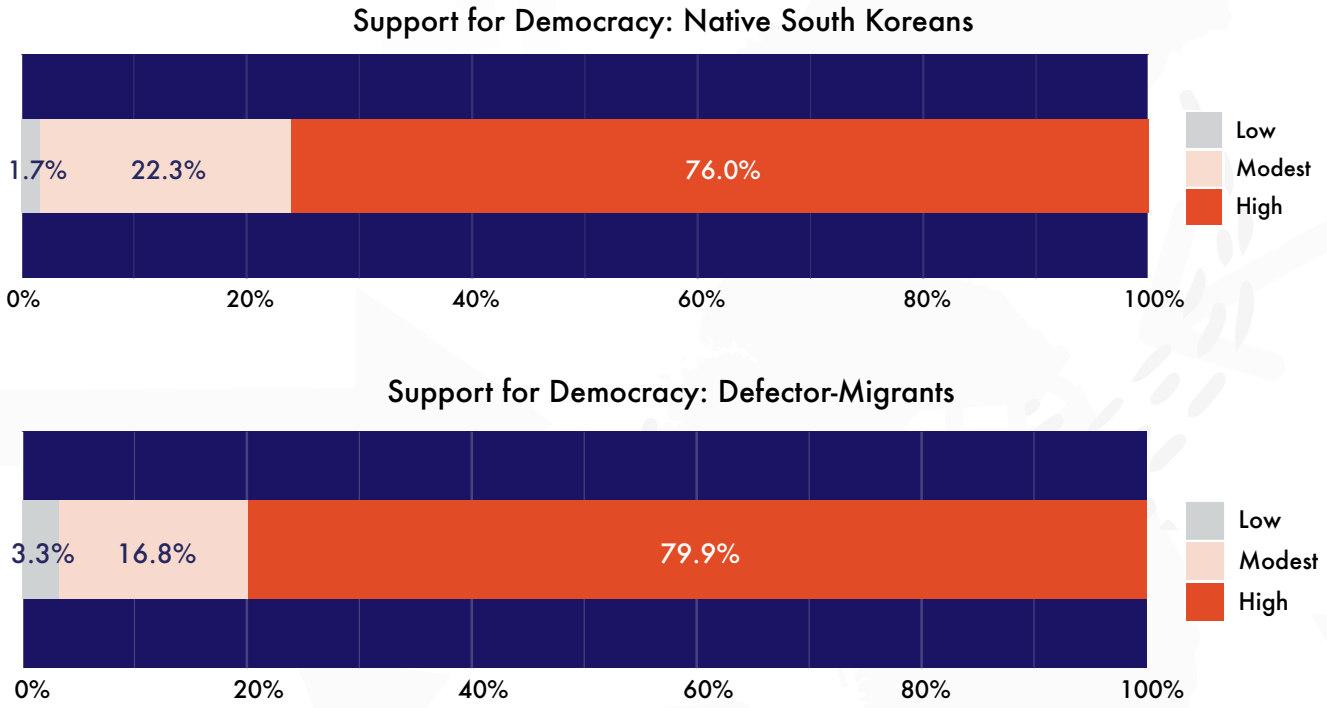
One of the starkest differences of opinion concerns the importance of rapid unification between North and South Korea. Respondents were asked whether unification should: (1) be done quickly; (2) proceed slowly and dependent upon circumstances; (3) be done without haste; or is in fact (4) unnecessary. For native-born South Koreans, only 16.3% feel the urgency of rapid unification. For defector-migrants, 70.4% want unification to come about quickly.



5.2 DEFECTOR-MIGRANT POLITICAL ATTITUDES

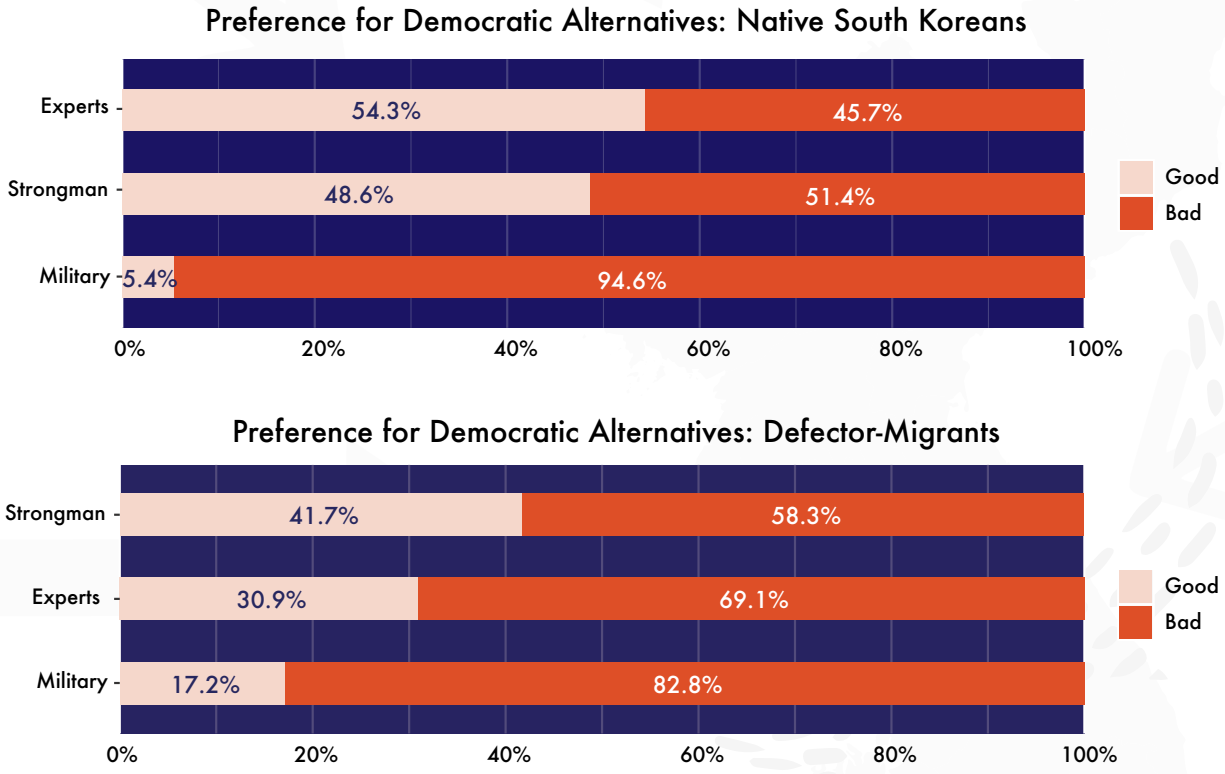
The political attitudes of defector-migrants are likely to be an influential variable in a future unification scenario, in which the approximately 25M residents of today's North Korea could acquire voting rights, changing the shape of not only South Korean elections, but the whole way South Korean politics is run.

The good news is that defector-migrants are extremely strong supporters of democracy as a system of government.



Indeed, support for the importance of living in a democracy is high for both native South Koreans and defector-migrants. Defector-migrants were more united in the strength of their support for the importance of democracy, with 85.3% scoring between 8-10 ("high"). But the number is also high, at 76%, for native South Koreans.

Relatedly, respondents were asked for their views of alternative types of political rule, but rather han placing them on a ten-point scale, respondents were offered three types of ruling systems: by strongman; by experts (commonly known as technocracy); and by the military. Four options for responses were provided ("very good"; "good", "bad", and "very bad"). These responses are recoded here as good or bad, with the results as follows.



Comparatively, defector-migrants are less supportive of rule by experts (30.9% vs. 54.3%) or a strongman (41.7% vs. 48.6%). They are, however, less wary of military rule (17.2% say this type of rule is good vs 5.4% for native South Koreans). The conclusion here is that there are some notable differences in opinion regarding democratic alternatives, but when it comes to the crunch, nothing compares overly favorably with democracy itself.

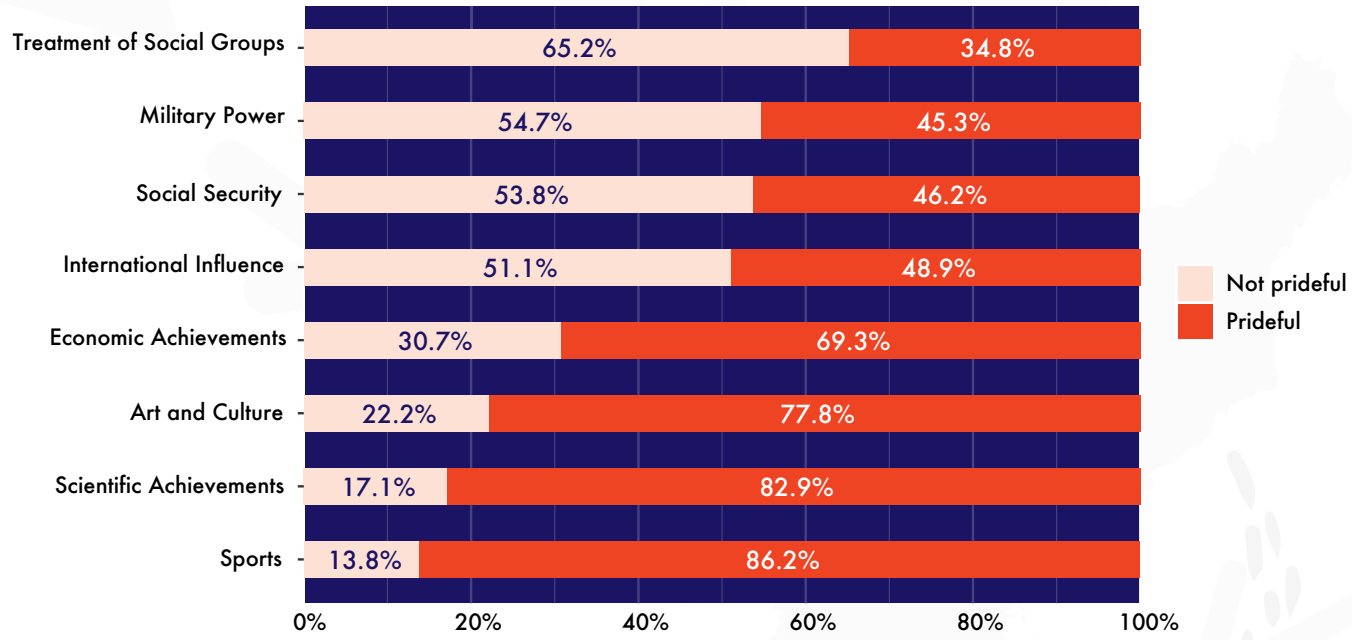
The final area of inquiry concerns subjective feelings of national pride. Respondents were invited to state whether they feel: (1) very proud; (2) somewhat proud; (3) not very proud; or (4) not proud at all in each of nine different areas of South Korean national life, ranging from the social to the economic, the political and the cultural. "How proud are you of South Korea in terms of…"

1. The operation of its capitalist system
2. Its political influence in the world
3. Its economic achievements
4. Its social welfare system
5. Its achievements in science and technology
6. Its achievements in sports
7. Its achievements in art and culture
8. Its military power
9. Its fair and equal treatment of all groups in society

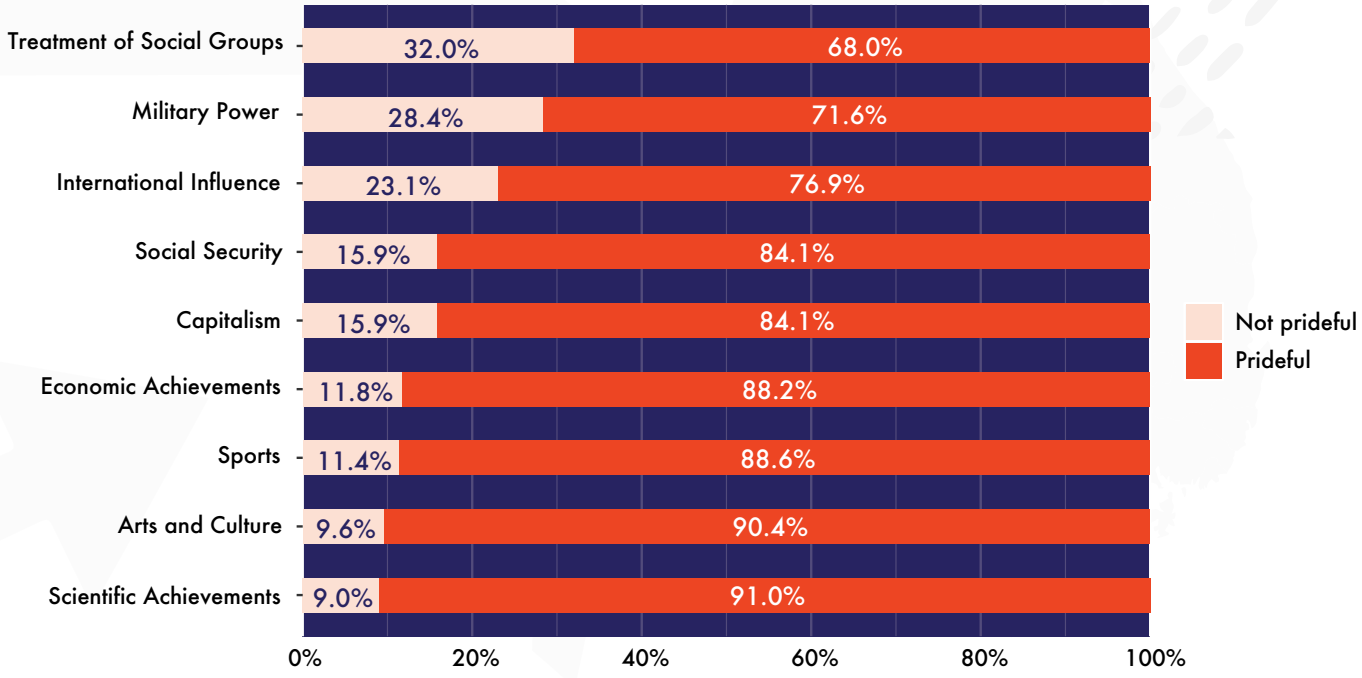
Here, we recode the responses into "prideful" and "not prideful."

The dominant finding appears to be that native South Koreans have either higher expectations of, or a greater degree of cynicism about, their state and its operation/achievements than defector- migrants. Where defector-migrants laud South Korea's fair and equal treatment of all groups in society (68% prideful), only 34.8% of native South Koreans feel the same. Where 76.9% of defector-migrants laud South Korea's international influence, just 48.9% of native South Koreans do the same. These are very significant differences. The pattern holds across several other attributes – most notably, military power and social welfare system. Only in the cultural realm do the two groups' responses begin to converge.

Pride in ROK: Native South Koreans



Pride in ROK: Defector-Migrants



CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

In this report, we have presented the results of several surveys of the general South Korean population, and of North Korean defector-migrants living in South Korea. We have analyzed the results both separately and together. The result is a holistic, intersectional view of contemporary South Korean and defector-migrant attitudes toward immigration and the state, and the place of co-ethnic and non-ethnic Korean migrants within it.

The South Korean survey was composed of two components. The first was a simple, conventional survey asking direct questions about specific social preferences. The second was experimental: a list experiment and two conjoint surveys. Respondents were asked their views about immigrants, their preferences with respect to the number and composition of immigration, and how they wished the South Korean state to treat prospective immigrants and immigrants already resident in South Korea. The styles of the experimental components served to reduce preference falsification and provide ways for respondents to escape the strictures of social desirability and other shortcomings of conventional survey designs.

The results show that social attitudes with respect to immigration into South Korea are mixed and not entirely consistent. In the first component of the survey, a large plurality of respondents indicated they believed immigrants increased crime, that immigrants were not particularly good for the economy, and that they would prefer immigrants to be of ethnic Korean origin. The effects were not large, but large enough to leave the reader with the sense that immigrants are not viewed as an unalloyed good for South Korea today.

Yet, despite this evidence of anti-immigrant sentiment, more than half of respondents also said they supported South Korea being a multicultural society, and over half support South Korea accepting "some" immigrants from poor countries. Moreover, and perhaps uncomfortably, ethnic preference does not extend to Chinese Koreans, who are the least favored group amongst all groups presented to respondents, including non-Koreans. This indicates that co-ethnic preference is just one factor among many that may influence attitudes. South Korean views of immigration are likely conditioned to some extent by ethnic factors, but these are not the only conditioning factors; indeed, they are not even the most important.

What, then, does matter most for native South Koreans regarding newcomers to society? We explore social attitudes towards diversity with the housing conjoint, finding that native South Koreans prefer native-born ethnic Koreans over ethnic Koreans born elsewhere, including North Korea. Place and origin matter, in other words, and the closer, the better. But they don't matter that much. The immigration conjoint findings suggest that an immigrant's country of origin, language capacity, and employment plans matter most, although there are also modest co-ethnic, gender, and occupation-based effects.

Using the conjoint design for researching native-born citizens' attitudes towards immigrants helps disaggregate the multiple attitudes and effects at play, allowing for an intersectional view. The direct survey questions tell us that South Koreans have tolerance for new groups even though they associate those groups with increasing crime and limited positive effects in the wider economy – a puzzling finding. However, the immigration conjoint provides clarity. Again, what matters most is proof that immigrants can and are able to work, and that they have the language ability to play a role in South Korean society. Absent this information, South Koreans are likely to be skeptical of a newcomer's overall value, no matter their gender or ethnic background.

Meanwhile, the North Korean defector-migrant component of this project indicates a remarkably high level of support for and pride in South Korean state identity and the achievements of the South Korean people in a wide range of fields. Similarly, North Korean defector-migrants evince generally stronger support for democratic institutions compared to South Koreans, and a majority support government by experts. This indicates high rates of incorporation of South Korean values. It is a question for the future to establish whether this shows the effectiveness of South Korean defector-migrant re-education and socialization programs, or simply is a function of how living in South Korea affects the worldviews of resettled North Koreans. Either way, these findings give hope for successful integration in a putative future unification scenario.

It is important in this respect to note that when South Korean respondents are provided more information with experimental surveys techniques, they

prove to be even less likely to oppose barring North Korean defector migration to the South. When asked directly, a majority (50.5%) said they opposed barring North Korean defector migration to South Korea. When asked indirectly, they were even less likely to oppose the proposition.

We can conclude, then, that South Korean support for the resettlement of defector-migrants remains strong, irrespective of the social challenges that the process has thrown up over the twenty years since the North Korean famine of the 1990s, which ushered in the era of mass migration from North to South. Simultaneously, we find that North Koreans are themselves supportive of South Korea in general, its social institutions and democratic system. Both defector-migrants and those involved in the integration process, though doubtless aware that resettlement will never be easy, can take succor from these findings.

It is to be hoped that by demonstrating how more experimental techniques can yield startlingly different and potentially important results, these techniques will be more widely used in social attitudes research with respect to sensitive Korean issues. It is also important going forward to conduct regular, thorough and creative surveys of North Korean refugee social attitudes. Assuming away the beliefs of any party to the social situation on the Korean peninsula is not, and never can be, the answer.

APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (SOUTH KOREAN SURVEY)

SOUTH KOREAN DEMOGRAPHICS		
Gender	Female	49.9%
	Male	50.1%
Regions	Seoul, Incheon/Gyeonggi	48.6%
	Busan, Ulsan/Gyeongnam	16.1%
	Daegu/Gyeongbuk	10.3%
	Daejeon, Sejong/Chungcheong	10.9%
	Gwangju/Cheolla	10.3%
	Kangwon/Jeju	3.8%
Age	18-29	17.1%
	30-39	19.1%
	40-49	21.0%
	50-59	21.0%
	60+	21.8%
Education	Elementary school or lower	0.8%
	Middle school	1.2%
	High school	21.1%
	Some college (including technical school)	8.0%
	University	58.3%
	Graduate school and above	10.5%

APPENDIX B: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (NORTH KOREAN SURVEY)

NORTH KOREAN DEFECTOR-MIGRANTS DEMOGRAPHICS (UNWEIGHTED)		
Gender	Female	73.8%
	Male	23.7%
	Unspecified	2.5%
Age	19-29	19.0%
	30-39	33.0%
	40-49	19.0%
	50-59	9.9%
	60+	14.6%
	Unspecified	2.3%
Origins	Pyongyang and Pyongando	3.4%
	Ryanggangdo	33.4%
	Hwanghaedo	2.9%
	Hamgyongdo	56.0%
	Nampo	0.3%
	Jagangdo	0.9%
	Gangwondo	2.9%
	Unspecified	0.3%
Education in DPRK	Elementary school or lower	3.2%
	Secondary School	73.4%
	Vocational College	14.9%
	University and above	7.7%
	Unspecified/No formal education	0.3%

NORTH KOREAN DEFECTOR-MIGRANTS DEMOGRAPHICS (WEIGHTED)*		
Gender	Female	70.8%
	Male	29.2%
Age	19-29	27.0%
	30-39	34.4%
	40-49	23.2%
	50-59	9.6%
	60+	5.8%
Origins	Pyongyang and Pyongando	5.3%
	Ryanggangdo	26.4%
	Hwanghaedo	2.8%
	Hamgyongdo	62.4%
	Nampo	0.2%
	Jagangdo	1.0%
	Gangwondo	1.7%
	Unspecified	0.2%
Education in DPRK	Elementary school or lower	7.8%
	Secondary School	74.9%
	Vocational College	9.3%
	University and above	5.8%
	Unspecified/No formal education	2.2%

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