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Employment Positions of Wage Workers in the Fourth Quarter of 2025

Contact Division	Register-based Statistics Division, Deputy Director General for National Data Planning and Cooperation	Contact Person	Choi, Jae hyuk (042-481-3675)
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Employment Positions of Wage Workers in the Fourth Quarter of 2025

◆ In the fourth quarter of 2025, the number of employment positions of wage workers rose by 221 thousand compared to the fourth quarter of 2024.

◆ As for employment positions by industry, 'Human health and social work activities'* and 'Accommodation and food service activities'** recorded a year-on-year increase.

* 'Social work activities' and 'Human health activities' marked a year-on-year increase.

** 'Accommodation' and 'Food and beverage service activities' marked a year-on-year increase.

Overview

- In the fourth quarter of 2025, the number of employment positions of wage workers was 21.123 million, which increased by 221 thousand compared to the fourth quarter of 2024.
- The number of sustainable employment positions, which the same workers occupied in the same quarter of the previous year, was 15.494 million. This figure accounted for 73.4% of the total employment positions. The number of replaced employment positions, which resulted from retirement or job change, was 3.272 million. This figure accounted for 15.5% of the total employment positions.
- The number of new employment positions, which resulted from enterprise foundation or business expansion, marked 2.356 million. This figure occupied 11.2% of the total employment positions. The number of extinct employment positions, which resulted from enterprise closure or business reduction, marked 2.135 million.

< Total employment positions of wage workers >

(Unit: ten thousand, %, year-on-year)

	4Q 2024	Change	3Q 2025	Change	4Q 2025	Change	Percent change
○ Total employment positions	2,090.2	15.3	2,092.7	13.9	2,112.3	22.1	1.1

< Employment positions of wage workers by type >



Note: The figures in parentheses represent the share among the total employment positions.

< Size and change in employment positions of wage workers >

(Unit: ten thousand)

	Employment positions of wage workers					Change (Year-on-year)
	Total	Sustainable employment positions	Replaced employment positions	New employment positions	Extinct employment positions	
4Q 2024	2,090.2	1,509.6	336.2	244.4	229.2	15.3
1Q 2025	2,053.6	1,507.0	325.4	221.2	219.7	1.5
2Q 2025	2,095.0	1,530.8	332.1	232.0	220.9	11.1
3Q 2025	2,092.7	1,534.9	327.2	230.6	216.7	13.9
4Q 2025	2,112.3	1,549.4	327.2	235.6	213.5	22.1

Employment positions by industry

- As for employment positions by industry section, 'Human health and social work activities', 'Accommodation and food service activities' and 'Professional, scientific and technical activities' rose by 126 thousand, 40 thousand and 33 thousand, respectively, compared to the fourth quarter of 2024.
- As for employment positions by industry division of 'Human health and social work activities', 'Social work activities' and 'Human health activities' grew by 81 thousand and 45 thousand, respectively.
- As for employment positions by industry division of 'Accommodation and food service activities', 'Food and beverage service activities' and 'Accommodation' rose by 37 thousand and 2 thousand, respectively.

- As for employment positions by industry division of 'Professional, scientific and technical activities', 'Professional services' and 'Architectural, engineering and other scientific technical services' rose by 21 thousand and 6 thousand, respectively.

< Employment positions of wage workers by industry section¹⁾ >

(Unit: ten thousand, %, year-on-year)

	4Q 2024		3Q 2025		4Q 2025			
		Change		Change		Compo- sition	Change	Percent change
○ Total employment positions	2,090.2	15.3	2,092.7	13.9	2,112.3	100.0	22.1	1.1
A. Agriculture, forestry and fishing	8.9	0.4	8.7	0.2	9.1	0.4	0.2	1.9
B. Mining and quarrying	1.1	-0.1	1.0	-0.1	1.0	0.0	-0.1	-5.2
C. Manufacturing	432.1	0.9	429.4	-1.5	430.7	20.4	-1.4	-0.3
D. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	8.0	0.0	8.1	0.0	8.1	0.4	0.1	1.2
E. Water supply; sewage, waste management, materials recovery	11.2	0.1	11.2	0.1	11.3	0.5	0.1	1.1
F. Construction	189.2	-10.9	175.4	-12.8	180.5	8.5	-8.8	-4.6
G. Wholesale and retail trade	217.3	0.0	217.4	0.7	218.6	10.3	1.3	0.6
H. Transportation and storage	76.6	2.6	79.5	2.9	79.2	3.7	2.6	3.4
I. Accommodation and food service activities	95.6	2.1	97.4	2.0	99.5	4.7	4.0	4.1
J. Information and communication	86.9	-0.6	86.6	-0.8	86.7	4.1	-0.2	-0.2
K. Financial and insurance activities	57.5	0.4	58.0	0.5	57.9	2.7	0.4	0.7
L. Real estate activities	44.4	-0.9	44.3	-0.2	44.3	2.1	-0.1	-0.3
M. Professional, scientific and technical activities	109.3	0.8	111.6	3.1	112.6	5.3	3.3	3.0
N. Business facilities management and business support services; rental and leasing activities	145.0	2.6	146.5	2.0	147.3	7.0	2.3	1.6
O. Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	137.7	0.1	137.1	0.6	138.6	6.6	0.9	0.7
P. Education	133.9	0.9	133.5	1.3	135.6	6.4	1.7	1.3
Q. Human health and social work activities	264.7	14.0	273.5	12.9	277.4	13.1	12.6	4.8
R. Arts, sports and recreation related services	16.1	-0.1	16.4	0.1	16.3	0.8	0.3	1.6
S. Membership organizations, repair and other personal services	53.3	2.9	55.9	2.9	56.3	2.7	3.0	5.6
Others ²⁾	1.3	0.0	1.3	0.0	1.3	0.1	0.0	0.2

Note 1) Refer to the Korean Standard Industrial Classification

2) Including 'T. Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods-and services-producing activities of households for own use' and 'U. Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies'

- ☐ As for the employment positions by industry group of 'Manufacturing', which occupied the highest share of the total employment positions, 'Manufacture of other fabricated metal products; metalworking service activities', 'Manufacture of electronic components' and 'Dyeing and finishing of textiles and wearing apparel' fell by 3 thousand, 3 thousand and 2 thousand, respectively.

< Size and change in employment positions of wage workers by industry >

(Unit: ten thousand)

	Employment positions of wage workers					Change (Year-on-year)
	Total	Sustainable employment positions	Replaced employment positions	New employment positions	Extinct employment positions	
Human health and social work activities	277.4	191.8	54.6	30.9	18.3	12.6
Accommodation and food service activities	99.5	53.0	22.6	24.0	20.0	4.0
Professional, scientific and technical activities	112.6	84.9	15.1	12.7	9.3	3.3
Manufacturing	430.7	354.1	42.9	33.7	35.1	-1.4
Construction	180.5	92.7	45.2	42.6	51.3	-8.8

Employment positions by characteristics of workers and enterprises

- As for employment positions by sex, the employment positions of males and females grew by 19 thousand and 202 thousand, respectively, compared to the fourth quarter of 2024.
- The employment positions of males showed a year-on-year increase in 'Human health and social work activities' (26 thousand), 'Transportation and storage' (17 thousand) and 'Professional, scientific and technical activities' (16 thousand).
- The employment positions of females showed a year-on-year increase in 'Human health and social work activities' (100 thousand), 'Accommodation and food service activities' (26 thousand) and 'Membership organizations, repair and other personal services' (22 thousand).

< Employment positions by sex >

(Unit: ten thousand, %, year-on-year)

		4Q 2024			3Q 2025			4Q 2025			
			Compo- sition	Change		Compo- sition	Change		Compo- sition	Change	Percent change
○ Total employment positions		2,090.2	100.0	15.3	2,092.7	100.0	13.9	2,112.3	100.0	22.1	1.1
By sex	Males	1,168.4	55.9	-3.5	1,160.1	55.4	-4.0	1,170.3	55.4	1.9	0.2
	Females	921.8	44.1	18.7	932.6	44.6	17.9	942.0	44.6	20.2	2.2

- As for employment positions by age group, 'Workers aged 29 or less' and 'Workers aged 40 ~ 49' fell by 111 thousand and 37 thousand, respectively, year-on-year. Whereas, 'Workers aged 60 or more', 'Workers aged 30 ~ 39' and 'Workers aged 50 ~ 59' grew by 246 thousand, 99 thousand and 24 thousand, respectively, year-on-year.
- The employment positions of 'Workers aged 60 or more' marked a year-on-year increase in 'Human health and social work activities' (88 thousand), 'Manufacturing' (27 thousand) and 'Business facilities management and business support services; rental and leasing activities' (26 thousand).

- The employment positions of 'Workers aged 29 or less' marked a year-on-year decrease in 'Manufacturing' (-31 thousand), 'Construction' (-17 thousand) and 'Information and communication' (-16 thousand).

< Employment positions by age group >

(Unit: ten thousand, %, year-on-year)

		4Q 2024			3Q 2025			4Q 2025			
			Compo- sition	Change		Compo- sition	Change		Compo- sition	Change	Percent change
○ Total employment positions		2,090.2	100.0	15.3	2,092.7	100.0	13.9	2,112.3	100.0	22.1	1.1
By age group	Workers aged 29 or less	297.8	14.2	-14.8	292.5	14.0	-12.7	286.7	13.6	-11.1	-3.7
	Workers aged 30 ~ 39	449.1	21.5	6.7	453.8	21.7	8.5	459.0	21.7	9.9	2.2
	Workers aged 40 ~ 49	471.7	22.6	-8.4	464.3	22.2	-5.9	468.0	22.2	-3.7	-0.8
	Workers aged 50 ~ 59	484.4	23.2	7.0	482.4	23.1	1.8	486.7	23.0	2.4	0.5
	Workers aged 60 or more	387.2	18.5	24.8	399.8	19.1	22.3	411.8	19.5	24.6	6.4

- As for employment positions by type of legal organization, 'Non-business corporations' and 'Government and unincorporated associations' grew by 117 thousand and 53 thousand, respectively, year-on-year. Whereas, 'Incorporated companies' and 'Sole proprietorship' rose by 35 thousand and 15 thousand, respectively, year-on-year.

< Employment positions by type of legal organization >

(Unit: ten thousand, %, year-on-year)

		4Q 2024			3Q 2025			4Q 2025			
			Compo- sition	Change		Compo- sition	Change		Compo- sition	Change	Percent change
○ Total employment positions		2,090.2	100.0	15.3	2,092.7	100.0	13.9	2,112.3	100.0	22.1	1.1
By type of legal organization	Incorporated company	1,172.3	56.1	-0.2	1,166.7	55.8	-2.3	1,175.8	55.7	3.5	0.3
	Non-business corporation	289.4	13.8	11.5	298.1	14.2	11.4	301.2	14.3	11.7	4.1
	Government & unincorporated association	302.5	14.5	4.5	303.8	14.5	5.2	307.9	14.6	5.3	1.8
	Sole proprietorship	326.0	15.6	-0.5	324.0	15.5	-0.3	327.5	15.5	1.5	0.5