



# 2018 Lifelong Learning in Korea

Vol. 1

「Lifelong Learning in Korea」 has been published to share vision of lifelong learning and help domestic/international experts and learners to improve their strategic insight. It is divided into a Korean version of 「Lifelong Learning in Korea」 which introduces overseas trends of lifelong learning to domestic readers while a English/Spanish version of 「Lifelong Learning in Korea」 which introduces domestic lifelong learning issues to international readers. Each of them is scheduled to be published semiannually, in June and December.

The first volume of 「Lifelong Learning in Korea」 covers 'the fourth National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan (2018~2022)' which was announced in February 2018 by the Ministry of Education. The topic of the second volume of 「Lifelong Learning in Korea」 will be on 'Lifelong Education White Paper' which was published in April 2018.

We thought there should be an explanation why we chose topics such as 'Lifelong Learning in the ASEAN countries', 'Sustainable Development Goals', and 'the fourth National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan (2018~2022)'. NILE is always concerned about a direction of national administration and global trend as a decision making body. We chose 'Lifelong Learning in the ASEAN countries' in line with the new government policy and chose 'Sustainable Development Goals' to not miss the direction of the government to combine SDGS with national affairs. In addition, a reason why we chose 'the fourth National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan (2018~2022)' is to fill 「Lifelong Learning in Korea」 with the latest materials and unique Korean characteristics.



## The Ministry of Education announced the fourth National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan

The fourth National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan(2018~2022)

After the ministerial meeting, the Ministry of Education finalized and made an announcement of 'the fourth National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan (2018~2022)' on February 23, 2017. Prior to the fourth plan, there were three plans: the first plan (2003~2007), the second plan (2008~2012), and the third plan (2013~2017).

During the first three plans, the National Institute for Lifelong Education and 17 local Lifelong Education Institutions were founded. This led to the establishment of lifelong learning promotion system, which includes designation and operation of lifelong learning cities. Moreover, lifelong education for supplementing academic qualifications has been activated through Academic Credit Bank System, Bachelor's Degree Examination for Self-Education System, and Accredited Literacy Education. These education systems have improved access to lifelong education to a considerable extent. Additionally, more people are able to exercise lifelong education by

enrolling in high quality university class lectures through Korean Massive Open Online Course (K-MOOC) and establishing a national lifelong learning portal (Neulbaeum) linked to local lifelong learning courses. As a result, the rate of participation in lifelong learning has steadily increased, reaching from 26.4% in 2008 to 35.8% in 2017. According to OECD Education at a glance (2016), the average rate of participation in lifelong learning was 40.4% in 2016. Korea still stands below the OECD average rate; however, the rate is steadily increasing.

Nonetheless, we still face challenges such as; participation rate gaps by educational background and income, characterization and improvement of lifelong learning programs, mitigation of gaps in local governments, and expansion of financial investment.

To solve these challenges, the Ministry of Education established the fourth National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan, featuring



the main tasks and future direction of President Moon Jae-in's government for the next five years. This plan was established based on Article 9 of the Lifelong Education Law.

Before examining the fourth plan in detail, it is important to look into the significance and importance of lifelong learning. After exploring it, this paper will review the background of the fourth National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan Establishment, basic direction and development strategy of the Fourth plan. Subsequently, this paper examines the fourth plan by looking into major initiatives which are divided into 4 parts - 1. Lifelong learning for every citizen, 2. Pursue Lifelong Learning while working, 3. Enjoy lifelong learning everywhere, and 4. Lifelong Learning with strong foundation.

### **I. Significance and Importance of Lifelong Learning**

Lifelong learning is significant and important for three main reasons. First, lifelong learning is the most efficient investment for growth, including expansion of job and growth potential. A talented person is a core element to determine quantity and quality of economic growth as well as a basis of sustainable innovation growth.

During the Fourth Industrial Revolution, human creativity and convergence capability were core parts of the growth driver and sources of technological innovation. Second, lifelong learning is the most effective welfare policy to eliminate polarization. Fair educational opportunities and quality education services are basic welfare policies to generate economic and social inequality mitigation and social class mobility. Lifelong learning is the most definite catalyst to connect the gold triangle circulation system called 'Growth- Employment- Welfare'. Lastly, lifelong learning ensures basic learning rights and improves life satisfaction of the people. Article 31 of the Constitution defines the State's obligation to promote lifelong education in the country. Under the statute of article 31 of the Constitution, every citizen have the right to receive equal education opportunity according to their capacity. Learning is the basic tool for self-realization and man-power development. Also, it is the most fundamental way of realizing the right to pursue happiness.

The Ministry of Education established 'the National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan' as a blueprint for lifelong education policy, presenting medium and long-term policy goals,



and basic directions. According to article 31 of the Constitution, the State shall promote lifelong education. Furthermore, article 9 of the Lifelong Learning Act (establishment of Lifelong Learning Promotion Basic plan) states that the minister of education shall establish a basic plan for promoting lifelong education every five years.

## II. Background of the fourth Plan Establishment

Korea needs to prepare a flexible and high-quality lifelong learning system in response to technological innovation such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and social changes due to an increase in life expectancy and a change in the professional world. To prepare for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, it is necessary to expand and support lifelong education programs in higher education without time and space limitations. As a result of technological innovation such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) development; the level and scope of the role of technology as a substitute for human beings, has expanded dramatically. On a larger scale, typical jobs which require simple repetition-oriented work is in the verge of extinction. Rather, creativity and converge-centered jobs will be created in the next years. Consequently, there

will be changes in job demands and employment patterns. More jobs would require the worker to utilize new technologies, monitor, and solve problems with creativity.

Due to the emergence of new technology such as Big Data, the validity period of job competence is expected to become shorter. According to the data from Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), we expect more than half of the accumulated capacity will become ineffective after 2020. Additionally, demands for dispersion of various types of lifelong learning such as online education is growing. As the pace of change grows, a flexible lifelong learning system is required for people to acquire new job skills at their desired time.

Along with the technological innovation, Korea is also experiencing changes in population structure such as an aging society and an increase in life expectancy, leading to an increase in demand for lifelong learning. As low birthrate and aging population became intensified, the adult population continue to increase - especially the proportion of elders in the adult population. As of September 2017, Korea entered an aged society where population of aged 65 or older is



over 14%. As life expectancy increases, workers experience a number of technological innovations and social changes. Even after retirement, people hope work until the age of 72. As a result, there is an increase in demand for lifelong learning related to vocational education. According to the OECD(2015), the actual retirement age for men is 72 years old while for women is 71.7 years old. In order to support qualitative advancement of manpower human resources, the affiliation between central government and municipalities is crucial.

Furthermore, social structures such as widening income polarization also lead to an increase in demand for lifelong learning. After Korea experienced two financial crisis, low growth has set in and income bipolarization has continuously deepened. In addition, declining decent job opportunities leads to deterioration of the polarization mechanism and degradation of social mobility. Therefore, preparation of virtuous circulation through lifelong learning is urgent as it will lead to capacity enhancement, decent job creation, and mitigation of bipolarization

### III. Basic direction and development strategy

The vision of the fourth plan is realization of a sustainable lifelong learning society in which the individual and society grow together. The development strategy is composed of 4P which are: People, Participation, Prosperity, and Partnership.

#### Development Strategy (4P)

- **People:** Paradigm shift towards learners-centered
- **Participation:** Expand to continuous and voluntary participation
- **Prosperity:** Support prosperity of both individual and society
- **Partnership:** Strengthen cooperation within institutions and systems

The 4P strategy will be reflected in all processes of planning, designing, promoting, and receiving feedback of lifelong education policy for the next five years.

### IV. Major initiatives.

#### 1) Lifelong learning for every citizen

- ① Guarantee lifelong learning rights for the entire nation
  - First, the fourth plan supports an employee to participate in voluntary lifelong learning by promoting paid leave vacation system,



consulting, and developing manual. It also supports a career resilience program in order to establish a customized learning plan, suitable for the individual entering upon the change of life depending on his/her career and ability of life.

- Secondly, the fourth plan advocates customized learning suitable for each learner's circumstance. It will promote training for counselors and instructors who will help elders with strong academic commitment to plan his/her second life through developing/operating life satisfaction program and finding/supporting suitable university degree courses. Furthermore, it will cultivate a lifelong educator for the elders reflecting subjects related to elderly education in the curriculum of lifelong educator training course.

- Thirdly, the fourth plan will manage a self-reliance support package program for stable settlement of married immigrants through the multicultural family support center.

## ② Provision of Lifelong Learning Ladder for the underprivileged

- First, the fourth plan focuses on expanding educational opportunities for literacy and academic achievement in the next five years to all citizens who wish to learn literacy. This will

lead cumulative beneficiaries to reach 640,000 people by 2022(an average of 70,000 per year in 5 years). According to statistics, 3.11 million people were subject to literacy education while 340 thousand people wished to participate in literacy education in 2017. From 2006 to 2017, accumulated 300,000 people volunteered. The fourth plan expanded literacy programs in the agricultural and fishing villages where the target of literacy education is concentrated. It is important to strengthen support for literacy program to develop basic life skills.

- Secondly, the fourth plan promotes the expansion of practical lifelong learning opportunities for the underprivileged and disabled through providing lifelong learning voucher reducing the cost of learning expenses. In 2018, Ministry of Education strives to reduce 2.4 billion won learning expenses of 5,000 people and eventually to support 45,000 people by 2022. The eligibility to receive lifelong learning voucher will depend on the learner's economic and social conditions such as income level.

- Thirdly, the fourth plan supports establishment of lifelong education promotion system such as the National Lifelong Education Promotion Center for the Disabled within the



National Special Education Center. It promotes establishing division of labor system between the State and provinces. The State will take action to establish National Lifelong Learning Promotion Plan for the disabled, administer organization and establish support system. Whereas, the province will be responsible for the establishment of a 'provincial lifelong Learning promotion plan for the disabled' with consideration of local conditions. Furthermore, the National Lifelong Learning Promotion Center for the Disabled will take responsibility of investigating status of lifelong education for the disabled, developing lifelong education programs by types of disability, and training lifelong educators.

Moreover, it is important to strengthen provision of personalized lifelong education for the disabled. To improve access to lifelong education system, an accessible service should be established for disabled people. For example, screen commentary, voice-eye support for the visually impaired and to provide interpretation, closed captions for the hearing-impaired.

## 2) Pursue Lifelong Learning while working

① Build an online lifelong learning ecosystem in preparation for job change due to the Fourth

Industrial Revolution Era

○ First, the fourth plan strives to improve KMOOC through partnering with colleges and universities, developing KMOOC courses about vocational education in order to prepare for the fourth Industrial Revolution and job change. The goal is to develop 30 courses each year after 2019. In order to prepare for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, it is important to support employees to learn and adopt new job skills without time and space restrictions. This can be done through putting continuous efforts to improve academic structure of universities and discover/expand occupation in the promising areas of the fourth Industrial Revolution. There has been an increase in access to lifelong learning through K-MOOC courses and Neulbaeum(National Lifelong Learning Portal) linkage with local lifelong learning courses. In 2015, K-MOOC initiated a pilot operation and as of December 2017, K-MOOC is currently managing 323 courses. Neulbaeum initiated in 2014 through affiliation with TED and Youtube Edu. Currently, 52 institutes and 680,000 contents are affiliated.

○ Secondly, the fourth plan strives to build an online ecosystem for personalized education. It plans to build a system which can distribute a variety of free and paid contents from the





government, public institutions, and private sector. It will also develop various K-MOOC paid services. Moreover, improving KMOOC platform and managing it as an open market is under consideration.

### ② Expansion of industrial customized lifelong education

○ First, the fourth plan aims to launch a trial operation of Match Up program supporting on-site settlement. Match Up program is a program targeted for students, job seekers, and employees so their job skills can be certified from companies in their relevant fields. Match Up will be operated from this year with an aim of creating 10 programs in 2018, 20 programs in 2019, and 50 programs in 2022.

○ Secondly, the Vocational Education Promotion Team will be constructed and operated to prepare the 'Vocational Education Master Plan' on July 2018. The Vocational Education Promotion Team will be consisted of related industries, field personnel, academic and related ministries.

### ③ Enhancement of a college's lifelong education function

○ First, the fourth plan aims to expand

adult-friendly education in higher education institutions. This could be done through adopting adult-friendly bachelor's degree system in advance to getting a job and promising occupation during the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It will also support operation of universities, hoping to establish a course that substantially increase educational opportunities. Furthermore, the Academic Credit Bank System will revise the standard curriculum in accordance with a change in industry and will expand the Academic Credit Bank courses reflecting a demand for the new industry.

○ Secondly, the fourth plan strives to foster a professional college as a hub for vocational and lifelong education. Likewise, the Fourth plan will institutionalize the linkage of secondary and higher vocational education; providing employment support and entrepreneurship education program, and encouraging headquarter institutions to strengthen its function of taking full charge in planning lifelong and vocational education.

### 3) Enjoy lifelong learning everywhere

#### ① Strengthen capacity of lifelong learning at a local level

○ First, the fourth plan strives to activate



lifelong education at a local level. It introduces the performance evaluation for the lifelong education capacity such as; the characterization and project promotion effort for the already designated lifelong learning city inducing proliferation of program for the resident career development. It will also continue to expand lifelong learning centers in consideration of local conditions and secure learning spaces utilizing local facilities.

○ Secondly, the fourth plan strengthens self-sustaining lifelong learning in a local region. To improve quality of lifelong learning institutions, it is mandatory to disclose information and examine ways to introduce an institutional evaluation and certification system. On September of 2017, information disclosure system of Academic Credit Bank System institution formally initiated. It reorganizes the process of training lifelong learning educators and improve the system so that placement of lifelong learning educators can flexibly apply based on institutional characteristics and local population. Currently, there is one lifelong learning educator in a lifelong learning institute, while there are one or two lifelong learning educators in provincial lifelong education institutions, depending on the total workforce.

② Support creating future value of community based on lifelong learning

○ First, the fourth plan supports strengthening civic competence at a regional scale. To promote co-existence of lifelong and vocational education between universities and municipalities, it will promote disclosing support status through "National Lifelong Learning Investment Alert". Also, it will initiate specialized non-degree courses for solving community problems and fostering talent. Furthermore, it will develop customized courses on humanities and expand both online and off-line lectures to enhance understanding of environmental values in connection with residents' participation system, safety consciousness and disaster response.

○ Secondly, the fourth plan strives to realize voluntary lifelong learning of a community. It supports expense and consultation of excellent voluntary learning groups in various fields. In addition, it creates social value through talent donation and volunteer activities. This will help the group to grow into a cooperative or a small company through affiliation with start-up support programs. The goal is to foster at least 9,0000 excellent voluntary learning groups by 2022.



#### 4) High quality lifelong learning with strong foundation

Before examining new objectives, it is important to review performances and limits of policy implementation. The National Institute for Lifelong Education was established in 2008 to build a control tower based on the legal basis for lifelong education. In September 2017, the State started a full operation of information disclosure about Academic Credit Bank which led to the creation of a foundation for information disclosure in lifelong education institutions. The State manages cumulative lifelong learning database by carrying out surveys on real condition of lifelong learning and lifelong learning institutes.

Despite of these performances, limitations remain. Current lifelong education act lacks content to cope with recent changes in social and lifelong learning such as, online lifelong learning and enhancement of a university's lifelong learning function. Therefore, specific legal basis should be developed in respect to K-MOOC, lifelong education voucher, Match Up, and a college's lifelong education. Moreover, there is a lack of credibility of survey on real conditions of lifelong education to use in local(city/province)

units. Overall, utilization of statistics including participation rate as well as investment for lifelong education is insufficient. There are wide variations in funding investment for lifelong education within local governments but is insufficient for central-local financial investment matching and monitoring system.

##### ① Improve laws and regulations related to lifelong education

- First, the fourth plan strives promotion of legislation related to lifelong education reflecting changes such as K-MOOC and college lifelong education. In addition, it aims to prepare long-term amendments of the Lifelong Education Act through strengthening linkage between the acts with laws and regulations related to education, qualifications and vocational training.

- Furthermore, the fourth plan aims to improve quality and utilization of lifelong education statistics of real condition of lifelong learning and lifelong learning institutes. The use of statistics could be raised through increasing sample size of surveys and institutions on real condition of lifelong learning.

- Secondly, the fourth plan enhances lifelong education policy promotion system. It will expand the participation of local experts in



the Lifelong Education Promotion Committee and deliberate on the implementation plans of relevant departments and local governments according to the basic plan. The state-municipal and provincial lifelong education institute will organize a regular council to explore joint projects and resolve regional disparities.

○ Thirdly, the fourth plan strives for expansion of international cooperation of lifelong education and special foreign language education. Especially, it will focus on operating EBS programs for strategic regional countries' language education (Vietnam, India, Mexico, Indonesia and Malaysia), K-MOOC, and commissioned educational programs.

## ② Expansion of lifelong education investment and systematic management

The fourth plan aims to prepare strategic plans and guidelines in order to expand investment and lifestyle resources for lifelong education promotion. Furthermore, the "National Lifelong Education Investment Alert" will establish in 2019 for systematic investment management of the ministries and municipalities.

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