

Press Release

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KCUE Announces the Results of the 2025 University Presidents Survey (I)

- The results highlight the need for financial stability and expansion and for the granting of greater autonomy to create a healthy higher education ecosystem.

- The Korean Council for University Education (KCUE) released the results of the the 2025 KCUE University Presidents Survey (I) conducted in conjunction with the council's regular General Meeting in 2025.
- The survey was conducted from December 5 (Thursday) to 26 (Thursday), 2024, with the presidents of 192 member universities*, and 140 universities responded (response rate: 72.9%).

* Five special universities were excluded due to the nature of the survey (Korea Military Academy, Korea Naval Academy, Korea Air Force Academy, Armed Forced Nursing Academy, and National Police University).

- Below is a summary of the presidents' responses.

▶ University presidents' areas of interest

- Due to the prolonged tuition freeze and cuts over the past 17 years and the sharp decline in the school-age population, respondents were most concerned about the financial crisis facing

universities and student recruitment. The most common responses included "financial support programs (central and local governments) (77.1%) and recruitment and replenishment of new students (62.9%).

► **Universities' digital innovation and investment in students**

- The key area for universities' digital innovation was "providing various teaching and learning options including online and hybrid" (60.0%).
- The key area for future investment for students was "support for employability and entrepreneurship (consulting, coaching, placements, mentoring, certifications, etc.)" (60.0%).
- The biggest challenge in promoting digital innovation and investment in students was "challenges in securing school budgets," regardless of the type, region, or size of the university (71.4%).

► **Universities' financial standing over the next 5 years**

- Regarding their financial situation over the next five years, 105 universities (75%) expected it to worsen (61 expected it to worsen slightly, 44 expected it to worsen significantly). Twenty-seven universities expected their financial situation to remain at the current level (19.3%), and eight expected it to improve (5.7%).
- By type, region, and size, national and public universities accounted for 81.8%, which was higher than private universities (72.9%). By region, universities in metropolitan cities and provinces **outside the capital region** accounted for 77.8%. In terms of size, **small universities** accounted for 76.7%.
- Of the 105 universities that responded that their financial situation would worsen over the next five years, the most common reason cited was "**increased administrative and operating expenses due to rising prices**" (91 universities, 86.7%). This was

the leading reason regardless of type, region, or size of university.

► **Directions for change and necessary government policy support for a healthy higher education ecosystem**

- The most common response was "stability and expansion of financial support, including extension of the Act on the Special Account for Higher and Lifelong Education Support" (43 universities), followed by "granting greater autonomy (admissions, tuition, donations, etc.) and deregulation" (39 universities), and "tailored policies and support (for basic academic research, etc.) by type, region and size of university" (20 universities).

- KCUE said it would use the results of the survey to "reflect the opinions of member university presidents in policy proposals."

[Attachment 1]

Responses to the Presidents (Member University) Survey

1. Objective: To gather opinions from the presidents of four-year universities nationwide
2. Survey period: December 5 – 26, 2024
3. Survey method: Web survey
4. Subjects and response rate: 192 member universities* ⇒ 140 respondents (72.9%)

* Five special universities were excluded due to the nature of the survey (Korea Military Academy, Korea Naval Academy, Korea Air Force Academy, Armed Forces Nursing Academy, and National Police University).

〈Respondents to the 2025 University Presidents Survey [|]〉

Category		Subjects	Respondents	Response rate (%)	Proportion (%)
Total		192	140	72.9	100.0
Type	National/public	41	33	80.5	23.6
	Private	151	107	70.9	76.4
Region	Capital region	73	50	68.5	35.7
	Metropolitan city (excluding Incheon)	38	27	71.1	19.3
	City/province	81	63	77.8	45.0
Size	Large	51	38	74.5	27.1
	Medium	60	46	76.7	32.9
	Small	81	56	69.1	40.0

Note) Small: 5,000 students or less; medium: 5,000 - 10,000 students; large: 10,000 or more (enrolled students).