Recently, the South Korean government proposed a 3.9 trillion won (USD 3.69 billion) supplementary budget to the National Assembly to create new jobs for young people in efforts to alleviate the prolonged youth unemployment in the nation.

In line with the government’s efforts to provide high-quality jobs to the youth, KOTRA hosted its first employment related event of the year, the 2018 Overseas Employment Environment Briefing Session, from April 4 to 6. The session offered valuable insight to participants regarding job markets outside of Korea with an extensive line-up of speakers to give seminars on the employment environments across five countries consisting of the U.S., Canada, Australia, Japan and Vietnam.

The event opened in Busan on Wednesday, then in Gwangju on Thursday, with the number of attendees from these regions amounting to 340 and 151 respectively. The session was held in Busan and Gwangju this year to provide an opportunity for jobseekers from rural parts of Korea gain access to information on foreign job markets. Friday’s event held at El Tower in Seoul attracted about 1,233 attendees, making the total number of participants reach nearly 1,800.

In particular, Seoul’s session commenced with the newly appointed President and CEO of KOTRA, Kwon Pyung-oh, as he delivered his opening address, saying, "I would like to start by expressing my sincere apologies to the
young people of the nation for the hardships you face in the job market." He added that he was able to relate to the participants of the session, made up mostly of young job-seekers, by speaking of the difficulties faced by his own daughter in the process of searching for a job. He also stated, “Our society is depending on KOTRA’s overseas network based on its offices located worldwide to provide high-quality job information that meet the demands of jobseekers today,” adding that “KOTRA will increase its number of overseas offices devoted to employment from the existing 27 to 50, and actively support over 1000 Korean youth per year get jobs abroad by 2020, providing them with invaluable information on overseas recruitment.”

The briefing session was broken up into three sub-sessions, comprised of eight seminars with experts presenting on a variety of topics related to strategies on landing a job abroad. The first sub-session offered seminars on getting jobs in Canada, the U.S., and Australia. The second sub-session focused on the Asian job market, as speakers provided advice on landing positions in Japan and Vietnam. The final sub-session offered participants guidance on writing resumes best suited for job prospects in the U.S. and Japan.

In addition to the seminars, attendees were given booklets with one containing presentation material from the speakers, another one with individual success stories of Korean jobseekers being hired overseas, and one with recruitment information of 25 different countries.

Notably, Rachel Baek, during her seminar, shared her knowledge and experience of working in Canada, encouraging job-seekers by saying, “Although you may have thought otherwise, I never lived or studied overseas prior to getting a job in Canada. I couldn’t even speak English very well, which shows you that anything is possible if you just give it a try.”

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Rachel Baek spoke about the Canadian job market as well as her own experience and gave tips on successfully finding jobs in Canada.

Soo-yeon Kim from KOTRA’s New York office presented on the U.S. job market, detailing desirable qualifications as well as visa related information.

Jeong-rak Choi from KOTRA’s Sydney office offered insight into successfully finding jobs in Australia despite the abolishment of the subclass 457 visa last April.

Geum-woo Lee from Fuji-Xerox’s HR department highlighted the reasons why Japanese companies seek to hire Korean talent and the qualities that Fuji-Xerox looks for in potential employees.

Min-jeong Kang from KOTRA’s Tokyo office outlined the ABCs on landing a job in a Japanese company as well as the current job market in Japan.

Ji-hoon Shin from KOTRA’s Ho Chi Minh office introduced the advantages of working in Vietnam’s specialized industries and encouraged jobseekers to leap into the Vietnamese job market.

Seong-eun Park walked participants through effectively writing an English resume and cover letter and also gave tips for successfully completing interviews in English.

Sun-joo Kim provided attendees with the standard hiring process in a Japanese company as well as valuable guidelines on writing a Japanese-style resume.