

# PEOPLE AND CULTURE

## The Korean Way of Life



Family in traditional clothes playing a typical Korean game called yutnori



Gyeongbokgung palace in the evening

What is culture? The particular habits of a group of people—their clothing styles, music, or architecture for example—help define their particular culture, their characteristics that set them apart from other groups. Culture can also include everyday things such as typical foods, language, sports, or school activities or even interpersonal interactions and manners. In the modern world, many cultures have become changed and have lost some of their distinctive characteristics to become more similar to urban cultures elsewhere. Korea has been able to retain many aspects of its ancient culture, blending the traditional with the modern in a distinctly Korean fashion.

Around the world, people recognize and appreciate Korean culture. Taekwondo, a Korean martial art, has international organizations and is practiced globally. Korean restaurants serve traditional Korean foods, such as kimchi and bibimbap, all over the world. With the spread of entertainment through the Internet, K-pop music and Korean dramas have enthusiastic fans on all continents. Korea's manufacturing advances have given Korea a reputation for high tech competency. There is a growing interest worldwide in all things Korean, which has benefits both for Korea and for the rest of the world.

The unique physical environment of Korea has helped to shape

a unique national culture that has flourished for centuries. The peninsular location kept Korea separated enough from the rest of Asia to develop its own culture, yet the surrounding seas fostered a rich exchange of cultural ideas with other countries in the region. The varied terrain and seasonally variable climate have influenced clothing styles, types of food, and architecture. The high population density, one of the highest in the world, has encouraged an emphasis on apartment-style, high density housing and a modern and efficient public transport system. A high population density has also been critical for supporting the growth in manufacturing and technological industries. Korea can serve as an example for smart growth for the rest of the world as it becomes more populated and urbanized.

In recent decades the separation of the country into North and South Korea has added a few differences to the cultures on either side of the DMZ. While South Korea has benefitted from a greater openness and interconnectedness with the rest of the world, North Korea has been more isolated. Even the language has begun to diverge, with different words and dialects characteristic of each side. But the peoples of both countries retain many similarities and still consider each other as one culture.



Opera house in Seoul Art Center



Korean foods: bibimbap with many side dishes

## Local Festivals

The map shows the following festival counts by region:

- Seoul: 55
- Incheon: 12
- Gyeonggi-do: 73
- Chungcheongbuk-do: 30
- Chungcheongnam-do: 58
- Sejong: 2
- Daejeon: 7
- Gyeongsangbuk-do: 40
- Daegu: 21
- Ulsan: 10
- Jeollabuk-do: 35
- Gwangju: 10
- Gyeongsangnam-do: 57
- Busan: 29
- Jeollanam-do: 37
- Jeju Special Self-Governing Province: 15
- leodo (Ocean Research Station): 0
- Ulleungdo: 0
- Dokdo: 0

**Total: 50**

**Type of Local Festival:**

- Culture and Art (Blue)
- Nature and Ecology (Green)
- History (Yellow)
- Local Special Products (Purple)
- Other (Orange)

Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (2015)

Posters advertised include: Icheon Rice Cultural Festival, Jarasum Jazz Festival, Hwacheon Sancheoneo (Mountain Trout) Ice Festival, Ganggyeong Salted Seafood Festival, Gimje Horizon Festival, Muju Firefly Festival, Memorial Chungjang Festival, Gangjin Celadon Festival, and Mungyeong Traditional Chasabal Festival.

Posters advertising diverse local festivals

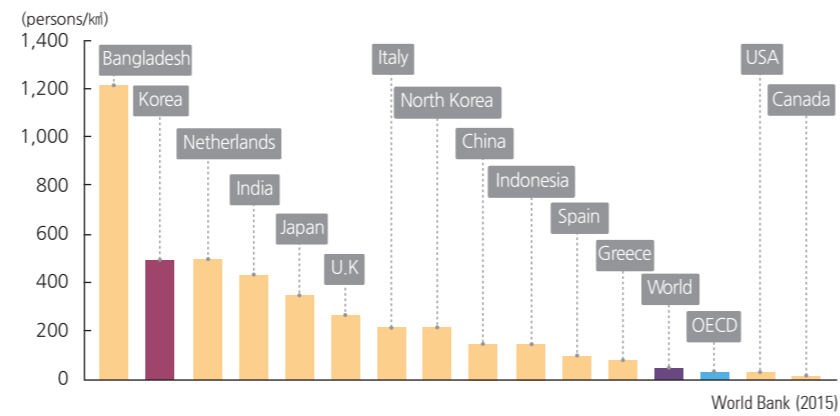
Although many aspects of Korean culture have become modernized—for example, on a normal day people will wear business casual clothing to work rather than a gwanbok (traditional formal clothing) with a gat (hat)—many institutions work to celebrate and promote traditional culture. There are museums, art centers, and a lively festival scene, with over 1,000 local festivals active each year. These festivals celebrate and promote many local cultural phenomena such as food, music, and history and reflect

the rich cultural and natural heritage of the regions they represent. Local cities market the festivals as a way to attract tourists and build the local economy. Each year, The Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism chooses the best festivals. The posters shown here advertise the best of the 2015 festivals as selected by the Ministry. As shown in the map, festivals are evenly distributed across the country, with many diverse themes.

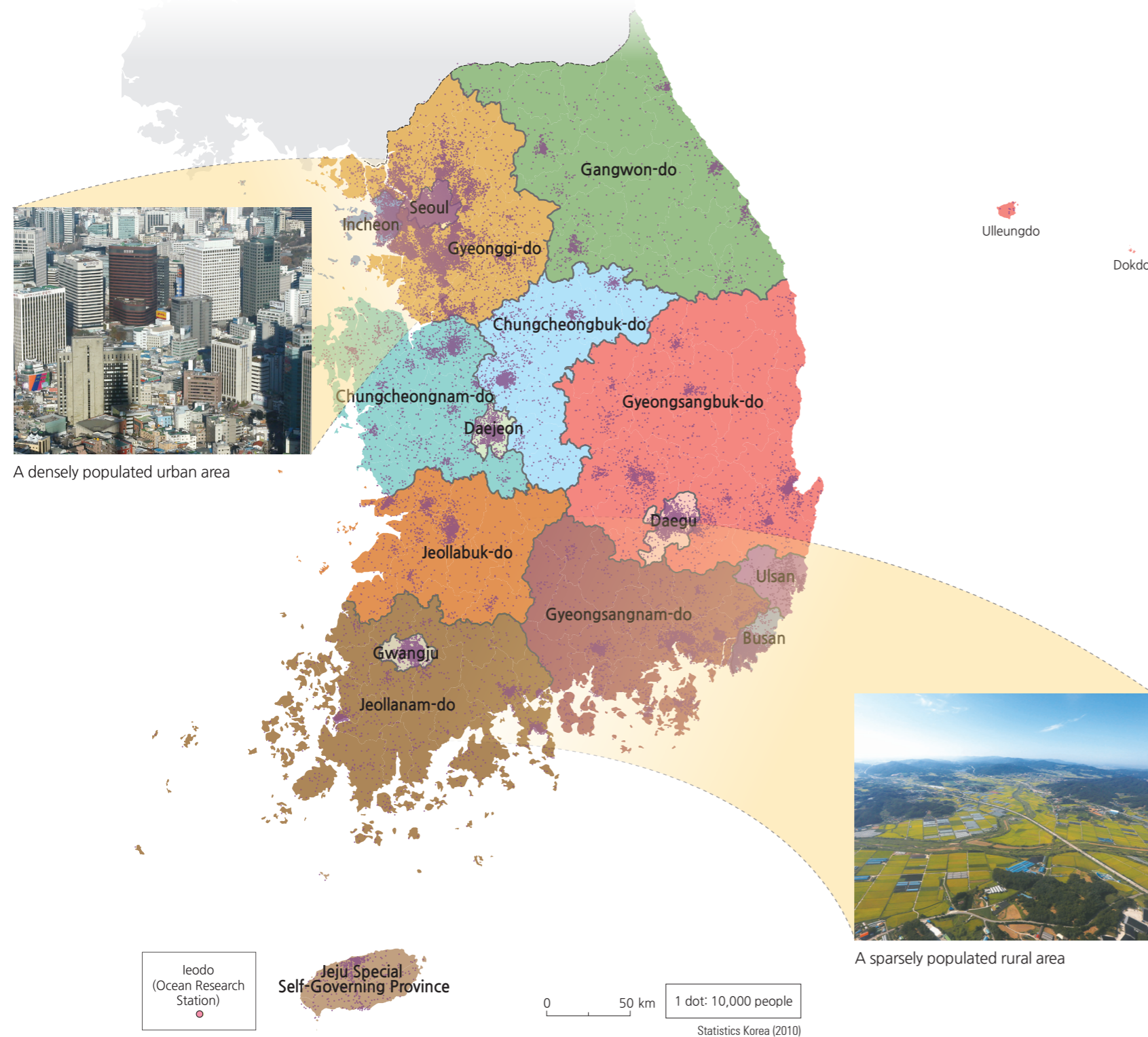
# Population

With over 50 million people, South Korea is among the most densely populated countries of the world. Since the land area of South Korea is about 100,000 square kilometers, the population density—i.e., the number of people per square kilometer—is over 500 people/km<sup>2</sup>. (50,000,000 people / 100,000 km<sup>2</sup> = 500 people / km<sup>2</sup>). Cities have a high population density and are very crowded. Rural or wilderness areas have a lower population density; they are more sparsely populated. Most South Koreans live in and around big cities, especially Seoul. Among large countries with over 10 million people, Korea's population density is second only to that of Bangladesh.

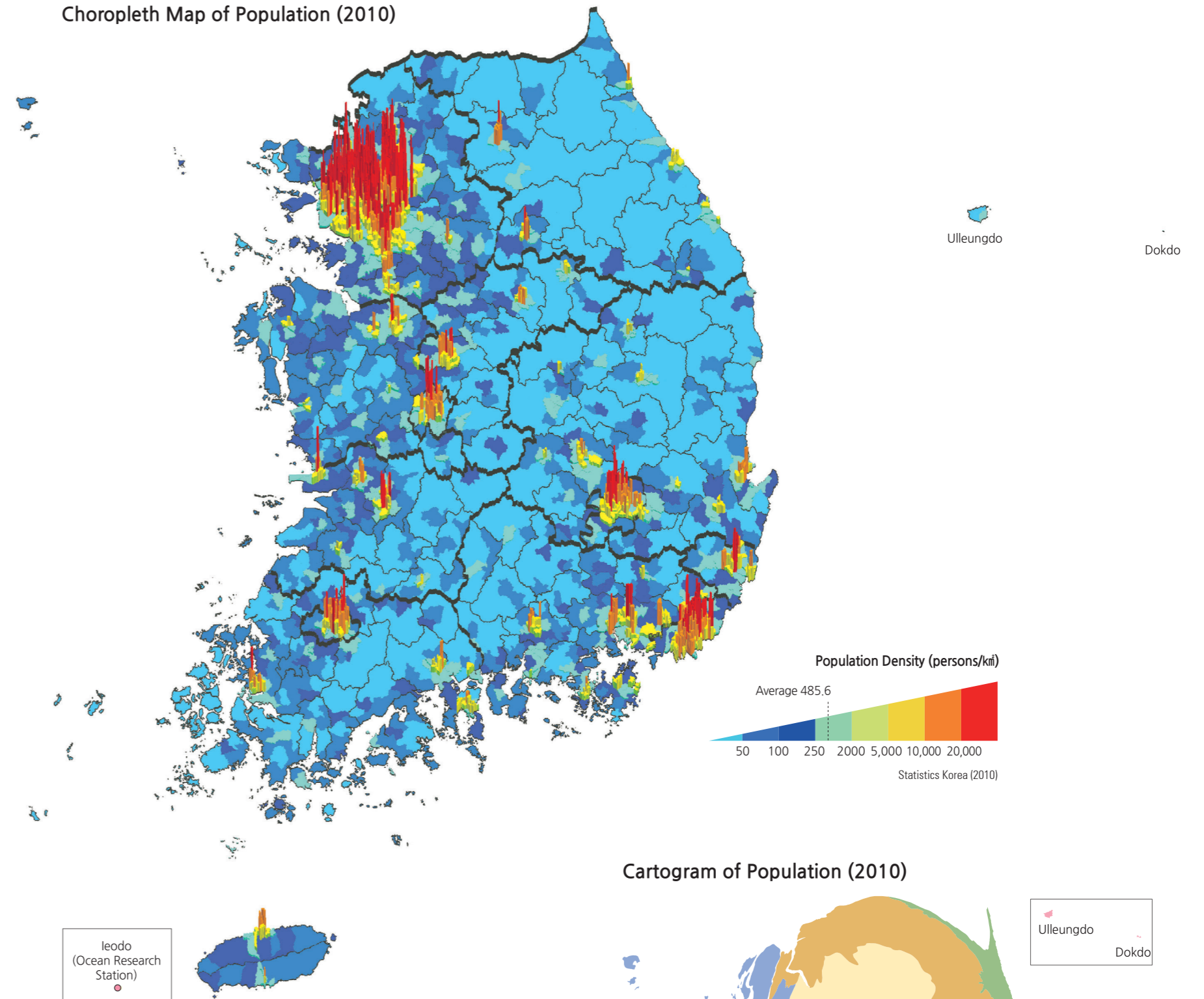
Population Density Comparison for Selected Countries



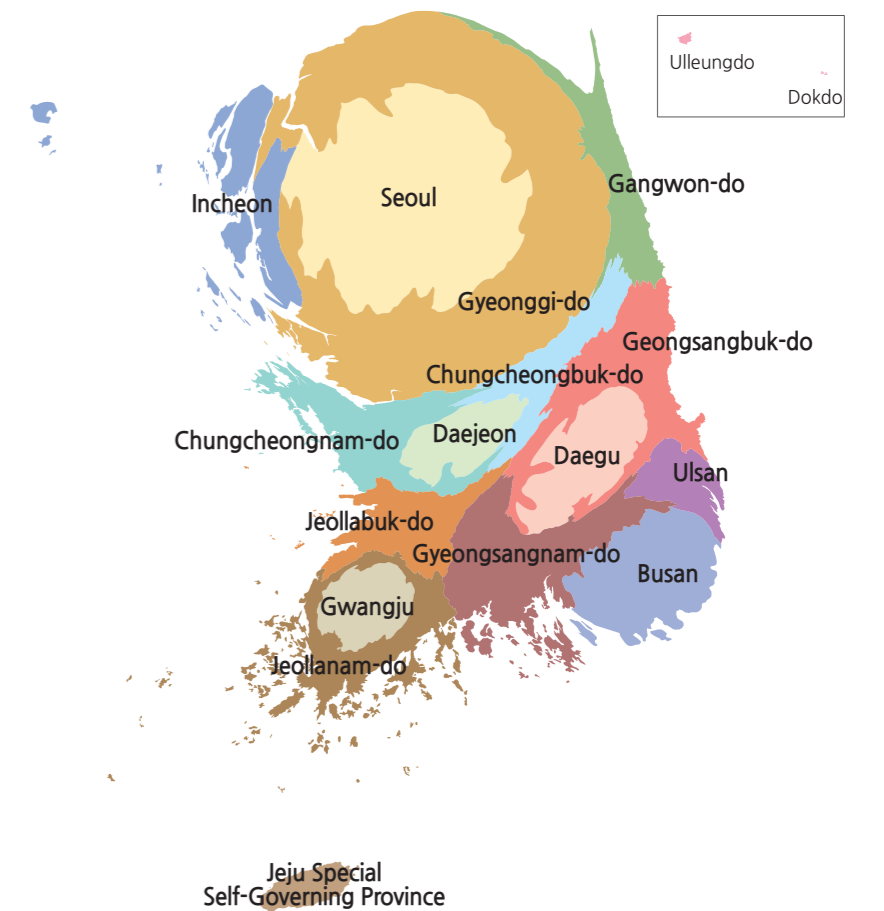
Dot Density Map of Population (2010)



Choropleth Map of Population (2010)



Cartogram of Population (2010)



The maps on these pages show three ways to visualize population. The dot density map at left represents people with small dots. If each dot symbolized one person, there would be too many dots and they would all merge together on the map. So each dot on the map symbolizes 10,000 people. A choropleth map (above) uses color to represent population density. On this map, the warm colors (oranges and reds) indicate areas more crowded than the average value of 485.6 people/km<sup>2</sup>, and cool colors (blues) mark areas that are less populated than average.

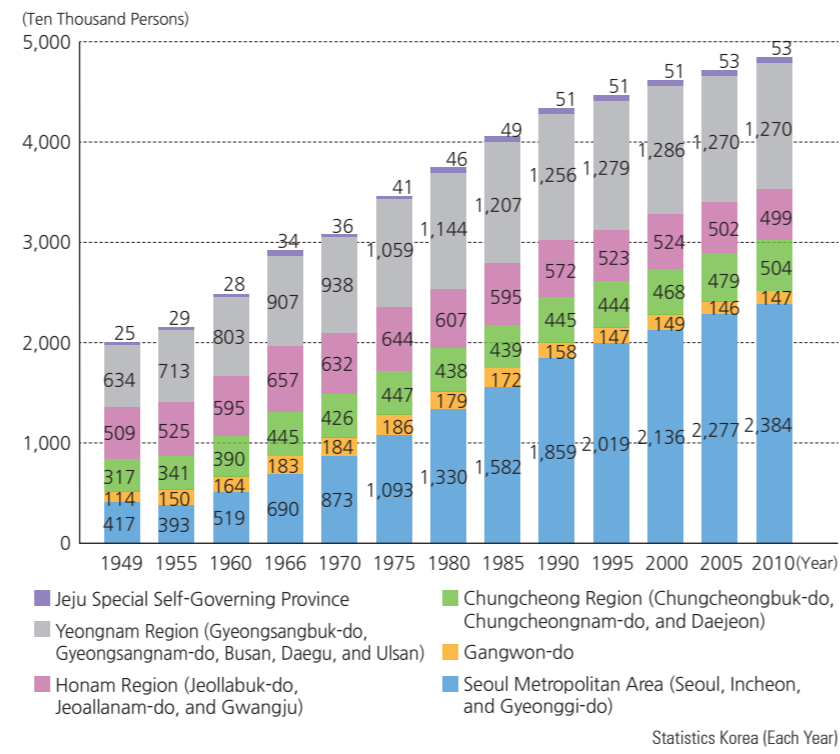
Another interesting way to display population is to make a cartogram. Here each district's land area is distorted and sized in proportion to its population. For example the area for Seoul is stretched much larger in comparison to its land area than other regions.

These maps show that population is unevenly distributed, clustering around Seoul and other large cities such as Daegu and Busan. The maps also show that the mountainous areas to the east and north have fewer people.

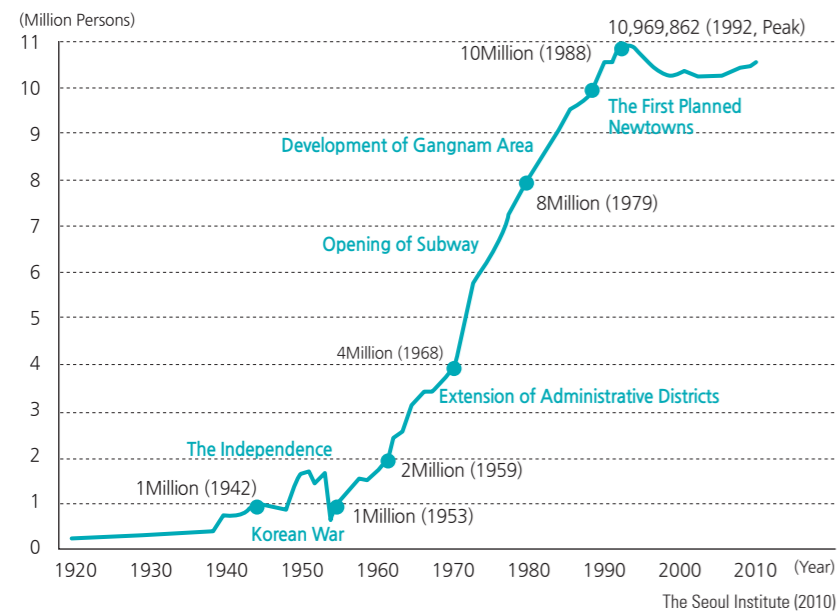
# Population and Lifestyle Changes

Korea's population has grown rapidly over the last century as shown in the numerous graphs on these pages. Population almost doubled from 1960 to 2010. Beginning in the 1960s many people migrated from rural to urban areas, resulting in massive population growth in the cities until the early 1990s. Seoul, for example, had a peak population in 1992. While the total number of people increased, there was also a big shift in the size of different age groups, or the population age distribution, as visualized using the population pyramids shown below. These are called population pyramids because the shape of many age distribution graphs resembles that of a pyramid. In 1960 young people outnumbered older people. The largest age group was that of the 5-9 year-olds. By 2010, the largest group was middle-aged, 40-44 year-olds. In 1960 fewer people reached old ages. The average life span was shorter and few lived beyond 70. In 2010 many more lived beyond 70 years, especially women. There were few children however. The shift in age distributions is a pattern typical for many countries during the 20th century. Korea's population is now aging at the fastest pace in the world due to a plummeting birth rate and extended life expectancy.

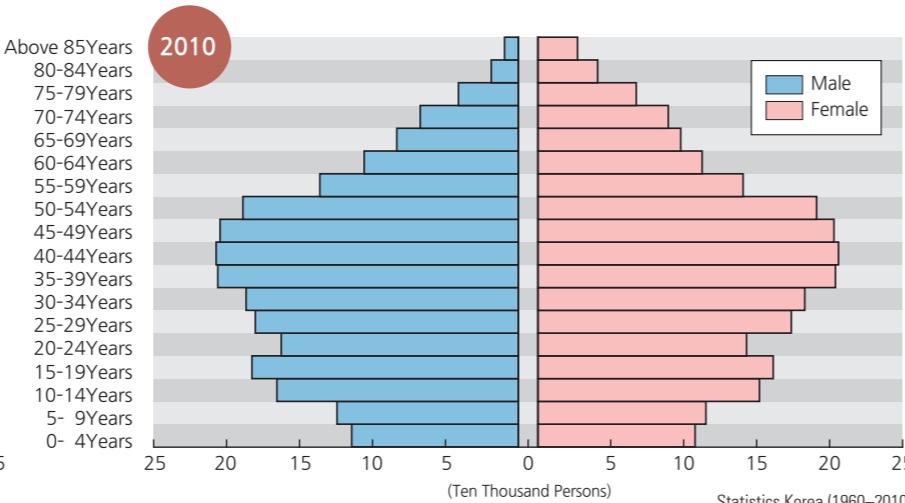
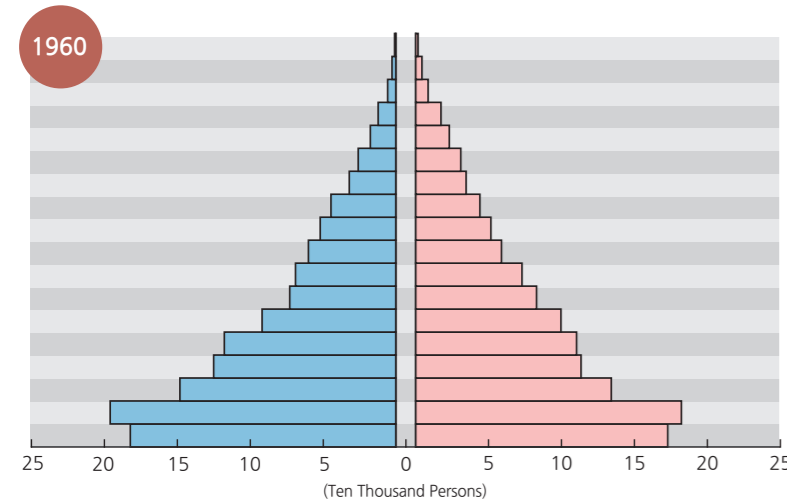
## Population of Regions



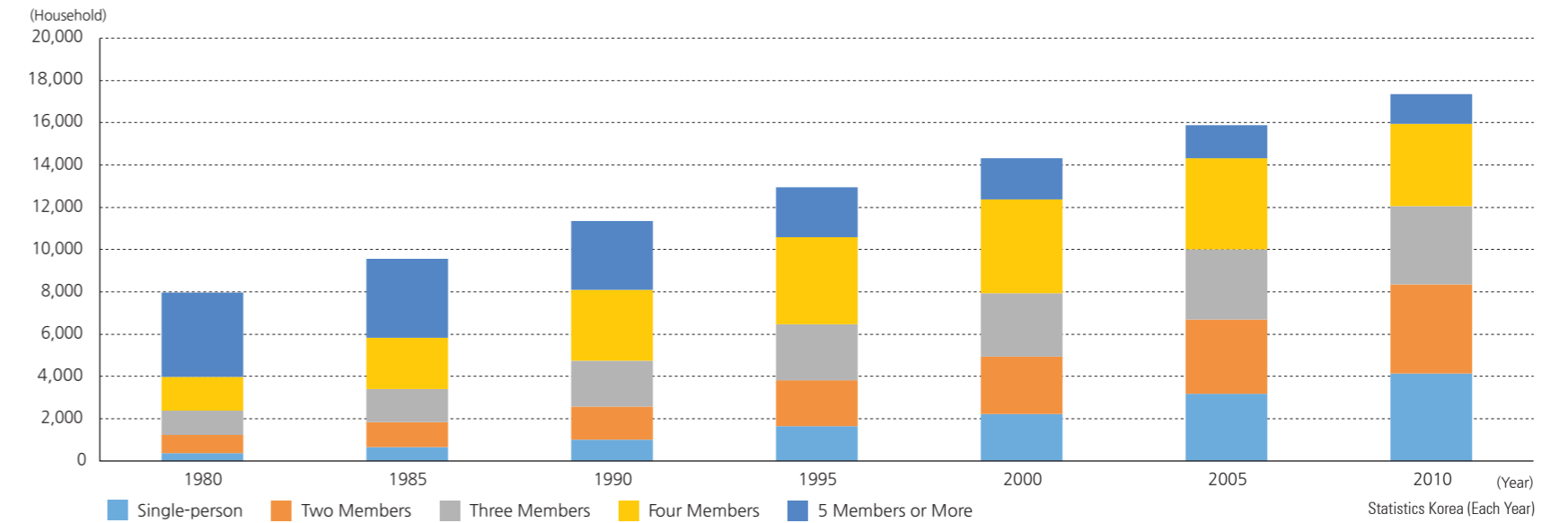
## The Population Growth of Seoul



A Korean family with three generations, grandparents, parents, and child



## Change in Household Size



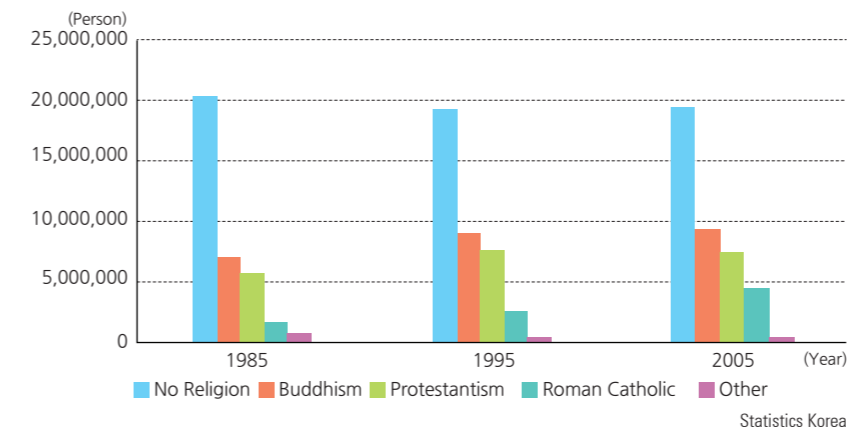
The social life of Koreans has rapidly shifted from the family and village-oriented community of the past to an urban way of life. These changes were accompanied by changes in other ways of life. In the past, the most common household was composed of five or more people sharing a home. There were very few single-person households. Now the situation has reversed and almost half of homes have only one or two people. And while in the past, several generations—grandparents, parents, and children—shared a home, today it is much less common for a household to have more than two generations living together.

Korean religion has also undergone significant changes. Confucianism and Buddhism influenced values and attitudes toward life in the past, and traditional religions were widely practiced in the daily life of Korean people. Christianity was introduced by missionaries during the late Joseon Dynasty, particularly in the 18th

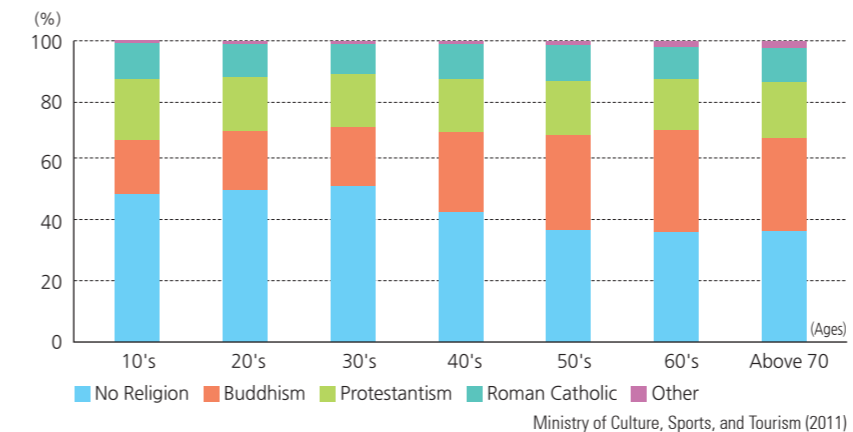
and 19th centuries, and expanded with the modernization of Korea. Christian congregations grew rapidly until about 1995. The religious population varies by region. The proportion of Christians is higher in the capital region and southwest area, while the proportion of Buddhists is higher in the southeast.

The Korean people have developed a diverse and unique food culture dating back to ancient times. Kimchi is a typical example of Korean fermented food. With four distinct climate seasons, fermenting allowed people to store vegetables to eat during winter. The most important grain in the Korean diet is rice. Korea has worked on land reclamation and securing a water supply to cultivate rice. Today, the consumption of rice is gradually declining, and Koreans are consuming more bread and noodles as wheat import has increased. Also, the modern Korean diet has an increased consumption of vegetables, fruits, meats, and dairy products.

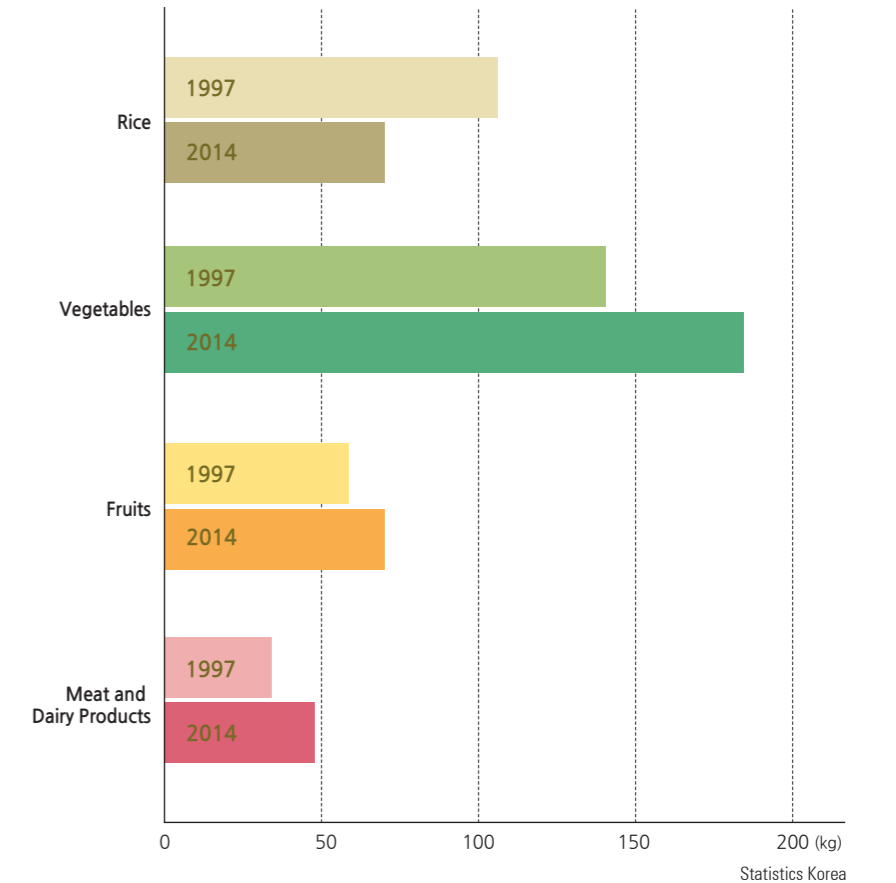
## Population Breakdown by Religion



## Religions by Age



## Consumption of Agricultural and Livestock Products per Capita





# Traditional Housing: Designed to Harmonize with Nature

Housing style determines many other aspects of life and culture, such as proximity to neighbors, interaction with the outdoors, walkability of neighborhoods, and other factors. The most common housing type in Korea is the apartment, especially in urban areas. Construction of apartments greatly increased beginning in the 1980s and they have been enormously popular in the decades since. In more rural areas, single-family detached (stand-alone) houses are more common.

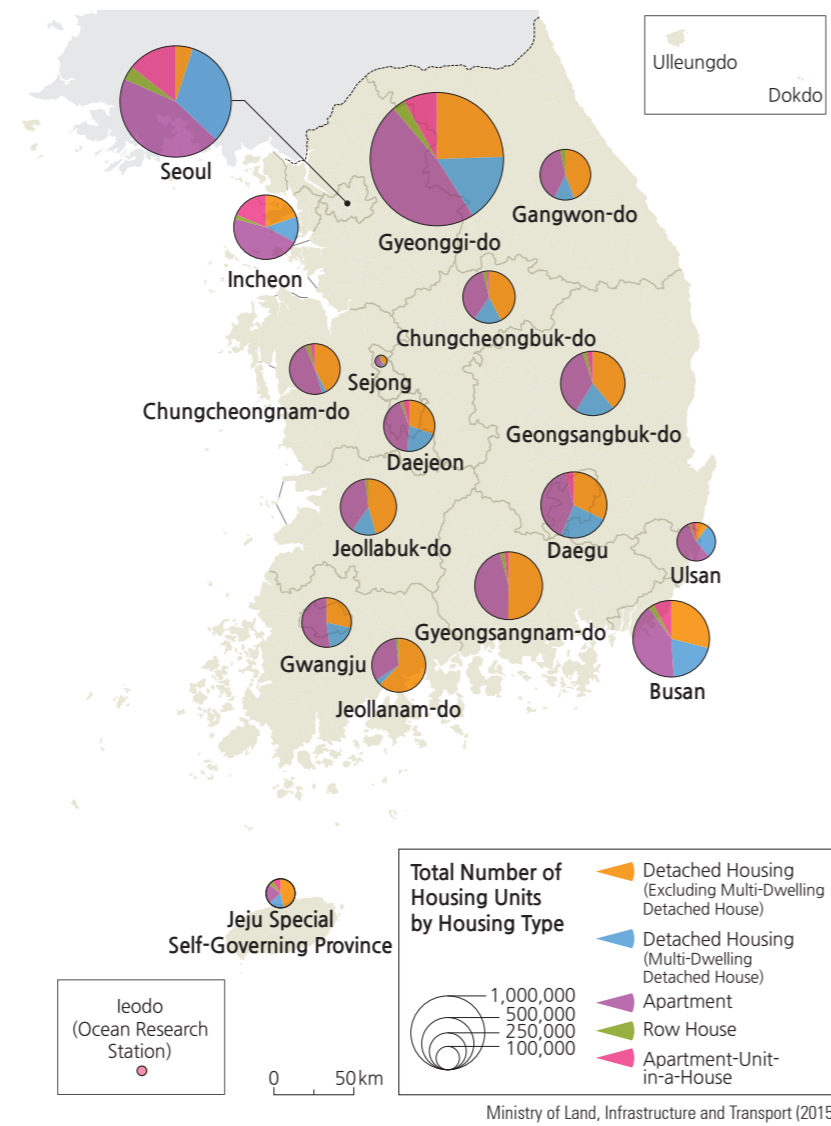
The traditional Korean village is often situated strategically with a mountain in the back and spacious fields and a river in the front. Many villages are found in hilly and low mountain areas due to Korea's largely mountainous terrain. Having a mountain behind the village offered timber for firewood and a wide array of other uses, and served as a windbreak from the freezing northwest winter wind. The streams and rivers in front of villages supplied agricultural water. Traditional Korean villages can still be found across the country, having been preserved and designated as important historical sites.

## Housing Types and Their Characteristics

Description	Detached House	Multi-Dwelling Detached House	Apartment	Apartment-Unit-in-a-House	Row House
	Detached Housing		Collective Housing		
Number of Floors	-	≤ 3	≥ 5	≤ 4	≤ 4
Building Area	-	≤ 660 m <sup>2</sup>	≤ 660 m <sup>2</sup>	> 660 m <sup>2</sup>	> 660 m <sup>2</sup>
Number of Households	1	2-19	≥ n 2	≥ 2	≥ 2
Number of Owners	1	1			

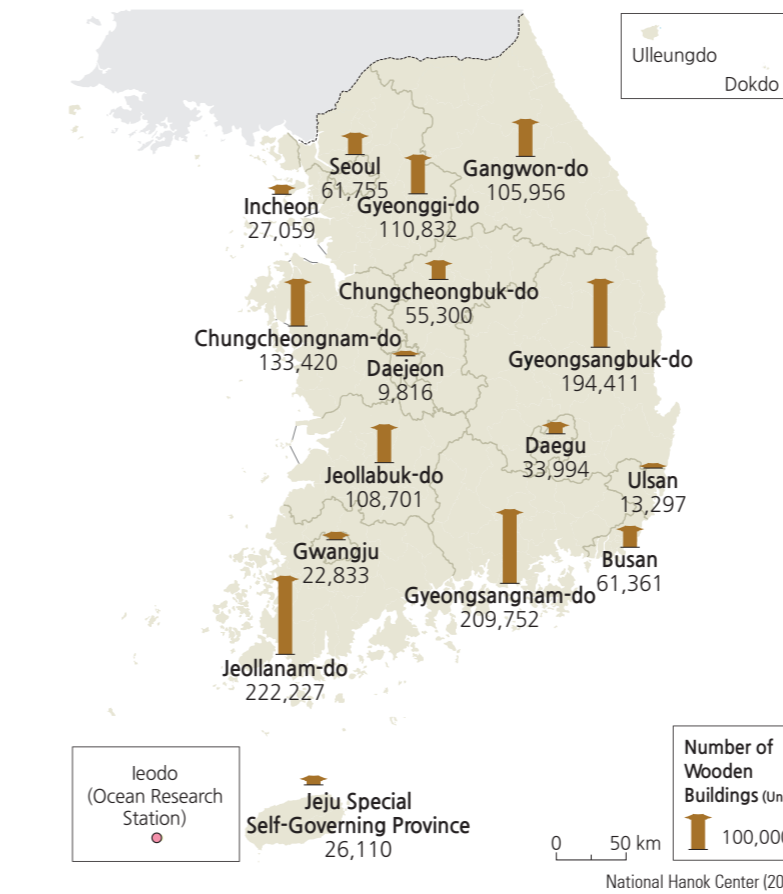
Statistics Korea (2015)

## Total Number of Housing Units by Housing Type (2012)



Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (2015)

## Distribution of Wooden Buildings (2015)



National Hanok Center (2015)



Hahoedaek Sarangchae at Andong Hahoe Folk Village (One of Korean Traditional House Styles)



A Private House at Goseong Wanggok Village

The traditional Korean style house, the “hanok,” uses a unique heating and ventilation technology that is sometimes still used in modern buildings today. Confucian hierarchical customs sometimes meant that the house represented social status or economic wealth, wherein the traditional village was composed of “Giwajips” (roof-tiled houses) for the “yangban” (noble or ruling) class, and thatched houses for ordinary people. The thatch was mostly made of dried rice plants.

All these houses reflect a deep interaction between humans and climate. In the northern provinces, where winters are long and cold, houses were designed to protect inhabitants from the elements by minimizing the need to go outdoors. In the southern provinces, with their hot, humid summers, structures were designed for maximum air circulation through “Daecheong Maru,” a main open floor. Traditional Korean houses also include “ondol,” a floor heating system for living with the cold winters.

## Traditional Korean Village: Dal-sil in Bonghwa, Gyeongsangbuk-do



Aerophoto



Topographic Map

## Preserved Hanok Districts in Metropolitan Cities

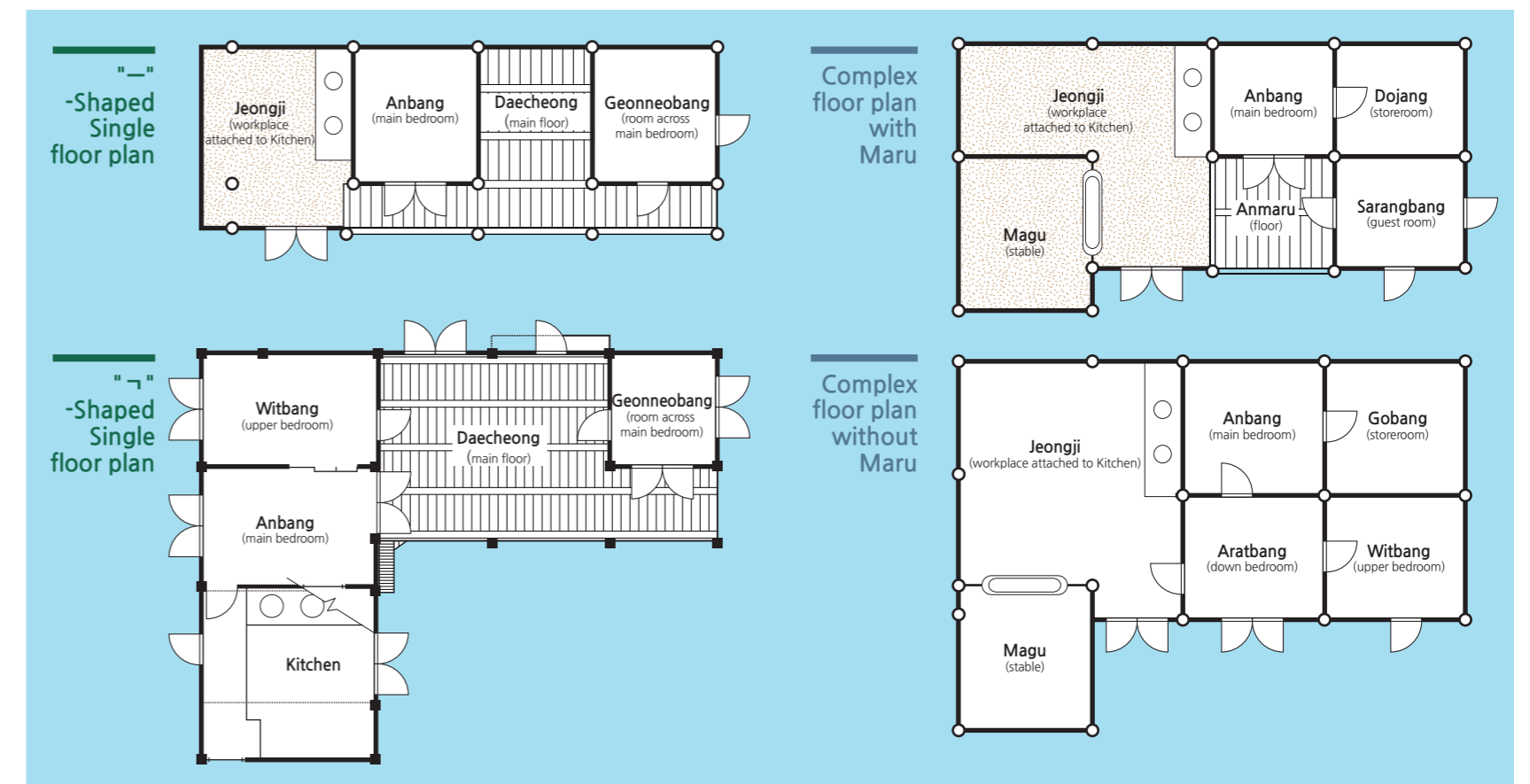


Bukchon Hanok Village in Seoul



Jeonju Hanok Village

## Typical Floor Plans of Traditional Korean Houses



# Modern Housing

One of the most striking things about modern Korea is the high number of people living in multi-unit dwellings. In large, densely populated cities, apartments were built in order to efficiently use the limited urban space. Apartments became popular because amenities, educational facilities, and commercial facilities are often located in the apartment complex. In addition, high-rise apartments occupy most of the residential areas in many newly constructed housing zones, such as in new cities in metropolitan areas. Apartments are steadily increasing relative to other housing types, accounting for about 60 percent of all housing in Korea, according to the 2010 census. In addition, including row housing and multiplex housing, many Koreans today live in multi-unit dwellings. Recently, a large number of multi-unit dwellings have been constructed even in suburban or rural village centers. In addition, high-rise commercial complexes, in which a low-rise is used for commercial facilities and a high-rise for residential purposes, have increased in some metropolitan areas.

Rural housing, for people who prefer living away from the bustling city life and enjoy rural life, has also recently increased. Many detached homes in densely populated areas have already been replaced with apartment complexes or multiplex housing according to policies for improving residential environments, such as for urban regeneration.

Housing in modern Korea is largely of three types: detached dwelling, apartment, or multiplex housing. Detached dwellings can be further divided into houses with only one household and houses with multiple households. The neighborhoods and living environments of these housing types have developed differently, leading to diversified neighborhoods in urban areas. Each distinct housing section of Seoul follows a certain dominant housing type. The old center of Seoul is dominated by single-household houses and is characterized by a high proportion of the elderly and lower numbers of commercial enterprises and schools or other educational facilities.

## Housing Types of Korea

Detached House



General Single House



Multi-Household House

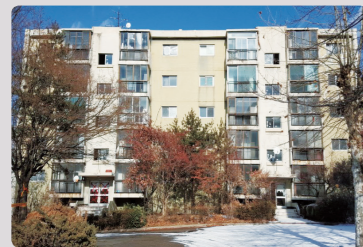


Farmhouse



Pastoral House

Apartment



Apartment Built in 1970's



Apartment Built in 1980's



Apartment Built in 1990's



Apartment Built in 2000's

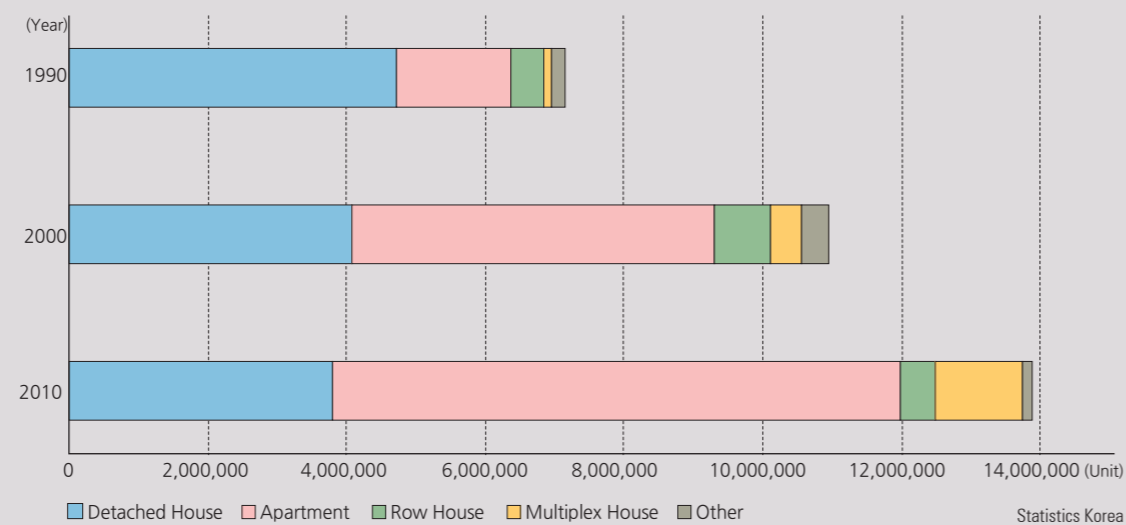
Row House



Multiplex House



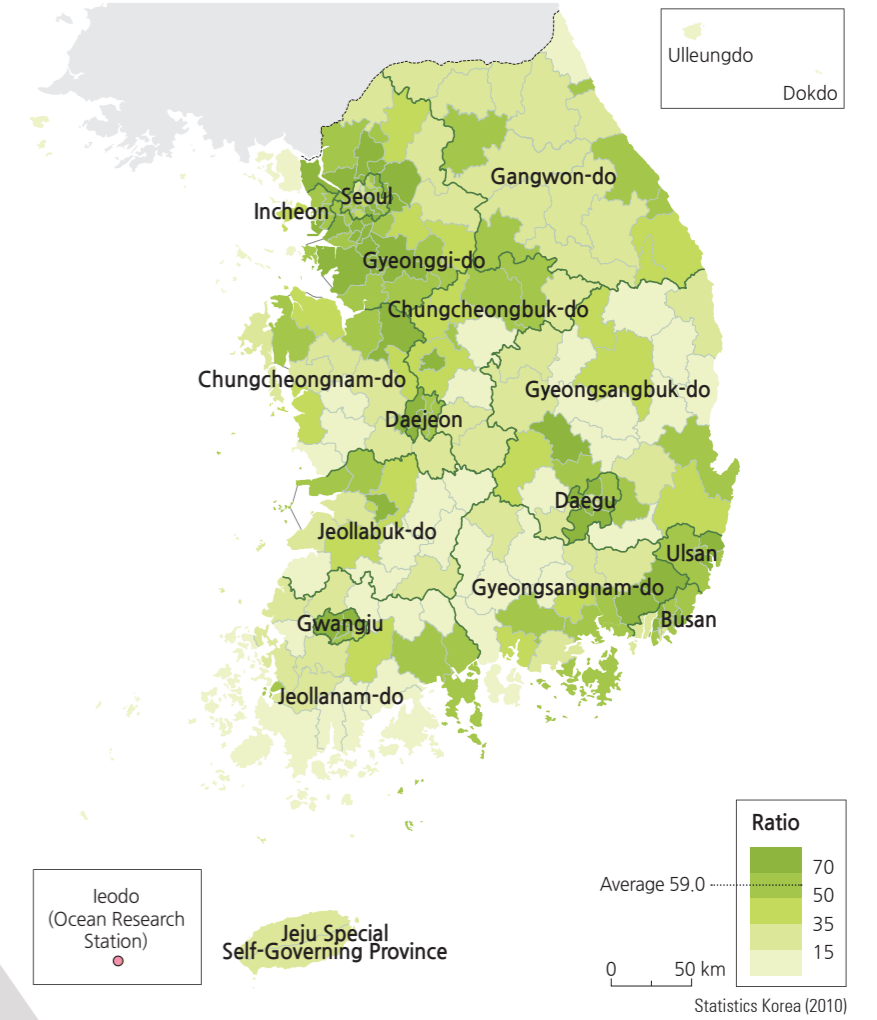
Total Number of Houses



The areas with a high proportion of multi-family houses are found in the sections having a relatively long history of developed dwellings. In these areas, the separation between residential areas and business areas is not distinct. These multi-household homes have been gradually transformed into multi-unit dwellings, such as apartments or multiplexes. In addition, there are sections of Seoul that consist of apartments only. These apartment complex areas have many families, with a large majority of them having school-age children. Thus, there are large numbers of schools and education-related facilities as well as small-sized neighborhood facilities that are part of the individual apartment complexes. These apartment complex areas were designed, through zoning, to share a large central commercial facility. Lastly, multiplex houses have recently developed into so-called "villas." Some multiplex houses are near city centers and are often preferred by young workers.

The map at right shows the ratio of apartments to houses. Darker green areas have more apartments.

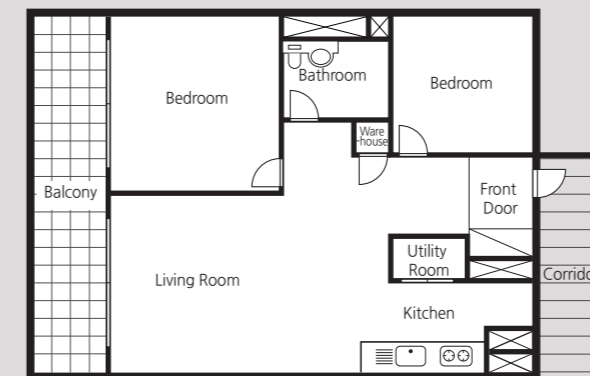
Ratio of Apartments to Houses (2010)



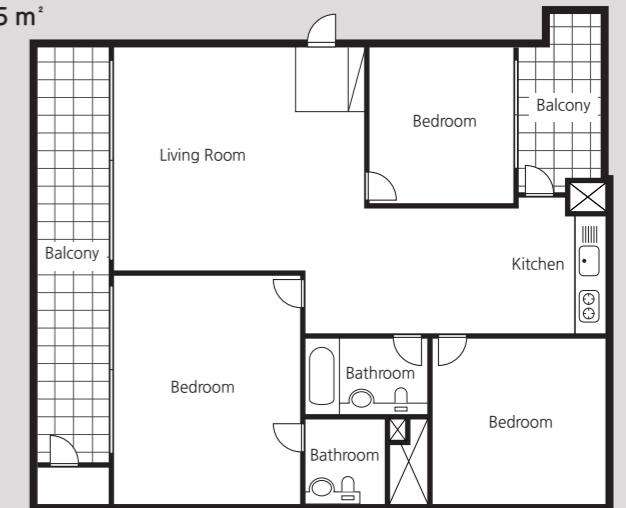
## Typical Apartment Floor Plans

Built in 1990's

Example of Exclusive Use Space 65 m<sup>2</sup>

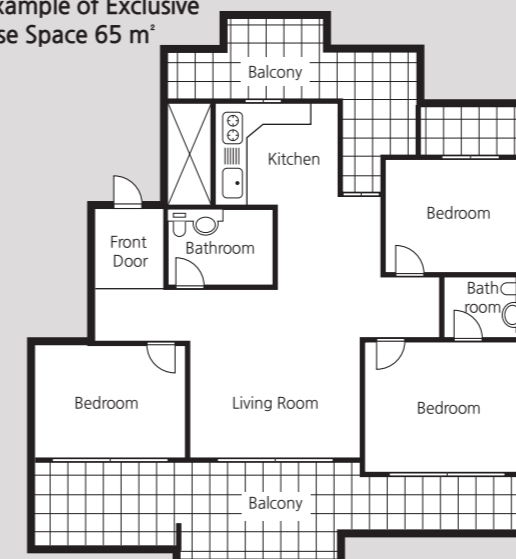


Example of Exclusive Use Space 85 m<sup>2</sup>

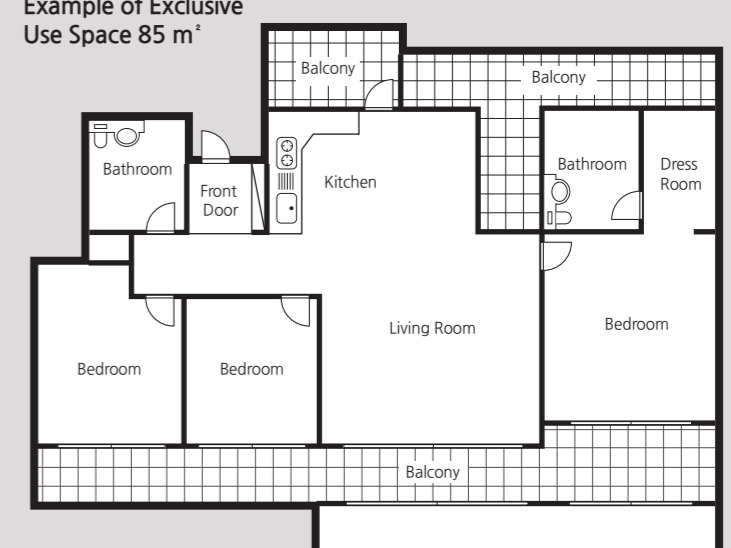


Built in 2000's

Example of Exclusive Use Space 65 m<sup>2</sup>



Example of Exclusive Use Space 85 m<sup>2</sup>



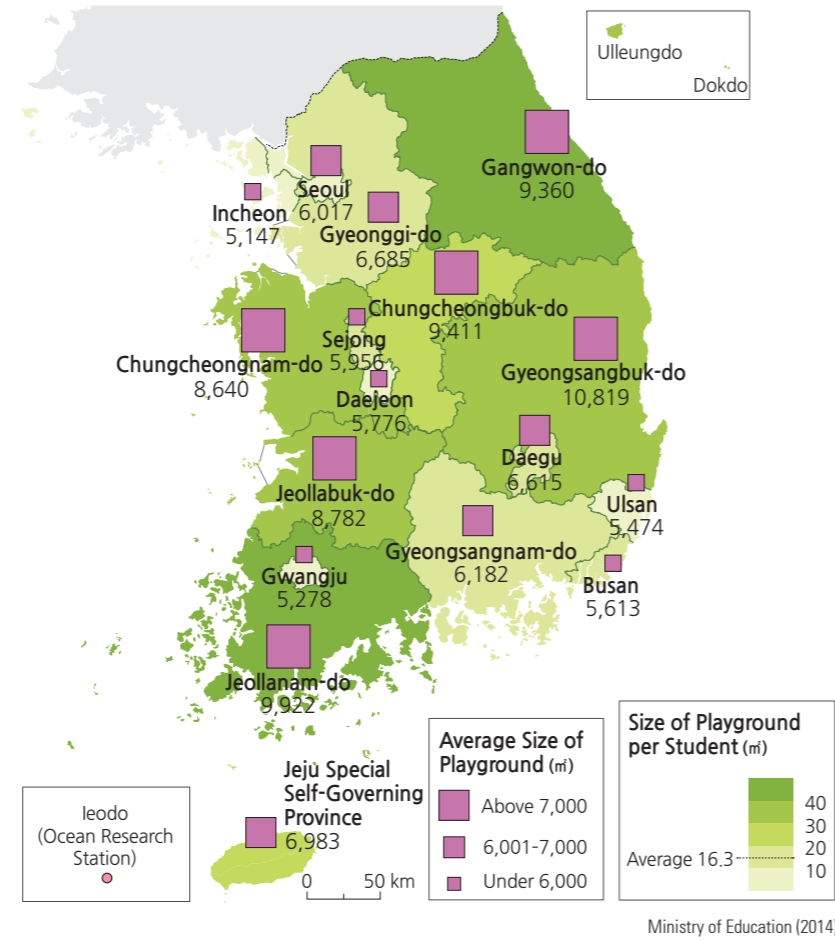
# Work and Play

In Korean society there is a high level of enthusiasm, and spending, for education. Korean education has undergone significant changes through its modernization process. The Korean school system is composed of elementary education for kindergarten and elementary school, secondary education for middle and high schools, and higher education for college and related levels. Most Koreans acquire at least six years of elementary education and another six years of secondary education, and the proportion entering higher education institutions, including college, is among the highest in the world.

Each education level is offered by various educational institutions. Elementary and secondary education is provided by public educational institutions established by the state, along with a variety of private educational institutions. Various schools have been established for special purposes in accordance with the characteristics of students. At the high school level, more choices such as college prep, vocational, and technical high schools are available. Higher education is mostly four-year universities and two-year community colleges. There are also technical colleges covering various professions. Recently, online and extension colleges and degree programs have been developed. Masters and doctoral degrees are offered by many graduate schools, and many students also pursue graduate studies abroad.

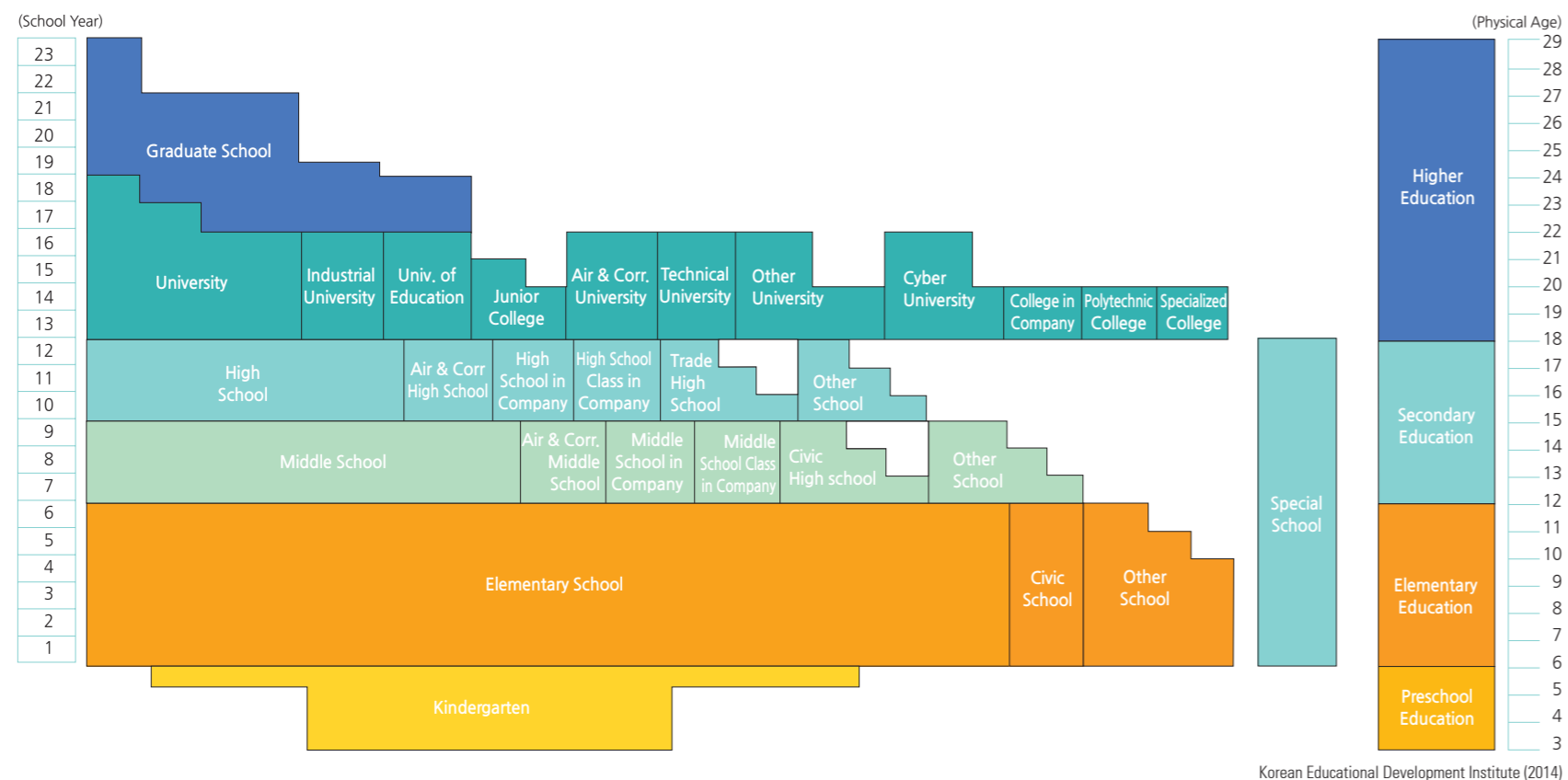
Recently, many elementary schools have been closed in areas with declining populations, while a large number of schools have been newly established in newer towns that are experiencing a continuing population influx. However, the sizes of newly established elementary schools are generally smaller than those of the existing

## Playground Size in Elementary Schools

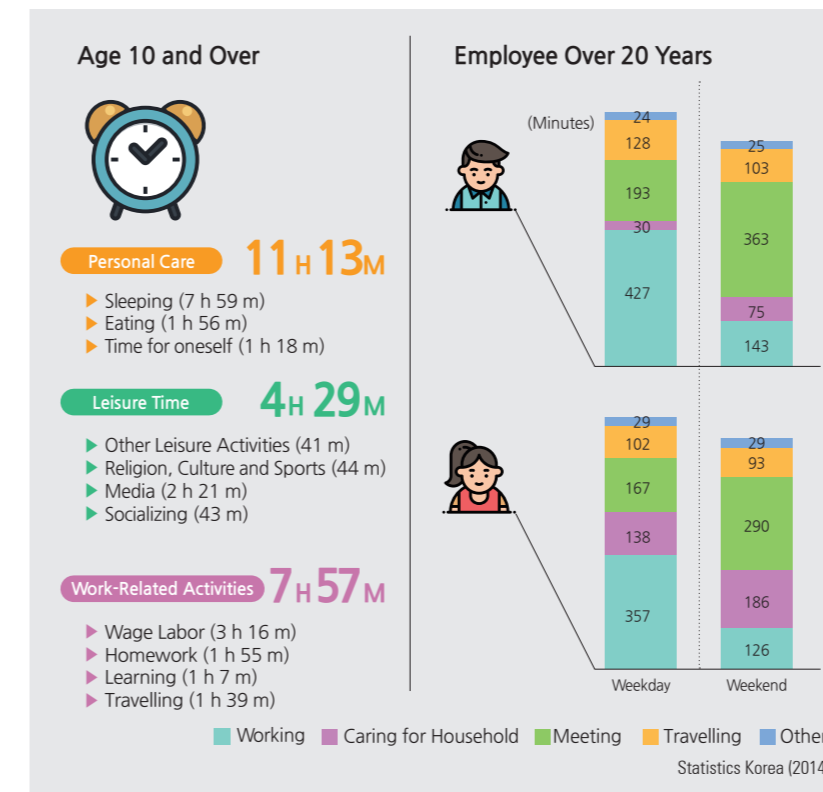


schools because of the costs of buying land. This trend partly explains the larger playground sizes in rural areas, as shown in the map

## Educational System in the Republic of Korea



## Koreans' Use of Time

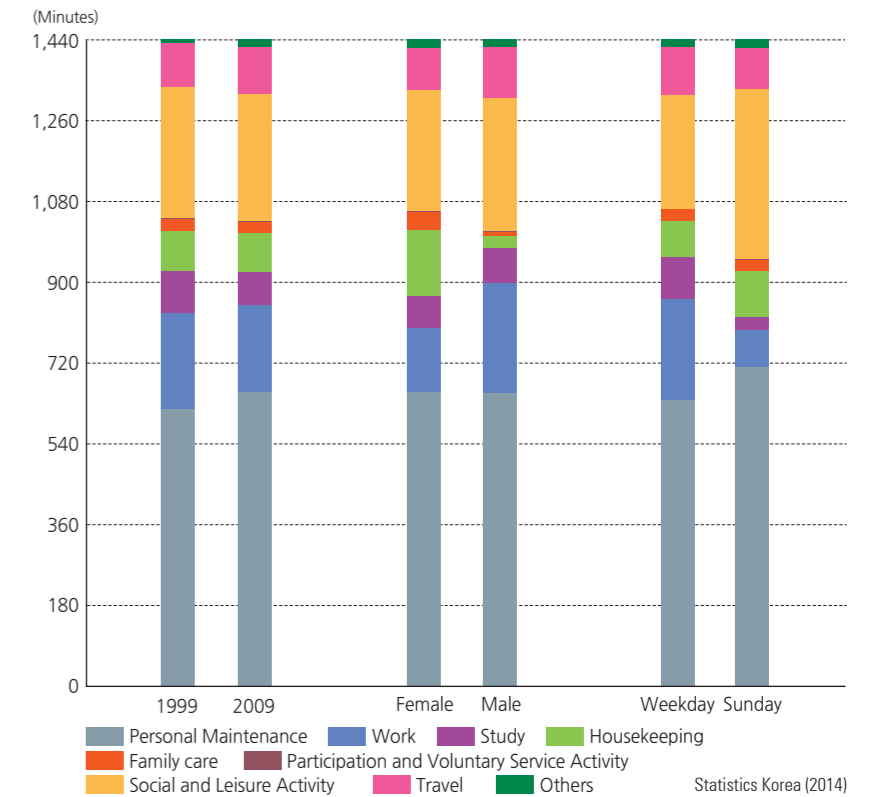


Koreans over age 10 enjoy an average of four hours and fifty minutes of leisure time every day, not counting the time for personal care activities such as sleeping, eating, or work requirements, study, and travel. In terms of how they spend their leisure, sedentary (couch) activities such as watching TV or using the Internet generally dominate on weekdays, while activities such as travel and exercise dominate the weekend. This pattern of leisure activities has been accelerated by the introduction of the five-day work week.

Koreans pursue their leisure in neighborhood parks for simple exercise and in restaurants and coffee shops for meetings and conversations. Many hike during weekends. In addition, regional differences in leisure activities occur from place to place, depending on the accessibility of neighborhood parks and open spaces within residential areas.

There are also age differences in leisure activities. Younger people tend to use more interactive social media, while older people prefer watching TV and walking. The middle-aged population seems to prefer social drinking and mountain climbing. For the younger generation, the proportion who use the Internet is about the same as the proportion who watch TV. The purchase of computers and

## Work and Leisure Time Use by Year, Sex, and Day



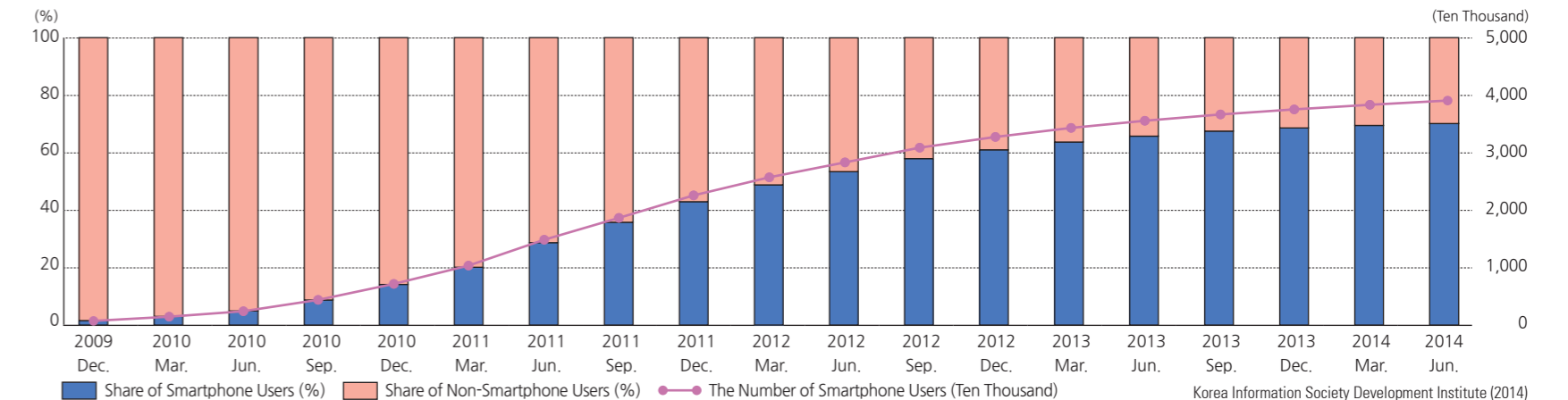
mobile phones is rapidly increasing, both offering easy access to the Internet. In addition, the number of TV channels has increased with the proliferation of cable and satellite broadcasting. Video-on demand (VOD) use is increasing also.



Summer Vacation (Sea)

Summer Vacation (Valley)

## The Growth of Smartphone Users



# Economy and Industry

The story of Korea's economic development is remarkable. Prior to the 1960s, South Korea was one of the poorest nations. But after several decades of rapid growth (see the chart below) South Korea now ranks among the world's most powerful economies. According to the World Bank (2014), Korea's gross domestic product (GDP, the total value of everything produced) was ranked 12th in the world in 2014 at 1 trillion won, or 1,410 billion US dollars. In terms of international trading, the highest volume of exports was to China, followed by the United States, Japan, Singapore, and Vietnam. Meanwhile, China was also the country from which Korea received the most imports, followed by Japan, the United States, and Saudi Arabia. In particular, China has been Korea's most important trading partner since 2007.

A common trend has occurred in many industrialized countries as their economy grows. Primary industries (such as agricultural, forestry, and livestock industries) are the most important at the outset, but they begin to make up a smaller and smaller percentage of the total national production, while secondary industries (such as manufacturing) increase in importance. Finally, as manufacturing declines in relative importance, the service industries grow. Service industries provide non-material products including commerce, food and lodging, tourism, transportation, communication, finance, real estate, health and medical care, and so forth. Service activities are diverse and vary from simple labor to complex knowledge dissemination, and from satisfying individual needs to assisting with various other production activities.

Compared to other developed countries, the shift away from primary industries occurred rapidly in Korea. Agricultural production fell from 40% to 7% of national production in only 26 years in Korea, compared to 100 years in Britain, the Netherlands, and Denmark, and over 90 years in the United States, Germany, and

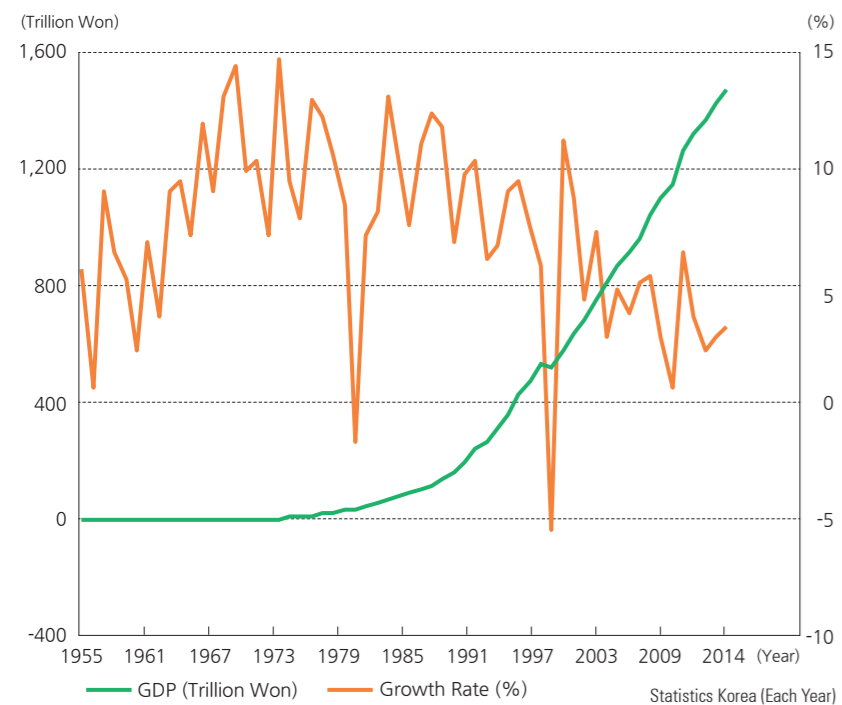
France. In Japan, this shift took close to 73 years. In South Korea, manufacturing reached its peak in the 1990s and currently service industries are growing and have become the main foundation of the Korean economy. The economic sectors of agriculture, forestry, fishery, mining, and manufacturing have continued to decline since 1993, while service sectors have increased.

The decline and structural changes in the primary industries did not occur uniformly across regions in Korea. Most rural areas did not have enough local jobs to absorb the surplus agricultural labor force. Therefore, there was mass migration to the cities, with almost no migration to rural areas. As a result, there are still some areas that maintain a high proportion of employment in the primary industries. During the early industrialization stage in the 1960s, Seoul was the most important manufacturing center in the country. Since the 1980s, however, manufacturing has become suburbanized and decentralized outside of the Greater Seoul Metropolitan area.

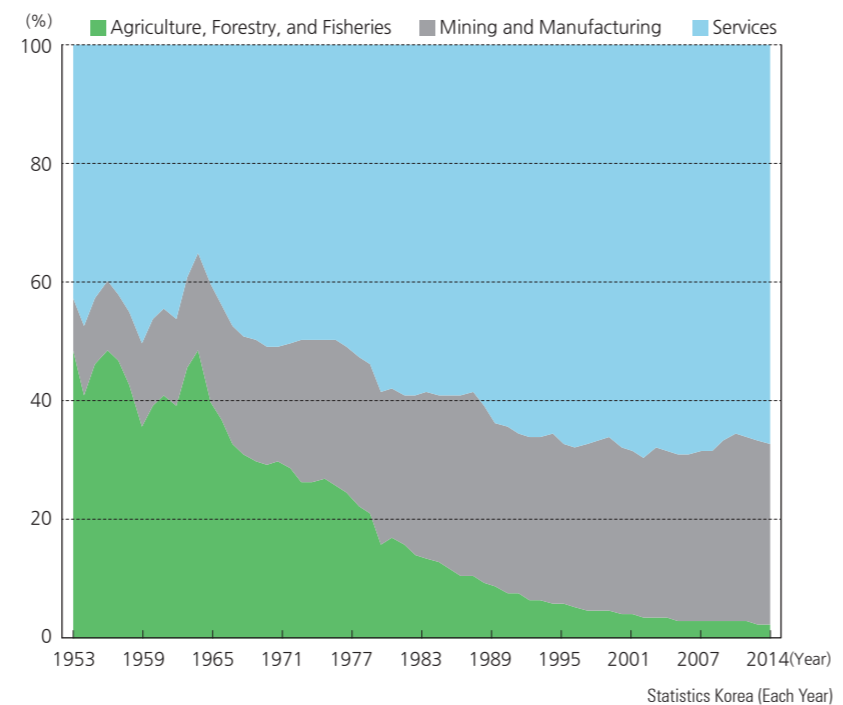


Traditional farming in a rice paddy

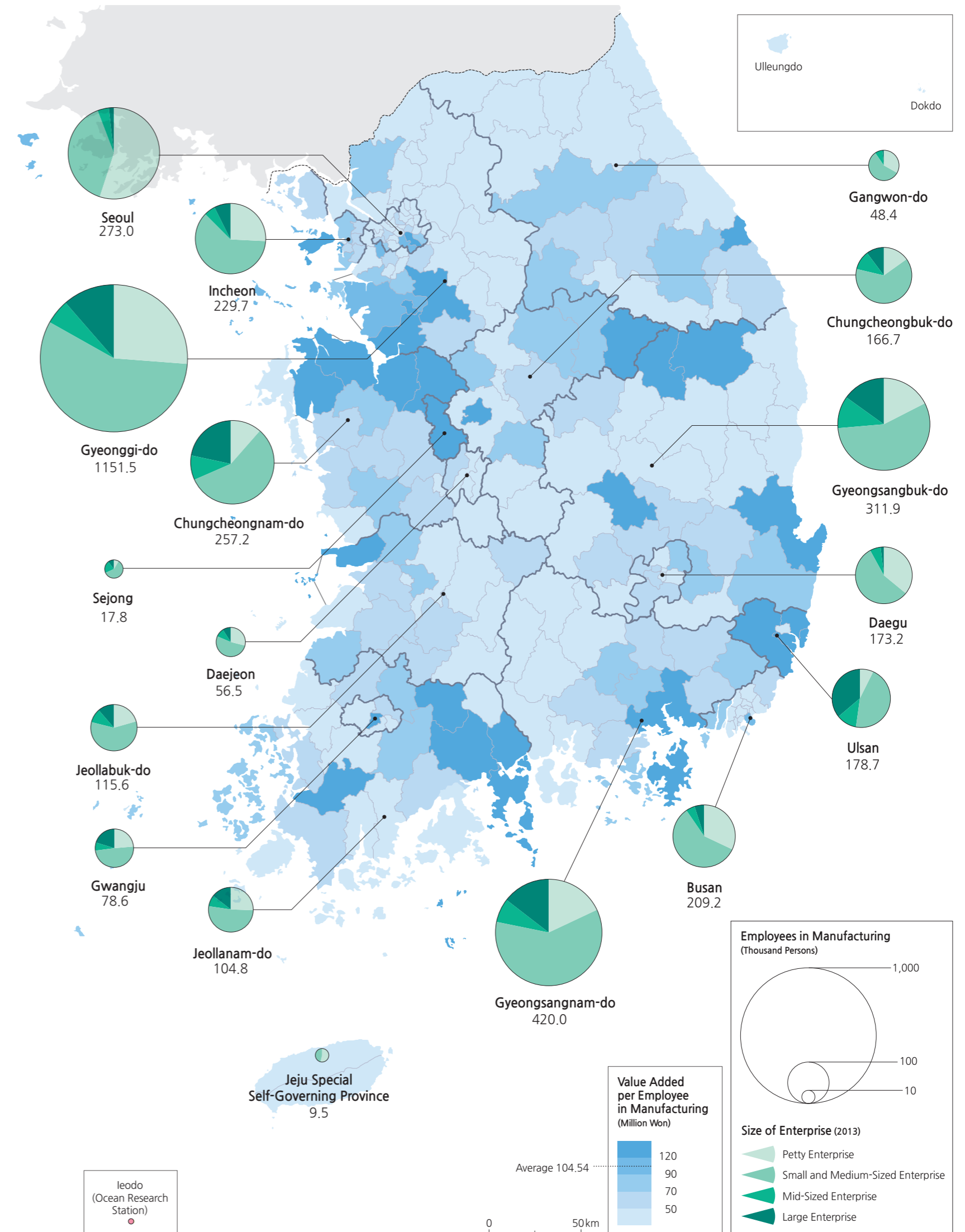
## Trends in the Real Growth Rate of GDP (1955-2014)



## Changes in GDP by Industry (1953-2014)



## Employees in Manufacturing (2012)



17 Metropolitan and Province Government (2012), Statistics Korea (2013)

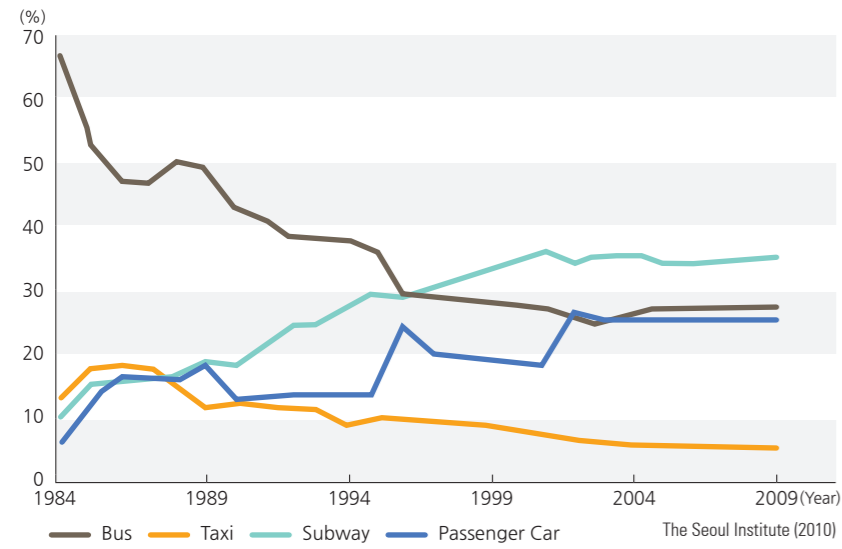
# Transportation

Rivers and mountains once hampered travel from place to place within Korea. The development of an efficient transportation network, with highways, airports, and high-speed railways has made it possible for travelers to move from point-to-point anywhere within Korea within a half-day. Korea's entry into modern transportation actually began with railways and airfields that the Japanese built to invade Korea and seize its resources during the colonial period. In 1955, diesel engine locomotives and a subway system were introduced while double-track railway projects were also promoted. The modernization of rail traffic has been ongoing, and in 2004 the Seoul-Busan High Speed Railway began operation. Korea's air transportation has opened a new chapter with the opening of the ultra-modern Incheon International Airport on Yeongjong Island in 2001.

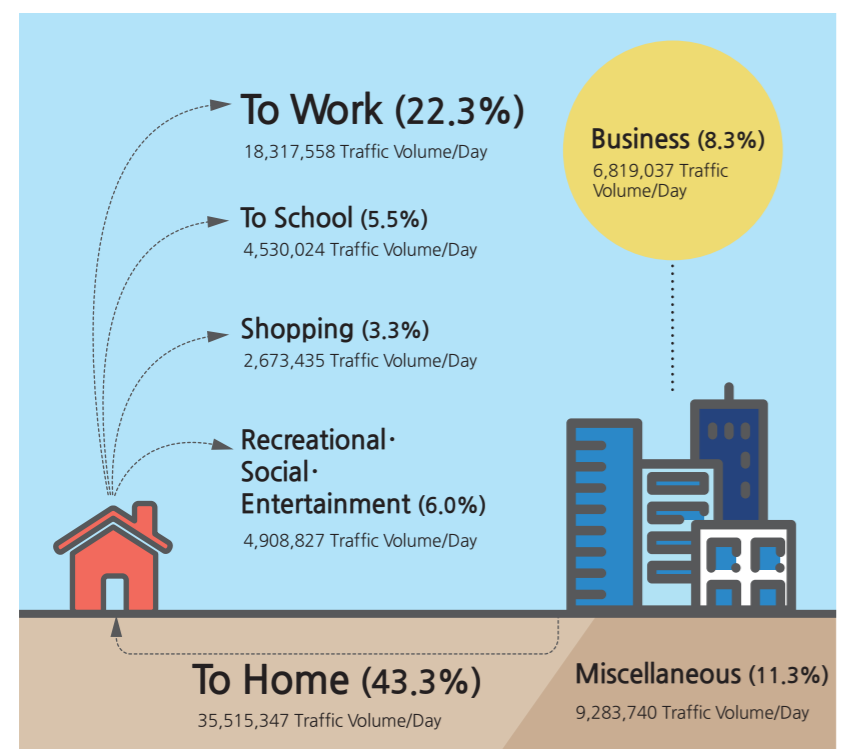


Seohaedaegyo bridge

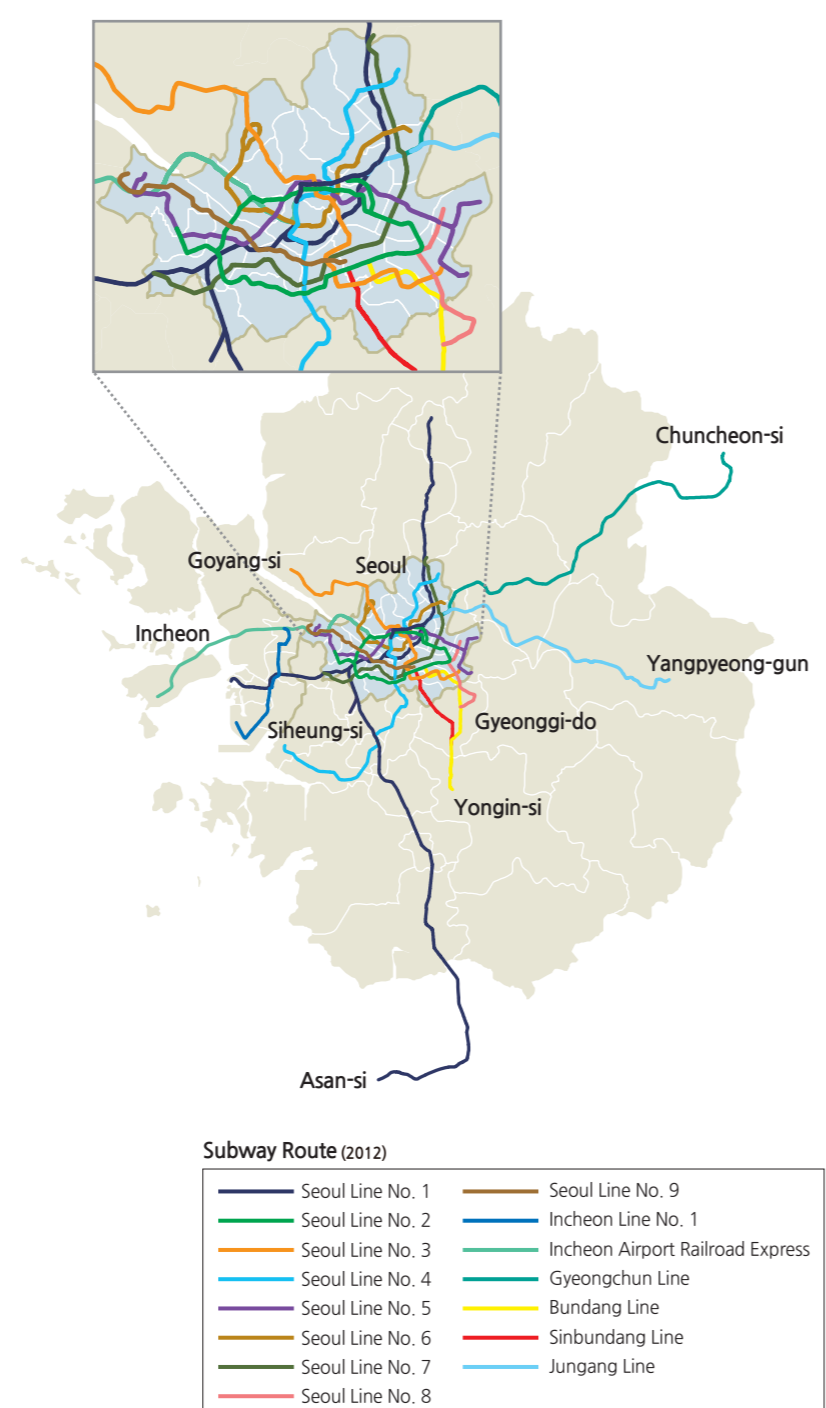
## Share of Transportation by Transit System



## Trips by Purpose (2013)



## Seoul Metropolitan Railroad Map



## Korea's National Transportation Network



As economic development gained momentum, transportation infrastructures were rapidly built to support the transformation. Numerous important industries were developed, and in order

to service those industries a main transportation network was established to connect Seoul with Busan. The most notable project was the 428 km Gyeongbu Expressway, opened in 1970.