

PEOPLE AND CULTURE OF KOREA



This fashionable couple illustrates traditional Korean clothing styles of the late 19th century. Painting by Shin Yunbok also known as Hyewon (1758-1813), from the album known as Hyewon Pungsokdo, Gansong Art Museum, Seoul.



Gyeongbokgung in the Evening



An outdoor event performer poses in traditional Korean costume with a typical Korean drum.

The style of a group of people—expressed, for example, in music, literature, or art—helps to define its culture, the set of characteristics that makes a group unique. Culture can also include everyday things such as cuisine, language, sports, school activities, interpersonal interactions, or etiquette. In the modern world, many cultures have lost some of their former characteristics, becoming 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 now 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, with benefits both for Korea and for the rest of the world.

The physical environment of Korea has helped to shape a unique national culture that has flourished for centuries. Its peninsular location kept Korea separated

enough from the rest of Asia to develop its own culture, while the surrounding seas fostered a rich exchange of ideas with other countries in the region. The varied terrain and seasonal climate patterns have influenced clothing styles, types of food, and architecture. The peninsula is one of the most densely populated territories in the world, and this 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 created cultural differences on both sides of the DMZ. While South Korea has benefitted from a greater openness and interconnectedness with the rest of the world, North Korea has become 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 belonging to the same culture.



Family in Traditional Clothes Playing a Typical Korean Game Called Yutnori



Korean Foods: Bibimbap with Many Side Dishes

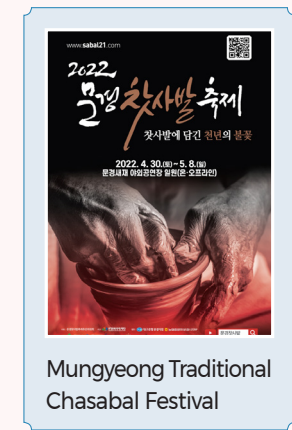
Poster Advertising Diverse Local Festivals



Jarasum Jazz Festival



Hwacheon Sancheoneo (Mountain Trout) Ice Festival



Mungyeong Traditional Chasabal Festival



Incheon Rice Cultural Festival



Ganggyeong Salted Seafood Festival



Gimje Horizon Festival



Muju Firefly Festival

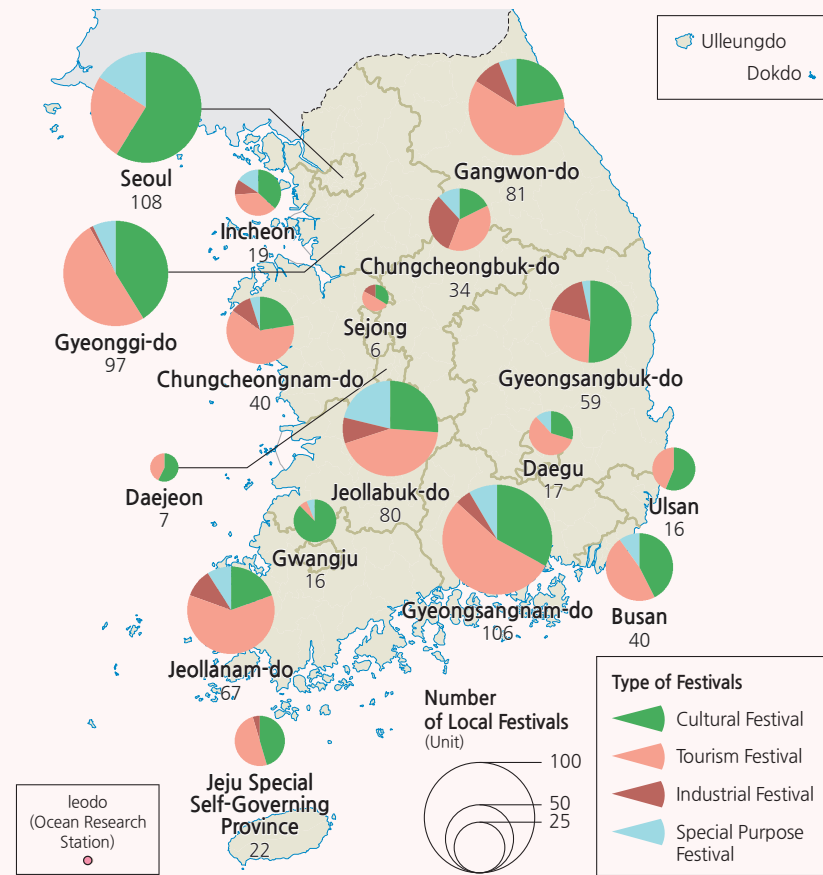


Memorial Chungjang Festival

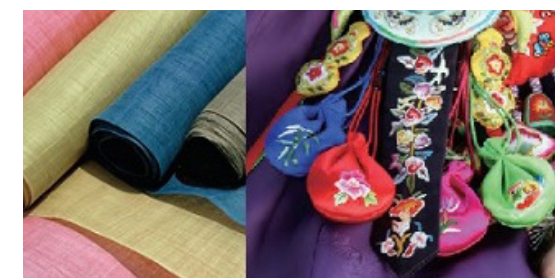


Gangjin Celadon Festival

Local Festivals (2017)



Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (2017)



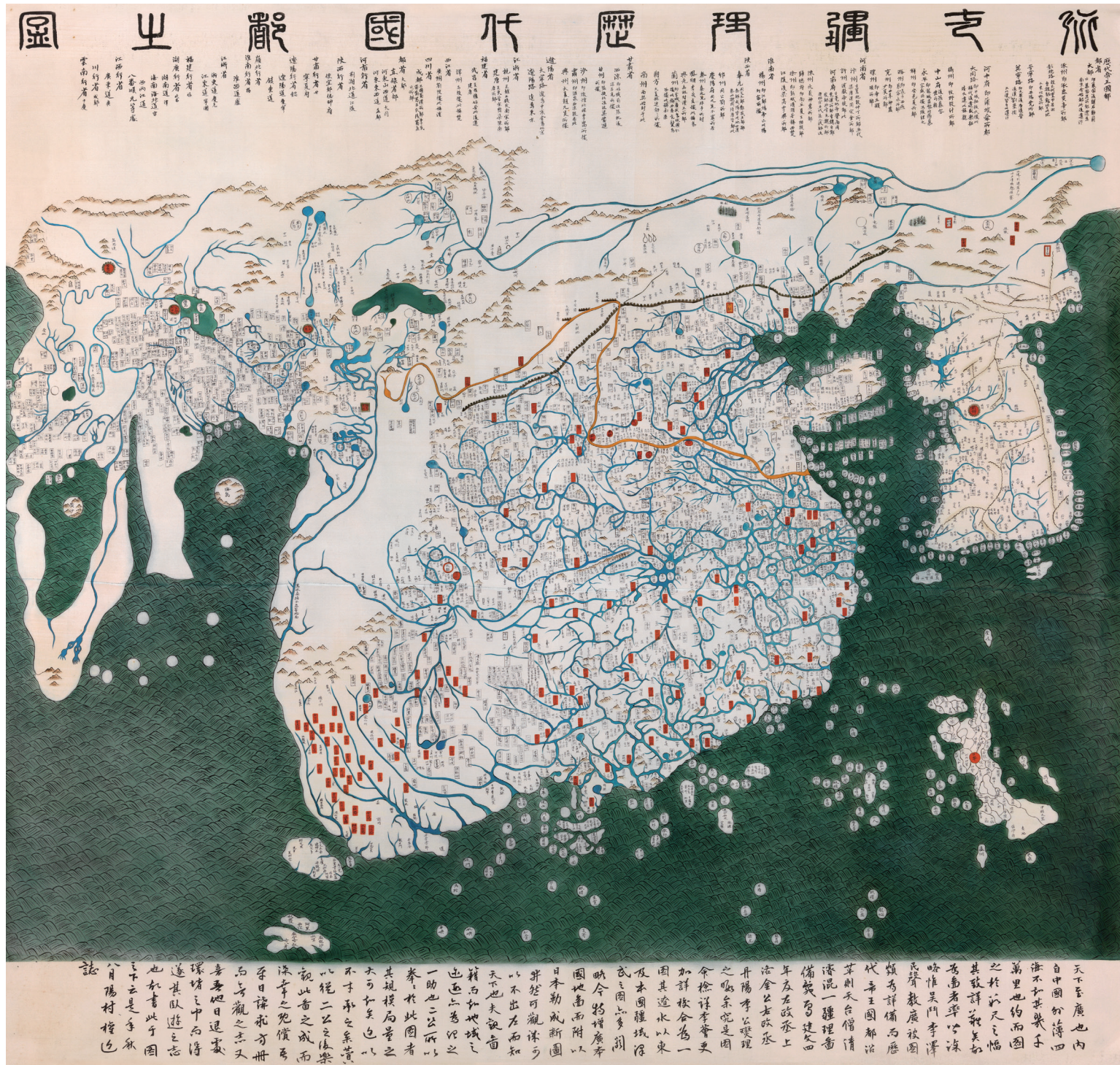
Traditional Fabric and Lucky Bags



Jangdokdae



Hansanmosi



Map of an Integrated Territory of Historic Countries and Their Capitals, Kwon Keun and Lee Hoe, 1402.

For thousands of years, Korean culture has placed great emphasis on learning and scholarship. Korea has an especially long and distinguished tradition in cartography, or the art and science of making maps.

This map was drawn by Korean cartographers in 1402 and indicates the advanced knowledge of Korea at an early period. The Korean peninsula is depicted in detail on the right of the map. China and India are shown as a large, combined land mass at center. Japan is the island at the lower right. A greatly misshapen Europe and Africa are drawn at far left. In general, lands farther from Korea are more distorted and less accurate, with fewer details represented. The map was one of the best of its time and reflects the global outlook and cultural exchanges of the Joseon Dynasty (1392–910) of Korean history.

Ancient historical and prehistoric features of global importance are evidence of the long history of human settlement on the Korean Peninsula. The United Nations has designated many of these features as World Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites as part of a global program to identify, celebrate, and protect important historical resources for the benefit of all humankind. Some of these sites in Korea feature dolmens: large, stacked boulders linked to the Bronze Age that served as burial markers. The impressive Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty, found across 18 locations in Korea, signify the worldviews and rituals of the time periods when they were built. Other interesting sites include a palace, a Confucian shrine, and several fortresses. Scattered across the Korean landscape, these cultural monuments

attest to the long and continuous nature of one of the most ancient civilizations on Earth.

The Korean World Heritage sites are mainly distributed in the central capital area and Gyeongsangbuk-do. Because Seoul has functioned as the capital of Korea since the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910), several historical sites are found there, such as the Changdeokgung Palace Complex, the Confucian Shrine, and the royal tombs of the dynasty. The military facilities located around Seoul also functioned in defense of the capital; chief among these are the Hwaseong Fortress and Namhansanseong.

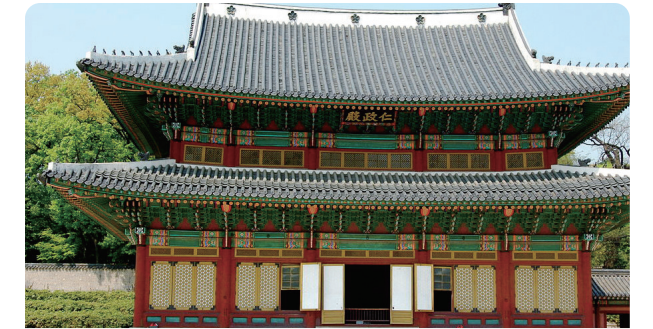
Gyeongju in Gyeongsangbuk-do is also noteworthy as an important historical spot. As the former capital of the ancient kingdom Silla (57 BC–935), Gyeongju still possesses a variety of relics from ancient times, such as the Seokguram Grotto and Bulguksa Temple. Additionally, in Gyeongsangbuk-do, there are historical villages dating back to the early Joseon Dynasty. Meanwhile, there are two heritage sites in North Korea: the Historic Monuments and Sites in Gaeseong and the Complex of Goguryeo Tombs.

The Korean folk villages of Hahoe and Yangdong and the royal shrine in Jongmyo are also worthy of notice. Daily life in the folk villages remains in keeping with Korean traditional customs. Programs at the royal shrine demonstrate the Confucian traditions of the Joseon dynasty's royal family through various performances, such as rituals, music, and dance.

World Heritage Sites



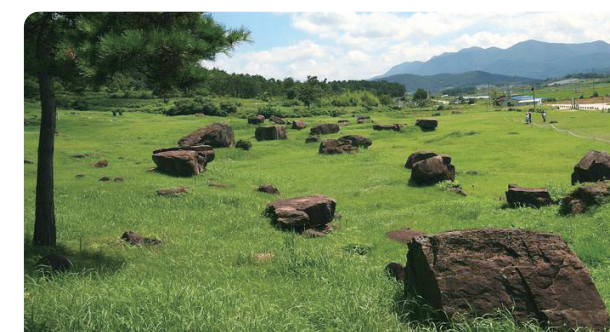
Hwaseong Fortress, Built to Defend Seoul by Order of King Jeongjo (1776-1800)



Changdeokgung, the King's Palace of the Joseon Dynasty, Serving as the Main Palace for 300 Years



Jongmyo, a Confucian Shrine Dedicated to Kings and Queens of the Joseon Dynasty



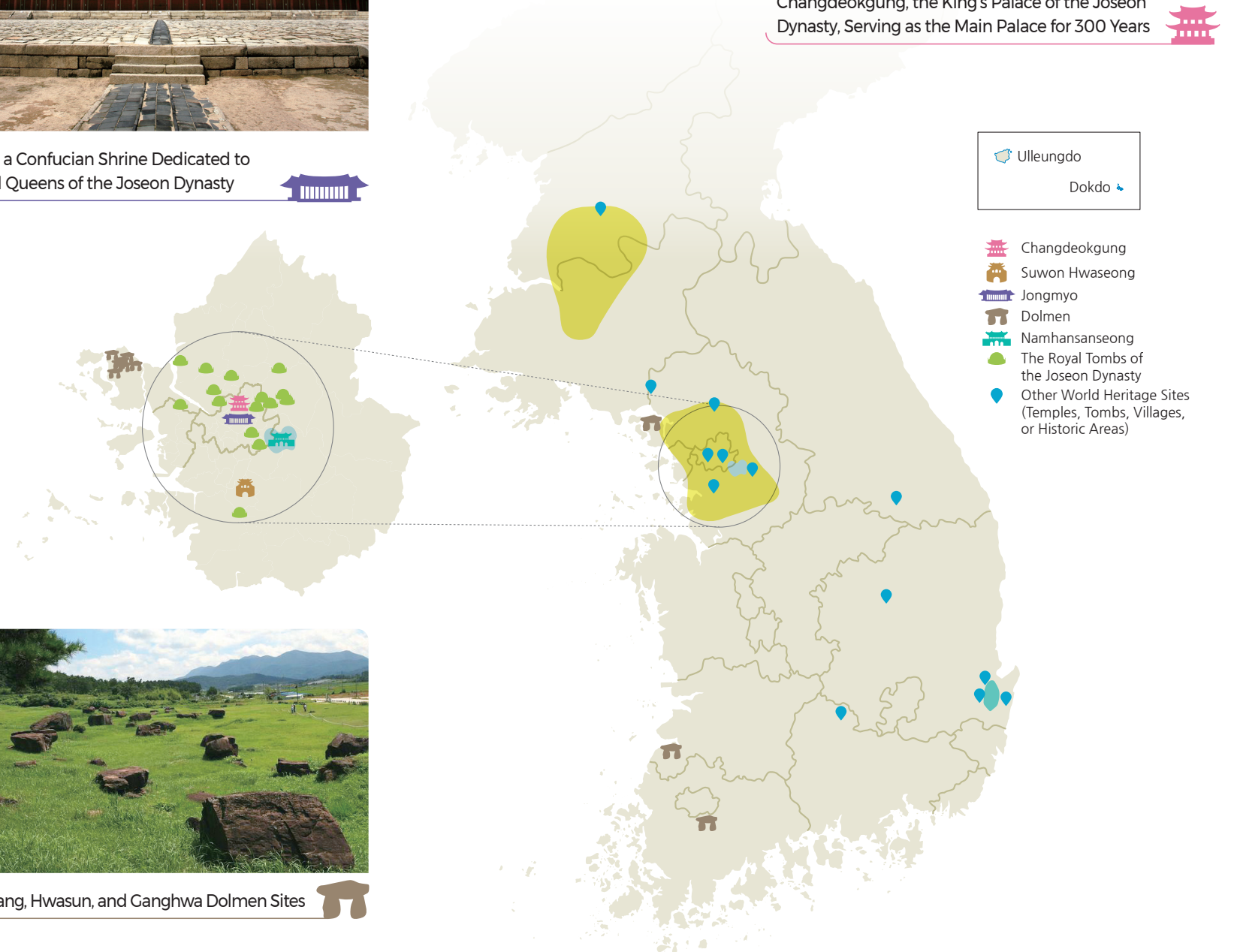
The Gochang, Hwasun, and Ganghwa Dolmen Sites



Namhansanseong Fortress, Located in Rugged Terrain on the Eastern Side of Seoul



The Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty



leodo (Ocean Research Station) (2022)

Korean Language



King Sejong the Great (1418-1450)

Korean Language: A Defining Cultural Symbol

The Korean language represents the Koreanic language family, which has been spoken on the Korean Peninsula and parts of Manchuria for thousands of years. Despite attempts to demonstrate a relationship between Korean and various language families spoken elsewhere in Asia, any such connection is tenuous and remains uncertain. Apart from sharing loan words with Japanese, for example, Korean appears to have been evolving as a separate language for a long time.

Beginning in the Gojoseon period, written Korean used Hanja script, based on Chinese characters. In 1443 AD, King Sejong the Great (1418–1450) devised a new alphabet known as Hangeul, that is the official script used today for Korean. Sejong designed Hangeul to make it easier for all classes of society to learn to read and write. Hangeul is a well-designed, orderly script that encodes features of pronunciation in a systematic way using 24 letters: 14 consonants and 10 vowels. These can be combined to form grouped symbols representing syllables. Unlike Chinese and Japanese, Korean writing typically runs from left to right. Because of its systematic structure, Hangeul has been well-suited for use with modern technological devices such as mobile phones.

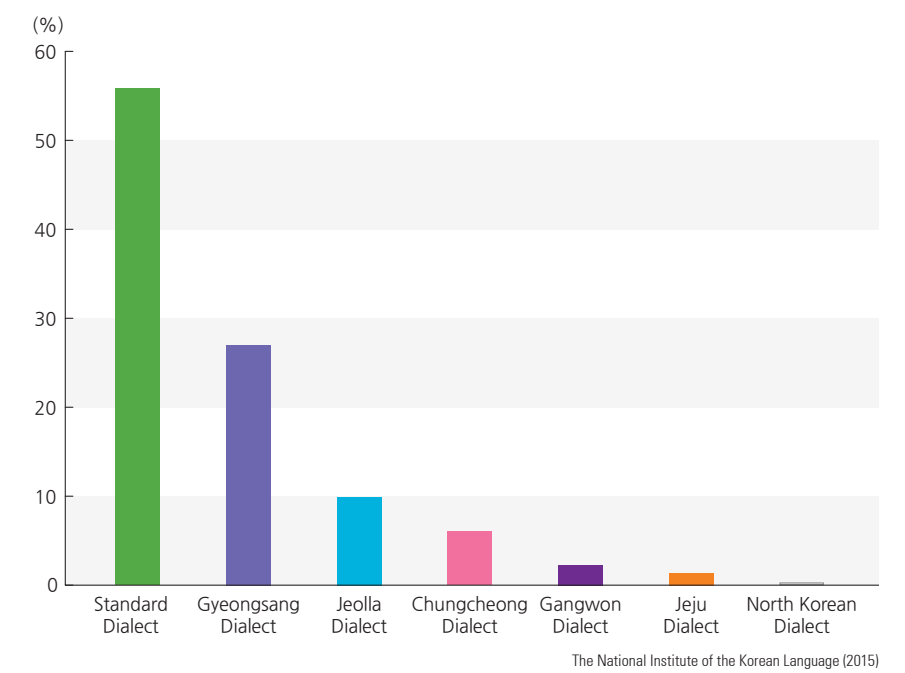
Korean language and the Hangeul script are used in both North and South Korea. Since their separation, some differences in dialect and vocabulary have emerged between the two states. Meanwhile, regional differences among dialects within South Korea have narrowed in the past century as a result of efficient transportation and increased mobility and interaction between regions. Within South Korea, six dialects have been identified, namely the standard, Gangwon, Chungcheong, Jeolla, Gyeongsang, and Jeju dialects. This classification was used in a 2015 survey performed by the National Institute of the Korean Language that measured Koreans' consciousness of language use. The nationwide survey showed that 54.5% claimed to use the standard dialect, 26.4% used the Gyeongsang dialect, 9.7% used the Jeolla dialect, 5.8% used the Chungcheong dialect, 2.2% used the Gangwon dialect, 1.3% used the Jeju dialect, and 0.1% used the North Korean dialect. Today, migration and urbanization impact the usage of local dialects.

"Memory of the World" is an international initiative led by UNESCO in order to facilitate and encourage the preservation of humanity's valuable documentary heritage, such as official documents, books, works of art, letters, and historical monuments. Since 1997, it has nominated such artifacts every two years to the Memory of the World. Most of the Korean heritage materials designated are textual materials like books, diaries, and government records. By 2019, seventeen Korean items had been registered as such. Korea ranks first in all of Asia for its preservation of such documentary materials and ranks fifth in the world overall. Some of these items are also designated as national treasures, such as the *Hunmin jeongeum* Manuscript. *Hunmin jeongeum* is the original name for Hangeul. This manuscript explains the reasons for creating the new letters and the scientific principles behind their use.

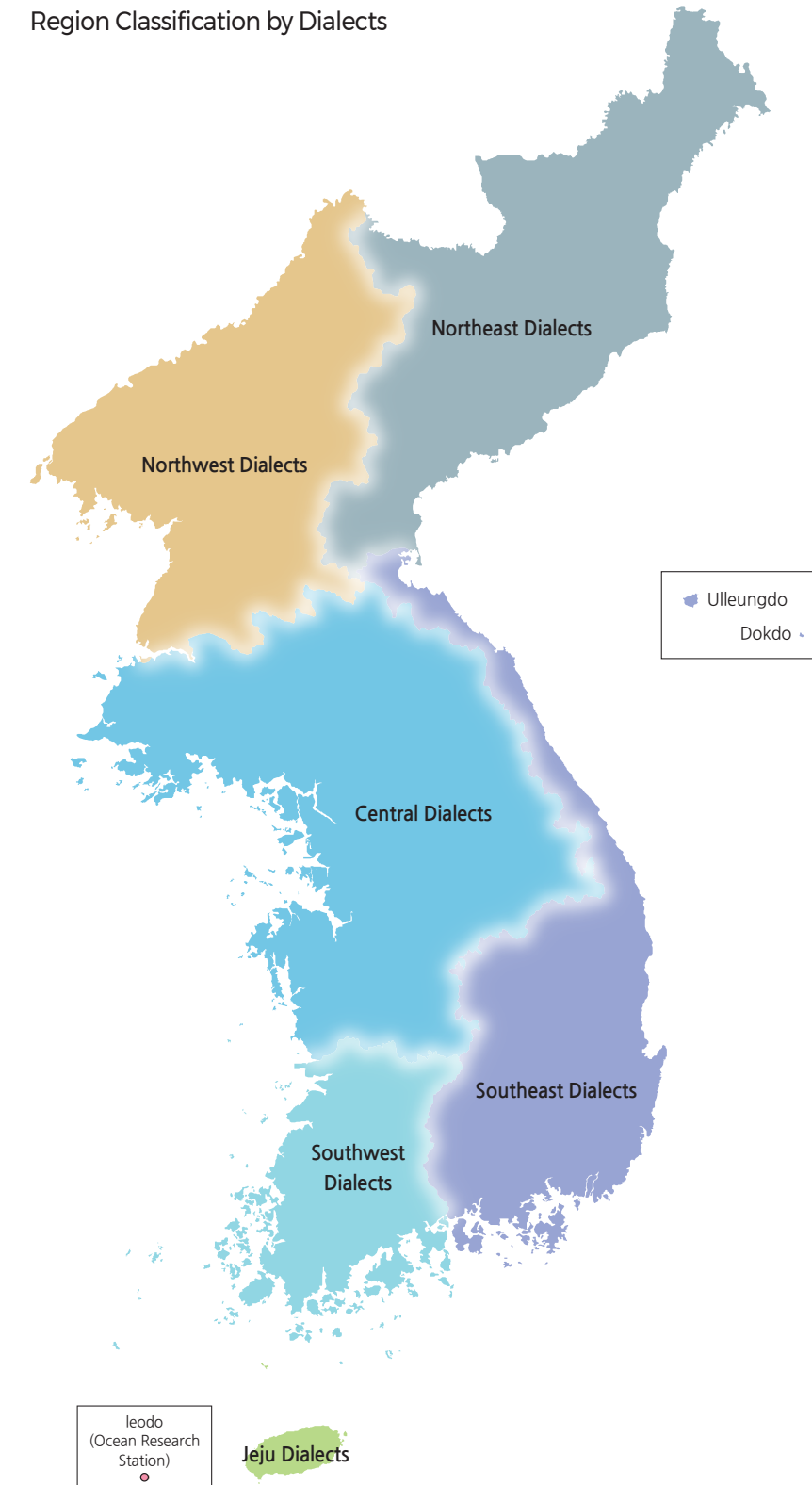


Street Scene in Daegu, where the Gyeongsang Dialect is Prevalent

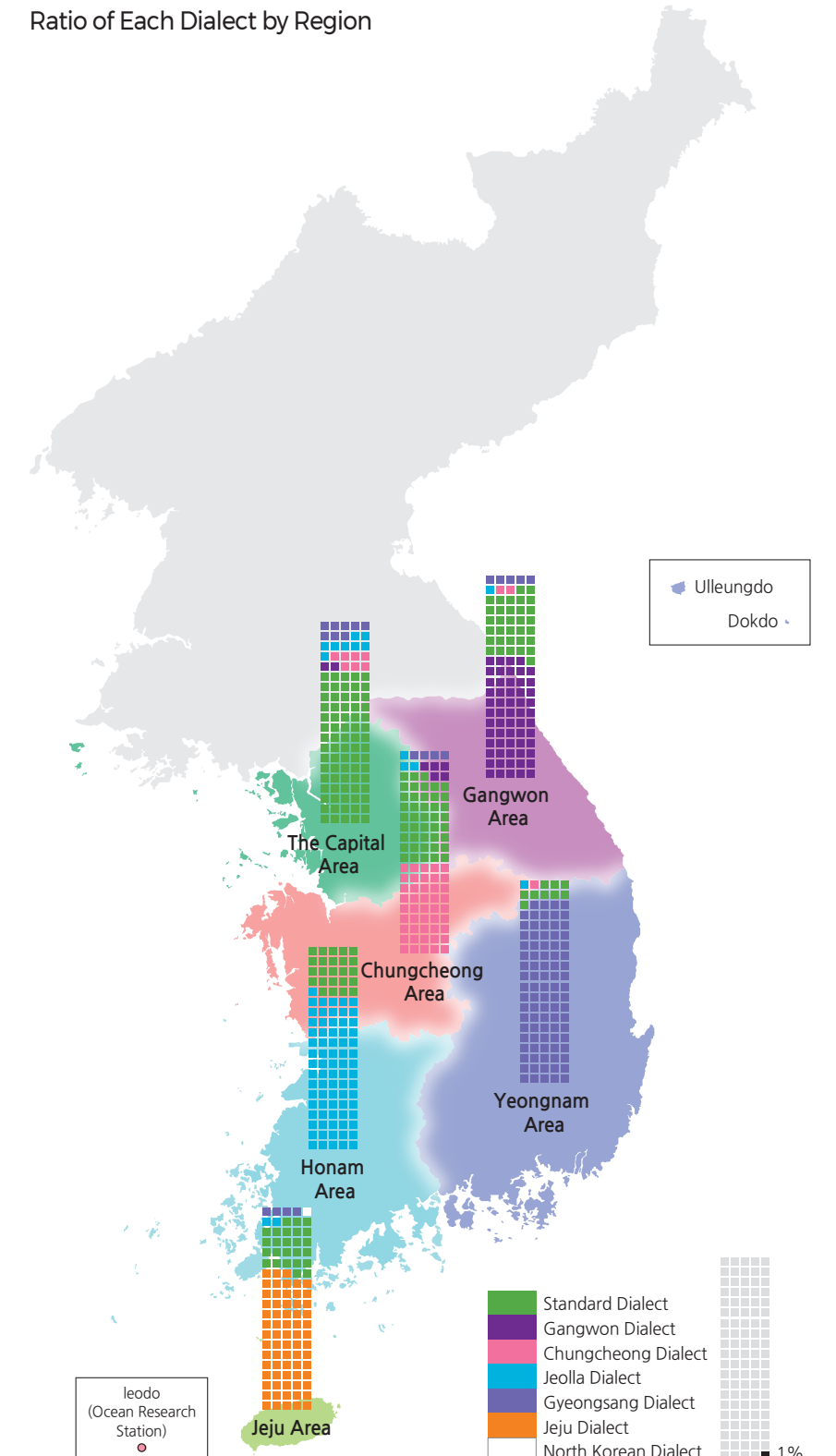
Dialects by Percentage of Citizens Using Each Dialect



Region Classification by Dialects



Ratio of Each Dialect by Region



The Hunminjeongeum Manuscript



Korean Calligraphy Master

Calligraphy Lesson by Eunjung Song, licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0 via flickr.

한글 HANGUL

CONSONANTS	PLAIN	TENSE	ASPIRATED
PLAIN	ㄱ/g/k, ㄴ/n/n, ㄷ/d/t, ㄹ/r/l, ㅁ/m/m, ㅂ/b/p, ㅅ/s/t, ㅇ/-ng, ㅈ/j/t, ㅎ/h	ㄱᄀ/kk/k, ㄴᄀ/tt/-, ㅅᄀ/pp/-, ㅈᄀ/ss/t, ㅊᄀ/jj/-	ㅋ/k/k, ㆁ/t/t, ㆁᄀ/p/p, ㆁᄀ/ch/t

Some consonants sound differently at the beginning and end of syllables.

For example, ㅈ sounds like **ch** when it's the first letter in a syllable, and like **t** when it's the last.

VOWELS	PLAIN	TENSE	ASPIRATED
PLAIN	ㅏ/a, ㅑ/ya, ㅓ/eo, ㅕ/yeo, ㅗ/o, ㅛ/yo, ㅜ/u, ㅠ/yu, ㅡ/eu, ㅣ/i	ㅏᄀ/father, ㅑᄀ/yard, ㅓᄀ/dog, ㅕᄀ/young, ㅗᄀ/home, ㅛᄀ/yo, ㅜᄀ/moon, ㅠᄀ/you, ㅡᄀ/good, ㅣᄀ/see	ㅏᄀ/ae, ㅑᄀ/yae, ㅓᄀ/e, ㅕᄀ/ye, ㅗᄀ/oe, ㅛᄀ/wi, ㅜᄀ/ui, ㅡᄀ/wa, ㅝᄀ/wo, ㅞᄀ/wae, ㅟᄀ/we

These charts use Revised Romanization. The examples under each romanized vowel are based on American-English pronunciation; they are not exact equivalents.

Hangul Chart

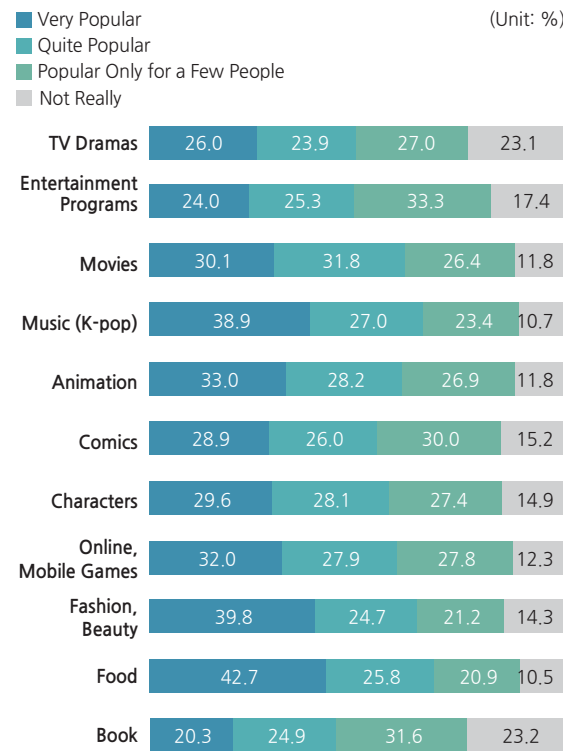
Hangul chart by Lenoresem, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons

Korean Wave

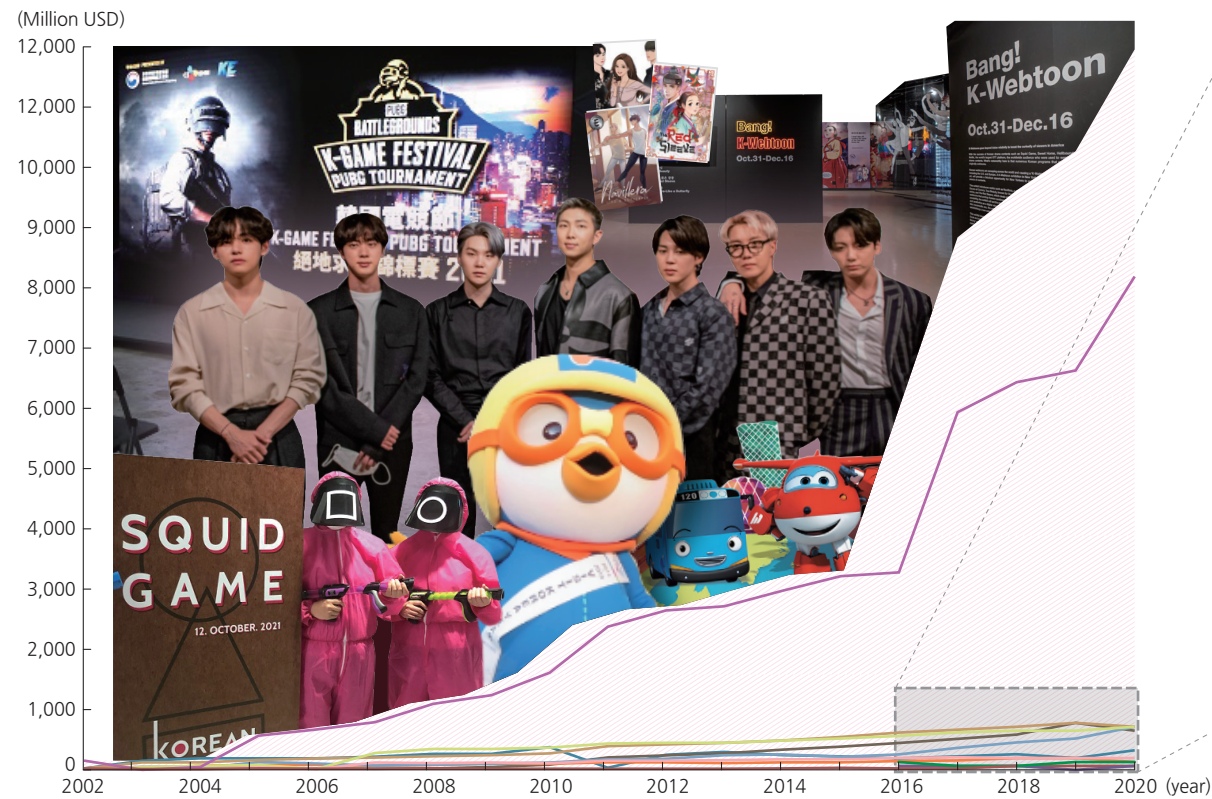
South Korea is increasingly well-connected with the rest of the globe through international diplomacy, educational exchanges, tourism, and trade. Perhaps Korea's most widely-dispersed export is that of Korean culture: K-pop, K-dramas, animations, comics, and Korean-designed video and computer games. The term Korean Wave expresses the recent, rapid spread of Korean culture throughout Asia and across the world.

The origin of the Korean Wave can be traced back to Korean TV dramas in 1997, which were televised by CCTV in China. From then through the early 2000s, Korean dramas and Korean pop songs gained popularity in China, Taiwan, and Vietnam. These early successes led to the spread of Korean popular culture to more countries, such as Japan and Hong Kong. Beginning in the middle of the 2000s, Korean songs were popularized beyond China, Japan, and Southeastern Asia, spread in part by popular video websites and social networking services (SNS). By 2010, K-pop music had risen to global popularity, reaching Europe and North America. During the past decade, the Korean Wave has become a global phenomenon expressed as a broad interest in many diverse aspects of K-Culture.

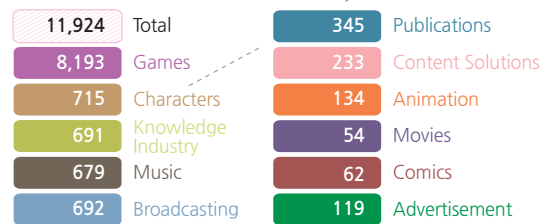
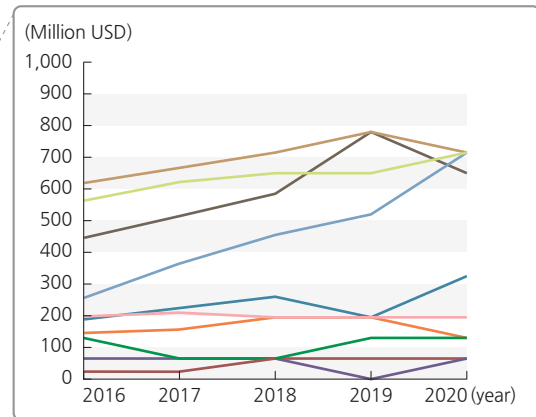
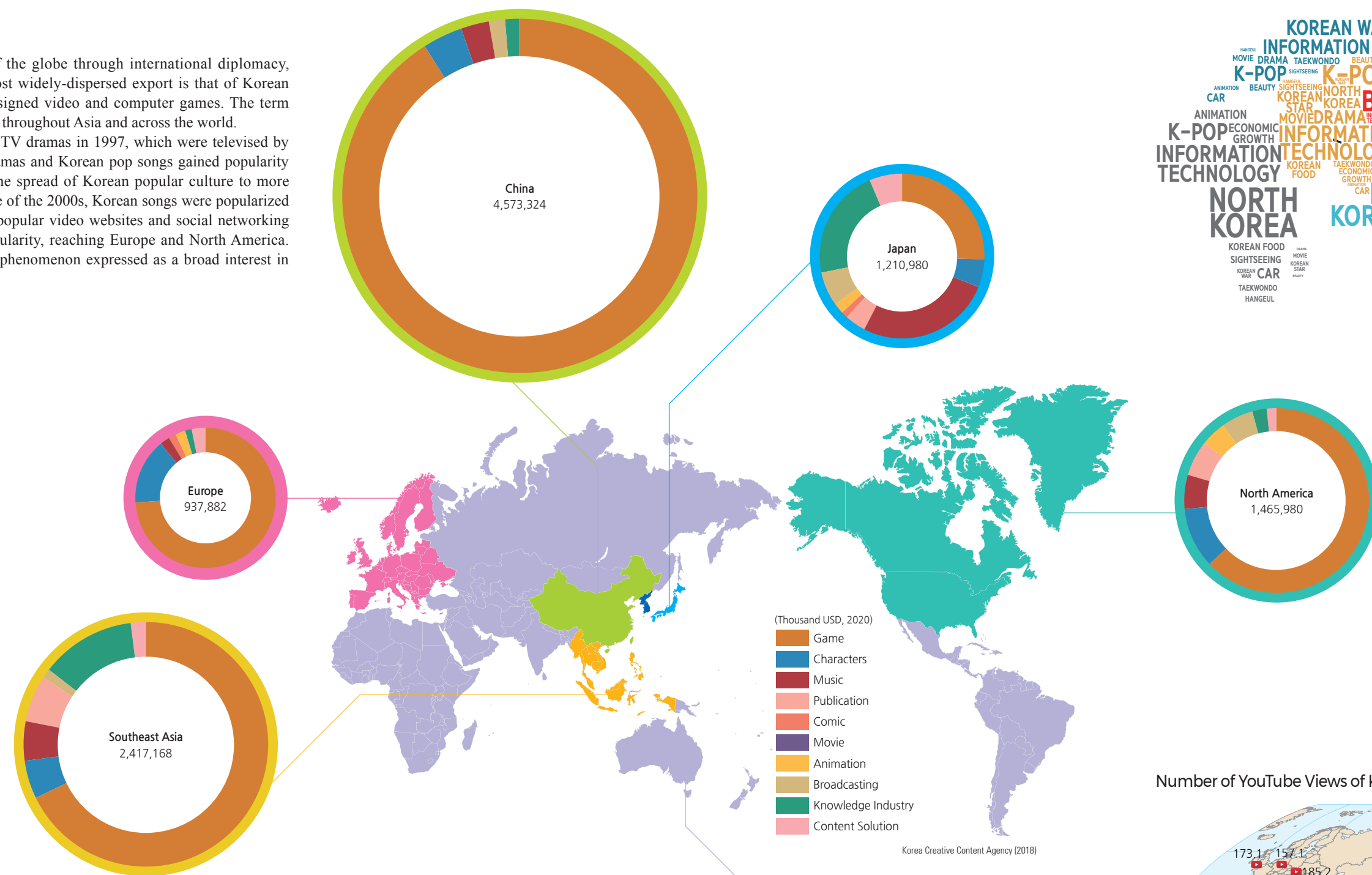
Popularity of Korean Wave



Export of Korean Wave



Korean Wave in the World



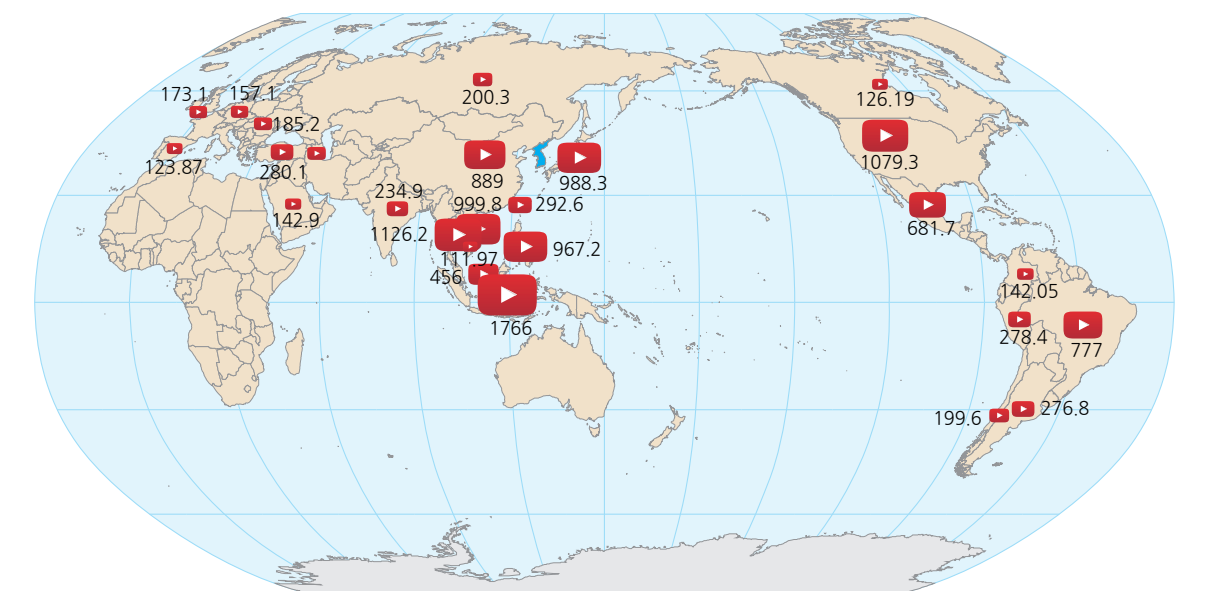
Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (MCST) (2022)

Image of the Republic of Korea



Korean Wave (Paris, France)

Number of YouTube Views of K-Pop Stars by Country



For Artists with Annual Views of more than 1 Billion Views (Duration: 2018. 08. 29-2019. 08. 27)
*Note: Materials on YouTube Charts (Charts, Youtube.com)

(Unit: Million View)

Along with the television and music industries, the gaming industry has grown dramatically over the past several years. Exports of character-related merchandise have increased gradually along with the spread of the Korean Wave, reflecting the consumption of Korean popular culture directly or indirectly through drama, K-pop, and Internet media. A majority of Korean cultural content is exported to East Asia (64%), with 45% going to China and 19% to Japan.

The most common image that foreigners associate with Korea is "K-pop," followed by "North Korea," "IT industry," and "Korean food." K-pop ranks first in the Americas, Europe, and Southeast Asia. Recent controversies surrounding North

Korea's nuclear weapons seem to be the reason why "North Korea" is ranked second.

The popularity of K-pop, which is leading the Korean Wave, is also reflected in YouTube views. As of August 2019, the number of YouTube views of Korea's leading artists in the past year has exceeded 14.7 billion views worldwide. More than one billion people in countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, the United States, and Vietnam watch YouTube content from Korean artists. Recently, various elements of the Korean Wave, such as K-pop, food, fashion, and beauty, account for a significant portion of the world's popular YouTube content.



Danwon Pungsokdo Cheop

One distinct feature of Korean food culture is the development of fermented food, such as kimchi, a dish of salted and fermented vegetables. Fermenting was initially used as a method to preserve vegetables for use throughout the winter. Various Korean pastes and sauces are a type of fermented food used for flavorings, such as Gochujang (red pepper paste), Doenjang (soybean paste), and Ganjang (soy sauce), which were traditionally fermented and consumed in individual households. Recently, with intensified urbanization and a desire for eating outside, especially in the urban areas, an increasing number of households purchase and consume Kimchi and Korean pastes and sauces that are commercially available. In addition, more platforms sell fermented food online. As a result, Korean fermented food has gained popularity worldwide, and global awareness of foods such as Kimchi and Gochujang has increased.

Diets and dining habits are changing in Korea. With more immigrants and foreign residents now living in Korea, many ethnic foods from overseas are being introduced and sold, and creative fusions of foreign and Korean food cultures are being developed.

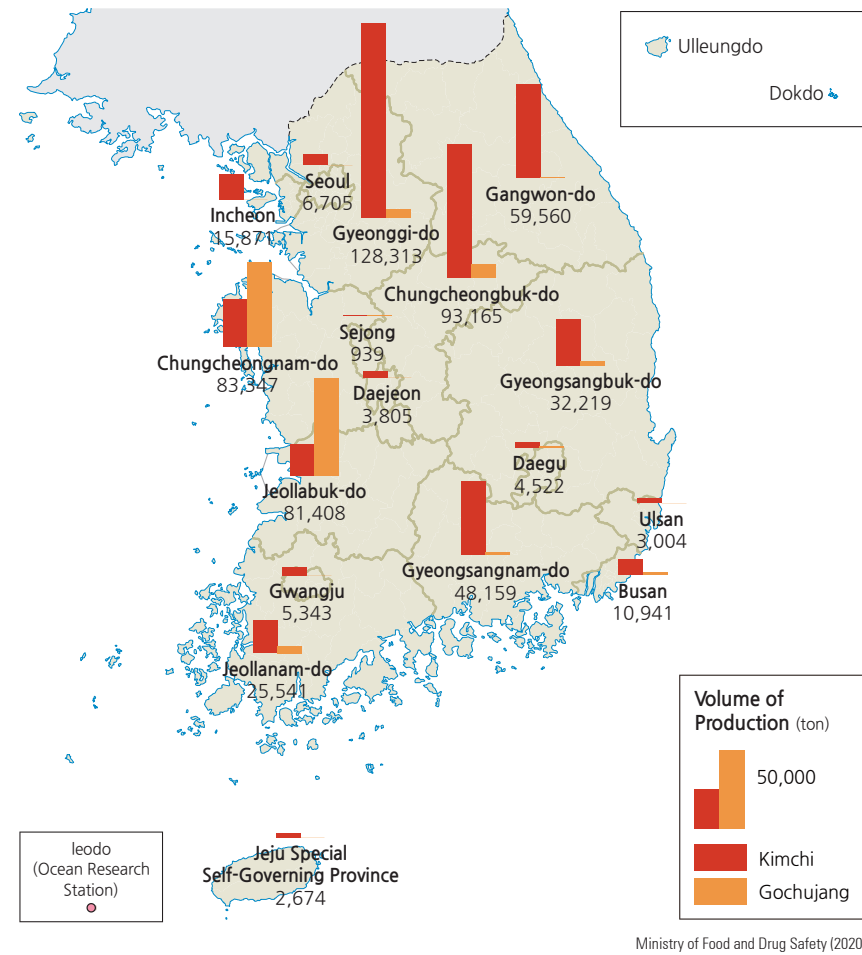


Fermenting Cabbage in Covered Buckets to Make Kimchi in This Specially-made Thatched Hut

Korean cuisine is known and loved around the world for its distinctive flavors and spices. The Korean people have developed a diverse and unique food culture that dates back to ancient times. Evidence about early food practices in Korea can be gleaned by studying archaeological remains of carbonized grains and shell mounds. Ancient artifacts such as fishing tackle indicate that seafood has long been an important part of the diet. The most important grain in the Korean diet has been rice (bap, in Korean). Like many Asian countries in which rice has been a main source of carbohydrates, Korea has worked hard on land reclamation and securing a water supply to cultivate rice. Various reservoirs from ancient times show the long tradition of rice cultivation.

Due to a public health campaign in the 1960s and 1970s encouraging people to consume mixed grains, there was a rapid increase in the consumption of bread and noodles. As a result, rice and wheat are now the two major grains that Koreans consume, with a large portion of the wheat being imported. Recently, rice consumption has decreased due to rapid changes in diet and increased interest in health. The contemporary Korean diet is largely characterized by a reduction in rice consumption and an increase in the consumption of vegetables, fruits, meats, fish, and dairy products.

Production of Kimchi and Gochujang (2020)



A Traditional Wood-Burning Stove Kitchen in Rural Korea



Some Korean restaurants today resemble some Japanese restaurants where a diner sits on the floor with mats, while food is served on a very low table. Korean hosts are normally very gracious in offering lots of dishes.

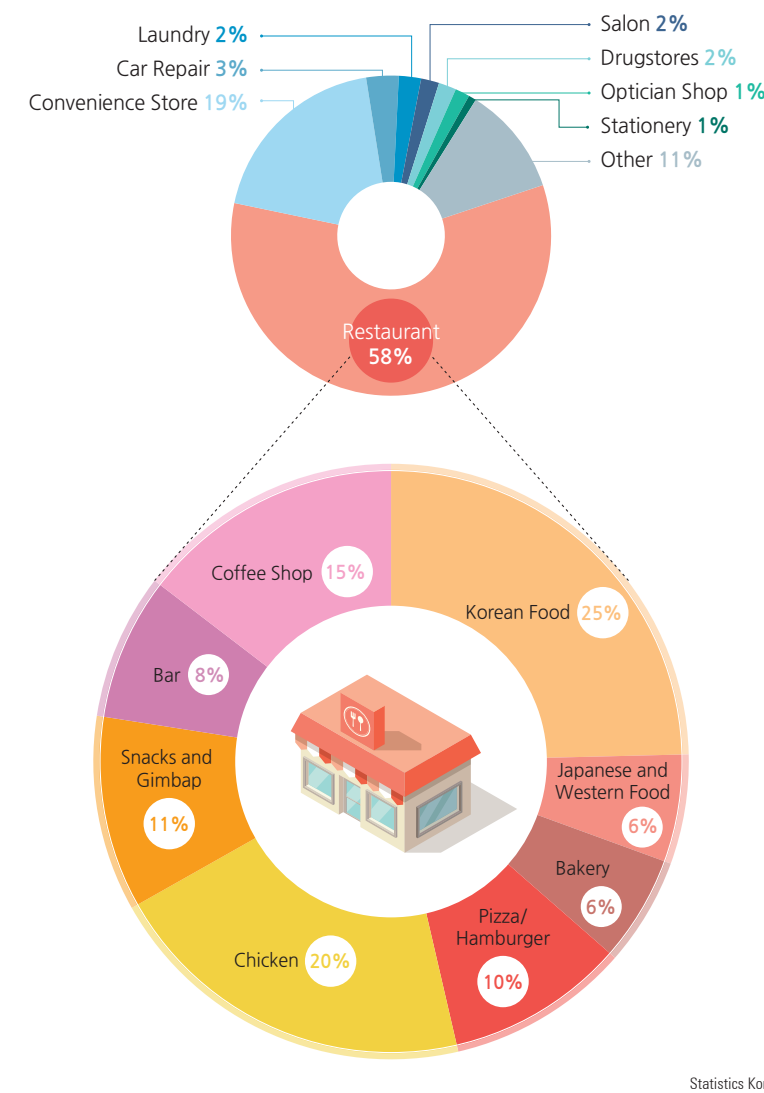


An Open-Air Fish Market Where Women Sell Live Seafood, including Octopus, Squid, and Sea Snails.



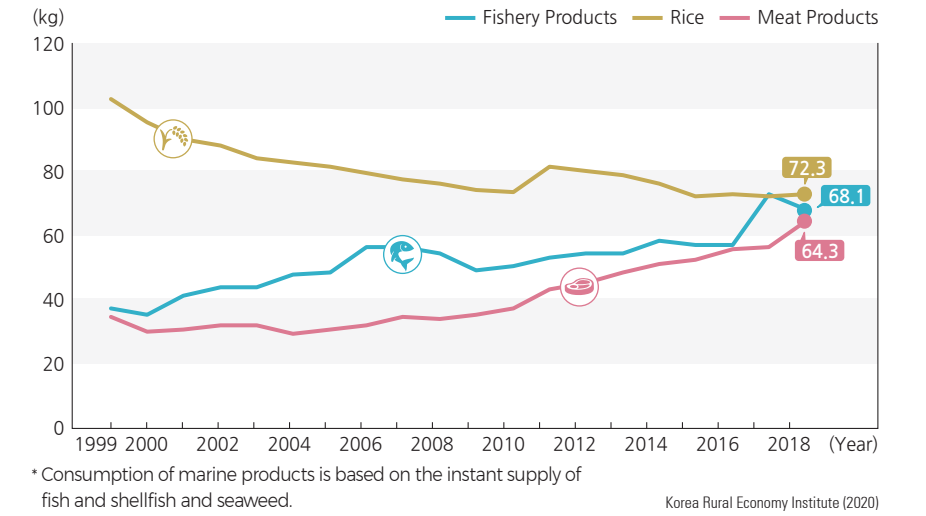
A Typical Open-Air Korean Barbeque Restaurant Where the Bulgogi Style of Meat is Freshly Cooked at the Table

Franchises (2019)

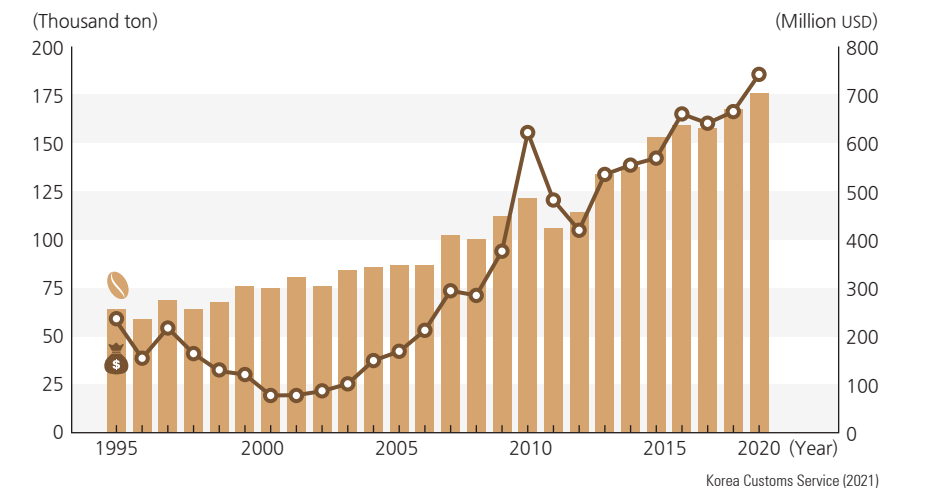


Korea imports a range of ingredients and processed foods, including agricultural, livestock, fish products, and grains. These are consumed as both staple foods and snack foods; for desserts; and as refreshments such as tea, coffee, and alcoholic beverages. Most wheat for human consumption comes from the United States and Australia, while wheat for animal feed comes from Ukraine and Romania. Rice production is now self-sufficient due to the changes in dietary culture. However, Korea continues to import rice from many countries, including China and the United States, because of the mandatory import quota. It is sold to be used in processed foods. Beans, including soybeans, are imported from the United States and Brazil. Corn is imported mostly from Serbia, the United States, and Brazil. Biscuits, snacks, pies, and bread are imported from China. Candies are mostly imported from European countries such as Germany, Spain, and Belgium. Chewing

Consumption of Agricultural and Livestock Products per Capita (1999-2018)



Coffee Imports (1995-2020)



gum is dominantly imported from Malaysia and Indonesia.

With the growing trend of eating out, various kinds of restaurants are becoming more popular. In addition to the familiar Korean, Chinese, Japanese, and Western restaurants, newer eateries include bakeries, pizza-hamburger-sandwich shops, chicken restaurants, coffee shops, and snack and Gimbab restaurants. These types of restaurants have steadily increased in number in recent years, and many are franchised.

In Korea, coffee consumption per capita is much higher than the global average and continues to grow. As a result, the annual import volume and amount of coffee are gradually increasing. Many coffee beans are imported from Central and South American countries such as Brazil; Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam; and African countries such as Ethiopia.

Education

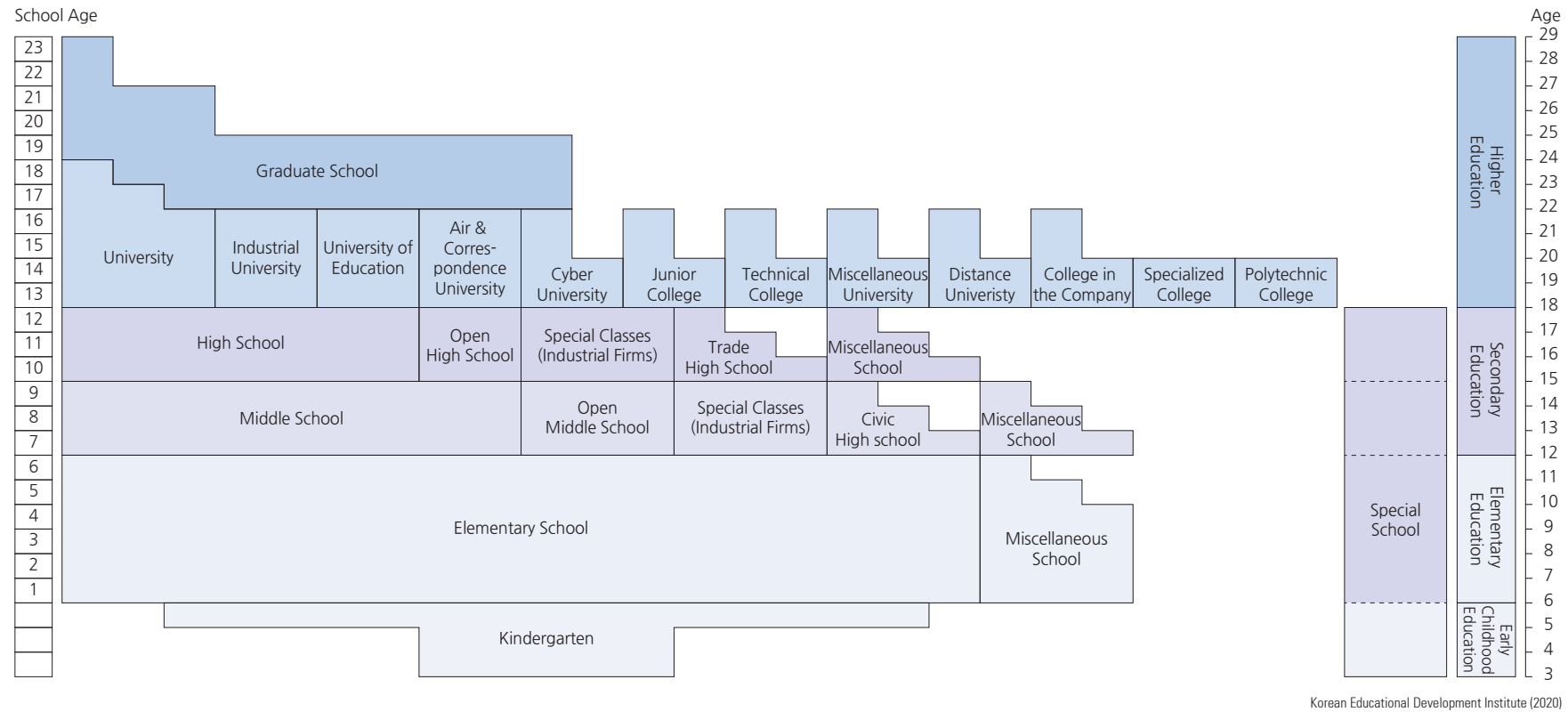
Koreans place a high value and importance on education. Education level is closely tied to many other aspects of society, such as family planning, population structure, household expenditure, residence selection, and city planning. Enthusiasm for education, reflected in a high level of spending, including for private education, are conspicuous characteristics of Korean society.

The Korean school system is composed of elementary education (kindergarten and elementary school), secondary education (middle and high school), and higher education (college and related levels). Most Koreans acquire at least six years of elementary education and another six years of secondary education. The proportion entering higher education institutions is among the highest in the world.

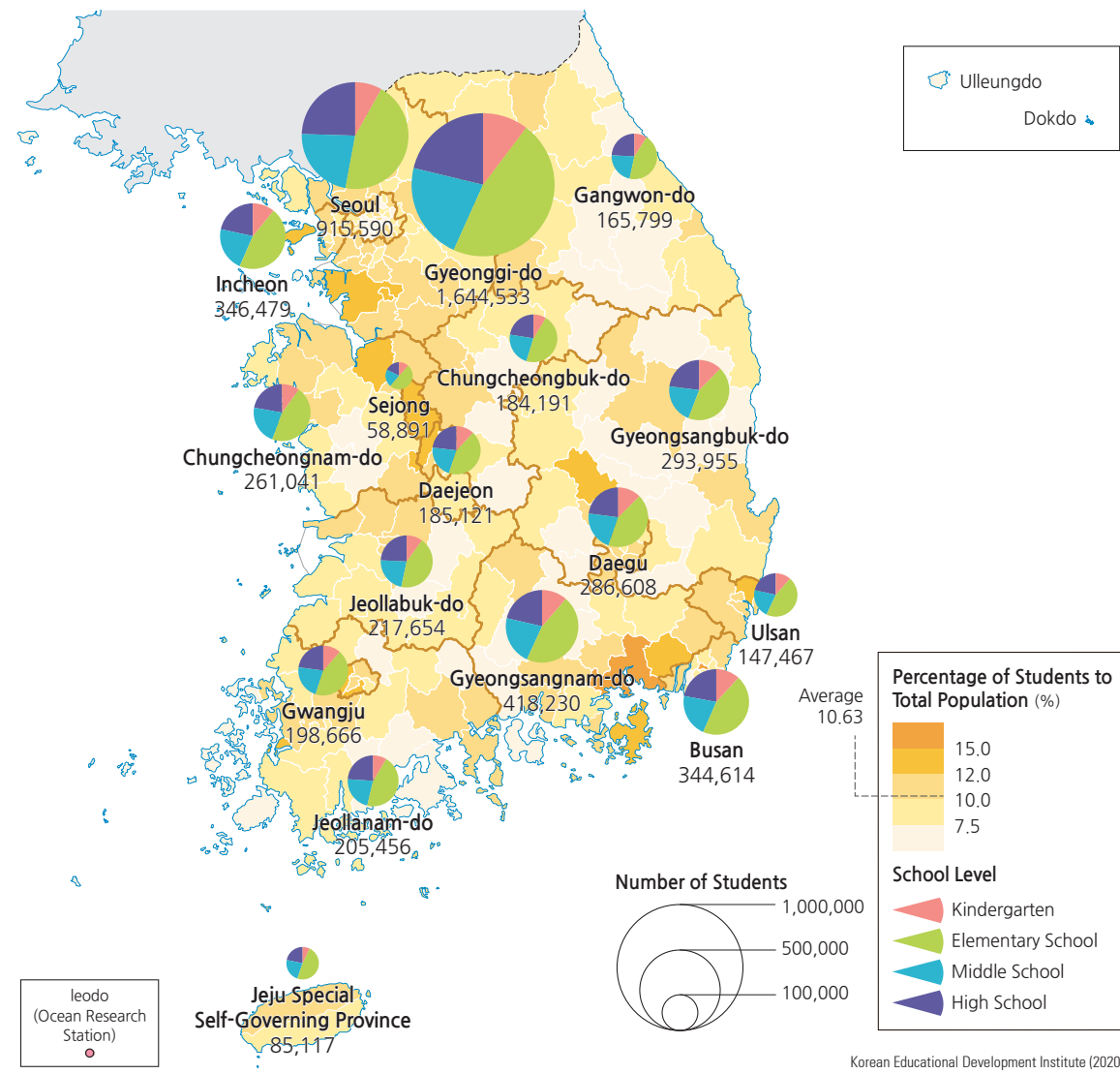
Elementary and secondary education is provided by public educational institutions established by the state, along with a variety of private educational institutions. Various specialized schools have been established that cater to the particular characteristics of their students. At the high school level, more choices, such as college prep, vocational, and technical high schools, are available. Higher education occurs at four-year universities or two-year community colleges. There are also technical colleges that provide training for various professions. Recently, online and extension colleges and degree programs have expanded educational opportunities. Master's and doctoral degrees are offered by many graduate schools, and many students also pursue graduate study abroad.

The middle school entrance rate in Korea has reached a perfect 100 percent since the late 1980s, and the high school entrance rate has been close to 100 percent since the mid-1990s. Accordingly, the overall number of schools has been consistently increasing, despite the closing of a large number of elementary schools since the 1990s in areas of declining population. Kindergarten enrollment has significantly increased since the 1980s as kindergarten education has become more widely available. On the other hand, the total number of students differs by age group, with the number of elementary students decreasing steadily due to decreasing fertility rates. A declining fertility rate has also resulted in a decrease in the middle and high school populations since the late 1980s. As a benefit, an increase in teacher hires has reduced the number of students per teacher. Changes in school age population vary greatly by region.

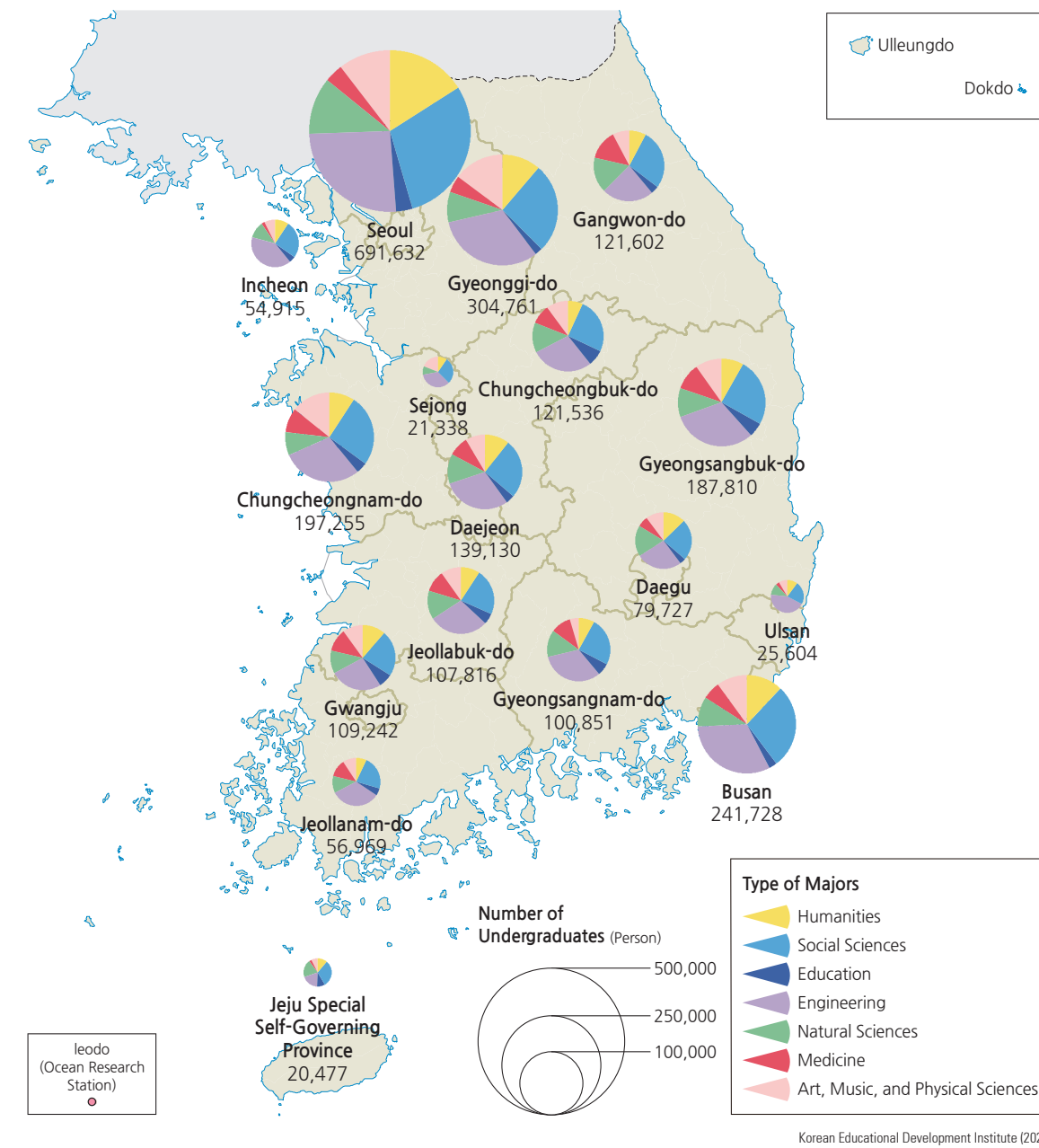
Educational System of the Republic of Korea



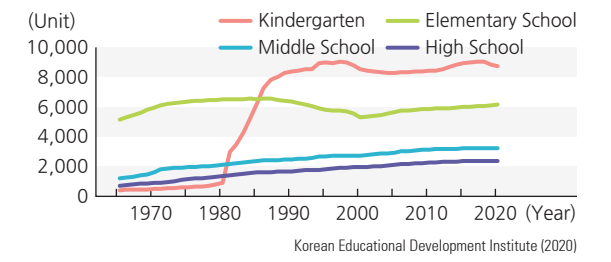
Number of Students by School Levels (2020)



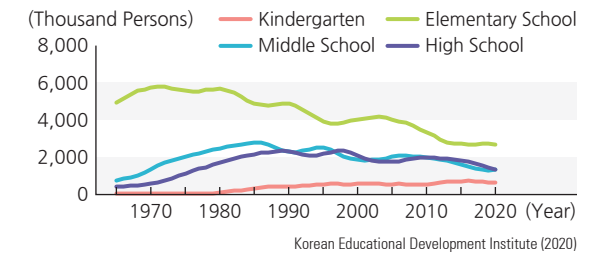
Number of Undergraduates by Major (2020)



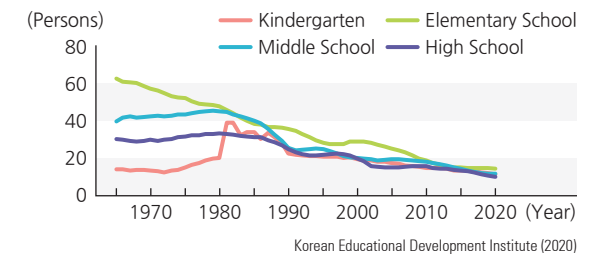
Number of Schools (1965-2020)



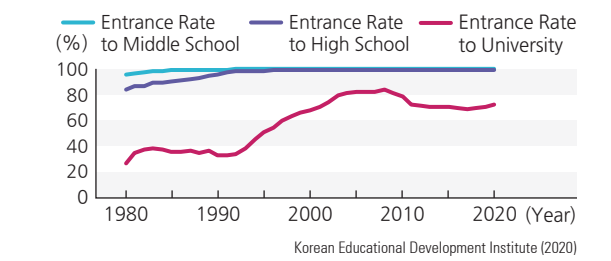
Number of Students (1965-2020)



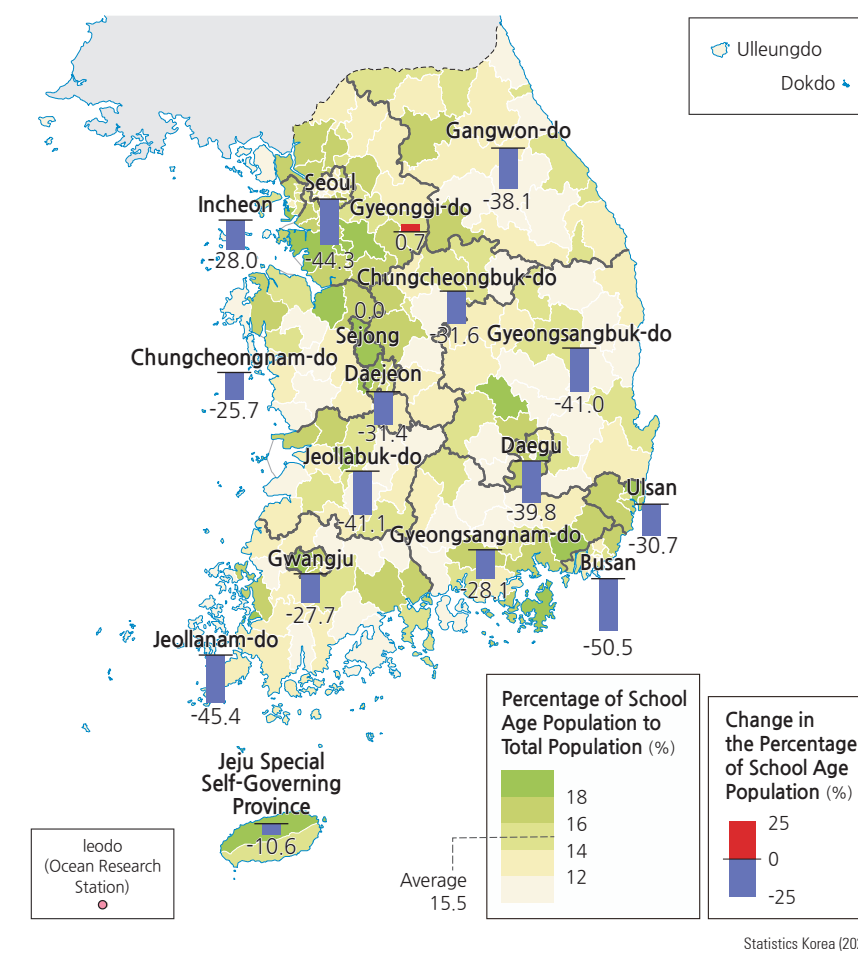
Students per Teacher (1965-2020)



Entrance Rate (1980-2020)



Changes in School Age Population (2000-2020)



Due to population decrease and migration to urban areas, many rural schools had to close. One school in a remote area still operates with a small number of students and teachers—Sanyang Elementary School in Punghwa-ri, in Sanyang-eup, Tongyeong-si in the Province of Gyeongsangnam-do.

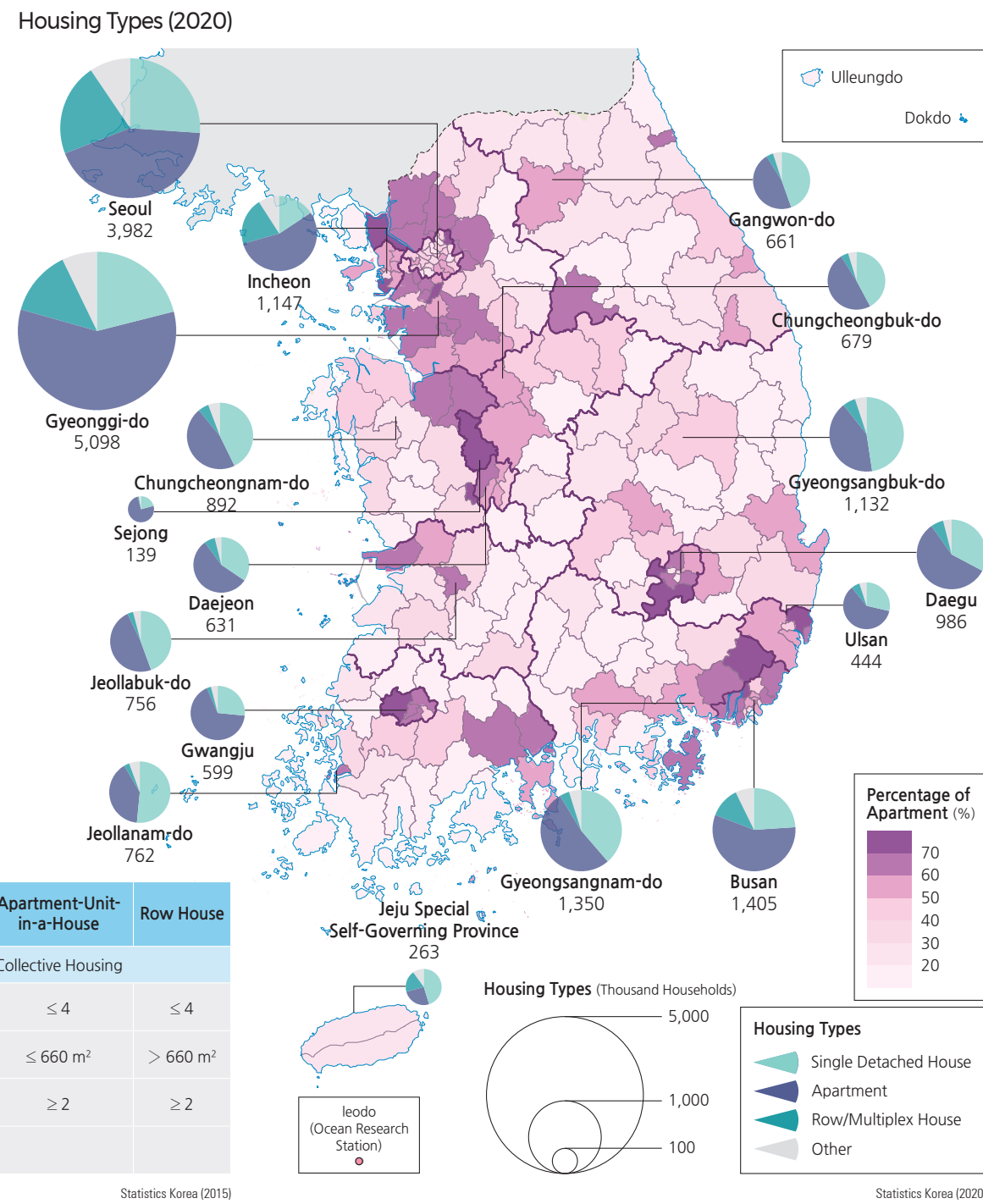


Eight of the nine total students in this school are gathered in a classroom for this photograph. There are four teachers at the Sanyang Elementary School, making it one of the best teacher-student ratios.

Traditional Housing: Designed to Harmonize with Nature

Housing style determines many 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 behind 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 in the back of 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

Statistics Korea (2015)

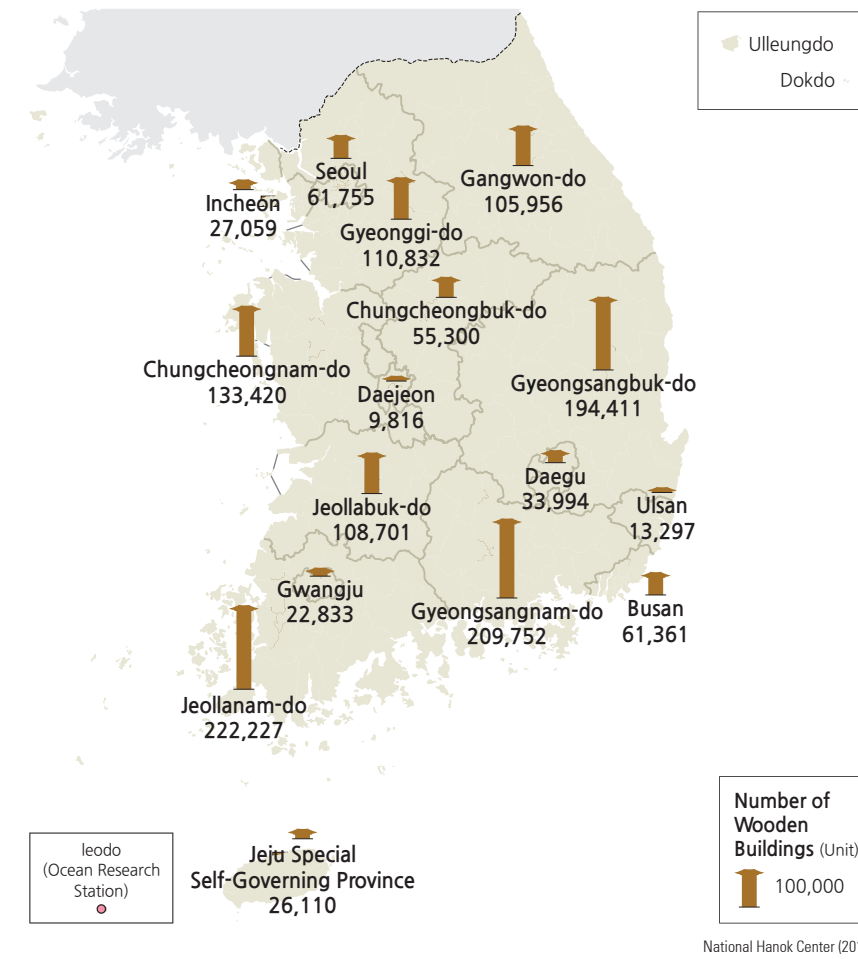
Traditional Korean Village: Dalsil in Bonghwa, Gyeongsangbuk-do



Preserved Hanok Districts in Metropolitan Cities

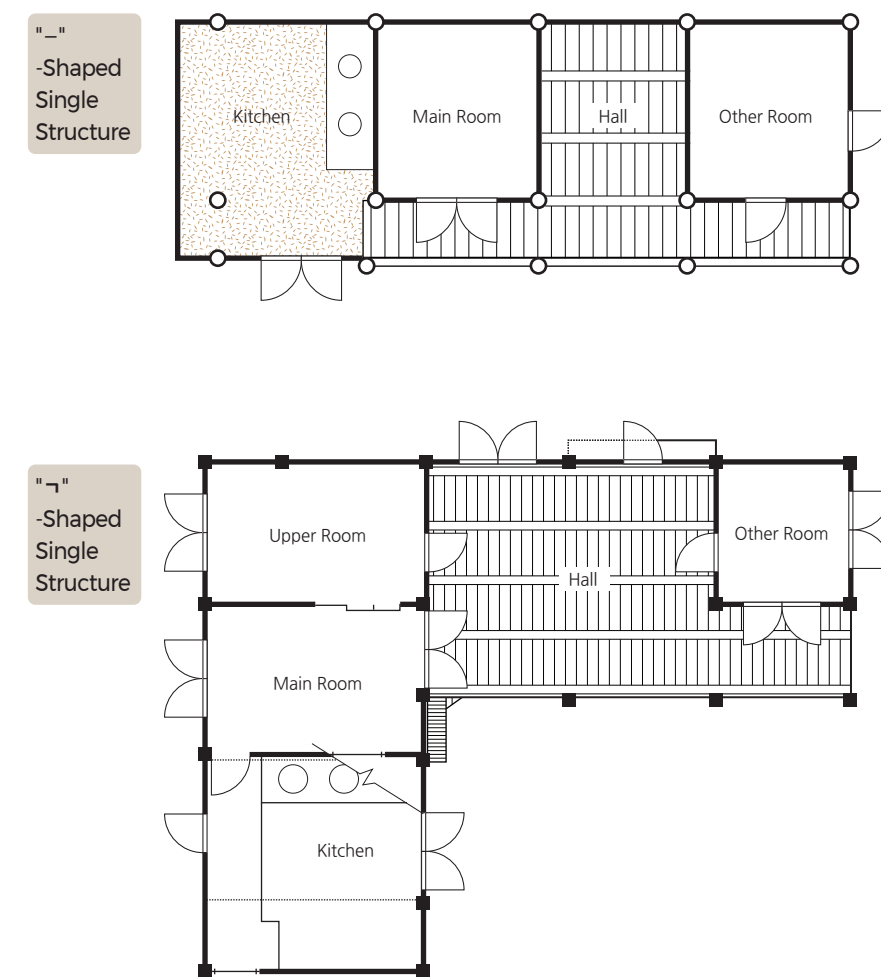


Distribution of Wooden Buildings (2015)



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

Structure of a Korean Traditional House



Sarangchae (Unit for Guests) in Andong Hahoe Village



A Private House at Goseong Wanggok Village

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 "Daechong Maru," a main open floor. Traditional Korean houses also include "ondol," a floor heating system for living with the cold winters.

Modern Housing

One of the most striking things about modern Korea is the high percentage of the population 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 within the apartment complex. In addition, high-rise apartments occupy most of the residential areas in many newly constructed housing zones, such as 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. 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, 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. For example, each distinct housing section of Seoul follows a certain dominant housing type. The old center of Seoul, where a high proportion of the elderly population resides, is characterized by single-household houses and comparatively few commercial enterprises and schools or other educational facilities.

The areas with a higher proportion of multi-family houses are found in the sections having a relatively long history of developed dwellings. In these areas, there is no clear separation between residential and business areas. The 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 solely of apartment complexes. These apartment complexes have many families, with the majority of households 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.

Housing Types of Korea

Detached House

- General Single House
- Multi-Household House
- Farmhouse
- Pastoral House

Multiplex House

Row House

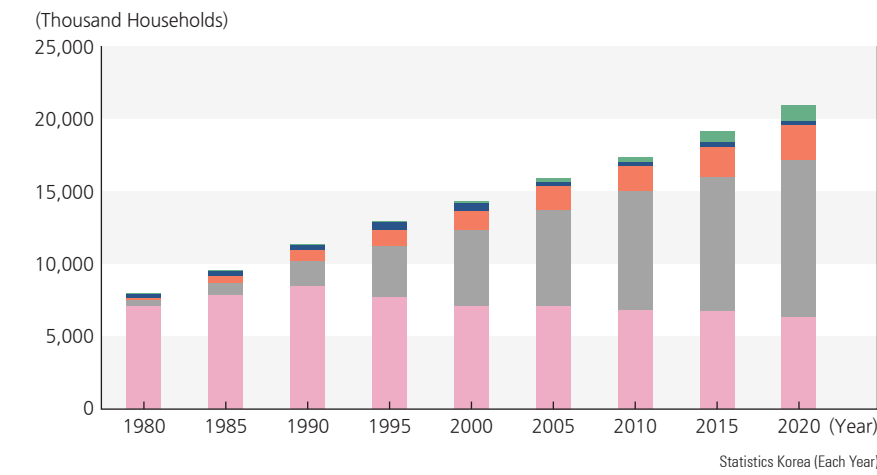
Apartment

- Apartment Built in the 1970s
- Apartment Built in the 1980s
- Apartment Built in the 1990s
- Apartment Built in the 2000s

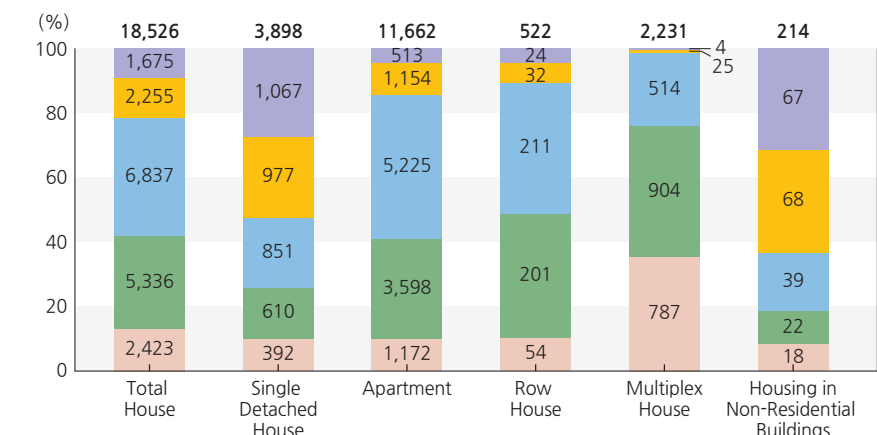
Total Number of Houses

Year	Detached House	Apartment	Row House	Multiplex House	Other
1990	~5,000,000	~1,000,000	~500,000	~200,000	~100,000
2000	~4,000,000	~6,000,000	~1,000,000	~500,000	~200,000
2010	~4,000,000	~8,000,000	~1,000,000	~1,000,000	~200,000

Changes in Housing Types



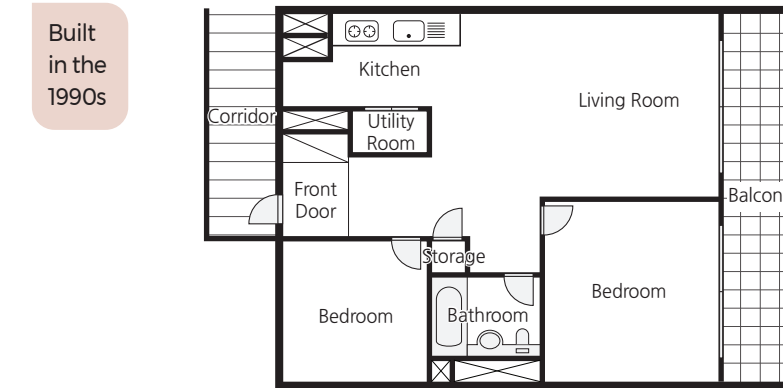
Gross Floor Area by Housing Type (2020)



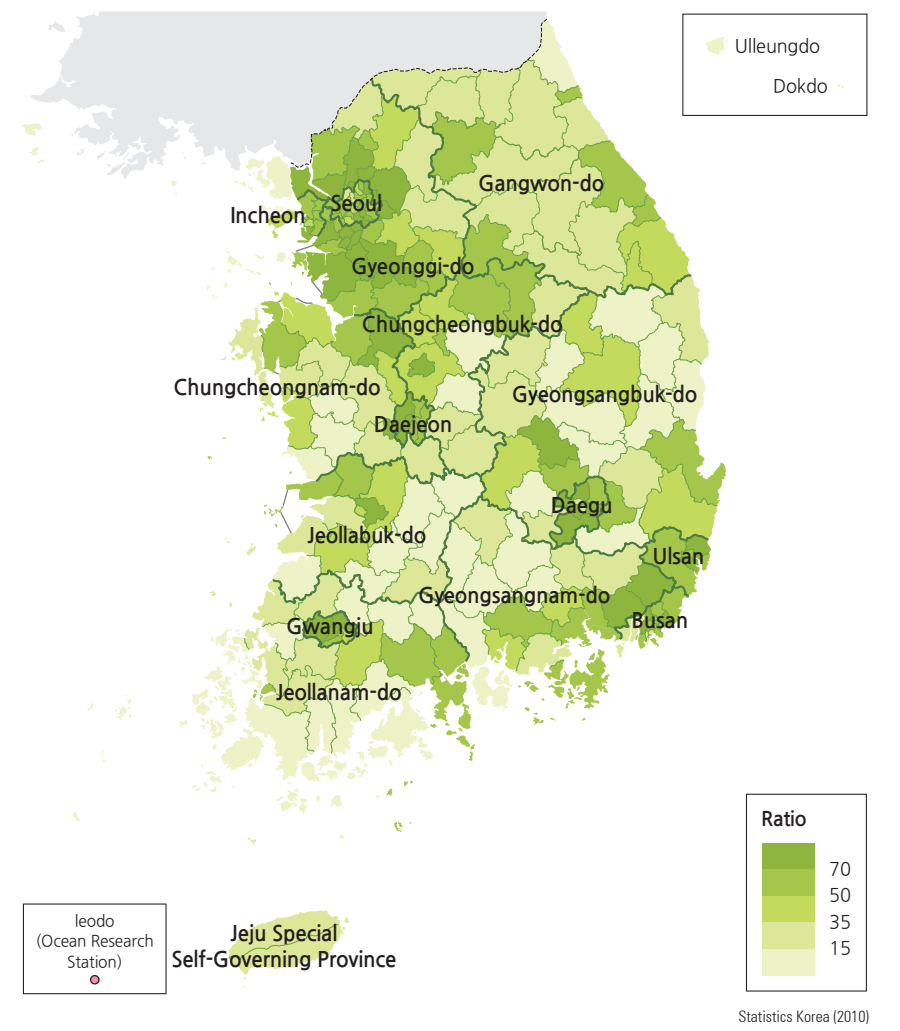
*Numbers in the graph indicate the number of households (Thousand Households). Statistics Korea (2020)

Examples of Apartment Structures

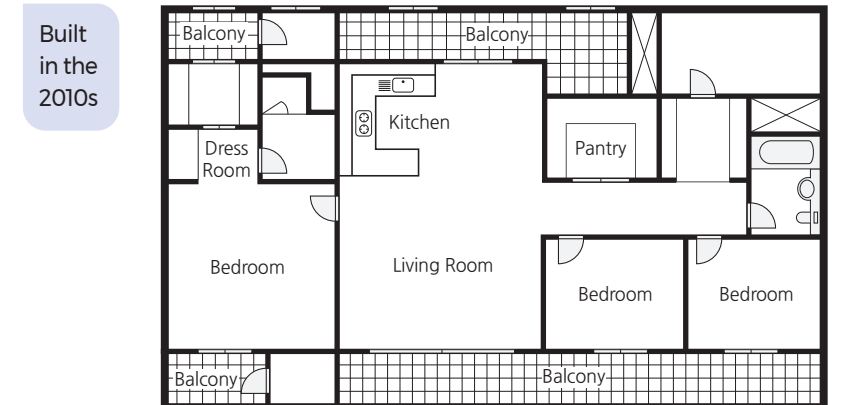
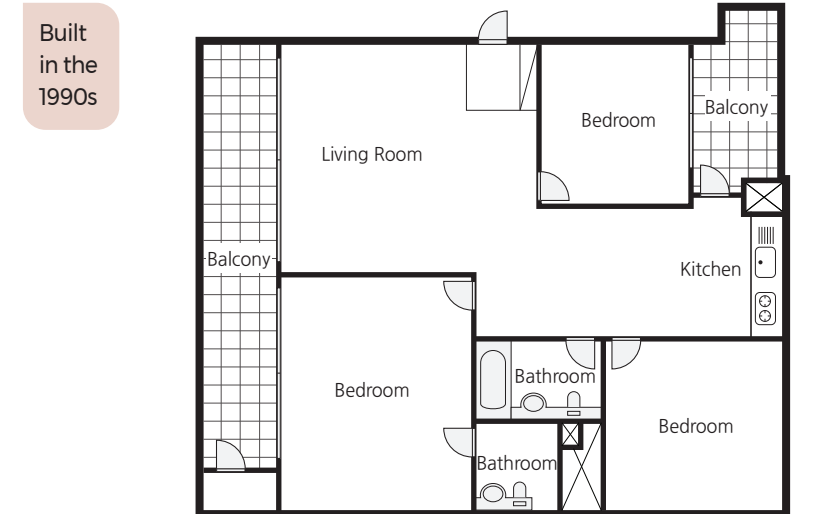
Example of Exclusive Use Space 65 m²



Ratio of Apartment to House (2010)



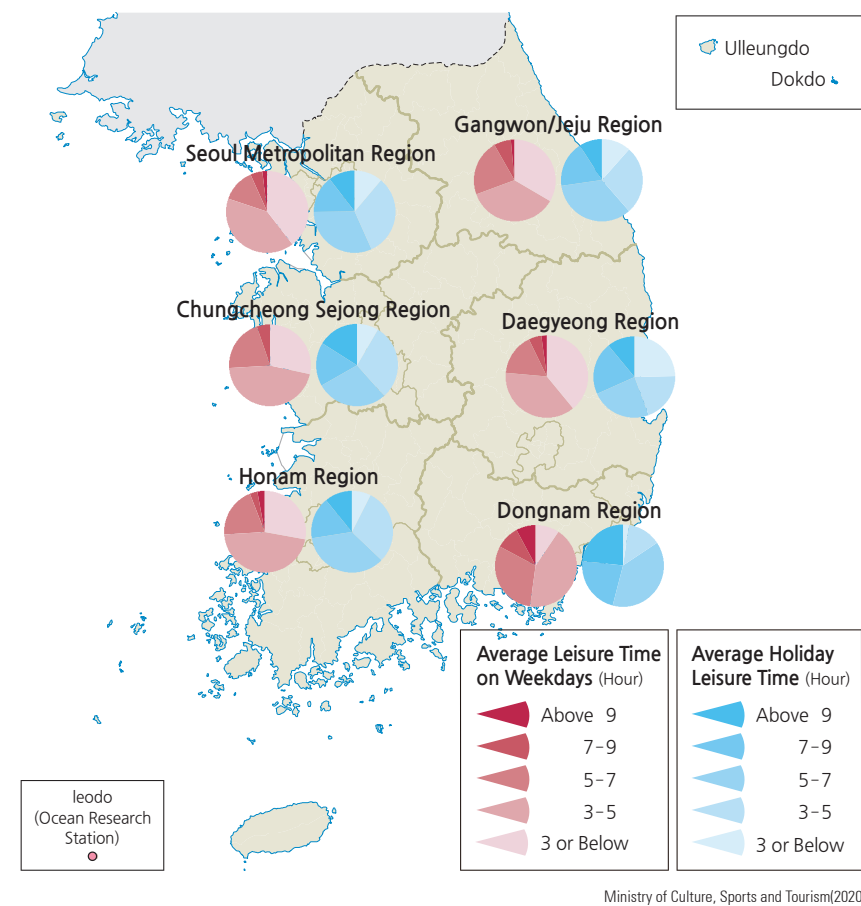
Example of Exclusive Use Space 85 m²



Life and Leisure in Korea



Average Leisure Time (2020)



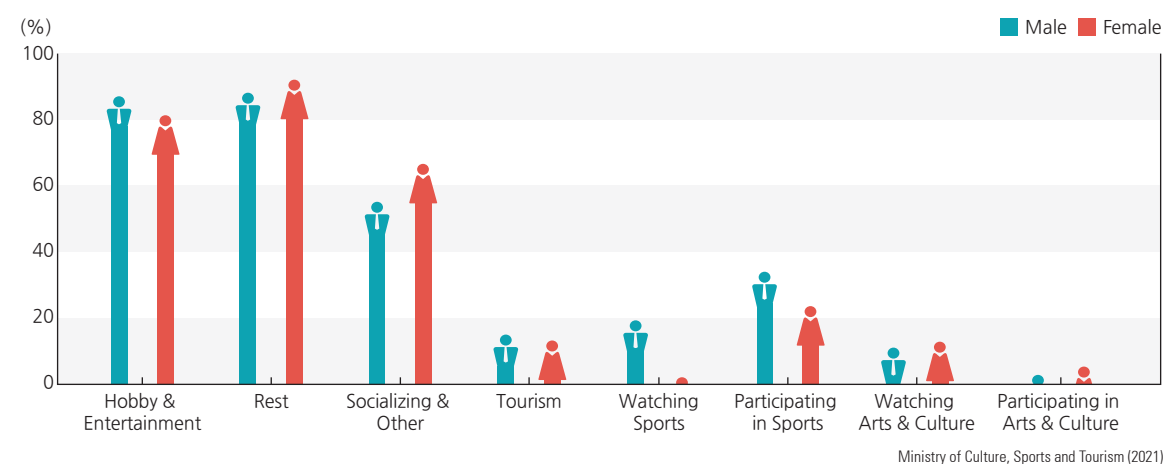
Koreans' leisure time and activities have diversified following the introduction of a five-day workweek in the early 2000s. Spending on leisure has increased along with income and a changing perception of leisure. As a result, opportunities to actively participate in leisure activities, such as joining clubs, have expanded, and domestic and international travel is more popular.

Central and local governments have also made a great effort to improve the Korean citizens' quality of life through increased participation in leisure activities. Governmental agencies have enhanced public access to leisure by building and managing facilities such as concert halls, libraries, parks, public sports facilities, and village sports facilities. In addition, governmental agencies have built many walking tour routes and bicycle paths. They have developed websites and mobile applications to provide relevant information. Furthermore, each local government has provided shared bicycles and improved public transportation routes and facilities to enhance accessibility to leisure spaces.

Koreans over age 10 enjoy an average of four hours and forty-five minutes of leisure time every day. The average Korean goes to sleep at 11:30 pm and wakes up around 7 am. Koreans generally engage in activities such as watching TV or using the Internet on weekdays and more active pursuits, like traveling and exercising, on weekends.

In recent years, Korean society has experienced social transitions, including changes in religious and family life. As the fertility rate decreases, families have become smaller. The average age of marriage has increased, and divorce has also become more common. With the demographic and social changes, opinions on the family, marriage, and divorce are shifting. Various social changes, including ideological and religious disagreements, economic inequality, intergenerational strife, and regional distinctiveness, play a role in shaping population patterns. Continuous efforts are being made to minimize cultural conflict and reduce inequalities in society.

Types of Most Actively-Participating Leisure Activities by Gender (2020)



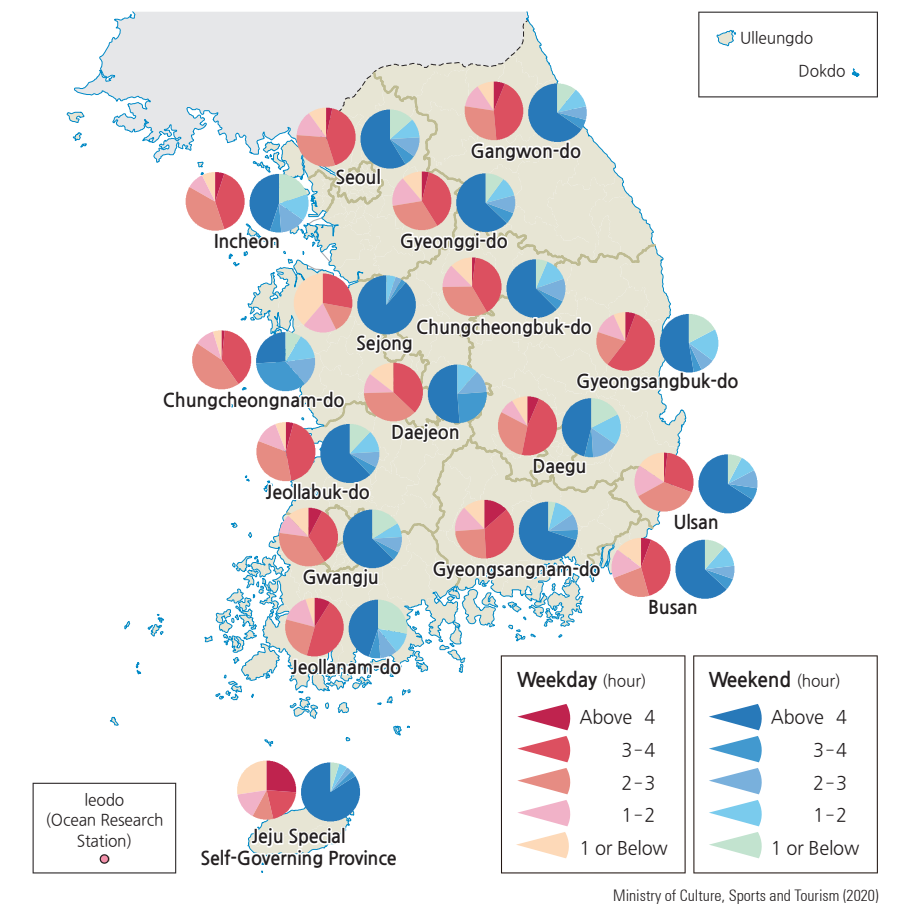
A day at the beach is popular with families. This beach is not crowded but some easily accessible beaches near urban areas are.

Koreans' Use of Time (2019)



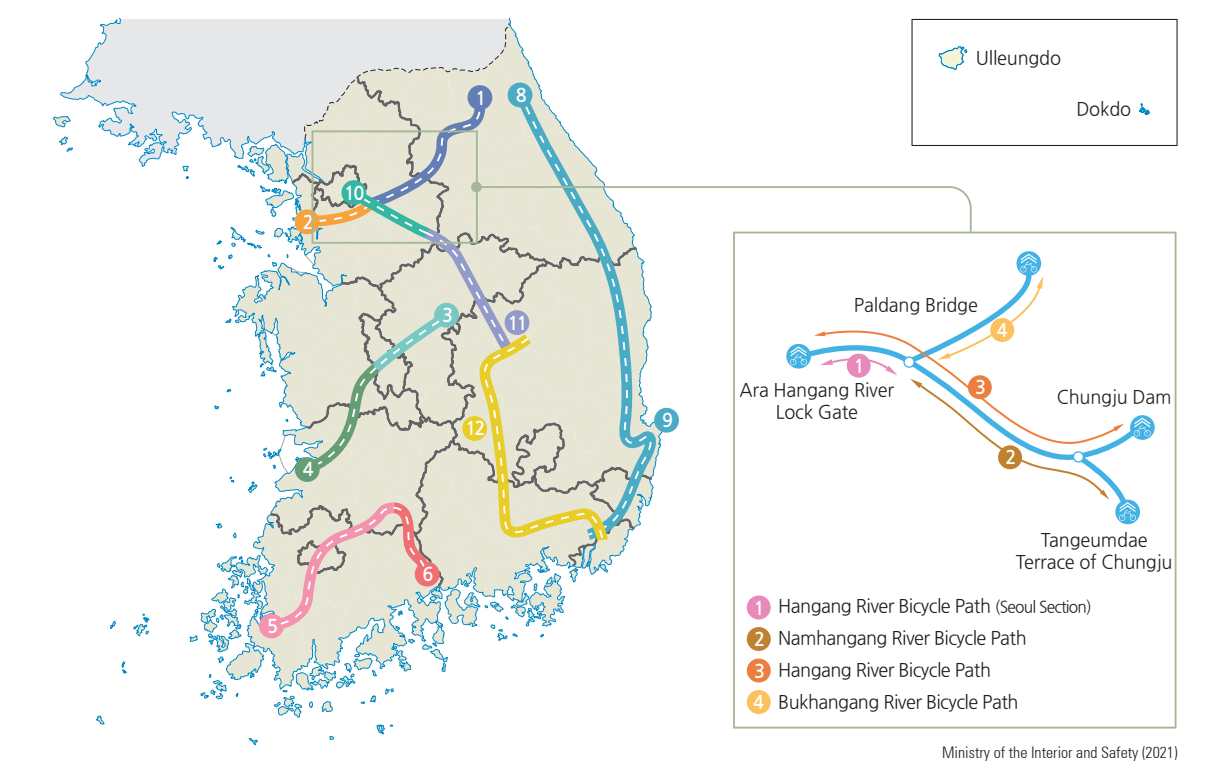
The recent walking and cycling craze is an important part of the Korean leisure culture. Many walking and cycling routes have been created across the country that enable people to experience local culture, ecology, landscapes, forests, and wildflowers. For example, Nuri-gil, a scenic stroll through an urban conservation area, has become popular nationally. In most cities and provinces, public bicycles—commissioned or directly managed—are available. People can pick up bicycles at rental stations using transportation cards or mobile applications. In the past, Korea's mountainous terrain discouraged many people from touring the country by bicycle. However, in recent years, many bicycle trails have been created along major rivers and coasts. Local governments have also built bicycle trails themed on history, nature, and culture. As a result, touring these bicycle trails and crossing the Korean territory using bicycle roads has become popular.

Time Spent for Using Smart Devices (2020)



Many people, especially those in the younger generation, like to hike to scenic places such as this waterfall near the city of Seogwipo on the south side of Jeju Island.

Distribution of Bike Trails (2021)

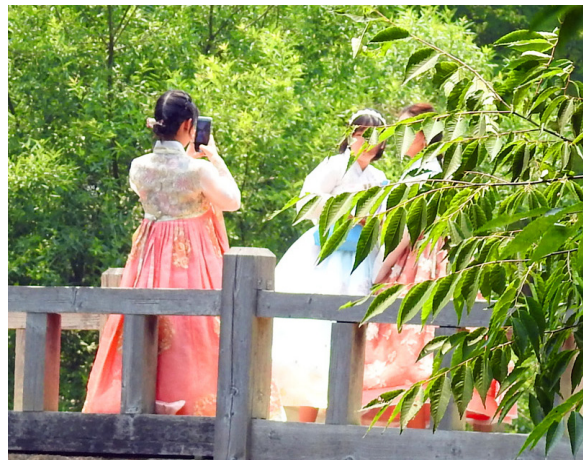


A woman takes a walk in an art park.

Example of a Walking Trail: Dongjakchunggyo-Gil Course (2021)



Snapshots of Korea



Young ladies enjoy an outing in a park in traditional dresses and taking photographs on a cell phone.



Gazebos are typically popular everywhere, especially under the hot summer sun.



Kimjang (Making and Sharing Kimchi: 2013)



A typical rural farming community with greenhouses nurtures marketable produce.



The Korean-Chinese Cultural Center at the Entrance of the Chinatown in Incheon



Three Buddhist nuns stroll down a downtown street.



In a nation with democracy, South Korean citizens enjoy the right to protests of the government. Here, the police ensure that the protest is peaceful.



Korean workers take their jobs seriously, whether it may be moving heavy containers with cranes or spray-cleaning an urban wall.



Changing of the Guards Ceremony in Front of a Palace



Inside a Classroom of a Top Science High School in Seoul



A Christian Church Situated in the Heart of Chinatown in the City of Incheon



A street caricature artist makes sketches of children.



A combination of Russian and Chinese shops attracts tourists.



A performer in traditional dress plays the flute.



Traditional Korean Martial Art



Statue of Confucius in Incheon



Sangganbalsa Temple with a large Buddha statue on the slope of Sanbansan Mountain overlooks the sea on Jeju Island.