

## SOUTH KOREA: BASIC DATA

- GEOGRAPHY** The Republic of Korea (ROK) occupies 99,274 km<sup>2</sup> of the southern portion of the Korean peninsula. Beijing is 800 kilometres westward, Japan is 240 kilometres to the southeast, and Siberia and Manchuria border the peninsula in the northeast.
- CLIMATE** Continental, with extremes of temperature. In Seoul, the hottest month is August (22-31°C), and the coldest month is January (9-0°C). The driest month is February (20 millimetres), and the wettest month is July (376 millimetres)
- POPULATION** 43.27 million (1991)
- MAIN CITIES**
- |       |            |         |           |
|-------|------------|---------|-----------|
| Seoul | 10,900,000 | Inchon  | 1,900,000 |
| Pusan | 3,900,000  | Kwangju | 1,200,000 |
| Taegu | 2,300,000  | Taejon  | 1,100,000 |
- TIME** South Korea is nine hours ahead of GMT.
- MEASURES** The metric system is used. Some local measures are: 1 chungbo = 9.922 hectares; 1 suk = 180.39 litres; and 1 kwan = 3.75 kilograms.
- LANGUAGE** Korean is the official language and is spoken throughout the country. English is a common second language and is taught in middle school and high schools.
- LEGAL SYSTEM** The laws of the ROK are largely influenced by the continental European system, especially the civil code. Present political and commercial legislation has been influenced by the laws which prevail in the United States and Europe.
- RELIGION** South Korea has approximately 20% traditionally Buddhist, and 21% Christian, of which 78% is Protestant.
- EDUCATION** South Korea's population is among the most literate in the world at over 90%. The school system is modelled after the U.S. educational system.
- SOCIAL LIFE** A growing affluence has led to increased time and expenditure on leisure activities. During the last five years, household leisure expenditure has increased from 3% to 5% of household expendable income.
- EMPLOYMENT** Approximately 60% of the population 15 years old and over participates in full-time economic activities. In 1990, the work force was about 19 million, with unemployment estimated at 2.4%.
- HOLIDAYS** January 1-3; March 1, 10; April 5; May 5; June 6; July 17; August 15; October 1, 3, 9; December 25; Buddha's birthday (May); Thanksgiving (September).