



# SOUTH KOREA



**Size:** Slightly larger than Indiana

**Population:** 48.9 million residents (10 million more than all of California)

**Languages:** Korean and English, which is widely taught in schools

**Religion:** Christianity, Buddhism

**Currency:** South Korean won

The literacy rate is 98%.

About 83% of residents live in urban areas. This is not surprising given the high population and small geographic size.

More than half of the population works in the services sector and only about two percent of the workforce is agricultural.

Sixteen percent of South Koreans live below the poverty level.

**Climate:** It has a temperate climate with four distinct seasons. Winters are long and cold, while summers generally are short, hot, and humid. South Korea is less vulnerable to typhoons than neighboring countries. Typhoons usually occur in late summer, especially August, and cause torrential rain.

**Clothing and Fashion:** South Koreans wear western clothing. Dress codes are very important in the country and business people dress formally and conservatively. They generally “dress up” more than Americans do.

**Food:** Korean food is quite healthy. Meals are almost always served with a bowl of hot soup or stew, sticky rice and a minimum of three sides, usually different forms of kimchi, which are fermented vegetables. Dishes can range from bland to very spicy and salty. Korea is the only chopstick culture that also uses spoons.