Korea at a Glance

Creating the Miracle on the Han River
Over the past half-century, Korea has transformed itself from an impoverished, largely ruined nation to a prosperous, democratic industrial society. Creating the ‘Miracle on the Han River’ upon the ashes of the Korean War, Korea has emerged as the world’s 13th largest economy.
Korea has become the world’s leading shipbuilder and steel exporter, and Korean smart phones and LED TVs are leading the world in high-end technology.

Education, a key driving force behind the development
As a nation with limited natural resources, Korea is a vivid testament to the transformative power of education, displaying how much individual lives can be transformed, and how rapidly nations can develop. There is a clear domestic and international consensus that Korea’s astounding prosperity is attributed to the nation’s unwavering commitment to providing high-quality education to its citizens under any circumstances. The Miracle on the Han River was only possible to accomplish because Korea was so passionate about education and invested in education.

The Korean Wave is sweeping across the world
The Korean Wave, also known as ‘Hallyu’, is globally interpreted as the growing popularity of all things Korean, from fashion and film to music and cuisine. As Korea has emerged as a major exporter of popular culture and tourism, the Korean Wave is spreading various aspects of Korean tradition, culture and language widely throughout the world.

Why Study in Korea?

Korea has a long history of prioritizing excellence in education.
With the spread of globalization, Korea is now undertaking efforts to share its development experiences and know-how through offering its highly competitive education to citizens of the world. With concentrated efforts from both the government and educational institutions, Korea is determined to provide the best education environment possible for international students.

1. Strong support from the government
   - Various types of scholarships available for international students
     - 2,000 government scholarship recipients every year
     - available for both degree-seeking and exchange students
   - Government-wide support system
     - Establishment of the International Education Quality Assurance System (IEQAS) designed to enhance the capacity of Korean higher education institutions by providing exclusive benefits to certified institutions only
     - Introduction of the globalization index for university rankings, encouraging universities to focus on globalization strategies, such as offering English-lectures.

2. Academic excellence
   - 433 universities and colleges in Korea offer a variety of degree programs in diverse fields
   - Korea ranks at the top of OECD countries for scholastic achievement and educational competitiveness.

Korea’s PISA Rankings(2012)

3. Affordable tuition fees
   - The average annual tuition fee for Korean universities is 5,500 USD a year, roughly one-third of that of other advanced countries.
   - In addition, most Korean universities provide a wide range of scholarships to international students depending on their academic performances.

4. Rich and colorful culture
   - International students are exposed to a highly developed modern society rooted in the nation’s 5,000 year old rich history.
   - The extensive spread of the Korean Wave appeals to international students, who often feel intrigued by all aspects of Korean tradition and culture.

5. Cutting-edge technology
   - Korea’s continued investment in R&D and ICT convergence has led to 64 high-tech industrial products having the largest shares in the global market including memory chips, smart phones, liquid crystals and shipbuilding.
   - An extensive nationwide 4G network has expanded to reach literally every corner of the nation.

6. World-class standard of living
   - Safety & Crime Index
     - Along with the extremely low crime rate and the nation’s location, which keeps it completely safe from natural disasters, Koreans’ warm hearts and humble spirits make the nation the safest place to live on the planet.

7. Job opportunities
   - 17 Korean global companies listed in the Fortune Global 500
   - 12,000 overseas branches established by Korean companies
   - Career and job fairs for international students.

*In Korea, the education system is really doing well*  
Barack Obama, President of the USA

*It is my dream to emulate Korea’s educational development level*  
Juan Manuel Santos, President of Colombia
Higher Education in Korea

**Educational System in Korea**

The Korean education is a single-track system, which operates on a 6-3-3-4 basis, with six years of elementary school, three years of middle school, three years of high school, and four years at the undergraduate university level. There are nine years of compulsory education, including the six years of elementary school and three years of middle school. One academic year has two semesters, the first semester is from March to June and the second from September to December. There are two vacations, in summer from July to August and in winter from December to February.

### Kindergarten

- **National Institute for International Education**
- **Ministry of Education**

### Colleges and universities / Junior colleges / Universities of education / Industrial universities / Technical colleges / 10 technical universities and 85 others

### Higher education level

- Broadcasting and correspondence universities
- Other miscellaneous institutions

### Degree Programs

- **Associate degree**
- **Bachelor's degree**
- **Master's degree**
- **Doctoral degree**

### Graduation System

- Independent graduate schools offer graduate degree programs with no affiliation to universities.

### Higher Education Programs

- **Doctoral degree**
- **Master's degree**
- **Bachelor's degree**
- **Associate degree**

### Higher Education Programs for International Students

**A. Full-time degree program**

International students may pursue associate, bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral degrees in diverse academic fields by enrolling at a Korean university or college as a full-time student. Courses are generally conducted in Korean but numerous English medium lectures are also available.

**B. Exchange student program**

The majority of the universities in Korea offer international students an opportunity to pursue their studies for one or two semesters in Korea through established partnerships with universities all over the world. The exchange student program is open to students enrolled as full-time students in any accredited higher education institution.

**C. Short-term program**

Korean universities provide a variety of short-term programs for international students during summer and winter vacations. International students will have diverse cultural activities combined with high-quality English lectures on Korean politics, economy, society, and culture as well as opportunities to partake in many hands-on activities.

**D. Korean Language program**

Many Korean universities have an affiliated Korean language center that provides intensive Korean language training to prospective international students planning to enroll in Korean universities and to others interested in learning about Korean language and culture. Those Korean language centers often offer regular programs for 10 to 12 weeks as well as short-term programs that last for 2-6 weeks.

**Internationalization of Korean Higher Education**

**Growth of International students in Korea (2006–2015)**

- By study programs
- By field of study

**Higher Education in Korea**

The Ministry of Education recognizes seven different types of institutions at the higher education level:

- Colleges and universities
- Junior colleges
- Universities of education
- Industrial universities
- Technical colleges
- 10 technical universities
- 85 others

### Korean universities are increasingly offering courses in English as a way to raise students’ global competitiveness, fulfilling a key criterion in the nation’s evaluation on internationalized universities. In some of the most internationalized universities, about one-third of the courses are conducted in English. Moreover, a large number of universities have academic faculties where all courses are taught in English only. The proportion of classes conducted in English is even higher in graduate studies.

### Absolute grading system

Acknowledging the language and environment difficulties international students may face, a large number of Korean universities have adopted a score-based ‘absolute grading’ system for international students, instead of a curved grading system.
Getting Ready to Study in Korea

1. Gathering information
   ‘Study in Korea’ [www.studyinkorea.go.kr](http://www.studyinkorea.go.kr) provides comprehensive information on:
   - 433 Korean colleges and universities
   - Various scholarship programs
   - Learning Korean language
   - Life in Korea

2. Meeting qualifications
   Admission qualifications vary from university to university. In general, international students are required to meet both academic and language qualifications.

3. Application submission and document screening
   In most cases, an application is submitted online. Some universities and colleges conduct interviews and written tests as parts of their screening.

4. Visa Application
   Upon acceptance, prospective students studying in Korea must obtain a student visa at the closest embassy or consulate of the Republic of Korea.

Academic background
- Degree programs: Applicants must have an appropriate high school diploma, bachelor’s or master’s degree depending on the degree program.
- Exchange and short-term programs: Applicants must be enrolled at an appropriate higher education institution.

Language proficiency
- Degree programs: Applicants must prove their language proficiency either in Korean or English depending on the program’s medium of instruction.
- Exchange and short-term programs: Requirements differ among universities; some do not require language proficiency.

Application Period
- Spring Semester: September to November
- Fall Semester: May to June

Visa type by academic programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Program</th>
<th>Visa Type</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate degree program</td>
<td>D-2-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree program</td>
<td>D-2-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree program</td>
<td>D-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree program</td>
<td>D-2-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean language program</td>
<td>D-2-6</td>
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</tbody>
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Since it may take from a few weeks to several months depending on regional conditions, it is very important to start working on visa application process as early as possible.

For more information, visit [www.hikorea.go.kr](http://www.hikorea.go.kr).
Scholarships

Global Korea Scholarship - Korean Government Scholarship Programs

1. Full scholarship program
   Number of scholarship recipients every year: 210 students from more than 60 countries
   Scholarships include:
   - Flight / Tuition / Stipend / Medical Insurance / Settlement / Allowance / Completion grants
   A. Scholarships for exchange students (4 to 10 month)
   B. Scholarships for ASEAN countries’ science and engineering students

2. Scholarship program for self-financed undergraduate students
   Number of scholarship recipients every year: 200 students
   Scholarships include:
   - Flight / Tuition / Stipend / Medical Insurance / Settlement / Allowance / Completion grants
   - Stipend for 12 months

3. Scholarship for short-term programs
   A. Scholarship for exchange students (4 to 10 month)
   B. Scholarship for ASEAN countries’ science and engineering students

University Scholarships
Apart from the government scholarships, most Korean universities provide a wide range of scholarships to international students depending on students’ entrance scores and academic performances during their studies. The amount of scholarship support provided to international students enrolling in Korean universities averages 30 percent of the total tuition.

Visit ‘Study in Korea’ www.studyinkorea.go.kr to find more about scholarships.