

The Republic of Korea



About South Korea

Capital City:

- Seoul

Major Port:

- Pusan

Monetary Unit:

- Won (KRW)

Major Language:

- Korean, English

Main Exports:

- Electronics
- Textiles
- Chemicals
- Motor Vehicles

Our Immigration Services in South Korea

Business Travel – Guidance and assistance with business visitor visa (C-2) applications filed at Korean consulates or consular sections of its embassies abroad

Short and Long-term Employment

Visas – For foreign nationals directly hired by Korean companies, intracompany transferees, treaty/corporate investors, and Korean residents abroad

Special Work Visas – For technical supervision/instruction, training, and treaty traders

Foreigner Registration & Re-entry Permit Applications – Filed with the Immigration Office

The South Korean Economy

Home to approximately 48 million people, South Korea has the world's 15th largest economy. It is a member of the Global 20 (G20), United Nations, WTO, OECD and is a founding member of APEC and the East Asia Summit. It is considered to have one of Asia's most vibrant democracies.

A top Chinese economic think-tank, recently listed South Korea as highest in comprehensive competitiveness rankings amongst Asian countries. The European Union has been the single largest foreign investor to South Korea and a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was approved in September 2010, which is expected to take effect later this year. South Korea is the EU's eighth largest trade partner and the EU has become South Korea's second largest export destination.

In the past, foreign investors who wished to do business in South Korea were required to work with a legally registered South Korean partner. In 2005, the government implemented several changes and initiatives in an effort to attract foreign capital, including lifting this requirement, streamlining the process for business organization, and expanding tax incentives.

For more detailed information about South Korean trade visit the following web site: <http://tinyurl.com/3fwqcn7>

Business Travel to South Korea

Foreign nationals who wish to travel to Korea for business should ensure their passports are valid for at least six months beyond the intended dates of stay and contain at least two blank visa pages. As of November 2010, over 60 countries have visa exemption agreements with Korea. A list of these countries and related maximum duration of stay per country is maintained at the following web site: <http://tinyurl.com/28u7s9s>

Nationals of visa waiver countries may enter South Korea without a visa as long as the purpose of their visit is for tourism or temporary visit. Those who wish to enter South Korea for the purposes of engaging in business and profitable activities, including market research and business negotiations should apply for a C-2 visa at a Korean consulate abroad prior to entry.

Visa-free business travel for nationals of APEC may be facilitated with an APEC Business Travel Card (for more information, please see the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/4xcahpz>). APEC Business Travel Card holders are given Short Term Business (C-2) visa status and are allowed to stay up to 90 days.

The Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs maintains an updated list of foreign consulates abroad at the following web site: <http://tinyurl.com/6gfx3g>

Living in South Korea

With one of the highest average workweeks and overtime hours in the world, expatriates to South Korea may require some adjustment to the demands of their new positions. English teachers comprise the highest percentage of expatriates living in South Korea. Engineers and technology professionals are in high demand.

While South Korean society is largely homogenous, the expatriate community is diverse with a wide array of nationalities represented. Most expatriates live in Seoul and Pusan, which are large urban centers that offer a variety of housing and shopping options. The most common housing available in the large cities is high-rise apartments and villa-style townhomes. Some single family home rentals may be available on the outskirts of town and in rural areas.

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South Korean Business Culture

Confucian ethics dominate Korean thought patterns and this translates in business terms into great respect for authority, age and seniority. Business dress is conservative and suits should be worn to business meetings. The presentation of business cards is formal. Double-sided cards should be printed in English and Korean, with the Korean-language side facing the recipient during presentation.

Bowing is the common greeting in South Korea but handshakes are also becoming more popular in international business scenes. It is customary for the more senior person to initiate the handshake.

South Korea Work Permit Process

1 Work visa application filed by the sponsoring employer in South Korea with the Ministry of Justice, which will issue a Certificate of Confirmation of Visa Issuance (CCVI)

2 Once the CCVI is approved:
If outside of Korea, the foreign national must apply for a corresponding visa at the embassy or consulate abroad
- OR -
If within Korea, the foreign national may be allowed to change their status via the local Immigration Office

3 Upon entry to Korea the foreign national must complete alien registration at the Immigration Office within 90 days from the day of entry (an Alien Registration ID Card will be issued and foreign registration will be affixed to the passport) and should apply for a re-entry permit before traveling outside Korea

How Goel & Anderson can assist your organization in South Korea

Organizations that wish to employ foreign workers abroad require an immigration service provider with a record of successfully coordinating and delivering global, business immigration services for multinational organizations. Goel & Anderson practices exclusively in the field of immigration to assist your company with the recruitment, hiring, and retention of foreign workers across the globe, including South Korea. We understand that time and resources are valuable to your business and that staffing an international project can be critical to your business' reputation and success. We are committed to efficiently delivering business immigration solutions that combine broad global coverage with a depth of local expertise.

We carefully select co-counsel who share our service and compliance-oriented approach to meet the needs of organizations doing business in the global marketplace. Our Global Immigration group and local counsel work closely together to ensure comprehensive business coordination and seamless delivery of services. Our immigration services include end-to-end processing, including: business or work visa application preparation and filing;

detailed guidance on the visa stamping and alien registration process; and tracking key expiration dates. Personal representation at the South Korean embassy or consulate abroad and local municipal office may be available.

Business and work visa applications require original and specifically formatted corporate and personal supporting documents. The Certificate of Confirmation and actual visa issuance can take 3 - 5 weeks. Thus, if your company's South Korean office anticipates engaging foreign talent, an early analysis of immigration options and strategies, as well as a thorough understanding of the sponsorship obligations, will better position your project for success. We also understand that despite careful planning, emergent issues can arise. We are well positioned to assist your business to address unexpected business requirements. Because global immigration matters do not occur within a vacuum and the law is infrequently static, we seek local experts who may also assist with a range of related legal services, including corporate formation, contracts, employment agreements, licensing, and transactions and who will advise of changes in policy and procedures.

With headquarters outside of Washington, DC in Reston, Virginia and operations in Pune, India, Goel & Anderson is an immigration firm that is international in scope and personal in nature. We are known as a firm that is highly professional and also highly human. We offer clients extensive experience and a comprehensive understanding of all areas of business, employment, and family-based immigration law worldwide.

For more information about our Global Immigration Practice and services, please contact Jill Marie Bussey at jill.bussey@goellaw.com or +1 703.796.9881.

*Goel & Anderson, LLC does not engage in the practice of law within India. All services in India are provided by our affiliate, G&A Immigration Services Private Limited.

The information contained in this document is intended for informational purposes only, is general in nature, and does not constitute legal guidance.



Innovative Approaches to Immigration Law

Goel & Anderson, LLC
1984 Isaac Newton Square East
Suite 203
Reston, Virginia 20190
USA

Phone: +1 703.796.9898

Fax: +1 703.796.9005

E-mail: info@goellaw.com

www.goellaw.com