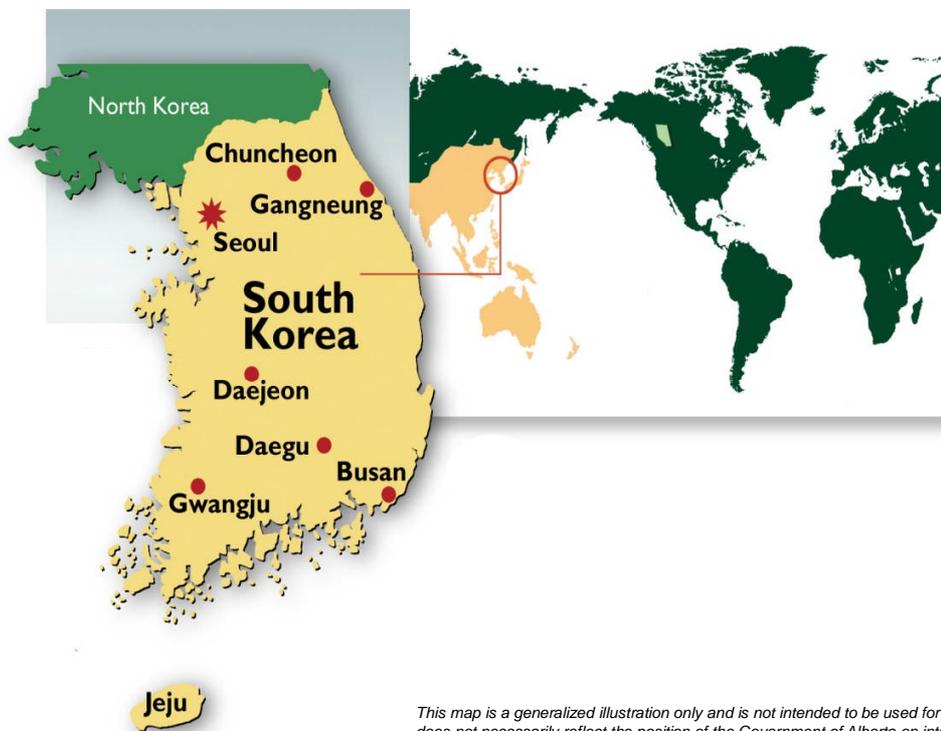


# South Korea - Alberta Relations



*This map is a generalized illustration only and is not intended to be used for reference purposes. The representation of political boundaries does not necessarily reflect the position of the Government of Alberta on international issues of recognition, sovereignty or jurisdiction.*

## PROFILE

**Capital:** Seoul

**Population:** 50.0 million (2012)

**Language:** Korean

**Government:** Presidential System

**Head of State:** President Park Geun-hye (since February 2013)

**Head of Government:** Prime Minister Jung Hong-won (since February 2013)

**Currency:** \$1 CAD = 1,054 South Korean Won (2013 average)

**GDP:** US \$1,129.6 billion (2012)

**GDP (PPP):** US \$1,540 billion (2012)

**GDP Per Capita (PPP):** US \$30,803 (2012)

**GDP Growth Rate:** 2.9 percent (2008-2012 average)

**Inflation:** 3.3 percent (2008-2012 average)

**Key Industry Sectors:** Electronics, automobile production, steel, shipbuilding, chemicals, telecommunications.

*Sources:*

*Bank of Canada, Economist Intelligence Unit*

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Alberta has long enjoyed positive relations with the Republic of Korea (commonly known as South Korea).
- Pyeongchang County will host the 2018 Winter Olympics. Located southeast of Seoul, in the southern part of Gangwon Province, Pyeongchang sits 700 meters above sea level in the mountainous Taebaek region.
- South Korea announced a long-term national "Green Growth" energy strategy, which aims to increase energy efficiency and the supply of clean energy and reduce energy consumption through to 2030.
- Forty-three percent of South Koreans share just three family names—Kim, Lee (Yi or Ri) and Park (or Pak). The most common, Kim (21 percent), means "gold."
- South Korea has four seasons, with a wet monsoon/summer season in the middle of the year, and a cold winter from November to March. Like Alberta, South Korea's winter weather is usually cold and dry, with heavy snow in the north and east.
- South Korea's demographic profile is distinctive. With more than 470 people per

square kilometer, it is the third-most densely populated country in the world (excluding city-states), after Bangladesh and Taiwan.

- The South Korean flag is called Taegeukgi. Its design symbolizes the principles of the yin and yang in Asian philosophy. The circle is surrounded by four trigrams, one in each corner. Each trigram symbolizes one of the four universal elements: heaven, earth, fire and water.

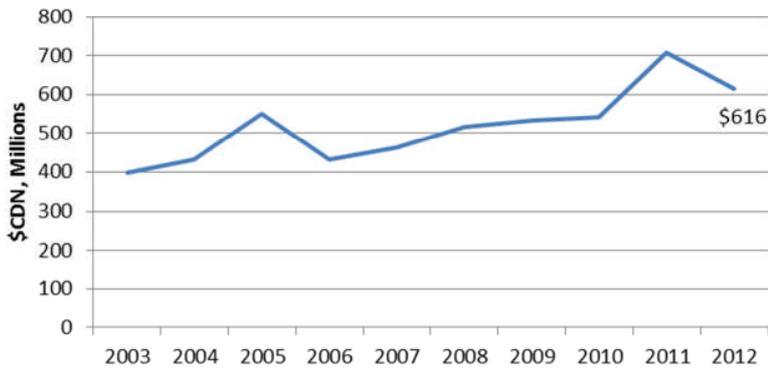
## RELATIONSHIP OVERVIEW

- Gangwon province in South Korea, which twinned with Alberta in 1974, is Alberta's oldest sister province relationship. Over the years, many twinning activities have involved education, culture and sport exchanges.
- Edmonton has a friendship agreement with the municipality of Wonju, South Korea. Daejeon is Calgary's sister city in South Korea.

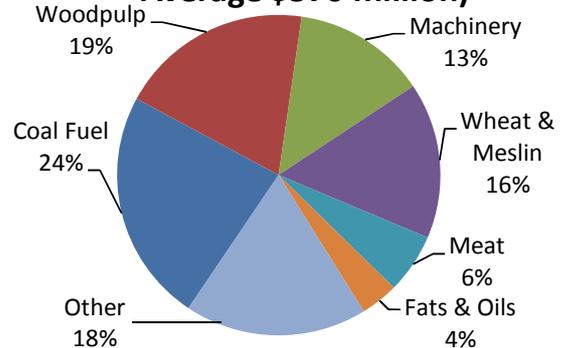
## TRADE AND INVESTMENT

- South Korea is Alberta's fifth largest export market and an important source of trade and investment.
- Alberta's exports to South Korea were \$616 million in 2012 and consisted primarily of

**Alberta's Exports to South Korea  
2003 - 2012**



**Alberta Merchandise Exports to  
South Korea 2008 - 2012 (Total  
Average \$570 million)**



woodpulp, coal, wheat and meslin, machinery, pork, nickel, and acyclic alcohol.

- From 2008-2012, Alberta's direct imports from South Korea averaged \$246 million and consisted primarily of machinery and industrial equipment, but also iron, steel, tires, rubber, and plastic products.
- South Korea remains a priority market for Alberta tourism. Travel Alberta maintains an in-market representative in Seoul.
- Canada and South Korea continue to discuss a free trade agreement.
- South Korea relies on imported LNG for most of its natural gas. In 2011, the country was the second largest LNG importer in the world.
- Korea is the third largest net importer of coal in the world, importing 125.3 million tons (EIA 2012). Coal represented 29 percent of the total primary energy supply in 2011, and is the backbone of the Korean power system.
- In December 2010, Korea Gas Corporation (KOGAS) Canada Ltd., a subsidiary of KOGAS, acquired 20 percent interest in an energy project led by MGM Energy Corp. for \$30 million.

## ENERGY

- South Korea was estimated to be the tenth largest energy consumer in 2011.
- In April 2012, the Korea-Canada Energy Forum, held in Calgary, provided an opportunity for promoting investment, trade and research and development collaboration between South Korea and Alberta in the energy sector. The event also enhanced mutual understanding of the energy industry and regulatory framework in South Korea and Alberta.
- In 2011, South Korea's electricity generating capacity was 496.9 billion kWh, comprised of 31.1 percent nuclear, 5 percent petroleum, 39.6 percent bituminous coal, 20.5 percent Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), 1.6 percent hydro, 0.7 percent anthracite coal, and 1.5 percent renewable resources.
- In 2011, South Korea consumed an estimated 2.2 million barrels of oil per day, making it the ninth largest consumer of oil in the world. It is estimated that oil accounted for 42% of the total primary energy consumption in 2011. Due to the country having no proven oil reserves, South Korea is dependent on importing from the Middle East, making it the fifth largest importer of crude oil.
- In November 2010, Alberta signed an agreement with Korea's Ministry of Knowledge Economy to establish a collaborative framework for the development and implementation of joint energy sector initiatives.
- In August 2010, Korea-based STX Energy bought natural gas fields in British Columbia from Calgary-based EnCana for \$152 million.
- The Alberta Korea Office partnered with the Alberta Energy Research Institute to successfully locate the Korea National Oil Corporation's (KNOC) International Technical Centre to Calgary in November 2010. In December 2010, the company acquired Hunt Oil. In May 2010, the joint venture completed an internal reorganization and was renamed Harvest Operations Corp., which owns both assets from Harvest Energy Trust and the BlackGold project KNOC acquired in 2006. KNOC acquired Calgary-based Harvest Energy Trust in a combined \$4.1 billion cash and debt deal in October 2009.
- The Canadian subsidiary of state-controlled KNOC is the sole operator of the Black Gold project, a potential 250-million-barrel prospect. As of 2011, Canada Black Gold oil sands project had \$743 million in investment and is expected to produce 10,000 barrels per day by 2016.

## TOURISM

- South Korea remains a priority market for tourism. Travel Alberta maintains an in-market representative in Seoul.
- In August 2012, the Premier met with the Chairman of Korean Air at an Alberta Days event during the London Olympics to discuss air service between South Korea and Alberta.
- In 2012, Alberta received 32,000 overnight visitors from South Korea accounting for \$30 million in tourism expenditures.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Under a letter of intent between Alberta and sister province Gangwon, approximately \$1.5 million has been contributed to eleven joint projects through the Alberta-Gangwon Collaboration Program since 2005.
- Alberta's Ministry of Innovation and Advanced Education provides support for an international research collaboration between the University of Calgary and the Korean company M & D, based in Alberta's sister province of Gangwon. The project focuses on measuring cancer cells and tissue samples to measure biomarker expression in real-time.

## AGRICULTURE

- South Korea is Alberta's eighth largest destination country for agri-food exports, with exports valued at \$113.3 million in 2013. Top products included wheat (\$32.3 million), pork (\$26.6 million), raw hides and skins (\$9.3 million), canola/mustard oils (\$8.4 million), malt (\$8.3 million), beef (\$6.9 million) and other oils, fats & waxes (\$6.3 million).
- South Korea was Alberta's third largest destination for pork in 2013.
- Opportunities for agricultural, meat and food products are significant in South Korea but expedited negotiations on a free trade agreement with Korea are key to restoring and

increasing Alberta's and Canada's trade in these products to South Korea.

## EDUCATION

- Many South Korean students attend schools in Alberta to learn English as a second language. From 2008 to 2012, 3,014 foreign students from Republic of Korea were issued a permit to study in Alberta.
- For over 10 years, the Calgary Board of Education has built a dynamic relationship with the Seoul Metropolitan Board of Education. Each year, about 15-50 teachers from South Korea participate in a specialized program on English language teaching in Calgary. The Board has also offered leadership training to administrators from Seoul, and has sent its own teachers to participate in summer language camps in South Korea.
- The University of Calgary has active cooperation agreements with a number of Korean institutions, including the Jeonju University, Kongju National University, Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources, Korea University, Seoul National University, and the University of Seoul.
- The University of Alberta (U of A) has many linkages with institutions in Korea, including in Gangwon Province where the Faculty of Education has long-standing ties. Exchange partners include Yonsei University and Seoul National University. The U of A offers Korean language and culture courses, in part through support from the Korea Foundation. There are many Korean short-term visiting students as well as degree students at the U of A.
- MacEwan University has active exchange agreements with the Dankook University and Hankuk University.
- Mount Royal University (MRU) has partnerships with Hanyang University, Kyung Hee University and Ajou University and has an active student exchange program with all three universities. In 2012, MRU was selected to deliver the official training program for participants in the Global Leaders' Program being sponsored by Gangwon Province to train employees prior to the 2018 Winter Olympics.

## EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

- The decline in natural gas prices, along with the projected increase of demand in South Korea, could result in increased Korean investment and trade with Alberta.
- In July 2010, Korean Air launched its new seasonal non-stop service between Calgary and Seoul.

- In July 2009, the federal government of Canada announced the successful conclusion of a Blue Sky air transport agreement with South Korea. The agreement allows any number of air carriers from either country to operate scheduled passenger and all-cargo air services as frequently as desired, to and from any point in either country's territory.
- Opportunities for forest products are considerable in Korea. The existing culture of wood construction in Korea is opening up markets in the decorative wood industries (e.g. flooring, paneling, and furniture). Through existing relationships and intentional marketing and branding, demand for forest products by distributors, builders, manufacturers and consumers can be stimulated. Alberta's forest products are well positioned to take advantage of this growing demand.

- Albertan and South Korean businesses are working together to promote export opportunities in the value-added building products industry.

## COMMUNITY

- There are approximately 12,340 Albertans of Korean descent.
- Between 2008 and 2012, 2,977 immigrants from South Korea chose Alberta as their destination. Of this number, approximately 84 percent were economic immigrants. This includes principal applicants and their dependents.
- From 2008 - 2012, 4,081 foreign workers from South Korea were issued a permit to work in Alberta and were largely occupied in positions including cleaners, food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and related occupations, chefs and cooks, paralegals, social service workers and occupations, and metal forming, shaping and erecting trades.
- In 2013, Apprenticeship and Industry Training approved 415 qualification certificate applications from South Korea. Of these, 83% were from welders. The Qualification Certificate Program provides experienced tradespeople with an opportunity to obtain an Alberta trade certificate by demonstrating that their skills, knowledge and experience meet Alberta industry standards.

- Active Korean community associations have been established in Calgary and Edmonton. In addition to providing assistance to newly arrived immigrants, these associations help to promote Korean culture and provide support to Korean business owners.

- The Edmonton Korean Community Centre

Foundation received a \$1 million grant from the Government of Alberta's Community Facility Enhancement Program to help develop the South Edmonton Multicultural Centre, which will serve as a venue for Korean and other immigrant groups to host cultural events and activities.

## RECENT VISITS

- October 2013: The Minister of Energy visited Seoul and Daegu in order to expand market access for energy commodities in Asia. He spoke at the World Energy Congress in Daegu, and signed bilateral energy cooperation agreements with Korean counterparts.
- September 2013: Alberta's Associate Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations met with companies in South Korea, including KOGAS and Daewoo International, to advance Alberta's economic relationship with South Korea. Meetings were also held to build on cultural and educational linkages, including support for Korea's preparation for the 2018 Winter Olympics.
- June 2012: Alberta's Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations met with companies and industry associations in South Korea to advance Alberta's economic relationship with South Korea.
- May 2012: As part of a mission to South Korea and China, Alberta's Minister of Education participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Education Ministerial Meeting hosted by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in Gyeongju, South Korea.

## DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION

- His Excellency CHO Hee-yong is the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Canada based in Ottawa.
- Mr. LEE Kie Cheon is the Consul General of the Republic of Korea based in Vancouver, which has jurisdiction for Alberta.
- Mr. David Chatterson is the Canadian Ambassador to South Korea in Seoul.
- Mr. George Fixler is the Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Korea in Calgary.
- Alberta has maintained an international office in Seoul since 1988. It is co-located in the Canadian Embassy. The Managing Director of this office is Mr. Greg Baker.



### For more information, contact:

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