



19.Mar.2018 Letter 032 - Ver 001

## **SICOGA 2018 - FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions about Korea**

### **1 What languages are spoken in Korea?**

Koreans speak the Korean language. As the second language, English is commonly used in Korea.

### **2 Is Korea safe to visit?**

Korea ranks high in personal safety and is believed to be a very secure place to visit and travel around. Seoul is also considered one of the few mega cities in the world that is safe to hang around at night. Korea is an orderly democratic country with a stable government. Our police and traffic regulations are generally respected.

### **3. Do I need to get a Visa for visiting Korea?**

Any foreign visitors wishing to visit the Republic of Korea must have a valid passport with an expiry date of at least 6 months later. Visitors of 104 countries who want to visit Korea temporarily are permitted to enter without a visa according to visa-exemption agreements, or in accordance with principles reciprocity or national interest. Please refer to the following homepage (<https://www.visa.go.kr/>) and see if your country is one for those whose their citizens are required to obtain a visa. It is highly recommend not to count only on that or any other web site, but to also verify the requirements at the local Korea embassy or any other official authority

Visitors for sightseeing or transit with confirmed outbound tickets may stay in Korea up to 30 days without visas, except those from certain countries. Any visitor from a country that has no diplomatic relations or no special visa exemption with Korea should obtain an entry visa before coming to Korea.

Servas Korea will do its best to help those who find that they need a visa by providing them an official invitation letter upon request. Applying and obtaining for visa and all related costs will be paid by the applying person.

For any help and guidance you may consult the Organizing Team contact person for visas Mr. DongWhan [dongwhany@gmail.com](mailto:dongwhany@gmail.com).

### **4 What currency do we use in Korea?**

Korean Republic Won - KRW.

Having a general idea so at begging of March the exchange rate is 1 USD\$ = 1,078 KRW and 1 Euro=1,328 KRW.

Paper money comes in denominations of 1,000; 5,000; 10,000; and 50,000 won bills. Coins come in 1, 5, 10, 100, and 500 won (1 and 5 won coins are not widely circulated).

An up to date exchange rates of any current can be found at <http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/>  
Money may be changed at banks or at currency exchange points at major airports. Most banks offer currency exchange services. Government-certified currency exchange booths also offer exchange outside of regular banking

hours, and are usually located in areas frequented by international visitors. Both Debit and Credit cards are widely used throughout Korea. There are terminals in all towns that will accept most cards. **However, non-Korea Debit cards may not work at some local centres. Some locations will charge a small percentage addition for use of Credit cards.**

Banks usually offer the best exchange rates to travelers. Banking hours can vary, but most have business hours from 09:00 to 16:00. ATMs typically operate until 23:00, but many are open 24 hours a day. ATMs can also be found at convenience stores, but often charge higher transaction fees. ATMs that accept international cards are common and are marked with a "Global" sign or the logo of the international banks they accept cards from. Most ATMs offer foreign language services, including English, Chinese, and Japanese.

- **Global Tax Free**

In Korea, a 10 percent VAT is added on to the price of many purchases. At stores displaying a "Tax Free" sign, foreigners are eligible for a tax refund on purchases greater than 30,000 won. In order to receive your refund, visitors should do the following:

- 1. Purchase merchandise of total value greater than 30,000 won at stores displaying the "Tax Free" sign.
- 2. Show your passport and ask for a refund check when paying.
- 3. Present your passport, refund check, receipt, and unopened merchandise at airport customs when leaving the country.
- 4. Receive your cash, check, or credit card refund at the refund counter located near the departure gates.

## 5 **Is it safe to drink tap water in Korea?**

It is safe to drink tap water throughout Korea. In addition, water bottles can be found in all supermarkets.

## 6 **Can I bring food into Korea?**

**It is strictly forbidden to bring any type of fresh food into Korea.**

Korea has strict bio-security regulations and there are heavy fines for attempting to bring fresh food into Korea. However, packaged foods, such as chocolates, may be considered. Having any doubt, It is highly recommended to declare upon arrival what you bring in.

## 7 **What type of power plugs & sockets and voltage operates in Korea?**

Korea electric power is 230Volts, 60Hz. The power plug type is "F" as shown at <http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets>. Make sure you bring suitable adapters and cables for all of your devices.

For all countries: <https://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plug-voltage-by-country/>



## 8 **What weights and measures are used in Korea?**

Korea uses kilograms (kg) and metres(m). All road signs are in kilometres(km).



**9 Which side of the road do we drive on in Korea?**

On the **Right hand** side road.

**10 How can I find out about tourism opportunities in Korea?**

You can visit the Korea Tourism Organization ([www.visitkorea.or.kr](http://www.visitkorea.or.kr)) web site, which is searchable by destination and subject. It is provided in 12 languages: Korean, English, Japanese, Chinese, German, French, Spanish, Russian, Thai and Arabic.

For detailed information on local tourist sites please visit the following websites, <http://korean.visitseoul.net> and [https://wikitravel.org/en/South\\_Korea](https://wikitravel.org/en/South_Korea)

**11 What accommodation is there in Korea?**

Servas Korea has more than 350 Servas hosts located throughout Korea. See our Servas Korea website <http://www.servas.or.kr> for information on "Where are our Hosts". Korea has a range of other accommodation for tourists. These include hotels, motels, bed-and-breakfast, hostels and backpackers.

**12 What are the climate and temperatures like mainly around October in Korea?**

The climate of Korea is divided into four characteristic seasons. In summer the monsoon occurs from the end of June through July. The winter brings a significant lowering of temperatures. The autumn is undeniably the most beautiful season to visit South Korea, this period profits from an agreeable amount of sunshine and superb landscapes. Autumn arrives in early October when the air currents shift back to the crisp northerly winds. The weather is normally dry and sunny. The month of October is characterized by rapid falling of daily high temperatures, with daily highs decreasing from 23°C to 16°C over the course of the month, exceeding 26°C or dropping below 11°C only one day in ten. For weather forecasts, you can listen to radio or TV reports, read the newspapers, or visit the website [www.thetimenow.com/weather/south\\_korea/seoul](http://www.thetimenow.com/weather/south_korea/seoul).

**13 How can I get into Korea?**

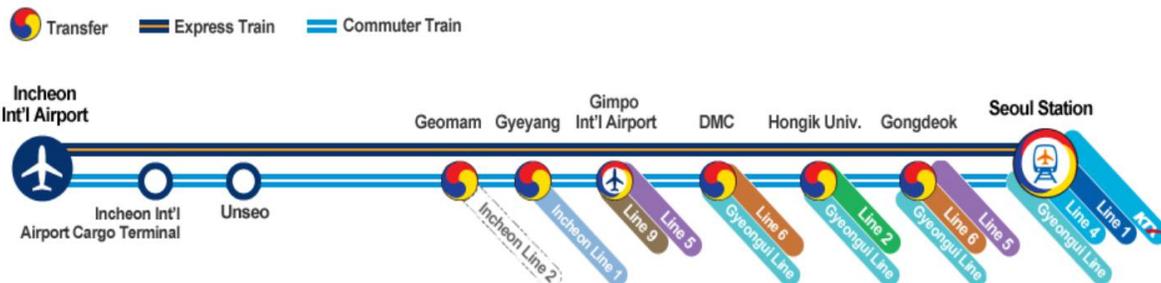
Korea is well served by frequent air services connecting to the world including North America, Asia, and Europe. Incheon International Airport (ICN), which is one of the newest transportation hubs in Asia, has over 64 airline offices and manages 455 inbound and outbound international flights each day. It is located approximately one hour away from downtown Seoul. For detailed information on the airport facilities and transportation, please refer to its website at [www.airport.or.kr](http://www.airport.or.kr).

**14 How can I get from the airport to Seoul?**

There are several different ways to travel from Incheon International Airport to downtown Seoul. It takes about 40 minutes to one hour to get to Seoul. The most popular ways include taking the Airport Railroad Express (AREX), Seoul Metropolitan Subway, airport limousine buses, and taxis. Among these, the Airport Railroad has the benefit of avoiding traffic on the roads, allowing tourists to arrive at their destination on time. The Airport Railroad Express

runs directly from Incheon International Airport to Seoul Station, with no stops along the way- Suggests the best way to get in Seoul. Ask at the Airport Help desk where to find these.  
For more information, you may visit the website <http://english.visitseoul.net/essential-info>. If you are being hosted before the Conference, please discuss this with your host.

**15 What is the best way to get to the conference place?**



The best way to get the conference venue site - the International Youth Center Youth Hostel, from Incheon Airport is to take Airport Train, get off at Gimpo Airport Station, transfer onto Line #5 train bound for Banghwa, and get off at Banghwa Station (final station). It takes 50 minutes to get to the International Youth Center Youth Hostel. During the morning and noon time of October 13th Servas Korea volunteers will be waiting for the SICOGA participants at the subway station to guide them. The conference venue site address is 234 Kuemnanhwa-ro, Kangseo-gu, Seoul-si, Korea.

**16 Is transportation being provided from any place to the Conference venue site?**

No public transport will be provided as it is actually not required. Within 8-minute walking distance from the venue site there is a subway station connected to the heart of Seoul, to Incheon and Gimpo international airports.

**17 Where the Conference is being held?**

The conference is held at the International Youth Center Youth Hostel ([www.iyc.or.kr](http://www.iyc.or.kr)) is located in a quite a pleasant surroundings of Mt. Gaehwa in the west Seoul within easy reach from Incheon International Airport, Gimpo International Airport and the city center by the subway train (Line No. 5). It is an international youth center that has been widely used for hosting international programs for youth associations and public because it has all facilities including the international conference hall, seminar rooms with different sizes, restaurants, a fitness club, a swimming pool and different types of guestrooms. International conference hall and seminar rooms provide a comfortable and convenient place to hold large international conferences as well as small scale gatherings. Guestrooms vary from sizes of 2, 3, 4, 6 beds to an Ondol traditional style 4, 6 and 10-person under-floor-heating room, which has no beds but only mattresses. Each room has dressers, bathroom, air conditioning, heating with individual control, and a phone to make international calls.

**18 Is bedding provided at the Conference venue?**

The venue will provide towels and all bedding needs (pillows, sheets, blankets, duvet) for all rooms.



## 19 Can special food requirements be served at the Conference venue?

In your registration for the Conference, you can choose between vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, or no restrictions. The kitchen staffs at the venue are very flexible, and will do their best to cater for your needs. If you have other special requirements, you may on your arrival day discuss them with the kitchen staff.

## 20. Phones, Mobile phones and sim cards in Korea.

You may have "roaming" capability on your mobile phone, or you can purchase a Korean SIM card at the Airport. To be able to make local phone calls and have communication data there is an option to purchase a local sim card. Sim cards can be purchased online and picked up at Incheon International Airport. It is also possible to purchase sim cards at the airport, and at most convenience stores around Seoul, such as CU, 7-11, and GS25. The recommended phone companies for purchasing a resalable sim card are SK telecom, LG Uplus, and KT.

- How to Make Domestic Calls within Korea

To make a domestic phone call within Korea, dial the area code followed by the phone number.

- Metropolitan Area Codes: Seoul (02), Incheon (032), Gwangju (062), Busan (051), Daegu (053), Daejeon (042), Ulsan (052)

- Provincial Area Codes: Gyeonggi-do (031), Gangwon-do (033), Chungcheongbuk-do (043), Chungcheongnam-do (041), Jeollabuk-do (063), Jeollanam-do (061), Gyeongsangbuk-do (054), Gyeongsangnam-do (055), Jeju-do (064)

- How to Make International Calls from Korea

Dial any of the following international exit numbers: 001, 002, 005, 008, 00365, 00700, 00770

Next, dial the country code of the country you are calling · Dial the local area code and phone number. Example: To call the United States, begin with any of the international exit numbers listed above, and then dial the country code +1, area code (555), and phone number 123-4567.

001+1+555+123-4567

- How to Call Korea from Abroad

When calling Korea from abroad, first dial your country's exit code (if applicable), then + 82 (ROK country code) + area code (omit the 0), and the phone number.

Example: To call Seoul from Australia, dial 0011+82+2-123-4567.

- Phone Rental

Mobile phones can be rented from major telecom companies such as LG, SK, and KT in the arrivals lobby at Incheon and Gimpo International Airports. To rent a phone, you will need to provide your passport and a credit card. Your rental phone must be returned to the same counter from which it was rented. Phones are also available for rental at most major hotels. Each carrier charges approximately 3,000 won/day in addition to the 100 won/10 seconds charge for outgoing calls. Incoming calls do not incur any charges for the recipient. Mobile data charges can vary, but are usually around 5,000 won per day. Both 3G and 4G are available in all but the most remote areas of the country. Once you've rented a phone, please download Visit Seoul's mobile application, i



Tour Seoul. This app will put all the essential information you'll need to navigate and enjoy Seoul right at your fingertips.

- Incheon Int'l Airport: 1st floor, Arrivals Lobby (open 24 hours a day)
- Gimpo Int'l Airport: International Terminal, 1st floor, Arrivals Lobby (7:00–23:00)
- Public pay phones

Payphones can be found at the airport, subway stations, and major tourist attractions. In Korea, you'll find phones that accept coins, prepaid cards, and credit cards, as well as phones that only accept coins and phones that only accept cards. To use the phones that accept cards, you must purchase a prepaid phone card from a convenience store (cards come in 3,000; 5,000; and 10,000 won increments), use a T-Money card or credit card, or dial collect. If you're using a phone that takes cards, first pick up the receiver and then insert your card. The remaining balance will be displayed. Enter the phone number you wish to dial. To use a T-Money card, hold the card up to the card reader. The phone will make a sound when your card has been read, after which you can dial the number you wish to call. For coin phones, deposit the required amount and then dial the number. Local calls are 70 won for every 180 seconds. Calls placed to a mobile phone cost 70 won for every 38 seconds.

## 21 How does the Internet in Korea works

Internet access is widely available throughout Seoul. Airports, hotels, tourist information centers, public facilities such as subway and railway stations, and many restaurants and cafés have Wi-Fi, LAN Internet access, or both. You can even connect to the Internet on KTX trains. You can also go to an Internet café, called a "PC bang" ("PC room"), which are found in most commercial and residential areas of the city. They cost about 1,000 to 2,000 won an hour.

### Wi-Fi

Wireless Internet is widely available in Seoul, which boasts nearly 10,000 free Wi-Fi hot spots. Public service centers and institutions such as transit centers, airports, libraries, hospitals, universities, and even many tourist spots offer free public access. Most hotels, stores, cafés, restaurants, and even taxis offer complimentary Wi-Fi access, although you may have to ask for the password ("bimilbeonho") or log in to their system.

Visitors can also pay for access from telecom companies such as KT, SK, and LG by logging in and paying by credit card at hot spots. Prepaid cards are also available for purchase at most convenience stores, and cost approximately 1,000 won per hour or 3,000 won per day.

Visitors who need consistent access to Wi-Fi can also rent portable routers (often called "eggs" or "pocket Wi-Fi") to create hot spots from major telecom providers such as KT and SK at Incheon and Gimpo International Airports. They can be reserved online in advance and picked up directly at the phone rental service desks of the telecom provider. Other rental agencies can be found in major tourist spots such as Seoul Station, Insa-dong, and Myeong-dong. A portable router usually costs between 5,000 and 10,000 won per day to rent.

## 22 Is there free Wifi at the Airport, in Seoul down town and at the SICOGA 2018 venue?

Incheon International Airport has limitation of 30 minutes free Wifi throughout the whole terminal. Wifi is also available in most areas of Seoul down town



The SICOGA 2018 venue has a 24/7 free high speed wireless internet network available for all guests.

**23 Will I need to bring with me a Servas Letter of Introduction (LOI)?**

A Letter of Introduction is required in case you intend to be hosted while staying in Korea.

**24 Are we expected to tip for services in Korea?**

Tipping isn't a Korean custom, not common nor required or expected at any place or service personnel in Korea including not at the venue site. However, many major hotels and upscale restaurants add a 10 percent service charge (in addition to the 10 percent VAT) to the bill. Taxi drivers do not expect tips, but do appreciate if you let them keep the change.

**25 What activities will there be for those not involved in the General Assembly (GA) meetings?**

There will be an information pack for partners of GA participants available in the Conference venue. This will provide a wide variety of options including day walks, scenic places to visit. These will be on a "user-pays" basis.

Servas Korea has planned some optional activities for not involved in the General Assembly participants. For useful information about Seoul, please visit <http://english.visitseoul.net/map-guide-book> where you can find the location and basic information about the suggested options.

**26 Will there be a group excursion Day during the Conference week?**

A group excursion will be to the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone), a unique opportunity to experience the only DMZ in the world guided by local Korea guides.

Food and drink will be provided along that day.

The Korean peninsula is home to a single nation of people with one language and ethnicity, but divided into two countries, South Korea and North Korea. The DMZ is a buffer zone, which was established on July 27, 1953 when the Armistice Agreement was signed between UN and North Korea. It is a de facto new border between South and North Korea. It vividly captures the scars and wounds of the Korean war as well as the wishes and hopes of all Koreans for the future. It is not only the safest battlefield but also one and only DMZ in the world. The DMZ tour will be a highly informative and impressive experience to all participants.

**-Imjinkak Peace Park:** This pavilion is located 7kms from the Military Demarcation Line and you can get a view of North Koreans' life from there. It was built in 1972 for those who came to South, leaving their home in the North.



**-Unification Bridge:** This is located in the Joint Security Area and crosses the Military Demarcation Line between South Korea and North Korea. It is called 'Bridge of No Return' as it was used for prisoner exchange at the end of Korean War in 1953.

**-The 3rd Infiltration Tunnel:** It is one of four known tunnels under the border between South Korea and North Korea, extending to south of Panmunjeom. It is only 44kms from Seoul. This incomplete tunnel was discovered in October 1978. It runs through bedrock at a depth of about 73m(240 ft) below the ground. It was apparently designed for a surprise attack on Seoul from North Korea and could accommodate 30,000 men per hour along with light weaponry. Visitors enter either by walking down a long steep incline that starts in a lobby near the gift shop or via a sled on rails that contains a driver at the front or back.

**-Dora Mountain Observatory:** It was built by the ministry of National Defence in 1986. You can view the North Korean village and as far north as the city of Gaesung from here. This place is the nearest point to North Korea from South Korea.

**-Visiting an elementary school in the Civilian Control Zone:** It is the agricultural line, which was established by the commander of the 8th U.S. Army Corps in 1954 to restrict entering and farming of civilians. The agricultural line was changed to the Civilian Control Line since the military carried out the duties of defense. Civilians were allowed to enter or stay for agriculture. As a result, more than 100 villages had generated between 1959 and 1973. Also the villages had made with the purpose of countering the propaganda village of North Korea.

**-Having a lunch at a restaurant in the border area:** This village is famous for restaurants with excellent bean cooking among which you can choose: Fast-fermented Bean Stew, Set Menu with Barley & Rice, Bean Paste Stew, and Soft Tofu Stew. The beans are produced in this highly eco-friendly and clean soil.

**-Bugak Skyway:** The 19km-long Bugak Skyway runs along the northeast ridge of Bugaksan Mountain. Built in 1968, the road offers lovely views of Bugaksan Mountain's Bibong Peak and Musubong Peak on one side, and Namsan Mountain on the other side. The skyway leads to an octagonal pavilion at the top called "Palgakjeong", where visitors can get a panoramic view of the Seoul city.

## 27 What places of interest can be found in Seoul?

Korea is a country visited by more than ten million international travelers every year. With its long history in culture and tradition, Korea has a lot to offer to visitors. We first recommend you to visit Seoul including the following places:

- **Korean Folk Village:** Set in a natural environment occupying approximately 243 acres, visitors can experience the natural atmosphere with over 260 traditional houses reminiscent of the late Joseon Dynasty, including various household goods from different regions. All these features have been relocated and restored to provide visitors with a broad understanding of Korean food, clothing, and housing style of the past.
- **Gyeongbokgung Palace:** the largest of the five palaces constructed by the Joseon Dynasty. Joseon lasted for 500 years and laid the foundation for major aspects of Korean culture and identity, including the entrenchment of Confucian ideals and doctrines in Korean society, and the importation and adaptation of Chinese culture.
- **BukchonHanok Village:** Surrounded by Gyeongbokgung Palace, Changdeokgung Palace and Jongmyo Shrine, BukchonHanok Village is home to hundreds of traditional houses called 'hanok' that date back to the Joseon Dynasty. The name, 'Bukchon,' which literally translates to 'northern village,' came about as the neighborhoods that the village covers lie to the north of the two significant Seoul landmarks, Cheonggyecheon Stream and Jong



no.

- **Insadong Antique Alley** is famous for streets filled with the flavors of tradition and is universally well-loved by tourists. Here, foreigners can purchase traditional souvenirs at low prices and taste authentic dishes by stepping into a Korean restaurant found on every street corner.
- **Namdaemun Market**: Opened in 1964, the Namdaemun Market is the largest traditional market in Korea with various goods in store. All products are sold at affordable prices and the stores in this area also function as a wholesale market.
- **Myeongdong** is one of the busiest places in Seoul and is among Korea's premier shopping destinations. Over 1 million shoppers pass through this area each and every day. Located in the heart of Seoul, Myeong-dong market has been a witness to Korea's tumultuous modern-day history as a center of city politics, economy, and culture. To international visitors, Myeong-dong is a stunning shopping district with countless shops and restaurants. Its wild popularity has led to similar shopping districts springing up all across the country.

Seoul homepage of [www.visitseoul.net](http://www.visitseoul.net) is the official tourism information website offering real time tourist information. It provides information on top 10 lists for attractions, nightlife, traditional & culture experience, items to buy in Seoul, and other useful information.

### **Summary**

The OT has done its best to gather and tell all that information above but as understood, some of it might be not up-to-date or fully accurate. Therefore it is highly recommended you will make your own study and search and verify what is relevant for you.

From time to time this document might be updated according to any new information the OT might receive. Therefore it is recommended to occasionally check for an up-to-date version.

Wishing you a pleasant trip and a wonderful stay in Korea.

The SICOGA 2018 Organizing Team

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