# Korea

**Responding institution:**

The respondent has requested to remain anonymous.

This is the first time that the Republic of Korea has responded to the IFLA/FAIFE questionnaire. There are an estimated 514 public libraries in Korea, 10 297 school libraries and 438 university libraries, with 42 government-funded research libraries.

Internet penetration is high in Korea, with 66.5% of the population being Internet users. Levels of access in the country's libraries are correspondingly high, as 81-100% of all libraries offer Internet access to their users. Internet access is free of charge in all libraries. The state has made no extra funding available to improve Internet access in the last two years.

The respondent has indicated that very much local content is available on the Internet, and also that very much content is available in local languages. The literacy rate is given as 97.9%.

The library association is in favour of filtering information to a certain extent (e.g. for children) and filtering software is used to a certain degree in libraries. The reasons given are the protection of children and the safeguarding of public morality.

The library association has not adopted the IFLA Internet Manifesto or the Glasgow Declaration, but a code of ethics was adopted in 1997.

**User privacy and anti-terror legislation**

No anti-terror legislation has been passed. It is felt that the keeping of user records would affect the freedom of expression of the individual Internet library user.

**Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years**

Many reports about South Korea focus on its relationship with North Korea, the latter being known for its severe freedom of expression and human rights abuses. Many articles criticise South Korea for not taking a stand against North Korean government activity. (For more information, see http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/11/17/skorea14621.htm.)

A press law, the Act Governing the Guarantee of Freedom and Functions of Newspapers, took effect on 28 July 2005. This law restricted free enterprise in the print media, but on 29 June 2006 the Constitutional Court ruled it contrary to freedom of the press and enterprise. There is, however, still a law on national security that allows the government to censor publications or block access to websites favourable to North Korea (http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=20797 and http://opennet.net/research/profiles/south-korea).

**HIV/Aids awareness**

There are no specific programmes to raise awareness of HIV/Aids, as libraries focus on cultural issues. There are also no specific programmes for people who are unable to read, as the literacy rate is very high.

**Women and freedom of access to information**

Libraries in Korea have no special programmes

focusing on the promotion of women's literacy or women's access to specific topics (e.g. social information, the economy, education, health and family planning). The respondent has indicated that genders are equal with regard to literacy and freedom of access to information.

**IFLA Internet Manifesto**

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has not yet been adopted, but the issue is currently under discussion.

**IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom**

The Glasgow Declaration has not yet been adopted, but the issue is currently under discussion.

**Ethics**

The respondent has indicated that the library association adopted a code of ethics in 1997 (see http://www.korla.or.kr/data/reference/morla.asp.)

## Main indicators

| | |
|---|---|
| Country name: | Korea (Republic of) |
| Population: | 49 044 790 (July 2007 est.) |
| Main language: | Korean; English (widely taught in junior high and high school) |
| Literacy: | 97.9% |
| Literacy reported by respondent: | 97.9 % |

Population figures, language and literacy are from the
*CIA World Factbook,* 2007 edition
(https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html).

**Korea**

## Libraries and Internet access

The Republic of Korea participated for the first time in the IFLA/FAIFE World Report in 2007. No comparisons can therefore be made with previous reports.

### Library services

| | |
|---|---|
| Estimated number of public libraries*: | 514 |
| Estimated number of school libraries: | 10 297 |
| Estimated number of university libraries: | 438 |
| Estimated number of government-funded research libraries: | 42 |
| Source of these numbers: | 2006 Korea Library Year Book; http://kosis.nso.go.kr |

### Internet access

| | |
|---|---|
| Population online**: | 34 120 000 users as of Dec. 2006 (66.5%) |
| Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users: | 81-100% |
| Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users: | 81-100% |
| Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users: | 81-100% |
| Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users: | 81-100% |
| In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet: | Very much |
| *To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:* | Very much |
| Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals: | Yes, to a certain degree – to protect children and safeguard public morality |
| Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries: | Yes, to a certain degree |
| Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers: | Yes, in all libraries |
| Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years: | No |

\* Public library service points, including branch libraries.
\*\* Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats (www.Internetworldstats.com).
\*\*\* Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.