

## REPUBLIC OF KOREA

**Dates of Elections:** 12 December 1978 (directly elected members)  
21 December 1978 (members elected by the National Conference for Unification)

### Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament on the normal expiry of their term of office.

### Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of the Republic of Korea, the National Assembly, has a total of 231 members: 154 directly elected for 6 years and 77—elected by the National Conference for Unification from a slate of candidates proposed by the President of the Republic—for 3 years. Despite these differences, all members enjoy the same status while in office.

### Electoral System

All citizens who are at least 20 years old, in full possession of their civil rights, and registered as electors are entitled to vote for members of the National Assembly. Disqualified from voting are persons adjudged partially or wholly incompetent to manage their property, persons sentenced to confinement or heavier criminal punishment who are imprisoned or in whose case a final decision is pending, persons for whom two years have not elapsed since the levying of a fine of 5,000 *Won* (approximately US\$ 10) as an electoral criminal, persons sentenced to confinement or heavier criminal punishment for whom six years have not elapsed since the final decision not to carry out the execution thereof, or since the completion or exemption of the execution thereof, and persons disfranchised pursuant to a court decision.

Electoral registers are compiled on the local (city, county, town) level as of the announcement of the polling day and revised continuously during this pre-election period. Voting is not compulsory.

Every qualified elector who has attained the age of 25 may be a candidate for the National Assembly. The same disqualifications as for electors are generally applicable, except that the time span since the levying of the fine of 5,000 *Won* is six years, not two. Membership of the National Assembly is incompatible with membership of the National Conference for Unification or local assemblies, membership of the Election Management Committee, the office of public official (except the Prime Minister, Ministers and others provided by law), membership of the armed and police forces, and the post of employee or director of statutory corporations and public or private interest bodies.

Independent candidates for direct election must make a deposit of 5,000,000 *Won* (US\$ 10,000), 2,000,000 *Won* more than party candidates; these amounts are forfeited if at least one-third of the total valid votes cast in the constituency are not obtained. No monetary deposit is required as regards the indirect election by the National Conference for Unification.

For purposes of direct elections, the Republic of Korea is divided into 77 districts, each of which returns the two Assembly members who have obtained the greatest number of votes.

As regards the indirect elections by the National Conference for Unification, a blocked list of candidates is approved by the absolute majority of delegates attending the sitting of the Conference; in case this majority is not achieved a new blocked list is put forward.

By-elections are held to fill vacant seats of directly elected members, while substitutes elected at the same time as titular members fill vacancies applying to members elected by the National Conference for Unification.

### **General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

In the 1978 elections, a total of 473 candidates vied for the 154 directly-elected seats of the National Assembly. Among these were 77 of the ruling Democratic Republican Party (DRP), 81 of the opposition New Democratic Party (NDP), 60 of the Democratic Unification Party and 255 independents. Among the registered candidates there also figured 119 incumbents and five women.

During the campaign period, the major political parties (DRP and NDP) engaged in policy confrontation, with each side's leaders advancing their party's election pledges. Economic questions, particularly inflation, were in the forefront of the debates.

According to the final election returns, the ruling DRP and the opposition NDP retained a solid dominance by winning 68 and 61 seats, respectively, as the NDP obtained the most votes. DRP came out on top in many rural electoral districts, whereas NDP nominees led most constituencies in major cities throughout the country. Independent candidates, numbering 252, logged a slight advance by capturing 22 seats.

Mr. Choi Kyu-hah of DRP continued as Prime Minister. The newly-elected Assembly held its inaugural session on 19 March 1979.

**Statistics**

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats  
in the National Assembly

	Directly elected members	Indirectly elected members
Number of registered electors	19,489,490	2,581
Voters	15,023,370 71	
Blank or void ballot papers . . .	210,927	11
Valid votes	14,812,443	2,562

Political Group	Number of Candidates ö b t a , n e d	%	Number of Seats	Number of Seats won at Previous Elections	
Direct elections	Democratic Republican Party . . . . . 77	4,695,995	31.7	68	73
	New Democratic Party . . . . . 81	4,861,204	32.8	61	52
	Democratic Unification Party . . . . . 60	1,095,057	7.4	3	2
	Independents . . . . . 255	4,160,187	28.1	22	<b>19</b>
Indirect elections	Yushimiongwobhoe** . . . . . 77		154*	<b>146</b>	
			77		
			231		

\* Eight seats added since last elections.

\*\* Political group composed of members elected by the National Conference for Unification.

*2. Distribution of Members of the National Assembly according  
to Professional Category*

	Directly elected members	Indirectly elected members
Professional politicians	111	35
Company employees . . .	7	<b>1</b>
Teachers	5	
Farmers . . . . .	5	
Lawyers . . . . .	4	
Tradesmen	3	
Journalists and publishers	3	
Industrial businessmen	1	
Others	7	
Without profession	8	
	154	

*3. Distribution of Members of the National Assembly according  
to Sex*

	Directly elected members	Indirectly elected members
Men	153	70
Women . . . . .	1	7
	<b>154</b>	77

*Distribution of Members of the National Assembly according  
to Age Group*

	Directly elected members	Indirectly elected members
31-35 years .	1	—
36-40 . . . .	15	2
41-45 . . . .	27	8
46-50 . . . .	35	17
51-55 . . . .	46	23
56-60 . . . .	23	15
61 and over	7	12
	154	77