**Korea: Busan Region**

**REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR**
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1. **A Brief Description of Regional Characteristics** (in terms of population, the specialisation in economic sectors etc)

Busan is a port city in the southeastern part of South Korea. It is a major city second only to Seoul in size. It boasts a population of 3.71 million as of 2003.

According to 2003 statistics, rate of participation in economic activities is 57.3% with 1,674,000 people economically active. Unemployment rate is 3.8%. Among Busan residents 1.61 million are employed, with 31,000 people in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, 323,000 in mining and manufacturing, 1,255,000 in social overhead capital and service industries (or the tertiary industry). The tertiary industry accounts for the lion’s share of employment in Busan.

Busan achieved a gross production of 40.19 trillion KRW in 2002. The city accounts for about 6% of Korea’s GDP. In 2004, the Busan Metropolitan City government designated 4 Core Strategic Industries (Port logistics, Mechanical parts and materials, Tourism and convention, and Film and IT) and 6 Endogenous Strategic Industries (Finance and futures, Bio-marine, Silver industry, Footwear, Processed marine products, and Textile and fashion) and decided to concentrate support in these industries. In addition, the Busan government plans to set up High-Tech Parts and Materials Cluster in the west and a Bio-Marine Cluster in the east.

2. **Characteristics of the HEIs in the Region** (the number of HEIs; a basic profile of each institution to be involved in the project in terms of student numbers, balance between teaching and research functions, territorial focus etc)

There are 23 HEIs in Busan, i.e. 13 universities (including a university of education which trains teachers) and 10 junior colleges. Four are national HEIs publicly run (including Busan National University of Education) and the rest are private institutions. Enrollment in the 4-year universities, 2-year junior colleges and graduate schools are respectively 180,000 students, 81,000 students and 17,000 students. Most students are from Busan area or from nearby Ulsan and other places in Gyeongsangnam-do. The 4-year universities together employ about 4,400 professors while the junior colleges employ about 880.

The national universities in Busan are Pusan National University, Pukyong National University, Korea Maritime University, and Busan National University of Education. Pusan National University and Pukyong National University offer programs and conduct research in a variety of academic disciplines. Korea Maritime University is specifically focused on the maritime industry and related issues, reflecting in its programs the distinct characteristics of its home as a major port city. There are other HEIs in Busan that offer education programs and carry out research that are relevant to the geographical environ of the port city. In Pukyong National University, for example, there are College of Fisheries Sciences and College of Environment and Marine Sciences and Technology.
HEIs in Busan serve as institutions of education while simultaneously performing research functions, although each varies on how these two roles are balanced.

3. A Brief History of HEIs' Engagement in the Regional Development

HEIs in Busan, as in other regions, have contributed significantly to regional development by raising qualified and highly-skilled human resources. The HEIs, at the same time, have carried out research and development that support the businesses in the region. Busan Techno Park has been established, and since 1995 three regional research centers have been active. In both the Techno Park and the research centers, the HEIs and their researchers perform important roles.

In Korea, HEIs became central vehicles of regional development in large part with efforts made by the government as the current administration took over in 2003. The ‘Participatory Government’ set balanced development and decentralization as its key goals. This raised regional development as a national task, and HEIs were identified as important vehicles for accomplishing this task. In this context, Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development in 2004 launched New University for Regional Innovation, or NURI Projects, which engages universities based in the provinces. 112 NURI project proposals were selected through highly competitive screening. In Busan alone 12 project teams have been chosen for financial support for 5 years under the NURI initiative.

The government initiative to strengthen the capacity for regional innovation has greatly emphasized the linkage between the education institutions and the industries. Busan will be no exception, and it will surely benefit from stronger regional development strategies based on partnership among the HEIs, the local government, and the local businesses.

4. Scope and level of involvement of regional stakeholders in the project

Representatives from HEIs in the Busan area (participation of national universities will be mandatory), representatives from the local government and the businesses, and representatives from the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development will set up a Regional Steering Committee. One ideal option being considered is to take advantage of the Sub-Council for Development of Regional Universities and Human Resources established under the Regional Innovation Council of the Busan Metropolitan City Government. The Sub-Council encompasses all the organizations that the OECD requires for the formation of a regional steering committee.

5. Resources for Further Information on the Region (i.e. web-site, published report etc)

- Busan Metropolitan City Homepage: http://english.busan.go.kr/index.jsp
- Busan Development Institute Homepage: http://www.bdi.re.kr/english/index.asp
- Busan Human Resources Development Institute Homepage: http://www.bhrdi.or.kr/