

Thales in the Republic of Korea

Factsheet



Locations

more than
40 years
of presence

Gimpo Airport

Seoul

Suwon

Daejeon

4 offices

70+
employees



Did you know?

- Thales equipment and solutions are widely deployed on the **South Korean Navy's ships and helicopters, securing Korean defence since early the 1980s.**
- Korea's Space sector is booming with **5 civil telecommunications** supplied and **4 military surveillance satellites** supported by Thales.
- More than **40% of Korean Air's aircraft** are equipped with Thales IFE systems.
- In the mobile sector, Thales holds **a leading market position in eSIM, SIM, and Machine to Machine (M2M) applications.**
- Thales is a dominant player in supplying **payment cards and digital identity documents**, all cybersecured by design.

About **Thales**

Thales is a global leader in advanced technologies specialized in three business domains: Defence, Aerospace, and Cyber & Digital. It develops products and solutions that help make the world safer, greener and more inclusive. The Group invests close to €4 billion a year in Research & Development, particularly in key innovation areas such as AI, cybersecurity, quantum technologies, cloud technologies and 6G. Thales has close to 83,000 employees in 68 countries. In 2024, the Group generated sales of €20.6 billion.

About Thales in the Republic of Korea

Thales has been present in Korea for more than 40 years, supporting the country's ambitions and local industry in the Defence, Civil Aviation and Space, Cyber and Digital sectors. Headquartered in Seoul, Thales in Republic of Korea employs 70 people engaged in providing solutions that help customers make critical decisions. Thales is helping build local expertise in Korea by engaging in transfer of knowledge, technology and production and is embarking on a strategy of strong collaboration with key local industrial players such as Hanwha, KAI, Korean Air, KT SAT, LIG Nex1 and Samsung.

In Aerospace, our airborne mobility solutions contribute to the safe operations of airports in Korea and our Inflight Entertainment solutions enhance the flying experience with Korean Air. In Space, Thales is a leading partner to Korea since 2006 in all domains such as telecommunications, observation and navigation. In Defence, Thales has supported building local capabilities particularly in the field of naval defence and air defence, providing equipment, technology and engineering assistance. In Cyber and Digital, Thales contributes to the daily life of Korean people with civil identity solutions such as ePassports, mobile connectivity solutions such as eSIM solutions and advanced connectivity solutions, secured banking and payment solutions and cloud protection & licensing.



Defence

Addressing a growing range of ever-changing threats, Thales supports nations and their armed forces to make the right decisions at the right time through advanced technologies, solutions and services in the land, sea, and air domains. Our defence technologies are fuelled with a technological foundation: AI, connectivity, cybersecurity and quantum. Relying on these we are constantly innovating to give armed forces the decisive edge.

Thales has been supplying equipment to the Republic of Korea Navy (ROKN) since the early 1980s, supplying radars, sonars, key interoperability radio solutions and fire control systems.

- The ROKN is one of the most important users of the Goalkeeper and fire control radar for naval defence, with several systems currently in operation. Thales is actively involved in a comprehensive overhaul program, executed in collaboration with local Korean industry partners. Thales' Mine Countermeasure sonars and influence minesweeping equipment form the backbone of the ROKN's Mine Countermeasures capabilities, alongside the dipping sonar used for anti-submarine operations.
- In air defence, Thales is recognised as a long-term partner of the armed forces and industry. Thales has participated in the K-SAM (Chunma) project by supporting technical cooperation with Korean industries and supplies various sub-system for KM-SAM (Chungung).
- Thales is currently assisting the Korean local defence industry to upgrade the country's air defence weapons system (Identification Friend or Foe) to be compatible with the Mode 5 identification classification. This advanced system uses cryptographic techniques to provide a secure and reliable way to identify friendly aircraft, reducing the risk of misidentification and friendly fire. Thales also provides helmet mounted display systems for the Light Armed helicopter and Korean Marine Attack helicopter, as well as avionics for the Korean Utility helicopter and Light Civil helicopter.

Thales supports the South Korean defence industry through strategic partnerships with domestic industry leaders, contributing to the enhancement of the nation's security and defence.



Civil Aviation

Thales is helping to build the safe, sustainable, connected aeronautics of tomorrow by offering a unique passenger experience in airports and in-flight, optimising flight operations and enabling the safe integration of new types of aircraft in airspace, capitalising on cutting-edge technologies such as AI and cybersecurity. Thales is the only company in the world with leadership positions in both on-board equipment — for both cockpit and cabin — and ground equipment (radar, air traffic management systems, etc.).

- In Korea, Thales is one of the major suppliers for Air Traffic Management solutions. Thales has provided Surveillance Radars (ASR/SSR), Instrument Landing Systems (ILS) and VHF Omnidirectional Range (VOR) / Distance Measuring Equipment (DME) along with other navigational equipment.
- Thales provides solutions to key airlines around the world including the national carrier, Korean Air. More than 1,000 aircraft in the Republic of Korea are equipped with Thales avionics systems.
- In the area of Inflight Entertainment solutions, Thales has been a key partner of Korean Air since 2009, keeping passengers entertained and enhancing the travel experience.
- Thales also provides customer service, engineering support, repair and logistics operations for avionics and IFE products in the Republic of Korea through Thales global maintenance centres.



Space

Thales Alenia Space offers institutions, governments, companies and operators a wide range of space solutions – satellites, ground segments, end-to-end-systems – for telecommunications, satellite navigation, earth observation, science and space exploration.

Thales has a 20 years track record with the Republic of Korea in 3 domains, including telecommunications, earth observation and satellite navigation. The company has also established strong partnership with Korean space agencies and companies on several key space programs:

- **Telecommunications:**

Thales has been the prime contractor for the 5 telecommunications satellites for Korean operator KT SAT (KOREASAT 5, 5A, 6, 7 and 6A). KOREASAT 6A embarked a satellite-based augmentation system (SBAS) payload to improve the continuity and availability of the Korea Augmentation Satellite System (KASS) and successfully launched in November 2024.

- **Earth observation:**

Thales has a long-standing collaboration in Earth observation missions delivering equipment for KOMPSAT 3A, 5, 6, 7 and 7A as well as CAS-500. Thales is co-developing the K425 program with Korean space actors, a constellation of high-resolution observation radar satellites for the Agency for Defence. A total of three K425 SAR satellite were successfully launched in April and December 2024 and April 2025, respectively.

- **Navigation:**

In 2016, Thales partnered with the Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI) to jointly develop the KASS system. Certified by national authorities, it became operational in January 2024. The system significantly enhances quality of life and safety by ensuring air traffic safety and supporting emergency responses and rescue operations.



Cyber & Digital

In a world where the number of digital connections and cyberattacks are constantly growing, Thales provides products and services which create a circle of trust between people and the digital services they rely on. The world's leading companies and governments in 180 countries trust us to secure people's and objects' identities, personal and sensitive data and their most critical applications. Our cybersecurity and digital identity technologies are designed to offer solutions for a more sustainable digital transformation.

Thales has provided various solutions in Korea that ensure reliable connectivity in the fields of Mobile, Automotive industry and Banking & Payment, ePassport and Enterprise Security.

- Mobile connectivity solutions: Thales eSIM solutions are leading the market in Korea and are trusted by most OEM customers from the consumer and automotive markets.
- Payment services: Thales provides high quality cards, digital payment and e-banking solutions for leading Korean banks and financial institutions.
- Identity & Biometric Solutions: Thales' identification and secure component solutions support Korean citizens with a secure and sustainable ePassport solution.
- Software Monetisation: Thales supports Korea's leading software companies to create revenue streams, improve operational efficiency, increase customer satisfaction and gain valuable business insights, by enabling innovative software pricing, selling and delivering models.
- Cyber Security Products: Thales' Data Protection & Cyber Digital Solutions have been widely deployed in Korean pillar industries to protect and control access to sensitive information, secure data in the cloud, safeguard transaction, validate identities, manage risk and ensure compliance. Thales cybersecurity services help protect critical systems for local government and all major banks.



Sustainability Commitments



Thales Korea is contributing to a safer, greener, and more inclusive society, aligning with the Group's global ESG goals. Our efforts focus on three key areas:

- **Reducing our carbon footprint**
In support of Thales's goal to achieve net-zero CO₂ emissions by 2040, Thales Korea has made its premises more eco-friendly by eliminating single-use items, promoting resource conservation, and running sustainability campaigns. We also engage in local environmental efforts like "plogging," where employees engage in exercise while simultaneously helping to clean up the community.
- **Supporting isolated and vulnerable communities**
Through partnerships with local organisations, Thales supports vulnerable communities with donation drives, volunteering at meal service centers, and other initiatives aimed at improving social welfare.
- **Advancing employee Health & Wellness and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)**
Thales is committed to increasing gender diversity and promoting career growth opportunities for women. We work to ensure a diverse and inclusive workplace that reflects the broader society and fosters equal opportunities for all. We also prioritise employee well-being by offering wellness programs to support mental and physical health.

By staying committed to Thales's global purpose and ESG vision, Thales is working with perseverance and dedication to create long-term sustainable growth and build a future we can all trust.



Local Partnerships



Thales has, in the course of many military programs over the past years, supported building local capabilities with its Korean partners. Thales actively supports Korean military research bodies by providing equipment, technology and engineering assistance in the development of local equipment. Thales also partners with many key industrial players including renowned companies like Hanwha Systems and LIG Nex 1.

In the space domain, Thales over the past 20 years has continuously reinforced its local presence through close industrial cooperation with partners such as Hanwha Systems, KAI and KT SAT among others and Korean public research centers like KARI and ETRI.

With Korea being a forerunner in the global start-up ecosystem, starting in 2025, Thales is collaborating with the Ministry of SMEs and Startups and the Korea Institute of Startup and Entrepreneurship Development (KISED) to participate in the 'Global Partnership Program'. Through the 'Thales Trust my Tech Korea' programme, Thales supports Korean startups in digital technologies and deep tech fields, including AI, big data, connectivity, cybersecurity, and quantum technologies. The program aims to help outstanding Korean startups enter the global market and actively promotes technological innovation and collaboration between France and Korea.

MOU SIGNING CEREMONY

창업진흥원-탈레스 코리아 간 우주항공·딥테크 분야 스타트업 공동육성을 위한 업무협약 체결식

Between Thales Korea and Korea Institute of Startup & Entrepreneurship Development
For Joint Nurturing of Startups in the field of Aerospace and DeepTech

JULY 17, 2024



Annexes/ List of Historical References



Defence

- In 2019, Thales installed the variable depth sonar on each ROKN mine counter-measure ship and also the hull mounted sonar on salvage and rescue ship.
- In 2020, Thales supplied the flash dipping sonar for ROKN MH-60R.
- In 2023, Thales has been awarded a contract by Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) to equip FA-50 fighter for Poland with its Scorpion Helmet Mounted Display (HMD).



Civil Aviation

- In 2019, Thales secured contract for installing 9 navigational aids (VOR/DME) for Korea Airport Corporation.
- In 2021, Thales secured contracts to modernize 3 radars for Korea Airport Corporation at Muan, Ulsan, and Yeosu airports.



Space

- The Korea Augmentation Satellite System (KASS) entered operational service in January 2024.
- In 2024, the first & second 425 SAR satellite of Korea and Koreasat-6A (Mugunghwa 6A) launched and the third 425 SAR satellite launched in 2025.



Cyber & Digital

- In 2019, Thales Supplied eSIM for mobile network operators and automotive eSIM for key Korean firms.
- In 2020, Thales provided embedded Secure Element (eSE) and an embedded SIM (eSIM) to Samsung's latest flagship smartphone Galaxy S20 series as the world's first smartphones featuring a secure single-chip solution.
- In 2021, Thales supplied the e-inlays for South Korea's new e-Passport.
- Thales has supplied more than 100 million units of payment cards to the Korean banking sector over the past decade.
- Since 2023, H/W-based business transformed successfully to service-centric monetization in software monetization sector, and became a leader in both data protection and software monetization.
- In 2023, Thales partnered with the leading Korean mobile operator SK Telecom to deploy Post Quantum Cryptography (PQC) on 5G networks to upgrade protection of subscribers' identity and privacy.



THALES

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