



East & Southeast Asia :: Korea, South

Introduction :: Korea, South

Background:

An independent kingdom for much of its long history, Korea was occupied by Japan beginning in 1905 following the Russo-Japanese War. In 1910, Tokyo formally annexed the entire Peninsula. Korea regained its independence following Japan's surrender to the United States in 1945. After World War II, a democratic-based government (Republic of Korea, ROK) was set up in the southern half of the Korean Peninsula while a communist-style government was installed in the north (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, DPRK). During the Korean War (1950-53), US troops and UN forces fought alongside ROK soldiers to defend South Korea from a DPRK invasion supported by China and the Soviet Union. A 1953 armistice split the peninsula along a demilitarized zone at about the 38th parallel. PARK Chung-hee took over leadership of the country in a 1961 coup. During his regime, from 1961 to 1979, South Korea achieved rapid economic growth, with per capita income rising to roughly 17 times the level of North Korea. South Korea held its first free presidential election under a revised democratic constitution in 1987, with former ROK Army general ROH Tae-woo winning a close race. In 1993, KIM Young-sam (1993-98) became the first civilian president of South Korea's new democratic era. President KIM Dae-jung (1998-2003) won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2000 for his contributions to South Korean democracy and his "Sunshine" policy of engagement with North Korea. President PARK Geun-hye, daughter of former ROK President PARK Chung-hee, took office in February 2013 and is South Korea's first female leader. South Korea holds a non-permanent seat (2013-14) on the UN Security Council and will host the 2018 Winter Olympic Games. Serious tensions with North Korea have punctuated inter-Korean relations in recent years, including the North's attacks on a South Korean ship and island in 2010, nuclear and missile tests, and its temporary closure of the inter-Korean Kaesong Industrial Complex in 2013.

Geography :: Korea, South

Location:

Eastern Asia, southern half of the Korean Peninsula bordering the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea

Geographic coordinates:

37 00 N, 127 30 E

Map references:

Asia

Area:

total: 99,720 sq km
country comparison to the world: 109
land: 96,920 sq km
water: 2,800 sq km

Area - comparative:

slightly smaller than Pennsylvania; slightly larger than Indiana

Land boundaries:

total: 238 km
border countries: North Korea 238 km

Coastline:

2,413 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm; between 3 nm and 12 nm in the Korea Strait

contiguous zone: 24 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

continental shelf: not specified

Climate:

temperate, with rainfall heavier in summer than winter

Terrain:

mostly hills and mountains; wide coastal plains in west and south

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Sea of Japan 0 m

highest point: Halla-san 1,950 m

Natural resources:

coal, tungsten, graphite, molybdenum, lead, hydropower potential

Land use:

arable land: 14.93%

permanent crops: 2.06%

other: 83% (2011)

Irrigated land:

8,804 sq km (2003)

Total renewable water resources:

69.7 cu km (2011)

Freshwater withdrawal (domestic/industrial/agricultural):

total: 25.47 cu km/yr (26%/12%/62%)

per capita: 548.7 cu m/yr (2003)

Natural hazards:

occasional typhoons bring high winds and floods; low-level seismic activity common in southwest

volcanism: Halla (elev. 1,950 m) is considered historically active although it has not erupted in many centuries

Environment - current issues:

air pollution in large cities; acid rain; water pollution from the discharge of sewage and industrial effluents; drift net fishing

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Antarctic-Environmental Protocol, Antarctic-Marine Living Resources, Antarctic Treaty, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands, Whaling

signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:

strategic location on Korea Strait

People and Society :: Korea, South

Nationality:

noun: Korean(s)

adjective: Korean

Ethnic groups:

homogeneous (except for about 20,000 Chinese)

Languages:

Korean, English (widely taught in junior high and high school)

Religions:

Christian 31.6% (Protestant 24%, Roman Catholic 7.6%), Buddhist 24.2%, other or unknown 0.9%, none 43.3% (2010 survey)

Population:

49,039,986 (July 2014 est.)

country comparison to the world: 27

Age structure:

0-14 years: 14.1% (male 3,603,943/female 3,328,634)
15-24 years: 13.5% (male 3,515,271/female 3,113,257)
25-54 years: 47.3% (male 11,814,872/female 11,360,962)
55-64 years: 12.7% (male 3,012,051/female 3,081,480)
65 years and over: 12.3% (male 2,570,433/female 3,639,083) (2014 est.)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 37.1 %
youth dependency ratio: 20.4 %
elderly dependency ratio: 16.7 %
potential support ratio: 6 (2013)

Median age:

total: 40.2 years
male: 38.7 years
female: 41.6 years (2014 est.)

Population growth rate:

0.16% (2014 est.)
country comparison to the world: 183

Birth rate:

8.26 births/1,000 population (2014 est.)
country comparison to the world: 220

Death rate:

6.63 deaths/1,000 population (2014 est.)
country comparison to the world: 144

Net migration rate:

0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2014 est.)
country comparison to the world: 85

Urbanization:

urban population: 83.2% of total population (2011)
rate of urbanization: 0.71% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

SEOUL (capital) 9.778 million; Busan (Pusan) 3.439 million; Incheon (Inch'on) 2.572 million; Daegu (Taegu) 2.458 million; Daejeon (Taejon) 1.497 million (2009)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.07 male(s)/female
0-14 years: 1.08 male(s)/female
15-24 years: 1.13 male(s)/female
25-54 years: 1.04 male(s)/female
55-64 years: 1 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.69 male(s)/female
total population: 1 male(s)/female (2014 est.)

Mother's mean age at first birth:

29.6 (2008 est.)

Maternal mortality rate:

16 deaths/100,000 live births (2010)
country comparison to the world: 143

Infant mortality rate:

total: 3.93 deaths/1,000 live births
country comparison to the world: 200
male: 4.13 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 3.73 deaths/1,000 live births (2014 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 79.8 years
country comparison to the world: 39
male: 76.67 years
female: 83.13 years (2014 est.)

Total fertility rate:

1.25 children born/woman (2014 est.)
country comparison to the world: 220

Contraceptive prevalence rate:

80%

note: percent of women aged 15-44 (2009)

Health expenditures:

7.2% of GDP (2011)

country comparison to the world: 83

Physicians density:

2.02 physicians/1,000 population (2010)

Hospital bed density:

10.3 beds/1,000 population (2009)

Drinking water source:**improved:**

urban: 99.7% of population

rural: 87.9% of population

total: 97.8% of population

unimproved:

urban: 0.3% of population

rural: 12.1% of population

total: 2.2% of population (2011 est.)

Sanitation facility access:**improved:**

urban: 100% of population

rural: 100% of population

total: 100% of population

0% of population

0% of population

0% of population (2011 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

less than 0.1% (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 154

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

9,500 (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 107

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

fewer than 500 (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 91

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

7.7% (2008)

country comparison to the world: 139

Education expenditures:

5% of GDP (2009)

country comparison to the world: 75

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 97.9%

male: 99.2%

female: 96.6% (2002)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 17 years

male: 18 years

female: 16 years (2011)

Unemployment, youth ages 15-24:

total: 9%

country comparison to the world: 116

male: 9.7%

female: 8.5% (2012)

Government :: Korea, South

Country name:

conventional long form: Republic of Korea

conventional short form: South Korea

local long form: Taehan-min'guk

local short form: Han'guk

abbreviation: ROK

Government type:

republic

Capital:

name: Seoul

geographic coordinates: 37 33 N, 126 59 E

time difference: UTC+9 (14 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions:

9 provinces (do, singular and plural), 6 metropolitan cities (gwangyoksi, singular and plural), 1 special city, and 1 special self-governing city

provinces: Chungbuk (North Chungcheong), Chungnam (South Chungcheong), Gangwon, Gyeonggi, Gyeongbuk (North Gyeongsang), Gyeongnam (South Gyeongsang), Jeju, Jeonbuk (North Jeolla), Jeonnam (South Jeolla)

metropolitan cities: Busan (Pusan), Daegu (Taegu), Daejeon (Taejon), Gwangju (Kwangju), Incheon (Inch'on), Ulsan

special city: Seoul

special self-governing city: Sejong

Independence:

15 August 1945 (from Japan)

National holiday:

Liberation Day, 15 August (1945)

Constitution:

effective 17 July 1948; amended several times, last in 1987 (2013)

Legal system:

mixed legal system combining European civil law, Anglo-American law, and Chinese classical thought

International law organization participation:

has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; accepts ICCt jurisdiction

Suffrage:

19 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: President PARK Geun-hye (since 25 February 2013)

head of government: [vacant]; note - Prime Minister CHUNG Hong-won resigned 27 April 2014; Deputy Prime Minister HYUN Oh-seok (since 26 June 2013)

cabinet: State Council appointed by the president on the prime minister's recommendation (For more information visit the [World Leaders website](#).)

elections: president elected by popular vote for a single five-year term; PARK Geun-hye elected on 19 December 2012; next election to be held in December 2017; prime minister appointed by president with consent of National Assembly

election results: PARK Geun-Hye elected president on 19 December 2012; percent of vote - PARK Geun-Hye (NFP) 51.6%, MOON Jae-In (DUP) 48%, others 0.4%

Legislative branch:

unicameral National Assembly or Gukhoe (300 seats; 246 members elected in single-seat constituencies, 54 elected by proportional representation; members serve four-year terms)

elections: last held on 11 April 2012 (next to be held in April 2016)

election results: percent of vote by party - NFP 42.8%, DUP 36.5%, UPP 10.3%, LFP 3.2%, others 7.2%; seats by party - NFP 152, DUP 127, UPP 13, LFP 5, independents 3

note: seats by negotiation group as of April 2014 - NFP 156, NPAD 130, UPP 6, Justice Party 5, Independents 1; note - 2 seats are vacant

Judicial branch:

highest court(s): Supreme Court of South Korea (consists of a chief justice and 13 justices); Constitutional Court (consists of a court head and 8 justices)

judge selection and term of office: Supreme Court chief justice appointed by the president with the consent of the National Assembly; other justices appointed by the president upon the recommendation of the chief justice and consent of the National Assembly; position of the chief justice is a 6-year non-renewable term; other justices serve 6-year renewable terms; Constitutional Court justices appointed - 3 by the president, 3 by the National Assembly, and 3 by the Supreme Court chief justice; court head serves until retirement at age 70, while other justices serve 6-year renewable terms with mandatory retirement at age 65

subordinate courts: High Courts; District Courts; Branch Courts (organized under the Branch Courts);

specialized courts for family and administrative issues

Political parties and leaders:

Justice Party [CHEON Ho-sun]

Liberty Forward Party or LFP (merged with NFP in October 2012)

New Frontier Party (NFP) or Saenuri (formerly Grand National Party) [HWANG Woo-yea]

New Politics Alliance for Diplomacy or NPAD [KIM Han-gil and AHN Cheol-soo] (merger of the Democratic Party or DP (formerly DUP) [Kim Han-gil] and the New Political Vision Party or NPVP [AHN Cheol-soo] in March 2014)

Progressive Justice Party or PJP [ROH Hoe-chan and CHO Joon-ho]

Unified Progressive Party or UPP [LEE Jung-hee]

Political pressure groups and leaders:

Catholic Priests' Association for Justice

Citizen's Coalition for Economic Justice

Federation of Korean Industries

Federation of Korean Trade Unions

Korean Confederation of Trade Unions

Korean Veterans' Association

Lawyers for a Democratic Society

National Council of Churches

People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy

International organization participation:

ADB, AfDB (nonregional member), APEC, ARF, ASEAN (dialogue partner), Australia Group, BIS, CD, CICA, CP, EAS, EBRD, FAO, FATF, G-20, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (national committees), ICRM, IDA, IEA, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), LAIA (observer), MIGA, MINURSO, NEA, NSG, OAS (observer), OECD, OPCW, OSCE (partner), Paris Club (associate), PCA, PIF (partner), SAARC (observer), SICA (observer), UN, UN Security Council (temporary), UNAMID, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNIFIL, UNISFA, UNMIL, UNMISS, UNMOGIP, UNOCI, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO, ZC

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador AHN Ho-young (since 7 June 2013)

chancery: 2450 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008

telephone: [1] (202) 939-5600

FAX: [1] (202) 797-0595

consulate(s) general: Agana (Guam), Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Honolulu, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Seattle

consulate(s): Anchorage (AK), Dallas, Hagatna (Guam)

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Sung Y. KIM (since 3 November 2011)

embassy: 188 Sejong-daero, Jongno-gu, Seoul 110-710

mailing address: US Embassy Seoul, Unit 15550, APO AP 96205-5550

telephone: [82] (2) 397-4114

FAX: [82] (2) 725-0152

Flag description:

white with a red (top) and blue yin-yang symbol in the center; there is a different black trigram from the ancient I Ching (Book of Changes) in each corner of the white field; the South Korean national flag is called Taegukki; white is a traditional Korean color and represents peace and purity; the blue section represents the negative cosmic forces of the yin, while the red symbolizes the opposite positive forces of the yang; each trigram (kwae) denotes one of the four universal elements, which together express the principle of movement and harmony

National symbol(s):

taegeuk (yin yang symbol)

National anthem:

name: "Aegukga" (Patriotic Song)

lyrics/music: YUN Ch'i-Ho or AN Ch'ang-Ho/AHN Eaktay

note: adopted 1948, well-known by 1910; both North Korea and South Korea's anthems share the same name and have a vaguely similar melody but have different lyrics

Economy :: Korea, South

Economy - overview:

South Korea over the past four decades has demonstrated incredible growth and global integration to become a high-tech industrialized economy. In the 1960s, GDP per capita was comparable with levels in the poorer countries of Africa and Asia. In 2004, South Korea joined the trillion-dollar club of world economies, and is currently the world's 12th largest economy. Initially, a system of close government and business ties, including directed credit and import restrictions, made this success possible. The government promoted the import of raw materials and technology at the expense of consumer goods, and encouraged savings and investment over consumption. The Asian financial crisis of 1997-98 exposed longstanding weaknesses in South Korea's development model including high debt/equity ratios and massive short-term foreign borrowing. GDP plunged by 6.9% in 1998, and then recovered by 9% in 1999-2000. South Korea adopted numerous economic reforms following the crisis, including greater openness to foreign investment and imports. Growth moderated to about 4% annually between 2003 and 2007. South Korea's export focused economy was hit hard by the 2008 global economic downturn, but quickly rebounded in subsequent years, reaching 6.3% growth in 2010. The US-Korea Free Trade Agreement was ratified by both governments in 2011 and went into effect in March 2012. Throughout 2012 and 2013 the economy experienced sluggish growth because of market slowdowns in the United States, China, and the Eurozone. The administration in 2014 is likely to face the challenge of balancing heavy reliance on exports with developing domestic-oriented sectors, such as services. The South Korean economy's long term challenges include a rapidly aging population, inflexible labor market, dominance of large conglomerates (chaebols), and heavy reliance on exports, which comprise about half of GDP.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$1.666 trillion (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 13

\$1.62 trillion (2012 est.)

\$1.587 trillion (2011 est.)

note: data are in 2013 US dollars

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$1.198 trillion (2013 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:

2.8% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 123

2% (2012 est.)

3.7% (2011 est.)

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$33,200 (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 42

\$32,400 (2012 est.)

\$31,900 (2011 est.)

note: data are in 2013 US dollars

Gross national saving:

31.9% of GDP (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 21

31.4% of GDP (2012 est.)

31.9% of GDP (2011 est.)

GDP - composition, by end use:

household consumption: 53.1%

government consumption: 15.9%

investment in fixed capital: 27%

investment in inventories: 0.3%

exports of goods and services: 54.6%

imports of goods and services: -50.8%
(2013 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 2.6%

industry: 39.2%

services: 58.2% (2013 est.)

Agriculture - products:

rice, root crops, barley, vegetables, fruit; cattle, pigs, chickens, milk, eggs; fish

Industries:

electronics, telecommunications, automobile production, chemicals, shipbuilding, steel

Industrial production growth rate:

2.5% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 121

Labor force:

25.86 million (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 25

Labor force - by occupation:

agriculture: 6.9%

industry: 23.6%

services: 69.4% (October 2013 est.)

Unemployment rate:

3.2% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 26

3.2% (2012 est.)

Population below poverty line:

16% (2009 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: 6.4%

highest 10%: 37.7% (2011)

Distribution of family income - Gini index:

31.1 (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 112

35.8 (2000)

Budget:

revenues: \$296.1 billion

expenditures: \$287.2 billion (2013 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:

24.7% of GDP (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 133

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):

0.7% of GDP (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 30

Public debt:

35.8% of GDP (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 105

35.5% of GDP (2012 est.)

Fiscal year:

calendar year

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

1.1% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 27

2.2% (2012 est.)

Central bank discount rate:

2.5% (31 December 2013)

country comparison to the world: 109

2.75% (31 December 2012)

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

4.7% (31 December 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 149

5.39% (31 December 2012 est.)

Stock of narrow money:

\$465.2 billion (31 December 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 12

\$426 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

Stock of broad money:

\$1.764 trillion (31 December 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 10

\$1.664 trillion (31 December 2012 est.)

Stock of domestic credit:

\$1.266 trillion (31 December 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 16

\$1.183 trillion (31 December 2012 est.)

Market value of publicly traded shares:

\$1.068 trillion (31 December 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 11

\$1.078 trillion (28 December 2012)

\$904.7 billion (29 December 2011 est.)

Current account balance:

\$55.69 billion (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 11

\$43.34 billion (2012 est.)

Exports:

\$557.3 billion (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 7

\$547.9 billion (2012 est.)

Exports - commodities:

semiconductors, wireless telecommunications equipment, motor vehicles, auto parts, computers, display, home appliances, wire telecommunication equipment, steel, ships, petrochemicals

Exports - partners:

China 24.5%, US 10.7%, Japan 7.1%, Hong Kong 6%, Singapore 4.2% (2012 est.)

Imports:

\$516.6 billion (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 8

\$519.6 billion (2012 est.)

Imports - commodities:

machinery, electronics and electronic equipment, oil, steel, optical instruments, transport equipment, organic chemicals, plastics

Imports - partners:

China 15.6%, Japan 12.4%, US 8.3%, Saudi Arabia 7.6%, Australia 5%, Australia 4.4% (2012 est.)

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:

\$341.8 billion (31 December 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 9

\$327 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

Debt - external:

\$430.9 billion (31 December 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 28

\$425.1 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

Stock of direct foreign investment - at home:

\$152.3 billion (31 December 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 30

\$147.2 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

Stock of direct foreign investment - abroad:

\$223.2 billion (31 December 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 23

\$196.4 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

Exchange rates:

South Korean won (KRW) per US dollar -

1,107.3 (2013 est.)

1,126.47 (2012 est.)

1,156.1 (2010 est.)

1,276.93 (2009)

1,101.7 (2008)

Energy :: Korea, South

Electricity - production:

485.1 billion kWh (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 11

Electricity - consumption:

449.5 billion kWh (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 11

Electricity - exports:

0 kWh (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 156

Electricity - imports:

0 kWh (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 163

Electricity - installed generating capacity:

84.66 million kW (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 14

Electricity - from fossil fuels:

74.5% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 102

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

21.9% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 6

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

2% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 137

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

1.5% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 79

Crude oil - production:

0 bbl/day (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 184

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 139

Crude oil - imports:

2.59 million bbl/day (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 6

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl

country comparison to the world: 151

Refined petroleum products - production:

2.83 million bbl/day (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 7

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

2.301 million bbl/day (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 10

Refined petroleum products - exports:

944,700 bbl/day (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 9

Refined petroleum products - imports:

794,000 bbl/day (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 8

Natural gas - production:

424.9 million cu m (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 72

Natural gas - consumption:

49.66 billion cu m (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 17

Natural gas - exports:

0 cu m (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 130

Natural gas - imports:

47.34 billion cu m (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 9

Natural gas - proved reserves:

5.269 billion cu m (1 January 2013 es)

country comparison to the world: 95

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

611 million Mt (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 9

Communications :: Korea, South

Telephones - main lines in use:

30.1 million (2012)

country comparison to the world: 11

Telephones - mobile cellular:

53.625 million (2012)

country comparison to the world: 25

Telephone system:

general assessment: excellent domestic and international services featuring rapid incorporation of new technologies

domestic: fixed-line and mobile-cellular services widely available with a combined telephone subscribership of roughly 170 per 100 persons; rapid assimilation of a full range of telecommunications technologies leading to a boom in e-commerce

international: country code - 82; numerous submarine cables provide links throughout Asia, Australia, the Middle East, Europe, and US; satellite earth stations - 66 (2011)

Broadcast media:

multiple national TV networks with 2 of the 3 largest networks publicly operated; the largest privately owned network, Seoul Broadcasting Service (SBS), has ties with other commercial TV networks; cable and satellite TV subscription services available; publicly operated radio broadcast networks and many privately owned radio broadcasting networks, each with multiple affiliates, and independent local stations (2010)

Internet country code:

.kr

Internet hosts:

315,697 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 62

Internet users:

39.4 million (2009)

country comparison to the world: 11

Transportation :: Korea, South

Airports:

111 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 53

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 71

over 3,047 m: 4

2,438 to 3,047 m: 19

1,524 to 2,437 m: 12

914 to 1,523 m: 13

under 914 m: 23 (2013)

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 40
914 to 1,523 m: 2
under 914 m:
38 (2013)

Heliports:

466 (2013)

Pipelines:

gas 2,216 km; oil 16 km; refined products 889 km (2013)

Railways:

total: 3,381 km
country comparison to the world: 52
standard gauge: 3,381 km 1.435-m gauge (1,843 km electrified) (2008)

Roadways:

total: 104,983 km
country comparison to the world: 44
paved: 83,199 km (includes 3,779 km of expressways)
unpaved: 21,784 km (2009)

Waterways:

1,600 km (most navigable only by small craft) (2011)
country comparison to the world: 51

Merchant marine:

total: 786
country comparison to the world: 14
by type: bulk carrier 191, cargo 235, carrier 8, chemical tanker 130, container 72, liquefied gas 44, passenger 5, passenger/cargo 15, petroleum tanker 55, refrigerated cargo 15, roll on/roll off 10, vehicle carrier 6
foreign-owned: 31 (China 6, France 2, Japan 14, Taiwan 1, US 8)
registered in other countries: 457 (Bahamas 1, Cambodia 10, Ghana 1, Honduras 6, Hong Kong 3, Indonesia 2, Kiribati 1, Liberia 2, Malta 2, Marshall Islands 41, North Korea 1, Panama 373, Philippines 1, Russia 1, Singapore 3, Tuvalu 1, unknown 8) (2010)

Ports and terminals:

major seaport(s): Incheon, Pohang, Busan, Ulsan, Yeosu
container port(s) (TEUs): Busan (16,163,842), Kwangyang (2,061,958), Incheon (1,924,644)

Military :: Korea, South

Military branches:

Republic of Korea Army; Navy (includes Marine Corps); Air Force (2011)

Military service age and obligation:

20-30 years of age for compulsory military service, with middle school education required; conscript service obligation - 21 months (Army, Marines), 23 months (Navy), 24 months (Air Force); 18-26 years of age for voluntary military service; women, in service since 1950, admitted to 7 service branches, including infantry, but excluded from artillery, armor, anti-air, and chaplaincy corps; HIV-positive individuals are exempt from military service (2012)

Manpower available for military service:

males age 16-49: 13,185,794
females age 16-49: 12,423,496 (2010 est.)

Manpower fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 10,864,566
females age 16-49: 10,168,709 (2010 est.)

Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:

male: 365,760
female: 321,225 (2010 est.)

Military expenditures:

2.8% of GDP (2012)
country comparison to the world: 26
2.77% of GDP (2011)
2.8% of GDP (2010)

Transnational Issues :: Korea, South

Disputes - international:

Military Demarcation Line within the 4-km-wide Demilitarized Zone has separated North from South Korea since 1953; periodic incidents with North Korea in the Yellow Sea over the Northern Limit Line, which South Korea claims as a maritime boundary; South Korea and Japan claim Liancourt Rocks (Tok-do/Take-shima), occupied by South Korea since 1954

Refugees and internally displaced persons:

stateless persons: 179 (2012)