

Economy of South Korea

Today, the country ranks as the tenth-largest economy in the world. Between 1960 and 2021, South Korea's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) surged from \$4 billion to approximately \$1.8 trillion (GDP is the total value of all goods and services produced by a nation, region, or globally). The country's GDP per capita (the value of GDP divided by the population) exceeds \$34,000, nearly three times the global GDP per capita.

GDP and Per-capita GNI

[Bank of Korea, 2020]

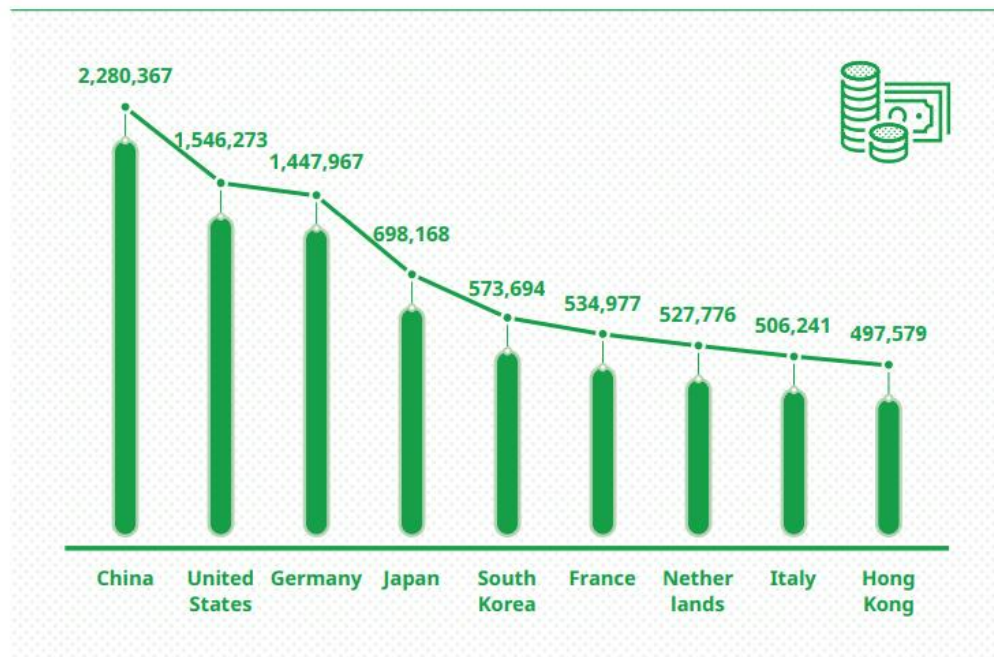


Source: Korea.net

South Korea is also the fifth-largest exporter globally. Electronic circuits, automobiles, and refined petroleum account for about 30% of its exports. The country's largest trading partners are China, the United States, Vietnam, Hong Kong, and Japan.

Trade Volume (Amount of export)

[Unit: USD 1 million / Statistics Korea, 2017]



Source: Korea.net

South Korea's five leading export items and export amounts

[Unit: USD 1 million, MTI 3 / Korea International Trade Association (KITA), 2019]

93,930

Semiconductors



43,036

Cars



40,691

Petroleum products



22,535

Automotive parts



20,657

Flat panel display and sensors



Source: Korea.net

The health of South Korea's economy is further evidenced by its exceptional recovery capacity during economic crises. This ability is indicated by the GDP growth rate, which measures how much an economy grows or contracts year over

year. In 1998, amid the Asian Financial Crisis, South Korea's GDP recorded a decline of over 5%. However, in 1999, the economy rebounded with a growth rate exceeding 11%. This strong performance was repeated during the Global Economic Crisis of 2008—GDP shrank by nearly 1% in 2009, but in 2010, the economy regained momentum, achieving over 6% growth.

Much of this success is attributed to significant investments in research and development. In 2016, the country had 461,000 researchers working in universities, government institutes, and industries—equivalent to 13.3 researchers per 1,000 economically active individuals.

Recommended Analysis on the Korean Economy: South Korea's Economy – Santandertrade.com. Available at: <https://santandertrade.com/pt/portal/analise-os-mercados/coreia-do-sul/economia>.

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