



# Korea, South



**Background** An independent kingdom for much of its history, the southern half of the Korean Peninsula set up a democratic government after World War II. After fending off a North Korean invasion in 1950, South Korea achieved rapid economic growth and today is a fully functioning modern democracy.

**Capital** name: Seoul

**Government type** presidential republic

**Area**  
total: 99,720 sq km  
land: 96,920 sq km  
water: 2,800 sq km

**Climate** temperate, with rainfall heavier in summer than winter; cold winters

**Natural resources** coal, tungsten, graphite, molybdenum, lead, hydropower potential

**Population** total: 52,081,799 (2024 est.)

**Population growth rate** 0.21% (2024 est.)

**Ethnic groups** homogeneous

**Religions** Protestant 17%, Buddhist 16%, Catholic 6%, none 60% (2021 est.)

**Languages** Korean, English

**Executive branch** chief of state: President LEE Jae-myung (since 4 June 2025)  
head of government: Prime Minister KIM Min-seok (since 3 July 2025)

**Diplomatic representation in the US** chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Chargé d'Affaires LEE Joon Ho (since 12 July 2025)

**Diplomatic representation from the US** chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Chargé d'Affaires Ambassador Joseph (Joe) YUN (since January 2025)

**Economic overview** high-income, export- and technology-oriented East Asian economy; manufacturing led by semiconductor and automotive industries; slow growth amid declining construction investment, export risks, and recent political instability; aging workforce; increased restraint in fiscal policy while maintaining industry support initiatives

**Real GDP (purchasing power parity)**\$2.607 trillion (2023 est.)  
\$2.572 trillion (2022 est.)  
\$2.507 trillion (2021 est.)

**Real GDP per capita**\$50,400 (2023 est.)  
\$49,800 (2022 est.)  
\$48,400 (2021 est.)

<b>Exports</b>	\$835.149 billion (2024 est.) \$769.243 billion (2023 est.) \$825.961 billion (2022 est.)
<b>Exports - partners</b>	China 25%, USA 18%, Hong Kong 4%, Japan 4%, Taiwan 4% (2023)
<b>Exports - commodities</b>	integrated circuits, cars, refined petroleum, plastics, machine parts (2023)
<b>Imports</b>	\$758.724 billion (2024 est.) \$758.41 billion (2023 est.) \$817.594 billion (2022 est.)
<b>Imports - partners</b>	China 31%, USA 13%, Japan 9%, Germany 5%, Australia 4% (2023)
<b>Imports - commodities</b>	integrated circuits, natural gas, crude petroleum, machinery, cars (2023)

## Population Pyramid

