

# REPUBLIC OF KOREA (SOUTH KOREA)

Region: East Asia (Global North)

Population (2022): 51.6 million (29<sup>th</sup>)

Life Expectancy at Birth (Women): 86.1 years (2<sup>nd</sup>)

Governance System: Constitutional republic with a presidential system

Capital: Seoul

Land Area (km<sup>2</sup>): 97,520 (103<sup>rd</sup>)

Major Language: Korean

## Select Global Rankings

GDP (2022): 13<sup>th</sup> (1,665,246 US\$ Millions)

Human Development Index: 19<sup>th</sup> (Very High)

Fragile States Index - Inverted: 21<sup>st</sup> (Cat. 3)

Good Country Index: 37<sup>th</sup>

Human Freedom Index: 31<sup>st</sup>

World Happiness Ranking: 57<sup>th</sup>

## Select Global Rankings (Gender-Focus)

Gross National Income Per Capita (Women): 33<sup>rd</sup>

Gender Social Norms Index: 38<sup>th</sup>

Women's Power Index: 92<sup>nd</sup>

Social Institutions and Gender Index (World Cup rank): 21<sup>st</sup>

Gender Inequality Index: 15<sup>th</sup>

Global Gender Gap Index: 105<sup>th</sup>

Women Peace & Security Index: 33<sup>rd</sup>

## Elite Sport System Rankings

2020 Summer Olympic Women's Medals (% of Total): 8.5 (43% of 20)

2022 Winter Olympic Women's Medals (% of Total): 3 (33% of 9)

Global Cup Ranking (Women): 14<sup>th</sup>

## Football/World Cup Profile

FIFA Region: AFC

FIFA Ranking: 17

World Cup Appearance: 4<sup>th</sup>

Best World Cup Performance(s): Round of 16 (2015)

Qualification: Asian Cup Semi-finalist

World Cup Group: H

Last World Cup Appearance: 2019

## **SOUTH KOREA in International (Gender) Affairs (by Jonah Lee)**

Although the end of World War II in 1945 came the fall of the Japanese Empire and the regain of independence for Korea, it also set forth the nation's greatest political divide. The Korean War was a conflict between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which was backed by the Soviet Union, versus the Republic of Korea, aided by [members of the United Nations](#) such as the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. The lack of time between independence from Imperial Japan and the onset of partition left South Korea in economic ruin. Fortunately, through the development of export-oriented industries combined with strong education systems and government support, the nation has [grown to become one of the world's most industrialized countries](#). South Korea's [closest trading partners](#) are the United States, Japan, and countries located in the Middle East, Eastern, and Southeastern Asia. These nations are among the 191 that they [maintain diplomatic relations](#) with and the country is a member of many different international organizations including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

While the nation as a whole has developed significantly in the past century, there continues to be a hold out against progressions for women. The election of the country's [first female president](#), Park Geun-hye, in 2012 was seen as a large step forward for gender equality in Korea. Unfortunately, numerous corruption charges and abuse of power led to her impeachment from office in 2016 and the country has continued to backtrack even further with the recent election of current president Yoon Suk-yeol who is attempting to abolish the Gender Equality and Family Ministry. The ministry has been one of the sole drivers in progressing women's rights in South Korea and operating in areas such as [violence prevention, gender-equal workplaces, economic development, and providing overall support for feminism in Korean culture](#). Suk-yeol aims to rid of the ministry in an effort to address the country's low birth rate, which is currently the [worst in the world](#). Feminism and [rejection of traditional views](#) where women are obligated to reproduce and dedicate their lives to caregiving are what is believed to be the blame for the diminishing population size. Considering the nation already has the [largest gender pay gap](#) by a large margin with women earning 31 percent less than men, the abolishment of the ministry will only see the gap continue to grow in size.