



PRAY FOR EAST ASIA

Pray for South Korea

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.

— Psalm 67:1-2

Country Profile

Located in the southern part of the Korea peninsula, South Korea is home to a population of 51.2 million people. It has the most homogeneous society in the world, with over 95% of its residents being of Korean ethnicity. In recent years, South Korea has implemented a number of policies to relax its strict controls on immigration and to attract foreign workers, to meet the country's demand for workers. At the end of 2018, there were nearly 2.3 million foreign nationals living in South Korea, about 4% of the population. Most of them lived in Gyeonggi Province, followed by Seoul.

South Korea is a highly industrialised nation, with an exported-oriented economy focused on high-technology industries such as automobiles, electronics, and information technology. It is a relatively wealthy country in Asia-Pacific, with a per capita income of almost \$23,000. Geopolitical risks, a huge household debt (over 90% of the country's GDP) and an aging population are some risks to its economy.

Freedom of religion is guaranteed by the South Korean constitution, but there is no national religion. In South Korea, Christianity is very visible. Churches are a common sight. However, there is a discernible trend towards increasing secularism, particularly among young people. Almost half of South Koreans profess to have no religious affiliation, and the percentage of South Korean Christians has remained largely the same in the past few years. Churches face an aging congregation, with young people now more preoccupied with finding a job, less trusting of hierarchical institutions like churches, and more interested in technology and popular culture. Churches find themselves having to constantly update their teachings to remain relevant to the younger generation, and to hold gatherings specifically geared to them.

OMF established the South Korea Homeside office in 1980, in cooperation with key church leaders who shared a passion for mission. It commissioned its first missionary in 1981. Since then, the Homeside has continued to grow, and now has over 60 members. It enjoys a solid partnership with South Korean churches for mobilizing, training, and sending out workers. With many overseas Koreans returning to South Korea and a slowly increasing number of foreign workers from China and Southeast Asia, the Homeside office hopes to develop its ministry to reach out to the East Asian Diaspora. It is also working to develop mission training programs for church leaders, and to mobilize both the older and younger generations for mission.



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Population

- **Total:** 51.2 million
 - **Korean:** 96%
 - **Others:** 4%

Religions

- **Non-religious:** 46.5%
- **Christian:** 29.2%
- **Buddhist:** 22.8%
- **Others:** 1.5%

Lord, we praise you for your work in South Korea. Thank you for all that you have done to help the people hear the good news of your gospel and to grow your church. We pray that you would continue to use the Korean church powerfully in sending missionaries and passing on your good news to other peoples.