

# Chapter 16

## Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Republic of Korea

### Chapter Preview

#### *People*

Kim Il-sung, Kim Jong-il, Kim Jong-un, Park Chung-hee, Roh Tae-woo, Kim Young-sam, Kim Dae-jung, Park Geun-hye

#### *Places*

Korean Peninsula, Pyongyang, Seoul

#### *Terms*

homogenous, Kingdom of Joseon (or Chosŏn), annex, Yalta Agreement, Cold War, coalition, stalemate, Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), self-reliance, provocation, armistice, civilian, domino theory, autocratic rule, Supreme People's Assembly, Central Court, presidential republic, National Assembly, Supreme Court, Constitutional Court, command economy, cooperative farm, famine, North Korean won, South Korean won, black market, reunification, denuclearization, multilateral, Six-Party Talks, Mutual Defense Treaty, Korea-US Free Trade Agreement

**Top:** The Buddhist Haedong Yonggungsa Temple was built in 1376 on the rugged Korean seacoast near Busan. **Background:** Seoul, South Korea, is the capital city and a center for technology innovation and trade.



**Bottom:** Pyongyang is North Korea's capital. The city is the country's largest and is located on the Taedong River about 70 miles upstream from the Yellow Sea.

From space, you can see the difference. When night falls over the Korean Peninsula, astronauts observe the lights of civilization. Cities begin to glow and seacoasts are outlined with the gleam of streetlights, small towns, and homes—all reflecting signs of life into space. The northern part of the Korean Peninsula, however, is surprisingly dark. It is as if a portion of the peninsula was ripped away, leaving a dark hole in its place. Of course, the land is there, but where are the lights, the signs of modern life on Earth? The dark area is North Korea, the part of Korea directly connected to China and the rest of Asia. The brightly lit tip of the Korean Peninsula is South Korea, a high-tech powerhouse in the modern world.

Why the difference? Why is it dark at night in the north and brightly lit in the south? Why are there even two Koreas? The answers to these questions will help you learn more about this region where tensions are often high, and the threat of war is real. It is so real, in fact, that the United States has about 29,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines stationed in South Korea. Their role is to protect South Korea and American interests in the country. Another 40,000 or so are stationed less than 1,000 miles away in Japan. These troops help to monitor issues of security and peacekeeping in the eastern Pacific region.

Korea has its roots in history dating back thousands of years. Ruled sometimes by China, sometimes by Japan, sometimes by its own kingdoms, Korea has often served as a bridge connecting people, goods, and ideas in mainland Asia with Japan.

Modern South Korea has a powerful, technology-based economy. You may have connections to this economy in your own life. Samsung makes many electronic devices, but their cell phones have challenged US-based Apple iPhone for dominance. Kia and Hyundai's high-quality cars and trucks are popular with American consumers. Kia Motors even has a manufacturing plant in West Point, Georgia.

North Korea, on the other hand, has spent its limited resources building its military strength. Its people are controlled by strict rules that limit and direct much of their daily life. The country has been ruled by the Kim family since 1948. The repressive government limits its people's contact with the outside world, and its leaders have at times allowed its citizens to starve rather than accept food aid from Western countries.

From communism to democracy, from command to market economy, and from darkness to light, the Koreas offer a fascinating look at different extremes of government and economic systems.

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*The endgame is peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula.*

- Lee Myung-bak,  
former president  
of South Korea

*The military might of a country represents its national strength. Only when it builds up its military might in every way can it develop into a thriving country.*

- Kim Jong-un,  
supreme leader of  
North Korea





# PASSPORT



**Official Name:** Democratic People's Republic of Korea (조선 민주주의 인민 공화국 or Choson-minjujuui-inmin-konghwaguk)

**Capital:** Pyongyang

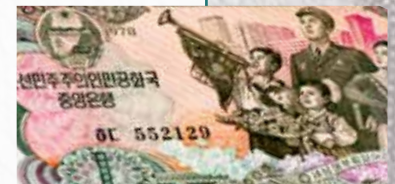
**Form of Government:** communist state

**Head of Government:** Premier

**Head of State:** Supreme Leader

**Suffrage:** 17 years of age; universal

**Currency:** North Korean won (KPW)



**Official Name:** Republic of Korea (대한민국 or Taehan-min'guk)

**Capital:** Seoul (Note: Sejong, located 75 miles south of Seoul, is being developed as a new capital.)

**Form of Government:** presidential republic

**Head of Government:** President

**Head of State:** President

**Suffrage:** 19 years of age; universal

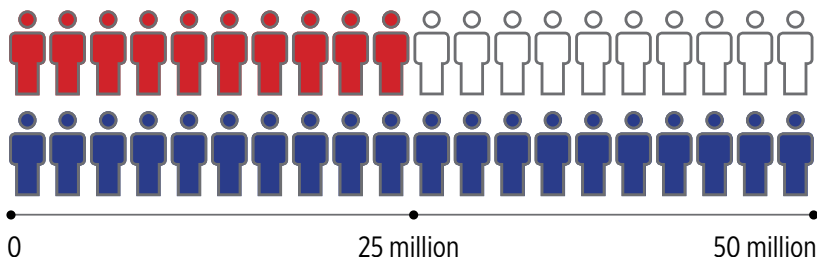
**Currency:** South Korean won (KRW)



**From Top to Bottom: Left:** Flag of the Democratic Republic of Korea. **Right:** The North Korean Parliament meets at the Supreme People's Assembly in Pyongyang. **Right:** North Korean leader Kim Jong-un came to power in 2011. **Right:** The currency of North Korea is the North Korean won. **Left:** Flag of the Republic of Korea. **Right:** Moon Jae-in became president of South Korea in 2017. **Left:** The South Korean Parliament meets in the National Assembly building in Seoul. **Right:** The currency of South Korea is the South Korean won.

# CULTURE CONNECTION

## POPULATION



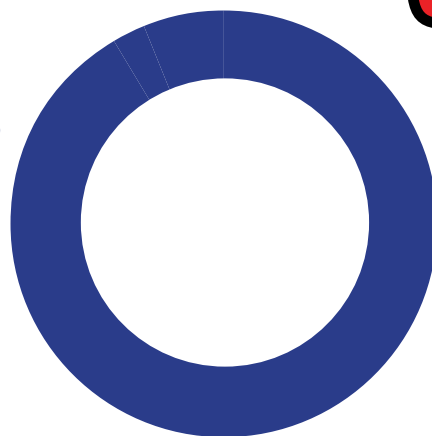
**North Korea**  
25,115,311 (est. July 2016)  
Population Rank 51

**United States**  
324,386,000 (est. 2017)  
Population Rank 3

**South Korea**  
50,924,172 (est. July 2016)  
Population Rank 28

## ETHNIC GROUPS

North and South Korea are racially homogeneous

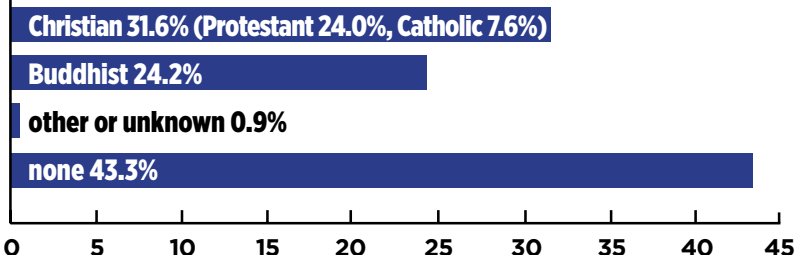


## RELIGION

### North Korea

Traditionally Buddhist and Confucianist, some Christian and syncretic Chondogyo (Religion of the Heavenly Way)  
(Note: Autonomous religious activities are now almost nonexistent; government-sponsored religious groups exist to provide an illusion of religious freedom.)

### South Korea



## FUN FACTS

North Korea functions within its own time zone, called Pyongyang Time, which started being used on August 15, 2015. It is 30 minutes behind South Korea and Japan.

South Korean babies are considered one year old at birth, and they gain another year every January 1st. That means December babies are considered two years old by the time they are actually only a month old.

### Official Language:

Korean

### Phrases in Korean

- Hello** - 안녕하세요 - Annyeonghaseyo
- Goodbye** - 안녕 - Annyeong
- Good morning** - 좋은 아침 - Joh-eun achim
- Good afternoon** - 안녕하세요 - Annyeonghaseyo
- Thank you** - 고맙습니다 - Gomabseubnida
- You're welcome** - 천만에요 - Cheonman-eyo
- Yes** - 예 - Ye
- No** - 아니 - Ani



## LIFE EXPECTANCY

	North	South
<b>Average</b>	70.4 years	82.4 years
<b>Male</b>	66.6 years	79.3 years
<b>Female</b>	74.5 years	85.8 years



## EDUCATION

**South Korea**  
**Education Expenditures** 4.6% of GDP  
**Rank** 75

**North Korea** NA



**Top Left:** Japanese troops marched into northern Korea during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904. **Middle Right:** North Korean leader Kim Il-sung (left) signed the armistice to stop fighting in the Korean War in 1953. **Middle Left:** In the mid-1950s, thousands of Koreans fled south after the North Korean army invaded their villages and towns. **Bottom Left:** Kim Dae-jung was elected president of South Korea in 1998 and later was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. **Bottom Right:** Korea's Samsung was forced to recall its Galaxy Note 7 phone in 2016 due to explosions caused by faulty batteries. The problem has cost the company over \$17 billion. **Background:** The bombing of Wonsan in the Korean War in 1951.

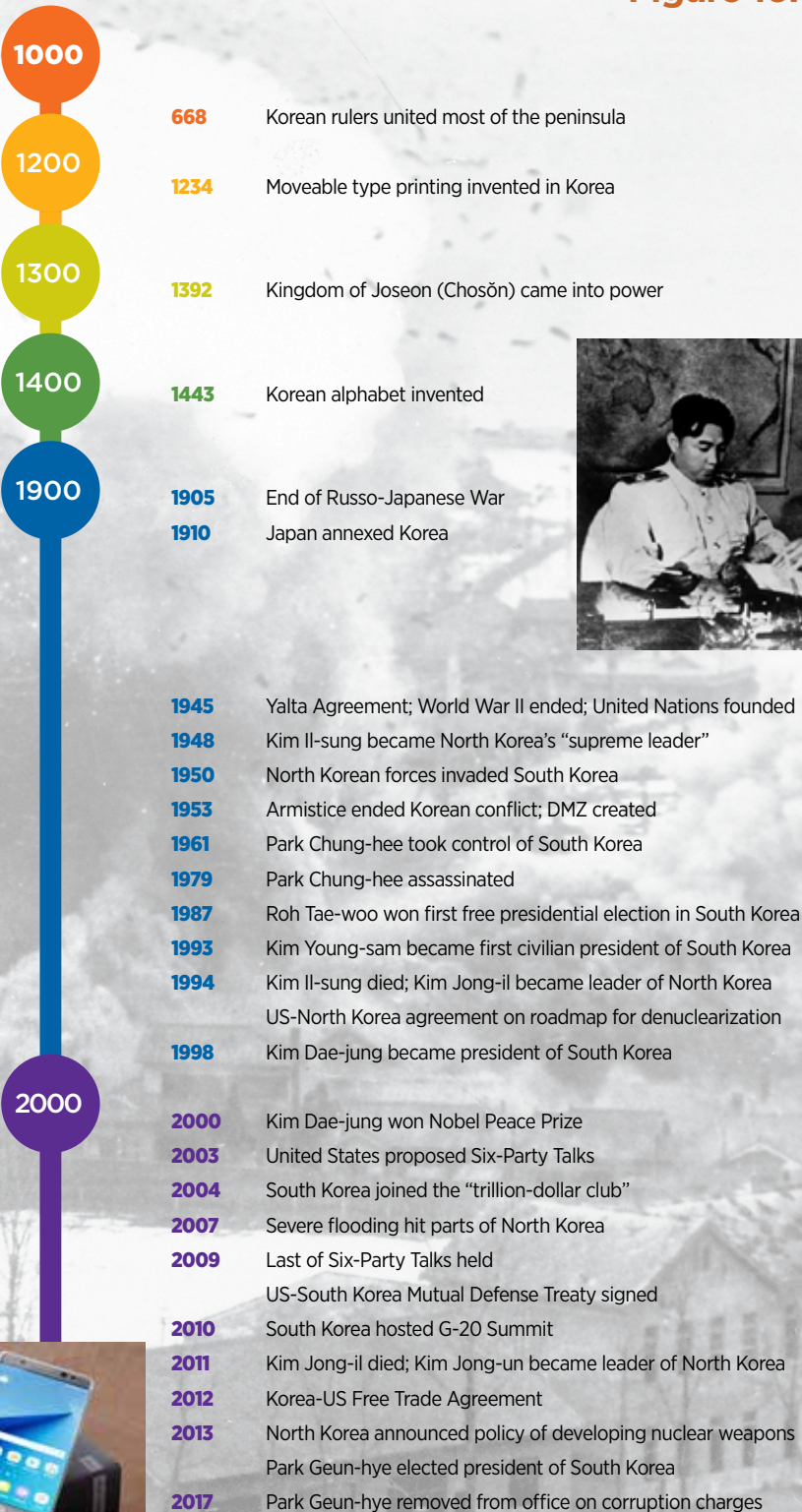


# TIMELINE

## OF KOREA HISTORY



Figure 16.1





### North Korea

**Area:** 46,540 square miles

**Rank:** 99

**Natural Resources:**

coal, lead, tungsten, zinc, graphite, magnesite, iron ore, copper, gold, pyrites, salt, fluorspar, hydropower

**Environmental Issues:**

water pollution; inadequate supplies of potable water; waterborne disease; deforestation; soil erosion and degradation

### South Korea

**Area:** 38,502 square miles

**Rank:** 109

**Natural Resources:**

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

**Environmental Issues:**

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



**Map 16.1**  
**North & South Korea**  
**Map Skill:** Which country appears to have higher mountains?