

# 2025 ACFEA Conference - Country Report -



**Jeeyeon Sah**

Assistant Professor  
Dept. of Consumer Science  
Seoul National University

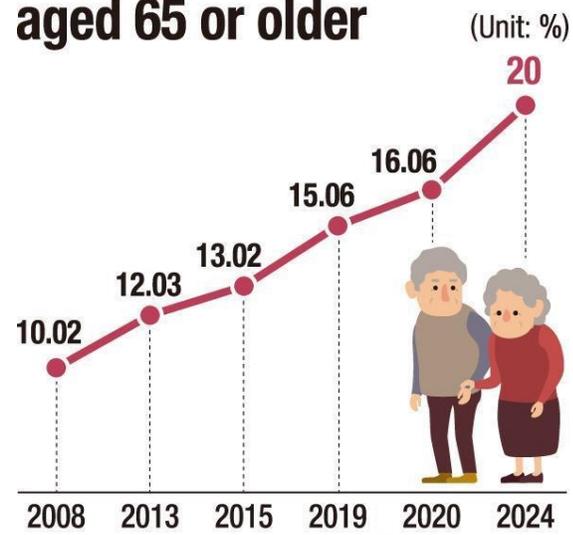
**Part 1.**

**Socioeconomic Situation in South Korea**

# 1. Super-aged Society

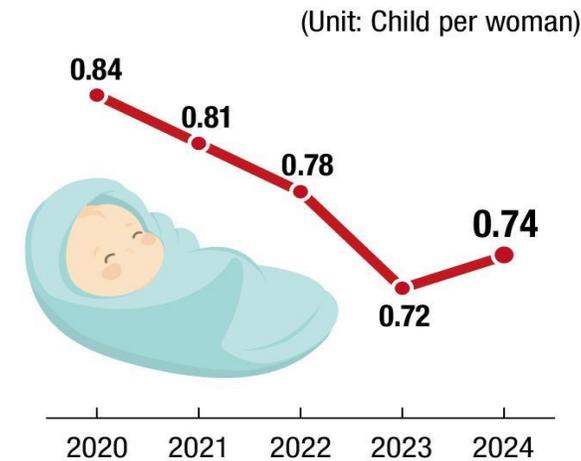
- **Became a super-aged society** in 2024 (20.6% aged 65+)
- **Recorded world's lowest fertility rate** in 2024 (0.72)
- **By 2030, working-age population is expected to fall below the global average**

### Proportion of Koreans aged 65 or older



Source: Ministry of Interior and Safety

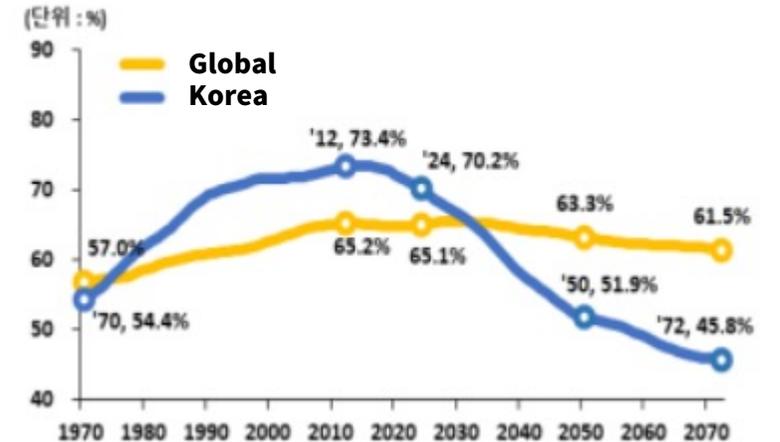
### Korea's total fertility rate



\*Figure for 2024 is an estimate by the Presidential Committee on Ageing Society and Population Policy.

Source: Statistics Korea

### Share of Working-Age Population in the World and Korea

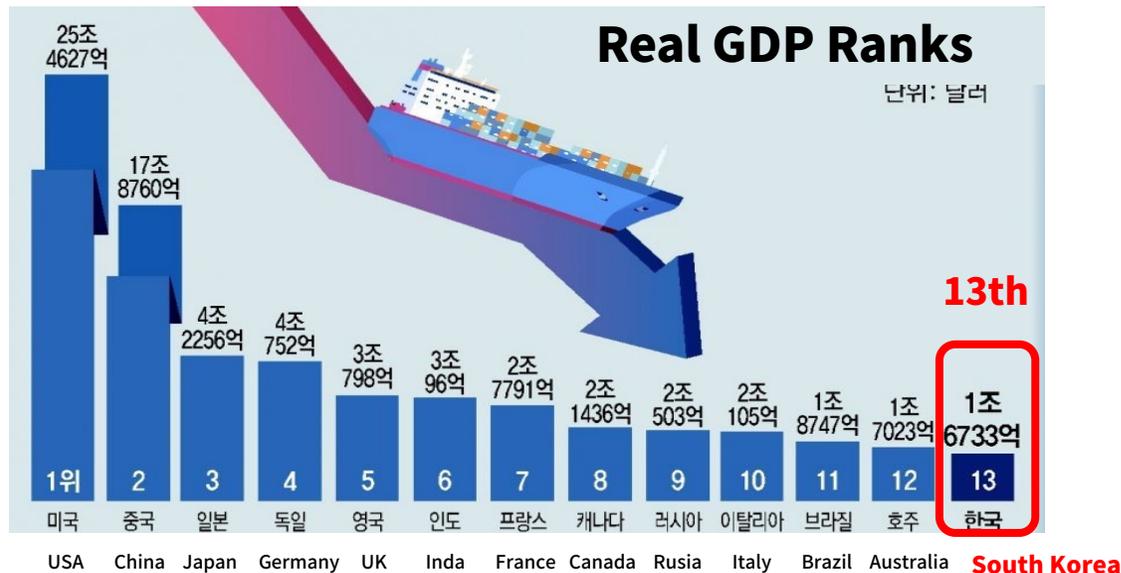


## 2. Low-growth economy

- **Economic growth has slowed to around 2%,**

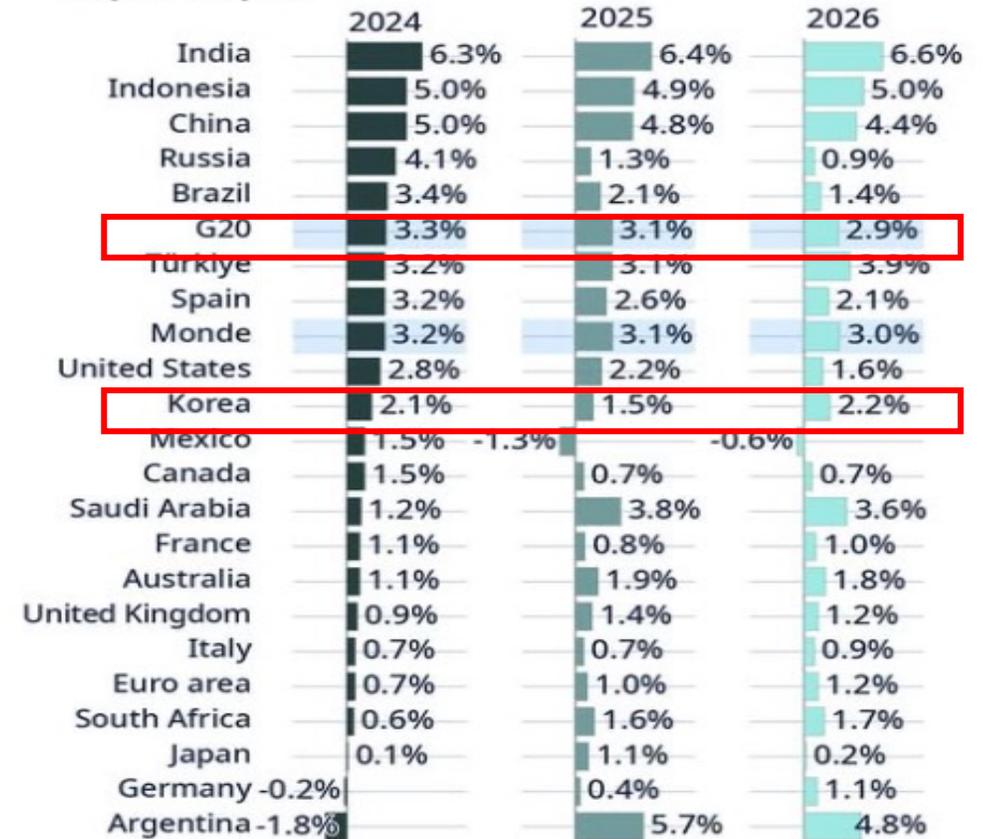
with declining productivity and weakening investment momentum.

- In 2022, South Korea's real GDP was placed at 13th place, down from 10th place the previous year.



### Real GDP growth projections for 2024, 2025 and 2026

%, year-on-year



# 3. Unhappy Society

● **Struggling with low quality of life**  
- long working hours, high suicide rate etc.



## Working hours

**Ranked 6<sup>th</sup>** among 38 countries (OECD, 2023)

## Suicide rate

**24.8** per 100,000 people (Statistics Korea, 2024)  
\* OECD 2024 = 10.7

## Relative poverty rate among the elderly

**Ranked 1<sup>st</sup>** among OECD countries  
(Statistics Korea, 2023)

OECD

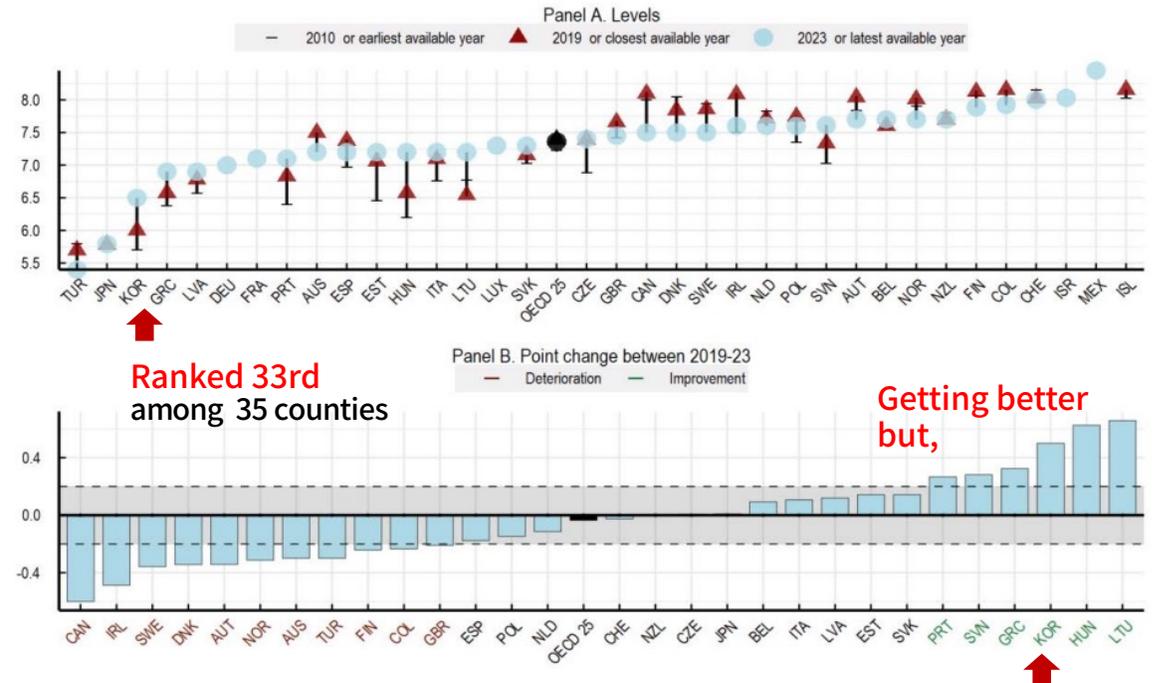
OECD > Publications > How's Life? 2024

### How's Life? 2024

Well-being and Resilience in Times of Crisis

Figure 2.21. Since 2018, life satisfaction remained stable in 12 OECD countries, deteriorated in 11 and improved in six

Mean values for life satisfaction, reported on a scale from 0 “not at all satisfied” to 10 “completely satisfied”



In summary



Achieved unprecedented economic growth,  
but now facing lack of new growth engines and declining life satisfaction

We are facing the **“side effects”** of rapid economic growth.  
Now it’s time to prioritize **“well-being and quality of life”**

**Part 2.**

**Consumption life situation in South Korea**

# 1. Technology-friendly market

Key Features	Emerging Consumer Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- World-class digital infrastructure (5G, fiber optics)</li><li>- High smartphone penetration (97.6%)</li><li>- <b><u>Rapid adoption of AI, IoT, fintech, biometric payment</u></b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b><u>Data privacy risks (e.g., SKT data leak)</u></b></li><li>- Low transparency in AI-driven decisions</li><li>- Digital fatigue &amp; overdependence</li></ul>

IT/Science  
**'ChatGPT' OpenAI Korea Corporation  
Established "Korea Ranks 2nd in Paid  
Subscribers Worldwide"**



## “Simple Payment is the trend”

Daily average amount of simple payment usage  
: 845.1 billion won... 16.9% increase in one year



## 27 million mobile fingerprints leaked in South Korean telecom data breach: ministry



## 2. Platform-driven market

Key Features	Emerging Consumer Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rapid growth of platform-based services</li> <li>- <b><u>Increasing share of platforms in daily consumption</u></b> (commerce, delivery, finance, media)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b><u>Platform lock-in and reduced consumer choice</u></b></li> <li>- Deepening market concentration and monopoly</li> <li>- Weak bargaining power for third-party sellers</li> </ul>



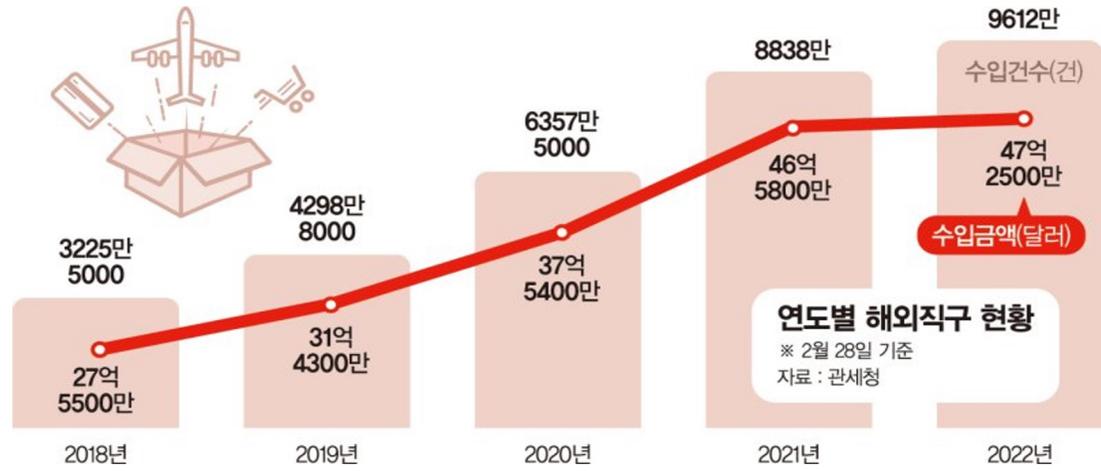
### MZ Generation Living in Naver Republic “Locked in to Platform Companies”

24세 대학생 L씨의 네이버 공화국

- 네이버 블로그에서 '신촌 맛집'을 열심히 검색
- 기상 후 네이버 매일 체크
- 블로그
- 식당에 가기 위해 네이버 지도에서 길찾기 가능 활용
- 사고 싶었던 신발을 네이버 쇼핑에서 검색
- 클릭하면 확대이미지를 볼 수 있습니다.
- 네이버 QR체크인으로 식당 입장
- 네이버 앱을 보여 하루를 마무리

# 3. Cross-border friendly market

Key Features	Emerging Consumer Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rapid growth in cross-border e-commerce (e.g., \$5.3B in 2023)</li> <li>- <b><u>Strong demand for global products</u></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legal &amp; jurisdictional gaps in consumer protection</li> <li>- <b><u>Complicated return &amp; refund processes</u></b></li> <li>- Lack of redress systems for international disputes</li> </ul>



“Yearly Statistics on Cross-Border Online Shopping”



"The overseas shopping boom led to a 136% spike in consumer damages."

**Part 3.**

**Prospects and Expectations**

# South Korea's new president Lee Jae-myung pledges to 'unite' country

4 June 2025

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**Yvette Tan**  
BBC News

**Koh Ewe**  
BBC News

Reporting from  Seoul Reporting from  Singapore



**New government's vision of 'AI powerhouse'**  
: ambitious plan vs. realistic constraints

**New government's 'Online-platform Act'** is coming  
... Industry to pay close attention to regulatory methods

**New government emphasis on strengthening 'financial consumer protection'**

**A new government was launched in June 2025.  
Various new economic and consumer protection initiatives are expected.**

**2025 ACFEA Conference**  
**Thank you for listening**

