Historically, the Korean Peninsula has been called Goguryeo, which can best be translated into the poetic phrase 「Land of the rising sun」appearing as if it were embroidered on silk. Unfortunately, years of Japanese occupation and the subsequent Korean War divided the country into North Korea and South Korea and devastated the nation’s infrastructure, industrial capability, and housing. This devastation led to a shortage of natural resources such as minerals, lumber, oil, and gas, triggering a collapse of the national economy, especially in South Korea. Until the early 1960s, Korea was forced to focus on recovering from the devastation of war by utilizing international aid to restore public facilities and rebuild the national economy. For the last 60 years, there have been many changes in the Korean landscape, most of which have stemmed from government-led land development projects, urbanization, and industrialization.

In the early 1960s, the government’s master plan for land development was put into action. The government based its plan on the growth pole theory in order to quickly develop the nation. Through well-thought-out, the growth pole approach only allowed for investment in the few central development areas that were most likely to succeed before development could be considered in other areas. Unfortunately, this approach resulted in both people and capital flowing to these few development centers. The resulting imbalance between these centers and the rest of the country was later countered with the implementation of a more balanced set of development policies.

Under the Special Area Development Project, Ansan, Incheon, and Uljin were selected as Special Areas to be developed first on the premise that the effects of such development would gradually envelop the surrounding areas. The Industrial Park Development Project began in Ulsan and Seoul in the early 1960s. Also, during the 1960s and 1970s, the Industrial City Construction Project was launched at targeted sites near each industrial park. It led to the emergence of major chemical industries concentrated in cities such as Ulsan, Yeosu-si, Pohang-si, and Gumi-si, with a consequent rise in population in each of these cities.

Since the 1960s, the South Korean government has fostered economic growth through export by building industrial complexes and new cities. Beginning with the Ulsan Industrial Complex, which was completed in 1962, and the Korea Export Industrial Complex (Gumi Industrial Complex) in 1969, many industrial complexes and their adjacent cities started in and around Yeosu-si, Pohang-si, Gumi-si, Incheon, Changwon, and Ansan-si, and elsewhere from the late 1960s through the 1970s.

Other major development projects from the 1970s to the present include a number of natural resource and energy-related projects such as reforestation, land reclamation, multipurpose dam construction, and nuclear power plant construction. In 1965, multipurpose Namhangang Dam was built across the Namhangang River. More multipurpose dams were built straight through the 1970s to the 1980s; the Seongpat Dam, Daechung Dam, and Changje Dam are notable examples. All possess hydropower, nuclear power generation capabilities. In 1979, Korea’s first nuclear power plant, the Gori Nuclear Power Plant No. 1, was built and began operating near Gumi. Subsequently, more nuclear plants were built in Wolsong, Uljin, and Yeonggwang.

Urbanization has had significant impact on the country’s demographics, city’s physical landscape, its social-behavioral institutions, and its economy. As the number of cities increased, the population of urban areas declined, which also led to a decrease in the percentage of the population that was engaged in agriculture and fishery activities. The emergence of metropolitan centers is a major feature of urbanization and has had significant impact on the country’s demographics, its physical landscape, its social-behavioral institutions, and its economy. As the number of cities increased, the population of urban areas declined, which also led to a decrease in the percentage of the population that was engaged in agriculture and fishery activities.

Since 2000, various projects for balanced national development have been carried out. As a result, in 2012, Sejong Special Self-Governing City was launched and a new administrative town was constructed. In addition, Incheon City was created in non-capital areas along with the relocation of public agencies to provincial areas.
The Development of Transportation

Since the 1940s, construction of transportation infrastructure has taken place rapidly, and major national networks such as expressways, railways, airports, and seaports were built and served as the backbone for continued transportation expansion. Numerous important industries were developed along the Gyeong-In Area, and in order to survive these industries, the major transportation network was established to connect Seoul with those areas. The most notable project was the 328 km Gyeong-In Railway, which connects Seoul with Incheon. Construction began in 1906, and the line opened in 1910. It serves as the main corridor through the country. With the opening of Gyeong-In Railway in 1910, the nation became more accessible to communities, making it possible for travel to move from peasant-rural in the country to urban areas.

Traffic Accessibility to High Schools

Facilities such as bus terminals, high schools, general hospitals, and shopping centers. Traffic accessibility to these key facilities is relatively low in rural areas compared to large metropolitan cities.

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (2017)


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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Major Transport System Development</th>
<th>Major Railway</th>
<th>Traffic Accessibility to High Schools</th>
<th>Traffic Accessibility to Bus Terminals</th>
<th>Traffic Accessibility to Shopping Centers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Business</td>
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Korea's air transportation started a new chapter with the opening of the ultra-modern Incheon International Airport on Yeongjong Island. In 1996, Incheon Airport opened. In 1968, Jeju Airport began operations. In 2001, the ultra-modern Incheon International Airport on Yeongjong Island. The traffic accessibility index measures the average time spent by public transportation users from the centroid of each area to various facilities such as bus terminals, high schools, general hospitals, and shopping centers. Traffic accessibility to these key facilities is relatively low in rural areas compared to large metropolitan cities.

The transportation sector of the Korean economy rapidly developed as a result of the Export Industry Policy. It was reflected in the land spatial structures and regional growth structures that centered on metropolitan areas and the Gyeong-In Area (South-Busan). Korea’s entry into modern transportation began with railways that the Japanese built to invade Korea and serve their resource during the colonial period. In 1935, diesel engine locomotives and a subway system were introduced, and double-track railway projects were promoted. The modernization of rail traffic has been ongoing, and in 2004 the Seoul-Busan High-Speed Railway began operations. The development of highways began with the construction of the Gyeong-In Expressway in the 1970s, and since the late 1980s, roads and expressways have been built and improved so road traffic has increased. Major Korean ports are primarily located along the southeastern coast, which allows for the ready import and export of materials and products needed for chemical and industrial plants located in that region. In 1958, Gimpo Airport opened. In 1966, Incheon Airport opened. In 2001, Incheon International Airport opened, making Korea’s air transportation transit a new chapter with the opening of the ultra-modern Incheon International Airport on Yeongjong Island. The traffic accessibility index measures the average time spent by public transportation users from the centroid of each area to various facilities such as bus terminals, high schools, general hospitals, and shopping centers. Traffic accessibility to these key facilities is relatively low in rural areas compared to large metropolitan cities.

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The most notable change in Korea’s landscape over the past 60 years is increasing urbanization. The representative indicator of this process is the urbanization rate that shows the share of people living in urban areas out of the total national population. This statistical number can differ depending on which administrative unit is used to designate an area as urban or rural. In the case that the urban population is used to designate an area as urban or rural, the Urban Population and Urbanization Rate (1955) was 32%. Since then, the urbanization rate has exceeded 90% (2018). The urbanization rate is calculated according to the urban population at the administrative unit level of “eup” and above. The list indicating urban growth in Korea when each city reached 1 million includes Suwon-si (1965), Incheon (1970), Daegu (1969), Incheon (1979), Gwangju (1988), Daejeon (1989), and Ulsan (1997). As for cities that did not meet the metropolitan level, these are Goyang-si in 2016, Geoyang-si in 2017, and Yangyang-si in 2018. Seoul exceeded 10 million in 1988 and became a metropolis by even international standards. In 1999, the second largest city, exceeded 5 million in 1979, however, its population stagnated and has decreased recently. The distribution of cities by population size shows a clear trend toward part city development along the northeastern coastal industrial area as well as the expansion of the greater capital area. These two urban centers, in particular, give rise to the Gyeongbu Area.

Traditionally, the dominant housing type was single-detached dwellings; however, these have been outnumbered by apartments, thus increasing the apartment residence rate significantly. The single-detached dwelling ratio was 87.5% in 1980, which dropped to 22.4% by 2018. During the same period, the apartment ratio has increased from 7.0% to 61.4%. The supply of apartments varies by region, and the trend shows that the supply is mainly concentrated in the capital and metropolitan areas rather than in nonmetropolitan areas.