

Objectives	Monitoring progress in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and universal health coverage (UHC) is a priority in the Western Pacific Region. This country profile aims to assist the country-led SDG and UHC monitoring process. Specifically, it will explore the current SDG/UHC situation, guide and direct discussion on possible areas (and population groups) where performance may be low, and foster policy dialogues.
Country statistics	Population ¹ 2016 50.8 million GDP per capita (current US\$) ² 2016 27 538.81 Income level ² 2017 High income Income Gini coefficient ³ N/A 0 (equality) – 100 (inequality)
Health system	Total health expenditure as % of GDP ⁴ 2014 7.4% Total health expenditure per capita (current US\$) ⁴ 2014 2060.25 General government health expenditure as % of total health expenditure ⁴ 2014 54.1% Life expectancy at birth (in years) ⁵ 2015 82.3

Key Messages

Overall progress towards universal health coverage (UHC)

- Ministry of Health and Welfare (MoHW) annual work plan for 2018 focuses on three major domains: 1) support for better life, 2) expanding national responsibility in order to improve people's quality of life, and 3) strengthening community engagement.
- Compared to other countries in the Western Pacific Region, the Republic of Korea has high coverage of essential services.
- Based on estimates of the financial burden for health, slightly less than 2 million people (3.9% of the population) incurred high out-of-pocket health payments, which suggest gaps in financial protection for health. People in the poorest quintiles seem to be most vulnerable to out-of-pocket expenses.

The majority of SDG 3 indicators are close to the target

- Compared to other countries in the Region for SDG 3 indicators, the Republic of Korea fared well in reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (RMNCH), in infectious disease prevention and control, in urban and environmental health, and in health system resources and service capacity.
- However, challenges remain in noncommunicable disease (NCD) prevention and control. The Republic of Korea has one of the highest rates of male smoking and alcohol consumption per capita.
- The equity dimension is not known either because the country may not have disaggregated data or because data have not been reported to WHO.

UHC Overall Progress		
UHC index⁶ – coverage of essential health services (SDG 3.8.1) 0–100 scale (Target: 100)		
≥ 80 <i>Republic of Korea</i>	40 <i>Region (lowest)</i>	≥ 80 <i>Region (highest)</i>
Financial risk protection:⁷ proportion of population with out-of-pocket health spending exceeding 25% of household's budget or income (SDG 3.8.2)		
3.9% <i>Republic of Korea</i>	0.0% <i>Region (lowest)</i>	5.0% <i>Region (highest)</i>
Performance scorecard of 13 UHC index – coverage of essential health services indicators, in relation to a target of 100%		
6 tracer indicators > 80	4 tracer indicators 60–80	1 tracer indicator < 60
<i>Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health</i>		
3	1	0
<i>Infectious diseases</i>		
1	2	0
<i>Noncommunicable diseases</i>		
1	1	1
<i>Service capacity and access</i>		
1	0	0

Note: Refer to page 2

SDG Overall Progress		
Performance scorecard of 23 SDG health indicators , in relation to a target of 100% (as relative proximity to SDG targets)		
13 indicators > 70%	0 indicators 40–70%	3 indicators < 40%
<i>Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health</i>		
7	0	0
<i>Infectious diseases</i>		
2	0	0
<i>Noncommunicable diseases</i>		
1	0	2
<i>Urban and environmental health</i>		
3	0	0
<i>Health system resources and capacity</i>		
1	0	0

Note: Refer to page 3

Sustainable Development Goals

World leaders committed to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 in an effort to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. SDG 3 covers the unfinished Millennium Development Goal (MDG) agenda and newer challenges such as noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), health security, tobacco and injuries.

How is country performance on the SDG indicators assessed?

There are two values displayed in each country profile: the indicator value and the rescaled value. The first corresponds to the actual value for a country at the baseline year, whereas the rescaled value shows the relative position of a country with respect to other countries in the Western Pacific Region.

The rescaled value measures the relative proximity to a target, i.e. explicit SDG targets or a best-performing country. Specific SDG targets (indicators shaded in grey) were used for the maternal mortality rate (70 per 100 000 live births), the neonatal mortality rate (12 per 1000 live births) and the under-5 mortality rate (25 per 1000 live births). A value of 100% means the indicator value is at the exact target value. The closer to the target the indicator value is, the higher the percentage.

The rescaled data should be interpreted in the following way: using the adolescent birth rate as an example, the Republic of Korea has a value of 100%, meaning it has performed at 100% of the best-performing country.

For all SDG indicators, rescaled values range from 0 to 100, therefore three equal bands have been used.

The **SDG performance scorecard** colour code for the Western Pacific Region:



How far is the Republic of Korea from the SDG targets?

SDG	Indicator value	Indicator rescaled score to 0–100% Target: 100%
Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health		
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100 000 live births) ¹² 2015		
3.1.1	11.0	100% ^d
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%) ¹³ 2015		
3.1.2	100.0%	100% ^e
Under-5 mortality rate (per 1000 live births) ¹⁴ 2016		
3.2.1	3.4	100% ^d
Neonatal mortality rate (per 1000 live births) ¹⁴ 2016		
3.2.2	1.5	100% ^d
Infants receiving three doses of hepatitis B vaccine (%) (proxy) ¹⁴ 2016		
3.3.4	98.0%	96% ^e
Proportion of married or in-union women of reproductive age who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods ¹⁵		
3.7.1		
Adolescent birth rate (per 1000 women aged 15–19 years) ¹⁶ 2013		
3.7.2	1.7	100% ^e
Diphtheria, tetanus toxoid and pertussis (DTP3) immunization coverage among 1-year-olds (%) ¹⁴ 2016		
3.b.1	98.0%	95% ^e
Infectious diseases		
New HIV infections among adults 15–49 years old (per 1000 uninfected population) ¹⁷		
3.3.1		
TB incidence (per 100 000 population) ¹⁴ 2016		
3.3.2	77.0	87% ^e
Malaria incidence (per 1000 population at risk) ¹⁴ 2015		
3.3.3	0.8	99% ^e

Noncommunicable diseases

Probability of dying from any of cardiovascular disease (CVD), cancer, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease (CRD) between age 30 and exact age 70 (%) ¹⁸ 2015		
3.4.1	8.3%	Regional Average: 17.1
Suicide mortality rate (per 100 000 population) ¹⁴ 2015		
3.4.2	28.3	Regional Average: 10.8
Total alcohol per capita (≥ 15 years of age) consumption (in litres of pure alcohol), projected estimates ¹⁹ 2016		
3.5.2	11.9	0% ^e
Age-standardized prevalence of tobacco smoking among persons 15 years and older (%) – Female ²⁰ 2015		
3.a.1	4.2%	94% ^e
Age-standardized prevalence of tobacco smoking among persons 15 years and older (%) – Male ²⁰ 2015		
3.a.1	49.8%	30% ^e

Urban and environmental health

Road traffic mortality rate (per 100 000 population) ²¹ 2013		
3.6.1	12.0	Regional Average: 17.3
Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution (per 100 000 population) ²² 2012		
3.9.1	23.2	86% ^e
Mortality rate attributed to exposure to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services (per 100 000 population) ²³ 2012		
3.9.2	0.2	99% ^e
Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning (per 100 000 population) ¹⁸ 2015		
3.9.3	0.6	76% ^e

Health system resources and capacity

Total net official development assistance to medical research and basic health per capita (constant 2014 US\$), by recipient country ²⁴		
3.b.2		
Skilled health professionals density (per 10 000 population) ²⁵ 2014		
3.c.1	79.0	Regional Average: 42.0
Average of 13 International Health Regulations (2005) core capacity scores ¹⁴ 2016		
3.d.1	100.0	100% ^e

^d Rescaled based on existing SDG targets.

^e Rescaled based on targets identified in the Region.

Are population groups in the Republic of Korea being left behind?²⁶

NO DATA

Poorest 20%	Richest 20%	Diff	Rural	Urban	Diff
SDG 3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)					
SDG 3.2.1 Under-5 mortality rate (per 1000 live births)					
SDG 3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate (per 1000 live births)					
SDG 3.7.1 Proportion of married or in-union women of reproductive age who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods					
SDG 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (per 1000 women aged 15–19 years)					
SDG 3.b.1 Diphtheria, tetanus toxoid and pertussis (DTP3) immunization coverage among 1-year-olds (%)					

■ Minor inequalities (< 10%)
 ■ Moderate inequalities (10–50%)
 ■ Major inequalities (> 50%)

- 1 World population prospects: the 2017 revision, DVD edition. New York (NY): United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2017.
- 2 World Development Indicators. Washington (DC): World Bank (<http://wdi.worldbank.org>, accessed 26 September 2017).
- 3 World Development Indicators 2013. Washington (DC): World Bank (<http://data.worldbank.org>, accessed October 2013).
- 4 Global health expenditure database [online database]. Geneva: World Health Organization (<http://apps.who.int/nha/database/Select/Indicators/en>, accessed 26 September 2017).
- 5 WHO life expectancy (http://www.who.int/gho/mortality_burden_disease/life_tables/en/).
- 6 SDG indicator 3.8.1 and its components have been computed by WHO using publically available data, including existing WHO/UN agency estimates, country data reported to WHO, and published results from household surveys available in UHC Data Portal (<http://apps.who.int/gho/cabinet/uhc.jsp>) and in the 2017 Global Monitoring Report on Tracking Universal Health Coverage (http://www.who.int/healthinfo/universal_health_coverage/report/2017_global_monitoring_report.pdf?ua=1).
- 7 Estimates of indicator SDG 3.8.2 are based on primary household survey data obtained from government statistical agencies directly or indirectly by the World Health Organization or the World Bank. The survey used in Republic of Korea was the Korea Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), Statistics Korea from 2015.
- 8 Reproductive maternal, newborn and child health measures the extent to which those in need for family planning, pregnancy and delivery care, child immunization and treatment receive the care they need.
- 9 Infectious diseases measures: (i) the extent to which those in need for TB and HIV treatment and malaria prevention receive the care and services they need; and (ii) access to improved sanitation.
- 10 Noncommunicable diseases measures the current status of NCD risk factors in the population, including blood pressure, glucose level and tobacco consumption, as a proxy indicator of success of both prevention efforts and screening and treatment programmes.
- 11 Service capacity and access measures general features of service capacity and access to care within a health system. Measures include hospital beds and health professionals per capita, and a measure of health security for responding to epidemics and other health threats.
- 12 WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and the United Nations Population Division. Trends in maternal mortality: 1990 to 2015. Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and the United Nations Population Division. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (<http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2015/en/>, accessed 17 March 2017). WHO Member States with a population of less than 100 000 in 2015 were not included in the analysis.
- 13 WHO/UNICEF joint global database 2017 (http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/en/ and <https://data.unicef.org/topic/maternal-health/delivery-care>). The data are extracted from public available sources and have not undergone country consultation. WHO regional and global figures are for the period 2010–2016.
- 14 World health statistics [online database]. Global Health Observatory (GHO) data. Geneva: World Health Organization (<http://www.who.int/gho/en/>, accessed 3 November 2017).
- 15 World contraceptive use 2016 [online database]. New York (NY): United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2016. Regional aggregates are estimates for the year 2016. Model-based estimates and projections of family planning indicators 2016. New York (NY): United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2016 (http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/theme/family-planning/cp_model.shtml).
- 16 World fertility data 2015. New York (NY): United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2015 (<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/dataset/fertility/wfd2015.shtml>). Regional aggregates are the average of two five-year periods, 2010–2015 and 2015–2020, taken from: World population prospects: the 2015 revision, DVD edition. New York (NY): United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2015 (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Download/Standard/Fertility/>, accessed 13 April 2016).
- 17 UNAIDS/WHO estimates; 2016 (http://www.who.int/gho/hiv/epidemic_status/incidence/en/).
- 18 Global health estimates 2015: deaths by cause, age, sex, by country and by region, 2000–2015. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/estimates/en/index1).
- 19 WHO global information system on alcohol and health [online database]. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017 (<http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.GISAH?showonly=GISAH>).
- 20 WHO global report on trends in prevalence of tobacco smoking 2015. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/156262/1/9789241564922_eng.pdf, accessed 22 March 2017).
- 21 Global status report on road safety 2015. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/en/, accessed 22 March 2017). WHO Member States with a population of less than 90 000 in 2015 who did not participate in the survey for the report were not included in the analysis.
- 22 Public health and environment [online database]. Global Health Observatory (GHO) data. Geneva: World Health Organization (<http://www.who.int/gho/phe/en/>). WHO Member States with a population of less than 250 000 population in 2012 were not included in the analysis.
- 23 Preventing disease through healthy environments. A global assessment of the burden of disease from environmental risks. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2016 (http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/204585/1/9789241565196_eng.pdf?ua=1, accessed 23 March 2017); and Preventing diarrhoea through better water, sanitation and hygiene. Exposures and impacts in low- and middle-income countries. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2014 (http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/150112/1/9789241564823_eng.pdf?ua=1&ua=1, accessed 23 March 2017). WHO Member States with a population of less than 250 000 in 2012 were not included in the analysis.
- 24 United Nations SDG indicators global database (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/?indicator=3.b.2>, accessed 6 April 2017). Based on the Creditor Reporting System database of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2016.
- 25 Skilled health professionals refer to the latest available values (2005–2015) in the WHO Global Health Workforce Statistics database (<http://who.int/hrh/statistics/hwfstats/en/>) aggregated across physicians and nurses/midwives. Refer to the source for the latest values, disaggregation and metadata descriptors.
- 26 Disaggregated data for SDG indicators on page 3 come from the WHO Health Equity Assessment Toolkit (HEAT), software for exploring and comparing health inequalities in countries. The tool includes reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health indicators, disaggregated by five dimensions of inequality, including economic status, education, place of residence, subnational region and sex (where applicable). Currently, Republic of Korea does not report data to this tool.