

LOW BIRTH RATE IN SOUTH KOREA

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Abstract: South Korea, despite being an economically developed country known for its technological innovations, is facing a low birth rate. The reasons for this phenomenon are related to a number of social, economic and cultural factors. Social pressures, family relationships and the changing importance of marriage also play an important role. Many young people prefer to avoid or delay marriage, which leads to a decrease in the birth rate.

Key words: birth rate, economic factors, cultural factors, social factors, career, social pressure, educational programs, economic growth, young families, female employment.

Annotatsiya: Janubiy Koreya, iqtisodiy jihatdan rivojlangan va texnologik innovatsiyalar bilan tanilgan mamlakat bo'lishiga qaramay, tug'ilish darajasining pastligi bilan yuzma-yuz kelmoqda. Ushbu fenomenning sabablari bir qator ijtimoiy, iqtisodiy va madaniy omillar bilan bog'liq. Shuningdek, ijtimoiy bosimlar, oilaviy munosabatlar va nikohning o'zgaruvchan ahamiyati ham muhim rol o'ynamoqda. Ko'plab yoshlar nikohdan qochish yoki uni kechiktirishni afzal ko'rmoqda, bu esa tug'ilish darajasining pasayishiga olib kelmoqda.

Kalit so'zlar: tug'ilish darajasi, iqtisodiy omillar, madaniy omillar, ijtimoiy omillar, kariyera, ijtimoiy bosim, ta'lim dasturlari, iqtisodiy o'sish, yosh oilalar, ayollarning ish bilan bandligi.

Аннотация: Южная Корея, несмотря на то, что является экономически развитой страной, известной своими технологическими инновациями, сталкивается с низкой рождаемостью. Причины этого явления связаны с рядом социальных, экономических и культурных факторов. Социальное давление, семейные отношения и меняющаяся значимость брака также играют важную роль. Многие молодые люди предпочитают избегать или откладывать брак, что приводит к снижению рождаемости.

Ключевые слова: рождаемость, экономические факторы, культурные факторы, социальные факторы, карьера, социальное давление, образовательные программы, экономический рост, молодые семьи, женская занятость.

According to preliminary data from the South Korean Statistical Office, the total fertility rate — the average number of children a woman gives birth to in her lifetime — was 0.72 in 2023. For comparison, this coefficient was 0.78 in 2022, 0.81 in 2021, and 0.84 in 2020. This is well below the average of 2.1 children needed to maintain the country's current population of 51 million. As of 2018, South Korea is the only country among the members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) with a fertility rate below 1. In addition, the average age of a Korean woman at the birth of her first child is 33.6 years. This is the highest result among OECD members. According to experts, if such a low birth rate continues, the population of South Korea, which is the fifth largest economy in Asia, will shrink by almost half by 2100, to

26.8 million people. Since 2006, the government has allocated about \$270 billion to address the problem of low birth rates, but these measures have not yielded results. Incentives include financial subsidies for couples, childcare services, and support for infertility treatment. The Guardian wrote that couples cite the rising costs of raising children and the rise in real estate prices, the lack of well-paid jobs, and the fierce competition in the education system as obstacles to having a large family. Experts also emphasize the role of cultural factors, including the difficulties women face in balancing career and motherhood, as well as the expectation that they are primarily responsible for housework and childcare. Since 2006, the government has spent more than \$270 billion on programs to encourage couples to have more children, including cash subsidies, childcare services, and assistance with infertility treatment. Financial and other incentives have not been able to encourage couples complaining about the sharply rising costs of raising children and property prices, the lack of well-paid jobs and the education system in the country, which are an obstacle to having a large family. Marriage is seen as a prerequisite for having children, but the number of marriages is decreasing due to the high cost of living. According to recent data, the total population of South Korea exceeds approximately 51 million. North Korea's population is 25 million. These figures are approximate and may change slightly due to factors such as birth, death, and migration.

South Korea has been facing serious problems with its birth rate in recent years. In 2021, the country's birth rate reached a record low of 0.84 births per woman. This indicator is one of the lowest in the world, and this situation is associated with social, economic, and cultural factors. The costs of raising children, education, and healthcare are very high. Financial pressure on young families negatively affects the decision to give birth. Housing prices are very high in South Korea, which limits the ability of young people to build their own homes. Many women are striving to advance their careers, which leads to a delay in childbirth. Competition in the workplace and the desire to achieve success take precedence over childbirth plans.

- Work-life balance. Balancing family and work life is difficult, which prevents many young people from having children.
- Traditional views. While traditional views on marriage and having children are changing, there is still social pressure among many young people.
- Focus on education. The education system is very competitive, which increases the demands on children and puts pressure on families' birth plans.

The decline in the birth rate can lead to a number of serious consequences. Population decline and an increase in the aging process. This can have a negative impact on the economy. The lack of a younger generation can lead to a shortage of labor, which will slow down economic growth. The strengthening of the aging process will create an additional burden on healthcare and pension systems. The South Korean government is taking a number of measures to increase the birth rate. Providing subsidies and assistance to families for children. Expanding kindergartens and care services.

- Flexibility in the workplace: Increasing the employment of women and supporting family life.

The low birth rate in South Korea remains a serious problem. Social, economic, and cultural factors are causing a delay in childbirth. The measures taken by the government to address this issue are important, but a more comprehensive approach and large-scale reforms are needed. In the future, changing social awareness and improving economic conditions are of great importance for increasing the birth rate.

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