INTRODUCTION
An independent kingdom for much of its history, following World War II, Korea was split with the northern half coming under Soviet-sponsored communist control. North Korea, under its founder President KIM Il Sung, adopted a policy of diplomatic and economic "self-reliance" as a check against outside influence. KIM Jong Il, was officially designated as his father's successor in 1980, followed in 2011 by current leader KIM Jong Un.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State
State Affairs Commission President KIM Jong Un
Head of Government
Supreme People’s Assembly President CHOE Ryong Hae
Government Type
dictatorship, single-party state; official state ideology of “Juche” or “national self-reliance”
Capital
Pyongyang
Legislature
unicameral Supreme People’s Assembly or Ch’oego Inmin Hoeui (687 seats)

GEOGRAPHY
Area
Total: 120,538 sq km
Land: 120,408 sq km
Water: 130 sq km
Climate
temperate, with rainfall concentrated in summer; long, bitter winters
Natural Resources
coal, iron ore, limestone, magnesite, graphite, copper, zinc, lead, precious metals, hydropower

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
one of the last centrally planned economies; hard hit by COVID-19, crop failures, international sanctions, and isolationist policies; declining growth and trade, and heavily reliant on China; poor exchange rate stability; economic data integrity issues
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $40 billion (2015 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $1,700 (2015 est.)
Industries - military products, machine building, electric power, chemicals, mining (coal, iron ore, limestone, magnesite, graphite, copper, zinc, lead, precious metals), metallurgy, textiles, food processing, tourism
Agricultural products - rice, maize, vegetables, apples, potatoes, cabbages, fruit, sweet potatoes, beans, soybeans
Exports $222 million (2018 est.)
watch components, fake hair, iron alloys, instructional models, tungsten (2019)
partners: China 67%, Suriname 6% (2019)
Imports $2.32 billion (2018 est.)
clothing, apparel, soybean oil, rice, wheat products, clocks/watches (2019)
partners: China 96% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
25.8 million (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
0.49% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity
racially homogeneous; there is a small Chinese community and a few ethnic Japanese
Language
Korean
Religion
traditionally Buddhist and Confucianist, some Christian and syncretic Chondogyo (Religion of the Heavenly Way)
Urbanization
urban population: 62.6% of total population (2021)
rate of urbanization: 0.85% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)