

# Korea birth rate lowest among OECD members

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South Korea's birth rate is the lowest among OECD member states, and also among the lowest in the world, according to The World Factbook of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

Korea's total birth rate stood at 1.25 last year, putting it 220th out of 224 countries on the list. Total fertility rate refers to the average number of children that would be born to a woman over her lifetime.

The only countries with lower birth rates than Korea were Hong Kong (1.19), Taiwan (1.12), Macao (0.94) and Singapore (0.82).

The African country of Niger topped the list with a total birth rate of 6.62. Among the 35 countries in the OECD, Israel had the highest rate at 2.66.

Women in Korea's neighboring states of Japan and China gave birth to more children than here, with rates of 1.41 and 1.6, respectively.

North Korea's total birth rate stood at 1.96, putting it at 125th place out of 224 countries.

South Korea's low figure is attributed to the high costs of child care. According to a report published by the Korea Institute of Child Care and Education last month, households in Korea spend about a third of their total expenditure on their children.

It showed nine out of 10 parents feel burdened by childcare costs.

In another recent survey, 62.6 percent of the respondents in their 20s and 30s supported the idea that "it is better not to have children if one cannot raise them under financially abundant conditions."

## Words

- fertility 생식력
- respectively 각자
- attribute ~것이랑보다
- expenditure 지출, 소비
- burden 부담, 짐
- survey 조사, 연구, 평가하다
- respondent 응답자
- financially 재정적으로
- abundant 풍부한

## Summary

The problem of low fertility in Korea is serious.

That is because the parents do not have enough child support.

↳ Although the government is trying to solve the problem of low fertility, it is a very difficult environment for couples to raise children.

Not only is there a lack of childcare facilities, but it is costly and burdensome to raise one child.

Therefore, low fertility rate in Korea is a natural result.

↳ Though policies for low fertility rates are presenting in Korea, there is a limit to the impact of such policies on the profound places such as large corporations. So in effect, there seem to be few places where the government's policy is practically practiced.

↳ That is so serious problem.

It will be resolved by further developing welfare benefits.

↳ I will have many children for Korea's high fertility rate.

In my opinion

I didn't know that Korea's fertility rate is so serious.

If this situation continues, many problems will arise in Korea such as the disappearance of jobs.

I wonder what the government thinks about this problem.

They are also implementing various policies, but the situation is not improving. So I doubt whether the policies are being implemented properly or the countermeasures are poor.