

MAPPING OUT EU-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS: KEY MEMBER STATES' PERSPECTIVES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is the perspective of key EU member states towards South Korea? While EU-South Korea relations have attracted growing attention in recent years, the relationship between key EU member states and the Asian country remains underexplored. This report addresses this omission by describing and analysing the recent evolution of the relationship between Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Poland and Sweden, on the one hand, and South Korea on the other. The report covers the areas of economic relations, security relations, bilateral relations and North Korea, and cultural relations.

The report shows that there is a clear trend towards greater cooperation between key EU member states and South Korea. This trend holds regardless of who is in power in South Korea, with the report covering the second half of the Lee Myung-bak government, the whole Park Geun-hye government, and the first half of the Moon Jae-in government. The trend also holds regardless of the type of government in the EU member states analysed.

Thus, it can be said that the Strategic Partnership signed in 2010 and the Free Trade Agreement in operation since 2011 served as a first turning point for EU-South Korea relations. This is specially the case for member states with their own bilateral strategic dialogue or partnership with South Korea. Also, the EU-South Korea relationship has accelerated since President Donald Trump took office in the United States in 2017. President Trump's unpredictability and lack of coordination with allies has actually served as a second turning point in the strengthening of EU-South Korea relations.

Moving into *economic relations*, the EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement has clearly served to boost trade and foreign direct investment in both directions. Having said that, there are disparities across member states. Those with greater synergies with South Korea in areas such as goods and services produced or lower labour costs, for example, have benefited the most from the agreement.

Focusing on *security relations*, the Strategic Partnership has served as a catalyst to strengthened EU member state-South Korea cooperation. Several member states have engaged in concrete, material cooperation in areas such as joint activities or arms sales. There is also a political willingness to deepen cooperation with South Korea

across the EU. This is especially the case for member states with their own strategic dialogue or partnership.

Regarding *bilateral relations and North Korea*, there is support for a common EU position towards Pyongyang; the so-called ‘critical engagement’ mixing carrots and sticks. Having said that, there are some internal divisions. Some member states clearly prioritize North Korea’s nuclear programme and take a tougher line on Pyongyang, whereas others take a more holistic view and would support deeper engagement along with sanctions.

Looking at *cultural relations*, people-to-people ties are becoming stronger. Public diplomacy, research and educational exchanges and cultural exchanges per se are growing across member states. They have been facilitated by the agreements signed by Seoul and Brussels and other government programmes. But cultural relations are to a large extent driven by the peoples of both Europe and South Korea.

Overall, EU member states seek to coordinate with South Korea at the bilateral level. They see potential for deeper cooperation with a country often described as a ‘like-minded partner’ by the EU. There is a question as to whether this clear wish for greater cooperation has been successfully uploaded to the EU or even United Nations (UN) levels. The report suggests that this is not always the case.

Notwithstanding the above, the report shows that there is a lingering lack of mutual knowledge and understanding on both sides, including among elites. On the European side, this is reflected in sub-optimal knowledge about domestic dynamics in South Korea and its position and policy at the regional and global levels. On the South Korean side, this can be seen in the limited understanding about the different positions and roles of member states vis-à-vis South Korea, Northeast Asia and globally.

Furthermore, China, especially, and Japan are considered to be more important than South Korea across member states in general. For the most part, this is related to differences in the size of their economies, their degree of involvement in global governance, and, in the case of China, the impact of differing worldviews and values. The report shows that there are exceptions though, especially with regards to Japan. This is the result of stronger economic links with South Korea and, sometimes, the degree of a member state involvement in dealing with North Korea. In any case, it should be noted

that Asia is becoming increasingly important across Europe even if not the top priority; this includes the relationship with South Korea.

In general, there is a sense across EU member states that there is potential for more cooperation with South Korea. But there are questions as to whether support for multilateralism, cooperation with like-minded countries and the prioritization of universal values is happening on the European side. As for South Korea, there is a question regarding whether it has, or wants to have, a value-driven policy. The report suggests that a natural alignment of interests and values rather than an active value-driven policy is the main driver behind stronger cooperation in recent years.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOUTH KOREA

- Ensure a smooth transition across administrations when it comes to Europe policy, considering that Europe is increasingly important for Seoul and non-divisive.
- Appoint a MOFA special envoy for coordination with Europe sitting in Office of the President strategic meetings, with a remit including the EU, EU member states, NATO, the UN and other international organisations.
- Address the expertise deficit among policy-makers, especially, and civil society to enhance knowledge about EU member states, based on key indicators coming out of the Strategic Partnership.
- Proactively identify areas for cooperation with specific EU member states or groups of member states, without feeling constrained by the existing EU dialogue and cooperation framework (or 'EU straightjacket').
- Proactively work together and liaise with the EU and its member states to come up with common positions in multilateral organisations.

INTRODUCTION

MAPPING OUT EU-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS

Ramon Pacheco Pardo, Institute for European Studies and King's College London

What is the perspective of key EU member states towards South Korea? While EU-South Korea relations have attracted growing attention in recent years, the relationship between key EU member states and the Asian country remains underexplored. This report addresses this omission by describing and analysing the recent evolution of the relationship between Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Poland and Sweden, on the one hand, and South Korea on the other. The report covers the areas of economic relations, security relations, bilateral relations and North Korea, and cultural relations.

South Korea and the EU have significantly strengthened their relationship over the past decade. Since the upgrade of relations to a Strategic Partnership in 2010, Seoul and Brussels have signed a Free Trade Agreement applied since 2011 and formally entering into force in 2015, a Framework Agreement that entered into force in 2014, and a Crisis Management Participation Agreement that entered into force in 2016. These agreements cover the key areas of politics, trade and investment and peace and security. They also help to cover the South Korea-EU relationship in the area of North Korea issue management. All of them are central to South Korea's foreign policy, since they underpin some of the country's core foreign policy objectives: to strengthen the country's diplomatic relations and security, to increase trade and economic relations with third countries, and to manage the North Korean issue. They are also central to the South Korea-EU partnership.

At the time of writing, South Korea is the only country in the world with which these three agreements have entered into force. This highlights and proves the importance that the EU accords to its relationship with South Korea. Indeed, these agreements have served to establish or reinforce a host of bilateral dialogues on a wide range of issues. They include traditional security threats such as nuclear weapons as well as non-traditional security threats such as cybercrimes or climate change. The agreements have also served South Korea to join EU counter-piracy missions; potentially, the same could happen with peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Furthermore, the Free Trade Agreement has served to boost trade and investment. In other words, the three agreements signed by Seoul and Brussels have had a positive effect on the bilateral relationship between both. They have led to tangible and material benefits.

Notwithstanding this success, the relationship could be improved. South Korea and the EU are currently revising their Free Trade Agreement, which signals that both partners feel that there is room to strengthen trade and investment links further. Also, the departure of the United Kingdom from the EU will have an impact on this agreement, for it was South Korea's second largest trading partner in the EU. Meanwhile, both South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European External Action Service are re-examining the Framework Agreement and Crisis Management Participation Agreement to find more synergies and strengthen and improve their implementation. In the case of the Framework Agreement, it covers a wide range of issues. The number of bilateral dialogues (already above 30) and implementation activities suggests that there is scope to deepen the relationship even further. As for the Crisis Management Participation Agreement, South Korea participates in the EU's Atalanta counter-piracy mission off the Horn of Africa. But there are ongoing deliberations about participation in a larger number and more varied range of missions. In other words, both Seoul and Brussels are aware that their bilateral relationship could improve – and they are actively looking at ways of doing so.

Having said that, ultimately an improvement in South Korea-EU relations will to a large extent be contingent on the perspectives and views that key EU member states have of this relationship, as well as the benefits they can extract from it. Most EU policies have a degree of inter-governmentalism. In other words, member states are actively involved in shaping the policy, whether at the national level, through their representatives in EU institutions and in Brussels or a combination of both. Furthermore, in many cases such as EU counter-piracy and peacekeeping missions the resources ultimately come from EU member states rather than from pre-existing EU units. Member states thus also shape policy through their decisions on resource allocation. And in some cases there is not even a proper, wide-ranging EU policy such as with cyber security or counter-terrorism. Member states still hold most power over these and other policies. Even trade, usually considered to be the most supranational of EU foreign policies, has a degree of member state involvement because the ratification process involves national and, sometimes, regional parliaments. This means that there needs to be a better understanding of the views that EU member states hold of their own relationship with South Korea.

Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain and Sweden are key member states in the relationship between the EU and South Korea. These seven countries are central to the shaping of the EU's foreign policy due to their size or special attributes; they are the largest EU economies, Netherlands aside; the five biggest in terms of population, with Belgium being number ten and Sweden number 13; amongst the biggest in terms of defence spending as a percentage of GDP; and also among the largest contributors to the EU budget. France, Germany, Italy and Spain can now be considered the Big Four EU powers, Belgium is a leading voice in the Benelux and the host of the key EU institutions, Poland is a leading voice for Central and Eastern Europe, and Sweden is among Northern and Nordic countries. In terms of relations with South Korea, these seven countries are its seven largest trading partners. Also, Germany, Poland and Sweden have embassies in Pyongyang and France has a cooperation bureau. Meanwhile, all of them host North Korean embassies except for Belgium, due to sensitivities related to its hosting of EU institutions, and France, one of only two EU member states yet to establish diplomatic relations with Pyongyang. In summary, it is necessary to understand the relationship between Seoul and these member states from their perspective to better understand Seoul's relations with Brussels.

Yet, this is a neglected area. The literature on South Korea-EU relations, whether policy-oriented or academic, almost exclusively treats the EU as a compact in which all member states agree on their policy towards South Korea. Since this is not the case, this project will map out the relationship between these EU member states and South Korea in order to better understand (1) *what has been the evolution of these key member states' relationship with South Korea since the Partnership Agreement, Free Trade Agreement and Crisis Management Participation Agreement entered into force or started to be implemented* and (2) *how these member states feel about their current relationship with South Korea and about potential areas for stronger cooperation*.

BELGIUM-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS: A PARTNERSHIP WITH POTENTIAL

Bruno Hellendorff, Egmont - Royal Institute for International Relations, and Linde Desmaele, Institute for European Studies

1 INTRODUCTION

In March 2019, their Majesties the King and Queen of Belgium visited the Republic of Korea (henceforth South Korea) along with a delegation of over 200 representatives. This visit constituted an important development in a relationship that began as early as 1901, when Belgium and Korea signed a Treaty of amity, commerce and navigation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea 2020). As a matter of fact, history was a major dimension of the visit: the Belgian Royal Historical Commission and the National Institute of Korean History signed an agreement with a view to compile, edit and publish the diplomatic archives between Belgium and Korea (Belga 2019). The King and Queen also paid tribute to the Belgian soldiers who lost their lives fighting in the 1950-53 Korean war. This episode continues to bring the two countries close to this day, around the shared values of “freedom and democracy” – in the words of Belgian Minister of Security and the Interior, Pieter De Crem (Belga 2019).

However, there was more to the visit than history. Trade, culture and political cooperation was high on the agenda. Belgium and South Korea have much to contribute to each other in terms of economic development. Both are advanced, export-driven economies relying on a rules-based international order for their security and prosperity (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium 2019). Cultural, academic and scientific ties also continue to intensify between the two countries.

This accounts for a wide-ranging relationship. And while it is true that Belgian foreign policy has traditionally focused on Europe and its periphery, the increasing global importance of Asia is putting the region on Belgium’s radar (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium 2020a). South Korea is a valuable partner in Asia, where Belgian interests are ever greater, as well as in global arenas. Meanwhile, South Korea has an interest in further developing ties with Belgium. Overall, therefore, their bilateral relationship holds vast potential for reinforced ties. Nonetheless, limited diplomatic resources, cultural differences and, at times, diverging policy priorities also place limitations on what Belgium and South Korea can achieve together.

2 ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Both Belgium and South Korea consider trade as the most important dimension of their bilateral relationship. Globally, South Korea is Belgium's 32nd export client and 27th import supplier. Interestingly, about 90 percent of Belgium's trade with Korea is with Flanders, and only ten percent with Brussels and Wallonia (FITT 2020a). This is important, for economic policy is a regional competence in the Belgian federal system. Given the uncertainty surrounding the European Union's (EU) future trading relationship with the United Kingdom after Brexit, diplomats from Belgium and its regions are increasingly focusing on promoting Belgium as a trade partner in Asia, including in South Korea (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium 2018).

Belgium's most important export goods to South Korea are chemicals, machinery and equipment, and base metals. In terms of imports, machinery and equipment, transport equipment and base materials dominate (BFTA 2019). The consequences of the 2010 EU-Republic of Korea FTA have been largely positive for Belgium as is clear from the increase in trade volume. This was especially the case for small and medium-sized companies (SMEs). Indeed, whereas in 2010, Belgian exports to South Korea were dominated by larger firms, the growth in exports since then has been primarily driven by SMEs (European Commission 2017). Conversely, for South Korea, it is mostly the *chaebol* that are the driving force in the country's outreach to Belgium.

Bilateral investments between Belgium and South Korea take place within the framework of the 1974 Agreement on The Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investments (FITT 2020b). On the Belgian side, Solvay occupies a prominent spot. The chemicals giant has been present in South Korea for over 40 years, employs 500 people and makes a profit of 500 million euros locally. Other important Belgian players are Umicore and AB Inbev. Several South Korean companies are also present in Belgium: Hyundai, LG Electronics, Kia Motors, Korean Air, Korea Institute for Advancement of Technology, Asiana Airlines and Korea Telecom (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium 2019; BFTA 2017).

From Belgium's viewpoint, five sectors are of particular interest in its economic relationship with South Korea. Firstly, producers of "med-tech" – high end and innovative medical equipment and products – consider South Korea a growing market. Given South Korea's rapidly aging population, the South Korean government is constantly seeking to improve healthcare services and has sought to establish international partnerships to that end (FITT 2020c; AWEX 2020).

Secondly, Belgium and South Korea also share the sense that an ongoing technological revolution is underway, that will significantly affect economic systems and value chains. The development of connectivity is inevitable, and devices become increasingly 'smart' and operate in networks. The development of 5G technology as an enabler for such transformations has captured the interest of Belgian and South Korean companies alike (BBC 2019). As a consequence, Belgian producers active in information and communications technology (ICT), and related hardware and software see various opportunities in and with South Korea. In a similar vein, 'smart farming' and 'smart factories' are interesting conduits for bilateral collaboration.

Thirdly, there is potential to increase Belgian exports to South Korea in the area of food and beverages, and beer in particular. As socio-economic conditions in South Korea evolve, there is an increasing demand for high-quality and healthy food products with various tastes. When it comes to trade in fresh products, important trade barriers nonetheless remain. Indeed, South Korea protects its domestic market through non-tariff barriers. For instance, since the outbreak of African swine fever in 2018, the once flourishing export of Belgian pork meat has almost completely halted (FITT 2020c; AWEX 2020).

Fourthly, both countries closely watch each other's automobile sector, especially when it comes to the development of 'green cars'. In 2018, South Korea was the seventh largest car producer in the world. Belgium ranked ninth. Critically, however, domestic car sales recently decreased in South Korea because of growing household debt (FITT 2020c; AWEX 2020).

Fifthly, and finally, Belgium and South Korea are both important players in shipping and logistics, and host respectively the 13th and sixth largest trading ports in the world. The growth of e-commerce in South Korea has also boosted the logistics sector in the country (FITT 2020c; AWEX 2020).

Despite this potential for increased economic relations, some difficulties remain. For one thing, Belgium and Korea feel the global repercussions of the trade conflict between the United States and China. Both countries have also experienced relatively slow economic growth in recent years. Furthermore, South Korea in some sense remains in a period of transition from a developing to a developed economy. While cooperation with European companies is often seen as an effective way of achieving innovation, differences in business culture and the lack of long-standing mature economic partnerships also lead to complications in this regard.¹

¹ Interview with South Korean diplomats, Brussels, 2019.

Table 1. Belgium's trade relations with South Korea, million euros

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Exports	1434	1649	1907	1664	1839	1824	1724	1559	1714
Imports	1729	1660	1515	2310	2227	2014	2344	2717	2396

Source: BFTA and UN Comtrade

Table 2. Belgium's FDI stocks with South Korea, million USD

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Inward	/	338	344	1,239	907	913	1,034	1,360	1,756
Outward	/	3,871	8	232,0	1,399	293	336	653	914

Source: IMF

3 SECURITY RELATIONS

Since both Belgium and South Korea are surrounded by major neighbours, their security policy is primarily geared towards their respective home regions. Moreover, for Belgium, the EU and NATO remain the primary reference points for the conduct of international affairs. At the same time, increasing international interdependence underlines the security of global flows of goods, resources, people, capital, services and information, for all countries. Issues like maritime security, cyber security and energy security transcend regional boundaries (Belgian MOD 2016). Against such background, Belgium and South Korea share an interest in upholding a rules-based international order. Their shared outlook is apparent in various outstanding dossiers today: the rise of 'connectivity' agendas and the relationship to great powers. As these different dossiers turn more complex, differences are also emerging.

Firstly, on the rise of connectivity, Belgium and South Korea have each adopted a pragmatic and non-confrontational approach to the visions of connectivity defended by their powerful partners. Belgian and South Korean firms have supported China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) from early on, expecting a surge in business opportunities (Le Vif 2018). However, as frustration grew in both Europe and Asia over the challenges and difficulties of BRI, and opposition from the United States intensified, both countries started adopting a more

cautious approach. But even if connectivity is in principle an area where Belgium and South Korea share many interests, a major hurdle for increased coordination remains. For Belgium, connectivity cooperation is part of its European and multilateral engagement, and a new opportunity for its economic diplomacy (Mattelaer 2019). Meanwhile, for South Korea, connectivity cooperation entails obvious strategic considerations. This inevitably puts important limitations on how much both countries can align their approaches.

Secondly, and relatedly, on relations to great powers, both Belgium and South Korea find themselves torn between China and the United States who exert increasing pressure on their partners and allies. For many years, South Korean authorities were confident that they could benefit from China's rise, and South Korean businesses were eager to tap into the Chinese market. Today, the situation has changed, and economic ties are becoming increasingly politicized and weaponized: The rise of geo-economics puts South Korean society at a crossroads.

Belgian diplomats have made a similar assessment for their country. There is also growing concern about foreign ownership of strategic assets like ports (Rabaey 2019), or energy distribution agents. As both countries seek to navigate in a world increasingly defined by Sino-American competition, Belgium and South Korea should have much to gain from increased consultation and cooperation.

4 NORTH KOREA

Although Belgium is geographically far away from the two Koreas, it has a long history of engagement with the Korean Peninsula. 3,171 volunteers from the Belgian military fought under the United Nations (UN) Command during the 1950-1953 Korean War (Korean MPVA 2020). This continues to have important symbolic value for Belgium and South Korea, as is clear from various commemoration ceremonies that take place still today. Nevertheless, Belgium is no major party to the inter-Korean stalemate. While it has formally established bilateral relations with North Korea, it does not have an embassy in the country and conducts its policy toward Pyongyang through the EU (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium 2020b). In terms of trade, Belgium-North Korean links are quasi negligible. In 2018, Belgian exports to North Korea were valued at only 281,612 euros, and imports at 303 euros. Finally, in terms of aid to North Korea, Belgium plays a role through its contributions to multilateral

instruments, such as the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium 2016).

When it comes to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, Belgium and South Korea are traditionally likeminded, and they have collaborated on this issue for many years. However, when it comes to North Korea specifically, differences in perspectives exist. Belgium sees the denuclearisation of North Korea as a matter of principle. As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the period 2019-2020, it defends the UN edifice of checks and sanctions against North Korean provocations and seeks to uphold the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Insofar as North Korea has not undertaken any significant steps towards denuclearisation, Belgium does not support easing sanctions against the regime (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium 2019).

Conversely, the Moon Jae-in administration has advocated a more pragmatic policy, asking international partners to support its outreach toward Pyongyang. While Belgium supports the Moon administration efforts to achieve peace on the Korean Peninsula, this is not a priority (Kim 2019). Hence, Belgium is unlikely to risk upsetting other partners, and the United States in the particular, in support of Moon's agenda.

5 CULTURAL RELATIONS

Belgium and South Korea are internationally known for their excellent universities and innovative research institutions. Academic and scientific exchanges between the two countries continue to grow. The Belgian embassy in Seoul annually receives approximately 150 student visa applications annually. In 2014, Ghent University Global Campus in Songdo awarded its first bachelor's degrees. On top of that, in 2017, the KF-VUB Korea Chair was launched in Brussels. The first of its kind in Europe, the Chair organizes a number of activities – policy panels, debates, publications – to help build links between South Korea and Europe. This way, it serves as the primary contact point on issues related to the Korean Peninsula in Europe.

Increasing scientific and technological cooperation has been on the agenda of both countries for many years already. In 2013, the issue was a major objective of then-South Korean President Park Guen-Hye's visit to Belgium. Likewise, the issue was also high on the agenda during the 2019 Belgian delegation's visit to South Korea. From Belgium's

viewpoint, the fields of circular economy, artificial intelligence and innovation are of particular interest. Today, fruitful collaboration takes place within the framework of the University of Ghent's campus in Songdo, the partnership between the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) and Hanyang University (KULeuven 2020), Solvay's involvement in Ewha Womans University (Solvay 2014), and IMEC's partnership in research with Samsung (Shankland 2016), to name a few.

There have been many cultural exchanges between Belgium and South Korea since the signing of a Cultural Agreement in 1980. About ten cultural exchange events take place annually. In 2013, a Korean Cultural Centre opened in Brussels (KCC). The KCC plays an important role in introducing Korean culture to Belgian citizens through exhibitions, language classes, cultural classes and so on (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea 2020). In recent years, South Korea has also scored very well in the International Queen Elisabeth Competition held in Belgium, one of the most prestigious international competitions for classical music. In 2019, the Korean Culture and Information Service honoured twelve people who have promoted Korean culture abroad and raised the country's international image. Tellingly, one of the twelve laureates was the Belgian musical advisor Thierry Loreau, who has produced multiple documentaries on South Korean winners of the Queen Elisabeth Competition (KOCIS 2019).

6 CONCLUSION

Overall, Belgium and South Korea maintain a stable and friendly relationship, largely free from controversies. Trade is at the core of the bilateral relationship. Nonetheless, Belgium and South Korea also seek to cooperate with each other in the area of security and are committed to increasing academic, scientific and cultural cooperation. In a sense, they are very much alike: both are liberal democracies with mature, export-driven economies and find themselves surrounded by larger neighbours. This translates into a series of shared interests that both seek to defend in international fora and at the global level.

Yet, despite these commonalities, important differences also put limitations to their relationship. Indeed, both Belgium and South Korea have a foreign policy outlook that focuses primarily on their immediate neighbourhood. Diverging policy priorities imply that Belgium and Korea are not always willing to spend much diplomatic capital on

issues of importance to the other. Going forward, the key issue is likely to seek area of convergence and to double down on cooperation accordingly. In those instances, Belgium and South Korea have a lot to offer one another, and together, they can really be a force to be reckoned with.

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FRANCE-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS: A BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH POTENTIAL

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1 INTRODUCTION

Relations between the Republic of Korea (henceforth South Korea) and France have been stable and without any major tensions, although sometimes they have differences in their approach to the North Korean nuclear issue or their overall view of the Asian region. France considers this region of key strategic importance, even more so since its 2018 endorsement of the 'Indo-Pacific' concept, and follows closely developments on the Korean Peninsula, in particular the development of the North Korean nuclear programme, which it strongly opposes. On this basis, it is, among EU member states, one of the strongest supporters of the sanctions regime against North Korea.

In terms of importance among EU countries, France is in the top three for South Korea. In the case of France, East Asia is of secondary importance compared with the traditional priorities of its external action, namely Africa and the Middle East. Nevertheless, France is willing to expand its influence in the Indo-Pacific and even if the relation with South Korea is less strong than the one with India or Japan, it is highly dynamic. South Korea is France's fourth trading partner in the region and the security relations of the two middle powers have a great – but still far from being fully exploited – potential.

2 ECONOMIC RELATIONS

From an economic perspective, bilateral trade has been increasing in various sectors over the last ten years (including aeronautics, transportation, cosmetics or food/agro industry) and continues to increase, as there is still room for further links. The 2015-2016 Korea-France Year marking the 130th anniversary of the opening of diplomatic relations between the two countries helped to strengthen bilateral cooperation in all areas, particularly in the field of innovation and start-ups. The launch in March 2016 of French Tech Hub Seoul and the implementation of start-up exchange programmes related to the 'French Tech' policy in France are two examples of this tendency.

¹ The opinions expressed are those of the author and do not represent the views of the French Armed Forces Ministry or the French Army. The author would like to thank Alice Ekman for her help and expertise with this chapter.

South Korea is now France's fourth largest trading partner in the region. Although trade contracted to 4.3 billion euros in 2018 (-13.8 percent), France's exports to South Korea have been on the rise in recent years (almost +30 percent in 2017)² as a result of the European Union-Republic of Korea free trade agreement. South Korea accounted for 0.9 percent of total French exports in 2018. Although diversified, since no category accounts for more than 20 percent of the total, the value of French exports to South Korea depends heavily on fluctuations in aeronautics (400 million euros in 2018 vs 900 million euros in 2017). Luxury goods and chemical products are the two other most important components of French exports. Meanwhile, South Korean exports to France increased for the fourth consecutive year in 2018, to 3.8 billion euros (+10 percent) but they are still modest (around 0.6 percent of the total South Korean exports). Sales of South Korean vehicles in France have almost doubled in two years (750 million euros in 2018). South Korea has a structural trade surplus (US\$70 billion in 2018, 4.4 percent of GDP), but this has not been the case with France since 2011. In 2018, France's surplus with South Korea was 542 million euros – down sharply from 1.58 billion euros in 2017 – but still the 19th largest surplus for France, and the third in Asia behind those with Singapore and Hong-Kong. After the first eight months of 2019, France's bilateral trade balance was again strongly in surplus, amounting to 1 billion euros (Ministry of Economy and Finance of France 2019).

French direct investment in South Korea has been increasing, with a stock of 4.9 billion euros in 2018. There are 216 French subsidiaries in South Korea, accounting for 23,000 jobs and a turnover of 13 billion euros. France's industrial presence mostly encompasses large firms. In the automobile sector, Renault Samsung Motors, 80 percent owned by Renault, is one of the five main South Korean car manufacturers. Conversely, the stock of South Korean direct investment in France barely reached 1.2 billion euros in 2018, the fourth largest amount in Europe behind Germany, Poland and Hungary (Business France 2019). Traditionally dominated by investment in industry, South Korean FDI has recently diversified and innovation is a new important element. Samsung Electronics opened its third largest AI research centre in Paris in 2018. As for real estate transactions, which do not appear in the FDI figures, South Korean investors made the three largest real estate acquisitions near La Défense (Paris business district) in 2019, with a total amount estimated at 2 billion euros.³ 50 South Korean firms are present in France representing 5,300 jobs (the two most important being Hahn & Co and Samsung Electronics) (Business France 2019).

²+29.5 percent in 2017, reaching a total of 5 billion euros, according to France's official figures (Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France 2019a).

³ French Ministry of Finance and Economy 2019b.

Table 1. France's trade relations with South Korea, million euros

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Exports	3214	4194	3678	4243	4959	4817	3878	5023	4334
Imports	3299	3619	3372	3888	3040	3091	3273	3441	3792

Source: French Ministry of Economy and Finance

Table 2. France FDI's stocks with South Korea, million USD

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Inward	571	572	702	620	593	790	749	1,000	1,334
Outward	4,170	4,013	4,502	4,529	4,594	4,689	4,179	5,079	5,619

Source: IMF

3 SECURITY RELATIONS

Bilateral security relations consolidated following the state visit by President Moon Jae-in to France in October 2018. They are facilitated by similarities in their political systems, as well as shared concerns about the impact of the Sino-American rivalry on Asia's regional order, and their capacity to act as autonomous stakeholders in this context. Both countries project a shared commitment to multilateralism that could fuel further cooperation in security institutions. This cooperation is likely to increasingly take place in alignment with shared South Korea-EU priorities, as France under the Emmanuel Macron presidency is a strong advocate of a more ambitious and coordinated EU external action, including in Asia. In any case, bilateral relations are framed by a historical legacy that dates back to the Korean War, which is still regarded with great importance by both Paris and Seoul.

Security and defence is one of the four priority areas – along with cooperation on major international issues, on the economy (innovation and cross investments) and on academic and scientific subjects – identified during President Moon's State visit to France in October 2018. An annual strategic dialogue between the two countries has

been in place since 2017. The third session was held in May 2019. Defence ministers of the two countries regularly meet; it was the case, for example, in June 2019 in Singapore. Regular exchanges and meetings between armies also take place. For instance, every year dating back to 2000 a new South Korean army officer is trained in the French Army military academy, Saint-Cyr. South Korean officers are also welcomed to the Navy and Air Force academies and French cadets are welcomed to South Korea's military academies.

Nevertheless, the two armed forces have two profoundly different paradigms: South Korea has relatively massive armed forces (599,000), with a vast majority of conscripts and almost entirely dedicated to territorial defence; France's armed forces are relatively small (274,595), all-professional and focused on deployments and operations abroad. This gap is, in a way, attractive. France, for example, can receive lessons from an army focused on high intensity warfare and South Korea can learn from the French experience in recent operations such as in the Sahel region. Nevertheless, having two profoundly different models is also a serious obstacle to deeper cooperation (Hémez 2017).

France and South Korea support freedom of navigation in Asia. The common economic interest of the two countries is obvious and there is a willingness to reinforce naval cooperation. Since 2014, French vessels have regularly patrolled in the South China Sea. Serving with CTF 151 and EUNOVFOR has afforded the South Korea Navy excellent opportunities to work closely with many other navies, including France's. One important factor is that France is the only European nation with a relatively important presence in the Asia-Pacific with five territories and troops permanently deployed in New Caledonia (1,450 soldiers) and French Polynesia (900 soldiers). Two surveillance frigates equipped with one helicopter each, three patrol vessels, two multi-mission ships, five maritime surveillance aircraft, four tactical transport aircraft and five helicopters operate from these two territories (French Ministry of Armed Forces 2019a).

The memory of France's military commitment during the Korean War – from November 29, 1950 to the day of the armistice – is the spearhead for Franco-South Korean cooperation. More than 3,000 French soldiers were involved in this war, of which 262 died and 1,350 were wounded. The French battalion, embedded within the 23rd US Infantry Regiment and the 2nd US division, participated in its most difficult fights in 1951 and encountered great successes (including Wonju, Twin Tunnels and Heartbreak Ridge) (Vernet, Jacques and Ferrari, Pierpolo. 2001). Commemorative monuments have been erected on several

sites in South Korea, like Suwon. The latter was completely renovated and inaugurated on May 30, 2013. To maintain this vivid memory, in 2003, France was the first country, together with Australia, to sign a “Shared Memory Agreement” with South Korea (French Ministry of Armed Forces 2017).

Since there is no peace treaty to end the Korean War, France remains committed to the armistice to this day through the Joint Declaration Concerning the Korean Armistice in 1953 signed by the 16 nations which participated to the war. This declaration states that: “if there is a renewal of the armed attack, we should again be united and prompted to resist”. This does not mean that France has a treaty obligation to come to the defence of South Korea if the country is attacked, since this not an automatic commitment, but it would be difficult for France not to intervene in case of a major contingency in the Korean Peninsula. Moreover, France continues to be a sending state to UN Command (UNC), whose purpose is to preserve the armistice and maintain control of the forces of all UN Sending States. France has had no permanent posting in UNC for years, but Paris is willing to have one starting in summer 2020.

Defence industry links are another important issue in the security and defence relationship between France and South Korea. The two countries have a strong industry in this sector and their cooperation is modest but not new. For example, the Chiron man-portable air defence (MANPAD) system was developed in 2003 as part of the French Mistral offset programmes. For South Korea, it is of interest to cooperate with the French defence industry to get technology offset but also to obtain experience to export, as Seoul is willing to continue to open its defence industry to the world market (Hémez 2015). South Korea ranked in sixth place worldwide in 2018 in terms of arms sales, accounting for 3.8 percent of the total. South Korea is seen in France as a model for innovation and has welcomed, for example, a visit of the new French Defence Innovation Agency. For France, South Korea is also an interesting market: Seoul has the seventh largest armed forces in the world, which need a lot of equipment. Recently, Airbus, a France-based European company, has experienced important successes with the Light Armed Helicopter (LAH), based on the H155 platform and produced together with Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) (Cabirol 2015a). Airbus Helicopters and KAI have already cooperated to produce the KUH-1 Surion medium-lift helicopter. Airbus has also won another important contract in 2015, when Seoul ordered four Airbus A330-200 Multi Role Tanker Transport aircraft (against a rival proposal from Boeing) (Cabirol 2015b). French company Safran’s Arriel 2L2 engine

will power the LAH. Hanwha Techwin will license-build the engines at its Changwon plant, and will be responsible for maintenance, repair, and overhaul.

These successes have helped to put in the past the strong disappointment created by the failure of Dassault to sell its Rafale fighter jet to South Korea in 2002. Having said that, accessing the South Korean defence market remains difficult for French companies. Indeed, it is a market dominated by US supplies, an ever-growing local production, opportunities concentrated on programmes and equipment with limited 'political visibility' and increasing requirements for technology transfers. As a result, South Korea was the biggest French customer in Northeast Asia between 2009-18 with 1,758.5 million euros (60 to 90 million euros), but only the 11th global customer for French defence products, well behind the top five (Ministry of Armed Forces of France 2019b).

Nevertheless, the prospects are interesting. On January 11, 2019, an increase in South Korean military spending for the period 2019-2023 – with an annual increase estimated at 7.5 percent while the average increase over the last ten years is estimated at 4.9 percent – was announced. USD 241.9 billion is to be invested over the next five years in order to equip the South Korean military forces with modern equipment. South Korea's defence budget will increase from 36.22 billion euros to 47.9 billion euros by 2023 (Smith 2019). This medium-term defence plan includes the budget needed for 'Defence Reform 2.0', with which South Korea intends to equip itself with military satellites, medium and high altitude surveillance drones, and long-range air-to-ground guided missiles – the kind of equipment which could be an opportunity for French and European defence companies. In contrast, France is not a promising market for South Korean defence companies. French Army foreign purchases are quite rare and it is difficult, for instance, to imagine the French Navy buying a South Korean ship like it was the case for the British Navy with a Daewoo ship in 2012.

4 BILATERAL RELATIONS AND NORTH KOREA

France is convinced that North Korea's ballistic and nuclear programmes threaten not only Northeast Asian stability but also the international order and the non-proliferation regime. Moreover, Minister of Armed forces Florence Parly declared in 2017 that North Korean missiles could reach Europe (BFMTV 2017). France strategic aim is to achieve

complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula through diplomatic means and has supported the Six-Party talks as well as the role of the IAEA. However, France is one of the few European countries not to have official diplomatic relations with North Korea.

Paris is also willing to demonstrate its commitment to peace in the Korean Peninsula. France has regularly participated in multinational exercises in South Korea (Ulchi-Freedom Guardian or Key Resolve) with staff officers. In spring 2019, France deployed a maritime patrol aircraft (Falcon 200 Guardian) and the frigate Vendémiaire in Japan, in support of surveillance missions to enforce UN Resolution 2375 on illegal transshipments.

5 CULTURAL RELATIONS

According to French official figures, there are around 12,000 South Koreans living in France. This is a relatively small foreign community (for example, in 2018, there were 529,000 Algerians, 531,000 Portuguese or 104,000 Chinese) (Insee 2019). 2,274 South Koreans study in France (2016 figures) (Campus France 2019), which makes France the seventh largest host country for South Korean students abroad. Around 2,500 French citizens are living in South Korea (Embassy of France in South Korea 2015). Again, this makes the French a very modest community. Around 1,300 French students study in South Korea, the first European student community in the country (Campus France 2019). Meanwhile, in 2016, Korean became one of the languages students can take as a first or second foreign language for the baccalaureate (high school final exam).

Paris host one of the 32 Korea Cultural centres across the world. First opened in 1980, it has been moved and launched again in November 2019. Five times larger than the previous one, this new centre is considered a 'reference for Europe'. Similarly to many countries across the world, Hallyu has affected France. South Korean dramas, K-pop and movies attract growing numbers of French, in particular teenagers, but the interest in South Korean culture is still in its infancy.

After having sold 40,000 tickets in a few minutes for an autumn 2018 concert in Paris, BTS gave two concerts in the Stade de France with a total of 140,000 attendees in June 2019 – a first for a K-pop group in this arena. Meanwhile, Netflix France is broadcasting a growing number of South Korean dramas. Also, the Korean movie *Parasite* (기생충), Palme d'or at the Cannes festival making it first South Korean movie to win this prize, has enjoyed a resounding success in France in 2019 with more than 1.7 million tickets sold.

In South Korea, France has a strong and positive cultural image. However, this was even truer in the 1970s and 1980s and the situation today is not as good. Even if France continues to be a cultural reference especially thanks to two French high schools, seven Alliance Françaises and one Institut Français (French Cultural Institute), contemporary French cultural creators are less known than their predecessors and young South Koreans have little interest in French culture. Still, there are approximately 40,000 South Koreans learning French, a larger share of the total population than in China or Japan (Embassy of France in South Korea. 2019).

6 CONCLUSION

The general impression coming out of the analysis of France-South Korea relations is that it is still a bilateral relation that punches below its weight, in comparison with other bilateral relations in the region. South Korea only represents 6.5 percent of all French export to the region, and France is only the fifth largest European investor in South Korea, behind the Netherlands, the UK, Germany and Malta.⁴ From a strategic perspective, divergences on the Indo-Pacific concept – which France is a keen promoter of, whereas South Korea has so far not endorsed it – limit cooperation, and prevents the reinforcement of the bilateral security dialogue on regional issues. As a matter of fact, bilateral dialogues on foreign policy and defence issues with India – with whom France has signed significant arm deals (sale of Rafale fighter jets, for instance) – or with Japan – with whom France has been conducted a 2+2 dialogue (including the ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Ministries of Defence from both sides) for many years – are stronger.

That being said, there exists significant political willingness from both sides (Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France 2018) to reinforce cooperation in the coming years in various areas, including the diplomatic,⁵ military and cyber domains, as well as to reinforce economic links in commonly identified sectors (including tech, renewable energy, artificial intelligence and aeronautics, among others). Such cooperation could be further enhanced at both the bilateral level and in third countries, in Asia or Africa, where both countries have developed a significant and potentially complementary presence. French diplomacy also sees South Korea as a partner in climate diplomacy, in the follow up of the Paris agreement and in preparation for upcoming COP summits. Both countries are also likely to reinforce their cooperation within several international organisations, ranging from the WTO to the G20, or the OECD, as they also position themselves in support of multilateralism.

⁴ According to French and Korean official figures in 2018.

⁵ A strategic dialogue between the two Ministries of foreign affairs took place in May 2019.

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GERMANY-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS: AN EXCEPTIONAL RELATIONSHIP BASED ON STRONG ECONOMIC AND ACADEMIC COOPERATION

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1 INTRODUCTION

Germany and South Korea are connected by a common historical experience of national division, close economic ties, and intensive cooperation in education, science, and technology. The relationship between the two nations officially started on 26 November 1883 in the form of a trade-, shipping-, and friendship treaty. The Republic of Korea (henceforth South Korea) and the Federal Republic of Germany, henceforth Germany, established consular relations in 1954 and full diplomatic relations in 1957. Since then the bilateral relationship has grown to become a framework that guarantees commercial activities and investments and promotes people-to-people exchanges, to which South Korean guest workers in Germany since the 1960s and the hundreds of German companies invested in South Korea have made meaningful contributions. Today around 40,000 Koreans, including the descendants of South Korean guest workers, live in Germany. By total trade volume, South Korea is Germany's third most important trading partner in Asia, and Germany is South Korea's most important trading partner in Europe. In addition to official visits by chancellors and presidents (Angela Merkel in 2010 and Frank-Walter Steinmeier in 2018 to South Korea; Park Geun-hye in 2014 and Moon Jae-in in 2017 to Germany), heads of state and ministers of both countries have regular encounters and cooperate within the G20.

Economic relations are the strongest dimension of the bilateral relationship and both trade volumes and FDI stocks underwent an upward trend over the past decade, followed by cooperation in science and technology; 168 German universities have established partnerships with South Korean universities, and there are currently 537 research cooperation projects between the two countries. With regards to security cooperation, South Korea has a paramount position, as all arms deals over the past decades have been approved despite strong German legal barriers. North Korea remains an issue on which Germany traditionally supports UN sanctions, but also the Moon government's policy of reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula is a topic that matters to the German public and its government. Top diplomats of both countries furthermore have engaged in a bilateral strategic dialogue since 2018.

2 ECONOMIC RELATIONS

South Korea and Germany have strong economic ties, which is the foundation of today's close bilateral relationship. Globally, South Korea ranked 23rd for imports and 19th for exports among Germany's trading partners in 2018 (GTAI 2019). In East Asia, South Korea is Germany's third largest export destination, after China and Japan, and Germany is South Korea's most important export market in Europe. The bilateral trade volume in 2018 was about 30 billion euros and 273 German companies employ around 34,000 South Koreans. This is remarkable, since production costs in South Korea are higher than elsewhere in Asia, and it shows that there are pull factors for FDI other than low wages and taxes, such as a high level of education, political stability and the rule of law including protection of intellectual property rights, as well as the quality of life for expats. Likewise, Germany is an attractive FDI destination for South Korean enterprises, and many South Korean conglomerates such as Hyundai, LG, and Samsung have their European headquarters in Germany. The two countries have signed an investment promotion and protection agreement (in 1967) and a double taxation treaty (in 2003) (Burghart 2017, 260).

In 2015, German-South Korean economic relations were adversely affected by the aftermath of the 2015 Diesel-Gate where Volkswagen had used emissions cheating software in 11 million diesel-powered cars worldwide. In response, the South Korean government fined Volkswagen with penalties of around 45 million euros and banned 80 of its models from the Korean market. This resulted in Volkswagen's almost complete discontinuation of business operations in South Korea, including brands such as Audi, Porsche, and Bentley (Choe 2016; Burghart 2017, 271).

Germany's most important export goods to South Korea are machinery, automotive vehicles and vehicle parts, chemical products, and data processing equipment. The most important import goods are data processing equipment, electric and optical products, other (non-automotive) vehicles, machinery, and chemical products. As can be seen, the total trade volume in goods has been continuously growing throughout the past eight years. Germany has furthermore developed a pronounced trade surplus with South Korea in the years 2010 to 2015. Since then South Korea has halved the deficit down to a little over 5 billion euros in 2018. Germany's export-oriented companies initially benefitted significantly from the 2011 EU-Republic of Korea FTA,

which among others made German cars competitive on the South Korean market. Since 2015, Germany's exports to South Korea are stagnating. Overall, bilateral trade between South Korea and Germany mirrors South Korea's trade with the EU in that the FTA first comparatively benefitted European companies, but South Korea was able to shrink the deficit in the following years (cf. Pacheco Pardo, Desmaele, Ernst 2018). The main business sectors of German invested companies in South Korea were manufacturing in the automotive sector (including both suppliers and OEMs), machinery, and chemical production. The majority of South Korean investments in Germany are conglomerates' production facilities and regional management units, which are largely concentrated in the Rhein-Main industry cluster of the Frankfurt metropolitan area. The overall trend of FDI stocks and business operations of both countries, i.e. number of companies, employees, and annual revenue has been growing, although German FDI activities in South Korea have been stagnating since 2015.

To improve professional skills and reduce youth unemployment, South Korea seeks to partly implement Germany's dual-education system, where students learn specialized skills at vocational schools that closely cooperate with the private sector. Through funding from the Ministry of Economics and Energy of Germany, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Germany in Seoul is currently developing a programme for car mechanics (*Kfz Mechatroniker*) in cooperation with Mercedes Korea and BMW. In 2009, Germany and South Korea have furthermore signed a bilateral 'working holiday' agreement (AHK Korea 2017; Deutsche Botschaft Seoul 2018).

Both countries have identified smart factories and Industry 4.0 as a future pathway to foster innovation and improve industrial productivity. The cooperation between the two countries yields synergies, as Germany is leading in industry automation whereas South Korea has been a frontrunner in rolling out 5G infrastructure. Both governments have been actively supporting cooperation in this field (Kagermann et al. 2016 22 f; Burghart 2017, 261; KOTRA Hamburg 2019).

Tourism also plays an important role in the bilateral relationship, both from an economic as well as from a people-to-people relations perspective. Germans made up the largest share of European visitors to South Korea and numbers are growing; German nationals' arrivals at South Korean airports rose from 100,803 in 2013 to 109,860 in 2017 (UNWTO 2019).

Table 1. Germany's trade relations with South Korea, million euros

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Exports	10259	11665	13373	14481	15616	17923	17246	17473	17273
Imports	11102	9555	8355	7992	8013	7668	7705	11316	12179

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt; Außenwirtschaftsportal Bayern

Table 2. Germany's FDI stocks with South Korea, million USD

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Inward	5,504	5,557	6,318	4,521	5,210	3,911	4,979	5,603	5,872
Outward	7,921	7,672	8,566	8,376	8,944	9,209	8,271	10,453	9,838

Source: IMF

3 SECURITY RELATIONS

Germany's security relations with South Korea beyond the EU-level Crisis Management Participation Agreement and through NATO is informed by the two countries' shared values and goals, which entails Germany's support of South Korea as a lively East Asian democracy and its efforts towards a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula. Noteworthy are the two countries' commitment to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and Germany's support of sanctions against North Korea, which Berlin also displayed during its presidency of the UNSC in 2019 (Auswärtiges Amt 2019). Another area of cooperation is Germany's experience of national division, which it shares with South Korea, and German reunification, which is an important historical reference for South Koreans with both symbolic and practical value. It is not only an example that peaceful unification after decades of systemic political and economic division is possible. Germany also actively supports South Korean policy makers and academics through sharing of government documents and expertise pertaining to the reunification process (Deutscher Bundestag 2013).

Berlin sees itself as Seoul's partner in its struggle for a peaceful solution of the inter-Korean conflict and does not shy away from criticizing Pyongyang for violating UN

sanctions. For instance, in 2017, at the height of North Korea's nuclear and ICBM tests, Chancellor Merkel called for stronger sanctions and signalled that Germany was ready to play a more active role to find a diplomatic solution on the Korean Peninsula (Collis 2017). Recently, both countries have increased cooperation on security matters step-by-step through dialogues. In May 2018, the German Federal Academy for Security, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, and the Korean Research Institute for Security Affairs organized a dialogue on European-Asian nuclear security, which was attended by government representatives and the academic community (Kamp 2018). In July 2018, South Korea and Germany conducted a top-level strategic dialogue, in which Foreign Minister of Germany, Heiko Maas, pledged to support South Korea's reconciliation policy and offered Germany's expertise in negotiating a nuclear-disarmament agreement (Welt 2018).

Another area of cooperation is arms trade. Since South Korea's democratization it is a consistent customer of German defence technology and ranks among the top-five destinations of German arms exports. Recent arms purchases include cruise missiles (Taurus KEPD-350), submarines (Type-214), but also combat ships, missile defence systems, as well as components for many more South Korean domestically produced defence projects (SIPRI 2019). In Germany, arms trade is a highly sensitive political issue, and German law stipulates that arms may only be sold outside of the EU and NATO with the Federal Security Council's approval. However, thanks to South Korea's democratization and accession to most international disarmament treaties, it is treated effectively like an ally and all weapon exports throughout the past decades have been approved (Ebbighausen 2017).

4 NORTH KOREA

When Germany reunified, it inherited East Germany's four-decade relationship with North Korea. The two socialist countries established diplomatic relations soon after their creation, in 1949, five years earlier than West Germany and South Korea did. East Germany and North Korea had signed an agreement on the transport of goods and payments in 1952, and four more agreements followed in the years after, governing the exchange of goods as well as East German support of North Korea's post-war reconstruction (Choi and Lee 2015, 670).

Upon reunification, East Germany's Embassy in Pyongyang became unified Germany's permanent representation until Berlin and Pyongyang officially established diplomatic

relations in 2001, thereby upgrading the premises back to the status of Embassy (Ibid, 672). Following the establishment of official diplomatic relations, the Goethe Institute, Germany's cultural diplomacy institution, opened an information centre in the Chollima House of Culture in 2004, which was the first Western cultural information centre of its kind in North Korea. The venue offered about 8,000 media products, including books, newspapers, VHS and DVDs with an emphasis on engineering and natural science contents and was open to all North Koreans. In 2006, articles of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the *Spiegel* were prohibited by North Korean authorities as they allegedly contained information critical of North Korea. The Goethe Institute saw this as a breach of contract and in 2009 the information centre was closed (Wolters 2004; FAZ 2009; Choi and Lee, 674). The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) had funded a chair in German Studies at the Kim-Il-Sung-University between 2001 and 2014 and continues to financially support studies of North Koreans in Germany (Mittelstraß 2014; Siedenhans 2019). The German political foundations, operating out of Seoul, work with North Korean partner organizations and run a number of projects supporting economic and educational development as well as sustainability in energy and agriculture, and also give stipends to North Koreans to study in Germany, albeit only in non-engineering majors.

There is no treaty or agreement between North Korea and Germany that governs economic, financial, or science and technological cooperation. Hence, bilateral commercial relations are weak and sporadic. In 2018, Germany imported goods worth ca. 1,000 euros and exported goods worth 2.89 million euros to North Korea, which ranks Germany seventh among North Korea's trading partners, (KOTRA 2019, 44). A few German companies conduct business inside North Korea despite sanctions, among whom are the 2008 founded German-North Korean joint venture Nosotek, which develops software solutions and computer games for the international market (Schulz 2011; Xiang Zi 2019) and Deutsche Post subsidiary DHL, which operates in North Korea through its China branch, and has an office in Pyongyang (Oh 2017). A North Korean source of revenue in Germany that has gained the media's attention is the lease of North Korean Embassy real estate to a Turkish hotelier, who established the low-budget 'City Hostel Berlin' two blocks from Potsdamer Platz (BBC 2017).

German development aid to North Korea is facilitated through a number of projects by humanitarian organizations and NGOs, such as the German Red Cross, the Caritas Association, and Welthungerhilfe. The operations of these organizations are financed through taxes and individual donations. In 2018, German aid amounted to about 900,000

euros (UNOCHA FTS 2018). Germany is a strong supporter of the NPT and all official policy towards North Korea is tied to Pyongyang's willingness to denuclearise (Meier 2018, 46f).

5 CULTURAL RELATIONS

Between 1963 and 1977, 8,000 miners and 10,000 nurses were sent from South Korea to West Germany as part of a bilateral program to financially support South Korea's economic development. These guest workers contributed substantially to the friendship between Germans and South Koreans (Bundestag 2013). In 1986, South Korea and West Germany signed an agreement on academic and technological cooperation. The Ministry for Education and Research of Germany has funded 250 German-Korean projects between 2005 and 2017 (Gate-Germany 2017). Altogether, there are 537 bilateral research cooperation projects, and 168 German universities have established partnerships with South Korean universities as of August 2019 (Kooperation International 2019). The number of German students registered at Korean universities in 2018 was 782, of which 109 were registered as regular students and 583 in exchange programs (Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea 2018). The number of South Korean students in Germany, in 2016, was 6,087, of which 3,445 studied at regular universities, 1,898 at universities for art and music, and 744 at universities of applied sciences (Gate-Germany 2017).

A number of renowned German research institutes cooperate closely with South Korea. In 2012, the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft established a research centre at POSTECH in Pohang and as of 2018, 201 Korean research fellows worked in projects funded by the society. The research institutes under the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft maintain close cooperation with South Korean partners from the research and private sector and founded, in cooperation with the Korea Innovation Centre Europe, the K-TC Lab in Dresden. Fraunhofer also has an office in Seoul and a Project Centre for Composites Research in Ulsan. South Korea, too, maintains a foothold in the German academic landscape; in 1996, the Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST Europe) was founded in Saarbrücken, and in 2017, the Korea Innovation Center Europe (KIC Europe) was founded in Berlin (Kooperation International 2019). In December 2019, Minister of Economics and Energy of Germany, Peter Altmaier, met his South Korean counterpart Sung Yun-Mo in Berlin, where the two parties agreed to "strategically

expand” cooperation on industrial materials and equipment R&D. At the occasion, the Korea Electronics Technology Institute signed a MOU with Fraunhofer Institute (Kang 2019).

South Korean guest workers and South Koreans who studied in Germany, and increasingly also Germans who studied in South Korea, build the backbone of people-to-people relations between the two countries. Noteworthy is the 2008 founded South Korea-based alumni network ADeKo, in which most South Koreans with personal, professional, or educational ties to Germany are members. The *Deutsch-Koreansiches Forum* (German-Korean Forum) is an important bilateral annual venue for experts from various fields, including government, business, science, arts and culture, to enhance the friendship between the two peoples. It was initiated in 2002 and was attended by then German President Johannes Rau and South Korean Prime Minister Lee Han-dong. The location of the forum changes between Germany and South Korea.

6 CONCLUSION

South Korea is more than a like-minded partner to Germany; the shared experience of national division makes the relationship exceptional. Both West and East Germany had established diplomatic relations and cooperated closely with their ideological counterpart on the Korean Peninsula since the 1950s. The Federal Republic of Germany today is the heir to both Cold War relationships, and there is a feeling of special responsibility to contribute to peaceful Korean reunification among Germans. The 2013 declaration by the German Parliament on the occasion of the 130th anniversary of bilateral relations underlines this historical bond that is strongly felt in Berlin, expresses solidarity with the South Korean people, and calls for further development of the bilateral relationship.

This bilateral relationship transcends official diplomatic ties and permeates various areas of cooperation, most notably trade, investment, and academic research. The 2011 EU-Republic of Korea FTA has further increased economic integration of the two nations and synergies are found in new areas such as smart factories and Industry 4.0. The bedrock of the relationship are people-to-people contacts, and it is no exaggeration to maintain that it is first and foremost the achievement of guest workers, exchange students, scholars, and businesspeople from both countries who make the bilateral relationship exceptional.

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ITALY-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS: THE STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF ROME FOR INTER-KOREAN DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION

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1 INTRODUCTION

The relationship between Italy and South Korea encompasses two different, but complementary, dimensions: (1) The bilateral one, characterised by the comprehensive Italy-Republic of Korea (henceforth South Korea) strategic partnership and the very limited Italy-Democratic People's Republic of Korea (henceforth North Korea) ties; and (2) Italy's role within the broader context of the EU-South Korea partnership and of the EU's policy of critical engagement towards North Korea. Italy has developed relations with the two Koreas in the context of the EU's strategy in Asia, in particular by supporting the inter-Korean dialogue and South Korean initiatives towards cooperation and trust-building on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia.

If we take the Asian region in the post-Cold War period, South Korea has traditionally ranked third in terms of priorities for Italy, after China and Japan. This rank was confirmed after the signature of the EU-Republic of Korea strategic partnership in 2010. However, in the last years the surge of Italy's ties with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as well as with India has somehow made Italy-South Korea relations rank fourth or fifth (depending on the moment). Such demotion can be explained by various reasons, including the continuation of tense inter-Korean relations and the development of North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes which make the prospect for Korean re-unification – an event which would create a strong Korean nation – a chimera. Thus, the economic emergence of ASEAN and India in recent years, coupled with the absence of any real progress towards reconciliation between the two Koreas, have made relations with South Korea – at least from an economic perspective – gradually less important in the broader context of Italy's Asia policy.

The Italy-Republic of Korea strategic partnership has traditionally focused on the development of economic ties, though strategic considerations have also been included,

in particular in the context of Italian efforts at contributing to inter-Korean dialogue and reconciliation. Moreover, an actor that in the last couple of years has been playing a new strategic role in the Korean Peninsula is the Vatican, an independent state which lies in Italy and whose foreign policy is traditionally coordinated with the governments in Rome. When South Korean President Moon Jae-in visited Italy in October 2018, the most important meeting that he had was not with Italian politicians but with Pope Francis. President Moon gave to the Holy Father a personal invitation from Kim Jong-un (the leader of North Korea) to visit Pyongyang, a city once called the 'Jerusalem of the East' since before the establishment of North Korea, the place housed the largest catholic community in East Asia. Therefore, to properly assess the significance of Italy-South Korea ties, the role of the Holy See (located in the heart of Rome) must be taken into account. The history of Italy-South Korea relations has, in fact, been made by both Italian personalities as well as churchmen.

2 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

Located almost on the same parallel, Italy and Korea are both mountainous peninsulas that stretch into the sea with an island in the south. These and other geographical and social similarities were first detected by the Italian Jesuit and historiographer Daniello Bartoli, in his 1660 book *Japan*, where Korea is defined as 'a land rich and strong' and comparable to Italy in terms of climate, geography, and character of the inhabitants.

The first contacts between Korea and Italy took place at the end of the sixteenth century, by Italian Catholic missionaries sent to China and Japan. In August 1866, the Admiral of Savoy of the trade ship 'Vittor Pisani', anchored at the port of Wonsan, asked the Joseon Dynasty to establish diplomatic relations with Italy. On 26 June 1884, the first Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation was signed between the Joseon Kingdom and the Kingdom of Italy.

This relationship was interrupted in November 1905 following the Russo-Japanese War. On 25 June 1950, the Korean War broke out (1950-1953). Italy sent to Korea a field hospital from the Red Cross to Korea as a humanitarian effort. It was equipped with 128 medical staff and operated until January 1955. South Korea and Italy re-established diplomatic relations on 24 November 1956. The respective legations – opened in 1957

in both countries – became Embassies with the Joint Declaration of 16 April 1959. Italy and North Korea did not have formal ties until 2000. Following the visit by Lamberto Dini, then Italy's foreign minister, to Pyongyang in 1998, the first ever visit by a western high-ranking diplomat to the Hermit Kingdom, Italy announced, in January 2000 the opening of official diplomatic relations with the DPRK – the first among G7 members.

Ever since the Korean War, Italy's relations with Korea have been unbalanced. While ties with North Korea are extremely limited and confined to some development aid and humanitarian assistance, it is the Italy-Republic of Korea partnership that has flourished, following in particular the signature of the EU-Republic of Korea Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) and the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2010.

3 ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Economic considerations have traditionally been the backbone of the relationship. Following the EU-Republic of Korea FTA, European exports to South Korea have increased by 60%. Italy is among the countries that have benefited most from the entry into force of the agreement. Between 2010 and 2016, Italian exports to South Korea increased more than the EU average resulting in Italy's trade balance being positive: in 2017, Italy exported products for 4.3 billion euros compared to 3.4 billion imports from South Korea. According to data provided by SACE – Italy's export credit agency - Italian exports are set to increase over the next few years to reach 5.5 billion euros in 2021, an increase of about 850 million. To date, Italy is Seoul's third commercial partner in Europe.

According to data provided by ICE – Istituto Commercio Estero, the Italian Trade Agency - the driving sectors of 'Made in Italy' exports to South Korea are: machinery (€996 million); leather goods, excluding clothing (€665 million); clothing (€472 million); motor vehicles (€317 million); chemical products (€262 million); agriculture, food products and beverages (€225 million); pharmaceutical products (€196 million); textile products (€179 million); electronics (€155 million) and computers (€ 141 million) (Sardegna Impresa 2018). Italian investments in the Republic of Korea have also surged since 2010, with a big increase in 2014. On already sound economic and trade relations, Italy-South Korea ties have been boosted in recent years.

Table 1. Italy's trade relations with South Korea, million US dollars

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Exports</i>	447	536	532	543	556	514	483	546	584
<i>Imports</i>	411	509	505	500	509	419	389	454	518

Source: Istat-Ice

Table 2. Italy's FDI stocks with South Korea, million USD

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Inward</i>	115	211	606	522	633	399	385	580	1,131
<i>Outward</i>	305	439	950	1,255	1,243	1,088	1,183	1,445	1,717

Source: IMF

4 POLITICAL AND SECURITY RELATIONS

In October 2018, during South Korean President Moon Jae-in's visit to Italy, the two sides upgraded their relationship to a strategic partnership, setting a diplomatic framework to push for deeper political, security, economic and cultural cooperation (IAI 2018). In particular, Rome and Seoul established a vice-ministerial-level diplomatic dialogue to boost cooperation in political and security affairs and inked three new agreements on cooperation in defense, air services and trade. The air services agreement calls for joint efforts to increase the number of passenger and cargo flights between the two countries as a way of promoting their trade and people-to-people exchanges. Moreover, the two sides agreed to set up a joint committee for industrial and energy cooperation and to boost defence cooperation, in particular in military equipment (Yonhap 2018a).

Italy and South Korea also maintain good relations in the field of global governance, underpinned by shared values and their commitment to a multilateral rules-based international order. Within the United Nations system, Italy and South Korea both promote reform of the UN Security Council (UNSC), adhering to principles set by the group United for Consensus which aims to democratise the UNSC through an enlargement in the number of non-permanent members and the limitation of the permanent members' veto power (UN 2018).

Italy's membership of the UNSC Sanctions Committee on North Korea has also allowed Rome and Seoul to collaborate closely on North Korea's nuclear threat and to foster the international non-proliferation regime. The Italy-Republic of Korea strategic partnership covers the security situation in the Korean Peninsula, and all Italian governments have reaffirmed North Korea's proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) as a potential threat to Italy's security.

As to relations with North Korea, they are quite limited, including a small number of high-level exchanges, in particular by some politicians from far right and populist parties (League; Movement 5 Stars). Besides that, there is almost no trade between Rome and Pyongyang and no bilateral investment. Italy has, however, contributed to the EU's humanitarian assistance to North Korea until 2013, the last year when Italy officially sent food and humanitarian goods to the Hermit Kingdom.

Italy – along with the other EU member states – is committed to the denuclearisation of North Korea and the protection of the international non-proliferation regime, and fully supports inter-Korean dialogue. Italy supported the Sunshine Policy of former President Kim Dae-jung and today backs President Moon's efforts towards dialogue and reconciliation with the North. Concurrently, Italian governments have supported US President Donald Trump's 'maximum pressure strategy' towards North Korea and related sanctions at the EU level. In 2017, Italy expelled the DPRK's ambassador, in response to North Korea's continued pursuit of its nuclear weapons programme (The Italian Insider 2017).

5 THE ROLE OF THE VATICAN IN ITALY-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS

On the North Korean dossier, it is worth recalling the role of the Catholic Church. South Korean President Moon's invitation to Pope Francis to visit Pyongyang – made on behalf of Kim Jong-un – during their meeting in Rome in October 2018 was seen by various Italian commentators as an attempt by the South Korean leadership to hopefully replicate the success of the Holy's See diplomacy (Tornielli 2019) – in particular the charismatic figure of Carol Wojtyla – in bringing down Communism in Eastern Europe during the Cold War period. Although today's North Korea is not the Poland of the 1980s, the Catholic Church – currently negotiating with the Chinese Communist Party

over the appointment of bishops and other issues – is considered by the South Korean leadership, as well as by Italian politicians as an actor that could yield some influence on inter-Korean relations. To note that in October 2018, in the presence of South Korean President Moon Jae-in, Pope Francis celebrated a special mass in favour of ‘peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula’, attended by a large South Korean delegation and various ministers from the Italian government (Yonhap 2018b). There is no doubt that an eventual visit by the Catholic Pontiff to North Korea may have a much bigger impact than the eventual visit of any Italian President and/or Prime Minister to the Hermit Kingdom. In this sense, the significance of the Italy-Republic of Korea strategic partnership, in particular on political and security issues related to North Korea, is amplified by the role that the Vatican could play on the Korean Peninsula. This makes Rome – the seat of the Italian government and the Holy See – a strategic place for South Korea’s diplomacy, since its significance goes well beyond Italy’s political weight in international affairs.

6 CULTURAL RELATIONS

Italy-South Korea cultural relations are quite strong, in particular in relation to four aspects consistently promoted by the Italian government: (1) tourism; (2) art, music and opera; (3) language learning; and (4) scientific and university ties.

Tourism is a promising sector for cooperation, which could support trade and cultural ties plus a positive image of the visited country. South Korea promotes Italy as a tourist destination, thanks to its rich cultural and natural heritage, while the Italian government is increasing efforts at promoting South Korea as a tourist destination due to its cultural heritage, its cuisine and the high quality of its infrastructures.

South Korean tourism flows to Italy have boomed thanks to the opening of direct flight routes between both countries and reached almost one million visits in 2018, according to the Italian Ministry of Tourism, up 16% from the previous year and a fourfold increase since 2010, when South Korean visitors to Italy were around 250,000. These figures make South Korea the third largest market of origin in Asia, after Chinese and Japanese tourists, and the Italian government consistently highlights the high level of spending by South Korean visitors (MAECI et al. 2019; UNWTO 2019).

Interest in the Italian language has surged in South Korea, thanks also to the growing interest among South Koreans in classical music and opera – whose *lingua franca* is Italian. Interest in Italian art and music is compounded by a growing demand for Italian lifestyle products and courses, including cooking classes which are becoming popular among young South Korean travellers to Italy (Italia Oggi 2018).

Scientific and university ties are also growing. Some South Korean universities have established their own Italian Studies department, and a few offer Italian courses, while a number of Italian universities have established their own Korean Studies department – in particular the ‘Orientale’ in Naples and Ca Foscari in Venice, two institutions well-known for the teaching of Asian languages – and a few offer Korean courses (Youn, 2017; Ambasciata d’Italia 2020a). Moreover, the new Korean Cultural Centre in Rome is a particularly active institution, promoting Korean language learning but also cultural exchanges through art events (Quaglia 2019). Academic exchanges are also increasing with a few universities awarding a joint degree (Ambasciata d’Italia 2020a).

7 CONCLUSION

Since the Korean War, Italy-Korea relations have been dominated by Italy-South Korea relations. There are very limited ties between Rome and Pyongyang, even though Italy was the first G7 member to establish official diplomatic ties with North Korea in 2000. This followed the visit by Lamberto Dini, Italy’s foreign minister, to Pyongyang in 1998, the first-ever visit by a western high-ranking diplomat to the Hermit Kingdom.

Italy-South Korea relations have developed across the board, with the economic dimension being the backbone of the partnership. Following the entry into force of the EU-Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement, European exports to South Korea have increased by 60% and Italy is among the countries that have benefited most from the FTA. To already sound economic ties, political and security-related issues have also been added. This led the two sides to establish a strategic partnership in October 2018, setting a diplomatic framework to push for deeper political, security, economic and cultural cooperation.

As Italy-South Korea relations received a boost, so did also South Korea-Vatican ties, in particular in the context of a possible role of the Catholic Church in promoting the inter-Korean dialogue and reconciliation process advanced by the administration of

South Korean President Moon Jae-in. There is a sizeable number of catholic believers in South Korea and Pyongyang was once called the 'Jerusalem of the East' since before the establishment of North Korea, the city was inhabited by the largest catholic community in East Asia. This makes of Rome – the seat of the Italian government and of the Holy See – a strategic place for South Korea's diplomacy, since its significance goes well beyond Italy's political weight in international affairs.

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POLAND-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS: A SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IN PROGRESS

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1 INTRODUCTION

Poland established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea (henceforth South Korea) on November 1, 1989. The history of Polish-South Korean diplomatic relations is relatively short, considering Poland's involvement in the Korean Peninsula for several decades. In 1948 Poland was the third country in the world, after the USSR and Mongolia, to establish diplomatic relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (henceforth North Korea).

In October 2013, Polish President Bronisław Komorowski and South Korean President Park Geun-hye decided to elevate bilateral relations to the level of strategic partnership. The framework for current Polish-South Korean relations is set by the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategic Partnership for the years 2017-2020. In this document Poland and South Korea have agreed to further strengthen their bilateral ties by undertaking specific actions in four general areas: 1) political, security and defence cooperation 2) economic, agricultural, scientific, technological and environmental cooperation, 3) promotion of cultural, tourism, people-to-people contacts and regional cooperation, and 4) multilateral cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland 2016).

South Korea, as one of Poland's strategic partners in the Asia-Pacific along with China and Japan, is among the Polish foreign policy priority countries in the region (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland 2018a). However, this region is of secondary importance compared to the main priorities of Polish foreign policy, oriented towards Europe and the United States (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland 2019a). Despite this, on the occasion of 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2019, Poland and South Korea have intensified political dialogue at various levels. In September, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York, Polish President Andrzej Duda held a summit with South Korean President Moon Jae-in – it was the second summit for the

two leaders after the one during the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games in South Korea (Cheong Wa Dae 2019). Moreover, in October 2019 Polish foreign minister Jacek Czaputowicz visited Seoul and met with his South Korean counterpart Kang Kyung-wha (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland 2019c). Bilateral relations are supplemented by a dialogue in the V4-Korea format, established in 2014 and also involves Czechia, Hungary and Slovakia. This includes meetings of heads of government, foreign ministers and deputy ministers of other ministries (Visegrad Group 2015).

2 ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Economic issues are the most important dimension of Polish-South Korean relations. Poland and South Korea have maintained regular consultations, including at the economy deputy minister level. The last meeting of the Polish-South Korean Joint Economic Committee between the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology of Poland and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea was held in 2017 in Warsaw. Adding to the activities of Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) in Warsaw and the Trade Office of the Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH) in Seoul, committee meetings serve as an opportunity to create favourable conditions for further deepening and expanding bilateral trade and investment (Polish Investment and Trade Agency 2017).

South Korea is Poland's second largest trade partner in the Asia-Pacific region, behind China and above Japan. For years, the biggest problem for Poland has remained the trade deficit with South Korea. In 2018, the value of bilateral trade was 4.65 billion euros, while the deficit amounted to a record 3.61 billion euros – Poland's third largest trade deficit behind China and Russia.

For Poland, the consequences of the EU-South Korea FTA have been ambiguous. Poland-South Korea trade has only benefited to a limited extent in comparison to the EU as a whole. Bilateral trade registered a 27 percent increase between 2011-2018, while the EU-South Korea trade volume increased much more – by 51 percent over the same period. Moreover, Poland is among the Member States, along with Slovakia and Czechia, with the largest trade deficit with South Korea – with an 18 percent increase in the 2011-2018 period. On the other hand, the EU-South Korea FTA has had a positive

impact on Polish exports to South Korea in the food industry, metallurgical goods, plastic products and jewellery. However, the most important Polish good exports to South Korea, which are electromechanical goods and car parts, are manufactured by South Korean companies in Poland. Besides, since 2014, when Poland reported its first case of African Swine Fever, the main trade issue for Poland has been a South Korean ban on the import of pork and pork products.

Polish imports from South Korea mainly consist of electromechanical equipment. For years, the Polish-South Korean trade deficit has been mainly caused by the negative balance of trade in these products – almost 70 percent of the total deficit. To some extent, the trade deficit is generated by the presence of South Korean investors with production facilities in Poland, as well as the import of South Korean components used in manufacturing for European markets. South Korean companies in Poland import intermediate goods, such as auto parts, from South Korea, and manufacture final goods in Poland. Their exports to other European countries then contribute to the economic and industrial development of Poland. Meanwhile and according to the Polish Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, the South Korean market creates a window of opportunity for Polish exports in sectors such as chemical industry (luxury cosmetics and pharmaceutical products), food industry, shipbuilding (yachts), machinery, IT/ICT (computer games]) and green technology (Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology of Poland 2019).

The core component of bilateral economic cooperation is South Korean investment in Poland. South Korea is the biggest Asian investor in Poland. Since 1991, 261 South Korean companies have totally invested over 2.7 billion euros in Poland (Korea Eximbank 2019). The dominant investment sectors are consumer electronics, household appliances and automotive parts manufacturing and software R&D centres. It is estimated that South Korean companies employ approximately 22,000 people in Poland, directly and indirectly. South Korean companies also support Poland's economic development. Corporate social responsibility programmes sponsor incubators, create partnerships in technology and cooperate with universities to nurture human resources. Poland has greatly benefited from South Korean investments, both in terms of employment and technology transfers, as they are increasingly focused on R&D.

In recent years, the most important South Korean investment in Poland has been the construction of an LG Chem lithium-ion battery factory for electric cars in Biskupice Podgórne (municipality of Kobierzyce) near Wrocław. The first stage of the construction was completed in 2018. Investment outlays have amounted to 1.3 billion euros so far. However, the company has already decided to expand its production capacity. As a result, LG Chem will invest a total of 2.7 billion euros in Kobierzyce and employ up to 6,000 people by the end of 2020. In terms of value, the LG Chem factory is the largest investment in Poland since 1989 (TVN24 BiS 2017). After expanding production capacity, it will be the largest factory of its kind in the world. LG Chem also intends to start cooperation with Polish universities, including Wrocław University of Technology, and create a research and development centre for about 400 engineers (Energetyka24 2019). The company is interested in building another factory in Poland, probably in Opole, due to the growing demand for batteries among electric car manufacturers (Dziennik.pl 2019).

The LG Chem investment is part of the Polish government's goals regarding the development of electric mobility (Ministry of Energy of Poland 2019). Thanks to the LG Chem investment, Poland became the EU's leader in the export of lithium-ion batteries in the first quarter of 2019 (Puls Biznesu 2019). LG Chem investment also proved to be an impulse for other companies. SK Innovation will build a factory for battery separators used in electric cars in Dąbrowa Górnicza (Silesian Voivodeship). This will be the company's first investment in Poland, and the estimated value of the project is 335 million euros. Production is planned to start by the end of 2021, and at least 300 people are to be employed (Wyborcza.pl 2019). Another area of investment cooperation is the chemical industry. In May 2019, Polish company Grupa Azoty and South Korea's Hyundai Engineering signed an agreement for the Polimery Police Project, a new petrochemical complex in north-western Poland. The biggest chemical industry project in Poland, with an estimated value of 1.5 billion euros, will place Poland among the leading polypropylene producers in Europe and improve its position among European plastic manufacturers (Grupa Azoty 2019).

Differently from South Korea's significant investments in Poland, Polish investments in South Korea are sporadic and small. Due to the geographical distance, high labour costs and a lack of market knowledge, Polish investors do not perceive South Korea as an attractive destination. The most important Polish investment in South Korea to date

has been the purchase of Hanil Corporation shares by Selena, related to construction chemistry. An example of greenfield investment is the Towimor Torun Ship Plant factory in Busan.

South Korea is interested in participating in large infrastructure projects planned by Poland: the first nuclear power plant, which the government plans to complete by 2033 (Ministry of Energy of Poland 2018), and the Solidarity Transport Hub (STH), a new central airport. The Ministry of Energy, responsible for Poland's nuclear energy project, has conducted numerous meetings with South Korean partners – officials, experts and entrepreneurs interested in cooperation (Poland In 2018). Meanwhile, the Trade Office of PAIH in Seoul estimates that South Korean companies may be interested in both the management and general contracting of STH due to their experience in participating in similar projects in 14 countries around the world (JP Weber 2019). South Korea could be a valuable partner in both projects, considering its successful experience in managing Incheon International Airport and the construction of nuclear power plants.

Table 1. Poland trade relations with South Korea, million euros

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Exports</i>	209	300	412	545	378	382	457	486	520
<i>Imports</i>	3686	3355	3485	3154	3284	2989	3066	3312	4133

Source: Insigos System of Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, Republic of Poland (2019)

Table 2. Poland's FDI stocks with South Korea, million USD

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Inward</i>	802	777	825	1,037	925	897	704	1,114	1,119
<i>Outward</i>	-23	-14	-8	5	8	4	-8	-16	-18

Source: IMF

3 SECURITY RELATIONS

In order to implement the strategic partnership in the security dimension, Poland and South Korea maintain a regular dialogue at the deputy ministers of defence and foreign affairs level. A bilateral security dialogue is coherent with Poland's global security agenda, which emphasizes the issue of non-proliferation of WMD, including participation in the work of the PSI-Kraków Initiative and the NPT review process (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland 2019e). Moreover, as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2018-2020 and member of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC), Poland is focused on developments in the Korean Peninsula and supports efforts to achieve lasting peace and stability in the region. Polish-South Korean security relations are also linked to South Korea-NATO relations. Starting from January 2019, the Embassy of Poland in Seoul took over the role of NATO Contact Point for the Republic of Korea (Embassy of Poland in Seoul 2019a).

A prospective area of cooperation between Poland and South Korea is cybersecurity. In June 2019, the first Polish-South Korean governmental consultation on international aspects of cybersecurity took place (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland 2019b). Moreover, Poland and the United States convened the Warsaw Process cybersecurity working group on October 2019 in Seoul. This is an initiative to address peace and security in the Middle East launched in February 2019 in Warsaw (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland 2019d).

The strategic partnership between Poland and South Korea also translates into cooperation between their defence industries. In December 2014, Polish defence company Huta Stalowa Wola and Samsung Techwin (now Hanhwa Land Systems) signed a contract worth 290 million euros for the delivery of chassis for 120 155-mm Krab self-propelled howitzers (Defence24 2014). The defence industries are working together on possible new joint projects. South Korea is perceived as a potential partner in the modernization programme of the Polish armed forces. In 2018, the Polish company H. Cegielski-Poznań SA announced the commencement of cooperation with Hyundai Rotem Company in order to offer the Polish army a Polish-South Korean new generation basic tank based on K2 Hyeuk-Pyo/Black Panther (Defence24 2018).

4 BILATERAL RELATIONS AND NORTH KOREA

Poland is one of seven EU member states that maintain a permanent diplomatic mission in Pyongyang. As a country that chaired the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference and led the work of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, Poland is concerned with the security situation on the Korean Peninsula. Especially the development of North Korea's missile and nuclear programmes (Czaputowicz 2019).

Poland has been engaged in the security issues of the Korean Peninsula for more than 65 years through membership of the NNSC, which was established in 1953 to supervise the observance of the armistice agreement after the Korean War. In total, 1,065 Poles have been involved in the activities of the NNSC since 1953. Currently, two or three Polish officers meet with their counterparts from Sweden and Switzerland several times a year to discuss the current situation on the Korean Peninsula (Embassy of Poland in Seoul 2019b).

Potential areas of Poland's engagement with the North Korea include the provision of humanitarian aid and cooperation in areas not covered by the sanctions regime on Pyongyang, such as providing scholarships for students. In the 2017/2018 academic year 20 North Korean citizens studied in Poland (Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland 2018). In 2015 and 2016, the Polish Embassy in Pyongyang provided support to North Korea to fight the draught affecting the country. The aid was provided under the so-called small grant system (Polish Aid 2016). Poland also assistance to disabled North Koreans in a specialized orthopaedic hospital – the only one in the country in Hamhung, built in 1954 by Polish workers (Polish Aid 2017). In previous years (2011-2013) the Polish Embassy, with the help of the Polish Humanitarian Action, provided equipment for the Hamhung hospital (Polish Humanitarian Action 2012).

Poland maintain a regular political dialogue with North Korea, using the Polish Embassy in Pyongyang and the North Korean Embassy in Warsaw as the communication channels. In October 2018, a delegation from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, headed by Director of the Asia-Pacific Department Paweł Milewski, paid a visit to Pyongyang as part of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland 2018b). Experts' contacts with North Korea complement the activity of Poland's diplomacy. The Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) has been participating in expert contacts with analysts from North Korea for several years. The result of this cooperation has been, among others, a PISM delegation visit to North Korea in August 2018.

Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs fully supports inter-Korean dialogue, seeing it as an initiative aimed at improving the security situation on the Korean Peninsula and in the region. After the April 2018 summit between Moon and Chairman Kim Jong-un in Panmunjom, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs appreciated the initiative and intensified efforts by Moon to resume the inter-Korean dialogue and the conciliatory attitude of North Korean authorities (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland 2018c). Due to its successful political and economic transformation after 1989, Poland is seen by some South Korean scholars as a reference point for North Korea's transition (Kim 2014, 13-37). Polish officials have emphasized that Poland is open to share, to some extent, its experience of transition from communism to capitalism (Korea Herald 2018).

As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and the vice-chair of the 1716 Sanctions Committee on the DPRK, Poland supports the continuation and full implementation of UN sanctions. Following from North Korea's fourth nuclear test in January 2016, Poland has not issued any visas for North Korean workers. The number of North Korean workers in Poland has decreased and stood at around 450 people at the end of 2017 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland 2018d). Actively implementing new UN Security Council resolutions, which allows accelerating the process of returning North Korean employees to their country, work permits for North Korean citizens in Poland have been withdrawn. At the same time the validity of these documents has expired. At the end of 2018 only about 45 people remained in Poland (Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy of Poland 2019). According to government data, there were no more North Korean workers in Poland as of June 2019.

5 CULTURAL RELATIONS

In recent years, Poland-South Korea cultural exchanges have significantly developed. Since 2009, the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, a governmental cultural institution, has been promoting Polish culture in South Korea through its Asia Programme. The Institute works with numerous South Korean partners, supporting a continuous presence of Polish artists at music and film festivals, theatre presentations and exhibitions of early and contemporary art in South Korea. In 2019, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, the Institute has implemented Polish cultural programme in South Korea, which included for example the first Polish Film

Festival in Seoul (Culture.pl 2019). Since 2010, the Korean Cultural Center in Warsaw has been offering various cultural programmes, including Korean language classes, art exhibitions and film festivals, to spread interests in Korean culture.

Due to expansion of cultural exchanges and growing popularity of K-POP among young people in Poland, Poles have become more interested in learning Korean language and culture. In recent years, three national universities and one private college in Poland launched major courses in Korean language. Moreover, two national universities, University of Warsaw and Adam Mickiewicz University, have established Korean studies as an independent department in 1983 and 2002. The language courses are also offered by King Sejong Institute in three cities: Warsaw, Poznań and Kraków (Choi 2017, 212-220).

According to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland data, 70 universities in Poland have signed bilateral academic exchange agreements with South Korean universities. However, in the 2018/2019 academic year only 119 South Koreans studied in Poland – the most popular fields of study were instrumental studies, management, medicine, telecommunications and informatics. In South Korea, about 130 people are studying Polish language and literature at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul, which makes it the largest Polish language faculty in Asia.

In autumn 2016, LOT Polish Airlines launched a direct flight connection between Warsaw and Seoul. This creates the possibility of intensifying people-to-people contacts, including tourism. In 2017, Poland was visited by 49,000 South Koreans – over 25 percent more than in 2016. However, in previous years, the number of South Korean tourists was higher: 64,000 in 2015 and 71,000 in 2014. In 2017, more than 20,000 Poles visited South Korea – an almost 25 percent increase compared to 2016 (World Tourism Organization 2018). In order to facilitate mutual understanding and people-to-people exchanges, Poland and South Korea signed a Working Holiday Programme agreement in 2018. It targets young people (18-30 years old) and combines holidaying and learning with the possibility of taking up paid work. The annual number of visas for the programme is 200 (Embassy of Poland in Seoul 2018).

6 CONCLUSION

Polish-South Korean relations are an example of fruitful cooperation in various areas, especially economics. The growing interest of South Korean companies in investing in Poland is particularly important. South Korea is perceived in Poland as a model partner offering high added value investments coherent with Polish economic plans. South Korean companies' participation in Polish large-scale infrastructure projects, including the construction of a nuclear power plant and a new airport, would be another milestone in bilateral economic relations.

Although Poland's policy towards South Korea is economy-oriented, political and security issues also play an increasingly important role in bilateral relations. The two countries are seeking to further strengthen cooperation on cybersecurity and the defence industry. Another incentive for closer ties with South Korea is Poland's long-standing presence on the Korean Peninsula. Polish involvement in the NNSC, diplomatic relations with North Korea, and valuable economic transformation experience could foster closer discussion between Poland and South Korea about the future of the Korean Peninsula.

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SPAIN-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS: A DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIP CHASING ITS POTENTIAL

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1 INTRODUCTION

Relations between the Republic of Korea (hereafter South Korea) and Spain have been traditionally cordial thanks to a lack of controversies. Moreover, the similarities between two like-minded countries have paved the way for collaboration in areas such as UN reform and the exchange in support for international organisation leadership candidacies and membership in international organizations. The visit of then-President Roh Moo-hyun in February 2007 contributed to the consolidation of the ties between the two countries thanks to the signing of an MoU for a Political Dialogue and a joint declaration. Afterwards, bilateral relations consolidated gradually until they reached a strategic level in 2017, when the Strategic Dialogue Spain-South Korea (hereafter Strategic Dialogue) was established. Throughout these years bilateral relations, primarily focused on the economic dimension, have progressively expanded to an increasing number of sectors promoted both by private and official initiatives.

Leaving aside the United Kingdom, South Korea's foreign policy-making ranks Spain at the same level as Italy and only behind France and Germany in terms of importance among EU countries. In the case of Spain, East Asia is of secondary importance compared with the traditional priorities of its external action, namely North Africa and Latin America. This relative disinterest in the region is reflected in its relations with South Korea. The latter also suffers from South Korea's smaller economic and demographic size compared with China or Japan. Yet, Spain-South Korea relations are highly dynamic.

2 ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Both Spain and South Korea see the economy as the most important dimension of their relationship. This is reflected at the institutional level as they have launched several dialogues on economic cooperation. The first Strategic Dialogue allowed to put forward

several areas for economic cooperation, including bilateral investment, tourism, and cooperation in third markets (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain 2019a). Bilateral dialogue platforms include the Joint Committee on Economy, Science, and Technology, last held in November 2018 in Seoul, the Spanish Chamber of Commerce in South Korea, officially recognized in 2019, and the Bilateral Business Committee, quite active until 2008, which has been recently reactivated with the occasion of the visit of King Felipe VI to Korea in October 2019 (Camara de Comercio de España 2019).

Spain's officials agree on the reasons behind South Korea's attractiveness. South Korea is the world's 11th largest economy, with future growth rates estimated at between 2.5 and 3 percent of GDP (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2019b, 20). South Korea has become Spain's third largest market in Asia as Spain-South Korea exchanges have greatly benefited from the EU-South Korea FTA. Bilateral trade registered a 207 percent increase during the 2011-2017 period, having a positive impact on all Spanish export sectors (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2019b, 53, 61). Foremost among them are the automotive sector, clothing, the food industry, and energy products (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain 2019b, 7).

There is a convergence at different institutional levels regarding the economic sectors to be developed. Spain's PASE Plan underscores food industry, renewable energies, equipment goods (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2019b, 64) as well as Industry 4.0, tourism, and cooperation in third markets (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2019c). The XII Tribune Spain-Korea, a dialogue platform organized by Casa Asia and the Korea Foundation bringing together government officials, local authorities and academic representatives, also emphasized collaboration on the energy sector combined with the potential role of Spain as a platform towards Africa and Latin America (Casa Asia 2019, 14, 17). Those assessments take into consideration South Korean policies and economic priorities, including smart agriculture and new energies.

Spain also seems to be interested in deepening industrial and scientific cooperation, and in benefiting from South Korea's leading role in innovation. Spanish officials are aware of South Korea's progress in crucial sectors, like 5G, and welcome its participation in initiatives like the Third Congress of Connected Industry 4.0 (Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Spain 2019). Bilateral talks during the Strategic Dialogue highlighted the will to further expand cooperation in the scientific, energy and infrastructure sectors.

This could build on existing MoUs. They include the 2017 MoU on Infrastructures and Transports (Ministry of Development of Spain 2017); the 2019 MoU on Investment in Infrastructures (Ministry of Economy and Business of Spain 2019); and the Korea Spain Energy Innovating programme (KSEI), covering energy efficiency, renewable energies, and smart grids (Ministry of Science of Spain 2019). Both countries should also leverage the platform provided by the Joint Committee for Scientific and Technical Cooperation. Finally, private initiatives, like the Business Meeting Spain-Korea 2019, should be highlighted. The next edition will promote renewable energies, science industries, and infrastructure (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2019a).

The Spanish government is also seeking to attract more South Korean investment, as the country only ranks as the 30th largest investor by FDI stock (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2019a). Likewise, Spanish financial flows towards South Korea remain limited. The last two significant Spanish investments date back to 2010, with Acciona's 100 million euros Yeong Yang wind park project, and 2014, with Befesa's steel recycling facility project (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain 2019b, 7). Meanwhile, recent significant South Korean investments include the Hanjin Shipping Terminal in the port of Algeciras.

Three sectors are of particular interest for Spain: food industry, tourism, and cooperation in third markets. Firstly, South Korea is considered a promising market for food exports. In particular, Spanish meat exports have registered significant growth. Nevertheless, there are still important phytosanitary barriers despite the EU-South Korea FTA. Most notably, the export of fresh food products, including vegetables and fruits (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2016), remains complex and subject to long authorization processes with high implementation costs (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2019b, 51-52).

Secondly, tourism is a promising sector for cooperation, which could support trade and cultural ties plus a positive image of the visited country. South Korean tourism flows to Spain have boomed thanks to the opening of direct flight routes between both countries and reached more than 500,000 visits in 2018 (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2019b, 57). These figures made South Korea the third largest market of origin in Asia, and Spanish institutions regularly underscore the high level of spending of South Korean visitors. Spanish actors also promote South Korea as a tourism destination, thanks to its rich cultural and natural heritage and to high quality infrastructure (IFEMA 2019). This will

be further strengthened during the 2020 International Tourism Trade Fair to be held at IFEMA, Madrid, in 2020, when South Korea's status as an associate country should provide it with increased visibility (Casa Asia 2019, 21).

Thirdly, Spain's government statements and documents draw attention to potential cooperation in third markets. While South Korea is looking to become a logistic hub in Northeast Asia (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2019b, 18), Spain promotes its role as a gateway to Latin America. South Korea's presence in the latter is on the rise, with increasing trade and FDI. South Korea is also engaged in infrastructure funding (Inter-American Development Bank 2017, 41, 49-50) and building in the region. South Korea is a member of the Inter-American Development Bank and has become an associate observer of the Ibero-American Conference with Spain's support. Triangular cooperation could benefit both countries through knowledge-sharing in their traditional areas of action. This was acknowledged during the bilateral meetings of Directors-Generals for Latin America and Caribbean Affairs (Government of the Republic of Korea 2014; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea 2017). There is also a significant interest in developing bilateral consortiums aimed at bidding for infrastructure and engineering contracts in third countries, building on successes such as the construction of subway lines in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (Reuters 2013), and the Duqm refinery in Oman (El Economista).

Prospects for further Spain-South Korea cooperation may also include renewable energies. They are still poorly developed in South Korea, but the Spanish PASE Plan takes South Korea's Renewable Energy 2030 Plan targets into consideration. These include a fivefold increase in solar and wind energy installed capacity, up to 58.5 GW (Ministry of Industry of Spain 2019b, 20), and a 20 percent share of renewable energies in total power generation by 2030 (Korea Energy Agency 2018). Spanish companies such as Univergy International are moving into South Korea to take advantage of these opportunities (Univergy 2018). South Korea's aging population may also provide economic and cooperation opportunities in the area of health services, where Spain could mobilize its experience in some medical specialties, public health system management, and the use of ICT in healthcare services (Yang 2016, 13).

Table 1. Spain trade relations with South Korea, million euros

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Exports	742	791	1078	1081	1988	2287	2181	2345	2615
Imports	1655	1706	1606	1602	1660	2489	2479	3420	3131

Source: Bank of Spain; Ministry of Industry of Spain, trade and tourism, DataComex

Table 2. Spain FDI's stocks with South Korea, million euros

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Inward	/	/	588	757	730	685	719	862	937
Outward	731	941	1,045	647	546	347	476	518	1,877

Source: IMF

3 SECURITY RELATIONS

Spain and South Korea also maintain good relations in the field of defence and security, underpinned by shared values and their commitment to a multilateral rules-based international order. Bilateral cooperation in defence builds on the Defence Cooperation Agreement signed in 2006 and regular Minister-level meetings of the bilateral Joint Committee on Defence.

Within the United Nations system, Spain and South Korea both promote reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), adhering to principles set by the group United for Consensus (UfC). UfC aims to democratize the UNSC through an enlargement in the number of non-permanent members up to 25 or 26, and the limitation of the permanent members' veto power (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain 2014). Spain's presidency of the UNSC Sanctions Committee on North Korea in the 2015-2016 term also highlighted its commitment to the international non-proliferation regime. During that period, South Korea looked for "close cooperation" with Spain (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea 2016) and acknowledged its "pivotal role" on the North Korean proliferation of WMD issue (Government of the Republic of Korea 2017). This remains an important issue for Spain: the Strategic Dialogue covers the security

situation in the Korean Peninsula, and Spain's National Security Strategy reaffirmed North Korea's proliferation of WMD as a potential threat to Spain's security (Presidency of the Government of Spain 2017, 52, 64).

The January 2018 meeting of the Joint Committee on Defence also highlighted avenues for cooperation on terrorism and maritime security. In particular, Spain's then-Minister of Defence, Maria Dolores de Cospedal, called for joint naval exercises (Ministry of Defence of Spain 2018). Recently, military equipment cooperation has also gathered significant attention, with the negotiations for the exchange of four Spanish A400M military transport aircrafts for 50 Korean training jets, namely T-50 and KT-1 (Navarro Garcia 2019). This would not be the first instance of cooperation in this field, as Spain sold 12 CN-235 military transport aircrafts to South Korea in 1994 (Ruiz de Azua 1996) and both countries signed an agreement in 2007 allowing for the exchange of F-4 and F-5 fighters' spare parts.

Remarkably, both countries are yet to cooperate on climate change, a key aspect of global security. As suggested during the XII Tribune Spain-Korea, this could be done through the Green Climate Fund or the Global Green Growth Institute (Casa Asia 2019, 8).

4 BILATERAL RELATIONS AND NORTH KOREA

Spain and North Korea have maintained official diplomatic relations since 2001 and Pyongyang opened an embassy in Madrid in 2013. Bilateral relations encompass a limited number of high-level exchanges (only four to date), almost no trade, and a lack of bilateral investment. Spain recognized North Korea in the context of the Sunshine Policy of then-President Kim Dae-jung, promoted in Europe by German diplomacy. Hence, this diplomatic move highlights that Spain's policy cannot be separated from that of the EU (Carlos Izquierdo, 611) and its continued support for South Korea's policy in the Korean Peninsula.

Spain has contributed to the EU's humanitarian programmes in North Korea. In 2007, the Spanish Red Cross also provided natural disaster assistance of its own, following an agreement with the North Korean government. Nevertheless, as the United States and its allies adopted a firmer policy towards North Korea, Spain was one of the most supportive countries of President Donald Trump's 'maximum pressure strategy' in the EU. This was illustrated when the North Korean Ambassador to Spain was expelled

before then-President Mariano Rajoy met with President Trump at the White House on 26 September 2017.

Spain has also welcomed peace efforts and high-level meetings between the South Korean and North Korean heads of state, mainly as a means to move towards the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula (Presidency of the Government of Spain 2018). Spain, like most EU states, focuses on the denuclearisation issue and the protection of the international non-proliferation regime. Thus, it promotes dialogue aiming at the “complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and advocates for a continued pressure from the International (sic) community [including UNSC sanctions] until the achievement of satisfactory results for the preservation of the international non-proliferation regime” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain 2019c, 6).

5 CULTURAL RELATIONS

Two trends look particularly promising in the area of cultural relations and are strongly promoted by Spanish officials: tourism, covered above, and language learning. Indeed, these issues are discussed regularly in the Tribune Spain-Korea and were also addressed in the first bilateral Strategic Dialogue.

The Spanish language has become in demand in South Korea, where it is regarded as a valuable career asset as South Korean government and private stakeholders are increasing their interactions with Latin America. For example, South Korea has signed FTAs with Chile, Colombia, Peru, and five Central American states. Furthermore, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) negotiations include three Spanish-speaking countries: Chile, Mexico and Peru.

Around 15 South Korean universities have already established their own Spanish studies department, and several more offer Spanish courses (Hernandez Velazquez 2015, 13-14). This is in addition to the Cervantes institutional network, comprising two working *Aulas Cervantes* and the promise of a Cervantes Institute to be opened in Seoul. Applications to take the DELE (Diploma of Spanish as a Foreign Language) certificate have consistently remained above 2,000 candidates per year dating back to 2010 (Hernandez Velazquez 2015, 28). Furthermore, official certification of knowledge of Spanish should be further boosted by the new SIELE (Spanish Language Evaluation

Service) system. In the other direction, the Korean Cultural Centre in Spain is a particularly active institution, promoting Korean language learning but also cultural exchanges through art events.

In contrast, academic exchanges remain low despite an active bilateral network between universities. Additional support and institutional resources would prove beneficial, fostering the role of students as informal ambassadors and proactive actors in the bilateral relationship. In order to consolidate Korean studies, it is also key to increase the number of specialized official higher education programmes, which at the moment are limited to the University of Malaga.

Cultural and people-to-people exchanges also benefit from bilateral agreements. These include an Agreement on Youth Mobility, which involves issuing one-year work visas for individuals aged 18-30 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain 2018a) and a bilateral Social Security Covenant covering work mobility (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain 2018b).

Bilateral relations would also benefit from improved media coverage, mainly limited at the moment to information gathered from Anglo-Saxon press agencies. This resulted in particularly negative coverage of Spain during the Eurozone Debt Crisis, which significantly eroded the image of Spain in South Korea. Cooperation between Spanish and South Korean media organisations would provide a more comprehensive image of Spain, avoiding simplistic representations. Media could also project positive perceptions, and tourism incentives, through TV programmes on subjects like such as sports or gastronomy (Yang 2016, 5-6, 16-17).

6 CONCLUSION

Spain and South Korea are two similar countries that keep friendly, growing, but not particularly intense relations. Their bilateral relations reached a strategic level in 2017 and this is materializing in enhanced cooperation in multiple areas. The two countries have recently launched cooperation in high value sectors such as Industry 4.0 and renewable energy. They also want to increase cooperation in areas in which they see significant complementarities, such as technology innovation, tourism, and construction and engineering both at home and in third markets.

Both countries also share values and interests in many international fora, which translates into close cooperation in the UN. In addition, defence cooperation is gaining traction through the Joint Committee on Defence, in areas such as terrorism, maritime security and the exchanges of military platforms. Nevertheless, Spain is not a key player in EU policy towards North Korea, as it lacks a permanent seat in the UNSC and has no diplomatic delegation in Pyongyang.

Spain-South Korea relations show great dynamism as both countries are aware of their untapped potential both in the economic and political areas. Hence, the 70th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral relations in 2020 offers a symbolic opportunity to hold high level visits that could foster closer links between Spain and South Korea.

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SWEDEN-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS: STRETCHING BEYOND ECONOMIC INTERESTS

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1 INTRODUCTION

Sweden's foreign policy toward East Asia has traditionally focused on promoting economic interests. This is also the case for Sweden's relations with the Republic of Korea (henceforth South Korea), one of the region's most successful economies. The economic exchange between the two countries has grown substantially in recent times. Yet, bilateral relations extend far beyond the economic sphere. South Korea has emerged as an important partner to Sweden in various areas of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, such as efforts to salvage the international trade order and reduce climate change.

Moreover, Sweden's history of relatively extensive relations with North Korea as well as its engagement in security-related matters on the Korean Peninsula are both highly relevant factors when studying the relationship with South Korea. With a focus on the Swedish perspective, this chapter aims to provide a brief overview of some aspects of the current Sweden-South Korea relationship, covering political relations, multilateral cooperation, economic exchange, security relations, and social and cultural relations.

2 ECONOMIC RELATIONS

With 10.3 million inhabitants, Sweden does not rank among the big EU member states in terms of population. Nonetheless, Sweden should not be classified as a "small" European economic partner for South Korea. Among the EU member states compared in this report, Sweden was the third biggest investor in South Korea in 2010–2018. The total value of Swedish investments amounted to around 25 and 50 percent of that of Germany and France, respectively (Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy of the Republic of Korea 2020). This is quite notable, since the size of Sweden's GDP 2019 is only about 14 and 20 percent of these two countries (International Monetary Fund N.d.). It could thus be argued that Sweden 'punches above its weight' as a source of FDI in South Korea. In May 2019, 89 'main' Swedish companies were active on South

¹ The author thanks Charlotte Svensson and Thu Le for their research assistance.

Korea (Embassy of Sweden 2019). Meanwhile, 12 South Korean companies are active in Sweden (Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the Kingdom of Sweden N.d.).²

In 2018, Sweden imported goods from South Korea to a value of SEK 9,713 million (≈923 million euros) (This paragraph is based on statistics from National Board of Trade Sweden 2020). The two categories 'Machinery and apparatuses' and 'Motor cars and other motor vehicles principally designed for transport of persons' made up about one third each of this figure. Swedish exports to South Korea amounted to SEK 14,389 million (≈1,367 million euros) in 2018. Between 2014 and 2018, the annual value increased by an average of 13.53 percent. Major groups of goods include transport equipment (for transport of both persons and goods), iron and steel, medicinal and pharmaceutical products, and machinery and apparatus (with 'Internal combustion piston engines and parts thereof' as the biggest subgroup). While South Korea made up 0.98 percent of Sweden's total exports in 2018, its share of exports of motor vehicles for the transport of goods reached almost 6 percent. Both on its own and together with South Korea, the Swedish government has pursued several initiatives to enhance economic and related cooperation.

During Moon's visit in June 2019, the two governments signed memoranda of understanding (MoU) on trade and cooperation in emerging industries (Yonhap 2019). In December 2019, Löfven was joined by the biggest Swedish business delegation to South Korea so far, including more than 60 businesses and organizations. According to Minister of Foreign Trade Hallberg, "we want to increase investments in Korea, and we want Korea to invest more in Sweden" (TT/Omni 2019).

Innovation is one area where Sweden sees room for increased cooperation. Sweden and South Korea are both innovative economies. In the Bloomberg Innovation Index 2019, South Korea tops the list and Sweden ranks at number seven (Jamrisko et. al. 2019). 'Smart cities' is one sector of interest to Sweden. According to Sweden's trade commissioner in South Korea, "when it comes to smart cities, Korea is strong on the technology side, while Sweden is thinking more sustainably. There I think we can cooperate and complement each other" (Omni 2019). Moreover, Stockholm is one of the leading start-up cities in Europe. South Korea has decided to set up a start-up centre in Sweden in 2021 (Omni 2019).

² It is unclear from the source which point in time this refers to.

Since 2019, the Embassy in Seoul hosts one of Sweden's total six Science & Innovation Counsellors around the world, who are tasked with strategically promoting Swedish innovation, research and education (Regeringskansliet 2018). In separate collaborations with the National Research Foundation of Korea, the Swedish Research Council and the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT) have funding programmes for collaboration between Swedish and South Korean researchers (Vetenskapsrådet 2019; STINT N.d.).

The Swedish Institute (SI) is a government agency tasked with promoting foreign interest in Sweden. Within the agency's work on Asia, South Korea has in recent years been one of the prioritized countries. In collaboration with the Swedish embassy in Seoul and a few Swedish universities, one ongoing project promotes Sweden as a study destination. As part of the Swedish government's Export Strategy, moreover, SI has invited South Korean participants in visit programmes on the themes of women in tech, smart cities, life science, circular and bio-based economy, and future transportation.³

Table 1. Sweden's trade relations with South Korea, million SEK

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Exports	8379	9008	8262	7839	8745	9798	12055	12227	14389
Imports	15484	8412	9431	8653	6066	6220	7250	8188	10777

Source: Statistic Sweden

Table 2. Sweden FDI's stocks with South Korea, million USD

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Inward	/	-370	-402	-441	/	/	188	281	/
Outward	3,734	2,178	2,456	2,584	1,910	2,523	2,573	2,512	2,698

Source: IMF

³Interview with official at the Swedish Institute, October 2019.

3 POLITICAL AND SECURITY RELATIONS

In the words of a Swedish diplomat, the relationship with South Korea is “excellent in every way”.⁴ The positive relationship, from a Swedish perspective, is based in a bilateral consensus on the value of democracy, human rights, an open world economy and a well-functioning multilateral trade order. The latter two are underpinned by the fact that the economies of both Sweden and South Korea rely on exports.⁵

One way to measure the political investment in a bilateral relationship is the frequency and rank of high-level visits. Since 2007, there have been at least 17 trips by Swedish cabinet members to South Korea (Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the Kingdom of Sweden. N.d.). King Carl XVI Gustaf, Sweden’s Head of State, has visited the country seven times, including a state visit in 2012. In 2018, Sweden’s Foreign Minister Margot Wallström visited, which in December 2019 was followed by a visit by Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Minister for Foreign Trade Anna Hallberg. High-level trips the other way have been less frequent, but a number of South Korean ministers have visited Sweden in the last ten years. Presidents Lee Myung-bak and Moon Jae-in made state visits to Sweden in 2009 and 2019, respectively. The visits of Moon and Löfven in 2019 coincided with the commemoration of 60 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

In areas of priority for its foreign and security policy, how does the current Swedish government view cooperation with South Korea? Given recent moves toward increased trade protectionism in some countries, the Swedish government stresses the need to support a functioning international trade order. Within the World Trade Organization (WTO), Sweden hopes that South Korea will continue to contribute in a constructive way to positions that the EU advocates.⁶

Since 2014, the Social Democratic and Green Party government in Sweden has been pursuing a ‘feminist foreign policy’, defined as the application of “a systematic gender equality foreign policy agenda” (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden 2018). South Korea scores quite low (108 out of 153 countries) in the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report, which seeks to capture “gender-based disparities and tracking their progress over time” (World Economic Forum 2019: 7). In 2017, South Korea’s Ministry of Gender Equality and Family signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sweden and the other Nordic countries, calling for “increased cooperation

⁴ Interview with Henrik Bergquist, Head of the East Asia Group at the Department for Asia and the Pacific Region, Sweden’s Ministry for Foreign Affairs, November 2019.

⁵ Interview with Henrik Bergquist

⁶ Interview with Henrik Bergquist.

and exchange in gender equality policies, practices, and knowledge” (Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway in Seoul 2017). During Löfven’s visit to South Korea in 2019, the two governments also signed a bilateral MoU for cooperation on gender equality and family policies (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of the Republic of Korea 2019). Sweden sees opportunity for increased cooperation, also within the South Korea-Nordic context, in this area.⁷

Regarding climate change policy, Sweden makes the biggest contribution per capita to the Green Climate Fund, a financial mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Swedish government stresses that by hosting the headquarters of the Fund, South Korea makes an important contribution to international efforts in combating climate change.⁸ South Korea has also joined the ‘Leadership Group for Industry Transition’, which was announced by Sweden and India at the United Nations Climate Action Summit in September 2019. According to Prime Minister Löfven, “with regard to the climate crisis and how to tackle it, our innovative countries [Sweden and South Korea] are well placed to lead the way.”⁹ Strengthening democracy and human rights is another priority area for Sweden’s foreign policy (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden 2019). The Swedish government would welcome South Korea to become even more active in multilateral work on human rights issues.¹⁰

With regards to military affairs, Sweden and South Korea have a MoU on cooperation in the defence area. In 2019, the Swedish Defence Materiel Administration (FMV) and South Korea’s Defence Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA) signed a MoU on defence industry and logistics support cooperation. A joint committee will meet at an annual basis to assure the implantation of the agreement (Supplementary arrangement between The Swedish Defence Materiel Administration of the Kingdom of Sweden and the Defence Acquisition Programme Administration of the Republic of Korea concerning defense industry and logistics support cooperation 2019). 2010-2018, Sweden is the world’s 12th largest arms exporter (South Korea ranks as number 13) (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. N.d). Over the last decade, Sweden ranks among the biggest EU arms exporters to South Korea. In terms of value, however, Sweden’s share is miniscule when compared to Germany, the biggest European exporter. In terms of Swedish security policy, Korea is perhaps the place in Asia where it has the longest and most active involvement. This is grounded in Sweden’s role as a member of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC) since 1953.

⁷ Interview with Henrik Bergquist.

⁸ Interview with Henrik Bergquist.

⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Llk5fEhBxQE>

¹⁰ Interview with Henrik Bergquist

4 CULTURAL RELATIONS

Over 10,000 Swedes are adoptees from South Korea, making the group a big majority of ethnic Koreans living in Sweden. Voluntary non-profit organizations have an important role in Swedish society. The oldest Swedish association for Korea is *Koreanska sällskapet* (Korean Association), which was established in 1961 by NNSC veterans. Two years later, Korean students in Sweden founded *Koreanska föreningen* (Korean Residents' Association in Sweden) (Jonsson 2019: 12).

One Swedish University, Stockholm University, offers Korean language courses. Since 2010, the number of students taking Korean has increased from about 50 to about 130. However, few students proceed to take courses at an advanced level. The university also offers a PhD programme in Korean language and culture, which currently has three students enrolled. Moreover, a growing number of students at Swedish universities, currently around 100, take area studies courses about Korea each year (Axelson Hernborg 2019).

South Korea was the theme country 2019 for the Gothenburg Book Fair, the biggest book fair in the Nordic countries. Several South Korean authors, including Han Kang, attended. While K-Drama never made big inroads in Sweden, there has been some interest in Korean cinema. The Stockholm-based Seoul-Stockholm Korean Film Festival was launched in 2007. However, K-Pop arguably has been the main vehicle for the dissemination of Korean culture in Sweden. K-Pop contacts also go the other way; Swedes have written hits for South Korean groups such as Girls' Generation, Red Velvet and Twice (Bomgren 2018; Jerdén 2018).

5 NORTH KOREA AND THE SECURITY SITUATION ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA

Sweden and North Korea established diplomatic relations in 1973. Sweden opened an embassy in Pyongyang in 1975 and was for decades the only Western country with a permanent diplomatic representation in North Korea. Starting from a situation in which Sweden also had an interest in the trade potential of the relationship, Sweden later became one of the most active providers of humanitarian aid and capacity-building training to North Korea.

Sweden is a protecting power in North Korea for several countries, including the United States. Being able to provide this assistance is a diplomatic asset for Sweden. In the last decades, Sweden has in periods played a role of a ‘facilitator’ (not, it should be noted, a ‘mediator’) between a number of the main stakeholders involved in the prolonged security crisis on the Korean Peninsula.

During Sweden’s presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2001, Prime Minister Göran Persson visited North Korea and met with Kim Jong-il. In 2006–2008, Paul Beijer, a former ambassador to North Korea, served as a special advisor to the government on Korean Peninsula issues (Andersson & Bae 2015). In the spring of 2017, the Swedish government took the initiative to revive its role as a facilitator. At around the same time, the Swedish government appointed Kent Härstedt as a special envoy to the Korean Peninsula. Härstedt, a social democratic parliamentarian until 2018, has been involved in work related to the Korean Peninsula for many years (Torén Björling 2018).

The current South Korean government aims to establish a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula. Sweden supports this ambition. In a speech at the Swedish parliament, Moon said that, “what our two nations have most in common is our strong determination for peace”. “We Koreans gratefully acknowledge and rely on the role that Sweden is undertaking for the sake of peace on the Korean Peninsula. [...] We Koreans, encouraged by the Swedish people, have been able to further foster aspirations for peace on the Korean Peninsula” (Moon 2019).

Non-governmental Swedish actors also maintain a fairly broad engagement with North Korea. The International Council of Swedish Industry (NIR) works to strengthen the long-term interests of Swedish companies in complex environments. NIR has a long-term engagement with North Korea. According to NIR, its activities are in line with EU engagement policy and authorized by the Swedish Foreign Ministry (Näringslivets Internationella Råd N.d.). Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) works with Swedish authorities to provide an environment for working level talks between representatives for North Korea and other stakeholders in the Korean Peninsula crisis. Another Stockholm-based organization, the Institute of Security & Development Policy (ISDP), has partnership agreements with the Institute for Disarmament and Peace (IDP) and the Korea National Peace Committee (KNCP), which sort under the North Korean foreign ministry and the Korean Workers’ Party, respectively. ISDP has maintained close

contacts with North Korean partners, including hosting a substantial number of guest researchers. In 2017 and 2018, six North Koreans guest researchers stayed at the institute.¹¹

6 CONCLUSION

Sweden's desire in deepening relations with South Korea is based in self-interest as well as common values. These factors coincide in the identification of South Korea as a partner in defending key norms of multilateral governance—cooperation with like-minded countries is necessary to maintain a system which has had positive economic and security-related effects for Sweden. Moreover, Sweden has a history of actively presenting its own modernizing experience as a source of policy inspiration for other countries. In the words of Simon Anholt, a pioneer in the field of 'nation branding', 'of the 100 countries I know well, there are three that stand out; Sweden, USA and Kazakhstan. You all have very high thoughts about yourselves and think you have a lot to teach to other countries' (Hultin 2019). Sweden's interest in cooperating with South Korea in some fields, such as gender equality, could arguably be understood in this light.

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¹¹ The figure is based on annual reports for 2017 and 2018 from the Institute for Security & Development Policy.

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MAPPING OUT EU-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS:
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