

Korea's Digital Gateway:

The Economic Impact of Google Play and Android in 2025



Google Play and Android are at the heart of Korea's digital economy.

South Korea is one of the world's most digitally mature markets, with near-universal smartphone penetration, deeply embedded mobile commerce, and a gaming culture that has produced a strong domestic market. That sophistication has also built the world's largest community of Play developers, with Korean studios using the platform to take domestically successful titles to global audiences. Play and Android are now connecting this developer base to billions of devices worldwide, turning Korea from a high-value domestic market into a growing net exporter of apps and digital content.

KRW 98 trillion

In 2025, the Play & Android economy generated **USD 69 billion or KRW 98 trillion** in revenue for app publishers and the wider economy in South Korea.

The world's largest Play developer community

Korea has jumped from being ranked **3rd to 1st globally** in active Play developers since 2024, reflecting growth across gaming, AI-powered apps and entertainment apps. Publishers like Netmarble, NCSoft, Krafton, and Kakao Games have been expanding their international reach, powered by a growth in cross-platform gaming and strategic partnerships with global publishers.

460,000

jobs enabled

The Google Play app ecosystem has enabled the creation of 460,000 direct, indirect and spillover jobs in Korea.

1.8 billion

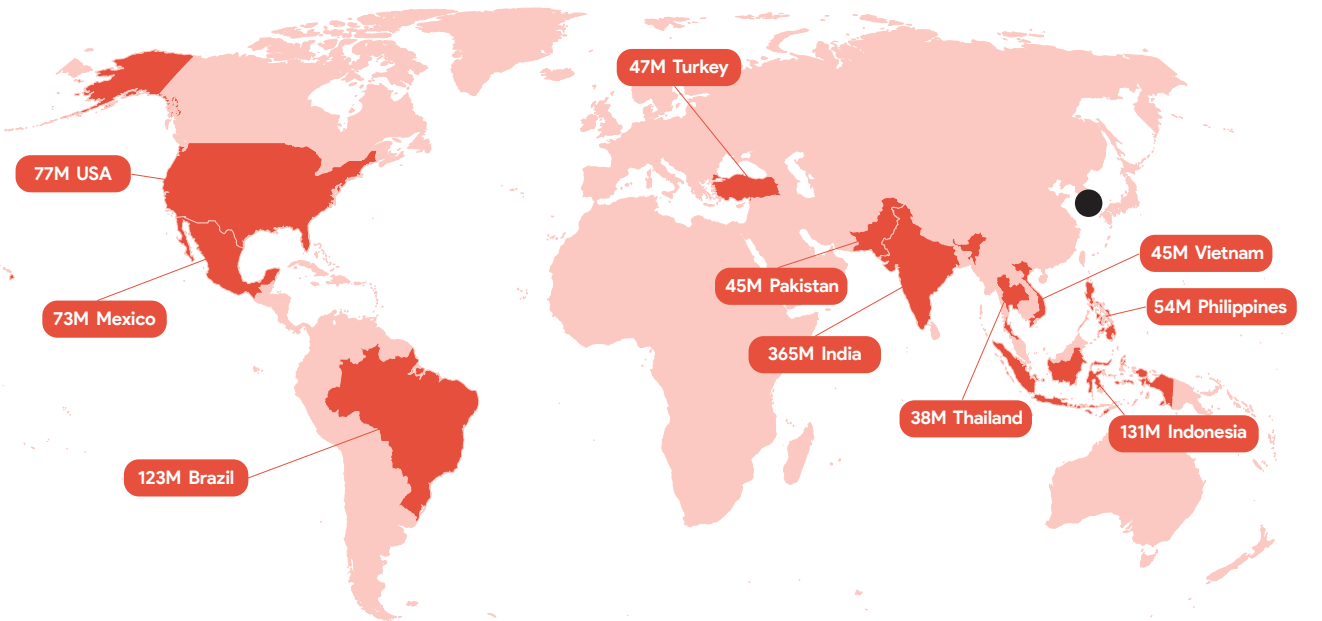
international downloads

Korean-made apps saw 1.8 billion international downloads in 2025, more than double their 730 million domestic downloads, making Korea a net exporter of apps.

Top app export destinations for South Korean developers, 2025

Overseas downloads in millions by consumer market

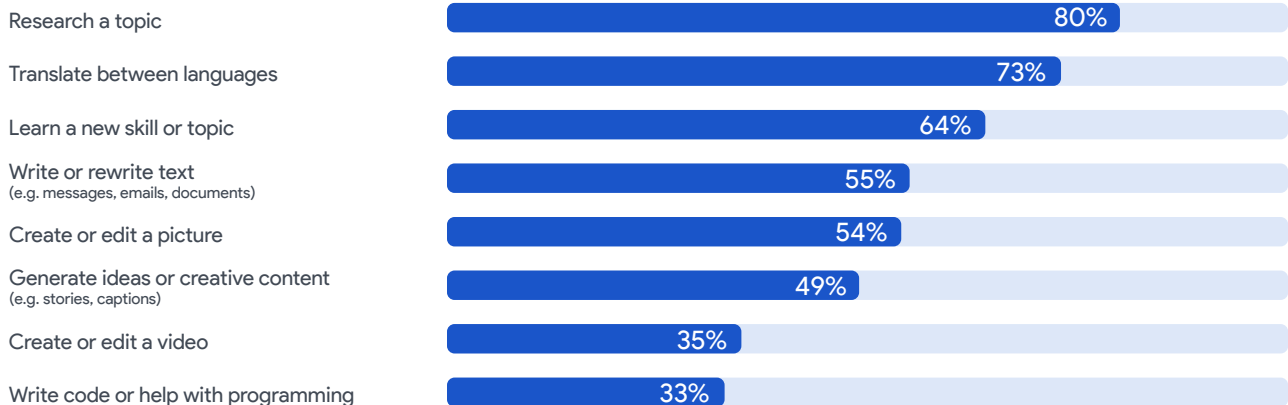
● South Korea (developer HQ) ● Export destination



Android is placing world-leading AI tools in the hands of Koreans.

Korean Android users are adopting AI at pace, using Gemini to learn new skills and save hours each week on everyday tasks. As of 2025, Korea was home to nearly 5 million Gemini users.¹ For Korea's world-leading developer community, AI tools are a force multiplier: reducing development time, automating routine tasks, and enabling faster iteration.

Gemini most popular for research and translation



Share of Gemini users

4.5

hours/week

4.5 hours per week saved on average by Android Gemini users using AI tools.

60%

trust Android

60% of users in Korea trust Android as a platform to access AI tools and features

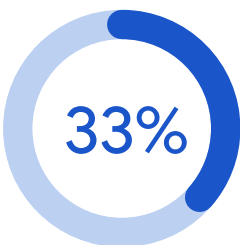
15 million

interested in vibe coding

15 million adults in Korea say they would be interested in using AI tools to vibe code their own app.

Boosting innovation and efficiency for Korean developers

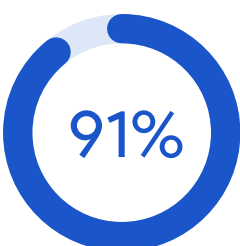
AI tools are accelerating development cycles, reducing costs, and enabling faster localisation of titles for global markets for developers in Korea. These efficiency gains are helping studios maintain Korea's competitive edge in mobile gaming while freeing teams to focus on boosting revenue.



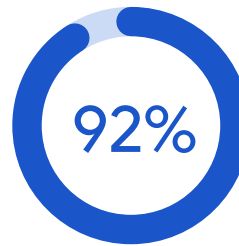
On average, we estimate that AI tools could increase Play and Android developer efficiency by 33% each year, the equivalent to annual productivity gains worth USD 14,000 (KRW 20 million) per developer.

9.2hrs/wk

Play app developers that use Google's AI tools report saving 9.2 hours per week, the highest reported time savings in the APAC region alongside India.²



of Play app developers who use Google AI tools in [Market] say that using AI tools has directly or indirectly helped them generate more revenue.²



of Play app developers who use Google AI tools in [Market] agree that Google is amongst their preferred or first choice suite of AI tools.²

¹ Sensor Tower data.

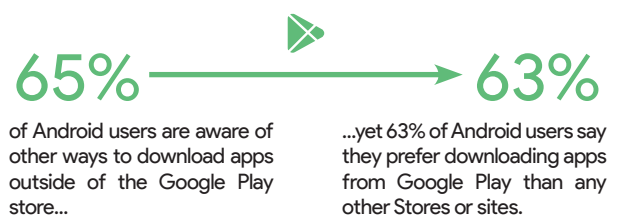
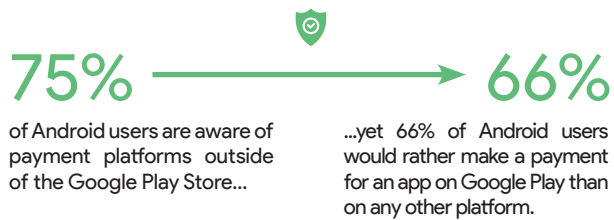
² These claims were generated by Kantar who polled 100 Play app developers that use Google's AI tools in Korea.

Building trust, safety, and choice in Korea's digital ecosystem.

Korean users are among the most digitally sophisticated in the world, and they place a premium on trust, security, and choice. With smartphones central to everything from payments and public services to gaming and commerce, Google Play's multi-layered protections give users the confidence to download, pay, and explore new apps and services.

Play offers extensive consumer choice

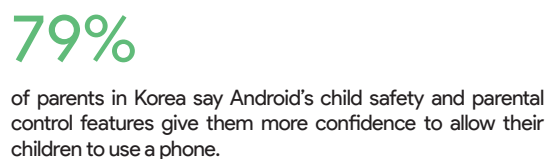
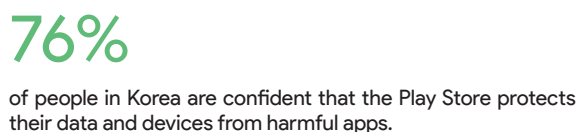
Google Play gives users multiple options to download apps externally and use a range of payment methods. While users are aware of their alternative choices, their high levels of trust in Play mean that they continue to prefer Play over other options.



Users have great confidence in Play and Android's security

The prevalence of sophisticated phishing scams is making Korean users anxious about accidentally compromising their data. Google is committed to building the safest and most trusted platform, addressing user anxieties while ensuring openness and user choice. This resonates with its users, with the majority reporting high levels of confidence across device and platform security.

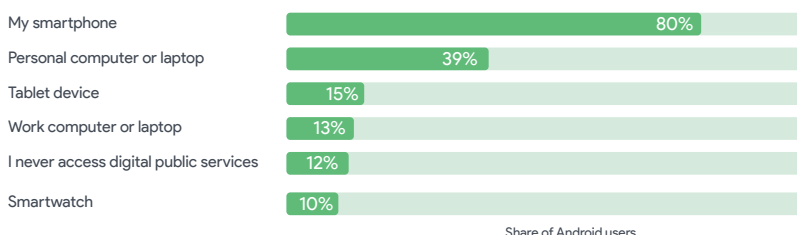
Korean Android users are most confident in the hardware security of their device



Gateway to public services

Android is how most Koreans connect to government and public services digitally, making it critical infrastructure for everyday civic life. Parents also value the platform's child safety features as smartphones become essential tools for education and entertainment.

Means of accessing digital public services



80%

of people in Korea say their Android phone is one of the main ways they access digital public services.