
Perceptions of Security on the Korean Peninsula: Key Security Concerns

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Abstract:

Purpose: The aim of this article is to investigate perceptions of the security environment on the Korean Peninsula and to determine the factors that contribute to variations in individuals' assessments of regional security. Particular attention is devoted to the extent to which selected sociodemographic characteristics, personal experiences, and attitudes toward military service influence the way respondents perceive and evaluate security conditions on the peninsula.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The study adopts an empirical research design based on a questionnaire survey administered to respondents representing diverse demographic and social backgrounds. The analysis incorporates a range of variables, including age, gender, place of origin, educational attainment, previous visits to the Korean Peninsula—including both South and North Korea—and attitudes toward military service. Descriptive statistical methods, complemented by comparative analysis, were employed to identify and assess variations in respondents' perceptions of security across selected demographic and experiential groups.

Findings: The article examines key security concerns on the Korean Peninsula and how they shape respondent's perceptions of the regional security environment. The findings highlight political differences between the two Koreas and North Korea's nuclear capabilities as the most significant security factors. Respondents generally perceived renewed conflict and reunification as unlikely or difficult, reflecting uncertainty, caution, and skepticism about the peninsula's future. Overall, the study demonstrates that security on the Korean Peninsula is multidimensional, shaped by political, military, nuclear, economic, social, and geopolitical factors.

Practical implications: The findings may be of particular relevance to researchers, policymakers, and institutions engaged in the fields of security studies, international relations, and strategic communication. A deeper understanding of the factors shaping perceptions of security can contribute to more effective assessments of public attitudes toward armed conflicts, geopolitical tensions, and evolving challenges to regional stability.

Keywords: Korean Peninsula, security perceptions, North Korea, nuclear deterrence, regional security, strategic stability.

JEL codes: F51, F52, D83.

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1. Introduction

This article continues the research undertaken on the security of the Korean Peninsula and builds upon the analysis presented in the author's previous article, entitled "Perceptions of Security on the Korean Peninsula: Part 1. Introduction." Drawing on the research framework and preliminary findings presented in Part 1, the present article provides a detailed analysis of the survey results, with particular emphasis on respondents' perceptions, attitudes, and assessments of the security challenges affecting the Korean Peninsula (Blicharz, 2026).

The Korean Peninsula has been a central area of the author's research interests for more than a decade. Over this period, the international security environment has undergone substantial transformation, with scholarly and political attention increasingly shifting toward other regions affected by ongoing crises and conflicts characterized by a high degree of dynamism and volatility.

Consequently, international attention to security developments in the Far East has fluctuated over time. Nevertheless, developments on the Korean Peninsula continue to attract renewed attention, particularly in response to North Korea's nuclear tests, missile activities, and recurring threats directed at regional and international actors. Such developments periodically intensify concerns about the future of the Peninsula and contribute to the emergence of increasingly pessimistic assessments of its security prospects.

At the same time, the security environment on the Korean Peninsula is considerably more complex and multidimensional than may be suggested by media coverage alone. Its evolution is shaped by a range of political, military, economic, and societal factors, as well as by the involvement and strategic interests of external powers.

Against this background, the purpose of this article is to present and analyse the findings of the conducted research, with particular emphasis on the factors that respondents identify as the most significant determinants of security on the Korean Peninsula and their perceptions of the principal threats affecting the regional and international security environment.

2. Literature Review

Security issues concerning the Korean Peninsula have been extensively examined by researchers worldwide. The peninsula represents a unique case in international security studies, as the Korean War, which began in 1950, has never been formally concluded by a peace treaty. Consequently, a substantial body of academic literature has emerged on various aspects of the conflict, including its historical background, geopolitical implications, military dimensions, North Korea's nuclear programme, and the security policies pursued by regional and international actors.

However, despite the extensive academic attention devoted to the Korean Peninsula, certain aspects of the security debate remain comparatively underexplored. In particular, research focusing on the subjective perception of security among South Korean society and the international community appears to be less prevalent than studies addressing the political, military, and strategic dimensions of the conflict. While the existing literature frequently examines security from the perspective of state policies, military capabilities, and international relations, less attention is devoted to how security threats are perceived and evaluated by members of the public, both within South Korea and internationally.

Understanding these perceptions is important, as public attitudes towards security threats may influence political debates, support for government policies, and broader assessments of stability on the Korean Peninsula. Furthermore, comparing perceptions among South Korean society and the international community may provide additional insights into how the security situation is understood by different groups and how these perceptions may differ depending on geographical, political, and social contexts.

In light of these considerations, this article seeks to contribute to the existing body of research by examining perceptions of security concerning the Korean Peninsula through original quantitative research based on a questionnaire survey. The data collected provide the primary empirical basis for the analysis and complement existing academic literature by focusing on the perceptions and assessments of respondents rather than exclusively on the objective military and geopolitical dimensions of the conflict. In doing so, the study aims to broaden the understanding of security on the Korean Peninsula by incorporating a public-perception perspective into the wider academic discussion.

3. Research Methodology

The empirical component of the study was based on a diagnostic survey conducted using a structured questionnaire (Pelc, 2012, pp. 25-35). The study employed an online survey, a data-collection method that, while offering several methodological advantages, is also subject to certain limitations.

The choice of an online survey was deliberate, primarily due to its capacity to facilitate access to a geographically diverse population and thereby broaden the scope of the study. The survey elicited responses from participants in 38 countries across all permanently inhabited continents: Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and Oceania, North America, and South America. This extensive geographical coverage was particularly relevant to the study's objective of developing a broad, cross-sectional perspective on the phenomenon under investigation. At the same time, the use of an online survey should be considered when interpreting the findings, particularly with regard to potential limitations associated with the composition and representativeness of the sample.

Web-based surveys generally yield lower response rates than other survey modes, with an average difference of approximately 12 percentage points. This difference has remained relatively stable over time, although more recent studies indicate a slightly larger gap of approximately 15 percentage points (Daikeler *et al.*, 2020).

Several factors have been identified as significant moderators of this response rate difference. First, the sample recruitment strategy appears to play an important role, with smaller differences observed for panel-based or pre-recruited samples compared with samples recruited specifically for a single survey.

Second, the solicitation mode moderates the difference, with smaller disparities observed when respondents are contacted via email compared with other modes, such as postal mail or telephone.

Third, the number of contact attempts is associated with a larger response rate difference, with repeated contact attempts appearing to increase the gap between web-based and other survey modes. Fourth, prenotification appears to be less effective in improving response rates for web surveys than for other modes.

Finally, country has also been identified as a relevant moderator, with smaller differences observed in the United States compared with the United Kingdom and the Netherlands (Daikeler *et al.*, 2020).

Despite these limitations, the author considered the online survey mode to be the most appropriate method given the specific characteristics and requirements of the research.

In order to facilitate participation among respondents representing different linguistic backgrounds, the questionnaire was made available in both English and Polish. A total of 234 completed questionnaires were collected, of which 197 were submitted in English and 37 in Polish (Blicharz, 2026). The substantial difference in the number of responses obtained through the two language versions may be attributed to several factors.

One possible explanation is the relatively limited level of public interest in East Asian affairs among the Polish population, which may, among other factors, be related to the considerable geographical distance between Poland and the region under study. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the historical and contemporary links between Poland and the Korean Peninsula.

In particular, Poland's involvement in the reconstruction of Korea in the aftermath of the Korean War represents an important element of Polish–Korean relations and provides a historical basis for considering the Korean Peninsula as a subject of Polish interest (Blicharz, 2020). From this perspective, issues related to Korea may not necessarily be perceived as entirely distant or unfamiliar by Polish respondents.

Nevertheless, invitations to participate in the Polish-language version of the survey resulted in a comparatively lower number of completed questionnaires. Furthermore, respondents in Poland were not limited to the Polish-language version and were also able to complete the questionnaire in English.

This may have further contributed to the relatively smaller number of responses submitted in Polish, as respondents with sufficient English-language proficiency could choose between the two versions. Consequently, the difference in the number of responses between the English- and Polish-language questionnaires should be interpreted with consideration of both the characteristics of the target population and the availability of an alternative language version.

The questionnaire was distributed among respondents representing a diverse range of social and national backgrounds. A detailed discussion of the research sample that was involved in the conducted study is presented in the article “Perceptions of Security on the Korean Peninsula: Part 1. Introduction” (Blicharz, 2026).

The survey questionnaire comprised six closed-ended questions, two open-ended questions, and two semi-open-ended questions. These were preceded by a set of questions concerning respondents’ personal characteristics, including gender, age, level of education, nationality, place of residence, and attitudes toward military service.

4. Research Results and Discussion

The main part of the research, conducted using a survey questionnaire, focused on respondents’ assessments of the individual factors influencing the security of the Korean Peninsula. The respondents were asked to identify the factor they considered to have the greatest impact on the security of the Korean Peninsula.

The question addressed six potential determinants: the differences between the political systems of North and South Korea; the insufficient involvement of major powers in maintaining security on the Peninsula; the presence of US military bases in South Korea; North Korea’s nuclear arsenal; economic disparities between the two Koreas; and differences in the mentalities and ways of thinking of Koreans living on opposite sides of the border. The question was posed to all respondents, including both those from the region in question and those from other parts of the world.

At this stage of the analysis, no correlations have yet been examined between respondents’ perceptions and their demographic characteristics. The analysis presented thus far focuses on the overall distribution of responses and the general patterns identified within the surveyed population, without differentiating respondents according to demographic variables.

The potential relationship between respondents' demographic characteristics and their responses will be examined at a subsequent stage of the study. This analysis will make it possible to determine whether differences in factors such as respondents' age, gender, nationality, educational background, or other relevant demographic characteristics are associated with variations in their perceptions and attitudes toward the issues addressed in the survey.

Table 1 presents a detailed breakdown of the responses to this question. The factor most frequently identified by respondents as having the greatest impact on the security of the Korean Peninsula was the difference between the political systems of the two Korean states, selected by 79 respondents.

The second most frequently cited factor was North Korea's military arsenal, which 59 respondents regarded as a major contributor to instability on the peninsula. The third and fourth most frequently cited factors contributing to security concerns on the Korean Peninsula were differences in mentality and ways of thinking between the two Korean nations, identified by 28 respondents, and the presence of U.S. military bases in South Korea, selected by 26 respondents.

These were followed by economic disparities between the two Korean states (17 respondents) and the indifference of the major powers (14 respondents).

Table 1. Frequency statistics calculated for the question: Which factor(s) do you consider to have the greatest impact on the security of the Korean Peninsula?

Variable	factors	N	%
Factors influencing perceived safety	The nuclear arsenal in North Korea.	59	25,1
	<i>The lack of sufficient involvement of the superpowers in ensuring security on the Peninsula.</i>	14	6,0
	<i>The different political systems of the two Koreas.</i>	17	7,2
	<i>The presence of US military bases in South Korea.</i>	26	11,1
	<i>Differences in mentality and ways of thinking</i>	28	11,9
	<i>Differences in political systems</i>	79	33,6
	<i>others</i>	11	4,7

Source: Author's own research.

The findings suggest that respondents primarily perceive the security challenges on the Korean Peninsula through the prism of differences between the political systems of North and South Korea. At the same time, the relatively high number of respondents identifying North Korea's nuclear arsenal indicates that the military dimension remains a central element of perceptions of security on the Peninsula.

The responses also demonstrate that security is perceived not solely in military terms, but also in relation to political and socio-cultural differences between the two

Korean states. In contrast, economic disparities and the insufficient involvement of major powers were less frequently identified as the principal factors affecting the security of the Korean Peninsula.

Another issue examined in the study concerned respondents' perceptions of North Korea's nuclear tests and their assessment of the potential security implications associated with the country's nuclear capabilities.

In order to examine how respondents perceived the nature and scope of the threat posed by North Korea, Question 5 addressed the perceived significance of North Korean nuclear threats, ranging from the view that such threats do not constitute a danger to other states, through the interpretation of North Korea's nuclear capabilities primarily as a form of deterrence, to the perception of these threats as a potential danger to South Korea, East Asia, or international stability more broadly.

According to the respondents, nuclear weapons pose a serious threat to international stability, as indicated by 120 respondents. Interestingly, the second most frequently selected response, chosen by 66 respondents, was that nuclear weapons constitute an element of deterrence against negotiations, reflecting a less categorical assessment than the first response.

A further 23 respondents stated that North Korea's nuclear tests could pose a threat to East Asia, while 14 considered Pyongyang's nuclear tests to constitute a direct threat to Seoul. Only 9 respondents indicated that North Korea's nuclear tests do not pose a threat to anyone. The detailed responses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency statistics for the question, *How do you assess North Korea's nuclear tests?*

Variable	Responds	N	%
North Korea nuclear tests:	<i>North Korea threats are a serious danger for international stability</i>	120	51,1
	<i>North Korea threats are a nuclear deterrence, not intended for actual use</i>	66	28,1
	<i>North Korea threats may become dangerous for East Asia</i>	23	9,8
	<i>North Korea threats are a danger for South Korea</i>	14	6,0
	<i>The North Korea threats are not a danger for anyone</i>	9	3,8
	other	2	0,9

Source: Author's own research.

The key conclusion is that the vast majority of respondents recognize the negative consequences of North Korea's nuclear program, yet some also acknowledge its significance as a tool of deterrence. Thus, perceptions of the program are not entirely clear-cut: while the assessment is predominantly framed in terms of a threat, a strategic perspective regarding deterrence is also present.

The security of the Korean Peninsula is shaped by the complex and unresolved relations between the two Korean states. Although active hostilities ceased with the 1953 Armistice Agreement, the Korean War was never formally concluded by a peace treaty, meaning that the conflict remains technically unresolved and effectively frozen.

Consequently, reports concerning the possibility of renewed armed hostilities on the peninsula emerge periodically. The next section of the survey therefore aimed to assess respondents' perceptions of the possibility of a resumption of armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula. To this end, Question 6 of the survey was formulated to assess respondents' views on the possibility of a renewed outbreak of hostilities between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and the Republic of Korea (South Korea), given that the Korean War was never formally concluded by a peace treaty.

In this context, Question 6 explored how respondents assessed the possibility of a military conflict on the Korean Peninsula under the prevailing geopolitical conditions. The response scale ranged from considering such a conflict absolutely impossible or rather unlikely, through a neutral response indicating a lack of interest in the situation on the Korean Peninsula, to perceiving the outbreak of conflict as possible or highly possible. This formulation was intended to capture different levels of perceived risk while also allowing respondents who did not consider the issue relevant to them to indicate their lack of interest in the matter.

The responses are presented in Table 3. The findings reveal a notable division in respondents' assessments of the likelihood of renewed conflict on the Korean Peninsula. As many as 83 respondents considered a resumption of armed hostilities to be "rather possible," whereas 59 regarded it as "rather impossible." This result is particularly noteworthy, as the remaining response options received considerably less support. Overall, the findings indicate a clear divergence in respondents' perceptions of the likelihood of a renewed outbreak of hostilities on the peninsula.

Table 3. Frequency statistics calculated for the question "How do you assess the possibility of conflict on the Korean Peninsula?"

Variable	responds	N	%
The possibility of conflict on the Korean Peninsula	<i>Absolutely impossible</i>	0	0,0
	<i>Conflict on the Korean Peninsula is rather unlikely</i>	59	25,1
	<i>The situation on the Korean Peninsula is not in my interest. I do not care what will happen</i>	9	3,8
	<i>Conflict on the Korean Peninsula may happen</i>	83	35,3
	<i>Conflict on the Korean Peninsula is highly possible</i>	25	10,6

Source: Author's own research.

The responses presented in Table 3 indicate a clear division in respondents' perceptions of the likelihood of renewed armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula. The largest group, comprising 83 respondents, assessed the possibility of renewed hostilities as "rather possible," while 59 respondents considered such a development "rather impossible." The predominance of the former response suggests that a considerable proportion of respondents perceive the security situation on the peninsula as sufficiently uncertain to regard the renewed outbreak of conflict as a plausible scenario.

At the same time, the relatively large number of respondents selecting the "rather impossible" option demonstrates that this perception is not shared uniformly across the surveyed population. The distribution of responses also suggests that respondents tended to adopt positions at opposite ends of the probability scale rather than expressing a strong degree of certainty.

The comparatively limited support for the remaining response categories may indicate that respondents were more inclined to perceive the possibility of renewed conflict in relative rather than absolute terms. In particular, the findings do not suggest that respondents overwhelmingly regarded a new military confrontation as either inevitable or completely unfeasible.

Instead, the results point to a degree of uncertainty surrounding the future security situation on the Korean Peninsula, with the largest proportion of respondents acknowledging the possibility of renewed hostilities while a substantial minority remained more sceptical about such a scenario. Overall, the findings highlight the absence of a uniform perception of the conflict risk and suggest that the unresolved security situation on the peninsula is interpreted differently among the respondents.

The issue of security on the Korean Peninsula cannot be examined in isolation from the historical developments that have shaped the region's present political and security environment. For centuries, the peninsula constituted a distinct territorial and cultural entity inhabited predominantly by a single nation—the Korean people.

However, from the late nineteenth century onward, Korea increasingly became the object of competing imperial ambitions, most notably those of the Japanese Empire. Japan gradually expanded its influence over the peninsula, ultimately annexing Korea in 1910 (Rurarz, 2009). Japanese colonial rule continued until the end of the Second World War in 1945, when Japan surrendered to the Allied powers.

The liberation of Korea from Japanese occupation might have suggested the restoration of Korean independence and sovereignty. Instead, the post-war settlement resulted in the division of the peninsula into separate zones of occupation. The Soviet Union established its sphere of influence in the northern part of the peninsula, while the United States assumed responsibility for the southern part.

Although the division was initially presented as a temporary arrangement intended to facilitate the reconstruction of Korean statehood and, ultimately, national reunification, growing tensions between the two occupying powers and their competing political interests made a unified Korean state increasingly difficult to establish. Each side supported political forces aligned with its own ideological and strategic interests while rejecting those backed by the opposing power.

As efforts to organize nationwide elections and establish a unified government failed, two separate Korean states were established in 1948. The Republic of Korea (ROK, South Korea) was proclaimed on 15 August 1948, followed by the establishment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, North Korea) on 9 September 1948. The division of the peninsula subsequently became institutionalized, and the Korean War (1950-1953) further consolidated the political and military separation of the two states.

Although active hostilities were suspended by the 1953 Armistice Agreement, no peace treaty was concluded, leaving the conflict formally unresolved. In these circumstances, Polish-Korean cooperation intensified, as evidenced by Poland's role in the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, to which it was nominated by the DPRK, and which, *nomen omen*, became the first international mission of the Polish armed forces (Bogusz *et al.*, 2024).

The question of Korean reunification has therefore remained an important and recurring issue in inter-Korean relations and South Korean political discourse (Blicharz, 2018). It also constitutes an important dimension of the broader security environment on the peninsula. For this reason, the issue of reunification was incorporated into the present survey as an essential element in assessing respondents' perceptions of security on the Korean Peninsula.

Given that the division of the Korean Peninsula remains unresolved and that the Korean War has never been formally concluded by a peace treaty, the reunification of the two Korean states is among the options discussed in the context of ensuring long-term security on the peninsula.

To examine respondents' perceptions of the possibility of Korean reunification, the final four questions of the survey addressed this issue, with two questions being closed-ended and two open-ended. The first of these questions asked respondents to assess how likely they considered the unification of the Korean Peninsula to be.

Respondents were asked to choose one of five possible answers, ranging from the view that unification is "definitely possible" or "rather possible," through the neutral response "I don't know," to the positions that unification is "rather impossible" or "definitely impossible. The answers provided are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Frequency statistics calculated for the question "How likely is the unification of the Korean Peninsula in your opinion? Please specify on the scale below."

Variable	responds	N	%
The possibility of reunifying the Korean Peninsula	<i>Absolutely impossible</i>	22	9,4
	<i>Rather impossible</i>	88	37,4
	<i>I do not know</i>	37	15,7
	<i>Rather possible</i>	58	24,7
	<i>Definitely possible</i>	23	9,8

Source: Author's own research.

The responses to this question were similar to those given to the previous question, with completely opposing views once again being observed. As many as 88 respondents considered reunification to be „rather impossible”, while 58 regarded it as „rather possible”. Similarly, the remaining response options received considerably less support.

The second question concerning the process of Korean reunification focused on the timeframe within which respondents considered unification to be possible. Respondents were asked to indicate when they believed the unification of Korea could occur, choosing from four possible timeframes: within 1–5 years, within 6–10 years, in more than 10 years, or never (Table 5).

On this issue, the respondents were generally consistent in their assessments, although their views remained predominantly negative or cautious. The largest group of respondents, comprising 116 people, indicated that reunification would eventually occur, suggesting that they did not entirely exclude the possibility of a unified Korean Peninsula. At the same time, 55 respondents expressed the opposite view, stating that reunification would never occur.

These results indicate that, despite differences in their assessments of the likelihood of reunification, a considerable proportion of respondents approached the issue with a degree of skepticism. The relatively strong representation of both positions also suggests that expectations regarding the future of the Korean Peninsula remain divided, with optimism about eventual reunification coexisting with a more pessimistic assessment of its feasibility.

Table 1. Frequency statistics calculated for the question "What is the possible timeframe for reunification?"

Variable	responds	N	%
The possible timeframe for Korean reunification	<i>Never</i>	55	24,9
	<i>1-5 years</i>	11	5,0
	<i>6-10 years</i>	39	17,6
	<i>over 10 years</i>	116	52,5

Source: Author's own research.

Next, the study examined whether selected demographic and experiential characteristics influenced respondents' perceptions of the security situation on the Korean Peninsula. In particular, the analysis considered the potential effects of gender, age, and attitudes toward military service.

Particular attention was also given to respondents' nationality, with a specific focus on whether respondents of Korean descent differed in their assessments from those representing other nationalities. In addition, the study examined whether previous visits to South Korea were associated with differences in respondents' perceptions of the factors affecting security on the Korean Peninsula.

To assess these relationships, a series of chi-square tests of independence were conducted, with each of the identified independent variables being tested against the relevant dependent variable. The results did not reveal any statistically significant relationships between the variables examined. In other words, the observed differences in respondents' assessments could not be considered statistically significant at the conventional level of significance.

This suggests that, within the sample analyzed, respondents' perceptions of the security situation on the Korean Peninsula were not significantly differentiated by gender, age, attitudes toward military service, nationality, or previous experience of visiting South Korea.

The detailed results of the statistical analyses, including the corresponding chi-square statistics and significance levels, are presented in Table 6. These findings should nevertheless be interpreted with some caution, particularly in light of the sample size and the distribution of respondents across individual categories. The absence of statistical significance does not necessarily indicate that the variables have no substantive relevance; rather, it indicates that the present sample does not provide sufficient statistical evidence to establish a significant association between the variables under examination.

Due to the small number of respondents who had previously visited North Korea ($N = 12$), this variable was excluded from all subsequent analyses employing chi-square tests. Including such a small subgroup could have resulted in low expected frequencies across the contingency tables and consequently reduced the reliability and interpretability of the chi-square results. Excluding this variable therefore ensured a more appropriate application of the statistical procedure to the remaining variables and helped maintain the methodological robustness of the subsequent analyses.

Table 6. Degrees of freedom, chi-square test statistics, and significance levels for the dependent variable „Security Factors”

	<i>df</i>	χ^2	<i>p</i>
Gender	5	1,27	0,938

<i>Natinaloty</i>	5	2,43	0,787
<i>Military service status</i>	5	5,46	0,363
<i>Previous visit to South Korea</i>	5	3,58	0,612

Source: Author's own research.

5. Conclusion

The submitted article, "Perceptions of Security on the Korean Peninsula: Part 2. Key Security Concerns," builds upon and expands the research presented in the author's previous article, "Perceptions of Security on the Korean Peninsula: Part 1. Introduction," in which the initial stage of the research was outlined.

The second part of the series examined the circumstances and factors that have contributed to the emergence of security issues as one of the most significant challenges facing the Korean Peninsula. Particular attention was devoted to the key security concerns identified by the respondents and to the ways in which these concerns shape perceptions of the security environment on the peninsula.

The study employed an online survey, a methodological choice made primarily to facilitate access to a geographically diverse population and broaden the scope of the research. The survey collected responses from participants in 38 countries across all permanently inhabited continents: Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and Oceania, North America, and South America.

This broad geographical coverage provided an international perspective on perceptions of security on the Korean Peninsula and allowed the study to capture views extending beyond the immediate regional context. At the same time, the diversity of the sample should be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings, particularly given that perceptions of international security may be shaped by different geographical, political, and socio-cultural contexts.

The study revealed several findings that highlight the complexity and multidimensional nature of respondents' perceptions. From a Eurocentric perspective, the Korean Peninsula may appear geographically and culturally distant and is often associated primarily with the nuclear tensions between North and South Korea.

However, the findings demonstrate that respondents perceive the security environment in a broader context. Differences between the political systems of the two Koreas emerged as one of the most important factors affecting security perceptions, while North Korea's nuclear capabilities constituted another central element.

Comparatively less importance was attributed to economic disparities and the insufficient involvement of major powers. These findings indicate that respondents understand security on the Korean Peninsula not solely in military terms, but also through the prism of political and socio-cultural divisions between the two Korean states.

Respondents' perceptions of North Korea's nuclear capabilities further demonstrate the complexity of the security environment. The majority of respondents recognized the negative consequences of North Korea's nuclear program, particularly in relation to international security and stability. At the same time, a considerable proportion of respondents acknowledged the role of nuclear weapons as an instrument of deterrence.

Consequently, perceptions of the nuclear issue were not entirely unambiguous: although the dominant perspective emphasized the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear capabilities, some respondents also recognized their strategic function within the broader security environment. This finding suggests that respondents were aware of the dual character of nuclear capabilities as both a source of insecurity and a potential instrument of deterrence.

The responses concerning the possibility of renewed armed conflict further illustrate the uncertainty characterizing perceptions of the future security situation on the Korean Peninsula. Although the largest group of respondents regarded renewed hostilities as "rather possible," a substantial proportion considered such a development "rather impossible."

Neither position was therefore shared uniformly across the sample. Rather, the distribution of responses indicates that respondents tended to perceive the possibility of renewed conflict in relative rather than absolute terms. The findings do not demonstrate a widespread conviction that another military confrontation is either inevitable or completely unfeasible. Instead, they point to uncertainty regarding the future development of inter-Korean relations and the persistence of unresolved security concerns.

A similar pattern can be observed in respondents' assessments of the possibility of Korean reunification. The largest group considered reunification "rather impossible," while a considerable number of respondents regarded it as "rather possible." At the same time, when asked about the longer-term prospects for reunification, a relatively large group indicated that reunification would eventually occur, whereas another substantial group believed that it would never take place.

These results demonstrate that skepticism regarding the feasibility of reunification does not necessarily correspond to its complete rejection as a future possibility. Rather, respondents' views appear to combine caution concerning the current

political and security conditions with the recognition that reunification cannot be entirely excluded from the long-term future of the Korean Peninsula.

Taken together, the findings reveal a diverse and, in some cases, divergent pattern of perceptions. Respondents emphasized political divisions, nuclear capabilities, and broader security concerns, while also recognizing the relevance of economic and socio-cultural dimensions.

Their responses concerning renewed conflict and reunification likewise demonstrate that the future of the Korean Peninsula is not perceived through a single coherent scenario. Instead, perceptions are characterized by a combination of uncertainty, caution, and differing expectations concerning both the risks of renewed confrontation and the prospects for eventual reunification. The international and geographically diverse character of the survey sample further contributes to the broader perspective of the study, although the findings should be understood within the specific characteristics and composition of the surveyed population.

The statistical analysis provides an additional dimension to these findings. A series of chi-square tests of independence was conducted to examine whether respondents' assessments were significantly associated with selected independent variables. The analysis did not reveal statistically significant relationships between the variables examined.

In particular, respondents' perceptions were not significantly differentiated by gender, age, attitudes toward military service, nationality, or previous experience of visiting South Korea. This suggests that, within the analyzed sample, the observed differences in perceptions cannot be attributed systematically to these demographic or experiential characteristics.

Instead, the findings point toward a relatively heterogeneous pattern of individual perceptions that is not strongly structured by the variables included in the analysis. Given the international scope of the survey, this result is particularly relevant, as it indicates that the differences observed in respondents' assessments were not statistically associated with the selected characteristics of the participants.

Overall, the study demonstrates that perceptions of security on the Korean Peninsula cannot be understood solely through the lens of military confrontation or the North Korean nuclear program. Rather, they reflect a multidimensional security environment in which political differences between the two Korean states, nuclear deterrence, perceptions of renewed conflict, the prospects for reunification, and broader economic and socio-cultural considerations remain closely interconnected.

The absence of statistically significant relationships between the examined demographic and experiential variables further emphasizes the individualized and heterogeneous character of these perceptions within the surveyed population.

The findings therefore underscore the importance of examining not only the objective dimensions of security on the Korean Peninsula but also the ways in which security-related developments are interpreted by individuals from diverse geographical and socio-cultural backgrounds.

The international scope of the survey, encompassing respondents from 38 countries across all permanently inhabited continents, provides an important broader perspective on these perceptions. At the same time, the results highlight the uncertainty surrounding the future of the Korean Peninsula and demonstrate that this uncertainty is reflected in differing assessments of the risks of renewed conflict, the prospects for reunification, and the role of North Korea's nuclear capabilities.

In this respect, the second part of the research complements the findings presented in the first article by demonstrating that perceptions of security on the Korean Peninsula extend beyond conventional military considerations and encompass a complex combination of political, strategic, social, and future-oriented concerns.

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