

Overview

Since the first long-term economic development plan was launched in 1962, the Republic of Korea (ROK) had undergone rapid economic growth averaging an annual rate of more than 8%, almost twice the world average during the same period.

Real GDP growth for 2002 is 6.3%, making South Korea one of the fastest growing economies in Asia. Korea has a population of 47.6 million, and 3.1% unemployment out of a total 22.7 million economically active population. Education has been a priority for Korea from the earliest days, and therefore relatively high level of government spending on education. Average life expectancy at birth in Korea was 75.6 years in 1999 (EIU, May 2003)

The last presidential election took place at the end of 2002 for a 5-year term. The head of the Government is President Roh Moo-Hyun of the ruling Millennium Democratic Party (MDP)

ILO Constituents

Government - Korea is a government member of the ILO Governing Body. The Labour Minister is Mr Kwon Ki Hong.

Employers - The Korea Employers Federation (KEF) is the main employers' organization dealing with social and labour matters. It is a member of the IOE. Mr. Nam Hong Cho, Vice-President of KEF is a deputy member of the ILO Governing Body for some years.

Workers - The Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU), founded in 1946, was the only recognized workers' organization at the national level, until the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) was registered in November 1999. KCTU obtained official legal status 4 years after it was established in 1995. Both FKTU and KCTU are affiliated to ICFTU.

Technical Cooperation

Currently, ILO technical assistance is being discussed between the government and the ILO in several areas such as social dialogue institutions industrial relations, labour market policy.

International Labour Standards and Tripartism

Korea has ratified 18 Conventions, including 4 core Conventions (C.100, C.111, C.138 and C.182).