

Overview

Prime Minister, Goh Chok Tong, of the People's Action Party (PAP) is Head of State.

GDP growth is officially estimated to have been 2.2% in 2002. The Economic Development Board expects investment commitments to fall in 2003. Overall budget surplus will rise to 1.5% of GDP in 2003. The tax rate on goods and services tax has been raised.

ILO Constituents

Government - Mr Ng Eng Hen is the current Acting Minister of Ministry of Manpower. The Ministry has formed close ties with both the National Employers' Federation and the National Trade Union congress to ensure sound economic and social development of the country.

Employers - The Singapore National Employers' Federation (SNEF) is the employers' organisation (EO) recognised as the employers' spokesman for labour matters. It is one of the most developed EO in the region with a professional secretariat providing direct services (advisory, training and information) to its members. It has shared through the ILO expertise on the role and management of an EO with other EOs in the region. The Singapore Business Federation (SBF) has been set up in April 2002 for more effective representation of employers. Companies with a paid up capital of S\$500,000 were required by legislation to be members. The National Employers' Federation (SNEF) is now considerably merging with the SBF. Meanwhile it works with the SBF on labour matters.

Workers - The National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) is the main workers' organization in Singapore. Nearly 99 percent of unionized workers are affiliated with the NTUC. It promotes a non-confrontational, amicable dispute - resolution approach, and participates in the formulation of policies affecting workers. In response to a drop in the unionization in recent years, the NTUC has sought to improve further its benefits to prospective new union members. These include a NTUC cooperative grocery chain, a taxi company, an insurance company, high-quality recreational clubs and holiday resorts.

The Director of Legal Services Department of NTUC, Ms Halimah Yakob, is a Deputy member of the Governing Body.

In December 2002, The Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF), Singapore Business Federation (SBF) and National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) jointly issued a Code of Responsible Employment Practices. In the Code, the SNEF, SBF and NTUC recognise that Singapore workforce is multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-religious thus both employers and employees can work together to achieve workplace harmony. The Code is based on the key principle that staff should be treated fairly and employers should continue to recruit based on skills, merit, experience, capability and relevant job requirements. It encourages self-regulation on the part of employers and employees in areas of employment including recruitment, selection, appraisal, job upgrading, posting and training, as well as terms and conditions of employment.

Technical cooperation

Being an advanced country, there has been no ILO technical cooperation project in Singapore since 1992. Singapore is host to many ILO meetings and fellowship programmes covering a wide range of activities in the labour and social matters.

International Labour Standards and Tripartism

Singapore has ratified 22 Conventions, three of which are Core Conventions (C.29 Forced Labour, 1930; and C.98 Rights to Organize and Collective Bargaining, 1949; C182 Worst Forms of Child Labour 1999). Following the ratification of C. 182 in 2001, Singapore ratified C. 100 in 2002. Singapore has now ratified 23 Conventions in total.