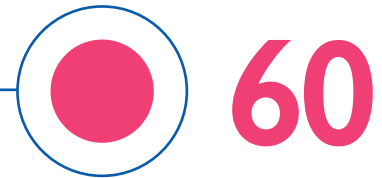


South Korea



Summary of Findings

1. INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The government does not accept, support, or endorse policies or legislation drafted by or developed in collaboration with the tobacco industry (TI).

However the Ministry of Health and Welfare permitted the TI's voluntary regulatory code, which prohibits tobacco advertisements inside tobacco retail stores. The Korean delegation did not include any representative from the TI to COP9 in 2021.

2. INDUSTRY CSR ACTIVITIES

The Tobacco Business Act facilitates public-private partnership and enables the TI to conduct CSR activities. The Minister of Strategy and Finance can request the Korea Tobacco & Ginseng (KT&G) Corporation to carry out public activities such as public health, medical care, environmental protection, and support for tobacco cultivation.

KT&G has partnered with Suwon City to tackle the negative impact of cigarette litter on the environment by setting up cigarette butt bins as part of an environmental program. KT&G has also signed an MOU with the National Institute of Ecology to protect the ecology of the country and committed to replacing their company cars with eco-friendly models by 2030. The Minister of Environment was present at the company's ceremony to commemorate the occasion.

In addition, KT&G has donated approximately US\$140,000 to support the Ministry of Justice's efforts in their social resettlement of persons subject to legal protection. Meanwhile, Philip Morris Korea has donated food to help Yangsan City overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, and the government has requested KT&G's assistance in contributing to a fund aimed at compensating victims of forced labor during Japan's occupation.

3. BENEFITS TO THE INDUSTRY

KT&G has received permission to sell tobacco products at highway service areas.

The Cooperative Act on the Production of Dried Tobacco Leaf Produce states that the government and public organizations should provide facilities and equipment preferentially.

The Tobacco Business Act allows the company to take KRW 5 off per 20 cigarettes production stabilization fund to directly support tobacco farmers.

4. UNNECESSARY INTERACTION

Awards ceremonies are the main way through which unnecessary interactions with the TI have taken place. KT&G continues to be awarded the Prime Minister's award for various categories where the ceremonies are hosted by various government departments.

KT&G signed an MOU with Sejong City to establish a new printing factory in the city. The signing ceremony was attended by the Mayor of Sejong City.

Additionally, KT&G announced its plan to replace its fleet of 1,200 company cars with eco-friendly vehicles by 2030 during a ceremony attended by the Minister of Environment.

5. TRANSPARENCY

The government does not have an official system in place to disclose its meetings and interactions with the TI to the public, nor is there a registry for the representatives and executives of the tobacco industry.



6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Although there is no explicit prohibition on contributions from the TI for political campaigns, the Code of Conduct for Public Officials prohibits current government officials from holding positions in commercial businesses. Moreover, top-level government officials do not typically join KT&G after their retirement.

7. PREVENTIVE MEASURES

The government has not implemented any specific measures or codes of conduct to safeguard against the influence of the TI on government administration. However, in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Public Officials (Presidential Decree), government officers are prohibited from receiving any form of gifts or favors from individuals or organizations that may benefit or suffer as a direct result of government policies or public projects (defined in Article 2.1 (g)). Additionally, according to a government report submitted to the COP, all individuals involved or engaged in tobacco control related projects are required to certify any potential conflicts of interest they may have with the TI. Specifically, those individuals who may directly or indirectly influence tobacco-related decision-making, such as members of the Tobacco Health Warnings Committee, must sign a Conflict-of-Interest Statement.