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# Employment and Labor Policies in a Transitional Period: Assessment and Outlook of Korea's Industrial Relations

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## I. Introduction: 2018 Industrial Relations in Korea

There are two statistical indicators that can be used to evaluate industrial relations in Korea at the macro level: trade union density and the number of work days lost. First, Korea's trade union density stands consistently at 10.3% almost every year, but interestingly, the number of trade union members continues to rise year after year. According to the 2017 survey results on trade unions, the total number of union members stood at 1,966,881 in 2016, showing an increase of 27,000 from 2015. This number was higher than the one observed in 1989 (1,932,000) when the union density peaked at 19.8%. Although the 2017 data has not been published yet, it has been estimated by several unions that their membership grew sig-

nificantly during the year. For instance, the Korean Federation of Public Services and Transportation Workers' Unions (KPTU) and the Korean Metal Workers Federation (KMWF), both of which are affiliated to the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), have recently had a membership increase of over 20,000 and 15,000, respectively. In addition, the Korean Federation of Service Workers' Union (KFSU), also affiliated to the KCTU, has newly recruited Korea's parcel delivery service workers to join the organization; and the Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) has reported that it has recently seen an increase in its membership although it cannot determine a specific number at this point.

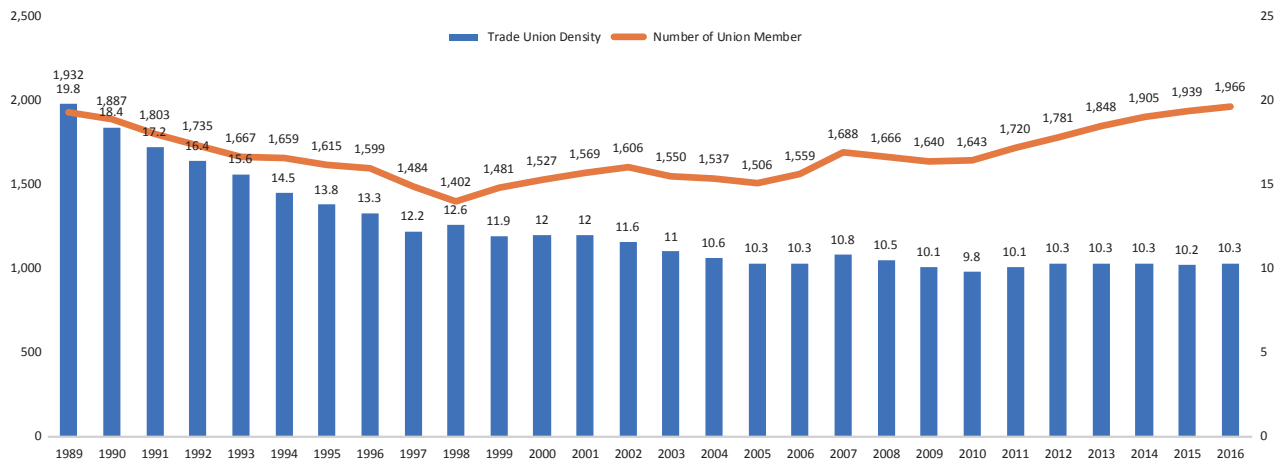
This trend signifies that more and more workers have high expectations of trade unions. For example, as gaps in working conditions—including wages—are widening

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Figure 1. Trade Union Density &amp; Number of Union Members (1989~2016)

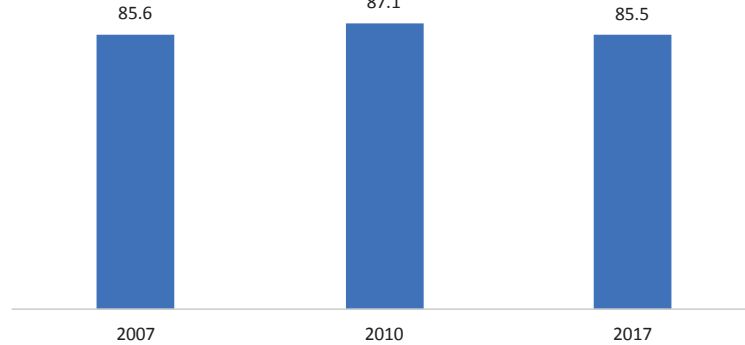
(Unit : thousand persons, %)



Source : Current Status of Korea's Trade Unions Organization (2017), Ministry of Employment and Labor.

Figure 2. Necessity of Trade Unions

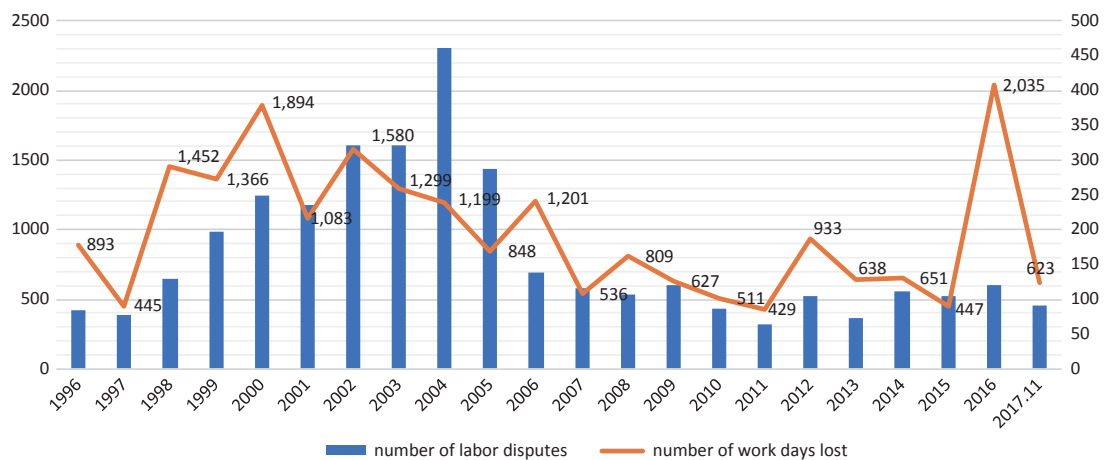
(Unit : %)



Source : Hong-Geun Chang et al. (2017).

Figure 3. Number of Work Days Lost &amp; Number of Labor Disputes

(Unit : thousand days)



Source : Ministry of Employment and Labor.

within the labor market according to firm size or employment type, workers perceive trade unions as a viable means of addressing the discriminatory labor market practices. In fact, according to the public opinion survey on industrial relations conducted by the Korea Labor Institute in 2007 and 2017, 85.6% of the 2007 survey respondents and 85.5% of the 2017 survey respondents said that “trade unions are needed” (Hong-Geun Chang, Jeong-Hee Lee, Heungjun Jung, and Dong-Hun Seol, 2017). These results indicate that the general public accepts the existence of labor movement, setting aside the actual evaluation of the labor movement activities. Therefore, the necessity of trade unions and the evaluation of their activities must be considered separately; and we need to guard against the view that “trade unions are useless” on the basis of a realistic assessment of their activities.

The second indicator which provides information related to Korea’s industrial relations is the number of labor disputes and the number of work days lost. In the 2000s, the number of work days lost due to strikes continued to be very stable. Both the number of strikes per year and the number of work days lost showed a downward trend for several years. However, in 2016, the number of work days lost jumped sharply to 2,035,000 due to a series of huge candlelight rallies, which means that the strikes lasted for a long time. In 2017, the figure fell back to the previous year’s level. Such stabilization of labor-management conflicts can be attributed to the fact that the government was actively trying to work on the demands of trade unions while trade unions also sought to resolve their issues through negotiations rather than through physical confrontation such as strikes.

## **II. Korea’s Industrial Relations in a Transitional Period**

It can be said that Korea’s industrial relations are cur-

rently undergoing a transitional phase (For further explanations, refer to Heungjun Jung (2017)). It is due to certain internal and external factors that they are now faced with a tide of change. Internally, there has been strong demand for a new labor regime after the 1987 labor regime came to an end, serving as the force that drives changes in industrial relations. Externally, since the inauguration of pro-labor Moon Jae-in administration, the government has been actively implementing a new set of labor policies, inevitably bringing changes to the existing industrial relations.

More specifically, the internal factors that led Korea’s industrial relations to undergo a transitional period are the limitations of the 1987 labor regime and strong calls for a new regime. The current labor regime which regulates the labor market, labor movement, industrial relations, and labor law system in Korea has its roots in the 1987 labor regime. However, the 1987 labor regime has served its purpose and is ready to be replaced by a new regime. The limitations of the 1987 labor regime and the tasks to be accomplished by the new regime can be summarized as follows. First, the corporate strategies under the 1987 labor regime were focused on labor flexibility and outsourcing aimed at enhancing efficiency, while workplace industrial relations were centered on distributive bargaining based on confrontational relationships at the corporate level. However, efficiency-oriented corporate strategies have been criticized for creating job insecurity and increasing the number of non-regular workers, thus hindering the long-term growth of enterprises. In addition, conflicting industrial relations at the enterprise level have led to the unintended consequence of widening the gaps in working conditions between firms, e.g. wage disparity as well as different social positions between workers of conglomerates/workers with high wages/regular workers and workers of SMEs/workers with low wages/non-regular workers, raising the issue of labor market distortions. Therefore, the new labor regime requires a

strategy that emphasizes corporate fairness and demands a change in the landscape of industrial relations, operating outside the enterprise boundary.

Second, since the labor movement under the 1987 labor regime was led by trade unions mostly made up of regular workers, the regime reached its limit in terms of representing the interests of non-unionized workers, and now it requires new strategic alternatives. Under the 1987 regime, trade unions led by regular workers failed address the problem of labor market polarization between regular workers and non-regular workers which worsened after the 1998 Asian financial crisis. Rather, they focused their efforts on securing the employment stability and wage increase for their members who were regular employees. Resultingly, trade unions have failed to play a key role in representing the interests of non-unionized workers who make up 90% of wage workers. In addition, the absence of leadership and the lack of policy capacity are becoming more evident in the existing unions whose activities have been centered on regular workers/workers of conglomerates/male workers. Thus, the new labor regime is asked to represent the interests of diverse groups of workers that have traditionally been neglected under the 1987 labor regime, such as youths, women, non-regular workers, middle-aged or senior workers so that they can now play a central role in labor movement.

Third, the government policies and legal systems also need to be changed. The key goals are to reduce the discrimination in the labor market (e.g. discrimination by employment type, gender/age discrimination, etc.), to expand the basic labor rights of workers, and to strengthen the social safety net. To this end, it is inevitable to improve the existing laws and systems under the new regime, e.g. realizing the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, limiting the grounds for using fixed-term workers, guaranteeing the basic labor rights for workers in special types of employment, expanding social insurance, and prohibiting the outsourcing of life and safety-related duties.

In summary, although the new labor regime is in the process of establishment to replace the 1987 labor regime, it is hard to specify details related to its format and contents at this stage. In particular, it has been known that the contents of the new regime will mainly consist of fairness and inclusiveness rather than efficiency and discrimination, but details are still being discussed.

Externally, the biggest factor is the government's labor policies. Since the launch of the Moon Jae-in administration on May 10th last year, the government has unveiled a new labor policy roadmap aimed at creating more quality jobs, building a society respecting labor, and redressing the discriminatory labor market practices. Details of the roadmap are as follows. First, the government will seek to create quality jobs in the public sector, and one way of doing so will be by turning non-regular jobs to regular jobs. In addition, the government will also raise the youth employment quota in public organizations to 5 percent from the current 3 percent.

Second, the government will strengthen its labor inspection administration to prevent unfair labor practices. As can be seen from MBC's alleged unfair labor practices, Paris Baguette's illegal dispatch of bakers, and Samsung Electronics Service's unfair labor practices, under the previous administration, many firms were able to get away with doing things that were clearly in violation of Korea's labor laws. However, the new administration is determined to revamp labor inspection on such activities and step up enforcement of compliance with labor laws. It has also expressed its plan to strengthen labor inspection on overdue wages and compliance with the minimum wage requirements.

Third, the new administration has affirmed its commitment to expanding the basic labor rights of workers. To this end, it has announced its intention to ratify the ILO Core Conventions and to come up with specific measures to improve the existing system for the representation of workers' interests so that the rights of non-regular work-

ers as well as non-unionized workers can be protected at workplaces.

There are two main reasons that the government has been able to implement the above labor policies in a relatively speedy manner until now. One is the favorable economic environment. Positive economic signals such as the upward revision of Korea's economic growth rate have been continuing, facilitating the implementation of labor policies. For example, the 2017 economic growth rate was raised upward to 3.1%, putting Korea in the upper ranks of OECD countries. Such an outcome was possible despite the recent decline in the shipbuilding industry and the difficulties faced by domestic producers of finished cars because the global economic environment has been improving and certain industries including the semiconductor industry fared well. The economic rebound underway provides a basis for the concept of income-led growth and serves as background for building public support for pro-labor policies. In particular, the growing social support for eradicating the outdated practice of “gapjil” (the abuse of power by someone against a person in a weaker position) from the labor culture and for reducing discrimination against non-regular workers has been the driving force behind the timely implementation of major labor policies such as improving labor administration and converting the status of non-regular workers into regular workers.

### III. Outcome in Industrial Relations

Korea's industrial relations are experiencing fundamental changes. Since its beginning, the Moon Jae-in administration has reaffirmed its commitment to redressing wrong labor policies and the existing employer-oriented practices of industrial relations. In general, the country's two major union federations—FKTU, KCTU—have been positive about the efforts of the new government. In par-

ticular, FKTU and KCTU secured a direct communication channel with the government's key ministries, meaning that they were now able to share government information and express the opinions of trade unions, which helped to reduce labor-government conflicts. There is also a qualitative change in industrial relations. Advocating for respect for labor, the government is strategically implementing such policies as guaranteeing the basic labor rights of workers, expanding the organizations representing the interests of workers, protecting workers from workplace harassment and guaranteeing their labor rights. Thanks to such policies, centralized bargaining with civil servants was carried out for the first time in 10 years, resulting in an agreement on labor rights through industry-level bargaining. For example, the metal and the healthcare unions have concluded an agreement to work toward preventing workplace harassment. The government policies have also led to a qualitative change in the industrial relations at the workplace level, e.g. there have been improvements in some of the bad practices such as illegal dispatch, wage overdue, and unfair labor practices.

#### 1. Abolishment of the Performance-Based Pay System and Establishment of Public Workers Solidarity Foundation

In June 2017, the performance-based pay system, which served as a key detonator for the 2016 labor-management conflicts, was abolished. The Steering Committee of Public Institutions eliminated the recommendation for the performance-based pay system, allowing each institution to autonomously determine when and how to implement the system based on the characteristics and the circumstances of each institution. It was also decided by the Committee not to impose the penalty that used to be applied to the institutions failing to introduce the pay system within the due date. In response, the trade unions in the public and financial sectors established a founda-

tion to realize social solidarity with the financial resources returned by the workers following the abolishment of the performance-based pay system. At the promoters conference held on November 7th, 2017, the Public Workers Solidarity Foundation announced that it would work towards eliminating social gaps by carrying out projects such as a scholarship project for non-regular workers, low-wage workers and their children, labor counseling projects as well as projects to promote social publicness. In this way, a good start was made between the government and trade unions: the new government abolished the performance-based pay system strongly opposed by trade unions; and in response, trade unions set up the Public Workers Solidarity Foundation using the financial resources from the performance-based pay system based on the support of employers and the government, resulting in the establishment of best practices in the public sector industrial relations.

## 2. A Significant Increase in Minimum Wage

Korea's minimum wage was raised by a significant amount. On July 15th last year, after careful deliberation, the 2018 minimum wage was determined to be 7,530 KRW per hour, going up by 16.4% from the previous year. This means that the monthly minimum wage in 2018 is 1,573,770 KRW for those who work 209 hours a month. With this increase, the government believes that it has laid the foundation for achieving a minimum wage of 10,000 KRW within the following three years. In addition, from the viewpoint of workers, a significant increase in the minimum wage is expected to improve the actual wage of low-wage workers, thus reducing their income gap with high-wage workers. However, employers are concerned that the steep minimum wage hike will increase the burden on small self-employed and have a negative impact on job creation. Therefore, various follow-up measures are being discussed after the decision to raise the minimum

wage, and the discussions on raising the minimum wage are expected to become more intense in 2018.

## 3. Facilitating Industry-Level Bargaining

One of the issues that can be used to comprehensively evaluate industrial relations in 2017 is the normalization of industry-level bargaining. Although industry-level bargaining has not spread across all industries and has not yet secured the consistency of working conditions within every industry through industry-wide agreements, it is noteworthy that negotiations between existing industry unions and employers have been smooth and that agreements have been concluded without difficulty. Given the failure of past industry-level bargaining efforts, it can be said that the current industrial relations have taken a major step forward. First, the Korean Health and Medical Workers' Union concluded an industry-level bargaining during the 4th round of negotiations taken place on July 12th, 2017. The Korean Metal Workers' Union also drafted a tentative agreement during the 11th round of negotiations on July 18th. In the case of the Korean Health and Medical Workers' Union, they attempted in effect to conclude agreements at the industry level by applying for collective dispute mediation for the 96 branches including those not participating in industry-level bargaining, thus making outstanding efforts to finalize the extension of industry-level bargaining. Also, the Civil Engineering and Construction Division of the construction sector has achieved centralized industry-level bargaining, with the outcome of unifying the working conditions that were regionally different in the past; and the State Public Officials' Labor Union and the Ministry of Personnel Management have recently attracted attention by resuming collective bargaining in 10 years. It is quite noteworthy that public institutions have established a structure for maintaining a table of negotiations with central ministries for routine issues while also discussing major issues if needed.

#### 4. Converting Non-Regular Workers to Regular Status in the Public Sector

The government has initiated a 1-year program from July 2017, the first stage project of shifting employment status of their non-regular workers to regular ones in the public sector. Under this project, among the 205,000 non-regular workers including fixed-term/temporary agency workers/service workers engaged in jobs of a permanent and continuous nature and those performing life and safety-related duties, about half of them (100,000) were converted to regular workers. Given that the conversion of non-regular workers to regular status in the public sector is based on the principle of hiring regular workers for jobs of a permanent and continuous nature, it is expected to lay the foundation for the prudent use of non-regular workers in the public sector. From the perspective of industrial relations, the expansion of non-fixed term contract positions is likely to increase demand for raising the public sector union density and improving working conditions and treatment for non-fixed term contract workers. However, since the conversion is allowed not just in the form of direct employment but also in the form of regular employment by a subsidiary, there exists a tripartite (labor, management, and government) controversy regarding conversion into regular status in a subsidiary. This type of conversion is actively utilized by public institutions and the government because, if they have their own subsidiaries, the conversion process is easier and it reduces management pressure on them. On the other hand, trade unions insist on allowing direct employment only because a subsidiary may be turned into an external service provider that is outsourced.

#### 5. Increasing Membership in Trade Unions

According to the statistics released by trade unions, the number of trade union members has increased steadily.

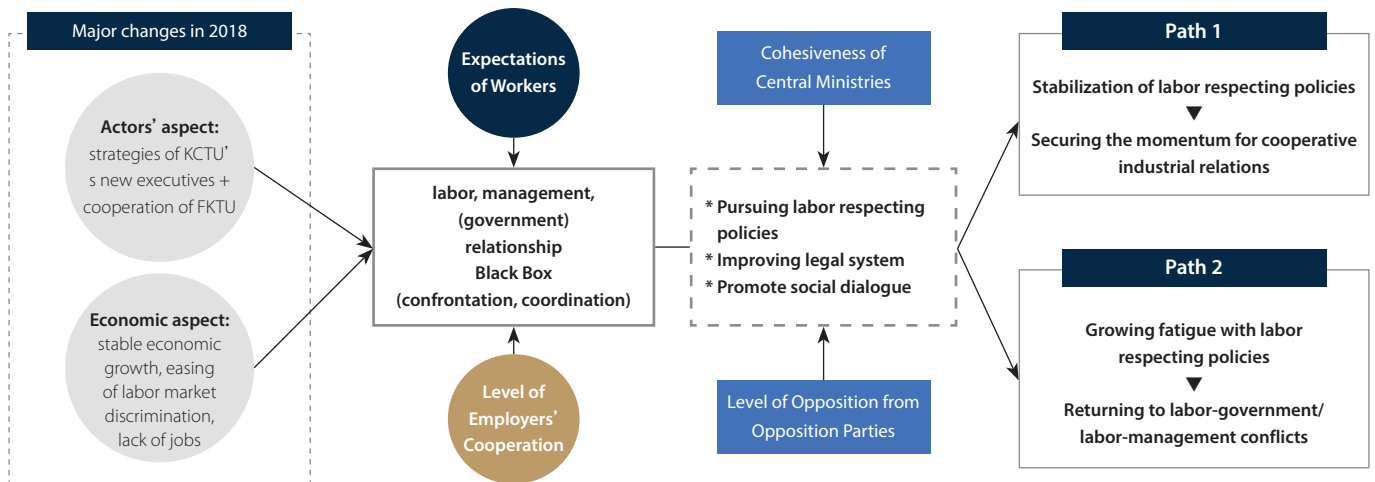
This increase shows that there are high expectations of the positive role played by trade unions in Korean society, and that unions are making various efforts to organize themselves. In particular, the government's policy of building a society respecting labor, and the rising expectations among workers of improvements in working conditions through trade unions have contributed to a steady increase in the membership of the country's two major union federations. For instance, the KMWF under the KCTU reports that their membership rose by almost 15,000 from 152,902 in 2016 to 168,172 in 2017 thanks to the rejoining of Hyundai Heavy Industries and the unionization of in-house subcontract workers (Hyundai Mobis union, Posco M-Tech union, etc.). The Korean Health and Medical Workers' Union also confirms that it has over 5,000 new members, and the Korean Public Service and Transport Workers' Union (KPTU) reports that more than 22,000 members have recently joined the organization.

#### IV. Short-Term Outlook on Industrial Relations

In the short-term, Korea's industrial relations are expected to undergo many difficulties and complexities. Depending on the situation, a number of industrial relations issues that exist may serve to strengthen cooperation between labor and management, or on the contrary, may worsen the existing conflicts in 2018. Nevertheless, it is expected that the government will continue to push ahead with its transitional-period labor policies. One of the optimistic scenarios is that the government's labor policies are settled in workplaces after careful consultation and coordination between the labor and management. The best scenario of industrial relations in 2018, therefore, is that labor, management, and government draw public support for pro-labor policies through appropriate compromises, thus securing the momentum for driving the 2019 labor



Figure 4. Framework of Short-Term Outlook on Korea's Industrial Relations



policies. On the other hand, there are also pessimistic scenarios. If employers do not cooperate or continue to resist, or if the general public shows a growing fatigue with unfulfilled expectations over trade unions or over the labor reform in general, it will be difficult for the government to improve the existing labor system with its pro-labor policies, delaying the reform process. As a result, we will be returning to situations where labor-government conflicts and labor-management conflicts continue to occur in Korean society.

Taking a closer look at the situations of 2018 as a whole, we can expect that new demands will be raised actively from the executives of the KCTU—one of the country's two major union federations—since the organization has recently gone through a change of leadership. Meanwhile, employers are likely to maintain the approach of passive agreement and partial resistance to the government's labor policies. Therefore, trade unions need to effectively take lead in discussions by presenting their opinions while offering alternatives to seek cooperation from employers. Although each opposition party has a different view toward labor policies, the leading opposition party is expected to be strongly opposing and is highly likely to strengthen ideological offensive, calling the current administration as a “leftist government.” Therefore, it is important for the central ministries such as the Ministry of

Employment and Labor and the Ministry of Strategy and Finance to seek solidarity and demonstrate their power to execute. This is because it would be difficult to successfully implement the government's labor policies when the central ministries' loyalty and solidarity level are low in pursuing the President's directions. This is illustrated in Figure 4.

Industrial relations in Korea will be significantly influenced in the short-term by such factors as the actual normalization of tripartite (labor, management, and government) social dialogues, promotion of industry-level bargaining, conversion of private sector non-regular workers to regular status, ratification of the ILO Core Conventions by the National Assembly, and improvements in laws and institutions related to protecting non-regular workers.

## V. Long-term Challenges in Industrial Relations

So far, we have examined the changes in public perceptions toward trade unions and industrial relations. Based on such perceptions and the evaluation of the industrial relations so far, we will reaffirm the significance of the industrial relations during the transitional period and discuss the future challenges.



## **1. Industrial Relations Task #1. The Role of Government for the Balance between Management and Labor**

Industrial relations are a process of finding consensus based on concessions, trust, and respect for each other. This requires a balance of bargaining power between labor and management. If the bargaining power of employers is too strong, trade unions become powerless and unable to represent the interests of workers. On the contrary, if the bargaining power of trade unions becomes excessively strong, the business management of employers may become ineffective, undermining the corporate competitiveness.

As can be seen in the government slogan of “Korea - a business friendly nation,” Korea’s industrial relations over the past decade have always been focused on the centrality of employers. The government, which has absolute influence in the public sector industrial relations, has maintained hostile union policies and displayed the pro-employers stance even in private sector industrial relations. As a result, unfair labor practices have spread widely (as reflected in a major decline in trade unions) and the moral hazard of corporations has reached its apex, with overdue wages amounting to 1.2 trillion KRW. Until now, the tripartite committee as a social dialogue body has been used as a provisional mechanism to unilaterally implement government policies. Therefore, the urgent task in industrial relations is achieving the right balance. According to a 2017 public opinion survey, 50.2% of the respondents answered “industrial relations should be regulated in the direction of protecting workers” when asked to comment on the desirable policy direction for industrial relations. In contrast, only 9.2% of the respondents said that “industrial relations should be regulated in the direction of ensuring business activities.”

The role of the government is important for achieving the right balance in industrial relations. First, it is neces-

sary to pursue strict law enforcement for employers’ unfair labor practices or illegal acts such as overdue wages. It is also necessary to punish consulting companies that help or encourage employers to engage in such unfair labor practices. Once the government lets one or two employers go unpunished, such illegal activities will be spread uncontrollably. Second, it is necessary to speed up the improvement of the system to achieve the right balance of power between labor and management. For example, institutional measures such as expanding the basic labor rights of workers and promoting industry-level bargaining can serve to encourage more non-unionized workers to join trade unions and protect their rights. In the long term, rather than the government trying to intervene and arbitrate in every single case, it would be better to facilitate labor and management to achieve appropriate compromises through negotiations. Finally, to achieve the right balance between labor and management, the government needs to refrain from giving signals that it is pro-labor or pro-employers, and avoid making decisions on the government-employer or the government-labor level. It should actively utilize social dialogue to discuss many things together with employers and unions at the same table. Only then can they share responsibilities for implementation and establish long-term plans.

## **2. Industrial Relations Task #2. Union Activities Focused on Alternative Labor Policies**

The policy interventions of trade unions on labor issues have been significantly weakened. Until now, various issues—such as employment adjustment, income polarization, non-regular workers, intergenerational competition, dual structure of the labor market, and increasing national dependency on conglomerates—have been directly and indirectly affecting the labor market and industrial relations, but there have been less and less meaningful alternatives offered by trade unions. Under the 1987 la-

bor regime, trade unions were emanating small and large voices in various political, economic, and social issues to achieve social democratization and economic democratization, and they received social recognition as an advocacy group. However, the labor movement over the past decade has gradually been loosened and weakened, failing to raise labor agendas or lead discussions on political, economic, and social issues. Trade unions remained silent or presented only principles for diverse and complex labor issues. Of course, since they were not able to lead in discussions, they took a position of principled opposition, struggled for it or chose not to intervene. In this way, the independent voice of labor movement about social issues has gradually disappeared, reducing the public interest in the labor issues and hindering the revitalization of social discussions.

If trade unions fail to propose policy alternatives actively, industrial relations will only produce rigid outcomes, and trade unions will have to either favor or disagree to the decision. To overcome this, trade unions should strive to systematically regenerate policy capacity by increasing budget. For example, the KCTU or the FKTU should develop an official program to develop policy competencies, and if it is difficult to do so, they could utilize external training. If this is also difficult, it would be necessary to fill up the gap in policy production by recruiting more activists that have policy competencies. Second, with regard to the policy department, its independent role must be guaranteed as much as possible, and it should always be kept independent from other departments irrespective of the term of the executives. This is to maintain the consistency and continuity of the policies. If trade unions do not make bold investment and promote activities in the area of policy development, they are likely to rely on strikes for everything, thinking that any obstacle can be resolved through strikes, and may underestimate policy alternatives simply as a logical tool used in negotiations with the government. That would have a negative impact both on

trade unions and industrial relations.

### **3. Industrial Relations Task #3. Reconsideration of Employers' Nonunion Policy**

Adopting the “nonunion policy” literally means utilizing various strategies and techniques to maintain the status of “no union.” In other words, if an employer’s main goal is to have no union presence, it will use various methods to pursue the “nonunion policy.” In such cases, the problem is not the policy itself. We need to pay attention to the problems that arise in the process of implementing the policy. There are several types of such problems. For example, when a company that already has a union present (trade union presence) pursues the “nonunion policy” by force and tries to disable union operations, labor-management conflicts are likely to occur and emotional conflicts with individual members would be difficult to avoid. Therefore, the “nonunion policy” pursued as part of employers’ strategy rather than based on the voluntary choice of workers should be avoided as it would only hurt those involved unnecessarily and create an irreparable distrust between labor and management. The second type is a case where in-house/external subcontractors are forced by their suppliers to implement the “nonunion policy” in their workplace. Of course, it is important for suppliers to ensure that their subcontractors have stable industrial relations but it is against the law and not desirable if they directly intervene in the industrial relations of subcontractors using their superior position in the work contracts. Nevertheless, many conglomerates still intervene directly or indirectly in the industrial relations of their in-house/external subcontractors, causing unnecessary conflicts. The last type is a case where a company with no union tries to retain their “nonunion presence” and labor-management conflicts occur because their wish is different from that of workers. Workers have a freedom to establish and operate trade unions regardless of how well their em-

ployers treat them or what opinions their employers have. Even so, if employers try to block workers' voluntary effort to set up a union in order to maintain the "nonunion policy," they would not only be violating the law (unfair labor practices) but also cause social criticism.

Employers are free to adopt the "nonunion policy" and develop various programs to execute the policy. However, such activities must be carried out within the framework of the law and should not turn into illegal actions that hinder the voluntary rights of workers. It is true that, in the past, there existed social tolerance of employers' aggressive response to the union movement. However, in order for workers and labor to coexist and achieve their goals, one side should not take advantage of its power to disable the other side. Therefore, the "nonunion policy" should only be pursued when it is clear that workers do not wish to form trade unions. And when unions are established by workers, it is desirable to institutionalize them through formal dialogue and negotiation rather than trying to block their efforts by force.

#### **4. Industrial Relations Task #4. Systematic Training for IR Experts**

In order for industrial relations to improve and leap

qualitatively, it is essential to train experts who can professionally conduct research on industrial relations and apply their findings to the field. Compared to other disciplines, the field of industrial relations has a relatively small number of experts who have been systematically trained, and there are simply not enough experts to meet the demand of the field. As a result, the field has become increasingly reliant on labor law firms that are equipped with legal skills, and has not been able to supply experts who are capable of dealing with overall industrial relations. Although there have been some practical programs such as labor-management specialist courses in certain universities and institutions, funded partially by the government, they were more of a program to promote labor-management cooperation than to provide professional training. Therefore, in order to be prepared for the new industrial relations of the transitional era, it is necessary to train more qualified experts. For example, it would be desirable for academic institutions such as universities to develop a specialized training system so that they can produce experts at the doctoral level. It would also be helpful to consider ways to combine theoretical training and field experience through collaborative programs with research institutes.

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