

Chapter 10

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

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Introduction

In the Republic of Korea (Korea), like many other Asian countries, people generally prefer to settle disputes through conciliatory means rather than by formal litigation. However, with economic growth and a significant increase in income, Korea has experienced a wave of consumer awareness and activism with regard to product quality and manufacturer's liability.

The Korean legislature and judiciary have also been active in the area of consumer protection in recent years. Following OECD membership in 1996, the Korean government introduced and has improved several policy measures aimed at consumer protection, including the establishment of a body to manage product recalls and to collect injury data; it also instituted a set of guidelines for voluntary and mandatory product recalls.

Sources of law

Korea is a civil law country with a judicial system like Germany, France and Japan. Since the decisions of Korean courts are not regarded as precedents but are merely explanatory and illustrative of the law contained in legislation, the major source of law is statute. There are several statutes in the area of consumer protection and product liability in Korea.

The *Consumer Standard Act*, which replaced the *Consumer Protection Act*, was enacted on 27 September 2006 and amended three times in

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