

E-People: Initiative – Facilitating Communication and Conflict Resolution between the Government and the People

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Introduction

In today's society, the government administration has become more and more complicated and people's awareness of their rights has increased greatly, resulting in a growing number of civil complaints against agencies.

Under the circumstances, the ACRC created and has developed e-People system in order to facilitate communication between the government and the people, to resolve conflicts, and even to contribute to the institutional improvement in a changing administrative environment.

The original Korean name of the "e-People" system is Kukmin-Sinmoongo, which means people's Sinmoongo. Sinmoongo was actually a name of a big drum and the e-People was originated from the system that the 3rd King Taejong initiated in the Joseon Dynasty in 1401 A.D. At that time, people were supposed to appeal their complaints to the regional government offices they belonged to. However, not all the complaints were resolved at those regional offices. In that case, people could appeal their unresolved complaints by beating the "Sinmoongo" drum letting the king listen to their petition, directly to help them.

Based on the history, the name, "Kukmin Sinmumgo" was given to the system, meaning that it is a system to solve people's grievances and difficulties in the promptest and the most precise way.

This paper consists of five parts: international recognition for excellence of e-People, its functions and achievements, new approach and future direction.

1. International Recognition

Since the e-People was set up in 2005, it has received awards or been selected as a leading example as many as 5 times in various international competitions.

Particularly, in 2011, it won an excellence award in the UN Public Service Award, which is a prestigious award to promote the importance of public governance to both the public organizations and the public in the world.

2. Functions of e-People

Before explaining specific functions of e-People, it is necessary to understand the background to introduce the e-People system. In many cases, people did not know how to and where to file their complaints when they faced administrative problems, because there were many different government agencies.

From the government agencies' perspective, on the other hand, they had to do extra works to find the right offices and referred the filed complaints to them via mail, and then notify the result to the complainant, if the complaint was not filed with a proper agency. In addition, they had to repeat same answers to every single complaint frequently received with the same problem.

In order to solve such inconveniences, the ACRC introduced the e-People system. Currently e-People has integrated all 43 central government agencies, 244 local governments, 194 offices of education, 144 overseas diplomatic offices, and 19 major public companies as an government online complaint-handling system.

Although the main function of e-People is to handle civil complaints, it also serves as a multi-functional system to receive a variety of proposals from people and public officials and to provide a platform for policy discussions.

The detailed functions of e-People are as follows. First, complaint-handling is the main function as mentioned above. When a complainant files a civil complaint with e-People, its system automatically designates the most proper agency to handle the complaint. Then, the competent agency addresses the complaint during the statutory period and notifies the result to the complainant. In addition, if a complaint requires several agencies to be addressed, these agencies can jointly work on the issue online.

When the complaint is not properly received, if not very often, the designated agencies can forward or refer the complaint to a proper competent agency on line in real time.

The complainant can also evaluate on e-People how much he or she was satisfied with the result, and based on this data, the ACRC evaluates and announces how each public agency handles complaints.

Second, e-People has a function to receive various opinions and proposals from both civilians and public officials. If they have a good idea contributing to the improvement of government services, they can submit their proposals through e-People. After evaluation every year, outstanding proposals are selected and adopted as a policy, and awards are presented to the proposers.

For example, in 2010, an idea was proposed to change the existing mosquito larvae-control system using chemical pesticides to an environmentally-friendly way with ultrasonic wave equipment. Another idea proposed in 2011 was to upload a PC electricity saving program for free, which the proposer developed. With this program, a total of 33 million US dollars is saved every year.

Another important function of e-People is “Policy Discussion.” Each central government agency utilizes this function to collect various opinions of people from civilians to experts on government projects or legislations, in order to reflect the opinions into policies.

The policy discussion can be divided into three categories: electronic public hearing, policy forum, and survey. The electronic public hearing is held to collect opinions on bills in legislative progress. Policy forum is to collect various opinions on the overall administration, including government policies and projects. Survey is used to collect opinions with specific questions and items.

For instance, “Improvement in the education sector” was one of the themes of policy discussions in 2012. This issue was discussed with approximately 200,000 times hits, collecting 2,765 opinions, and 1,170 people participated in the survey.

Besides these functions mentioned above, e-People has other functions, such as institutional improvement. The public officials in charge of handling civil complaints are required to designate specific legal provisions that caused the complaint. The ACRC analyzes these designated legal provisions and informs the concerned agencies of the most complaint-causing provisions. Then, the agencies analyze and decide whether to improve the institutions.

In addition, the ACRC analyzes civil complaints and call counseling issues to extract necessary information to figure out what kinds of problems people have and how to establish or modify government policies. Based on such information, the ACRC makes daily, weekly, and monthly reports and provide them for the central government agencies.

In 2011 alone, the ACRC analyzed 1.07 million civil complaints received with e-People and 2.19 million counseling calls to the Government Call Center run by the ACRC.

In the meantime, the e-People system provides “Foreign Language Service.” With this service, a foreign resident in Korea can file a complaint in his/her mother tongue, and

the complaint is translated into Korean, handled by the concerned agency, then the result is translated into the mother tongue again and notified to the complainant.

Currently, the number of foreign residents in Korea is over one million, including short-term residents, married immigrants, foreign workers and students. To help them file complaints without language problem, “e-people” started the foreign language service in English, Chinese and Japanese in June 2008. Ten foreign languages are now available in filing complaints, such as Vietnamese, Mongolian, Indonesian, Thai, Uzbek, Cambodian and Bengali.

3. Achievements of e-People

According to the statistics, the number of complaints received with e-People increased from 700,000 in 2009 to 1 million in 2011. The number of proposals also increased from 84,000 to 100,000 over the same period. The number of policy discussion participants also significantly rose from 20,000 to 70,000.

Meanwhile, the administrative effectiveness of the government agencies has improved with e-People, since the public agencies can forward improperly received complaints to the competent agency with just one click, and address repeatedly filed complaints by one complainant as a single case by combining those same complaints.

The average complaint-handling period was reduced as well; the average handling time for general complaints fell from 7.8 days to 5.7 days from 2006 to 2011, while combined complaints down from 14.4 to 8.8 days over the same period, improving the quality of public service in handling civil complaints

4. New approach of e-People

The ACRC currently opens and operates bilateral exclusive complaint windows on e-People where the ACRC and foreign ombudsmen jointly receive complaints and notify

the results to complainants. The Korean-Indonesian exclusive window was open on June 30 in 2012, and Korean-Thai exclusive window on August 30, 2012.

With the bilateral exclusive complaint windows, Indonesian and Thai residents in Korea can file their complaints against their home country as well as against the Korean government in their mother tongue. Korean nationals living in Indonesia or Thailand also can file their complaints against the Korean government as well as against their residing country in Korean.

5. Future direction of e-People

The ACRC expects to expand the bilateral exclusive windows to more countries. If the number of bilateral exclusive complaint windows increases one by one, we will see a little bit different version of the system in the future. And we might call the future version of the system GPS, i.e. Global e-Petition System.

Other Ombudsmen in the world may be inspired by the “ACRC’s bilateral online exclusive complaint windows” in improving their system to help foreign residents to file their complaints without any difficulties caused by language barrier or geographical distance.

Conclusion

The e-People is a window facilitating communication between the government and the people, and its function has been expanding in an active way. The ACRC believes that this kind of system has a future potential that can contribute to strengthening and expanding the functions of the ombudsmen all over the world as well as developing the administration of the Korean government.

e-People

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ACRC Anti-Corruption &
Civil Rights Commission



e-People
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*E-PEOPLE : INITIATIVE – Facilitating
Communication and Conflict Resolution between
the Government and the People*



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International Recognition

Top 10 in the 「 e-Government Competition 」 in France (2006.10)

Selected as a leading example of the IOI Asian Region (2006.10)

Won the Top Prize in the exhibition part in the 「 e-Challenge 2008 」 (2008.10)

Operated an exhibition booth in the 「 CeBIT 2009 」 in Australia (2009.5)

Received an Excellence Award in the 「 UN Public Service Awards 」 (2011.6)





Functions & Achievements of e-People

II. Functions & Achievements

Central Government Agencies



43 Agencies

Diplomatic Offices

U.S., Japan, etc.

144 Offices

Offices of Education

16 Offices of education /
district offices of education
(Seoul, Gyeonggi, etc.)

194 Offices



Local Governments

City/Province
city/ gun, gu(district)

244 Organizations

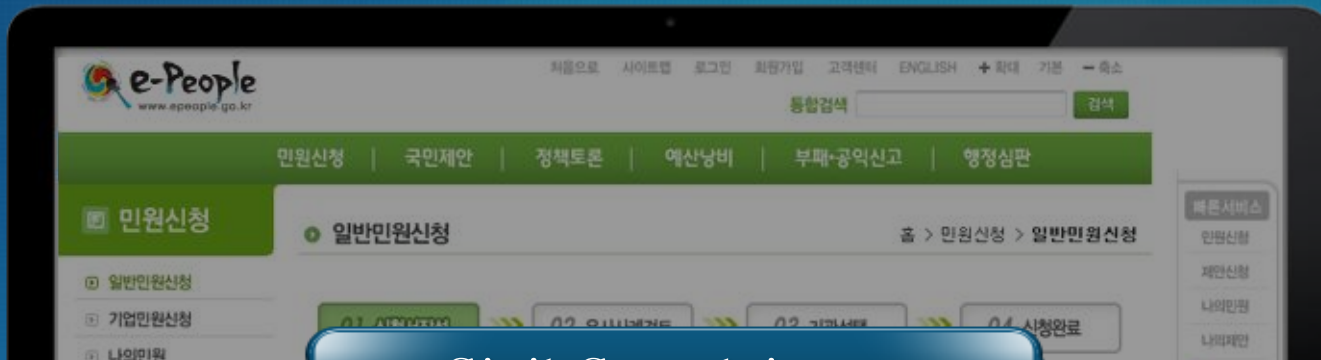
Major Public Organizations

Financial Supervisory Service
Korea Consumer Agency
Korea Legal Aid Corporation
Korea Land & Housing Corporation
National Health Insurance Corporation

19 Organizations

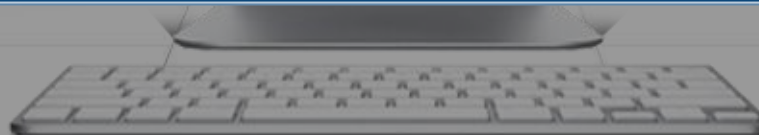
The Judiciary (National Court Administration)





Civil Complaints

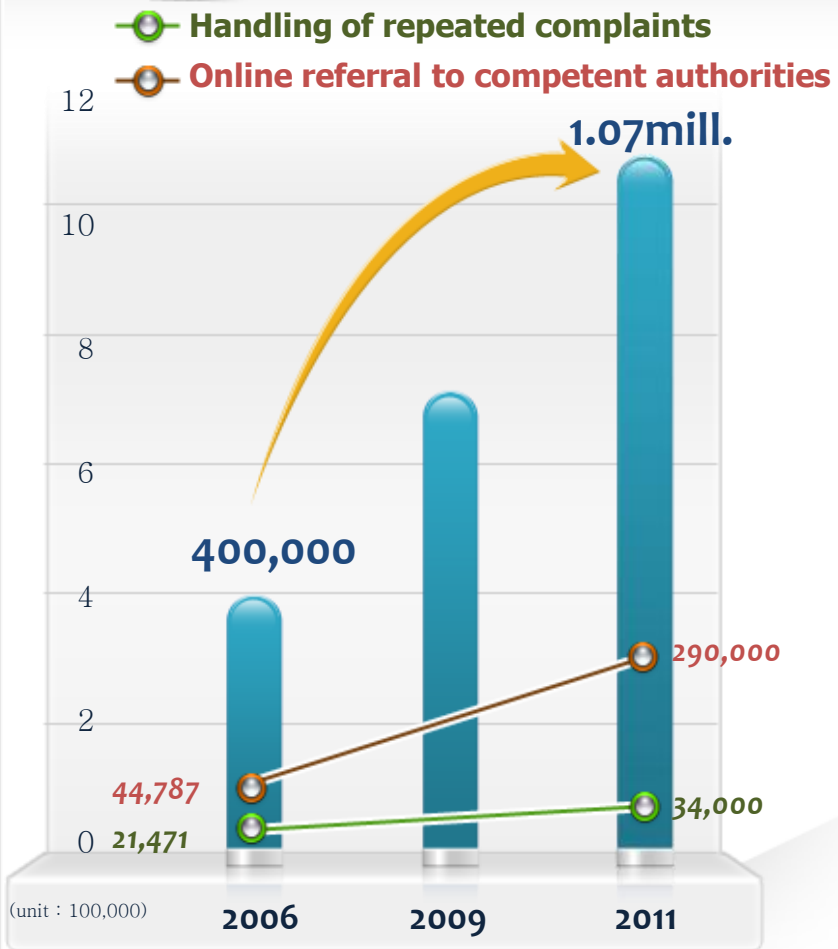
- 1 Fill out a complaint form
- 2 Search for similar cases
- 3 Select a proper agency
- 4 Complete the filing
- 5 Address the complaint
- 6 Notify the result
- 7 Evaluate the satisfaction of the complainant



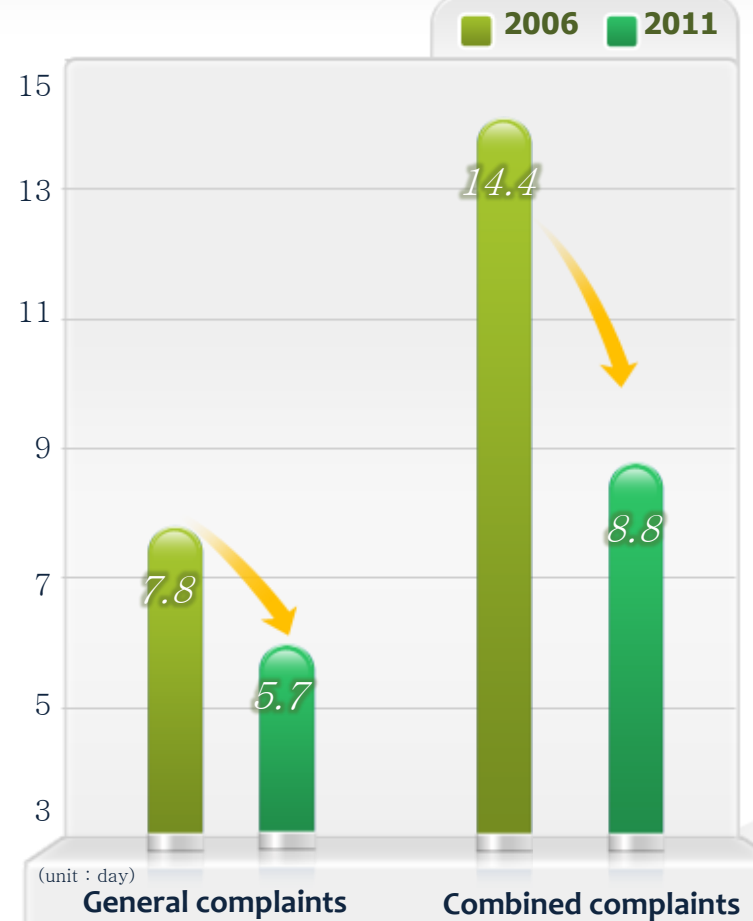
No. of complaints by year

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|---------|---------|-----------|
| 696,715 | 798,570 | 1,073,499 |

No. of Complaints



Average Handling Period





Proposal



Government Employees



People



*Reflect in policy
and award
best proposals
after evaluation*

Development of pest(mosquito larva) control facilities using ultrasonic waves (2010, Gold Medal, a public official's proposal)

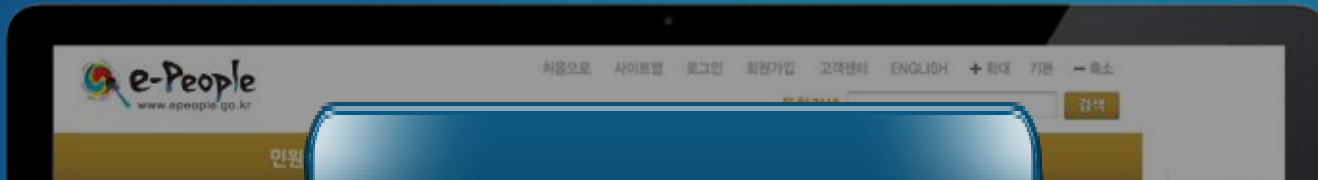
PC electricity saving program support (2011, President's Award, a civilian's proposal)

Changing the mosquito larva control method from chemical pesticide control to environmentally friendly pest control using ultrasonic waves

Uploading a free PC electricity saving program on the Internet: Expected electricity saving effect : KRW 37.1 billion

No. of proposals by year

| 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|--------|---------|---------|
| 84,026 | 118,533 | 107,894 |



Policy discussion

Policy discussion

People

Suggest an opinion

Experts

Notify the result

Public Officials

Electronic Public Hearing

Policy Forum

Survey

Collect public opinions

Reflect them In policy



Government

3. Policy discussion

II. Functions & Achievements

이슈
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김태원 한국교육개발원장

고졸취업, 학력이 문제인가, 인식이 문제인가
 교육 직장인이 당당하게 설 수 있는 사회!
 바람직한 진로 교육과 고졸취업 방안을 통해 찾아드립니다.

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박상홍(직접미디어공명) 학교폭력 어떻게 만들어지는가 <http://t.co/u6eTUL1B> @yes24now 에서
 6시간 전 | 트윗



겨울나무/SeokYoung 학생들이 학교라는 공간에서 폭력을 경험했을 것이라는 점은 쉽게 짐작할 수 있다. 그러나 미물이 물신종 드러내고 있는 것은 한국의 낙후한 교육이 아니라 교육 그 자체이다, 교육 자체의 정당성이 흔들리고 있다. (120p) @wintree77
 6시간 전 | 트윗

2012 e-People Electronic policy discussion (Education sector)

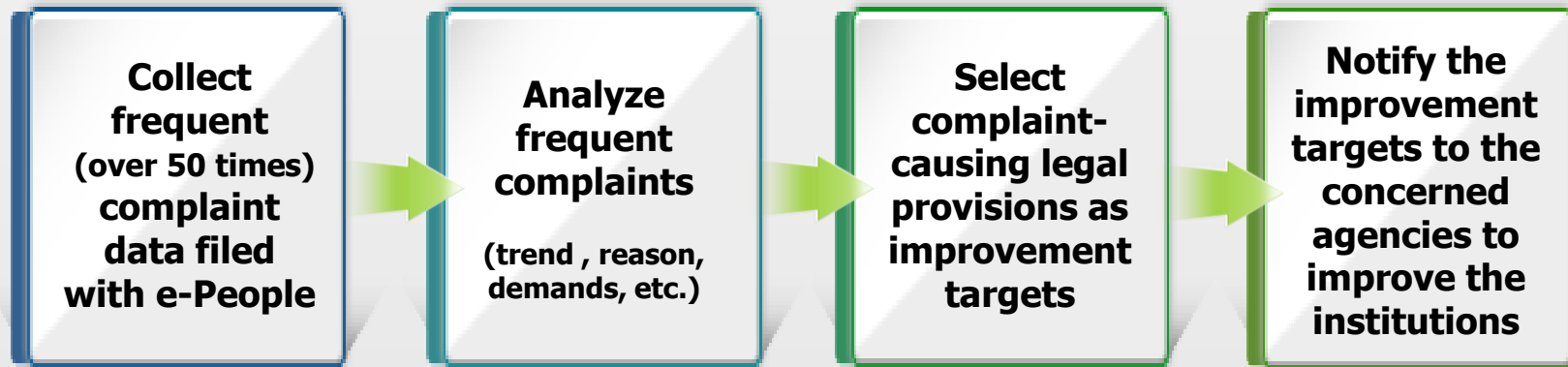
- Registered opinions: 2,765 opinions
- Hits: approx. 200,000 hits
- Survey targets: 1,170 people
- Implications & policy proposals
 - Strengthening personality education
 - Toughening the punishment against school violence perpetrators
 - Creating a comprehensive manual to respond to school violence

No. of discussions by year

| | Total | Policy Forum | | Electronic Policy Hearing | | Survey | |
|------|--------|--------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|--------|----------------|
| | | Agenda | Opinions | Agenda | Opinions | Agenda | Participations |
| 2009 | 22,167 | 58 | 480 | 594 | 19,171 | 17 | 1,847 |
| 2010 | 11,105 | 38 | 292 | 465 | 9,136 | 20 | 1,154 |
| 2011 | 72,057 | 41 | 612 | 636 | 66,345 | 23 | 4,400 |

4. Other Functions - Institutional Improvement through analyzing frequent complaints

Institutional Improvement through analyzing frequent complaints



- ※ Select 35 frequent complaints in 2011: 1st qtr (10), 2nd qtr (8), 3rd qtr (7), 4th qtr (10)
- ※ Examples : victims of fraudulent micropayments using cell phone, requests to improve child-care subsidy policies or national scholarship systems, etc.

4. Other functions - Foreign language service



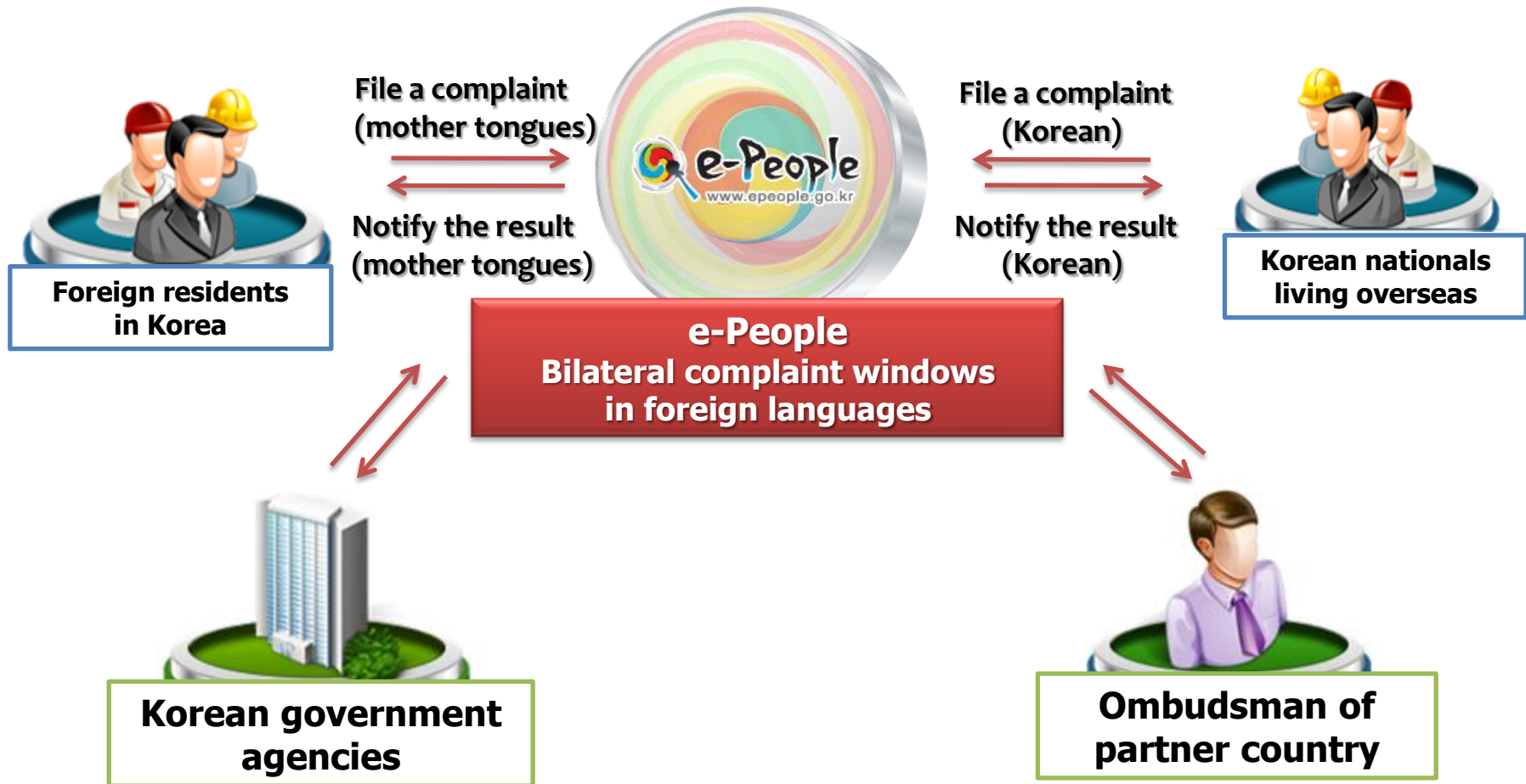
Major issues by sector

| Sector | Major issues |
|----------------|--|
| Legal | Visa issues(application, extension, refusal of issuance), passport examination, naturalization |
| Labor | Complaints for wages in areas, unfair labor practice |
| Education | Qualifications of foreign instructors, dentist qualifications for those who obtained foreign degrees |
| Civil/Criminal | Civil/criminal litigation proceedings, laws related to security check at the immigration office |
| Others | International marriage, proposals to establish new airport bus routes |



New Approach of e-people

Current bilateral complaint windows of e-People





Future Direction: Establishment of GPS(Global e-Petition System)

Establishment of GPS (Global e-Petition System)

IV. Future direction

Foreign language windows of e-People



MOU

Indonesian Ombudsman
Thai Ombudsman
Uzbekistan Ombudsman

ACRC solves complaints of foreign residents in Korea and Korean nationals living overseas against both the Korean government and the government of their residing country



- Ombudsman 1
- Ombudsman 2
- Ombudsman 3
- Ombudsman 4 (ACRC)

Anyone can file a complaint against a government (home country or residing country) in their mother tongue through the GPS



Q&A



Thank You