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## **New Government's Gender Policy: Vision and Tasks**

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Gender and family policy issues are gaining renewed importance these days due to the recent social and economic changes, resulting shifts in the family. They have also broadened, as new issues and tasks have emerged. It is thus necessary to assess and revisit the gender/family policy environment general to identify the policy orientation, agenda and specific tasks for the new government.

The status of women in Korea remains low despite the unrelenting increase in

women's social participation in the past two decades. Korea ranked 116th in the World Economic Forum's 2016 Gender Gap Index(GGI), continuing its slide from 97th in 2007 to 107th in 2011. Moreover, the gender pay gap stood at 37% as of 2014, more than double the OECD average of 15%. Coupled with the persistent rise in female irregular workers, they illustrate the worsening polarization and job insecurity in the labor market for women. Rise in violence and crimes against women and gender inequality in policy making are also important factors keeping down women's social participation and Korea's rank in the Gender Gap Index.

Dramatic changes are taking place inside the family as well. Persistent trends of low birthrate and population ageing, growing female participation in the labor market and increasing numbers of late marriage or non-marriage are causing gaps in family caregiving, resistance to the traditional forms of family or family life, and rising needs to accept new family culture. Increase in dual-income nuclear families keeps calling for more social support for family caregiving, in response to which the caregiving roles and responsibilities should be reshaped among the government, family and community. Diversification in the family structure is spawning new types of familial relations and memberships, raising the need to open up to new family structures and cultures. It is important to eliminate social prejudices and discrimination against different family types and memberships, and to spread a more inclusive concept of family that respects and embraces diversity. There are now beginnings of an alternative discourse on the family (which today is centered on nuclear family), and family values are also rapidly changing, necessitating modifications and broadening of the existing family policy.

There is also the challenge of increasing women's participation and representation in various fields, such as political, public and private. In politics, there have been attempts to adopt female quota in the candidacy for National Assembly and local councils, but female representation still has room for

improvement. Women's participation in public service has made headways through recruitment targeting (women's quota in public posts, gender-equal recruitment, etc.) but it, too, needs to be further improved.

It is against this backdrop that this study offers the gender policy vision and tasks for the new government in 11 areas: labor, family, work-family balance, caregiving, women's representation, gender mainstreaming, safety, gender violence, health, law and peace and unification.

1. Achieve gender equality in the labor market by reducing gender pay gap
2. Implement active family policy as a response to changes in the family
3. Support gender-equal work-family balance
4. Strengthen caregiving support through government-family-community linkage
5. Mainstream gender to achieve gender equality in public policy
6. Secure effectiveness in female representation
7. Enhance gender-specific safety competency by life cycle
8. Eliminate gender violence loopholes
9. Strengthen assurance of women's rights to health
10. Strengthen gender-equal policy making through legislation
11. Pursue gender-sensitive unification policy