

Need to Focus on Work-Life Balance as a Priority Task of Gender Equality Policies

Results of the Survey on the Public Perception of Gender Equality Policy in the Era of Transformation

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- With the upcoming inauguration of the new administration, Korean Women's Development Institute(KWDI) surveyed 5,000 women and men aged 18-69 across the country to understand their perception and demand for gender equality policies, and explored the implications for future policies.
- The purpose of this survey is to provide the basic data for establishing mid-to-long-term strategies of gender equality policies. In this survey, we explored how the Korean public perceives the direction of mid-to-long-term social changes and how they think about the necessity of gender equality policies and their improvement tasks in the key policy domains. Then, we analyzed the difference in responses among the survey participants by gender, generation, and class.

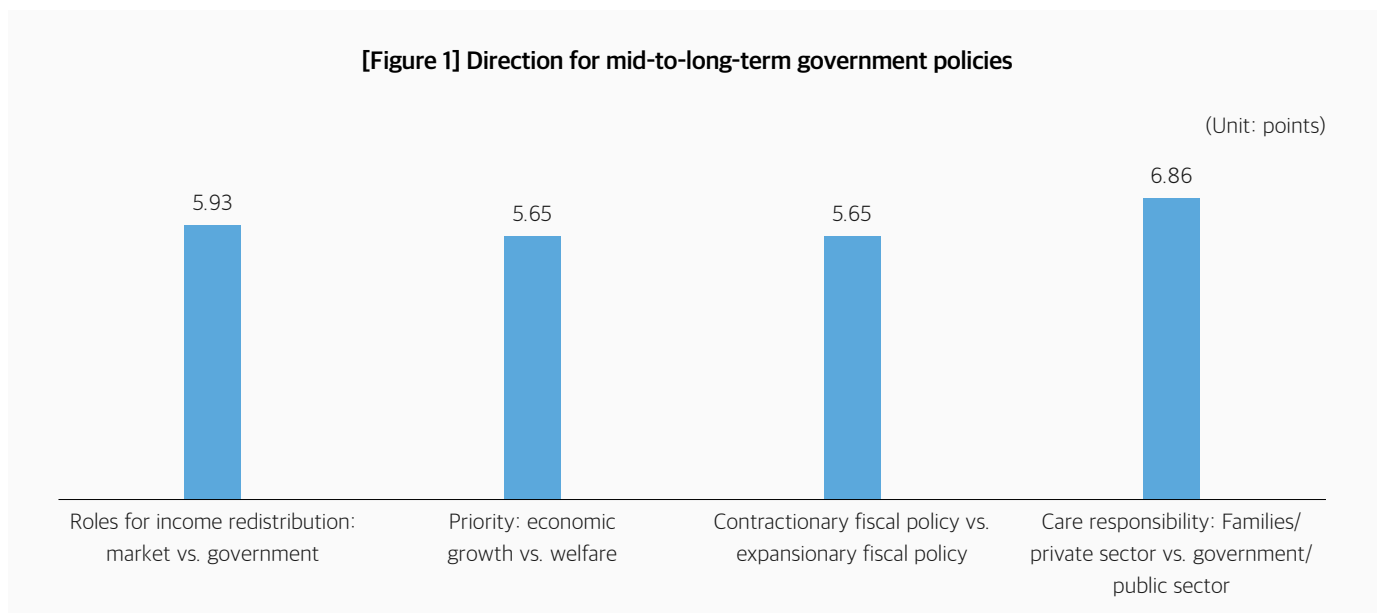
<Survey Overview>

Classification	Contents
Subject	5,000 men and women aged 18-69 across the country
Method	Web-based, online panel survey
Sample	Random sampling after population-based allocation by region/gender/age group
Period	January 5 ~ January 20, 2022
Content	Perception on mid-to-long-term social changes, achievements and future tasks of gender equality policies, and strategies for gender equality policy improvement

1) This manuscript is based on the presentation at 'The 3rd Forum on Gender Equality Policy in the Era of Transformation'.

Perception on mid-to-long-term social changes

- Need to expand the government's role compared to that of the market to address income redistribution and care responsibility
 - In the survey, more respondents said that the role of the government should increase compared to that of the market to address income redistribution and that the government/public sector is more responsible for nursing care/childcare than the families/private sector. Meanwhile, more respondents agreed than disagreed that the government should put higher priority on welfare than on economic growth. They also agreed that the government needs to continue expansionary fiscal policy to deal with issues arising since COVID-19 ([Figure 1]).

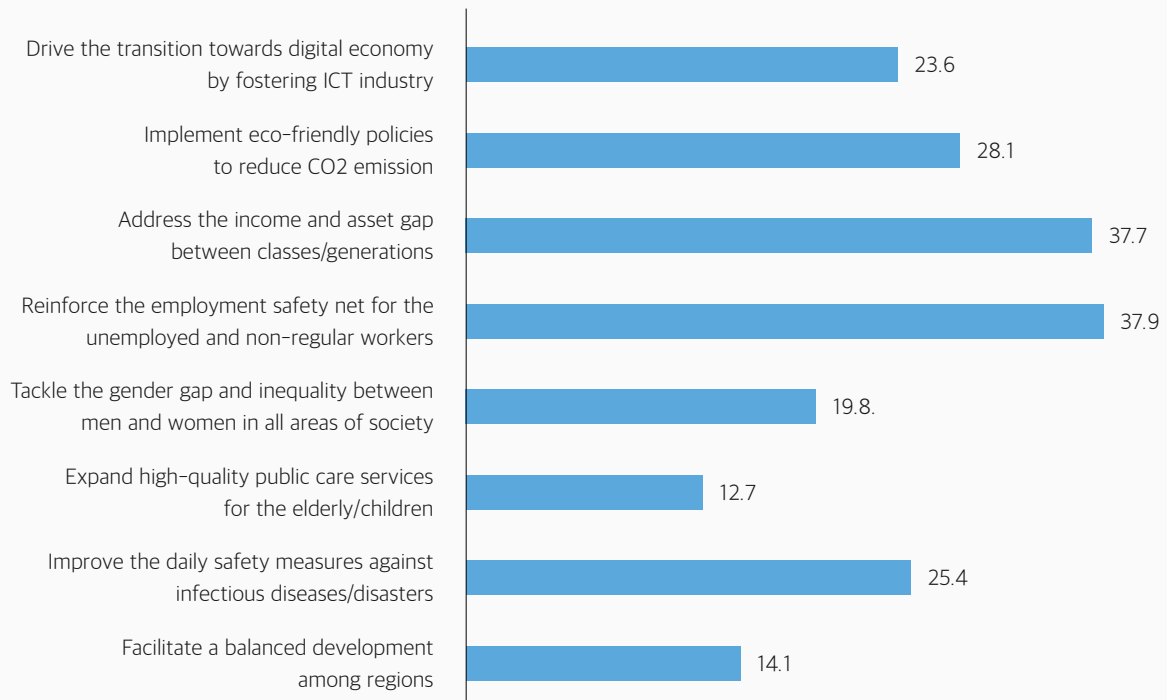


Note: The two policy directions were placed at '1' and '10' respectively, and the survey participants were asked to choose a value in the range of 1~10. The closer to 10 points, the more respondents chose the role of the government, priority on welfare, expansionary fiscal policy, and the responsibility of the government/public sector.

- Measures requested to address the gap between classes/generations and to strengthen the social safety net
 - When asked about desirable policy directions for the Korean society after COVID-19, the largest number of respondents chose 'Reinforce the employment safety net' (37.9%), which was followed by 'Address the gap between classes/generations' (37.7%), and 'Implement eco-friendly policies' (28.1%). In this survey, a considerable number of respondents opted for 'Improve the daily safety measures against infectious diseases/disasters' (25.4%) and 'Drive the transition towards digital economy' (23.6%) as well as 'Tackle the gender gap and inequality' (19.8%). ([Figure 2])

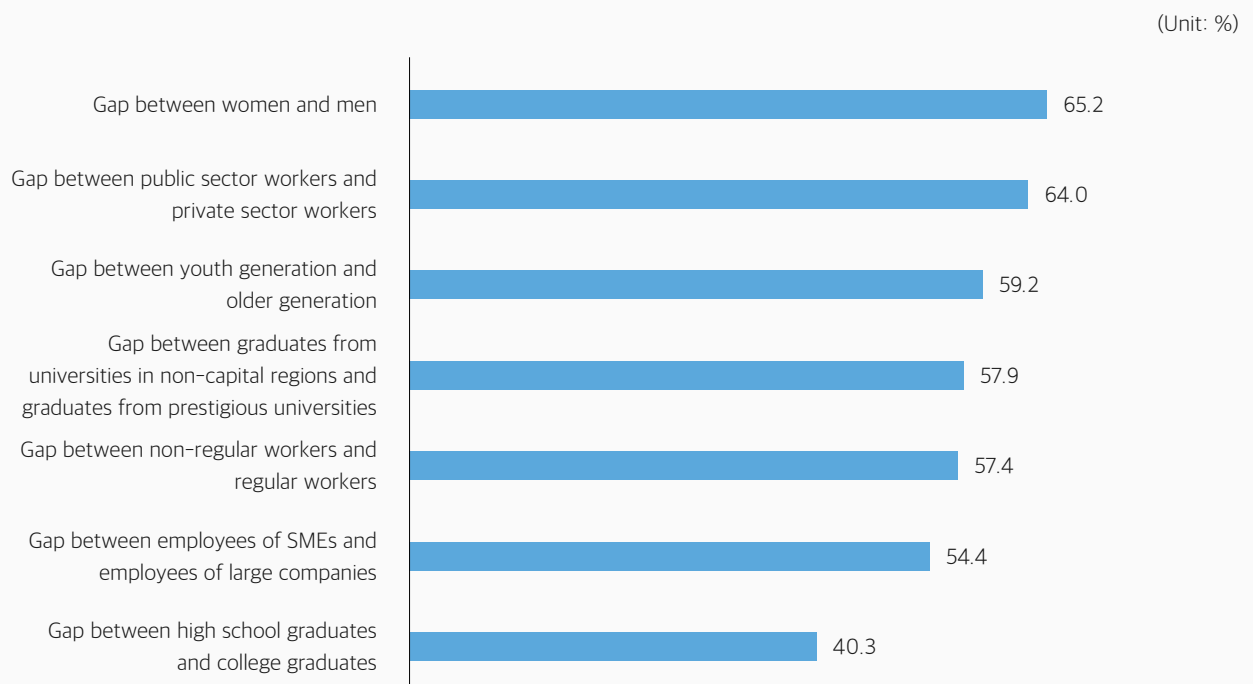
[Figure 2] Desirable policy directions for the Korean society: the first and second choice

(Unit: %)



- Men and women regarded as having the most unfair gap in wage/income, among different groups of population
 - As for the population group with the most unfair gap in wage/income in the Korean society, 65.2% of the respondents chose 'women & men', which was followed by 'public sector & private sector' (64.0%), 'youth generation & older generation' (59.2%), 'graduates from universities located in non-capital regions & graduates from prestigious universities' (57.9%), 'regular workers & non-regular workers' (57.4%), 'employees of SMEs & employees of large companies' (54.4%), 'high school graduates & college graduates' (40.3%) ([Figure 3]).

[Figure 3] Perception on wage/income gap among different groups of population in the Korean society

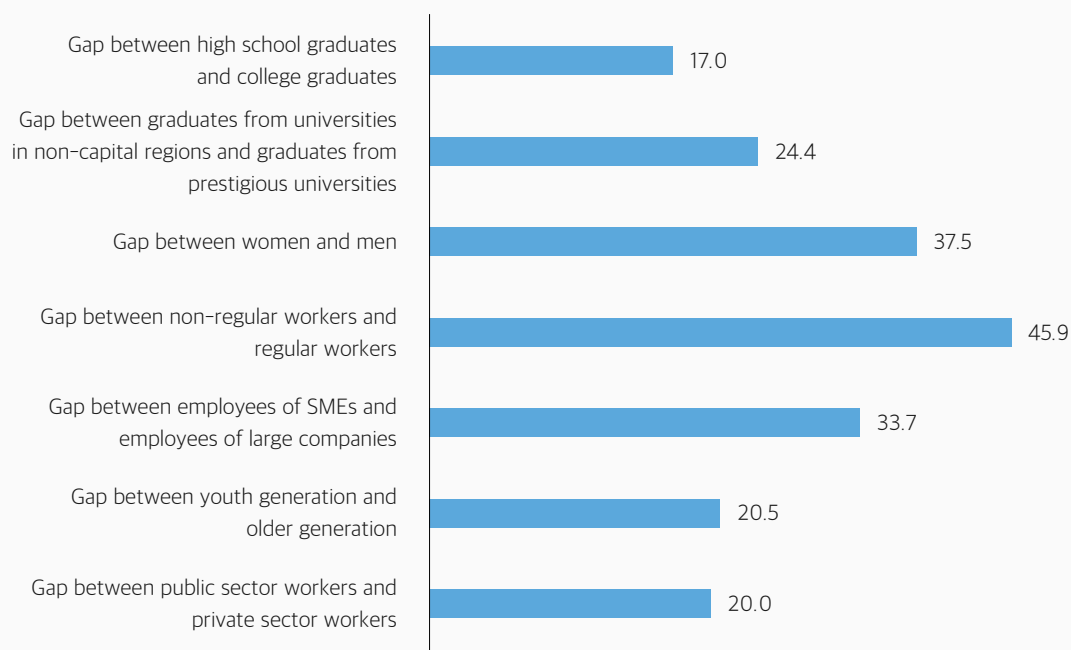


Note: Percentage of respondents who chose 'very unfair' and 'slightly unfair' in the four-point scale ranging from 'very unfair' to 'very fair.'

- Need policy intervention to resolve the gap between employment types/genders
 - Regarding the wage/income gap among different groups of population above, 45.9% of the respondents answered that the government's policy intervention is needed the most to improve the 'Gap between regular workers & non-regular workers', which was followed by the 'Gap between women and men' (37.5%) and the 'Gap between employees of SMEs and employees of large companies' (33.7%) ([Figure 4]).

**[Figure 4] The wage/income gap that should be improved through government policies:
the first and second choice**

(Unit: %)

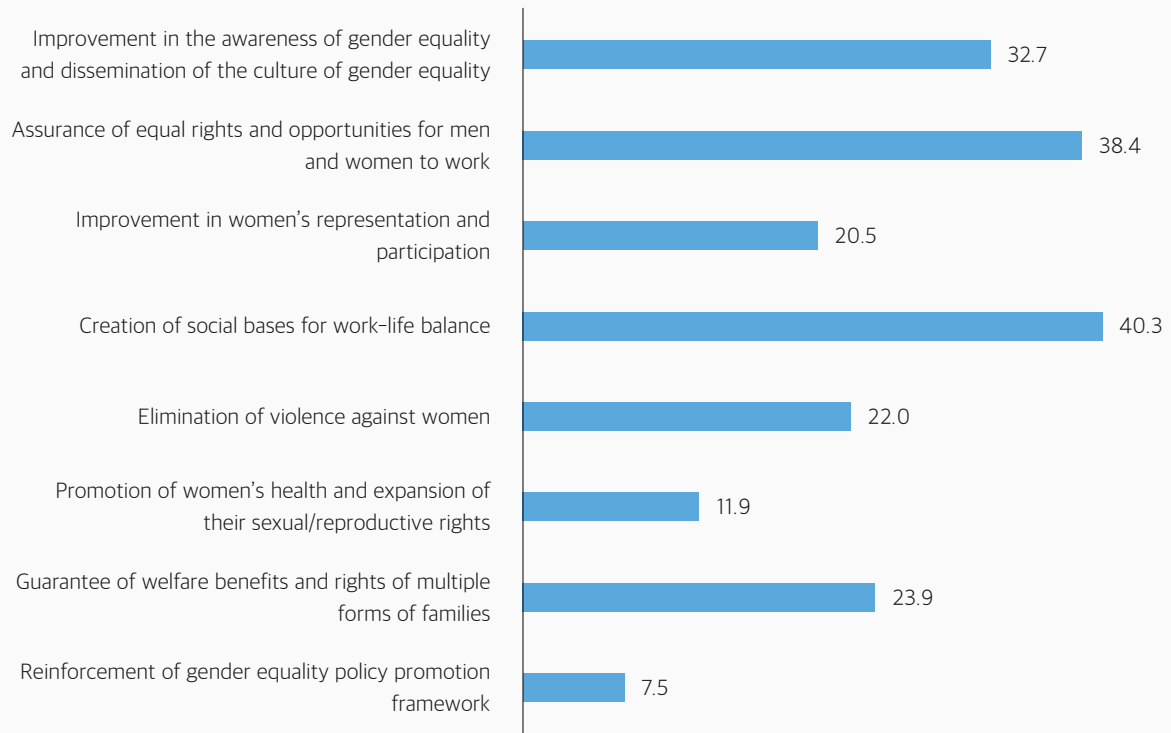


Achievements and future tasks of gender equality policies

- Work-life balance regarded as the biggest achievement of gender equality policies for the last 5 years
 - When asked about the biggest achievement of gender equality policies that have been implemented for the last 5 years, the respondents chose 'Creation of social bases for work-life balance' (40.3%), which was followed by 'Assurance of equal rights and opportunities for men and women to work' (38.4%), and 'Improvement in the awareness of gender equality and dissemination of the culture of gender equality' (32.7%) ([Figure 5]).

[Figure 5] Achievements of the current government's gender equality policies: first and second choice

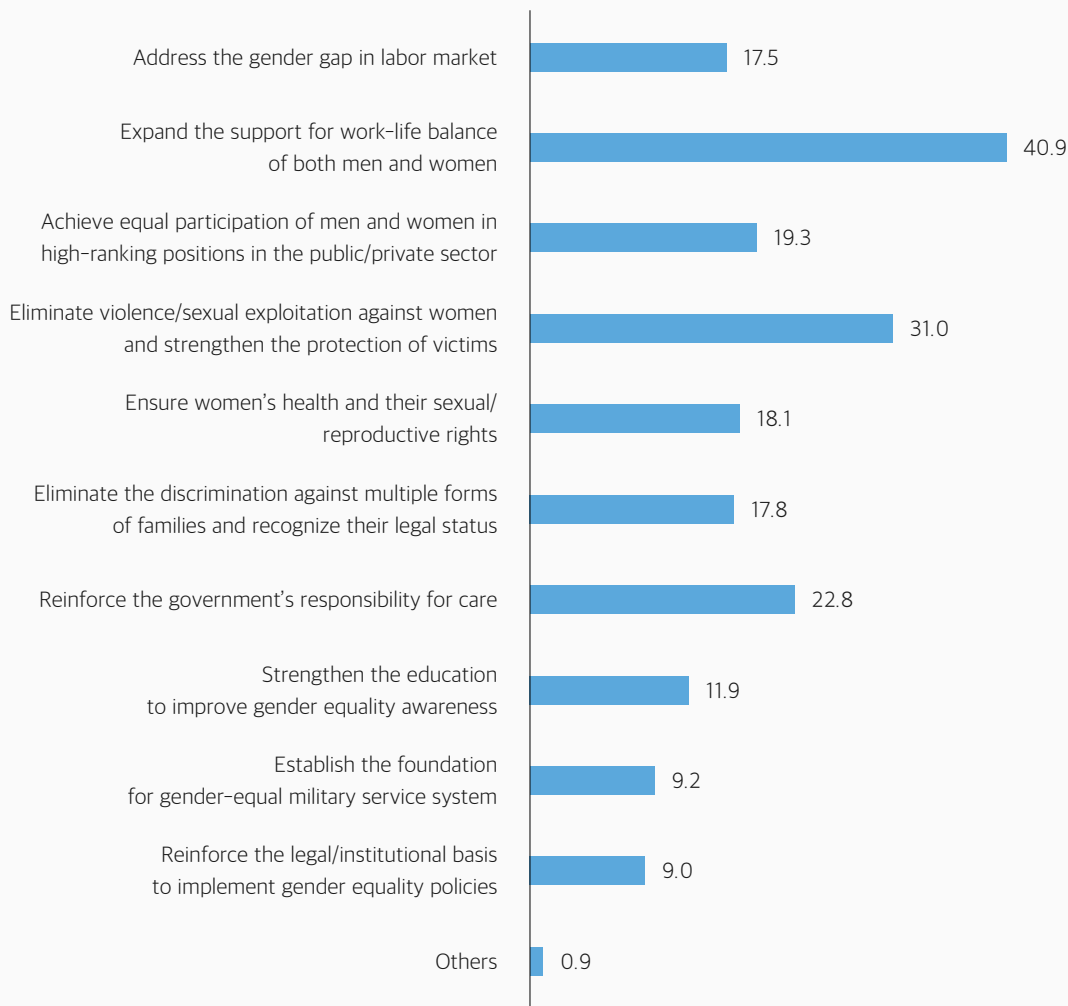
(Unit: %)



- Support for work-life balance of both men and women regarded as the next administration's priority in gender equality policies
 - As for the priority tasks of the next administration's gender equality policies, 40.9% of the respondents chose work-life balance ('Expand the support for work-life balance of both men and women'), which was followed by 'Eliminate violence/sexual exploitation against women and strengthen the protection of victims' (31%) and 'Reinforce the government's responsibility for care' (22.8%) ([Figure 6]).

[Figure 6] Priority tasks of the next administration's gender equality policies: first and second choice

(Unit: %)



Conclusion

- The survey shows that the Korean public demands the government to strengthen its responsibility for welfare/distribution/care rather than for economic growth and to address the gap between different classes, generations, genders, and employment types, considering the mid-to-long-term changes in our society since COVID-19.
- In the survey, two out of five Koreans chose 'Expand the support for work-life balance of both men and women' as the top priority of the next administration's gender equality policies. According to our analysis, both Korean men and women have higher demand for such policy tasks because they experienced difficulties in achieving work-life balance and used work-life balance programs including work-from-home options more often during the pandemic. Therefore, the next administration needs to consider work-life balance as a priority task in implementing its gender equality policies.