

# KWDI Issue Paper

**Research Title:** Direction of Support System Reorganization in Line with Family Changes and Relevant Tasks  
**Principal Researcher:** Hyo Jean Song, Research Fellow

## Direction of Support System Reorganization in Line with Family Changes

### Abstract

- ◆ Korean society is witnessing increasing individualization, diversity, and fluctuation in family structures, with rapid changes in the awareness of family support.
- ◆ The public support system have primarily responded to changes in family structures; however, except for the abolition of the Family Registry System since the establishment of the Civil Code, the private support system based on the extended family model from the agricultural society has remained unchanged.
- ◆ This research uses statistical data to explore changes in family and recognition of support, assesses the discrepancies between the provisions of the Civil Code and the actual support practices, and reviews family support issues. It also reviews the current legislative status regarding the support system in other countries. Based on that, it proposes directions and relevant tasks for reorganizing the private support system in response to changes in family.

### Background and Purposes

- **Korean society is witnessing increased individualization, diversity, and fluctuation in family, with rapid changes in the awareness of family support. The public support system have primarily responded to changes in family structures; however, except for the abolition of the Family Registry System since the establishment of the Civil Code in 1958, the private support system based on the extended family model from the agricultural society has remained unchanged.**

- This research uses statistical data to explore changes in family and recognition of support, assesses the discrepancies between the provisions of the Civil Code and the actual support practices, and reviews family support issues. Based on that, it proposes directions and relevant tasks for reorganizing the private support system in response to changes in family.
- The scope of this research is to explore the direction of reorganization mainly on economic support from the support system under the Civil Code (so-called private support system).

## Research Outcome and International Case Study

### ● Changes in family and support awareness

- Based on analysis of statistical data from prior study on changes in family and support awareness, this research examines family changes from the perspectives of 'expanding diversity in family' and 'changing awareness and attitudes towards family.' The key findings are as follows.
- The diversification of family structure is evidenced by the increasing trend of individuals choosing not to have families and by the increased fluctuation of family relations.
  - ▶ The most notable structural change is the increasing trend of individuals choosing not to marry, such as the rise in unmarried and single-person households. This is evident from the declining marriage rates (Statistics Korea, Population Trends Survey (1980-2020, annually)) and the increasing social acceptance of remaining unmarried (Statistics Korea, Attitudes Towards Marriage (a couple can live together without being married), and Social Survey (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020)) that marriage is unlikely to function as a universal norm in the future, and the instability of partnerships (marital relationships) is expected to increase.
  - ▶ Furthermore, while the proportion of households composed of kin such as married couples and parent-child units is gradually decreasing, the proportion of single-person households and households where non-relatives live together (non-family households) is on a continual rise (see Table 1 below).

<Table 1> Trends in Household Composition by Type (2020-2050)

(Unit: %)

Category		2020	2025	2030	2040	2050
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Single-person households		31.2	34.3	35.6	37.9	39.6
Family households	Total	66.8	63.3	61.8	59.2	57.3
	Couples	16.8	18.3	20.0	22.2	23.3
	Couples + Children	29.3	26.0	23.6	19.7	17.1
	Father + Children	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.0
	Mother + Children	7.3	7.0	6.9	6.6	6.6
	Three generations	3.8	2.9	2.4	1.8	1.4
	Other*	7.1	6.8	6.7	6.7	6.8
Non-family households		2.0	2.4	2.6	2.9	3.1

\*Note: "Other" includes couples + parents, grandparents + grandchildren, etc.

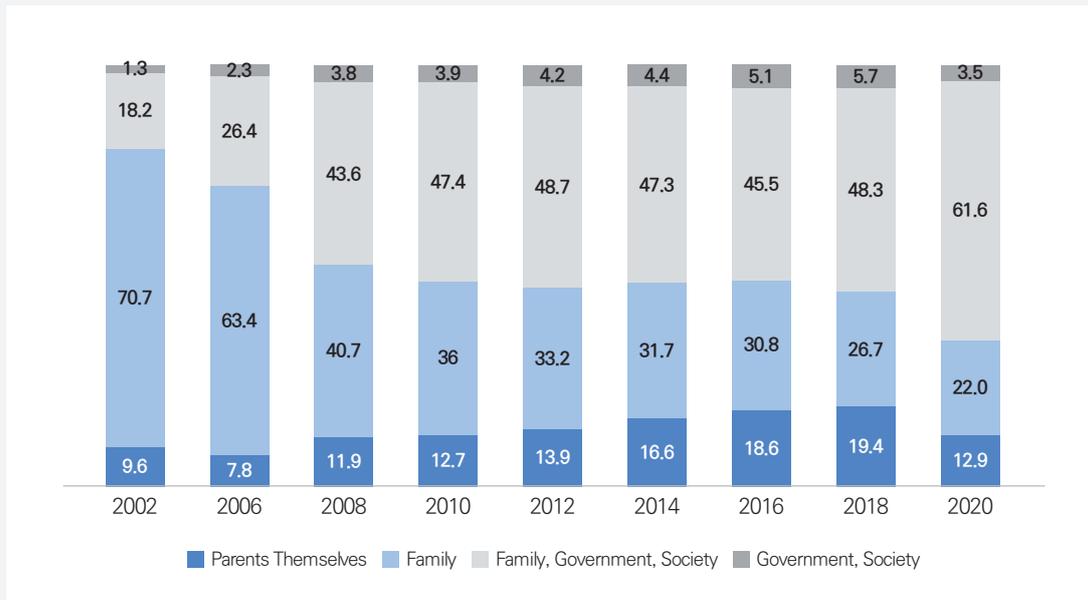
Source: Statistics Korea (2022, June 28). Future Household Projections: 2020-2050 Press Release, p.4.

- ▶ The weakening of traditional family norms is expected to deepen the fluctuation of family. Statistical analysis shows that the stability of marriage is declining, and social acceptance of changes in family relations or choices outside of institutional marriage, such as divorce, remarriage, and cohabitation without marriage, is on the rise (Statistics Korea, Population Trends Survey (1980-2020, annually); Statistics Korea, Opinions on Divorce, Social Survey (2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020); Statistics Korea, Attitudes Towards Marriage (men and women can live together without being married), Social Survey (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020)). This indicates that the family does not exist in a fixed form but changes dynamically, and throughout life, the relationships and lifestyles individuals choose are likely to be fluidly constituted. The fluctuation in family relations suggests that there may be misalignment with existing support systems that assume fixed family forms.

**● The facets of family change can also be seen in the awareness of the concept of family and support responsibilities.**

- ▶ According to a survey on awareness related to family (Kim et al., 2021:52-53), family is still predominantly recognized as a construct based on marriage and blood relations, yet this perception is limited to close relations centered around the self, such as spouses, parents, children, and siblings. Moreover, there is a tendency to define family more in terms of emotionally intimate relationships rather than instrumental functions (Kim et al., 2021:56). Consequently, the legally and institutionally defined concept of family is becoming narrower and weaker, and the trend of recognizing family in terms of emotional closeness is expected to expand.
- ▶ Furthermore, the obligation and responsibility of caring for family members, especially elderly parents, are also weakening. Results from empirical studies show that the perception of parent support as a responsibility of the family (children) is gradually diminishing, while the recognition that the government and society should share the support responsibilities traditionally held by families is increasing (see <Figure 1> below). Based on these results, the existing support system that has primarily assigned the duty and responsibility of parent support to family members (children) is likely to be unsustainable in the future.

<Figure 1> Attitudes Towards Parent Support (2002-2020)



Note 1: Survey of population aged 15 and older (2002-2010) and aged 13 and older (2008 onwards).

Note 2: Responses in the "Other" category for 2002 and 2006 were 0.2% and 0.1%, respectively, and are excluded from the graph.

Source: Statistics Korea. Social Survey. Various years. Retrieved from: [https://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT\\_1W2A03&conn\\_path=I3](https://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1W2A03&conn_path=I3), [https://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT\\_1W2C03&conn\\_path=I3](https://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1W2C03&conn_path=I3), [https://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT\\_1SSFA040R&conn\\_path=I3](https://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=101&tblId=DT_1SSFA040R&conn_path=I3) (accessed June 2, 2022).

When integrating the results discussed, it becomes clear that the concept of family is transitioning into relationships based on intimacy, which are selectively formed by individuals. In this context, the recognition of familial responsibilities and obligations, as traditionally defined by law, is diminishing. Reflecting on these patterns of family change, it is crucial to reevaluate the continuing validity of traditional private support systems, which assume the family as a stable relational and economic unit.

## Current Status and Limitations of the Support System under the Civil Code

The Civil Code addresses family support among kin in Chapter 7, consisting of six articles (Civil Code, Articles 974 to 979). Since its enactment in 1958, the Civil Code has remained largely unchanged except for a 1990 amendment that eliminated the support duties of the head of family, even after more than 60 years, the support system based on the extended family established at the time of enactment is still in place.

The Civil Code specifies the range of kin obligated to support each other as 'between direct blood relatives and their spouses' and 'other kin (as defined by the Civil Code, blood relatives within the eighth degree of kinship, relatives by affinity within the fourth degree, and spouses) (only if they live together)' (Civil Code Article 974). It states that 'the obligation to provide support arises only when the recipient is unable to maintain themselves through their own means or labor' (Civil Code Article 975). Section VII of the Civil Code on Support imposes this support obligation as a mandatory provision across a broad range of kin, from blood relatives to relatives by marriage, placing a significant burden on individuals.

- ▶ Moreover, the obligation to support minor children, considered more significant than general family support, is encompassed within the parental authority to ‘protect and educate’ their child, as stipulated in Article 913 of the Civil Code, and is merely indicated and interpreted as such.
- ▶ The obligation to support one's spouse, regarded as more significant than kinship support, is based on specific marital obligations in the marriage law section of the Civil Code (Article 826, Paragraph 1), rather than the provisions for ‘other relatives share living accommodations,’ and this has traditionally been the prevailing interpretation.

<Table 2> Support System in the Korean Civil Code

Category	Scope of Support Obligations	Legal Basis
Mutual support between spouses	Legally married spouses	Civil Code Article 826: Duty to cohabit, support, and cooperate
	Common-law spouses	- No legal basis - Recognized by case law: Duty to cohabit, support, and cooperate
Support for minor children	Parents' obligation to support minors	- No specific support provision - Derived from Civil Code Article 913: Rights and duties of protection and education by parents
Family Support	Direct blood relatives	Civil Code Articles 974(1), 975-979
	Spouses of direct blood relatives	Civil Code Articles 974(1), 975-979
	Other family (if cohabiting) : Defined by Civil Code Article 777 as relatives (within the 8th degree of consanguinity, 4th degree of affinity, and spouses)  Excludes relatives specified in Article 974(1) (dominant perceptions and law cases suggest support for spouses and minor children should be excluded from this category)	Civil Code Article 974(3), 975-979

Source: Compiled by the research team based on the Civil Code.

**● Korean support system can be seen as a blend of legal provisions rooted in pre-modern structures (extended family and kinship communities) and legal reasoning in interpretations and case law intended to reflect modern concepts (nuclear family).**

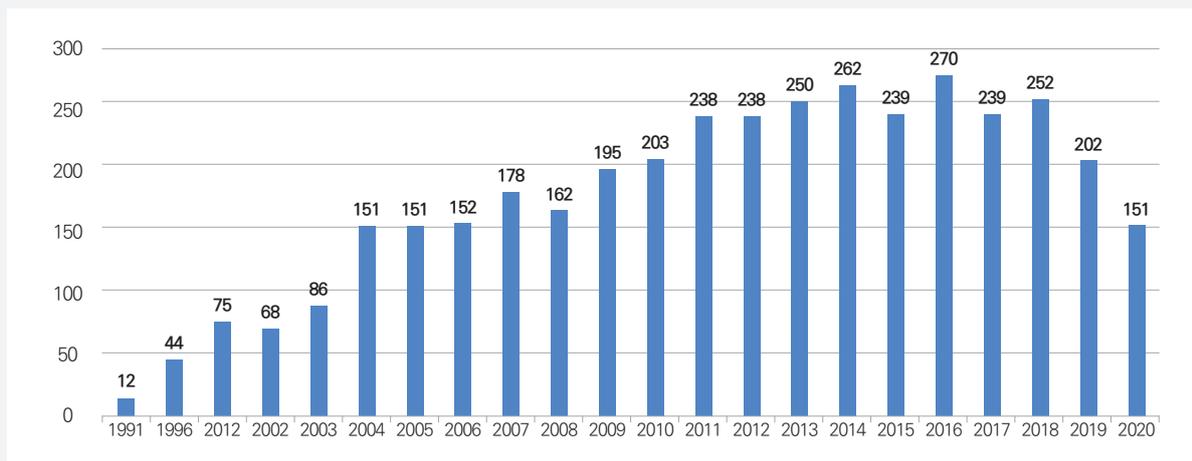
- ▶ In a society transitioning from extended families to nuclear families, the focus has shifted from family support to spousal support and child maintenance. However, Chapter 7 of the Civil Code, which regulates support, is ill-suited for a nuclear family society. The traditional legal principles fail to adequately address the support of minor children and spouses, rendering Chapter 7 less effective. Case law, rather than statutory provisions, has filled gaps regarding spousal and child support. Additionally, the Civil Code lacks provisions for support in individually chosen relationships. Moreover, Article 974 of Section VII, which mandates kinship support, faces criticism for its overly broad scope, misalignment with contemporary values, and lack of effectiveness.
- ▶ Thus, the private support system under the Civil Code, centered around kin-based support from a pre-modern agricultural society, faces inherent limitations due to a mismatch between the legal framework and the interpretative legal reasoning required for a nuclear family-oriented society.

## Support Challenges Arising from Family Changes

- Specific cases in case law, support-related documents, and literature confirm that the gap between the Civil Code's support system and the realities of increasing family diversity and evolving perceptions of support has widened.
- Disputes over family support can be understood as stemming from legal norms that fail to reflect the evolving values and societal changes in family dynamics and support perceptions. These conflicts illustrate the misalignment and tensions between traditional views on family support and contemporary changes. The current state of support-related litigation reflects these conflicts and the shifts in our society's approach to family support.
  - According to the Judicial Yearbook published annually by the National Court Administration, the number of support payment lawsuits was 12 in 1991 and 75 in 2001, increasing significantly to 151 in 2004 and 270 in 2016. However, a trend has declined, with the number of falling back to 151 cases in 2020 (see Figure 2 below).
  - The obligation of support that was once taken for granted among family members has become difficult to remain due to the growing fluidity and diversity of family structures. This disparity between reality and the legal system, coupled with evolving and varied perceptions of familial support, has resulted in conflicts manifesting as lawsuits. However, as expectations for support obligations bound by blood ties have diminished and the reality of family changes has made it more challenging for families to assume stable support roles, there is a declining trend in the willingness to pursue legal action against legally obligated family members.

<Figure 2> Number of Support Payment Claims Filed

(Unit: Case)



Source: National Court Administration (1991, 1996, 2001-2020), Judicial Yearbook.

## ● Implications and Issues of Family Support as Explained Through Case Law and Case Studies

### ● It has been confirmed that perceptions of family support, once taken for granted, are changing.

- ▶ It has become evident that the perception of children's obligation and responsibility to support their grandparents as a natural duty is weakening. While the system still imposes support obligations based on blood relatives, expecting stability in these relationships has become difficult, and relying on inherent support responsibilities based solely on biological ties is increasingly challenging.

I have two children, but I am out of contact with both. I am struggling financially and would like to receive government support, but it's not allowed because my children are financially well-off. I want to receive living expenses from my children (Consultation case from Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relations, a 70-year-old female client, Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relations, 2022.9:8).

- ▶ The support obligations defined by the Civil Code, which extend beyond direct blood relatives to include broader kinship units, now appear ineffective and obsolete. Cases or precedents involving support among siblings or other cohabiting kin are rare, aside from claims between the spouses of deceased direct descendants, and most cases involve no obligation due to non-cohabitation. The extensive kinship support outlined by the system is disconnected from reality. Given the weakened awareness of support obligations even among direct descendants, expecting legal demands for such support is unrealistic.

My husband passed away two years ago, and my sister-in-law lives in the USA. My mother-in-law lives two hours away, and my sister-in-law has arranged for me to manage my mother-in-law's living expenses. However, neither my children nor I wish to continue supporting my mother-in-law (grandmother) (Consultation case from Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relations, a 63-year-old female client, Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relations, 2022.9:10).

In a case where a mother-in-law, who received a monthly allowance of 200,000 won from her son A, continued to receive the same amount from her daughter-in-law after her son's death, a property dispute led her to claim both past and future support payments from the daughter-in-law. The Supreme Court ruled that past support payments can only be claimed if the entitled person had requested support and the obligated party failed to fulfill their duty, causing a delay. Therefore, no past support payments were granted. For future support payments, under Article 974(1) of the Civil Code, a direct descendant must support their parent or spouse's parent regardless of cohabitation, as long as the descendant is alive. However, per Article 974(3), if the descendant is deceased, the surviving spouse's obligation to support the parent is recognized only if they live together and the surviving spouse has not remarried. Thus, the mother-in-law's claim was not recognized (Supreme Court Decision 2013.8.30, 2013스96 [Support Payment]; Lee Eun-jung, 2017:209-210).

### ● Interdependence is becoming increasingly important in the context of support responsibilities.

- ▶ With increasing fluidity and diversity in family relationships, it has been found that uniformly imposing or denying support obligations based solely on kinship is inappropriate. Consequently, considering reciprocal relationships and contexts when determining support responsibilities is becoming more significant.
- ▶ Cases of adult children unwilling to support parents who neglected their duties due to non-support, domestic violence, etc., have been identified. Traditionally seen as obligatory due to blood ties and rooted in morality and kinship, there is a growing recognition that support obligations should be assessed based on the reciprocal aspects of the relationship, even among direct relatives.

- ▶ Additionally, various cases have shown that the traditional support system often fails to operate effectively in complex relationships, such as those in blended families, which are difficult to uniformly categorize.
- ▶ Such cases demonstrate the possibility that decisions regarding support may need to consider reciprocal relationships, as it has been observed that uniformly determining support obligations based solely on blood or legal kinship, as prescribed by the Civil Code, can be misaligned with reality.

My father, who tormented the family with gambling and alcohol addiction, has filed a claim for support from his children. I do not want to provide financial support to my father (Consultation case from Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relations, a 49-year-old male client, Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relations, 2022.9:8).

A father (plaintiff) sought a monthly support payment of 600,000 won from his daughter (defendant). The father habitually inflicted domestic violence on his wife and daughter, causing injuries and expelling the daughter from the house naked, and prevented her from attending middle school. The daughter left to live with her mother and had almost no contact with her father, who did not support her education. She later passed the middle school equivalency exam, attended high school and university, and became an elementary school teacher. She currently supports her two young children, cohabiting mother, and pays 1.1 million won monthly for her in-laws' nursing care.

She earns about 4 million won per month, while her spouse, an education public servant, also works. They have an 80 million won loan with ongoing interest payments. The court dismissed the father's claim for support (Cheongju District Court, Decision No. 2012누단299 on September 27, 2012: final [Support Payment]. Summarized by researchers based on stated facts).

**With the increase in family fluidity and the growing number of children being raised in diverse caregiving environments beyond the traditional parent-child family structure, it has been observed that the current support system for minor children is significantly inadequate and vulnerable.**

- ▶ Although precedents and cases still predominantly address issues related to the separation of custody and caregiving following parental divorce and avoidance of support, additional concerns may arise from situations such as suspension or loss of parental rights due to child abuse, the incarceration of a parent, or circumstances where custody and caregiving are separated, involving non-parental guardians such as foster homes or institutional care.
- ▶ Given these fluid family relations and the issues of support for minor children, the current support system outlined in the Civil Code is inadequate to address these challenges, necessitating reorganization and enhancements.

**As family diversity intensifies with increasing unmarried individuals, single-person households, and non-family households, support from traditional family and kin as defined by existing systems is becoming difficult to expect. On the other hand, some individuals still willingly choose to provide support.**

- ▶ While there is a growing desire to form new partner relationships and mutually provide support, cases show that such intentions and the actual support relationships are often excluded from systems and policies (recent trends can be observed through case laws). Although the traditional function of family support is weakening, it is also difficult to expect public support systems to completely compensate for this reality, hence, respecting and institutionally supporting mutually supportive relationships formed by individual choice becomes a crucial and meaningful issue to address the gaps and blind spots in the support system.

Non-legal family members are excluded from personal deductions in year-end tax settlements. Despite living together and providing mutual care and support, they face financial losses due to this exclusion (from the survey 'Government, Here is My 'Family', question on discrimination experienced in the use of government welfare policies and services, recited from Lee Min-joo, 2022:20).

On January 7, the 6th Division of the Seoul Administrative Court dismissed the claim of Plaintiff A (31), who has a same-sex male spouse B (32), in the lawsuit against the National Health Insurance Service for cancellation of the insurance premium imposition (Case No. 2021구합55456). A argued that "despite being entitled to recognition as a dependent of B, an employee insured under the health insurance scheme, it was unlawful to impose health insurance and long-term care insurance premiums totaling 115,560 won." The plaintiff had quit his job due to health issues and became a regional member of the health insurance scheme as of December 1, 2018. (Legal Times, 2022.2.12.).

However, the Seoul High Court, serving as the appellate court for this case, ruled that the National Health Insurance Service's decision to deprive the plaintiff, who is in a same-sex union, of the status of a de facto spouse without any reasonable justification, violated the principle of equality and was therefore illegal. Consequently, the court overturned the initial verdict as unjust and canceled the National Health Insurance Service's decision (Seoul High Court Decision on February 21, 2023, Case No. 2022ㄴ32797: Appeal [Cancellation of Insurance Premium Assessment]).

## International Cases

The scope of private support obligations as defined by various countries' legal systems is outlined below.

<Table 3> Scope of Private Support Obligations According to Foreign Legal Systems

Legal System	Scope of Support Obligations	Notes
Korean Civil Code	① Direct blood relatives and spouses ② Kin living together*	* Relatives within the 8th degree of consanguinity, 4th degree of affinity: only if cohabiting
Central/Northern Europe	① Spouses ② Direct blood relatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obligation recognized between grandparents ↔ grandchildren (Germany)</li> <li>• Some obligations recognized between parents ↔ adult children (Germany)</li> <li>• No obligations recognized between parents ↔ adult children (UK)</li> </ul>
Southern/Eastern Europe	① Spouses ② Direct blood relatives ③ Siblings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greece, Spain, Turkey, Russian Federation</li> <li>• Includes spouses of direct blood relatives (Italy)</li> </ul>
Asian countries	Japan ① Spouses ② Direct blood relatives, siblings ③ Special circumstances: relatives within the 3rd degree of consanguinity*	*By family court decision
	Taiwan ① Spouses ② Direct blood relatives ③ Spouses' direct ancestors and descendants living together ④ Siblings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes mutual support among other family members under head of family</li> </ul>

Source: Dethloff (2018: Rn.4); Muscheler (2017: Rn.661); Schwab (2022: Rn.1055, Rn.1110); Lowe et al. (2021: 227); Greek Civil Code Article 1504 (Source: Greek Ministry of Justice, accessed August 30, 2022); Spanish Civil Code Article 143 (Source: Spanish Ministry of Justice, accessed August 30, 2022); Turkish Civil Code Article 364 (Source: Turkish Legislative Information, accessed August 30, 2022); Russian Federation Family Code Article 93 (Source: Korea Legislation Research Institute, accessed August 30, 2022); Italian Civil Code Article 433 (Source: Italian Official Gazette, accessed August 30, 2022); Japanese Civil Code Articles 752, 877 (Source: Japan Ministry of Justice, accessed August 30, 2022); Taiwanese Civil Code Articles 1114, 1116-1 (Source: Ministry of Justice, 2012: 599).

● Fundamentally, the scope of individuals obligated to provide private support is generally much narrower in other legal systems compared to the Korean legal system.

- ▶ In Central and Northern European welfare states, support among direct blood relatives is recognized only for minor children or is limited between parents and adult children, and sometimes extends to grandparents and grandchildren. A common feature of private support systems is the focus on spouses or partners and minor children.

## Policy Recommendations

### ● Direction for Reorganizing the Support System

● The proposed direction for restructuring the private support system to adapt to changes in family structures is outlined below.

- ▶ The private support system should be restructured to ease the inherent, binding obligations based on blood ties and status, and to provide an institutional basis for mutual support relationships formed by the will and choice of the parties. This restructuring should focus on support obligations as responsibilities tied to choice and action.
- ▶ The primary task in reorganizing private support is to clearly define its essential basis while appropriately restructuring the extensive scope of family and blood-relative support, remnants of an agrarian society, to align with current realities.

● Accordingly, the principles for reorganizing the support system under the Civil Code can be established as follows.

- ▶ The primary basis and legal reasoning for support under the Civil Code should derive from relationships based on personal will, contractual responsibilities, and actions. This establishes mutual support obligations between spouses (married or cohabiting) and support obligations towards minor children and adolescents.
- ▶ Although aiming for a welfare state, public support systems cannot entirely replace private ones, the obligation to support direct blood relatives should be recognized based on societal perceptions, but its scope must align with changed family structures and values, considering reciprocal relationships. The broad range of kinship should be restructured to include only direct blood relatives, allowing for flexible judgment based on mutual relational dynamics.
- ▶ The restructuring of private support systems should align with the prevailing trend in Korean society to reduce economic dependence on families and ensure individual economic foundations and safety nets, pursued alongside the continuous strengthening of public support.

## ● **Tasks for the Reorganization of the Support System**

### ● **Reorganize support regulations for parties opting for mutual support**

- ▶ Under the Civil Code, the primary basis and legal principle of support should be rooted in relationships based on individual will and contractual responsibilities. The representative obligation is spousal support between married partners. However, with the increasing diversity and fluidity of families, the current private support system has blind spots that public support cannot fully cover, and restricting legal recognition of chosen mutual support relationships to legal marriage fails to reflect the parties' intentions and actual support situations, leaving the system unable to address the growing burden of public support costs and the gaps in the support system.
- ▶ The private support system should be reorganized to encompass not only traditional legal marriage relationships but also alternative arrangements and choices, centering on relationships where parties choose to support each other, thereby respecting and supplementing these within the support system.

### ● **Clarification and prioritization of the basis and hierarchy for supporting minor children**

- ▶ The obligation to support minor children is recognized as the most crucial and significant aspect of private support today. Unlike other forms of family support, such as between direct blood relatives, the legal basis for the duty to support minor children, along with greater responsibility and prioritization, ultimately rests on the responsibility arising from one's actions.
- ▶ It is essential to clarify the legal basis for the duty to support minor children, a key aspect of private support, while considering the introduction of an advance child support payment system and defining the relationship between public and private support; additionally, given the increasing instances where parental authority and caregiving responsibilities are separated due to various family changes, it is necessary to establish a clear legal basis for the entities entitled to claim and exercise support rights. Therefore, it is proposed to legislate the Civil Code to clearly establish the legal basis and priority of support responsibilities for minor children.
- ▶ When parental authority and caregiving responsibilities are separated, as in cases of guardianship, foster care, or institutional care, practical challenges and unresolved issues regarding the support of minor children arise, highlighting the need for a clear legal basis within existing frameworks. Furthermore, it is necessary to establish principles for supporting minor children and delineating support responsibilities when parental authority and caregiving are separated.

## ● Reducing and Restructuring the Scope of Family Support

- ▶ There is a need to reorganize the overly broad scope of family support obligations in line with changes in family dynamics. As Korean society evolves beyond nuclear families towards greater individualization, changing perceptions and values render the current kinship-based support system misaligned with reality. Given that the public support system does not fully cover private support, it is necessary to reorganize and narrow the scope of support to reflect contemporary societal norms.
- ▶ In foreign countries, private support typically focuses on partners and minor children, with minor variations. In contrast, South Korea has the broadest scope, encompassing relatives within the eighth degree of consanguinity and the fourth degree of affinity. It is proposed to narrow this scope to primarily cover parental obligations toward their children.
- ▶ Additionally, to reflect changes in family relations and perceptions, it is worth considering the introduction of exception provisions that account for reciprocal relationships when determining support obligations. This would allow for the restriction of support claims from individuals who have not fulfilled their own support duties.

## ● Strengthening Public Support Systems - Harmonizing with the Restructuring of Private Support Systems

- ▶ Strengthening the public support system and restructuring the private support system must be coordinated and implemented together. When considering public support in relation to the restructuring of the private support system, it is evident that the reorganization of private support aligns with the broader trend of strengthening public support in our society. Strengthening public support is essential for ensuring individual survival rights, which, in turn, allows for the formation of support relationships based on free choice and mutual equality. Respecting support relationships based on individual choice can be seen as a virtuous cycle that alleviates the public costs associated with strengthening public support.
- ▶ Clarifying the support responsibilities for minor children and ensuring their support across diverse family backgrounds should be based on strengthening state responsibility, minimizing blind spots, and providing robust institutional protection through both public and private support systems.
- ▶ The reduction of private support obligations among kin should be pursued alongside the strengthening of the public support system. In response to changes in family and society, the ineffective scope of private support should be restructured, while ensuring that the public support system guarantees individual survival rights and economic safety nets.
- ▶ The support system should be reorganized to ensure that strengthened public support guarantees individual safety nets, while private support and solidarity fill gaps, creating a complementary interaction between public and private support. Reducing economic dependence on family and ensuring individual economic foundations and safety nets are essential for effective and harmonious private support.

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Responsible Ministry : Ministry of Justice(Office of Legal Counsel)

Related Ministries : Ministry of Justice(Office of Legal Counsel), Ministry of Gender Equality and Family(Family Policy Division)