



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Ninth periodic report submitted by the Republic of Korea under
article 18 of the Convention, due in 2022****

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The annexes to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



I. Introduction

1. The Republic of Korea became the 90th country in the world to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in May 1983. The CEDAW entered into force in Korea on January 26, 1985, obtaining the same force as domestic laws. Korea has submitted its periodic reports every four years following the initial report in 1986, with its eighth report submitted in July 2015 and reviewed in February 2018. It conducted inter-ministerial monitoring and inspection on an annual basis to improve and effectively implement the recommendations contained in the Concluding Observations on the Eighth Periodic Report and submitted its follow-up report to the Concluding Observations in March 2020.

2. In this Ninth Periodic Report, the Republic of Korea aims to examine the progress toward implementing the recommendations contained in the Concluding Observations on the Eighth Report and put forth the achievements in gender equality policies pertaining to CEDAW implementation since the 2018 Review.

3. The Republic of Korea has made progress in a range of fields related to gender issues since 2018. The #MeToo movement that began in full force in 2018, in particular, has induced changes in laws, policies, and governance related to women in all aspects of society. Eight Korean government ministries created separate divisions responsible for gender issues while a new consultative body comprising gender focal points was set up to establish a governance system that supports various ministries in incorporating gender equality perspectives and coordinating gender equality policies.

4. Various policies were introduced to prevent violence against women, protect victims, and impose an appropriate punishment. They include the enactment of the Framework Act on Prevention of Violence against Women to prevent violence against women and support victims better, harsher punishment for digital sex criminals and victim support, and strengthened protection of children and youth against sex offenses. Those policies, which were designed to prevent the career interruption of women and ensure their continued employment, contributed to fostering a gender-responsive labor market and solidifying a foundation for women's job security. The government is making various efforts for a higher representation of women by enhancing their representation in the public sector and adopting affirmative actions. Children from low-income, single-parent families receive extended support for child-rearing and relevant expenses. Efforts for transition are underway to guarantee women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, and a wide array of policies for women and youth have been introduced.

5. The Ninth Periodic Report will present such policy achievements under each article of CEDAW and examine the country's implementation progress on the recommendations presented in the Concluding Observations of the previous Periodic Report.

6. Subject-matter experts authored this report in the Korean Women's Development Institute with the guidance of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (MOGEF). The report focused on the major achievements in laws, regulations, policies, and statistics related to women in Korea, collected through rounds of internal discussions and consultative meetings with gender and human rights experts, including those from the National Human Rights Commission and international organizations. The report was revised and updated after working closely with relevant government ministries.

II. Implementation of the convention

1. Article 1 (Definition of discrimination)

A. Prohibiting discrimination in the constitution

7. The Constitution of the Republic of Korea, promulgated in 1946, guarantees equal rights and prohibits discrimination by stipulating in Article 11(1) that “All are equal before the law. No one should suffer discrimination based on their gender, religion, or social status in any part of their political, economic, social, and cultural lives.” It also guarantees equal opportunities in education in Article 32(1), prohibits unfair discrimination against female workers in Article 32(4), and ensures gender equality in marriage and family life in Article 36.

B. National Human Rights Commission Act

8. The National Human Rights Commission Act defines the “discriminatory act violating the equal right” as “an act of favorably treating, excluding, discriminating against or unfavorably treating a person in employment; the supply or use of goods, services, means of transportation, commercial facilities, land and residential facilities; and education and training at educational facilities or institutions for workplace skill development, or the use thereof, without reasonable grounds, yet on the grounds of sex, religion, disability, age, social status, region of origin, state of origin, ethnic origin, physical condition such as features, marital status such as single, separated, divorced, widowed, remarried, married *de facto*, or pregnancy or childbirth, types or forms of family, race, skin color, ideology or political opinion, record of crime whose effect of punishment has been extinguished, sexual orientation, academic career, medical history, etc., as well as an act of sexual harassment (amended on February 3, 2016).” The Act describes an act of sexual harassment as “making people feel sexually humiliated or loathsome in business, employment or other settings or giving disadvantage in employment on the pretext of disobedience to sexual comments or other demands by a working person, an employer or an employee of a public agency who takes advantage of their superior position or sexual comments, etc. with regard to their duties, etc.,” thereby proscribing any type of discrimination.

C. Equal employment opportunity and work-family balance assistance act

9. The Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act stipulates that a case constitutes discrimination where “an employer discriminates against an employee in employment or working conditions, or takes any other disadvantageous measures without any justifiable reason, on grounds of gender, marriage, status within family, pregnancy or childbirth, etc.” The Act thereby defines indirect discrimination in employment as another act of discrimination, such as in a case where the number of men or women capable of satisfying such conditions is remarkably fewer in comparison with the opposite gender and thus puts the opposite gender at a disadvantage, even if the employer equally applies employment or working conditions to them.

D. Framework act on education

10. The Framework Act on Education prescribes against discrimination in educational opportunities on the basis of gender by specifying in Article 4 that “No citizen shall be treated with discrimination in education for reasons of gender, religion, faith, race, social standing, economic status, or physical conditions, etc.”.

E. Labor standards act

11. Article 24 of the Labor Standards Act prescribes that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of gender concerning restrictions on dismissal for managerial reasons. A business

owner shall reinstate a pregnant woman to the same work or to the work with the same wage level as before the leave (Article 74).

F. Framework act on gender equality

12. The Framework Act on Gender Equality stipulates in Article 3 on the definition of gender equality that the term “gender equality” means a state that ensures the equal enjoyment of human rights and equal participation and treatment in all areas, without any gender-based discrimination, prejudice, depreciation, or violence. In contrast, Article 24 prescribes against discrimination based on gender across all aspects of women’s participation in economic activities.

2. Article 2 (Obligations of state parties)

A. New laws

13. The #MeToo movement that began in Korea in 2018 prompted the development of measures to prevent sexual harassment and violence and protect victims in many fields, including schools, art and culture, and sports. Moreover, the Nth Room case – a criminal case involving digital sex crimes and sexual exploitation where a messaging app was used to induce victims and blackmail them into taking sexually exploitive videos for reproduction and distribution – led to legislative actions aimed at strengthening the punishment of digital sexual violence perpetrators and protecting the victims. As a result, three new laws were enacted to eliminate violence against women (VAW).

14. The Framework Act on Prevention of Violence against Women, enacted on December 24, 2018, presented the clear responsibilities of the State and local governments for protecting and supporting victims and preventing VAW. It serves as a basic law to comprehensively and systematically promote policies to prevent VAW. The Act includes VAW dating violence, stalking, digital sexual violence, and others, on top of traditional types of violence such as domestic violence, sexual violence, sex trafficking, and sexual harassment, thereby broadening the concept of VAW and further supporting victims. By stipulating the term “secondary victimization,” the Act also sets forth clear obligations of the State and local governments in preventing it. Notably, the Act carries great significance in that it sets out the right to support VAW victims, enables the establishment of statistics concerning VAW, and puts in place a structure for the effective promotion of policies to counter VAW by having the State and local governments establish Committees on Prevention of Violence against Women.

15. Newly enacted on April 20, 2021, to prevent human trafficking and protect victims, the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons, Etc. and Victim Protection Act specifies the definition of the term “trafficking in persons” in alignment with international norms, including those of the United Nations, the establishment of a government-wide integrated response system, and early identification and protection of and support for victims. The Act brought together relevant criminal acts under the term “trafficking in persons, etc.,” which were previously stated in 11 different laws, including the Criminal Act, thereby addressing the problem of the existing Criminal Act that had confined the definition of trafficking in persons only to selling and buying another person. This new law established a unified system to prevent trafficking in persons and a legal foundation for providing customized support to victims across the entire process of identification of victimization, protection, and support.

16. The Act on Punishment of Stalking Crime, etc. (enacted on April 20, 2021) strengthened the punishment of stalking crime perpetrators by clearly defining an act of continued, repeated stalking as a crime while stating new procedures for victim protection. The Act stipulates that if a victim files a report on an act of stalking, the police can take emergency measures in the initial stage of stalking, such as restraining the act or giving a warning, to prevent such act from escalating into a crime, while prescribing that victims and perpetrators are separated in the course of an investigation of crime.

B. Amended laws

17. A number of laws related to women have also been amended during the given period.
18. Amendments to the Framework Act on Gender Equality (partially amended on April 20, 2021) made it mandatory for government institutions and organizations to provide gender-responsive education to public officials (December 18, 2018) and inform MOGEF of any occurrence of sexual harassment within their entities (April 20, 2021). It prescribes that the heads of state agencies and employers shall carry out prevention training for sexual harassment.
19. The Act on Promotion of Economic Activities of Career-interrupted Women was replaced by the Act on Promotion of Economic Activities and Prevention of Career Interruption of Women (promulgated on December 7, 2021, and to be enforced from June 8, 2022) as a whole amendment made in 13 years since its first legislation in 2008. The Act focused its fundamental policy goal on preventing career interruption and providing reemployment assistance for career-interrupted women. The policy target was expanded to “women” in general from career-interrupted women. The Act also strengthened the responsibilities of the State, local governments, and business owners. It stipulated measures to improve the workplace environment to enhance the quality of jobs for women, such as narrowing the gender pay gap, enforced jointly by MOGEF and MOEL (Ministry of Employment and Labor). To improve job quality for women, MOGEF and MOEL jointly formulated and implemented measures to foster a better work environment, including reducing the gender pay gap while laying the foundation for invigorating employment promotion for women, such as by conducting situation surveys on women’s economic activities and publishing white papers.
20. Addressing the issue of sexual violence by the abuse of authority raised by the #MeToo movement, amendments made to the Criminal Act (partially amended on December 8, 2020) increased statutory penalties (October 16, 2018) up to seven years imprisonment for the “crime of sexual intercourse by means of fraud or by the threat of occupational authority” and up to three years for indecent acts, respectively. The amendments raised the age of consent – a criterion for constituting a statutory rape against a minor – from 13 to 16 (May 19, 2020). Also introduced were new provisions on criminalizing the preparation and conspiracy for rape, etc., making punishable the act of planning or preparing for the commission of statutory rape against a minor.
21. The Act on Special Cases Concerning the Punishment of Sexual Crimes (partially amended on October 20, 2020) was amended multiple times since 2018 to counter increasingly serious digital sexual crimes. An act of distributing a photograph or a video irrespective of the will of the person who was recorded became punishable even if the person recorded agreed to do so at the time such photograph or video was taken (December 18, 2018). Acts of editing or manipulating the photo or video against their will (March 24, 2020) and possessing, purchasing, or storing such a photo or video (May 19, 2020) also became punishable.
22. The Act on the Protection of Children and Youth against Sex Offenses (partially amended on March 23, 2021) was amended to replace the term “child or youth pornography” with “child or youth sexual exploitation materials” (June 2, 2020). The Act defined “online grooming” against children or adolescents as an act of punishable crime if it leads to rape, sex trafficking, or sexual exploitation (March 23, 2021). Moreover, it allowed judicial police officers to conduct undercover investigations to prevent digital sex crimes against children and youth and secure admissible evidence (March 23, 2021). These amendments provide stronger protection for children and youth against sex offenses.
23. A number of other laws were amended, including the State Public Officials Act, National Sports Promotion Act, Local Public Officials Act, Military Personnel Management Act, Public Officials Act, and Social Welfare Services Act, to tighten the provisions on restricting the employment of sexual violence offenders or limiting, revoking, and suspending their acquisition of specific qualifications. The amendments to the Private School Act on October 18, 2018, prescribed a stricter punishment of teachers and other teaching staff involved in sex offenses by

extending the prescription period for disciplinary action against a teacher who commits sexual misconduct from five to ten years. They also obligated the person authorized to appoint teachers at a private school to comply with a request to take disciplinary action against such teachers involved in sexual misconduct, etc., thereby taking a serious response to school-based gender violence (March 19, 2019).

24. Enforcement of the amended Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act has improved working conditions for women (August 27, 2019). Paternity leave of three to five days (with only three paid days) has been extended to ten days for which compensation is made. Conditions for the use of a childcare leave have been relaxed for employees. The scope of family members was extended so that an employee could take family care leave to take care of them. And a new system of “short-term family care leave” was introduced for employees who need to urgently care for their families on the grounds of senility or child-rearing. Moreover, employees can apply for a reduction of working hours to care for their health or the health of their families, prepare for their retirement if aged 55 or older, and pursue their studies. Employers who dismiss or take any disadvantageous measures against their employees on the grounds of paternity leave now face more severe punishment.

25. The Financial Investment Services and Capital Markets Act was amended in 2020 (February 4, 2020) to state that corporations holding above two trillion won in total assets shall not have a same-gender board of directors. Among 152 corporations subject to the application of special cases concerning the gender composition of the board of directors under the Act, 85 companies (55.9%) appointed one or more female registered directors, according to the announcement by MOGEF in 2021 – which indicates steady improvements from 2019 (19.0%) and 2020 (30.6%).

C. Strengthened policies

1) Basic plan for gender equality policies

26. The Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality Policies (2018-2022) was formulated in 2017 to reinforce the management of gender equality policy implementation in the respective ministries. Concentrating on “promoting the culture of gender equality and its awareness” to resolve gender inequality fundamentally, the Second Basic Plan is being carried out with a focus on “improving a social structure for employment and social participation free of gender gaps” and “strengthening accountability across ministries” with action plans developed and implemented every year.

2) Basic plans related to women

27. Various basic plans related to women were formulated and implemented to eradicate discrimination against women and ensure their human rights in the policy area. The Fourth Basic Plan for Low Fertility and Aging Society (2021-2025) shifted the policy paradigm from focusing on pregnancy and childbirth-oriented health for boosting fertility rates toward promoting universal health for both men and women with the following various initiatives in progress: strengthening awareness and rights for gender equality, safeguarding against gender-based violence, supporting a life cycle approach to women’s health, guaranteeing sexual and reproductive rights throughout one’s life cycle by ensuring menstrual health, providing universal allowances for infants, expanding a childcare leave system, strengthening the public nature of child care and providing more substantive services, establishing an institutional foundation for accommodating diverse families by shifting the orientation of laws and regulations from legal marriage and paternal line toward protecting the rights and interests of the child, etc. The Third Basic Plan for Promotion of Economic Activities of Career-interrupted Women (2020-2024) is being implemented mainly to better prevent career interruption for women in employment, facilitate the reemployment of career-interrupted women, respond to increasingly diversified modes and areas of work, strengthen support systems for care, and realign a system of policy implementation for career-interrupted women. Under the Fourth

Basic Plan for Healthy Families (2021-2025), various policies are implemented to create an environment that reflects family diversity where all families are respected without discrimination and not excluded from policy considerations, continue bolstering support for single parents and other key target groups while expanding the policy paradigm to universal family support, and realizing gender equality in family roles as well as in providing care not bound by generational or gender hierarchy (see Table 1 in the Appendix).

3. Article 3 (Appropriate measures)

A. Establishing a new inter-ministerial consultative body and gender-focal divisions within line ministries

1) Designating gender focal officials in charge of gender equality and operating gender focal divisions

28. New gender focal divisions were installed at eight key ministries since May 2019 (Ministry of Education [MOE], Ministry of National Defense [MND], Ministry of Justice [MOJ], Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism [MCST], Ministry of Health and Welfare [MOHW], Ministry of Employment and Labor [MOEL], Supreme Prosecutors' Office [SPO], and Korean National Policy Agency [KNPA]) to reflect gender-responsive perspectives in the pursuit of key social policies on education, culture, tourism, and employment. In September 2020, the Standard Directives on Supporting Gender Equality was drafted to support the operation and efficient functioning of the consultative body among eight ministries, to address gender equality issues within each of the policy areas, and strengthen a collaborative implementation system, thereby enhancing the function of coordination and consultation on gender equality (September 2020). The operation of this consultative body facilitated the sharing of and response to policy agendas. It enabled the respective ministries to make improvements from the viewpoint of gender equality, such as by gender-mainstreaming their laws, regulations, promotion materials, facilities, etc., operating sexual harassment and violence reporting centers, and scaling up units dedicated to gender equality.

2) Pan-governmental monitoring task force for eliminating sexual harassment and violence

29. MOGEF installed and operated the Pan-governmental Monitoring Task Force for Eliminating Sexual Harassment and Violence from March 2018 to March 2021 to effectively implement measures to eliminate sexual harassment and violence and support inter-ministerial coordination. The inception of the Task Force helped formulate sector-specific measures to eradicate sexual harassment and violence and continuously update them, such as Measures to Eradicate Workplace Sexual Harassment and Violence, Measures to Prevent Sexual Harassment and Violence in the Public Sector, and Measures to Eradicate Sexual Harassment and Violence at Workplace and in the Fields of Art and Culture. Measures for migrant women were also developed.

3) Organizational Gender Equality Innovation Promotion Team

30. MOGEF established the Organizational Gender Equality Innovation Promotion Team in June 2021 in order to take ex-post measures, including victim protection and offender punishment upon the occurrence of sexual harassment or violence incidents in the public sector, and pre-emptive measures to build a gender-equal organizational culture. This temporary organization consists of the organizational culture innovation team and the educational innovation team. It carries out the following mandates: improving systems related to gender-equal organizational culture in the public sector, developing diagnostic tools; extending diagnostics and consulting for each agency, promoting best practices and managing follow-up actions, offering sexual harassment and violence prevention education to high-level public officials, and supporting education on the prevention of secondary victimization for investigative bodies.

B. Gender impact assessment

31. The Republic of Korea has been implementing the Gender Impact Assessment in full force since 2005 in two categories. The General Gender Impact Assessment allows central government ministries and local governments to evaluate statutes or regulations newly enacted or amended, mid-term and long-term statutory plans, and major policies and projects. The Specific Gender Impact Assessment helps them recommend improvements to the policies which can substantially impact people's real-life experiences. Moreover, the necessary guidelines were prepared for carrying out the Gender Impact Assessment on government promotion materials (June 2020), thereby raising the gender-responsive capabilities of public officials.

32. The General Gender Impact Assessment was conducted on 204 projects and 41 entities in 2020 and 197 projects and 44 entities in 2021. The Specific Gender Impact Assessment was carried out in 12 policies in 2020 and 8 in 2021.

33. In 2019, Gender Impact Assessment implementation rates became a part of government performance evaluation indicators, which solidified the institutional foundation for inducing central administrative agencies to conduct assessments more proactively. Moreover, 16 local gender impact assessment centers that support local governments' assessments were each staffed with one additional employee responsible for monitoring the implementation of policy improvements and providing education for professional capacity building in assessment support, etc., to strengthen the relevant institutional foundation.

C. Gender-sensitive budget system

34. Gender-sensitive budgeting began in full force from FY 2010 in Korea after the Ministry of Strategy and Finance introduced a relevant legal basis in 2006. The gender-sensitive budget for 2021 stood at 35.3 trillion won, representing a steadily rising trend from 28 trillion won in 2016. The number of central government agencies subject to gender budgeting rose from 35 in 2020 to 38 in 2021, while the overall budget increased from 31.7089 trillion to 35.2854 trillion won. The total number of projects increased 7.0%p to 304 from 284. Among those projects, the number of general and special accounts projects increased to 225 from 210, while Fund projects rose to 79 from 74 (see Table 2 in the Appendix).

35. When drafting the "2021 Gender Budget Statements," the ministries in which gender equality officers were newly appointed (MOE, MOJ, MCST, MOHW, MOEL, MND, and KNPA) were required to include in the Statements their relevant projects and project-specific performance targets for management, after the project divisions in charge consult the gender equality officer within the ministry. The objective was to strengthen the pre-review process.

36. To strengthen the role and operation of the permanent consultative body for gender budgeting and settlement, the Government installed the Gender Budgeting and Settlement Council in January 2021. The Council, consisting of government and private sector members, is held at least three times a year. A specialized evaluation committee, which comprises private sector experts and was created in February 2021 as an affiliated organization of the Council, engages in pre-emptive deliberation on the selection of projects which are subject to gender budgeting and performance evaluation.

D. National Gender Equality Index

37. The National Gender Equality Index was developed in 2009 to support quantitative measurements of gender equality at the national level. The indexed value is based on gender equality indicators, such as the degree of gender-equal participation in society, awareness and culture of gender equality, and women's rights and welfare. Pursuant to Article 19 of the Framework Act on Gender Equality, MOGEF is examining and publishing the national gender equality index to help formulate gender equality policies and raise the level of gender equality while working to realign the index to ensure comparability with international indices for

country-to-country comparison, etc., by incorporating changes in the social environment. The national gender equality index has gradually grown every year from 71.2 in 2016 to 74.7 in 2020. The highest level of gender equality was health, and the lowest was decision-making (see Table 3 in the Appendix).

E. Women, peace, and security

38. The Republic of Korea laid a legal foundation for the domestic implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda by stipulating in Article 41(3) upon the amendment of the Framework Act on Gender Equality on December 12, 2017, that the “Government shall formulate and implement the National Action Plan (NAP) in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security.” MOGEF convenes public-private joint monitoring meetings regularly with ten civic advisors to implement the NAP and reports the results of the meetings to the Gender Equality Committee.

39. The second NAP (2018-2020) was terminated, and preparations for drafting the NAP for the third cycle (2021-2023) began in 2020. Throughout the second NAP, gender-responsive education to those related to women, peace, and security was strengthened, and public awareness was enhanced. There was an increase in women’s participation in decision-making in key policy arenas. The dissemination of international peace and development cooperation took place from the perspective of women, peace, and security.

40. The Republic of Korea formulated the third NAP (2021-2023) for United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security in 2021. Consisting of 11 objectives, 24 strategies, and 50 actions in five different fields, the NAP added the Peaceful Unification Advisory Council as a new implementing body, bringing the total number of participating bodies to 10.

F. Sustainable development goals

41. The Korean government developed the Korean Sustainable Development Goals (K-SDGs) in 2018 with the participation of relevant ministries, private sector working groups, stakeholders, and citizens. A government-wide K-SDGs consultative body, working groups, Korean-Major Groups and other Stakeholders, etc., were organized to establish the K-SDGs, announced after the State Council deliberation in December 2018, through a bottom-up process. In alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), gender equality was presented as Goal 5, under which detailed objectives and matrices were developed, including the adoption of policies and laws for women’s empowerment. Endeavors are underway to attain the goal through annual stocktaking in continued cooperation with relevant ministries.

42. The Republic of Korea is incorporating SDG 5 in formulating strategies and roadmaps in conducting official development assistance (ODA) projects. The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) developed its Mid-term Implementation Plan (2019-2021) in December 2018 to enhance gender equality and empower women and girls. It also launched the “SDG5 Fill the GAP (Gender Advocacy Partnerships) Initiative” in accordance with its strategic objective, under which it is implementing a range of gender equality ODA projects (2020-2026). Contributing some 4.7 million dollars to UN Women every year, MOGEF is pushing forward international development projects to empower women and protect their human rights in developing countries, including Indonesia.

4. Article 4 (Temporary special measures to eliminate discrimination)

A. Institutionalizing the nomination quota system for female politicians

43. A nomination quota system for female politicians sets a minimum proportion of female candidates for nomination by parties to boost women’s political participation. Under the current laws, when nominating candidates to run for proportional representation members of the

National Assembly or local councils, political parties are mandated to nominate candidates falling under every odd number in order of the candidate roll from among women. When nominating candidates to run for electorate members of the National Assembly or local councils, they are recommended to nominate female candidates not less than 30% of the total number of the respective constituencies. In addition, parties that nominated female candidates above 30% of the total number of constituencies are given subsidies.

44. The Public Official Election Act, amended on March 12, 2010, prescribes in Article 47(5) that, in local council elections, excluding the ones for *gun* districts (local township level), political parties shall nominate at least one female candidate to run for either *Gwangyeok* (major urban governments) or *Gicho* (small cities and provincial governments) councils for each electoral district, and violation of such shall invalidate their entire candidate slate. The above Act, amended again in 2018, prohibited accepting an application for candidate registration when the parties violated the recommended ratio and order of female candidates nominated for proportional representation members of the National Assembly or local councils, with the effect of mandating a 50% female candidate nomination for proportional representation seats.

45. These endeavors are leading to a gradual rise in the ratio of female members in the National Assembly and local councils. At the general election held in 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic, 57 out of the total 300 elected were women, representing a record-high share of 19%. The number of female representatives increased both in proportional representation and local constituencies. The ratio of elected women reached a historic high of 26.7% at the 2018 local election as well. The amended Public Official Election Act required political parties to nominate at least one female candidate to run for either the *Gwangyeok* or *Gicho* council for each electoral district of the National Assembly (excluding the *Gun* districts). The amendment helped the number of female representatives increase in constituencies (see Tables 4 and 5 in the Appendix).

B. Increasing women's representation in the public sector

46. With its Plan to Improve Women's Representation in the Public Sector (2018-2022) prepared in 2017, MOGEF has been monitoring its implementation progress every half year. As a result, all the goals in 12 areas were achieved for two consecutive years in 2019 and 2020. In particular, the ratios of women in manager or higher positions at the headquarters of central government ministries and female executive officers at public institutions rose above 20% for the first time in 2019. Moreover, the ratio of women in manager or higher positions in local governments also surpassed 20%, and that of the Senior Civil Service official positions reached 10% for the first time respectively in 2020 and 2021.

C. Affirmative action

47. To stimulate women's economic participation, the Republic of Korea has been enforcing affirmative action since 2006 pursuant to the Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act. Under the Act, public institutions and private enterprises with a number of employees over a certain size must submit to the Minister of Labor and Employment the current status of male and female employees categorized by job type and rank as well as their action plans. In 2019, this requirement was extended to local government-invested public corporations or local public agencies employing fewer than 300 employees and conglomerates employing 300 or more.

48. Since the introduction of affirmative action, the share of women in managerial positions at public institutions and private enterprises increased to 21.3% in 2021 from 10.22% in 2006 and 20.92% in 2020. Female employment rate rose to 37.78% in 2021 from 30.77% in 2006 and 37.69% in 2020.

49. The Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act was amended in 2018 (and partially amended on May 28, 2018) to require all workplaces subject to

affirmative action to submit the current status of salaries by gender (see Table 6 in the Appendix).

5. Article 5 (Changing social and cultural patterns of conduct)

A. Building a policy foundation for preventing violence against women

1) Formulating the first basic plan of policies to prevent Violence Against Women (2020-2024)

50. The enactment (December 24, 2018) and enforcement (December 25, 2019) of the Framework Act on Prevention of Violence against Women laid a legal foundation for the comprehensive, systematic pursuit of policies aimed at preventing violence against women (VAW). First, pursuant to Article 7 of the Act, the First Basic Plan of Policies to Prevent Violence against Women (2020-2024) was formulated (jointly by relevant ministries in 2020). The development and implementation of the Plan helped integrate policies on VAW that had been thus far fragmented by the type of violence while emphasizing the responsibilities of the State in the overall matters of VAW.

51. To build a gender-equal society by eradicating VAW, the First Basic Plan (2020-2024) set three goals: building a stronger response capacity against newly emerging types of VAW; building a more specialized, substantive prevention, protection, and punishment system concerning VAW; and laying a firmer foundation for implementing policies to eliminate VAW. It also calls for the formulation and implementation of annual action plans. The Plan is significant because it is the first of its kind that addresses a full spectrum of VAW issues.

2) Executing situation surveys on Violence Against Women

52. The existing situation surveys on VAW were fragmented by the type of violence, such as sexual violence, domestic violence, sex trafficking, sexual harassment, etc., posing difficulties in presenting an overall picture of VAW. They were also limited in scope as they failed to cover newly-emerging types of violence, including stalking, dating violence, online grooming, etc. The Framework Act on Prevention of Violence against Women prescribes in Article 12 that a factual survey be conducted on the types of VAW omitted from the existing surveys. Accordingly, following the preliminary survey in 2020, a full-fledged survey was conducted in 2021.

3) Compiling statistics on Violence Against Women

53. The Framework Act on Prevention of Violence Against Women prescribes in Article 13 that statistics on the current status of VAW, etc., are regularly collected, produced, and published, enabling the systematic management thereof. A research project for constructing and maintaining such VAW statistics was conducted in 2020. Another project is underway in 2021 to formulate a concrete roadmap for the implementation of such VAW statistics project and collect relevant statistics on a trial basis.

B. Strengthening measures against sexual harassment and violence in various fields in the wake of the #MeToo movement

54. The spread of the #MeToo movement in 2018 raised the need for establishing countrywide measures to prevent and combat sexual harassment and violence. To smoothly implement measures against sexual harassment and violence and step up inter-ministerial coordination, the Republic of Korea created the following bodies in March 2018: a whole-of-government consultative body chaired by the Minister of MOGEF, a government-wide control tower, and a Pan-governmental Monitoring Task Force for Eliminating Sexual Harassment and Violence, its working-level body. The two bodies drafted the measures to eradicate sexual harassment and violence by taking into account the sector-specific characteristics of society.

55. To monitor the implementation progress of the measures to prevent sexual harassment in the public sector announced in November 2017 and fill the gaps thereof, the Korean government formulated the “Current status of policy implementation for eradicating sexual harassment and violence in the public sector and complementary measures (2018),” the “Measures to eradicate sexual harassment and violence at the workplace and in the fields of art and culture (2018),” “Measures to eradicate sexual harassment and violence in the field of education (2018),” “Measures to eliminate corruption such as sexual violence, etc., in the field of sports (2019),” etc. All these sector-specific countermeasures emphasize protecting victims and punishing perpetrators. Other achievements include executing sector-specific special inspections and situation surveys on sexual harassment and violence, establishing reporting centers with support for case handling, and strengthening preventive education.

56. Moreover, the #MeToo movement in arts and culture, among others, prompted the legislation of the Act on the Guarantee of the Status and Rights of Artists (enacted on September 24, 2021, and to be enforced from September 25, 2022), through which countermeasures became systemized to prevent sexual harassment and violence against artists, such as the establishment of reporting and counseling centers and implementation of preventive education. The Act specifies the creation of a remedial organization and measures for artists (administrative disposition and suspension of financial assistance to the offenders, etc.), among others, thereby laying the institutional basis for guaranteeing the prevention of infringement of rights of artists and effective remedy for damage.

57. To further protect victims of sexual harassment or violence in public institutions and prevent the recurrence of such incidents, amendments were made to the Sexual Violence Prevention and Victims Protection Act (amended on December 9, 2020, and enforced from July 13, 2021) and the Framework Act on Gender Equality (amended on April 20, 2021, and enforced from October 21, 2021). Accordingly, any sexual harassment or violence in the public sector must be immediately notified to MOGEF, and recurrence prevention measures must be submitted. In the event of serious incidents, an on-site inspection can take place to request corrective or complementary action.

C. Reinforcing response to technology-driven Violence Against Women including digital sex crimes, etc.

58. The Republic of Korea is witnessing a rapid rise in gender-based violence against women assisted by digital devices and information and communication technologies (ICT) – for instance, illegally taking and distributing photos or videos through Telegram for sexual exploitation – and damages therefrom are becoming more serious. Such crimes of VAW are becoming more organized and corporatized, evolving with new emerging trends, so existing countermeasures against sex crimes have limitations. In response, the government developed stringent measures, including the “*Webhard* (online file sharing platform) Cartel Prevention Plan (2019)” and “Comprehensive Prevention Measures against Digital Sex Crimes (2020).” It also formed a new organization to support digital sex crime victims (“Digital Sex Crime Victim Support Center”) to bolster state-level response to gender-based violence that has emerged with the advancement in ICT and eliminate blind spots in victim support (see Table 7 in the Appendix).

59. The cartels among *Webhard* companies, content filtering companies, and “digital undertakers” have been pointed out as one of the main culprits for the unceasing distribution of illegal sexual content, despite various regulations and crackdowns. In accordance with the “*Webhard* Cartel Prevention Plan” set forth in January 2019, the government re-examined existing regulatory systems concerning illegal sexual content and tackled the roots of such cartel structures by making institutional improvements and legal amendments. The plan seeks to block the production and distribution of illegal sexual content swiftly, sternly punish conspirators, make legal and institutional realignments to break up *Webhard* cartels, and offer stronger comprehensive support for victims.

60. The “Comprehensive Prevention Measures against Digital Sexual Crimes (2020)” was released in April 2020. In line with this, the Act on the Protection of Children and Youth against Sex Offenses (amended on and enforced from June 2, 2020) was amended. Major changes included the replacement of the term “child or youth pornography” with “child or youth sexual exploitation materials,” thereby clarifying that relevant acts are not a matter of social customs but a crime of sexual exploitation. Moreover, statutory punishment against crimes involving child or youth sexual exploitation materials was reinforced. A legal basis was established for punishing the act of introducing, advertising, purchasing, or viewing such materials. The Telecommunications Business Act (partially amended on June 9, 2020) and the Act on Promotion of Information and Communications Network Utilization and Protection (partially amended on June 9, 2020) were amended to impose obligations on *Webhard* companies and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) above a certain business size to delete, without delay, illegally filmed materials or the like, and take technological and administrative measures to prevent the circulation of such materials while reinforcing the obligation of ISPs to delete and prevent the circulation of digital sex crime materials.

61. Legal grounds were set up in 2021 for punishing an act of grooming that involves enticing and soliciting for sexual exploitation of a child or youth (Article 15(2), newly added to the Act on the Protection of Children and Youth against Sex Offenses). Furthermore, in special cases, police officers were allowed to investigate digital sex crimes involving a child or youth in disguise or without disclosing their identities.

D. Enhancing reporting and case-handling capacity of victims for the Violence Against Women

62. Prompted by the #MeToo movement, sector-specific reporting centers have been in operation at the pan-government level since March 2018 in an effort to root out sexual harassment and sexual violence in the public, education, the workplace, and arts and culture as well as sports domains, etc. By 2020, counseling for a total of 4,766 cases was provided to victims of sexual harassment and violence at workplaces covering the public and private sectors. The victims were given support for returning to their normal daily lives and workplaces as early as possible by connecting them with specialized service institutions for counseling, legal and medical services, etc. (see Table 8 in the Appendix).

63. Pursuant to the Joint Ministerial Countermeasures for Domestic Violence Prevention (November 11, 2018), “arresting a flagrant offender,” the term prescribed in Article 212 of the Criminal Procedure Act, has been added as one of the “emergency measures” police can take at the scene of domestic violence. It allowed police officers to separate victims from perpetrators immediately and seek an arrest warrant against offenders who put their families in serious distress, such as habitual offenders and offenders carrying weapons, thereby enhancing the capacity to respond to domestic violence incidents.

64. In some cases, it is required to receive a review by the Korea Communications Standards Commission in order to request data correction concerning digital sex crimes. In September 2019, an electronic review system was introduced to shorten the review period to 24 hours from three days.

65. In the past, only victims could request the deletion of the digital content for the damage caused by the dissemination of illegal videos and photos. Under the amended Sexual Violence Prevention and Victims Protection Act (promulgated on January 29, 2020, and enforced from April 30, 2020), their spouses, direct relatives, or siblings can also request deletion in order to stem the spread of such illegal content. Furthermore, the amended Telecommunications Business Act (partially amended on June 9, 2020) allowed designated institutions and organizations to serve as proxies to make a report and request for the deletion of illegally-filmed materials to ISPs, thus enabling more timely remedial support for the victims.

E. Protecting and supporting victims of Violence Against Women

66. The government has supported VAW victims by funding *Sunflower Centers*, which are counseling centers for sexual violence and domestic violence victims, and shelters. The *Sunflower Center* extends its integrated services to women and children under violence through counseling, medical aid, legal aid, and investigation. Forty centers were operating in 2020. The number of service cases supported by the centers rose by 16%, from 361,457 in 2017 to 418,032 in 2021 (see Tables 9 and 10 in the Appendix).

67. State funding for counseling centers and shelters for VAW victims continued. Across the nation, there were 215 counseling centers for domestic violence and 197 counseling centers for sexual violence in 2020. The number of counseling centers for victims of domestic and sexual violence financially supported by the government increased by 17.8% to 232 in 2020 from 197 in 2015, while the number of shelters decreased by 1% to 99 in 2020 from 100 in 2015 (see Tables 11, 12, and 13 in the Appendix).

68. The “1366 Hotline for Women” has been providing 24/7 services for victims. Providing initial services to VAW victims, 18 nationwide hotline centers extend support services, such as counseling, emergency shelters, and referral to legal services. The number of counseling cases handled through the Hotline increased 8.6% to 313,868 in 2021 from 289,032 in 2017 (see Table 14 in the Appendix).

69. The Support Center for Digital Sex Crime Victims opened in April 2018 to offer comprehensive support to victims of digital sex crimes. Providing counseling, digital content deletion services, referrals to investigation and legal aid, medical care, etc., the Center has handled an increasing number of cases every year since its opening. Digital content deletion accounted for 90.2% (169,820 cases) of its total service cases in 2021. Moreover, an around-the-clock counseling system has been established, and it continues to uncover areas for pre-emptive deletion support through the advance detection of victimization cases.

F. Strengthening the punishment of offenders

70. The Korean government has strengthened the punishment of gender-based violence through a number of legislative actions such as the enactment of the Act on Punishment of Stalking Crime, etc., the amendment of the Act on Special Cases Concerning the Punishment of Sexual Crimes; the Education Officials Act, and the Private School Act. Responsibilities and punishment criteria were strengthened as well for businesses concerning the production and distribution of digital sexual crime materials, with the amendments to the Act on Regulation and Punishment of Criminal Proceeds Concealment (partially amended and enforced from April 5, 2019), Act on Promotion of Information and Communications Network Utilization and Information Protection (partially amended on June 9, 2020), and Telecommunications Business Act (partially amended on June 9, 2020).

71. Beyond these legal amendments, the Supreme Prosecutor’s Office (SPO) formulated the “Standards for Handling Sexually Exploitive Video Perpetrators (SPO Press Release on April 9, 2020),” and relevant laws were subsequently amended several times, leading to the amendment and enforcement of the “Standards for Handling Digital Sexual Crime Cases” in February 2021, thus forging a stern response to relevant crimes. Moreover, the SPO Sentencing Commission approved the “Draft Sentencing Standards for Digital Sexual Crimes” on September 14, 2020, thereby prescribing detailed sentencing criteria for digital sexual crimes and recommending up to 29 years and three months in prison with labor for an act of producing sexually exploitive materials involving a child or youth.

G. Strengthening tailored-response for specified groups

1) Supporting migrant women victims and preventing gender-based violence against migrant women

72. With a new provision in the Enforcement Rule of the Immigration Act (partially amended on June 12, 2018), more limitations on sexually abusive employers were imposed, and the human rights protection of migrant women was enhanced. It restricts the issuance of visa-issuance certificates to employers sentenced to imprisonment or higher for an act of sexual violence or firing of a sexual crime victim, etc., to prohibit them from inviting foreigners.

73. As migrant women face difficulty in reporting incidents of violence due to language barriers, lack of information, the unstable status of their stay and employment, etc., the MOEL started providing services in 16 foreign languages in its anonymous reporting center for workplace sexual harassment from April 2018 to make it easier for them to file a report without the fear of exposing their identities.

74. The *Danuri* Call Center delivers comprehensive services tailored to migrant women in different stages of settlement and multi-cultural families across their life cycle while also providing human rights protection to migrant women under violence through counseling and emergency support. The number of shelters for migrant women increased to 32 in 2020 from 28 in 2015. Five counseling centers for victimized migrant women were newly established in 2019, and four more were added in 2020, totaling nine centers in operation as of 2020 (see Table 15 in the Appendix).

2) Supporting victims with disabilities and preventing gender-based violence against women with disabilities

75. The Korean government has extended its support for the operation of counseling centers for sexual violence and domestic violence and shelters for victims with disabilities. As of June 30, 2020, 32 counseling centers and 10 shelters were in place nationwide. Counseling visits and sign language interpreter support (for the visually impaired) are available upon the requests by victims.

76. To support victims with disabilities, people with severe disabilities were provided more access to counseling while the counseling center staff (one director and three counselors) and counseling support staff (one person) received more support for their personnel and transportation expenses. For the greater convenience of people with disabilities staying at shelters, convenience facilities such as passages, elevators, bathrooms, and bedrooms were installed, while additional personnel and transportation expense support was provided.

H. Efforts to expand preventive education and awareness-building against gender-based violence

77. Endeavors to scale up the education and awareness campaign for the prevention of gender-based violence continued. More specifically, with the amendment of the National Sports Promotion Act (partially amended on February 4, 2020), would-be certified sports leaders are required to take sessions on the prevention of violence, such as sexual violence, during the training courses, and the completion of such preventive education became mandatory. Moreover, the Popular Culture and Arts Industry Development Act was amended (partially amended on June 9, 2020) to mandate gender-based violence prevention education for artists and trainees in the entertainment agencies and impose an administrative fine of up to three million won for the violation of such a requirement. The Artist Welfare Act was also amended (partially amended on October 16, 2018) to have the Korea Artists Welfare Foundation run projects for providing education to prevent sexual harassment and violence in the arts community and relief services for victims.

78. The Korean government launched the “#WithYou” campaign with a commitment to providing safety, protection, and support to victims of sexual harassment and violence. Public awareness campaigns were also raised to prevent potential secondary victimization under various conditions following initial gender-based violence and uproot the conventional notion under which victims are held at fault for the sexual violence committed against them.

79. The general public is able to take free education sessions on the prevention of sexual violence, domestic violence, sexual harassment, sex trafficking, and digital sex crimes under the “Preventive Education on the Go” scheme. Residents in areas with limited access to education, such as islands, remote areas, and agricultural, mountainous and fishing villages, are given priority in such support. Moreover, those in communities or occupations expected to play a leading role in facilitating violence prevention in their communities, such as local microbusiness owners, heads of *Tong* (village) and *Ban* (hamlet), and taxi and bus drivers, are given customized violence prevention education that takes into account each group’s characteristics. A total of 19 institutions (one central and 18 regional ones) providing such free preventive education are in operation as of 2021.

80. The “Standard Guidelines for the Prevention of Secondary Victimization upon Violence against Women” was prepared and distributed to offer guidance on the measures each institution should take to prevent the secondary victimization of VAW victims and case-handling procedures.

6. Article 6 (Prohibition against exploitation of women)

A. Enacting the prevention of trafficking in persons, etc. and victim protection act

81. The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons, etc. and Victim Protection Act was enacted on April 20, 2021. Once the Act takes effect on January 1, 2023, MOGEF will work with the relevant ministries to formulate comprehensive five-year measures, among others, to pursue in full swing policies aimed at preventing trafficking in persons, etc., and protecting and supporting victims. In addition, a government-wide integrated response system for inter-agency collaboration will be put in place through the Policy Coordination Council for Prevention of Trafficking in Persons that will be placed under the Office of Deputy Prime Minister for social affairs. New agencies to be established in 17 cities and provinces to protect the rights and interests of victims will also play a central part in the early detection and protection of and support for victims.

B. Protecting and supporting victims of sex trafficking

82. In operation were 30 counseling centers for victims of sex trafficking, 39 general and youth support facilities, one support facility for foreigners, 12 communal living facilities for self-reliance support (*Group Homes*), 12 rehabilitation support centers, and two institutions entrusted with alternative education as of 2020. Each institution provides victims of sex trafficking with counseling, medical care, legal aid, vocational training support, treatment and recovery programs, etc. (see Table 16 in the Appendix).

83. Organizations supporting victims of sex trafficking offered 88,672 sessions in 2020, up from 61,554 sessions in 2019. The Centers handled 48,950 rescue and support cases in 2020, down from 52,289 in 2019 (see Tables 17 and 18 in the Appendix).

7. Article 7 (Equality in political and public life)

A. Proportion of women in managerial positions

84. The government formulated the First Basic Plan on Balanced Public Personnel Management (2018-2022) that contained initiatives to expand the appointment of women to the

positions of senior civil servant officials and managers or higher at ministry headquarters and to improve gender equality in the government, to name a few. More specifically, in accordance with the “Pan-government Plan on Balanced Public Personnel Management” announced in 2019, various methods were employed, such as broadening the candidate pool, personnel exchange, and headhunting to appoint more women in senior official positions while local governments were obligated to commission women to at least 40% of their personnel committee seats. Moreover, “Reports on Balanced Personnel Management in the Public Sector” are published annually to make available statistics on balanced personnel management, including the ratios of women in managerial positions at central government ministries, local governments, and public institutions. These endeavors are leading to a gradual rise in the percentage of female managers in central government ministries and local governments as follows: the proportion of women in the position of a manager or higher increased by 6.9%p over three years, from 17.5% in 2018 to 24.4% in 2021; the percentage of female senior civil service officials rose by 3.3%p during the same period, from 6.7% in 2018 to 10.0% in 2021; and the share of women in the position of a manager or higher in local governments was up by 8.7%p, from 15.6% in 2018 to 24.3% in 2021 (see Table 19 in the Appendix).

B. Proportion of women at public institutions and local public enterprises

85. Public institutions have been implementing the “Quota System for Female Managers at Public Organizations” initiated by the Ministry of Strategy and Finance since 2014. Relevant ministries jointly developed the “Plan to Improve Representation of Women in the Public Sector” in 2017, setting and steadily working toward the target ratios of female executive officers and managers at public institutions in a five-year period (2018-2022). In 2019, a guideline for “appointing at least one female executive officer” was published, the “Quota System for Appointment of Executive Officers for Gender Equality” was introduced, and the implementation of such was incorporated in management evaluation as a way to encourage public institutions to make relevant endeavors proactively. As a result of such work, the ratio of female managers at public institutions has steadily risen from 23.8% in 2018 to 25.1% in 2019 and 26.4% in 2020, while the female executive ratio has also increased from 17.9% in 2018 to 22.1% in 2020.

86. “Female Manager Appointment Targets,” first introduced in 2017 at local public enterprises, were further rolled out to all enterprises. Each enterprise is formulating five-year plans and offering education on policies to increase the number of female managers. Thanks to such endeavors, female managers rose from 6.9% in 2018 to 10.6% in 2020.

C. Proportion of female teaching staff

87. Pursuant to the Framework Act on Gender Equality and the Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality Policies, the MOE is implementing the “Target Ratio of Female Principals and Vice-Principals,” and city/province offices of education have been setting and implementing their quotas on their own since 2013. These efforts led to a slight rise in female principals and vice-principals from 42.7% in 2018 to 44.5% in 2020.

88. In the case of institutions of tertiary education, the “Quota for Female Professors” was first introduced in national and public universities in 2003 to foster a gender-sensitive culture and redress the gender imbalance among university professors. More recently, in 2019, Article 6(4) was introduced in the Decree for the Appointment of Education Officials to stipulate the implementation of situation surveys on gender equality at national and public universities, while Article 11(5) of the Education Officials Act was amended on January 29, 2020, to ensure that one gender represents no more than 3/4 of teachers at national and public institutions of tertiary education, with the effect of allowing the State to legally prescribe a 25% share of female professors at such universities. The percentage of female professors in national and public universities stood at 18.1% in 2020.

D. Proportion of female military officers

89. The MND has put in place a system for increasing the assignment of women as field-grade commanding officers and staff officers at field units and in key posts in policy divisions, by amending the Directives for National Defense Personnel Management on May 17, 2019. The share of female military officers increased from 6.2% in 2018 to 8.2% in 2021 and will be raised further to 8.8% in 2022.

E. Proportion of female police officers (Police and coast guard)

90. A quota for managerial positions was newly introduced for the police in 2019. In recent years, the share of female police officers rose from 11.7% in 2018 to 13.4% in 2020, while female members of the coast guard increased from 12% to 13.2% during the same period. The Korea National Police University (KNPU) appointed its first female president in 2019.

91. To eliminate gender discrimination in the recruitment process, the KNPU abolished the previous 12% female admission quota and decided to admit 50 students with no gender consideration beginning in the 2021 academic year. Under the Basic Plan for Gender Equality Policies, the KNPU is preparing to abolish gender-segregated recruitment and develop a plan to improve the physical fitness standards for an integrated recruitment of patrol officers and make relevant legal amendments, starting with the patrol officer recruitment in 2023.

F. Proportion of women in government committees

92. The Republic of Korea prohibited one gender from representing more than 60% of commissioned members of government committees upon the amendment of the Framework Act on Women's Development (August 13, 2013). At present, government committees are obligated to conduct and publish annual surveys on the current status of gender representation in their commissioned membership. The share of women on government committees has already surpassed the target of 40%, increasing to 42.4% in 2021 from 41.9% in 2018. To support institutions experiencing difficulty in appointing female commissioned members due to the shortage of the available pool of women, MOGEF is operating the "Women Leader Database System," where some 100,000 talented women excelling in various fields are registered, with a goal of identifying 10,000 more such talented women in new industries by 2022.

93. It was stipulated in the 2018 amendment to the Enforcement Decree of the Economic and Social Development Commission Act (September 11, 2018) that people from all societies, including youth, irregular employees, and women, shall participate in the policy development process by joining the Economic and Social Development Commission as members.

8. Article 8 (Equality in global political and public arenas)**A. Appointing the Republic of Korea's first ambassador for gender equality**

94. Ambassadors-at-large are appointed by the government from among private citizens or former public officials, etc., to have them leverage their networks and expertise and support the government's diplomatic activities. The Moon Jae-in Administration appointed the first-ever Ambassador for Gender Equality as an ambassador-at-large in 2020, with a mandate to publicize the government's policy endeavors for gender equality on the international stage. The third National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325, formulated in 2021, incorporated new initiatives for supporting the Ambassador for Gender Equality in national defense, security, peace, unification, and public safety to promote the continuity and scalability of the Ambassador's role.

B. Increasing the proportion of female public officials and managers

95. In 2019, the share of female public officials at MOFA stood at 49.8%, over 13%p higher than the overall average share of female public officials at 36.7%. In the same year, the percentage of manager-level women at MOFA headquarters was 33.3%, over 12%p higher than the overall average of all ministries at 20.8%. The share of female senior civil service officials has recently edged up from 3.9% to 5.9% (see Table 20 in the Appendix).

9. Article 9 (Equality in nationality laws)**A. Promoting legislation to improve the birth registration system**

96. The government pre-announced a bill to introduce a birth notification system to guarantee every child the right to a birth registration (a bill to partially amend the Act on Registration of Family Relations, pre-announced on June 21, 2021). The bill is designed to establish a birth notification system to ensure the birth of every child is registered without exception, such as by installing a new provision on mandatory birth notification by medical institutions. The MOJ sought diverse public comments during the legislative notice period and submitted the bill to the National Assembly for the introduction of a birth notification system.

97. Moreover, the MOJ has been seeking to introduce a birth registration system for foreign children under which the birth of a child born in Korea to a non-Korean citizen is registered, and access to or issuance of a birth certificate can be requested to prove the fact of the child's birth and identity. To that end, the MOJ held a public consultation in November 2018, operated the "Advisory Board for the Implementation of Birth Registration System" comprising child-related researchers and field experts from December 2018 to July 2019, conducted deliberations at its policy committee in February 2021, etc., to discuss measures for introducing the birth registration system for foreign children. Its Women and Child Policy Deliberation Committee also deliberated on the introduction of such a system in April 2021. The MOJ plans to fully incorporate the deliberation results of the aforementioned Committee as it pushes ahead with the timely introduction of the foreign children birth registration system.

10. Article 10 (Equality in education)**A. Enhancing female students' participation in tertiary education and alleviating gender bias in science, technology, engineering, and math**

98. Female students' participation rate in tertiary education has steadily improved in Korea. Their college enrollment rate surpasses that of male students since 2009 and at 7.9% higher than their male counterparts as of 2019.

99. With their broadened participation in tertiary education, female students are more actively pursuing STEM majors. While the share of female students choosing STEM is relatively lower than that of male students, it is still trending upwards gradually. For example, female engineering students (in undergraduate programs) increased from 17.4% in 2017 to 20.0% in 2020. As of 2020, the share of female engineering students in master's and doctoral programs was 22.2% and 17.8%, respectively (see Table 21 in the Appendix).

100. Under the Fourth Plan for Fostering and Supporting Women Scientists and Technicians (2019-2023), the government is expanding STEM education for girls in elementary and middle schools to induce them toward STEM careers while laying the foundation for achieving gender balance in engineering colleges. More specifically, the Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT) is carrying out projects to nurture female engineering talent and expand their career entry as follows: life stage-specific online and offline mentoring support programs with female engineer mentors to bring in more excellent female students to STEM (190 mentors matched with 558 mentees as of 2020), STEM research team projects to expand the advancement of female

undergraduate and graduate students to STEM fields (86 teams supported as of 2020), STEM career experience projects for middle and high school girls (total 452 short- and long-term specialized education courses operated with female scientists and engineers at local universities), etc. Such efforts are boosting the ratios of female STEM major students in their hiring, employment, career advancement, and managerial positions (see Table 22 in the Appendix).

B. Supporting dissemination of gender equality education materials

101. The MOE incorporated content related to “human rights,” “gender equality,” “attitudes toward sexuality,” etc., in elementary, middle, and high school education curricula in September 2015, and through a gradual roll-out, applied them from grades 1 through 12 by 2020. In the meantime, the National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK), as per the 2015 Revised Curriculum, monitored textbooks for elementary, middle, and high schools in phases and presented recommendations for addressing the elements that infringed on human rights.

102. Moreover, the MOE developed teaching and learning resources for gender equality in 2018, which contained “human rights issues,” “work-life balance culture,” “gender roles,” etc. The Ministry distributed them to all elementary, middle, and high schools in February 2019. Furthermore, to develop textbooks with balanced perspectives on gender roles and gender equality, the MOE reinforces gender equality-friendly content in new textbook development and forms a textbook monitoring group to screen, correct, and address gender-biased elements.

C. Fostering a gender-equal school culture and career education free from gender stereotypes

103. In response to the *#SchoolMeToo* movement that has spread rapidly since 2018, the MOE released the “Manual for Response to Sexual Harassment and Violence at School.” As the first-ever guideline published by the MOE on sexual harassment and violence, the manual sets out measures to be taken when such incidents occur to prevent secondary victimization, protect victims, handle offenders, prevent a recurrence, etc.

104. With a view to building a robust gender-equal culture at school, the Republic of Korea is endeavoring to disseminate gender equality education by revising and utilizing assessment indicators for diagnosing a gender-equal school culture (developed initially in 2007, updated in 2015 and 2018) and designating gender-responsive pilot and hub schools (four schools in 2021) by distributing gender equality-oriented learning materials, etc.

105. Since the enactment of the Career Education Act in 2015 (June 22, 2015), various career education and experience programs have become available within school curricula. Its amendment bill was proposed in 2020 to bring further improvements through the promotion of career education based on gender equality values. The bill is currently under review.

D. Supporting gender equality education for teachers and education service providers

106. Subjects related to gender equality have been introduced in qualification training, in-service training, etc., to institutionalize the education of teachers and enhance the expertise of teachers and education service providers in gender equality education. Since 2012, gender equality-related curricula have been offered during qualification training as per the “Standard Curriculum for Qualification Training of Principals, Vice-Principals, Master Teachers and Regular Teachers (MOE Notice).” Also, pursuant to the Framework Act on Gender Equality and the Sexual Violence Prevention and Victims Protection Act, etc., “prevention education on sexual harassment, sexual violence, sex trafficking, and domestic violence” is included as compulsory legal education for teachers.

107. Furthermore, as gender equality education for pre-service teachers became mandatory with the amendment of the Teacher Certification Regulation (partially amended on June 23,

2021), students of teachers' college and pre-service teachers must receive at least four sessions of gender-responsive education during teacher training courses starting in 2021.

11. Article 11 (Employment)

A. Establishing policies for facilitating women's economic participation

108. The rate of women's economic participation in Korea has grown steadily since 2009, exceeding 50% in 2012 and rising continuously until 2019 to reach 53.5%, with their employment rate climbing consistently over the same period. The rate of employment substantially increased, especially among women in their 30s who experience career interruptions due to the intensive burden of childbirth, child-rearing, and care work, thereby flattening the M-curve. The employment rate of women aged between 35 and 39 who are at the trough of the M-curve rose nearly to the 60% level.

109. Promoting women's economic participation and supporting work-family balance is one of the government's policy priorities for women. As such, basic plans are formulated and implemented to facilitate women's economic empowerment. Firstly, to support career-interrupted women, among others, the Third Basic Plan for Promotion of Economic Activities of Career-interrupted Women (2020-2024) was established, building a social support system to help women maintain their careers and build capacity. A support structure and system were reinforced for working women while employment services strengthened for the re-employment of women with career interruptions. Also, plans to enhance the quality of various types of jobs were included, along with detailed plans for promoting an enabling infrastructure for women's career support, etc.

110. Moreover, the Sixth Basic Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance (2018-2022) was drawn up to create a discrimination-free working environment, thus introducing and expanding policies to eradicate gender-discriminatory employment practices and institutions necessary for fostering a decent working environment. Also, policy tasks were devised to prevent career interruptions by removing blind spots in childbirth and childcare leaves, facilitating the use of workplace daycare centers and disseminating a culture of work-life balance, and to help career-interrupted women return to work by supporting their re-employment and job retention. The Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality Policies (2018-2022) aims to promote awareness of gender equality and spread an enabling culture by focusing on addressing the gender gap in employment and building a robust workplace culture of work-life balance (see Table 23, Figure 1 in the Appendix).

B. Reinforcing support for preventing career interruptions

111. A customized life cycle-based system was newly established and improved to support all working women and those with career interruptions as follows: for mothers who are engaged in income-generating activities yet not eligible for maternity leave benefits from their employment insurance, a program was introduced in July 2019 to pay maternity leave benefits to uncovered mothers, thus enforcing the payment of maternity leave benefits to women who run a one-person business, freelance, etc.

112. After the first three months of taking leave, the level of childcare leave benefits was raised (from 40% to 50% of ordinary income) in tandem with the upper (1,000,000 to 1,200,000 won) and lower limits (500,000 to 700,000 won) in 2019. It further increased (enforced from 2022) to 80% of ordinary income (1,500,000 won upper limit and 700,000 won lower limit), thus inducing low-income, dual-earner families to actively use childcare leaves. This can be viewed as a policy improvement to encourage shared parenting and widen the scope of low-income beneficiaries. Also, from the second half of 2018, fixed-term laborers who work less than one year (yet at least for six months) at one workplace have been allowed childcare leaves.

113. Paid paternity leave was extended from three to ten days to expand men’s involvement in parenting (to be phased in by 2022). The upper limit amount paid for the first child under the “Paternity Leave Bonus System” was raised (from 1,500,000 to 2,500,000 won), to name a few, thereby increasing fathers’ participation in childcare leave. Also, to encourage co-parenting, the “3+3 Parental Leave System” was introduced to raise the level of childcare leave benefits for both parents taking leave at the same time within 12 months from the birth of their child (enforced from 2022). Furthermore, the “Concurrent Parental Leave System for Both Parents” has been implemented since February 2020. Previously, parents were not allowed to take leave during the same period, and even if the employer would grant leave, childcare leave benefits were paid to only one of them. This was viewed as an impediment to the facilitation of the use of childcare leave by fathers. The enforcement of such a system has enabled both parents to take childcare leave simultaneously and receive their respective benefits. This policy has subsequently boosted the share of fathers on childcare leave among the total childcare leave takers from 13.4% in 2017 to 17.8% in 2018, 24.5% in 2020, and 26.3% in 2021 (see Table 24 in the Appendix).

114. The Equal Employment Opportunities and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act was amended on August 27, 2019, to prevent career interruption by raising the flexibility in using working hours and promoting the effective use of existing maternity protection and work-family balance assistance systems. Incorporating the workers’ right to choose their working hours, family care leave, and the right to request a reduction in working hours were instituted while the use of leave, vacation, and working hour reductions was made more widely available in such a way that ensures the practical use of the system in terms of the period of reduced working hours to care for children (extended to a maximum of two years), effective working hours (expanded to a minimum of 15 hours and a maximum of 35 hours per week after the reduction is initiated), the number of its use (at least for three months at a time), etc. In addition, childcare leave was previously available for employees parenting their children aged eight years or younger or in the second grade or lower of elementary school. Still, with the amendment of the Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act (amended on May 18, 2021, enforced from November 19, 2021), pregnant workers are able to use childcare leave in advance even during the period of their pregnancy. Furthermore, to alleviate the financial burden of employers in granting reduced working hours to pregnant workers, assistance such as wage subsidies (up to 600,000 won a month for SMEs and 400,000 won for large companies), etc., was extended continuously. For an employee who uses childcare leave to rear their child aged eight years or younger or in second grade or lower of elementary school, a reduction of working hours for childcare is automatically guaranteed for one year. For any unused childcare leave, the remaining period can be added to the period for the reduction of working hours, thereby expanding the system toward preventing career interruptions. Since January 2020, a short-term family care leave was introduced to entitle employees to apply for a leave of absence up to ten days per year to care for the family on the grounds of disease, accident, or senility or rear their children while the scope of care under family care leave was broadened (adding grandparents and grandchildren as eligible family members), thereby allowing employees to request a reduction in working hours, which was previously permitted only for pregnancy and childcare, also on the grounds of family and one’s health. Furthermore, to address the chronic issue of long working hours, the Labor Standards Act was amended on February 28, 2018, bringing changes such as shortening the maximum weekly working hours from 68 to 52 and reducing the scope of business lines with special exemption from such working hour requirement.

115. In the meantime, MOGEF piloted a career interruption prevention program in 2017 to offer psychological support to female workers when they encounter difficulties in work-life balance and career development, embarking on this initiative in earnest in 2019. As of 2021, out of 159 Career Development Centers for Women, 75 implemented career interruption prevention programs that operated specific projects to maintain employment of women (through counseling and consulting, supporting workplace adjustment, and return-to-work) and improve

workplace culture through training and consulting, networking for cooperation, and awareness campaigns.

C. Strengthening support for the reemployment of women after career interruptions

116. Since the establishment of the Act on Promotion of Economic Activities of Career-interrupted Women in 2008 (June 5, 2008), the “Career Development Center for Women” project was launched to deliver comprehensive employment support services to career-interrupted women. The Career Development Centers for Women promote and support economic participation of career-interrupted women through job counseling, vocational training, job referral, follow-up management after employment, etc. Their network expanded from 77 centers in 2009 to 159 in 2021.

117. Tax incentives were expanded for companies re-hiring them to facilitate reemployment and job retention of career-interrupted women (enforced from 2018). The previous tax support scheme, introduced in 2015, granted tax credits for 10% of payroll cost for two years when a former female employee is re-employed by the same small-and medium-enterprise within three to less than ten years from her resignation on the grounds of pregnancy, childbirth, and child-rearing after having worked there for one year or longer. Yet its utilization remained sluggish due to the limited scope of eligibility and insufficient incentives. In response, the scope of companies eligible for deductible labor expenses was broadened (from SMEs to SMEs and middle market enterprises) and tax credit rates were adjusted upwards (from 10% to 30% for SMEs, 15% newly installed for middle market enterprises). At the same time, improvement plans were drawn up to redesign and enlarge the scope of beneficiaries or the period of support. Moreover, referrals are made to the STEM Returner Program (MSIT), start-up programs (Ministry of SMEs and Startups), etc.

118. Such policy support has steadily lowered the number of career-interrupted women. The number of married women who experienced career interruptions declined consistently from 2.164 million in 2014 to 1.448 million in 2021. Likewise, married women who experienced career interruptions fell from 22.2% in 2014 to 17.4% in 2021 (see Figure 2 in the Appendix).

D. Creating an environment more conducive to addressing the gender gap

119. The gender pay gap in Korea has been narrowing recently yet remains large compared to other OECD countries. To improve this situation, the government is reviewing the inception of the “Gender-Equal Wage Disclosure System,” among others. It also disclosed the “Wage Distribution by Business Characteristics” in 2020, thereby making information available on pay differences by gender. Moreover, in 2019, the list of companies subject to affirmative action (AA) was expanded to include all local public enterprises and industrial complexes. As for business groups subject to disclosure as per the Monopoly Regulation and Fair Trade Act, business places hiring 300 workers or more at any given time were also added, with further plans under review to subject private enterprises hiring 300 workers or more in the future. Such ceaseless endeavors are bringing sustained changes in the gender pay gap in Korea that continues to decline, etc. However, the gap remains quite high among OECD countries (see Figures 3 and 4 in the Appendix).

E. Building a workplace free from discrimination

120. The Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act had provisions that exempted business places hiring less than five regular workers from the requirement to prohibit discrimination against employees on the grounds of gender (Article 8 [Wages], Article 9 [Money and Goods], Article 10 [Education, Assignment and Promotion], and Article 11(1) [Age Limit, Retirement, and Dismissal]). To ensure that all provisions also apply to such small business places, the Enforcement Decree was amended in 2018 and enforced with broader coverage in 2019.

121. Moreover, the Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act and the Labor Relations Commission Act (partially amended on May 18, 2021) were amended in 2021 to introduce a remedy procedure for gender discrimination with the Labor Relations Commissions from 2022, empowering them to order correction and compensation for punitive damages regarding discriminatory treatment in employment such as in wages, promotion, retirement, and dismissal. A harassed employee may choose to simultaneously pursue proceedings with their local employment and labor office and the Labor Relations Commission, respectively, for incident handling and discrimination correction.

122. To facilitate the use of the maternity leave system that does not discriminate against workers on employment type, the Employment Insurance Act was amended and entered into force in July 2021 (partially amended on January 5, 2021; enforced from July 1, 2021) to guarantee fixed-term or temporary agency workers an amount equivalent to the remaining maternity leave benefits they are entitled to even when their contracts expire while they are on maternity leave.

F. Reinforcing the prevention and supervision of sexual harassment in the workplace

123. Countermeasures to prevent sexual harassment in the private and public sectors were formulated. And the Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act was amended (partially amended on November 28, 2017; enforced from May 29, 2018) while reporting procedures were newly installed. The said Act was amended to broaden the scope of application of sexual harassment in the workplace, reinforce sexual harassment prevention education, and bolster employers' duty to take measures when sexual harassment occurs in the workplace, etc. In particular, to prevent secondary victimization of harassed victims, the employers became obliged to take protective measures such as investigation and ordering a paid leave of absence. Measures were strengthened as follows: raising fines from three million to five million won for non-compliance with sexual harassment prevention education, mandatory posting of prevention education materials in the workplace at all times, recommending installation and operation of reporting centers via intranet, and requiring all labor supervisors to monitor sexual harassment in the workplace. The MOEL has been operating an anonymous reporting center for victims or witnesses to report cases safely. As a result, the Labor Relations Commissions have come to handle sexual harassment cases in the workplace in earnest like other dismissal or discrimination cases. Businesses are expected to implement workplace sexual harassment prevention education and establish or realign regulations or guidelines on handling workplace sexual harassment cases.

G. Promoting a full-fledged discussion on universal employment insurance system to eliminate blind spots in social insurance

124. In principle, all wage workers must subscribe to employment insurance. Yet, significant blind spots exist for small business places and low-wage workers due to practical barriers in the subscription process, while limitations stemming from legal barriers impede the inclusion of workers in special types of employment, such as for non-regular workers in employment insurance. Accordingly, discussions have begun to introduce the Universal Employment Insurance System that encompasses people who are self-employed or in special types of employment, etc., by bolstering the comprehensiveness of employment insurance subscriptions. At the same time, systems are being established in earnest to remove blind spots through social insurance subsidy programs. The Universal Employment Insurance System, to be rolled out in phases by 2025, aims to enroll all employed persons in employment insurance. The system was first applied to artists in December 2020 and then to 12 types of occupations of people in special forms of employment in July 2021, such as insurance planners, tutors, and delivery workers. Expansion of this system is expected to clear blind spots in the social insurance schemes for female workers not covered by the employment insurance, with a potentially positive impact on the qualitative aspect of jobs.

12. Article 12 (Equality in access to health care and medical facilities)

A. Transitioning toward ensuring sexual and reproductive health and rights and establishing relevant policies

1) *Proposal for alternative legislation upon the loss of force of certain “crimes of abortion” provisions*

125. On April 11, 2019, the Constitutional Court of Korea decided that the crimes of abortion under the Criminal Act were unconstitutional as they infringed on women’s right to self-determination by forcing pregnant women into maintaining pregnancies and delivery without exception even to various, broad, social, and economic grounds, and subjecting violators to criminal punishment (April 11, 2019, Constitutional Court). This decision carries significance as it considered the effects of pregnancy on women, recognized the need to abort pregnancies on social and economic grounds, and acknowledged that the crimes of abortion were not an effective instrument for reducing the termination of pregnancy.

126. In response, the government submitted to the National Assembly on October 7, 2020, a bill to partially amend the Criminal Act to remove the unconstitutional status of the provisions regarding “doctors” in Article 269 (1) and Article 270 (1). Along with this, a bill to amend the Mother and Child Health Act was submitted to the National Assembly to set forth detailed procedures on induced abortion, such as medical doctors’ duty of medical explanation and establish a basis for supporting social and psychological counseling, etc., concerning pregnancies in crisis and conflict. Within the timeframe for alternative legislation ending on December 31, 2020, five bills to amend the said Act were submitted to the National Assembly. These bills proposed by the government and lawmakers are currently pending before the National Assembly.

2) *Pursuing a transition to policies for ensuring sexual and reproductive health and rights*

127. Along with the Constitutional Court’s decision on the unconstitutionality of the abortion ban, social interest in sexual and reproductive health and rights and demand for relevant legal systems have been growing.

128. Current policies related to sexual and reproductive health have recently been reflected in a national-level basic plan. In the “Fourth Basic Plan for Low Fertility and Aging Society (2021-2025)” unveiled in December 2020, the “Guarantee of sexual and reproductive rights throughout life” was added as a key area for achieving the goals of ensuring an “Enhanced quality of individual life,” a “Gender-equal and fair society,” and “Social innovation to respond to demographic changes” under the vision of a “Sustainable society where all generations are happy together.” As policy tasks, a comprehensive guarantee of sexual and reproductive rights, reproductive health management and disease prevention throughout the life cycle, and ensuring healthy and safe pregnancy and childbirth were included. This signifies a shift in policy paradigm from pregnancy- and childbirth-centered health for raising fertility rates to universal health for both men and women, thereby guaranteeing the right to self-determination in an equal relationship where men and women respect each other to promote sound gender awareness and strengthen social responsibility for ensuring safe pregnancy and childbirth, with comprehensive plans put in place to foster a safe culture from gender violence and ensure sexual and reproductive health and rights of women throughout their life cycle. In the Fifth National Health Plan (2021-2030) announced thereafter in January 2021, sexual and reproductive health was also added, and in the third policy task of “Promoting customized health policies by the life cycle of women” under the “Health management by population group,” in particular, the following tasks were included: “Systematic assistance for pregnant women at high medical or social risk,” “Strengthening the promotion of sexual and reproductive health for men and women together throughout the life cycle,” and “Bolstering support for vulnerable women to address health disparities.”

3) *Supporting menstrual health of adolescent girls and strengthening their right to make choices*

129. The rising price of menstrual hygiene products raised social issues, causing some teenagers to use alternative, harmful products as substitutes, etc., giving rise to social consensus on the need to guarantee adolescent females the right to menstrual health through assistance for menstrual products.

130. A voucher program for menstrual hygiene products is designed to subsidize the purchase of menstrual hygiene products by giving low-income adolescent girls electronic vouchers stored with a certain amount of credit. A legal basis for this system was established in Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Article 5 (Support for Healthy Growth) in the Youth Welfare Support Act in December 2017, while in-kind assistance was extended in the second half of 2018 to adolescent females aged 11 to 18 who are either beneficiaries of the Basic Livelihood Security Program (BLSP), in the second-lowest income bracket, or eligible for support under the Single-parent Support Act. Menstrual hygiene products are being provided through an e-voucher system starting in 2019.

131. The introduction of e-vouchers has enhanced accessibility as the application for the vouchers can be made online or offline by visiting community centers at the *eup/myeon/dong* level or via the portal (www.bokjiro.go.kr) and *bokjiro* mobile application. Also, the subsidy amount has increased continuously since then, with more diverse types of online and offline outlets accepting the vouchers, thus strengthening the users' right to choose the goods they prefer the way they want (As of 2021, the subsidy is 11,500 won per month and up to 138,000 won per year. Refer to *bokjiro* for information on this voucher program for girls). (See Table 25 in the Appendix.)

132. Recently, the National Assembly, viewing menstrual hygiene products for adolescent females not as selective but essential goods for health and hygiene, also proposed a bill to amend the School Health Act to mandate school health facilities to keep menstrual hygiene products available at all times.

B. Reinforcing the status of health promotion policies for women through the establishment of gender-sensitive statistics

1) *Improving health equity of men and women based on gender statistics across national health promotion policies*

133. The National Health Plan is one of the long-term national plans established every ten years. However, notwithstanding the health inequities in gender identified in various areas of health, the design of health promotion plans based on gender statistics was not robust enough until the Fourth National Health Plan (HP2020).

134. Accordingly, the Fifth National Health Plan 2030 (2021-2030), which was designed through continuous discussions between government ministries and experts, required performance indicators to be set in principle as sex-disaggregated ones in order to improve universal health and health equity as one of the basic principles under the vision of "A society where everyone enjoys life-long health together." As a result, 141 (35.3%) out of 400 performance indicators were set as gender indicators to support gender gap monitoring. Moreover, out of 64 leading indicators for 28 key tasks, 45 (70.3%) were gender-disaggregated.

2) *Identifying the health status of women and setting policy agenda through the establishment of integrated women's health statistics*

135. To elevate the public awareness of women's health issues and build a broader social consensus on the importance of promotion of women's health, the Korea National Institute of Health at the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency has been issuing a Yearbook of Women's Health Statistics called "Women's Health: STATS & FACTS in Korea," on a biannual basis since 2014. Since its first issue in 2014, four yearbooks have been published by 2020. For

the 2020 edition, the existing statistics for health levels, chronic illness, cancer, health behavior, mental health, sexual and reproductive health, and access to medical care were included. On top of them, statistics on elderly health, child health, and work and health of women in the COVID-19 pandemic era were also added.

C. Ensuring national-level support for the promotion of young women's health

1) Policies for preventing suicide of young women in their 20s and 30s

136. The First Basic Plan for Youth Policy (2021-2025) was formulated to ensure the rights of young people to realize their dignity and value as human beings and enjoy happy lives while fulfilling their duties and responsibilities as healthy democratic citizens.

137. With the suicide rate of young women rising continuously in recent years, the comparable rate of women in their 20s increased 25.5% in 2020 from the previous year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, the first Basic Plan for Youth Policy incorporated the goal of promoting youth health, under which a measure to support suicide prevention of women in their 20s and 30s (MOGEF) was formulated in November 2020, and “policies for the development of customized examination tools for women in their 20s and 30s and operation of a policy support group for suicide prevention” were included among others. More specifically, at-risk young women will be offered follow-up management services and referrals to welfare services, etc., as a means of suicide prevention (see Table 26 in the Appendix).

2) Enabling young people to access free national health examination to build a national health examination system encompassing the entire life cycle

138. Based on various research findings that support the recent trend of deteriorating health status of young people, free health examinations for young people in their 20s and 30s commenced in January 2019 to support their health management.

139. National health examinations for young adults in their 20s and 30s are offered every two years starting at age 20. The examinations cover obesity, visual and hearing impairment, hypertension, kidney disease, anemia, diabetes, tuberculosis, thoracic disease, depression, etc. For young women, cervical cancer is also included. The take-up rate of health examinations in the initial year of 2019 hovered rather low at 20.5%. Since 2020, various promotional campaigns have been waged, especially in youth-frequented college towns, etc., to raise awareness about the program.

D. Providing medical subsidies for pregnancy and childbirth and improving regional equity

1) Expanding medical subsidy program for infertile couples

140. Introduced in 2006, the medical subsidy program for infertile couples has been steadily expanding its scope in several aspects. Instead of simply covering medical expenses of infertility treatment, the program has broadened eligibility for support and alleviated the burden of uninsured medical expenses to facilitate sustainable infertility treatment.

141. Significant changes have taken place since 2018. In terms of eligibility, the age limit of 44 was fully abolished in July 2019. Only legally married couples had qualified until 2019. Still, those in a de facto relationship also became eligible in 2020. The scope of eligibility expanded from people earning at or below 130% of standard median income and medical benefit recipients in 2018 to those earning at or below 180% of standard median income in 2019. Above all, as national health insurance became applicable in 2020, health insurance deductibles and uninsured expenses of infertile couples have been subsidized in part, thus easing their financial burden. In terms of assistance, subsidy disbursements (up to seven fresh and five thawed embryo transfers, five artificial insemination procedures, with a maximum of 400,000-500,000 won in subsidies until 2019) became more generous in 2020 in their frequency and scale, now covering 90% of partial and full out-of-pocket expenses for artificial insemination and in vitro

fertilization (fresh and thawed embryos), up to 300,000 won in embryo freezing and up to 200,000 won in implantation supplements and miscarriage prevention drugs.

142. Furthermore, to drive qualitative improvement in medical care for infertile couples, a system for fertility clinic evaluation and management was put in place for the first time in 2020, supporting infertile couples' right to know by making available the assessment findings as a reference in selecting such medical institution. Additionally, to provide psychological and emotional support to infertile couples, the Korea Counseling Center for Fertility and Depression under the National Medical Center was established on June 20, 2018. Its network is expanding to every region, while a regional center in *Gyeonggi* province also opened in 2021.

2) *Expanding medical subsidies for high-risk pregnancy and medical assistance for teenage pregnancy and childbirth*

143. Medical subsidies for high-risk pregnancy were offered only for five types of high-risk pregnancy complications in 2018: preterm labor, postpartum hemorrhage, severe pre-eclampsia, premature rupture of membranes, and placental abruption. Still, they were extended to 11 types in 2019, adding placenta previa, threatened abortion, polyhydramnios, oligohydramnios, antepartum hemorrhage, and cervical incompetence. In July of the same year, eight more types were added: hypertension, multifetal pregnancy, diabetes, hyperemesis gravidarum with metabolic disturbance, kidney disease, heart failure, intrauterine growth retardation, and adnexal diseases, hence covering 19 types in total.

144. The medical assistance program for teenage pregnancy and childbirth aims to support pregnant teenagers who lack prenatal care due to unplanned pregnancy and childbirth, promoting better health for both mothers and their unborn babies. This program has been scaled up largely in four aspects since 2018. Firstly, the age of eligibility was 18 or under until 2020 but was changed to 19 or under in 2021. Secondly, the scope of participating hospitals was expanded from only hospitals, clinics, and midwifery clinics until 2019 to include oriental medical institutions in 2020 and all nursing facilities related to pregnancy and childbirth in 2021. Thirdly, the range of services became more diverse. While OB-GYN treatment and pregnancy- and childbirth-related care, namely, prenatal screening, delivery, postpartum care, etc., were available until 2020, psychiatrist counseling to treat postpartum depression, etc., and dental care related to pregnancy, childbirth, etc., were added in 2021. Lastly, the period of service was also extended. The Integrated National Voucher Card, used until 2018 for up to 60 days past one's expected due date, was rendered available for up to one year from the due date in 2019.

3) *Introducing pre-emptive assistance for regions without obstetric clinics*

145. Until recently, the support programs were only in obstetrically underserved regions, which installed and operated maternity hospitals with facilities, equipment, and operational subsidies.

146. From 2020, those vulnerable areas at risk of becoming obstetrically underserved are being preemptively considered for support, and, as such, maternity hospitals operating in such regions are receiving assistance.

13. Article 13 (Financial and social guarantee)

A. Expanding support for single-parent families

1) *Broadening assistance including childcare subsidies for single-parent families*

147. The government increased the age of single parents' children eligible for childcare expense subsidies from 13 in 2017 to 18 in 2019 while raising the unit cost of welfare support for single-parent families (unit cost of childcare expenses, stationery, etc.) steadily.

148. In addition, childcare subsidies given to adolescent single parents were scaled up from the previous 170,000 won in 2017 to 350,000 won per month in 2019, thereby bolstering support for their child-rearing. Additional childcare subsidies previously given to adolescent single parents aged 24 or younger were expanded to young single parents aged 34 or younger from May 2021 (amended in Article 12(3), Single-parent Family Support Act).

149. Moreover, the amended Single-parent Family Support Act broadened the application of subsidies for childcare expenses even to those already receiving livelihood benefits under other statutes (National Basic Livelihood Security Act, etc.) so long as they are eligible for single-parent support (amended in Article 12(2), Single-parent Family Support Act) (See Figure 5, Table 27 in the Appendix).

2) *Abolishing the family support obligation rules for single-parent families*

150. The criterion of obligatory providers for receiving livelihood benefits under the BLSP was abolished for single parents aged 30 or younger in 2019 and eligible single parents aged 30 or older in January 2021. Single-parent families are entitled to livelihood benefits under the BLSP as long as they meet relevant income and property criteria.

3) *Expanding child care services for single-parent families*

151. In 2019, a childcare service program was newly launched in single-parent family welfare facilities.

152. To ease the care burden of single-parent families with limited access to childcare facilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government particularly scaled up its childcare services support. For single-parent families earning at or below 75% of the median income who use childcare services, the government increased its support by 5%p to cover up to 90% of the cost. On days when daycare centers, kindergartens, elementary schools, etc., are closed or shift to online classes, additional childcare service hours from 8 am to 4 pm were made available, apart from the annual government support hours [up to 840 hours] (see Figure 6 in the Appendix).

4) *Broadening the eligibility for support to single parents in multi-cultural families*

153. The Single-parent Family Support Act was amended (October 20, 2020) to allow foreigners to become eligible for single-parent family support regardless of their marital status if they are raising children of Korean nationality. As such, marriage migrants in a de facto marriage, instead of a legally registered marriage, became single parents eligible for support (Single-parent Family Support Act, amended).

154. Thanks to such increases in the age limit and scale of subsidies for childcare expenses for low-income single-parent families, along with institutional improvements, more single-parent families benefited from childcare subsidies (78,000 beneficiaries in 2017 to 138,000 beneficiaries in 2020).

5) *Bolstering support for the enforcement of child support payment for single parents*

155. The Act on Enforcing and Supporting Child Support Payment was amended to strengthen measures to enforce the payment of child support for single-parent families (Act on Enforcing and Supporting Child Support Payment, partially amended on January 12, 2021; enforced from July 13, 2021). In other words, an institutional basis has been laid so that non-custodial parents who willfully default on child support payments are subjected to the suspension of driver's license, disclosure of names, prohibition of departure, and other administrative disposition as well as criminal punishment. If the government provides emergency assistance for temporary child support, the amount paid can be collected from an obligor for child support in the same way as disposition is made on default of the national tax, and even without the consent of the obligor, their credit information and insurance information

can be inquired. Subsequently, the enforcement rate of child support payments increased from 32% in 2017 to 35.6% in 2019 and further to 36.1% in 2020.

156. Legal grounds were laid for child support agencies to securely operate visitation support services for non-custodial parents and minor children (Act on Enforcing and Supporting Child Support Payment, partially amended on March 27, 2018; enforced from September 28, 2018), and services were scaled up for the welfare of children of single parents and the effective enforcement of child support payments. As a result, the number of people participating in visitation programs rose from 286 in 2017 to 486 in 2019, further soaring to 1,866 in 2020.

157. The period of emergency assistance for temporary child support extended from 9 months to 12 months, thus delivering stronger support for low-income single parents raising children [Act on Enforcing and Supporting Child Support Payment, partially amended on March 27, 2018; enforced from September 28, 2018] (See Table 28 in the Appendix).

B. Reducing the share of low-wage women workers by raising the minimum wage

158. An increase in the minimum wage mainly affects wages below the median level, leading to a more profound impact on female low-wage earners. <Table 29> (see Appendix) shows the level of the minimum wage relative to the median wage. In 2005, the minimum wage (2,840 won) was only at about 44.9% of the median wage, whereas in 2010, the minimum wage (4,110 won) rose to 48.2% of the median wage. Since then, the gender wage gap shrank drastically in 2014 (5,210 won), after which the minimum wage came to surpass 50% relative to the median wage, and as the minimum wage (7,530 won) increased dramatically, especially in 2018, it surged to the mid 60% level and again to 66.0% of the median wage in 2019 (8,350 won). Therefore, it can be stated that the rise in the minimum wage had a considerable impact on reducing the gender wage gap and the share of female low-wage earners. Their share of the total wage workers, which stood at 17.6% in 2005, fell sharply to 9.8% in 2019 (see Tables 29 and 30 in the Appendix).

C. Introducing National Employment Support System for the working poor

159. The “National Employment Support System (NESS)” was introduced and implemented as a Korean unemployment assistance scheme in January 2021 to provide employment support services and livelihood assistance for low-income job seekers, youth, career-interrupted women, and others with low employability. The NESS was designed to disburse a job search allowance (500,000 won a month for six months) to low-income job seekers (with capacity and willingness to work) aged 15 to 69 whose household income is no more than 60% of the median wage and under 400 million won in asset value. Given that many women are either informal or marginally attached workers uncovered by unemployment benefits or the BLSP and that their work cannot be defined by the current employment types, the introduction of the NESS is expected to bring a positive impact to a majority of women. As of the end of December 2021, the first year of implementation, 423,000 people participated in the NESS and received employment support services, while 341,000 people signed up as type-1 applicants for job search allowances, of which women accounted for 55.4% (189,000 people).

14. Article 14 (Women in rural communities)

A. Laws and policies

160. The Republic of Korea legislated the Support for Female Farmers and Fishers Act (enacted on December 31, 2001, and enforced from July 1, 2002) to foster female farmers and fishers. In 2018, it was amended to support policies related to their maternity rights, health examination, and disease prevention (partially amended on December 24, 2018). In the amended law, to ensure the right to health of female farmers and fishers, a legal basis was established to promote and subsidize health examination projects by the State and local

governments for diseases prevalent among female farmers and fishers while ensuring maternity rights was specified to pursue related policies effectively.

161. In addition, through legal amendments in 2021 (partially amended on November 30, 2021, and enforced from June 1, 2022), the concept of “gender equality” was defined, while content related to the expansion of gender equality in farming and fishing communities were incorporated into the purpose of the law and responsibilities of the State and local governments, etc. Also, Female Farmers Day (October 15) and Female Fishers Day (October 10) were designated. Furthermore, the Consultative Councils for Female Fishers and Farmers’ Fostering Policies were changed into the Deliberation Councils for Female Fishers and Farmers’ Policies.

162. Based on the Support for Female Farmers and Fishers Act (enacted on December 31, 2001), basic plans for female farmers fostering policies are formulated every five years, and action plans are established and promoted every year in accordance with the basic plan. The Fifth Basic Plan for Fostering Female Farmers (2021-2025) was recently created, setting out the vision of “Promoting gender equality to create a happier life, workplace, and shelter for female farmers” with four strategies and 16 tasks. The four strategies include: realizing agriculture and farming villages with gender equality, reinforcing vocational competencies and social capabilities, providing welfare and cultural services and ensuring health and safety, and revitalizing rural communities and nurturing the next generation. To carry out tailored policies adaptive to the changes in rural communities, efforts are underway to nurture professional gender equality instructors for rural communities, explore models for social economy organizations for rural women, conduct specialized health examinations for female farmers, promote cross-generational community activities, etc. Consultative Councils for Female Fishers and Farmers Fostering Policies have also been operating to propose and advise on policies for female farmers, etc., thus improving the efficiency of policy implementation.

163. The Enforcement Rule of the Act on Fostering and Supporting Agricultural and Fisheries Business Entities was amended on March 24, 2016, so a spouse who is registered as a “farmer other than the business owner” could be listed as a business co-owner when married couples are engaged in agricultural activities and the business owner of the agricultural business entity gives consent. In 2018, the amendment was made to remove the above consent procedure of the business owner, thus further lowering barriers to the business co-owner system.

164. The Enforcement Rule of the Act on Fostering and Supporting Agricultural and Fisheries Business Entities was amended on February 15, 2019, so wives can be recognized as business co-owners when married couples are engaged in fisheries business. Previously, when registering a fishery business entity, the wife could only register as a “fisher other than the business owner” if the husband became a “business owner.” It prevented female fishers from gaining recognition for their occupational status, as evidenced by the low ratio of female fishery business owners at around 20%, even when women accounted for half of the fishing community population. With this amendment, female fishers, once acknowledged as business co-owners, are entitled to the various rights and benefits available to fishery business entities, including the qualification for fishery industry-related loans and grants such as direct payments and subsidized payments for national pension and health insurance premiums. Such registration as business co-owners has elevated the occupational status of the spouses of the business owners and entitled them to maternity benefits at the time of childbirth (1.5 million won).

165. To broaden the participation of female farmers and fishers in the Consultative Councils for Female Fishers and Farmers Fostering Policies, the qualifications for its membership expanded from the representatives of female farmers and fishers organizations to all female farmers and fishers, with their representation to account for at least 30% of the prescribed number of members of a consultative council through the amendment of the Rule (partially amended on December 10, 2019), while realigning the Consultative Councils as Deliberation Councils for Female Fishers and Farmers’ Policies to function as a deliberative body (partially amended on November 30, 2021).

B. Strengthening relevant functions in line Ministries

166. In June 2019, the Rural Women Policy Team was set up within the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) as a unit dedicated to policies specialized in promoting the rights and interests of female farmers, namely, enhancing their welfare, improving relevant infrastructures, nurturing female manpower, advancing gender equality, etc. Currently, the dedicated seven-person team introduces policies for female farmers and posts relevant data through a webpage for the Female Farmers at MAFRA (www.mafra.go.kr/woman) and policy publications, thereby enhancing female farmers' access to pertinent policies.

167. Moreover, in accordance with Article 21 of the Framework Act on Gender Equality, continuous efforts are being exerted to maintain the female ratio in the government committees of the MAFRA at least at 40%. The current ratio stands at 42.7% as of late December 2021.

C. Building capacity of female farmers

168. To build the capacity of female farmers, a diverse range of education and projects are being carried out, including education to improve agricultural management conditions to reduce their workload, the development and leasing of women-friendly agricultural machines, and the deployment of compact equipment. Specialized education programs are operated for married immigrant women and young women, while preferential policies for female farmers are implemented with additional points in various agricultural projects. In addition, Female Farmers' Centers within local governments and Career Development Centers for Rural Women provide broad-based support, such as vocational counseling, recruitment and job search management, vocational training, internships, and post-employment services, to rural women whose careers have been interrupted due to child-rearing, housework, etc. As of 2021, 41 Female Farmers' Centers and nine Career Development Centers for Rural Women were in operation.

D. Enhancing the status of female farmers

169. According to the Situation Survey on Women in Agriculture in 2018, female farmland ownership stood at 27.4% of the total owners in 2013, owning 0.11 ha on average. Yet by 2018, the comparable share rose about 9.9% to 37.3%, with the average lot size increasing to 0.23 ha or up 0.12 ha from 2013. Similarly, in terms of asset ownership of female farmers, 27.4% of farming land and 23.7% of houses and buildings were owned by women in 2013, whereas in 2018, both ratios rose to 37.3% and 36.37%, respectively. Likewise, women's ownership grew in bank and insurance accounts, from 81% and 43.7% in 2013 to 90.8% and 55.7% in 2018, respectively (see Table 31 in the Appendix).

E. Best practices in gender equality policies in agriculture

170. In the Republic of Korea, farmland shall be owned only by a person who uses or will use it for their own agricultural management. However, through the amendment of the Enforcement Decree of the Farmland Act in August 2020, women who are "pregnant or within six months post-delivery" are now allowed the leasing or gratuitous lending of farmland (amended on August 11, 2020). Previously, women who underwent pregnancy and childbirth were not allowed to lease farmland or entrust its management to others despite the need to do so. Still, the recent amendment brought tangible results in enabling female farmers to continue farmland operation even during their pregnancy and childbirth, encouraging fertility, and facilitating the utilization of farmland at the same time.

171. In 2018, the Enforcement Rule of the Act on Fostering and Supporting Agricultural and Fisheries Business Entities was amended (January 29, 2018), thus making possible application for business co-ownership even without the consent of one's spouse. In 2016, the "business co-ownership" system was introduced to elevate the legal standing of female farmers. Still, the

consent of a business owner was needed for the registration of business co-owner, etc., hence restricting such registration. The recent amendment allows the registration of a business co-owner even without the consent of the business owner, thereby advancing the occupational status of female farmers as the owners of agricultural businesses.

172. A 20% quota is allocated to women and multi-cultural families in selecting agricultural business successors. When selecting outstanding agricultural business successors, candidates who complete “gender equality education” and sign the “Business Co-ownership Agreement between Spouses” are assigned additional points. Those policies expanded the selection of women and multicultural families as agricultural business successors. They lifted the engagement of women and multi-cultural families in the programs for nurturing critical agricultural manpower while enhancing awareness of gender equality, thus contributing to rational family business management.

15. Article 15 (Equality before the law and in civil matters)

A. Amending the military pension act to allow for pension benefits division between divorcees

173. A divided pension system that allows pension benefits to be split between divorcing spouses became available for national pensions (1998) and pensions for public officials as well as private school teachers and staff, etc. (2016), but not for military pensions until recently. However, the amendment of the Military Pension Act in 2019 allowed military pension benefits to be split as a result of divorce starting in 2020 (Military Pension Act, wholly amended on December 10, 2019). This fully laid a legal basis in Korea’s pension system for filing an application for divided pension benefits in a divorce.

B. Correcting gender-discriminatory elements in compensation and support for persons of distinguished service

1) Equally divided payment between parents of compensation for bereaved families of persons of distinguished service to the state, etc.

174. Previously, compensation for bereaved family members paid to the parents of (a) persons of distinguished service to the State, and (b) persons eligible for veteran’s compensation was confined to one person with priority granted to the older person. However, the Constitutional Court ruled such provision unconstitutional for infringing on a younger parent’s right to equality. Accordingly, the Act on the Honorable Treatment of and Support for Persons of Distinguished Service to the State was amended as follows: when the only parent eligible for compensation has not been agreed upon, or a parent who mainly supported the person of distinguished service to the State cannot be specified, the compensation shall be divided equally and paid separately to each parent if they have same priority order (Act on the Honorable Treatment of and Support for Persons of Distinguished Service to the State, partially amended on November 26, 2019, Act on Support for Persons Eligible for Veteran’s Compensation, partially amended on November 26, 2019). This carries significance in that equal and separate bereaved family compensation is now guaranteed in Korean society, where husbands are most likely older than their wives.

2) Addressing gender discrimination in employment assistance for the descendants of persons of distinguished service to national independence

175. In extending employment assistance to the eldest grandchild of a person of distinguished service to national independence, the eldest grandchild was previously interpreted only as the eldest son of the eldest son, thus excluding female descendants from such assistance. Citing that confining the “eldest grandchild” to the eldest son of the eldest son was discriminatory, the NHRCK recommended in 2019 that the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (MPVA)

formulate remedy measures. The MPVA, accepting NHRCK's recommendation, changed the criteria for interpreting the provision – “one child of the grandchild who is the eldest grandchild” – from the “first son of the first son” to the “first child of the first child regardless of gender” and enforced it from August 2019. Such change holds significance as it removed gender discrimination from the laws and their interpretation criteria.

16. Article 16 (Equality in family laws)

A. Proposing a bill to the national assembly to abolish the patrilineal surname system in determining the surname of a child

176. A bill to amend the Civil Act (Article 781) to abolish the patrilineal surname principle under which a child succeeds their father's surname was introduced by a member of the National Assembly (Bill No. 2108609, on March 3, 2021; Bill No. 2104403, on October 6, 2020; Bill No. 2102999, August 14, 2020) and is currently in discussion.

177. After its announcement, the government is implementing a policy task of reviewing the need to improve ways to determine a child's surname (Fourth Basic Plan for Low Fertility and Aging Society [Korean government, 2020a], Fourth Basic Plan for Healthy Families [MOGEF, 2021d], Recommendation by the MOJ Committee for Legislative Improvements for Inclusive Family Culture [May 8, 2020]).

B. Promoting policies to protect co-habitation partnerships

178. The government announced that it would take measures to protect non-marital cohabitation partnerships not bound by legal marriage as a policy task for implementation (Fourth Basic Plan for Low Fertility and Aging Society by the Presidential Committee on Ageing Society and Population Policy, Fourth Basic Plan for Healthy Families by MOGEF).

179. Consequently, it will continue to (a) promote amendment of the law expanding the concept of a family centered on legal marriage, (b) review the need to improve current family laws that distinguish between children born under and outside marriage to remove discrimination against the latter, and (c) review and discuss the implementation of a system to protect the rights of alternative family relations. Moreover, policy tasks included (a) identifying and finding ways to address inconveniences that various family members experience due to practices and cultures mainly shaped by marriage and kinship, etc., in such life domains as healthcare and funerals, and (b) reviewing the need to expand the scope of application of the law to crimes committed in intimate relationships such as non-marital cohabitation, not recognized as a family under the current law. Furthermore, public awareness surveys on diverse types of families, including non-marital cohabitation, are carried out to produce data as input for policy.

C. Promoting the amendment of the framework act on healthy homes by reflecting the diversifying family types

180. Reflecting the increase in family diversity, the government established a basic plan for family policy for the period 2021-2025 that embraces family diversity in order to ensure all families are respected without discrimination and not excluded from policies. The plan intends to guarantee all families' stable living, strengthen the social care system hand in hand with family diversity, and foster a social environment wherein all people work together and take care of one another (Fourth Basic Plan for Healthy Families, MOGEF [2021d]).

181. In the Fourth Basic Plan for Healthy Families, the government incorporated a task for amending the Framework Act on Healthy Homes (partially amended on January 16, 2018) to change the definition of family and terms herein regarding healthy family, etc., to embrace family diversity and lay the groundwork for conducting education on family diversity, etc.

182. In the National Assembly, discussions are underway for a bill proposed to amend the Framework Act on Healthy Homes (Bill No. 2103381, Bill No. 2104842, etc.) and the main amendments are as follows: changing the name of the said Act to the “Framework Act on Family Policy”; adopting the basic concept of the law in which no person shall be discriminated on the grounds of the form of family and in which the family members shall respect each other and jointly participate in supporting and bringing-up family members, household work, etc., thereby forming democratic, equitable family relations; and deleting the provision on family definitions centered on blood and legal marriage and realign the term for a healthy family, etc.
