

KICCE Policy *Brief*

December, 2018 | Korea Institute of Child Care and Education

Issue 11

The Two Korean National Plans on Child Birth and Childcare

- I. The Two Important National Plans
- II. The Third Mid-term Childcare Master Plan
- III. The Third Plan for Aging Society and Population
- IV. Summary

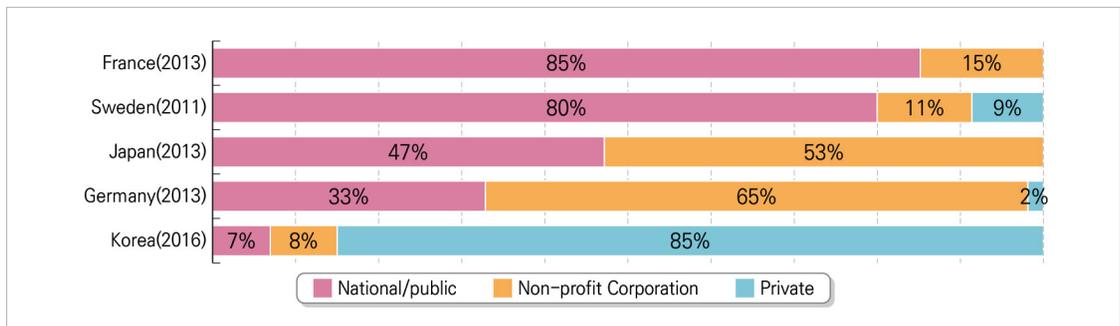
The Two Korean National Plans on Child Birth and Childcare

I. The Two Important National Plans

- Korean government has recently released two important national plans. One is the ‘Third Mid-term Childcare Master Plan’(2018-2023) to reinforce national accountability for child-care and rearing. The other is the ‘Third Plan for Aging Society and Population’ to boost the country’s birthrate.
- The Korean government has been established childcare plans every five years at the national level.
 - ▶ The Third Mid-term Childcare Master Plan has been implemented in 2018 and has a goal of a society collaborating for young children’s welfare in every developmental stage.
 - ▶ It is intended to achieve national tasks on childcare, ‘strengthening the social responsibility for child-care and rearing’.
 - ▶ It contains four areas and seventeen tasks to enhance the public nature and quality of childcare.
 - ▶ The ‘2nd Mid-term Childcare Master Plan’(2013-2017) aimed to promote children’s healthy development as its top priority with its vision as a ‘world in which children are happy and parents feel secure’.
- In 2016, the Korean government has also established the ‘Third Plan for Aging Society and Population(2016-2020)’ and revised it in 2018.
 - ▶ Both ‘The First(2006-2010) and the Second(2011-2015) Plans for Aging Society and Population’ have constantly focused on lessening the parental burden of child rearing and strengthening the balance of work and life.
 - ▶ The third plan has added two new directions for the implementation, such as social responsibility for child-birth and rearing, removing socio-economic obstacles for those in their 20’s and 30’s delaying marriage, in addition to the aforementioned contents.

II. The Third Mid-term Childcare Master Plan

- The 'Third Mid-term Childcare Mater Plan(2018-2022)' has four areas as follows:
 - ▶ Strengthening the public nature of childcare
 - ▶ Reforming the childcare system
 - ▶ Improving the quality of childcare services
 - ▶ Increasing support for parental child rearing
- The specific strategies to achieve strengthening the publicness of childcare are to increase the enrollment rate of national/public childcare facilities from 13% in 2017 to 40% in 2018, and to expand childcare facilities in the workplace.
 - ▶ The proportion of national/public childcare facilities in Korea is lower than OECD countries (see Figure 1).



[Figure 1] Proportions of childcare facilities in selected OECD countries by types of establishment

Source: The Press Release of the Ministry of Health and Welfare(2017. 12. 27)

- ▶ Childcare facilities at the workplace are one of the most preferred types of childcare services to working parents, the Korean government based on the Child Care Act intends to extend them more than 90% of companies with over 500 regular workers or over 300 women workers.
- In order to achieve organizing of the childcare system, focused on meeting parents' demands regarding childcare such as the need for and intention of using childcare facilities, and ensuring sufficient access to childcare facilities to appropriate childcare fee subsidies through reestimating childcare unit cost.
- The specific strategies to achieve improving the quality of childcare services are to reform certificate and cultivating system of childcare teachers and reinforce the in-service education of present childcare teachers.
- Strategies to increase the support for parental child rearing are to extend services for providing information regarding child rearing and to support parenting at home to lessen parents' burden of child rearing.

III. The Third Plan for Aging Society and Population

- ‘The First Plan for Aging Society and Population’ was established in 2006. Nevertheless, Korea’s total fertility rate has been declining. Thus, the government intends to make multidimensional efforts to raise the country’s low birth rate through the ‘Third Plan for Aging Society and Population’.
- ▶ The total fertility rate of Korea has been below 1.3 for over the past 10 years.

[Table 1] The countries experiencing the lowest fertility rates(TFR below 1.3)

Nation	Years accomplishing about 2.1	Year of TFR 1.3	Duration years below TFR 1.3	Lowest level	TFR
Korea	1983	2001	14ys(2001~2014)	1.08(2005)	1.21(2014)
Italy	1977	1993	11ys(1993~2003)	1.19(1995)	1.39(2013)
Germany	1970	1992	4ys(1992~1995)	1.24(1994)	1.41(2013)
Japan	1960/1974	2003	3ys(2003~2005)	1.26(2005)	1.43(2013)

Note: Cited in the Third Plan for Aging Society and Population(Korean Government, 2016) p. 11.
Source: Statistics Korea, Birth Statistics; OECD Family Database, 2015

- ▶ The government attempts to change all areas of people’s life including employment, child birth, child rearing, childcare and education, housing and medical services to boost the birth rate.
- The basic directions of the ‘Third Plan for Aging Society and Population(2016-2020)’ are as follows:
 - ▶ Removing socioeconomic obstacles for the younger generation who are reluctant about or give up marriage.
 - ▶ Reinforcing social responsibility of child-birth and rearing
 - ▶ Improving of childcare and education environments to lessen parents’ burdens in child rearing
 - ▶ Removing factors preventing the balance of work and life
- The specific strategies to accomplish the basic directions are as follows: The government
 - ▶ Makes efforts to both reinforce systemic supports and reform social perception and culture while at the same time discouraging the tendency to give up or postpone marriage because of economic barriers such as job, housing, and marriage costs.
 - ▶ Establishes a social accountability system regarding pregnancy and child birth, and strengthens social support for diverse family types to prevent the abandoning of child-birth and rearing.
 - ▶ Administers education reform such as accomplishing a skill-based society and stabilization of formal education in order to solve the problem of excessive private education, which was contributing to the burden of child-birth and rearing.

- ▶ Devises customized childcare so as not to be inconvenient in parenting at home, and adapting childcare facilities to accord with needs of parents and children.

IV. Summary

- The Korean government is expecting for both the younger generation and working parents to support giving birth and raising their children through the accomplishment of the two aforementioned important plans, resulting in solving Korea's low birth rate.
 - ▶ Recently, the Korean government has been paying attention not only to quality of childcare and reforming the childcare system but also to housing, employment, and medical services to raise the birth rate.
- The Korean government has established plans to ensure the quality of childcare facilities and the balance of work and life, and so on, but it might not take a short time to consolidate them into a actual life such as the workplace and families.
 - ▶ Above all, to ensure quality service of childcare facilities, the salary and welfare of teachers should also be improved and their education system should be reformed.
 - ▶ To accomplish the balance of work and life, the cooperation from companies and families, especially fathers, needs to be emphasized.

Korea Institute of Child Care and Education

Diplomatic Center, 3F&4F, 2558, Nambusunhwan-ro, Seocho-gu, Seoul, Korea
Tel 82-2-398-7700 Fax 82-2-398-7798
www.kicce.re.kr/eng

