**< ANSWER >**

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| ㅇWhat are the main challenges that young people face in your country in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic and the response to it?  ㅇWhat measures is your Government taking to support young people and ensure the full implementation of their rights during and after the pandemic |

(Office for Government Policy Coordination,

Youth Policy Coordination Office)

□ T**he outbreak of COVID-19 has aggravated** the lives of young people, especially in terms of employment, making it hard for these future leaders to **stand on their own feet**.

ㅇ Despite improving employment indicators, **young adults are still struggling in the job market** due to changing recruitment practices. The positive indicators have yet to be fully reflected in the labor market.

\* Compared to the same month last year: ▴ college students’ average time to degree up by 0.4 months (to 51.4 months) and ▴ proportion of college students taking a leave of absence up by 1.1%p (to 48.1%) (Source: The Survey of Young Adults as a supplement to the Korean Economically Active Population Survey conducted as of May 2021)

ㅇ **Rising education and living costs and widening gaps in income or wealth** only **exacerbate their anxiety about their future**, deteriorating **their mental health**, as well.

\* Percentage of those living in basement, semi-basement, or rooftop homes: 2.0% for young people, 0.3% for newlywed couples, 1.6% for adults, and 1.8% for elderly people (Source: the Korea Housing Survey 2020)

\*\* Percentage change in total assets: -2.5% for those aged 29 and below, 8.7% for those in their 30s, 3.7% for those in their 40s, 3.2% for those in their 50s, and 1.6% for those in their 60s

□ To address **the growing precariousness of young people** in terms of **employment, housing conditions,** and other areas of life, it is necessary to quickly overcome the impact of COVID-19 by **creating more jobs** in the short term and then focus strategic support on **empowering them** in the long term so that they can lead change for the future.

ㅇ Guided by this policy direction, the government has established the nation’s first **Five-Year Basic Youth Policy Plan (from 2021 to 2025)** with detailed tasks in the five areas of **jobs**\***, housing, education, welfare/culture, and participation/rights**.

\* Under the plan, the goal is to support 555,000 young people in 2021 to recover from disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis and to gradually expand the support to over 1.28 million young people by 2025.

ㅇ The five-year plan aims to strengthen the capacity of young adults, allowing them to preemptively prepare for the post-COVID world, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, climate change, and other future challenges.

< **1st Five-Year Basic Youth Policy Plan (‘21-’25) Illustration** >

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| Vision |  | Young People Living Out Their Dreams, Our Future Evolving with Their Dreams | | | |
| Direction |  | **Ensure that young people have full access to their rights to**  **△ basic institutional support, △ a living space, and**  **△ a stable foundation so that**  **they can live the life of their dreams** | | | |
| 3 Principles |  | **Participation and Ownership** | **Closing the Gap** | | **Sustainability** |
| 5 Policy Areas and Key Tasks |  | **JOBS**  **Guarantee Their Right to Work** | | **HOUSING**  **Ease Young People’s Housing Burden** | |
| ① Expand youth employment and empower them  ② Foster and solidify youth entrepreneurship  ③ Strengthen their workplace safety net  ④ Establish fair hiring practices and improve workplace culture | | ① Increase the supply of youth housing  ② Reduce their rent prices  ③ Provide focused support for vulnerable young people living in cheap lodging houses or sub-basement homes  ④ Provide youth-friendly housing units | |
| **EDUCATION**  **Help Young People Shape Their Future** | | **WELFARE/CULTURE**  **Improve Young People’s Lives** | |
| ① Promote equity in education  ② Strengthen their future capacity  ③ Enhance school-to-work transitions  ④ Establish the basis for virtual interactive learning | | ① Help build their assets and resilience for a smooth transition to independence  ② Promote and protect their health  ③ Increase support for vulnerable young people  ④ Help them enjoy and benefit from culture | |
| **PARTICIPATION/RIGHTS**  **Support Young People to Make Their Own Decisions** | | | |
| ① Expand their participation in youth policy formulation  ② Establish and solidify the basis for youth policy implementation  ③ Establish a youth-friendly policy delivery system  ④ Promote youth rights and youth exchanges | | | |

□ In addition to this five-year plan, the government unveiled a separate set of **Special Measures for Youth** in August 2021 to **ease the adverse impacts of COVID-19 on young people** and **provide a level playing field for young people transitioning to economic independence.**

**ㅇ Taking the changing social circumstances and changing needs of young adults** into full account, the special measures were set out under the **following three directions**: ① **overcome the COVID-19 crisis**\*, ② **close opportunity gaps among young people**, and ③ **support them to map out their future.**

\* △ Youth Job Leap Grant + Youth Job Search Allowance under the National Employment Support System, △ Increased support package for high school graduates (job training + education-to-job scholarship + job-after-education scholarship), and △ New counseling voucher program for young people impacted by the COVID-19 crisis

**ㅇ Under these three directions, there are detailed tasks in the following five areas.**

**< Special Measures for Youth >**

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| ① Jobs: To improve youth employment to pre-pandemic level (800,000+a)  - To institute Youth Job Take-off Incentive program (9.6 million won a year, for 140,000 persons), to increase locally-created youth jobs (26,000 young persons)  ② Housing: To alleviate housing cost burden for 240,000 young persons and supply 51,000 house units for youth  - To introduce youth monthly rent voucher (200,000 won a month, for 152,000 persons) and a 40-year policy mortgage plan (with fixed rate for 40 years)  ③ Welfare & Culture: To support 350,000 youth with asset building and extend culture enjoyment card to 310,000 persons  **- Institute asset-building assistance by different levels of income and youth healthy mind voucher (200,000 won a month, for 15,000 persons)**  ④ Education: To lessen financial burden on 560,000 college students and foster talents that are tailored to the needs of industries  - To expand state scholarship (to help youth in low- and middle-income groups with half the amount of tuition) and offer job-linked vocational training (for 1,050 persons)  ⑤ Engagement and Rights: To increase youth engagement in government committees with up to 20% of membership comprising youth members and ensure greater linkage in policy service delivery |

□ Furthermore, for the successful implementation of the five-year youth policy plan (‘21-’25), the government **sets up an annual implementation plan for each year**.

ㅇ In its **2021 Youth Policy Implementation Plan**, it has included **emergency countermeasures, such as supplementary budgets** to alleviate **the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth employment**.

\* Greater incentives for hiring young people, more support packages from the National Employment Support System, support measures for entrepreneurs in virtual services, etc.

ㅇ The **2022 Youth Policy Implementation Plan** also **reflects and further elaborates on the detailed tasks of the Special Measures for Youth** to overcome the COVID-19 crisis as follows:

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|  | **< 2022 Youth Policy Implementation Plan: Executive Summary >** |  |
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| **◈ (Diverse Policy Support) 376 support tasks (↑ by 68 year-on-year) worth KRW 24.6 trillion (↑ by KRW 800 billion year-on-year) to enhance the overall quality of youth life △employment Youth Job Leap Grant (140,000 persons), △employment stronger public-private support for more youth jobs, △entrepreneurship a new startup ecosystem for young entrepreneurs, △housing special monthly rent assistance (KRW 200,000 per month for 152,000 persons), △education talent cultivation for new industries including BIO, AI, and carbon neutrality, △welfare Mental Health Voucher (15,000 persons), etc.**  **◈ (Greater Coverage) Relaxed eligibility requirements to cover more young people, even those in middle-income groups  △ Package of Three Asset-Building Supports\* customized to income level, △ Half-Price College Tuition available even to those from middle-income families, △ eased eligibility requirements for preferential savings account for young home buyers (annual income cap raised from KRW 30 million to KRW 36 million) and monthly rent loans (annual income cap raised from KRW 20 million to KRW 50 million)**  **+ △ Support package for high school graduates (education-to-job training + KRW 5 million in education-to-job scholarship + job-after-education scholarship)  △ Welfare blind spot identification and support for underserved vulnerable youth, including young carers and youth preparing for independent living**   |  | | --- | | **\* Package of Three Asset-Building Supports**  ① **Youth’s Future Savings Account** for those with annual income of KRW **24 million** or less (104,000 persons, assistance 1-3x the amount saved) ② **Youth’s Hope Installment Savings Account** for those with annual income of KRW **36 million** or less (2-4% incentive on the amount saved) ③ **Long-Term Stock Fund with Taxable Income Deduction** for those with annual income of KRW **50 million** or less [40% of fund investments (up to KRW 12 million) deducted from the taxable income amount] |   **◈ (More Systematic Implementation) In addition to expanding support measures and their coverage, there is now more focus on improving the quality of these support measures by conducting the Youth Survey and policy implementation assessments.  △ Korea’s first national youth statistical survey “Youth Life Survey“ conducted (on 15,000 young people) → stronger policy formulation base, △ nation’s first implementation plan assessment conducted → greater policy efficacy, and △ Youth Policy-Designated Organization → ongoing monitoring and management** | | |