

Youth Voices on Population Issues: The 10th University Population Debating Championship



The Korea Population Health and Welfare Association(KoPHWA) held the 10th University Population Debating Championship in order to expand social awareness of population issues and discover innovative policy ideas from young people.

The main event and award ceremony of the population debate competition were held at the Conference Room of the National Assembly Office Building on June 30th.

KoPHWA called for policy proposals on demographic change response and after preliminary evaluations, selected 10 teams. The selected teams underwent 1:1 incubation with experts to prepare for the main event, and the PT competition.

This event was jointly organized by the National Assembly Forum on Low Birthrate and Response for Demographic Crisis, and Congresswomen Choi Yeon-sook and Nam In-soon, sponsored by the Presidential Committee on

Aging Society and Population Policy, the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and the Population Association of Korea(PAK).

A total of around 80 people attended the event, including presentation teams, judges, and other staff. The judging panel consisted of four experts, and a citizen evaluation panel composed of 30 members, including representatives from the 2030 Policy Advisory Group, the '100 fathers' group, and chief advisor & secretaries of the National Assembly.

The main event was a ranking competition among the 10 teams(each composed of 3 students) chosen through the preliminary rounds and incubation. Each team had 7-minutes to present with 30-minute Q&A sessions.

The presentation topics were diverse and included themes such as △Work-Life Balance △Marriage and Birth Support △Aging Society △Immigration △Education △Balanced Regional Development, and others.

The university students delivered their presentations with passion and enthusiasm, showcasing their dedication and fervor.



△ Presentation and Q&A sessions

Intriguing and realistic policy ideas were suggested during the competition: expanding residential and child-care support benefits for women who intend to have a second child within 30 months after their first childbirth; introducing 'Pregnant Women All-Care Service System' to effectively utilize existing policies; providing clear incentive through a family-friendly certification system;

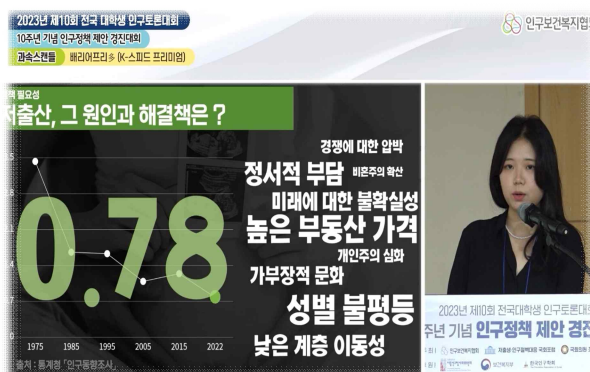
proposing methods to reduce the burden of private education expenses by promoting online public education, etc.

Through the careful evaluation and voting process of the panels, 10 teams were ranked in order of the Grand Prize(1st, 6 million won scholarship), Excellence Prize(2nd, 4 million), Outstanding Prize(3rd, 3 million), Encouragement Prize(4th, 2 million), and Honorable Mentions(5th~10th, each 500 thousand).

The Grand Prize was awarded to ‘Popcorn’ team, which presented on the topic of work-life balance, receiving the highest score from panels for their idea ‘OLEAVE(Open site for family LEAVE)’

‘OLEAVE’ is a parental leave data disclosure platform that publicly disclose parental leave usage rates and employment retention rates of the returners.

The team explained that the public disclosure of such information would not only culture work-life balance atmosphere in society but also provide crucial employment information for job seekers.



△ Presentation Slides



△ Opening Remark of President Sam-Sik Lee

Young-Mi Kim, Vice Chairperson of the Presidential Committee on Ageing Society and Population Policy, stated, "Now is the time for complete support from the National Assembly more than ever in terms of population issues." She added, "Among the policies proposed today, I will

closely work with the Ministry to make them be adopted.”

In-soon Nam, head representative of the National Assembly Forum on Low Fertility and Response for Demographic Crisis, emphasized the importance of adopting a long-term perspective and consistently formulating policies to address population issues. She stated, “The voices of the younger generation can lay the foundation of effective population policies.”



△ Vice Chairperson Young-Mi Kim



△ Congresswomen In-soon Nam

As KoPHWA successfully conducted this new trial of presentation competition, young people had meaningful opportunities to contemplate the population issues and provide policy insights to be further reviewed by government officials.