

auri research brief

No. 56

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Housing Planning in Response to Socio-economic Conditions and Lifestyle Changes

The total population of South Korea is predicted to reach 52 million by the year 2030 and decline afterward. In terms of household structure, the number of single-person households, and in particular, female single-person households is on the rise. Concurrently, various housing demands have emerged due to diversifying lifestyles including housing for the elderly, and the need for childcare and sharing the load of housework for families where both parents work. In contrast, the existing housing policy and supply system have limitations in sufficiently responding to the changing housing conditions. New concepts of housing supply and management are being introduced partially through the public and private sectors. However, even in these cases, consideration towards improving the quality of housing, which is directly related to lifestyle changes, is lacking.

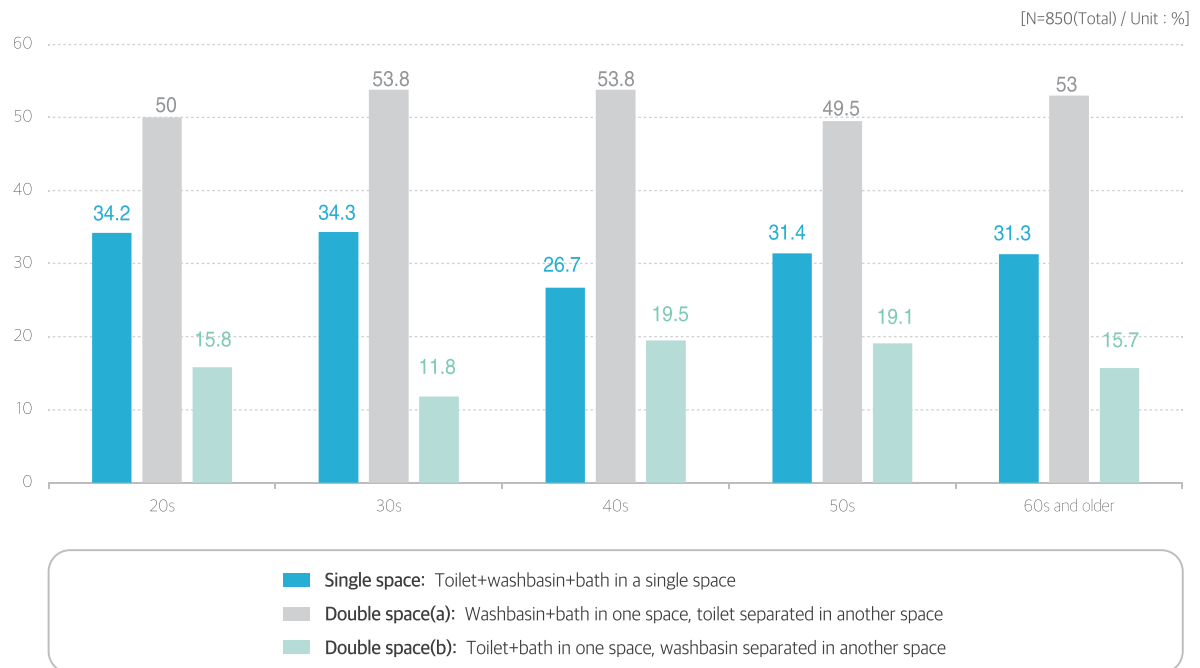
This study aims to explore housing measures that respond to diverse housing needs resulting from structural demographic changes such as low birth rate and an aging population, and examines the appropriateness of housing size and spatial composition of current schemes built according to present housing standards. Based on this, the study aims to suggest the direction of future housing standards to ensure adequate quality of residential space.

To understand the current conditions and problems of the housing system, the study analyzed the problems of the housing area of national housing (less than 85m²) and public rental housing. The study also analyzed the various policies of housing support for low-income households, young adults and newlyweds proposed in the current government's five-year plan, which was launched in 2017. The housing unit size of national housing is directly related to the government's limit on funding and financial subsidies. Nonetheless, the basis for the housing unit size, which was established in 1975, is unclear. Furthermore, more than 45 years have elapsed since and considering increased income levels, diversified lifestyles, and an increase in single-person or two-people households, the criteria need to be reconsidered. Therefore, a detailed study considering how this relates to major government policies, including private sector housing supply and public sector rental housing, is required. New housing types that are currently being discussed, such as newlywed housing, young adult housing, newlywed town, business support housing, and safe housing for women, need to be clearly defined in terms of its concept and housing standards to prevent confusion among various policies.

The "Framework Act on Residence" outlines the minimum housing standard necessary to ensure quality living standards of the general public. The current minimum housing standard was published in 2011, and includes the standard household composition, the number of rooms, and housing unit size based on the number of household members. Apart from this, a guided housing standard is introduced to improve the living standards of the general public, and the government has announced to develop this standard in detail based on the minimum housing standard. The current minimum housing standard needs to be reconsidered taking into account higher income levels and a decreased number of household members. Also, besides the minimum area standard, more refined criteria of housing performance including design considerations for the elderly and the disabled, safety, sound insulation, energy reduction, daylight, ventilation, and hot water supply are needed. To ensure the effectiveness of the guided housing standard, it is necessary to understand the achievement rate of a minimum housing standard, and current housing supply trends and empty homes, so that a comprehensive review of how to set new housing standards, which differentiated from the minimum housing standard, can be conducted.

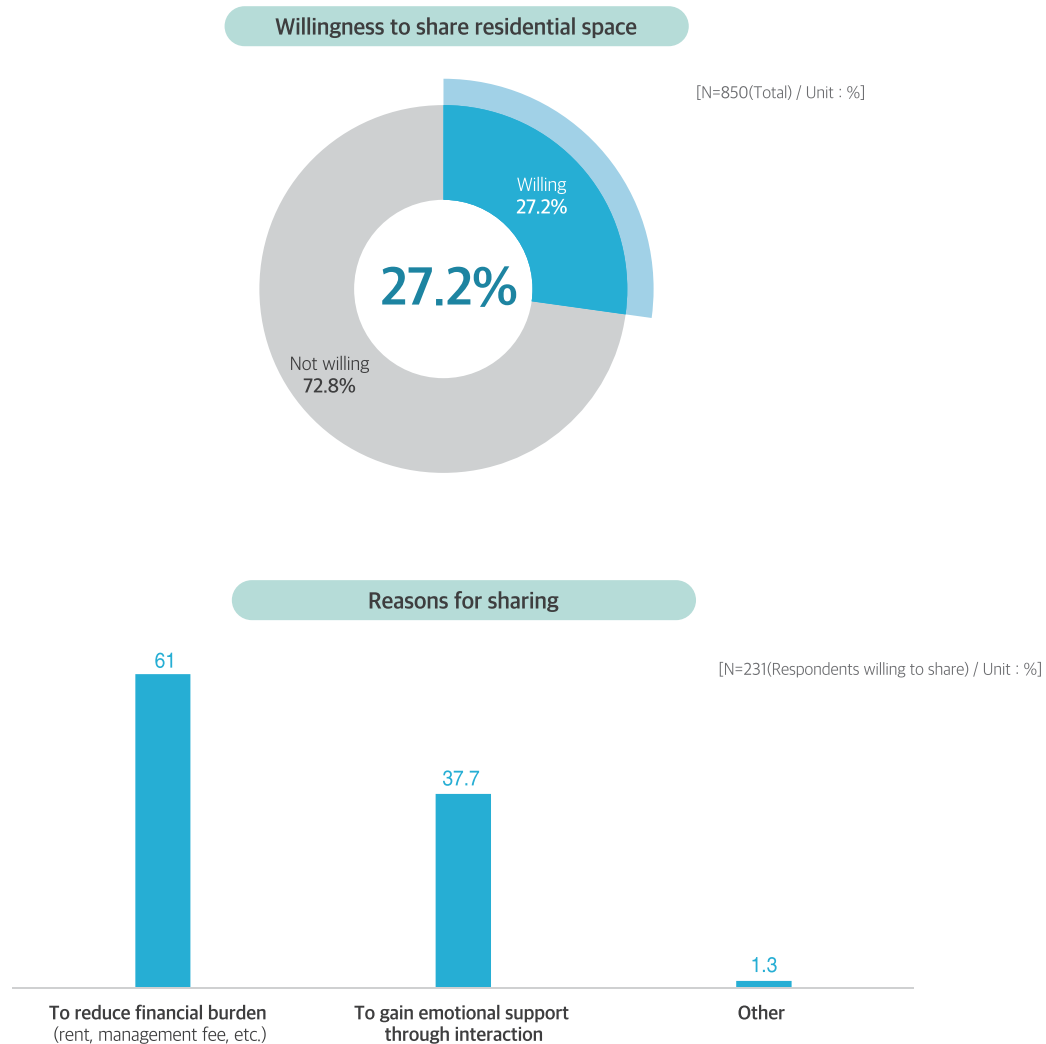
In a survey conducted to understand new housing demand, the household composition, the use of residential space, preferred housing type, preferred residential facilities and perceptions of sharing residential space were surveyed by 850 residents aged between 20 and 69, living in multi-unit housing in metropolitan cities and special municipalities nationwide. In terms of the use of residential space, while the overall satisfaction was reported to be average (3.44 points out of 5 points), the satisfaction level of the housing area and the composition of space

was relatively low. The residents felt that the least satisfactory space in regards to size was the storage and service areas such as the multi-purpose room or storage room. Residents also responded that they most wanted to expand the size of living areas such as bedrooms and the living room. This showed that the general satisfaction of space usage did not necessarily align with the demand for space expansion. In terms of the housing area composition, more than 90% of respondents desired to secure a separate bedroom, and wanted a separate living room, dining area, and kitchen, in the order of desire. Across all generations, respondents preferred separating the toilet from the washbasin and bathroom space, which highlighted a need for an alternative to the most commonly found single space bathrooms (bath, washbasin, and toilet). According to the currently-owned home appliances and future purchase intentions, people showed an increased demand toward clothes managing appliances and dryers, indicating that new functions and areas may need to be examined.



[Figure 1] Preferred spatial composition for bathrooms

Respondents' perception toward sharing residential space was not enthusiastic and possible tenants were limited to acquaintances, similar age groups or same gender. In terms of the actual spaces that could be shared, many wanted private bedrooms and toilets but were willing to share kitchens and living rooms. As for the reasons for sharing, reducing financial burden was chosen over social exchange.



[Figure 2] Willingness to share residential space and reasons for sharing

To effectively respond to the new housing need, the multi-unit housing supply system needs to shift and means of securing diverse housing choices need to be sought in light of the current residential space limitations. First, it is necessary to understand the requirements for residential space in detail according to the different categories of residents. Also, new ways of composing space for specific groups, such as young adults, single-person households, and the elderly, need to be considered in response to the varying needs of the target resident group. Furthermore, as new home appliances become popularized, space expansion or adjusting spatial arrangements, efficient circulation, and the appropriate width of corridors and openings need to be three-dimensionally reviewed. Furthermore, there should be ways

in which residents can choose and arrange the basic residential components. To this end, the area-based spatial planning and supply process needs to become more flexible to reflect user customization, and professional consulting and support systems need to be in place to efficiently compose internal spaces including its finishing.

Keywords : Housing Demand, Residential Space, Housing Standard, Multi-unit Housing, Public Housing

