

TIME RECEIVED	REMOTE CSID	DURATION	PAGES	STATUS
October 1, 2018 12:12:00 PM GMT+02: +41227340859		695	24	Received
01/10 2018 12:01 +41227340859		MISSION TURKEY TO UNOG		#4976 P.001/024



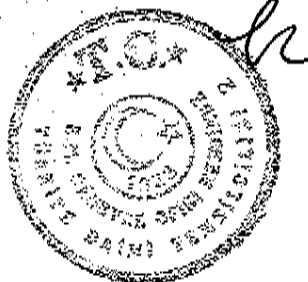
MISSION PERMANENTE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE DE TURQUIE
AUPRÈS DE L'OFFICE DES NATIONS UNIES À GENÈVE

2018/62441669-BMCO DT/14370975

La Mission Permanente de la République de Turquie auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies à Genève et d'autres organisations internationales en Suisse présentent ses compliments au Haut-Commissariat aux droits de l'homme et se référant à la lettre de M. Dante Pesce, Président du Groupe de travail sur la question des droits de l'homme et des sociétés transnationales et autres entreprises du 7 août 2018, a l'honneur de joindre à la présente lettre, une note d'information rédigée par les autorités turques compétentes en réponse à la demande d'information figurant dans la lettre susmentionnée.

La Mission permanente de la République de Turquie saisit cette occasion pour renouveler au Haut-Commissariat aux droits de l'homme les assurances de sa plus haute considération.

Genève, le 1er octobre 2018



Pièce jointe: comme indiqué

Haut Commissariat aux Droits de l'Homme
Palais des Nations
1211 Genève 10



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Hazırlayan : Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü

Konu : BM İş Dünyası ve İnsan Hakları Çalışma Grubu Sualnamesi'nin Cevapları

- 1. In what ways do women experience the impact of business-related rights abuses differently and disproportionately? Please provide concrete examples in the context of both generic and sector -or region- specific experiences women.**

International Labour Organisation (ILO) handles the status of unpaid family worker together with self-employment and identifies these two forms of work as vulnerable employment. The ratio of employment in these two forms of work to the total employment constitutes the vulnerable employment rate. Within this scope, while women in Turkey are mostly employed in the services sector with 57,2%; 26,9% is recruited in agricultural sector and 15,9% is in the industrial sector according to the data of Turkish Statistical Institution (TUIK).

- 2. Please share any good practices on how to deal with increased marginalisation or vulnerabilities faced by women due to intersectionality, feminisation of work, informal economy and conflicts.**

The activities that are carried out by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services General Directorate on the Status of Women in order to strengthen women's economic status in Turkey are as follows:

Mom's Job, My Future Project (2013-2019)

One of the obstacles to women's entry into work life is duty of childcare. Within this scope, "Mom's Job, My future" Project has been put into practice in order to establish crèches in Organized Industrial Zones (OIZs) within scope of the cooperation protocol signed among



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the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services and the Ministry of Industry and Technology, and Borusan Holding Inc.

It is aimed with the Project to reduce the burden of childcare on women through establishing crèches in 10 provinces to be determined and to increase women's employment in industry through reconciliation of work and family life. Under the Project, crèches in Adiyaman, Afyonkarahisar, Malatya and Balıkesir OIZs were constructed and put into service. Impact analysis was carried out in these four provinces and a report was prepared regarding the problems encountered and their solution. In addition, the feasibility study is underway for opening crèches in Bursa and Baskent OIZ.

Engineer Girls of Turkey Project (2016-2020)

Engineer Girls of Turkey Project was put into practice with the cooperation of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, Ministry of National Education, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Limak Holding. The Project aims to give support in all spheres for the female students who want to be engineers and enable them to be role models of their profession. Within scope of the Project, scholarship, internship and employment opportunity and English language program, trainings on "Social Engineering" certification programs and mentorship support are provided for the university students. In 2018, scholarships have been awarded to 102 female students who are successful but in need of financial support and study at the engineering faculties of universities.

Furthermore, awareness-raising and informing activities in the fields of engineering are carried out for 10th and 11th grade students at the most successful Science and Anatolian High Schools in 10 provinces, their teachers, school administrators and parents within scope of the project. Within this scope, 21.400 persons including 50 school administrators, 50 representative teachers, 611 school counsellors, 1860 parents and 18.829 students have been reached in total.

Painter Forewomen Project (2016-2017)



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“Painter Forewomen Project” was carried out in partnership with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, ISKUR(Turkish Employment Agency), and Betek Paint and Chemical Industry Corp. The Project aimed to provide women with professional knowledge and skills in different sectors and ensure their employment.

Within scope of the Project, 365 trainee women benefitted from painting trainings for construction sector and 266 women were entitled to receive Professional Competency Certificates.

The Project on Grandmothers for Promotion of Women’s Employment (April 2017-April 2018)

“The Project on Grandmothers for Promotion of Women’s Employment” was implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Family and Social Policy(former) and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (they were restructured as the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services (MoFLSS) under a single roof) to prevent the currently working women from stepping out of the labor market by providing financial benefits for grandmothers caring for their 0-3 year-old grandchildren and to support cultural transmission by offering children the chance to grow up with their grandmothers. In the pilot provinces, 6500 grandmothers were provided with allowances of 425 TL for one year. During the Project, house visits were paid to the families benefiting from the aforementioned support by the personnel of Family Social Support Program (ASDEP) under the responsibility of our Ministry; and “Analysis and Evaluation Report” was prepared as a result of the data obtained.

Activities for Women and Girls in Science and Technology and Digital Literacy **“International Day of Women and Girls in Science”**

On the occasion of “International Day of Women and Girls in Science” held with the participation of girl students on 12nd February 2018, successful female scientists in different fields of science and girl students who had reached national and international success in different sciences were brought together. With the occasion, it was aimed to

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enable girls to benefit from these experiences and take courage to carry out studies in the field of science.

“International Girls in Information and Communications Technology Day”

On the occasion of “International Girls in ICT Day” that aims to create a global environment that empowers and encourages school girls and young women to consider careers in the field of information and communication technologies;

- “Training on Information Technologies and Conscious and Safe Internet Use” was held for girls growing up at the homes of love affiliated to the MoFLSS and caretaker mothers; and wives and children of martyrs on 18th April 2018 in Ankara and 24th April 2018 in Istanbul.
- At the event organized on 26th April 2018 with the participation of girls growing up at the homes of love affiliated to the MoFLSS and caretaker mothers, successful women in the field of information and communications technologies were brought together and they shared information.
- Digital Literacy Seminars; first of the training programs covering efficient usage of opportunities provided by the digital technology, safe and conscious internet use, effective e-Posta usage, cloud technology, basic data literacy, organized in cooperation with Google Turkey was held on 3rd May 2018 for the personnel of Our Ministry with the participation of 103 persons. “Women and Technology Istanbul Meeting” was held on 10th May 2018 with the participation of nearly 600 female mukhtars, azas and personnel of Our Ministry.

Seminars on Financial Literacy and Women’s Economic Empowerment

“Seminars on Financial Literacy and Women’s Economic Empowerment” are carried out for women in cooperation with relevant local actors under the coordination of Provincial Directorates of the MoFLSS in order to raise awareness about mechanisms that are encouraging women’s economic participation and ensuring understanding of financial issues and risks. Within scope of these seminars, 3.514 women participated in these seminars in totally 14 provinces in 2017 and 2018.



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3. How to address sexual harassment and sexual or physical violence suffered by women in the business-related context, including at the workplace, in supply chains and in surrounding communities? Please share any good practices which have proved to be effective in dealing with sexual harassment and violence against women.

There have been significant developments regarding combating sexual harassment and violence against women in the workplace.

With the amendments on 18th June 2014, the penalties for sexual offences were increased in the Turkish Criminal Code. The term “workplace harassment” was introduced and the qualified cases of sexual offences were defined; accordingly, harassment by undue influence based on public office or employment relationship or by using the advantage of working in the same workplace with the victim was punished more severely compared to the basic forms of the offence. With this amendment, not only the sexual harassment from a senior, but also between employees was regulated.

In addition, it was regulated in the Labour Law which entered into force in 2003 that the employee is entitled to break the contract with valid reason in cases where the employee was sexually harassed by the employer, another employee or by third persons in the establishment, adequate measures were not taken although the employer was informed of such conduct.

Moreover, the Prime Ministry Circular No. 2011/2, including measures for protection of employees against psychological harassment, was published in the Official Gazette No. 27879 and entered into force on 19th March 2011.

There are also different mechanisms in order to resolve all kinds of reports and complaints on work life in an efficient and speedy manner apart from aforementioned legal amendments. One of them is “Presidency Communications Center (CIMER)” serving in order to ensure citizens’ speedy access to public services, solve their problems, assess the complaints and demands. Another application mechanism is 170 Hotline Communications Center on problems encountered in the work life, particularly mobbing, as well as all the



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services provided by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, Social Security Institution, Turkish Employment Agency and Vocational Qualifications Institution. The Center gives information and finds solution. In cases that the calls cannot be replied immediately; there is immediately made contact with institutions and organisations and the demands are responded within 72 hours at the latest.

One another application mechanism is the Ombudsman Institution. Persons whose interest has been violated can apply; and complaint petitions may be delivered via mail, e-mail, fax and electronic system on its website.

4. Which State laws and policies or social, cultural and religious norms continue to impede women's integration into economic activities and public life generally?

There is not any national legal adjustment in Turkey that constitutes an impediment to women's integration with economic life and society in general.

However, women in Turkey face with many obstacles related to gender inequalities as in the whole world. As in many societies, household and domestic care duties which are socially and culturally attributed to women, decrease the rate of women's participation in labour market.

5. Are there any good practices of integrating a gender perspective into States' economic sphere (e.g., state-owned enterprises, public procurement agencies, trade missions, export credit agencies, privatisation of public services, public-private partnerships, and trade and investment agreements?)

The state takes various measures and carries out incentive and support programs in order to eliminate the structural, social and other problems regarding women's employment. All these initiatives have been included in the high policy texts, plans and programs in Turkey. The National Employment Strategy (2014-2023) includes the target of increasing women's labor force participation up to 41% and decreasing unregistered employment rate down to 30% in 2023.

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Significant legal developments were conducted in order to promote women's economic participation. Within this scope;

➤ **The Law No. 6663 Amending the Income Tax Law and Some Specific Laws** which entered into effect as of 10th February 2016 embodies the following provisions about the personal rights of female employees and parents:

- *The time of unpaid leaves due to maternity leaves shall be considered in degree and rank improvements of state officials.*
- *Regulation of paid part-time employment rights of the employees in case of childbirth*
 - ✓ With the amendment, female employees were entitled to part-time employment for two months for the first child on condition of the survival of the child; four months for the second child, and six months for the third and more children. In multiple births, one extra month shall be added to the aforementioned periods. In the event of a child with disability, the employee was entitled to work part-time for 12 months on usual salary.
 - ✓ During this period, the wages and premiums of the times worked by the workers shall be paid by the employer.
 - ✓ The part-time work allowances for the off times shall be paid from the unemployment fund; and the daily wage is the gross minimum wage.
 - ✓ The state officials and workers may start their present maternity leave, which is a period of 24 months for state officials and 6 months for workers, at the end of the paid part-time work.
- *Regulation of part-time employment rights of working parents*
 - ✓ State official and worker parents are entitled to work part-time until the child reaches the compulsory primary school age, for each child. For purpose of business and human resources planning in public and private sectors, one of the parents shall benefit from this right once for each child.
- *Regulations on leave rights in case of premature birth and in the event of decease of the mother, who was a worker*

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- ✓ It was regulated that in case of premature birth, the maternity leave of female civil servants shall be extended to compensate for the periods of leave not used because of premature birth.
- ✓ As for state officials, in the event of death of the mother, who was a worker, the father is entitled to benefit from the remaining maternity leave exactly.
- ***Leave rights in the event of adoption were regulated.***
 - ✓ In the event of adoption, parents are entitled to benefit from the maternity leaves by comparison.
- ***With the "Law no. 6663 Amending the Income Tax Law and Some Specific Laws",*** the following secondary legislative regulations were made in order to ensure application union in use of leaves entitled to the employees due to childbirth and adoption:
 - ✓ **With the Civil Servant General Communiqué No.6** which entered into force as of 13th April 2016, regulation was made regarding use of leaves entitled to the civil servants due to childbirth and adoption including part-time leave.
 - ✓ **"The Regulation on Part-Time Work After Maternity Leave or Unpaid Leave"** entered into force as of 8th November 2016, regulated the leaves to entitled to the workers due to childbirth and adoption.
- The Provision on the Procedures and Principles on the Treasury Subvention Provided to the Credit Guarantee Institutions" includes provisions containing positive discrimination in support of female entrepreneurs. In the Treasury-Funded Surety System, the maximum warrant ratio is 90% for the beneficiaries within scope of the SME and 85% for the beneficiaries out of the scope of SME. The maximum warrant ratio is 90% for the credits to be used by entrepreneur women.
- The following issues aimed at ensuring reconciliation of work and family life were enacted by **"the Law Nr.6745 on Amending Specific Decrees and Laws on Project Support to Investments"** effective as of 7th September 2016,
 - ✓ With the amendment to the Article 20 of the Income Tax Law No. 193 and dated 31/12/1960, "private crèches and day-care centers were exempted from the income taxes for five taxation periods as of the taxation period they came into operation."



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- ✓ With the amendment to the Article 5 of the Corporate Tax Law No. 5520 and dated 13/6/2006, “private crèches and day-care centers were exempted from the corporate taxes for five fiscal periods as of the fiscal period they came into operation.”
- With the amendments to **the Income Tax Law and “Law No. 7103 on Amending the Tax Acts and Some Specific Laws and Decrees”** published in the official gazette on 27th March 2018, it was ensured that if the employer pay **50%** of the monthly gross minimum wage for each child of the female employees (currently equivalent to 1015 TL) directly to the crèches and day-care centers providing these services, this amount shall be **exempted from income tax.**
- With the Law No. 6111 which entered into force in 2011, it was regulated that in case of employment of females older than 18, their insurance premiums will be covered by unemployment insurance fund of the employers’ shares for 12 to 54 months according to some conditions with affirmative action to provide new employment opportunities to women. The applicable period of the initiative concerned has been extended until 31.12.2020 upon the Decision of Council of Ministers.
- In order to ensure women’s employment in qualified jobs, promote reconciliation of work and family life, institutional care support of 400 TL is paid monthly to women who attend the courses and programs in industrial sector and have children aged between 2-5 during the course/program.

In addition to the legal adjustments, the projects and activities included within scope of the 2nd question above and can be gathered under 6 titles, which are carried out by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services General Directorate on the Status of Women are initiatives that contribute to promote women’s economic participation.

6. How could policy coherence be improved between different governmental ministries or departments dealing with women issues and business related matters?

With the new system of government in Turkey, there have been considerable amendments in the structures of the Ministries and institutions. Within this scope, the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services was established and “the Ministry of Family and Social Policy (former)” and “the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (former)” were



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restructured under a single roof by the Presidential Decree on Presidential Organization No. 1 and dated 10th July 2018. Through this amendment, a complete political harmony and consistency have been ensured between (former) the Ministry of Family and Social Policy that carried out activities in order to prevent discrimination against women, protect and improve women's human rights; and (former) the Ministry of Labour and Social Security that had the duties to regulate the work life.

In addition, the Prime Ministry Circular No. 2010/14 on **“Increasing Women's Employment and Promotion of Equality in Opportunities”** was published on 25th May 2010 and entered into force in order to increase women's employment and to implement equal pay for equal work for strengthening women's socio-economic status, ensuring equality between women and men in social life, and reaching the sustainable economic growth and social development targets. “The National Monitoring and Coordination Committee on Women's Employment” was established with the participation of representatives of Ministries in order to monitor and evaluate the activities carried out by all stakeholders for identification of existing problems in women's employment and elimination of these problems and ensure coordination and cooperation; and the Committee convenes periodically.

Furthermore, *“The Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women's Empowerment”*, which was prepared to cover the period 2018-2023, aims to promote women's economic and social participation; ensure equal access to rights and opportunities; mainstream the equal opportunities for women and men. One of the 5 main policy pillars of the Action Plan is “Economy”; and many Ministries have been identified as responsible and related institutions in implementation of activities and strategies set within scope of the Action Plan. Within this scope, it is estimated that the Ministries carry out the activities under their responsibility by integrating them into their own plans, programs and budgets. Annual monitoring meetings will be organized with the participation of Ministry representatives in order to monitor and evaluate the activities carried out. All these activities to be conducted under *“the Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women's Empowerment”* will promote the political harmony and consistency among Ministries.

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7. What is the extent to which businesses currently apply a gender lens in conducting human rights due diligence, including social or environmental impact assesment?

Thanks to the egalitarian reforms in the Labour Law, legal ground has been established to ensure that employers protect the principle of equality between women and men in Turkey.

The most significant improvement introduced by the new Labour Law, which entered into force in 2003, is that any discrimination with respect to basic civil rights, including sex, could not be made in employer-employee relations. In this respect, the provisions below were included in the code;

- The employer may not make any discrimination, either directly or indirectly, against an employee in the conclusion, conditions, execution and termination of employment contract due to the employee's sex or maternity,
- Lower payment for work of equal value shall not be permissible due to sex,
- Sex, marital status and family responsibilities, pregnancy and maternity shall not constitute valid reason for termination,
- The employee is entitled to break the contract with valid reason in cases where the employee was sexually harassed by the employer, another employee or by third persons in the establishment, adequate measures were not taken although the employer was informed of such conduct,

In case that the employers do not comply with the Law, various legal sanctions are imposed.

The Prime Ministry Circular no. 2004/7 on "Acting in Accordance with the Principle of Equality in Staff Recruitment" includes the provision that gender discrimination cannot be made except for the service requirements in personnel recruitment.

8. Are there any good practices of business enterprises adopting a gender perspective in making human rights policy commitments, addressing the



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gender wage gap and under representation of women in boards and senior positions, or involving affected women in meaningful consultations and remediation processes?

In “the Communique on Identification and Implementation of Corporate Governance Principles” published by the Capital Markets Board; it was regulated that “There shall be at least one female member in the executive board.” while it is not mandatory. However, the principle concerned is advisory as required by the principle “Implement, Explain If Not”.

In addition, in the World Economic Forum on Middle East, North Africa and Eurasia held in Istanbul between 4-6 June 2012 within scope of “the World Economic Forum Closing the Gender Gap Program”, “Gender Parity Task Force of Turkey” was established under the auspices of (former) the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, and under the co-leadership of Sabanci Holding and Doğus Holding in order to decrease the Turkey’s gap of opportunity and participation down to 10% within 3 years. Task Force Group was transformed into “Equality at Work Platform” with the press launch in January 2013. Within this scope, it is seen that the objective was completely achieved at the end of these 3 years and the gap was pulled down by 10, 9%. 85 companies signed the “Equality at Work Declaration” and became members of the aforementioned “Equality at Work Platform”. Moreover, the introductory handbook of the Gender Parity Platform, brochures and videos, Best Practices Booklet, and Booklet on Promotion of Equality at Work throughout the Supply Chain were prepared and printed. As a part of the platform work, the “Role Model Women Employee” videos were shot.

9. What is the role of businesses in dealing with domestic laws, policies and societal practices which are discriminatory to women?

As a requirement of the equal treatment principle, any discrimination with respect to basic civil rights, including sex, could not be made in employer-employee relations pursuant to the Labour Law. Within this scope, the employer is obliged to take all necessary measures for elimination of all practices including discrimination against women.

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10. How could media and advertising industries fight against gender stereotyping and disempowerment of women?

While the media may have the function of changing the social judgments in positive way in determination of cultural and social structure in the society, it also reproduces existing social judgments through its context. With its power, media is a platform on which gender-relative social representations, in that the system of values, beliefs and practices that enables to discover, perceive and regulate the life, are always produced, restructured and transformed. In this regard, how women are represented in media has a significant potential in determining the social status of women and men. Also, media professionals are not independent of gendered structure existing in the society. Therefore, media and advertisement industries have an important duty on gender stereotypes and the way women are represented in media. While fulfilling this duty, media and advertisement industries should be in full scale fight in cooperation with the public, private sector, non-governmental organizations.

Considering the importance of media in women's empowerment, General Directorate on the Status of Women has carried out many activities since its establishment. Some of them are as follows;

- **The National Action Plan on Gender Equality** which was prepared for the period 2008-2013 under the coordination of GDSW, included the title "Women and Media" as one of the critical areas identified in the Beijing Platform for Action as well.
- Between 2010 and 2012, two meetings entitled "**the Role of Media Literacy in Ensuring Gender Equality**" were held for teachers who lecture the media literacy course. 110 teachers attended these meetings.
- With **the Gender and Media Workshops** organized between 2009-2013, 12 Gender and Media Workshops were organized with the participation of 434 students for the students of communications faculties to be future's media professionals. Also, "Workshops on the Role of Local Media Professionals in

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Combating Violence Against Women and News Writing” were organized for local media professionals; and 198 media professionals attended these workshops.

- Within scope of the communication strategy of **“the Project on Combating Domestic Violence”** for the period 2014-2016, which was funded under IPA-2009 program, and Our Ministry was also a beneficiary, trainings were organized for local media professionals on language of media in violence against women in Konya, Antalya and Trabzon.103 local media members were reached through trainings.
- The Project on Women’s Representation in Media was carried out by the MoFLSS in 2017 in order to find out the impacts of women’s representation on women and social and cultural structure of society. Within scope of the Project, a comprehensive report and guidebook on women’s representation in media, banner, brochure and flyer for media professionals. In addition, the data obtained will provide input in the studies for raising awareness and consciousness of the media managers, media professionals, students of communication faculties and the society/public in the upcoming periods.

In addition; the chapter of “Media” in “the Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women’s Empowerment, a document developed under the coordination of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, was prepared to cover the period 2018-2023 and include the activities which will be conducted for women’s empowerment by the public institutions and organizations, local administrations, universities, non-governmental organizations, private sector and other relevant institutions, includes strategies such as “developing awareness-raising activities for content providers at all levels of media sector about improvement and strengthening of women’s representation” and “increasing the efficiency of regulatory and supervisory mechanisms in media”. Moreover, it includes the target that “content producer, regulatory and supervisory mechanisms will be ensured to be aware of the improvement and strengthening of women’s representation in media”.

11. What additional or specific barriers do women (women human rights defenders) face in accessing effective remedies for business-related human rights abuses?

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Although it is not a direct obstacle, insufficient number of accessible institutional childcare centers may be regarded as an obstacle with respect to supporting the childcare responsibility of women which is highly efficient in women's participation into work life.

12. How could all types of remedial mechanisms, processes and outcomes be made more gender sensitive?

It is of utmost importance to raise awareness and activities for transformation of social attitudes as well as transform the public plans, policies and budgets into gender-responsive structure in implementation of the regulations conducted within scope of combating discrimination against women. Different parts of the society may be reached through these activities and women's social and economic empowerment can be contributed. Within this scope, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services General Directorate on the Status of Women carries out activities to raise awareness and transform the social attitudes included also in the Question 2.

Engineer Girls of Turkey Project (2016-2020)

Engineer Girls of Turkey Project was put into practice with the cooperation of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, Ministry of National Education, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Limak Holding. The Project aims to give support in all spheres for the female students who want to be engineers and enable them to be role models of their profession. Within scope of the Project, scholarship, internship and employment opportunity and English language program, trainings on "Social Engineering" certification programs and mentorship support are provided for the university students. In 2018, scholarships have been awarded to 102 girl students who are successful but in need of financial support and study at the engineering faculties of universities.

Furthermore, awareness-raising and informing activities in the fields of engineering are carried out for 10th and 11th grade students at the most successful Science and Anatolian High Schools in 10 provinces, their teachers and parents within scope of the project. Within this scope, 21.400 persons including 50 school administrators, 50 representative teachers, 611 school counsellors, 1860 parents and 18.829 students have been reached in total.



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Women and Girls in Science and Technology

“International Day of Women and Girls in Science”

On the occasion of “International Day of Women and Girls in Science” held with the participation of girl students on 12nd February 2018, successful female scientists in different fields of science and female students who had reached national and international success in different sciences were brought together. With the occasion, it was aimed to enable girls to benefit from these experiences and take courage to carry out studies in the field of science.

“International Girls in Information and Communications Technology Day”

On the occasion of “International Girls in ICT Day” that aims to create a global environment that empowers and encourages school girls and young women to consider careers in the field of information and communication technologies;

- “Training on Information Technologies and Conscious and Safe Internet Use” was held for girls growing up at the homes of love affiliated to the MoFLSS and caretaker mothers; and wives and children of martyrs on 18th April 2018 in Ankara and on 24th April 2018 in Istanbul.
- At the event organized on 26th April 2018, with the participation of girls growing up at the homes of love affiliated to Our Ministry and caretaker mothers, successful women in the field of information and communications technologies were brought together and they shared information.

Seminars on Financial Literacy and Women’s Economic Empowerment

“Seminars on Financial Literacy and Women’s Economic Empowerment” are carried out for women in cooperation with relevant local actors under the coordination of Provincial Directorates of Our Ministry, with the participation of housewives, in order to raise awareness about mechanisms that are encouraging women’s economic participation and ensuring understanding of financial issues and risks. Within scope of these seminars, 3.514 women participated in these seminars in totally 14 provinces in 2017 and 2018.



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The Implementation Project on Gender Responsive Budgeting and Planning in Turkey

The Project aims to mobilize and strengthen the individuals and institutions at local and national levels; to provide technical support for public institutions, public administrations and non-governmental organizations; gender mainstreaming in local/national programs, plans and budgets; and to share the best practices in the field of GRB in Turkey and other leading countries.

The UN Women was identified as the project coordinator and the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services as the main beneficiary.

It is estimated to maintain the Project for three years.

It is planned with the Project to develop awareness-raising activities, analyzes, capacity-building, models for monitoring the public policies from the gender perspective, to carry out activities for institutionalization of gender-responsive approach at local and national level.

12. How could all types of remedial mechanisms, processes and outcomes be made more gender sensitive?

13. How to overcome power imbalances and discriminatory practices that might undermine the effectiveness of remedies obtained by women?

As stated, activities regarding awareness-raising and transformation of social attitudes are of vital importance in combating discriminatory practices that may decrease the efficiency of women's gains. Through these activities, different parts of the society can be reached and contribution can be made to strengthen women's social and economic status.

It is required to promote women's economic and social participation; to ensure equal access to the rights and opportunities; mainstream the equal opportunities for women and men in order to maintain women's gains and improving mechanisms. To achieve this, it is required to carry out awareness and consciousness raising activities and to make close cooperation

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with the public, private sector, universities and non-governmental organizations as well as the strong legal reforms.

In Turkey, many significant legal adjustments have been carried out for ensuring equal opportunities for women and men in recent years. They are as follows;

- The following provisions were added to Article 10 of the Constitution in 2004: “Women and men have equal rights. The State has the obligation to ensure that this equality exists in practice.” And with the last amendment in 2010, the provision that “Measures taken for this purpose shall not be considered as a violation of the principle of equality” was added and the Article concerned was turned into a highly strong structure including the issue of affirmative action.
- With the amendment to the Article 90 of the Constitution in 2004, international agreements, duly put into effect, concerning fundamental rights and freedoms, including The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Istanbul Convention were rendered superior to the national legislation.
- The new Turkish Civil Code, which entered into force in 2002, conducted regulations eliminating gender-based discrimination.
- The Labour Law, which entered into force in 2003, includes significant regulations which protects equal opportunities for women and men and that any discrimination with respect to basic civil rights, including sex, could not be made in employer-employee relations.
- Turkish Criminal Code that entered into force on 1st June 2005 includes regulations with regard to gender equality and violence against women. To the Article which regulated the qualified cases of willful murder, which requires life imprisonment, the statement “with the motive of custom” was added and it was adopted that the custom killings should be punished with the most severe penalty. Moreover, the penalties for the offences committed against sexual integrity were aggravated in 2014.

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- Pursuant to the Municipal Law No. 5393, it became “an obligation” for the Metropolitan Municipalities and the municipalities with a population over 100.000 to open shelters for women and children.
- In 2009, the Committee on the Equality of Opportunity for Women and Men was established in Grand National Assembly of Turkey.
- The Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Domestic Violence against Women prepared by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services was adopted unanimously at the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 8th March 2012; and entered into force having been published on the Official Gazette No. 28239 and dated 20th March 2012.
- The Regulation on the Implementation of Law no. 6284 was prepared in accordance with the opinions by the related institutions and organizations and entered into effect on 18th January 2013.
- The Regulation on Opening and Operation of Women’s Shelters regarding restructuring of women’s shelters entered into effect on 5th January 2013.
- The Regulation on Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers was published on Official Gazette on 17th March 2016 and entered into force.
- With the amendment to the Income Tax Law in 2007; the income yielded by women by selling the home-made products in the charity sales, festivals and fairs and at places determined temporarily by the state institution and organizations was deemed exempt of tax.
- It was regulated by the Law No. 6111 which entered into force in 2011 that in case that women older than 18 are employed, with respect to providing employment opportunities by adopting affirmative action, their insurance premiums shall be covered from the Unemployment Fund of the employer’s share for 24 to 54 months according to specific conditions by adopting affirmative action. 148.396 women have benefited from these incentives as of November 2017; the applicable period of the incentive has been extended until 31st December 2020 upon a decision of Council of Ministers.
- The condition that “female farmers engaged in agricultural activities on their own behalves should be the head of family in order to be covered by the insurance” was



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revoked. Women engaged in household chores have been entitled to insurance opportunity.

- The Council of Ministers Provision on the Procedures and Principles on the Treasury Subvention Provided to the Credit Guarantee Institutions includes provisions containing affirmative action in support of female entrepreneurs. . In the Treasury-Funded Surety System, the maximum warrant ratio is 90% for the beneficiaries within scope of the SME and 85% for the beneficiaries out of the scope of SME. However, the maximum warrant ratio is 90% for the credits to be used by entrepreneur women in both cases.
- Prime Ministry Circular No. 2004/7 on “Acting in Accordance with the Principle of Equality in Staff Recruitment” entered into force.
- Prime Ministry Circular No. 2010/14 on “Increasing Women’s Employment and Promotion of Equality in Opportunities” entered into force.
- Under the Law No. 6663, the time of unpaid leaves due to maternity leaves were considered in degree and rank improvements of state officials. Female employees were entitled to work part-time for two months for the first child on condition of survival of the child; four months for the second child, and six months for the third and more children without any pay reduction. Working parents were entitled to work part-time until the child reached the primary school age, for each child. In case of premature birth, the maternity leave of female civil servants was extended to compensate for the periods of leave not used because of premature birth. In the event of death of the mother after the childbirth, who was a worker, the father was entitled to benefit from the remaining maternity leave exactly. In the event of adoption, parents are entitled to benefit from leave rights.
- It was regulated with the amendment pursuant to the Law No. 6745; “Private crèches and day-care centers were exempted from the income taxes for five taxation periods as of the taxation period they came into operation.”
- In Turkey, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services has conducted many activities to raise awareness and consciousness for ensuring equality between women and men in recent years as well as legal regulations. They are as follows;

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- “Training Programs on Equality Between Women and Men and Gender” were organized between 2007-2016 for public administratives serving in provinces and districts throughout Turkey. In addition, “Training Protocols” were signed between General Directorate on the Status of Women and the relevant Ministries (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, and Presidency of Religious Affairs). Within this scope, through the Training Protocols signed with the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of National Defense; trainings of 71.000 police officers, 65.000 health personnel, and 47.566 religious officers have been completed; and seminars have been organized for 326 Family Court Judges and Public Prosecutors so far. Moreover, under the Protocol signed with the Ministry of National Defense; trainers’ trainings of the 7.605 Turkish Armed Forces personnel have been completed so far; and these trainers have trained 463,694 ranks and files, both new recruits and seniors. Furthermore; conferences were organized for 26,528 personnel including Officers, Sergeants, Civil Servants and military students commissioned in the headquarters.
- Within scope of the Communication Strategy developed under “the Project on Combating Domestic Violence” which has been funded under IPA-2009 Instrument for Pre- Accession- and implemented by our Ministry since 2014; 50 visibility meetings have been organized in order to raise awareness about violence against women for different target groups including local media professionals, family practitioners, university students, academicians, mukhtars, representatives of public institutions etc. in Konya, Erzurum, Kırşehir, Eskişehir, Trabzon, Gaziantep, Antalya, Samsun, İstanbul and Ankara; and 3.519 persons in total have attended these meetings. Within scope of the Project; public service ads, banners and brochures are prepared, published and distributed in order to raise public awareness level about violence against women.

In addition to awareness-raising activities; the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services periodically organizes consultation meetings with non-governmental organizations and women’s studies centers of universities.

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Furthermore, “the Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women’s Empowerment” was prepared by Our Ministry to cover the period 2018-2023 in order to promote women’s economic and social participation; ensure equal access to rights and opportunities; mainstream the equal opportunities for women and men. The Action Plan concerned is an important document in terms of developing policies and measures to ensure realization of the principle of equality between women and men in practice and elimination of practices including discrimination against women.

The Strategy Paper and Action Plan, which is the first most comprehensive action plan aimed at women’s empowerment in Turkey, has regulated the current situation, main purposes, targets, strategies and activities regarding 5 main policy pillars– education, economy, health, participation in decision-making mechanisms and media-. It is estimated with “the Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women’s Empowerment” to follow up the responsibilities imposed on the public institutions and organizations, local authorities, universities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.