

Report No 48508-TR

# Female Labor Force Participation in Turkey: Trends, Determinants and Policy Framework

November 23, 2009

Human Development Sector Unit  
Europe and Central Asia Region



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T.R. Prime Ministry, State Planning Organization



World Bank

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(Exchange Rate Effective November 2, 2009)

Currency Unit = TL (Turkish Lira)

US\$ 1 = 1.49 TL

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARIP	Agricultural Reform Implementation Program
BETAM	Bahçeşehir University's Center for Economic and Social Research
ÇSGB	Ministry of Labor and Social Security
CEM	Country Economic Memorandum
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DIS	Direct Income Support
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EPL	Employment Protection Legislation
EU	European Union
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GAP	South Eastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration
GDP	Gross domestic product
GfK	Growth for Knowledge
HBS	Household Budget Survey
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
HLFS	Household Labor Force Survey
ICBF	Colombian Institute for Family Welfare
ILO	International Labour Organization
İŞ-KUR	General Directorate of Turkish Employment Organization
KOSGEB	Small and Medium Sized Industry Development Organization
KSGM	Turkish Republic Prime Ministry Directorate General on the Status of Women
LFP	Labor Force Participation
LFS	Labor Force Survey
MEB	Ministry of National Education
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
PGA	Presidency of GAP
SHÇEK	The Social Services and Child Protection Agency
TDHS	Turkey Demographic and Health Survey
TÜİK	Turkish Statistical Institute
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WAP	Working-Age Population
WDI	<i>World Development Indicators</i>
TL	Turkish Lira

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# Female Labor Force Participation in Turkey

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## Preface

Turkey has been collaborating with the World Bank in developing macroeconomic policies and implementing various reforms such as social security, investment climate, competitiveness, labor market and public sector management. The Bank's programs are very beneficial for Turkey in providing economic and social development. In this context, the medium term framework of this cooperation with the World Bank was determined by the Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) which is a four year framework of cooperation for 2008-2011 being primarily based on the Ninth Development Plan. Under the CPS framework, World Bank provides investment credits and program loans as well as analytical and advisory works for Turkey.

*"Welfare and Social Policy Analytical and Advisory Services Program"* is a part of those works of the Bank under CPS. Within this program a valuable Report has been made jointly by the World Bank and State Planning Organization (SPO) staff. This joint Report aims to investigate the reasons why labor force participation of females in Turkey is low relative to EU and OECD averages and why it has been decreasing. In that context, this Report intends to contribute the policy framework to promote female's participation into labor force.

We extend our deep appreciation to all contributors, from experts involved in World Bank and State Planning Organization to many public agencies and academics for the extensive assistance and cooperation provided in the preparation of this Report and look forward to continuation of this mutual and invaluable cooperation in the coming future.

**Kemal MADENOĞLU**

Undersecretary of State Planning Organization





## Executive Summary

**1. One of the salient features of the labor market in Turkey is the distinctly lower Labor Force Participation (LFP) rates of women.** As of January 2009, female LFP in Turkey was 23.5 percent. As a benchmark, female LFP among Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) and European Union (EU)-19 countries averaged 62 percent and 64 percent, respectively in 2007. Patterns of female LFP in Turkey should be interpreted within the many social and economic changes that the country has experienced since the 1980s. As Turkish people become more educated, as the country's middle class expands, and as the country urbanizes; families and women in particular are facing new challenges and new ways of life. Urbanization and the move out of subsistence agriculture have had a profound effect on employment patterns for women, especially among those who have not attained university education. Traditionally, women in rural areas worked on the family farm. But family farming and subsistence agriculture have become less and less important as other more attractive (and lucrative) opportunities expand in the service and manufacturing sectors. In many cases, shifts in family activities away from subsistence agriculture (and especially in cases where the husband and/or household head move away from agriculture) cause a withdrawal of women from the labor force.

**2. The Report finds that many women in Turkey would like to work, but they face a number of difficulties that prevent them from doing so.** Women without university education, especially in urban areas (where most of the new migrants live), generally have access to jobs that offer low wages, require long and hard working hours, and do not provide social security. On top of that, the high cost of hiring someone else to help working women with childcare and domestic work is an important barrier for women to seek jobs. Women interviewed for this Report stated that in Istanbul they would have to pay between 500 and 600 TL per month for childcare only if they decided to work. This would

imply giving most of the salary they would earn to cover the cost of childcare, and this does not include other extra costs associated to hiring help for domestic tasks such as cleaning and cooking.

### **Helping Turkish Women Get Jobs Is A Good Social And Economic Investment**

**3. In the Ninth Development Plan the Turkish Government has set goals to increase the number of women who are actively employed.** The National Action Plan for Gender Equality emphasizes that using women's talents and skills in the labor market not only provides families with more economic independence, but also increases women's self confidence and social respectability:

*(a) Higher female employment is instrumental in building capacity for economic growth and poverty reduction.* International experience indicates that getting women into jobs is associated with poverty reduction, higher economic growth, and better governance. Estimations in the Report suggest that reaching the female labor force participation target of the Ninth Development Plan (from the current 24 percent to 29 percent) could contribute to reducing poverty by up to 15 percent if all new entrants would take full-time jobs.

*(b) Higher levels of female employment allow government investments in education to be used more efficiently* as women use their acquired talents productively in the economy. In countries with low levels of female employment, families often under-invest in girl's education. On the contrary, working women generally are more involved than non-working women in making decisions in relation to their children's education and health, which are externalities that positively affect the welfare of future generations.

<sup>1</sup> The EU-19 refers to Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Finland, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary.

## The Puzzle of Low Female Labor Force Participation in Turkey

### 4. Turkey has experienced important structural and social changes that would be expected to facilitate women to enter the labor market:

(a) *The social attitude toward working women has changed in recent years.* Part of this may be pragmatic: with changing economic conditions, it has become harder for households to make ends meet with a single income.

(b) *Women are becoming more educated.* In the past two decades, the proportion of illiterate women dropped from 33.9 percent to 19.6 percent, while the proportion of women with more than primary school education more than doubled. Furthermore, the share of women with a university education increased from 1.8 percent in 1988 to 5.8 percent in 2006. A more educated female population is likely to have positive effect on their employment since higher education is associated with increased participation in the labor force.

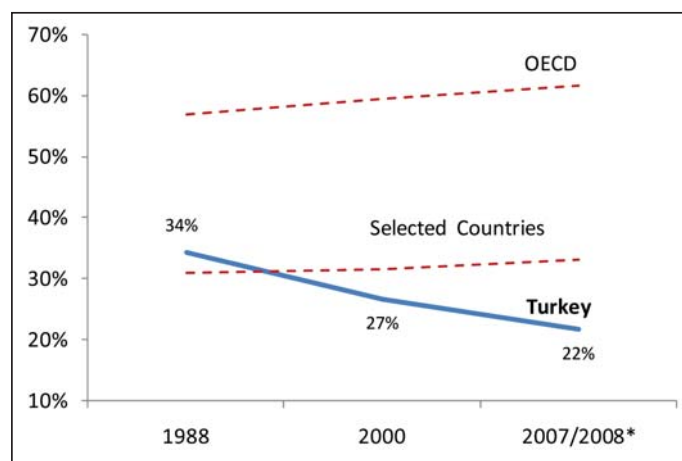
(c) *Women are getting married at a later age.* Compared to earlier generations, women are postponing marriage, which would allow them to study and/or participate in the labor force.

(d) *Fertility rates are declining.* In 2008, women were expected to give birth to 1.9 children, on average, compared to 5.7 children in 1968 and 3 children in 1988.

**5. It is surprising that despite these factors, the share of women having or seeking jobs in Turkey has been decreasing** (from 34.3 percent in 1988 to 22 percent in 2008). On the contrary, this share has been increasing in most OECD countries as well as in other selected comparison countries (Figure ES.1). In the 1980s, Turkey enjoyed levels of female LFP similar to those of more developed countries, such as Austria, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. This was largely induced by high participation of women in agricultural activities. Most of the OECD countries that displayed a similar

rate of female LFP in the 1980s experienced further increases in female participation, while Turkey experienced the opposite. By 2006, Turkey had the lowest level of female LFP among Europe and Central Asia (ECA) and OECD countries.

Figure ES.1: Female LFP Rates, 1988 - 2008

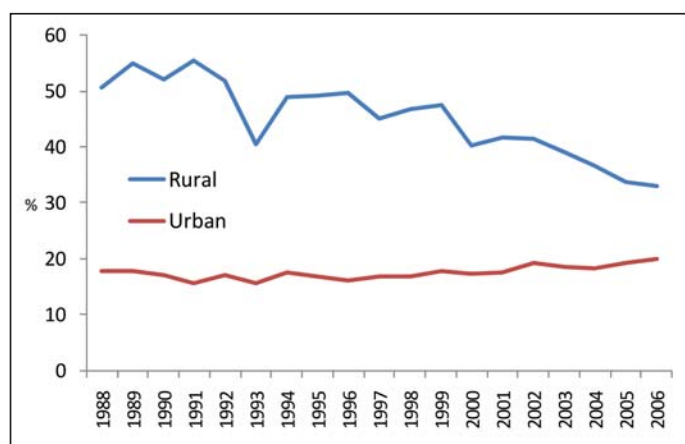


Source: Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009), WDI, TÜİK. OECD Stat Extracts. \*Latest available year.

Note: Selected Islamic countries: Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Algeria, Iran (Islamic Republic), Afghanistan, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt (Arab Republic), Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq.

### Why has Female Participation Decreased?

**6. Urbanization and the decline in agricultural employment are the two main factors that have contributed to decrease the share of women having or seeking jobs in Turkey.** Because of urbanization, women migrated from a high-participation rural environment (where they engage in unpaid agriculture) to a low-participation urban environment (where many of them stay at home). Furthermore, female participation in the labor market *in rural areas* has been decreasing the past 20 years – from 50.7 percent in 1988 to 33 percent in 2006 (Figure ES.2). This decrease is explained by the fact that *young men* are becoming more educated and thus move away from agricultural employment into better-paid jobs in manufacturing and services. In many cases, shifts in family activities away from subsistence agriculture (and especially in cases where the husband and/or household head move away from agriculture) cause a withdrawal of women from the labor force.

**Figure ES.2: Female LFP Rates by Strata, 1988 - 2008**

Source: TÜİK.

**7. However, for those women who do work, urbanization seems to have contributed to improvements in the quality of their employment.** In the 1980s, the majority of all working women in Turkey were employed as unpaid family workers in the agricultural sector. Today, unpaid employment among women is below 38 percent while the share of women employed as wage earners is approximately 43 percent (almost twice as much as in the 1980s).

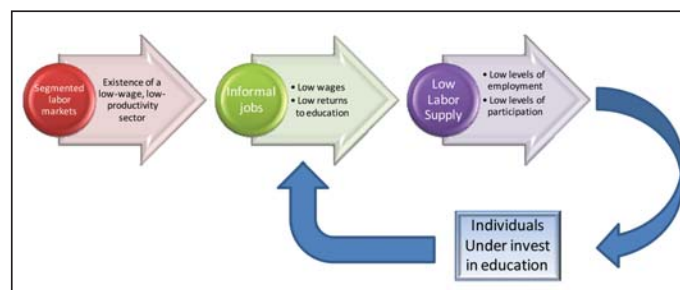
### The Under-Participation Trap Hypothesis

**8. Female LFP in Turkey remains low by international standards mainly due to very low participation rates among poorly educated women in urban areas.** Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) data indicate that overall female LFP in urban areas is quite low—at 19.9 percent in 2006. While participation rates among educated women in urban areas (that is, those who have attained tertiary education) are quite high (69.8 percent in 2006), LFP rates among women who have attained only primary and secondary education are extremely low, at 13.3 and 15.3 percent respectively in 2006.

**9. Poorly educated women in urban areas face complex cultural and economic barriers that constrain their participation in the labor market.** Economic barriers mainly relate to the quality of working conditions for poorly educated women in urban areas (high likelihood of working in the informal sector, low salaries, lack of affordable childcare, and long working hours, among others), while cultural barriers mainly

relate to women's role as caregivers and to family/social demands for women to remain at home.

**10. Poorly educated women in urban areas may be facing what has been referred to as an “under-participation trap”.** This is illustrated in Figure ES.3: urban women with low levels of education are very likely to work in the uncovered/informal sector. Informal jobs generally offer women wages that are low compared to what they would have to pay to hire someone else to do their domestic activities such as childcare, cooking, and cleaning. Consequently, labor supply (employment and participation) among women who would only have chances to work in the informal sector is also likely to be low. Low wages and low returns to education may cause families to under-invest in the education of girls because they think they have little chance to participate in the labor market when they grow up. This will feedback into the labor market and contribute further to keeping wages low, which in turn will keep labor supply low (creating a trap).

**Figure ES.3: What is an Under-participation Trap?**

Source: Authors' elaboration

### How can the under-participation trap be reversed?

**11. Policies that can help improve women's opportunities for more and better jobs in Turkey include:**

(a) *Creating job opportunities for first time job seekers:* Interventions should aim at promoting formal employment for women with low levels of education, and especially for those transitioning from school to work. More flexible labor market regulation may reduce the barriers of businesses hiring women. For instance, the Government of Turkey has introduced a program that subsidizes

employers' social security contributions for new hired women for up to 5 years. Programs like this are likely to contribute to increase the rate of employment for women, especially in times of healthy economic performance. Interventions should aim at decreasing high levels of informality among workers with low levels of education. To do so, a comprehensive set of policies that involve taxation, enforcement, inspections, and a more flexible labor market are required. For more details, the 2009 Turkey Country Economic Memorandum (CEM) describes a policy framework to mitigate structural and non-structural factors of informality. Labor regulation should contain direct and indirect costs of "formal" hiring to avoid incentives for lower labor demand for unskilled formal employment.

(b) *Affordable childcare*: Many women could be encouraged to work by having access to affordable care for their children. This could be achieved by promoting early childhood development programs (ECD), such as preschool education and public/subsidized childcare programs. First, international evidence suggests that high-quality early childhood education and care helps prepare young children to succeed in school and eventually in life. This translates into economic returns because they are associated with lower repetition and dropout rates throughout a student's lifetime. Second, and directly relevant for this Report, a developed child care education industry could be economically important because it creates jobs and allows parents (mainly mothers) to be economically active. A forthcoming World Bank Report on Equality of Opportunities in Turkey highlights that ECD interventions may contribute to break intergenerational transmissions of poverty and inequality.

(c) *Sustaining investments on education*: Higher education attainment is associated with higher levels

of female participation. Investment in Vocational Education and Training (VET) are likely to prepare women, and especially young women, with the skills needed to qualify for good jobs in the labor market. International evidence indicates that investments on VET help women to get formal jobs, and promotes gender equality in earnings and labor market opportunities. However, investing in education alone is not the solution. Analysis in this Report indicates that in the extreme case that all urban women in Turkey were to attain university education, female LFP would rise to only 47 percent (a level still below the 60 percent benchmark set by the EU).

## The Report

**12. This Report by Turkey's State Planning Organization and the World Bank aims to contribute to the lively debate on gender equality and women's job opportunities.** The scope of the Report is fundamentally analytical. While the analysis in the Report develops and discusses a general policy framework to promote female LFP, it does not aim to provide any specific policy recommendation. This Report is part of the World Bank Welfare and Social Policy Analytical and Advisory Services program. For a more comprehensive understanding, readers should also refer to the Report "*Turkey: Equality of Opportunities and Early Childhood Development*". The Report is structured as follows: Chapter I provides a general background on the trends and determinants of female LFP in Turkey and highlights the fact that female LFP in Turkey is affected by strong economic and cultural factors; Chapter II aims at understanding why female LFP in Turkey has been declining over the past two decades, and provides analysis indicating that urbanization and agricultural shedding have been two main engines contributing to this trend; Chapter III aims at understanding why female LFP in Turkey remains low compared to international standards.



# CHAPTER I.

## Trends and Determinants of Female Labor Force Participation in Turkey

**T**his chapter provides general background on the trends and determinants of female labor force participation (LFP) in Turkey. Female LFP in Turkey is multidimensional and is affected by strong economic and cultural factors. Some studies argue that the main driving force for women to participate in the Turkish labor market is largely economic. Others claim that the main determinant for non-participation of women in Turkey relates to their social role as caregivers and as the main person responsible for housework. Turkey has experienced important structural changes that have facilitated female participation in the labor market: women are becoming more educated, they are getting married at a later age, and fertility rates have been declining. Despite these changes, female LFP in Turkey not only remains very low by international standards, but also has been decreasing over the last 20 years.

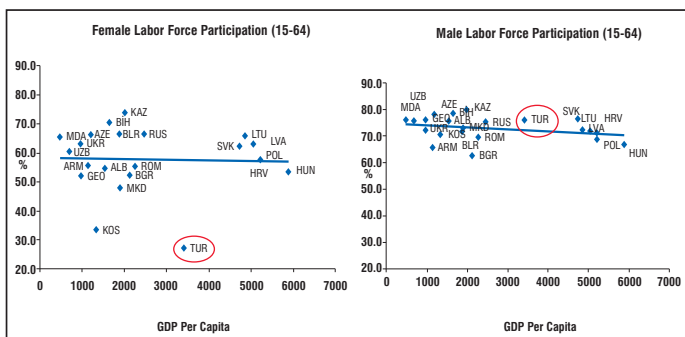
### Background

**1. One of the salient features of the labor market in Turkey is the distinctly lower labor force participation (LFP) rates for European standards. Indeed, Turkey has the lowest female LFP of any country in Europe and Central Asia (ECA) (Figure I.1). As of**

January 2009, female LFP in Turkey was 23.5 percent. As a benchmark, female participation among Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) and European Union (EU)-19 countries averaged 62 percent and 64 percent, respectively, in 2007.

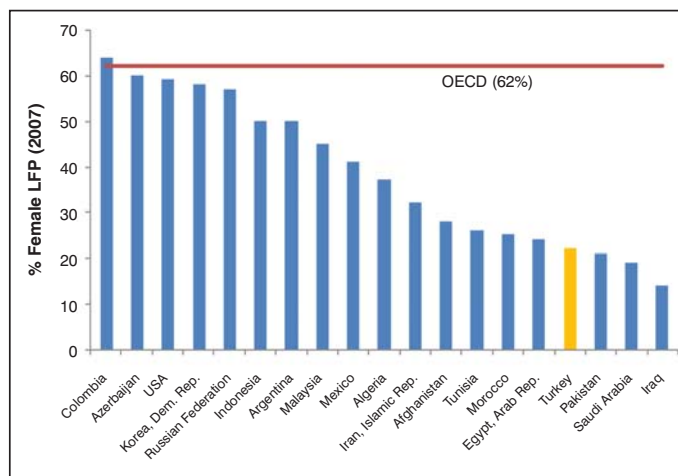
**2. Since female LFP is often dependent on sociocultural factors, one could argue that OECD and ECA are not the right comparison benchmark for a country like Turkey. Nevertheless, when compared to a selected group of predominantly Islamic countries, Turkey still displays lower-than-average levels of female participation. Among the pool of Islamic countries, however, Turkey’s level of female LFP is not necessarily an outlier. Indeed, female LFP among Islamic countries vary widely, with other developing economies such as Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia (among others); displaying similar (and even lower) levels of female LFP than those in Turkey (Figure I.2).**

**Figure I.1: Turkey has the Lowest Female Labor Force Participation Rate of any ECA County**



Source: WDI dataset. Data for years 2006/2007.

**Figure I.2: Female LFP in Turkey vs. Comparator Countries**



Note: Definitions of LFP may not be fully compatible across sources; for more information please see Appendix A

Source: WDI 2007, OECD Stat Extracts for 2007, and EUROSTAT 2007.



### **3. Female LFP in Turkey is multidimensional; it involves both strong economic and cultural factors.**

Participation in the labor market generally involves a series of social and economic aspects that, while affecting a woman's choice to work, are not measured or proxied by standard quantitative surveys (Figure I.2). In order to understand the barriers to and motivations for female LFP, it is necessary to look at the economic and social framework of Turkish households and how gender relations within and beyond the households are produced and reenacted in Turkish society. Traditional roles in Turkey as well as intra-family roles and relationships are important determinants of labor market choice. As such, female LFP in Turkey needs to be analyzed from both an economic and a sociocultural perspective. Qualitative studies have the ability to provide more in-depth assessment than those provided by the typically used surveying methods. It enables certain issues (questions) to be raised several times, which usually "unravels" the initially provided socially desirable responses. For this research, focus group discussions and in-house visits were realized in urban Istanbul during February 12–23, 2009. For a more detailed description of the data and definitions used in this Report, the reader should refer to Appendix A.

## **A Review of the Literature**

**4. Recent literature on female LFP in Turkey highlights its intrinsically complex "socio-cultural" and "economic" nature.** Available literature indicates that factors such as the level of education, number of children, migration, socio-cultural factors, civil status,

and wage levels, are all important determinants of female LFP in Turkey. Some studies argue that the main driving force for women to participate in the Turkish labor market is largely economic, and thus women make labor market decisions based on market wages and on the business cycle (that is, they decide to enter the labor market when their market wage is above their reservation wage). These studies claim that the main driving force for women not to participate in the labor force is explained by the fact that for some women, the market wage level is below their reservation wage, which corresponds to their total value of housework. A considerable number of papers have emphasized that migration from rural to urban areas has been a determinant in explaining why female LFP in urban areas remains low. Women from rural areas, who worked previously as unpaid family workers, become unemployed or unable to participate in the urban labor market. Other important factors that determine women's LFP are related to early retirement and childcare. Most studies agree that the presence of young children negatively affects the participation and employment decisions of women (Table I.1). Other studies, however, have claimed that the main determinant for non-participation of women in Turkey relates to their social role as caregivers and as the main person responsible for housework. These sets of complementary findings indicate, as mentioned, that female LFP in Turkey is multidimensional and needs to be approached and understood from both a socioeconomic and cultural perspective. Aran and others (2009) show that in urban settings, for instance, women who have arranged marriages (which is a proxy for conservatism) are 4 to 10 percent less likely to participate in the labor market.

### **Box I.1: Qualitative Analysis in this Report**

The qualitative analysis presented in this Report reflects the opinion of a group of Turkish women, and therefore must be used and interpreted with care. Indeed, qualitative studies are not designed to provide answers that are representative of the population. Women who participated in the qualitative interviews were selected through a phone-based recruitment process. GfK Türkiye works with agencies which are members of Turkish Association of Marketing and Opinion Researchers. Before the fieldwork, GfK Türkiye screens potential participants using short phone interviews. During the phone interviews women were subject to a set of screening questions; such as employment status and education. Additional questions about non-related topics are also asked to potential participants in order to evaluate their capacity to communicate and share opinions about different issues. Only the participants suitable for the project (i.e. not in the labor force, with low levels of education, and with "good" communication skills were invited to the interviews). As such, the process of selecting participants may have introduced sample bias that is common to this type of studies. Furthermore, in order to avoid selection bias that may occur in selecting particular quotes, all of them were compiled and grouped by topic (see Appendix B).

**Table I.1: Main Determinants of Female Labor Force Participation in Turkey (A review of the literature)**

	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Main Findings</b>
<b>Social and Cultural factors</b>	Alkan (1995) Aran, Capar, Husamoglu, Sanalmis, and Uraz (2009) Dayioglu (2000) Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009) Erman (2001) Eyüboğlu, Özar, and Tanrıöver (2000) Gunduz - Hosgor and Smits (2006) Kasnakoglu and Dayioglu (2002) Ozar and Gunluk Senesen (1998) Taymaz (2009)	The social roles of women (and the influence of patriarchal society) play a strong role in determining women's decisions on labor market participation. House chores and childcare/eldercare are traditionally female duties that may prevent them from participating in the labor market. The presence of young children negatively affects women's LFP. Estimates of Aran and others (2009) indicate that in urban settings if the marriage of a woman is arranged by her family, her likelihood of participating in the labor force declines by 4 to 10. The effect is generally higher among more educated women.
<b>Education</b>	Aran, Capar, Husamoglu, Sanalmis, and Uraz (2009) Baslevant and Onaran (2003) Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009) Eyüboğlu, Özar, and Tanrıöver (2000) Gunduz-Hosgor and Smits (2006) Ince and Demir (2006) Kasnakoglu and Dayioglu (1997) Taymaz (2009)	Evidence shows that as the level of education increases, the probability of women entering the labor market also increases. Higher levels of education also strengthen women's self-esteem, provide them with competitive work skills, and lead to higher levels of LFP. Estimates indicate that higher educational attainment increases employment probability from 3 percent (primary school graduate) to 73 percent (college graduate) for women.
<b>Urbanization</b>	Aran, Capar, Husamoglu, Sanalmis, and Uraz (2009) Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009) Erman (1998) Kocak (1999) SPO (2007) Taymaz (2009) TURKONFED (2007) World Bank (2000, 2004)	The decline in agricultural production has caused labor shedding, pushing people to migrate to urban areas. Rural migrant women, who were once unpaid family workers in their rural settlements, are likely to become discouraged workers in the urban labor market. The main reasons for this are their low levels of education and insufficient skills.
<b>Marital Status</b>	Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009) Pancaroglu (2006)	Pancaroglu finds that unmarried and married women have different priorities while seeking jobs. It seems that childcare benefits are the leading drivers for married women to enter the labor market, whereas unmarried women first seek a job covered with health insurance and pension benefits. Being married is negatively associated with participation in both urban and rural areas, with a particularly large effect in urban areas. Separated and divorced women are also less likely to participate in rural areas but not in urban areas.

Source: Authors' compilation of sources.

Table I.1: cont.

	Author(s)	Main Findings
The Economic Cycle	Baslevant and Onaran (2003)	The authors study the “added worker effect” (that is, wives decide to participate in order to compensate for the loss of income due to husbands’ unemployment). The authors researched whether the participation decisions of married women are dependent on their husband’s employment status. Using HLFS 1988 and 1994 data, their research indicates that women’s LFP is negatively correlated to their husband’s employment. This relationship was found to be more significant during the 1994 economic crisis.
	Baslevant and Onaran (2004)	When macroeconomic dynamics are considered, the authors find that the impact of longer-term growth performance on female labor market outcomes is significantly positive for both single and married women.
	Tansel (2001)	In her study—using time-series data for 1980, 1985, and 1990—the author shows that high rates of overall unemployment negatively affected the female LFP (especially through the “discouraged worker” effect).

Source: Authors’ compilation of sources.

## Why is Female Labor Force Participation Important?

**5. The Turkish government has set various important goals to increase female labor force participation (LFP) as part of its development objectives.** “The National Action Plan for Gender Equality”, prepared by the Turkish Government, recognizes that Turkish women are well behind their male counterparts in terms of participation in the labor force. The Report emphasizes that “women’s general social and economic development is closely related to their participation in the labor force, because employment not only provides women with economic independence, but also increases their confidence and social respectability and improves their position within their families”. The government’s 2007–2013 Ninth Development Plan aims at increasing the level of female participation to 29.6 percent by 2013. To achieve this increase, the government envisions developing a set of policies that would involve raising the level of education of the workforce, enhancing employability through active labor force policies, and facilitating access to the labor market (Table I.2). Since 1995, programs and projects geared at strengthening the employability of women have been established, such as support to female entrepreneurs, subsidies for new hires (youth and female workers), vocational training, and the provision of childcare centers, among others.<sup>2</sup>

**6. Higher female LFP rates are instrumental in building capacity for economic growth and poverty reduction.** International experience indicates that greater economic equality between women and men is associated with poverty reduction, higher gross domestic product (GDP), and better governance (World Bank 2001; Klasen 1999). Recent studies indicate that some developing economies, especially in the Middle East and North Africa, display lower participation rates than those predicted given their age and education structures. If female LFP in such countries rose to the level predicted by women’s age and education structure, household earnings could increase up to 25 percent (World Bank 2001, 2003). Micro-simulations for Turkey (World Bank 2009a) indicate that reaching the female labor force participation target of the Ninth Development Plan – from 23 percent currently to 29 percent – could contribute to reduce poverty by up to 15 percent (8 percent) if new entrants take full-time (part time) jobs. This occurs as female employment brings extra income to the household, decreases their dependency on their families, and increases their intra-household decision-making power. Furthermore, previous literature has found that working women generally are more involved than nonworking women in making the right decisions in relation to their children’s education and health (Angel-Urdinola and Wodon 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, higher female LFP and a gender mainstreaming approach to employment policy are important targets in Turkey’s harmonization agenda with the European Union (EU). The European Councils at Lisbon and Stockholm set ambitious targets for raising participation rates in the EU by 2010 (from 54 percent in 2001 to 60 percent in 2010).

**Table I.2: National Action Plan for Gender Equality**

<b>Objective 1: Accelerate efforts to increase women's employment</b>	<b>Responsible Institution</b>	<b>Collaborating Institutions</b>
1.1 Increasing women's employability through education, training, and entrepreneurship 1.2 Expanding childcare and eldercare services 1.3 Raising social awareness to decrease the prevalence of traditional structures	ÇSGB, İŞ-KUR, MEB, KOSGEB	KSGM, SHÇEK, GAP Administration (PGA), Universities, Trade Unions, and NGOs
<b>Objective 2: Women's economic position in rural areas will be improved</b>		
2.1 Encouraging women's entrepreneurship in agriculture 2.2 Implementing income-generating projects for rural women and projects to improve labor conditions	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, MEB, İŞ-KUR, ÇSGB	KSGM, PGA, MEB, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Trade Organizations, NGOs, and Universities
<b>Objective 3: Gender discrimination in the labor market will be combated</b>		
3.1 Revising the existing Labor Act to incorporate gender equality 3.2 Producing data on income differences between women and men doing similar work 3.3 Taking necessary measures against all kinds of discrimination faced by women in working life	ÇSGB, KSGM, TÜİK, Universities, İŞ-KUR	İŞ-KUR, Bar Association, Trade Unions, NGOs, ÇSGB (SGK) Private Sector KSGM, Relevant Public Agencies and Institutions

Source: National Action Plan for Gender Equality (2009).

**7. Higher levels of female LFP are associated with higher returns to human capital and education.** In countries with low levels of female LFP, families often under-invest in the education of their female members. The reason behind this is simple: families realize that women have little chance to join the labor market when compared to their male counterparts and prefer to invest in the education of their sons (at the same time cutting investment in the education for their daughters). There are several negative externalities about this decision-making process. For example, there is a vast literature that highlights the social and economic benefits of women's education (for example, investment in women's education reduces child mortality, increases immunization rates, and decreases the prevalence of HIV/AIDS). Furthermore, mothers' education is a significant variable affecting children's educational attainment and opportunities. Indeed, mothers' education

(in almost all countries) is highly correlated to children's education. Children with more-educated mothers are more likely to have better education outcomes than children with less-educated mothers.

**8. Qualitative analysis indicates that women in Turkey would like to have more opportunities to work.** According to the findings of the qualitative study, inactive women in Turkey (mainly housewives) want to participate in the labor market. Indeed, the majority of women who participated in the study expressed the desire to participate in the labor force, or at least to acquire jobs that are compatible with their education level and skills. However, participants in the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) claimed that there are two types of working women in Turkey: the working women "with a profession", who are socially accepted and even admired; and the working women "without a profession";

who are regarded as needy and are not well accepted by society. Indeed, inactive women tend to idealize working women “as women with a profession” whom they admire. Working women with a profession are perceived very positively as having the freedom, strength, ambition, and high self-esteem. Women perceive that by working they can gain independence and social acknowledgment, which in turn will enable them to provide a better life and better educational opportunities for their children. On the other hand, working women without a profession are perceived as needy and are often associated with high levels of stress and physical exhaustion. For more detailed information, the reader may refer to the quotes on “perceptions of being a working woman” in Appendix B. According to the FGDs participants, there are several reasons why women would like to have more opportunities to work: to assure a better future for their children, to contribute to a higher household income, to increase their self-confidence, and help their families during period of shock such as illness/unemployment of a family member (see quotes on “willingness to work” in Appendix B). However, as will be analyzed in more detail in Chapter III, women face constraints (both cultural and economic) that limit their opportunities to join the labor market.

## The Puzzle of Low Female Labor Force Participation in Turkey

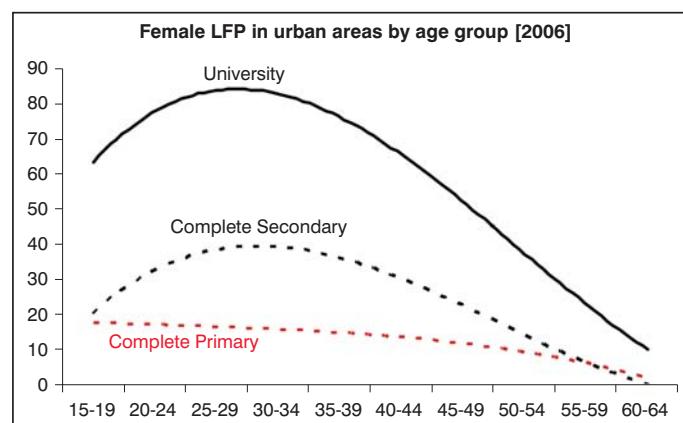
**9. Turkey has experienced important structural and social changes that would be expected to facilitate female LFP.** Female employment has become more acceptable to Turkish society, women are becoming more educated, they are getting married at a later age, fertility rates have been declining, and Turkey had experienced favorable economic conditions until the recent recession.

**10. The social attitude toward working women has changed favorably in recent years.** According to participants in the FGDs, Turkey has come a long way in relation to acceptance of female employment in recent years. Female FGD participants argued that people’s attitude toward working women was less tolerant 15 years ago than nowadays. With changing social and

economic conditions, it has become harder for households to make ends meet with a single income. As a result, it has become more (although not totally) accepted for family members other than the father (generally the main “breadwinner”) to join the labor force in order to help support the family. Male FGD participants seemed not to mind that their wives work in times of economic challenges, especially during periods of high unemployment. Interestingly, most male participants (especially those who were not homeowners) agreed that they would like their wives to help them pay for some expenses, especially related to housing and rent. For more detailed information, the reader may also refer to the quotes on “community approach to working women” in Appendix B.<sup>3</sup>

**11. Women are becoming more educated.** Education is one of the main determinants of female LFP in Turkey. Indeed, higher education is associated with higher levels of participation, especially in urban areas (Figure I.3). But the majority of women in Turkey still do not have more than a primary school education. This situation, certainly, negatively affects their participation and puts them at a disadvantage compared to men, who, in terms of schooling, do somewhat better than women. For instance, in 2006, one out of every five women (20 percent) was illiterate compared to only 4 percent of men. The proportion with more than primary school education, in addition, was limited to one-third of the female population, compared to half the male population.

**Figure I.3. Female Labor Force Participation by Level of Education and Age (Urban areas, 2006)**



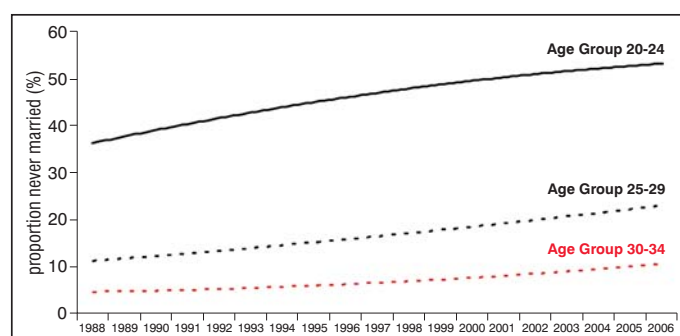
Source: Processed from Aran and others (2009).

<sup>3</sup> The recall period used in the FGDs was of 15 years. The selection of this recall period was arbitrary and was not based on any economic or political event. The main purpose of the question was to obtain information about changes in social attitudes towards working women over time.



**12. However, educational attainment has been improving in Turkey, especially for women.** In the past two decades, the proportion of illiterate women dropped from 33.9 percent to 19.6 percent, and the proportion of women with more than primary school education more than doubled (Table I.3). Furthermore, the share of women with a university education increased from 1.8 percent in 1988 to 5.8 percent in 2006. This positive change in the education distribution is likely to have contributed to increase female LFP.<sup>4</sup>

**Figure I.4: Proportion of Never-married Women, by Age Group by Year**



Source: Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009).

**Table I.3: Distribution of Male and Female Population, by Highest Attained Education Level (%)**

	Men 1988	Women 1988	Men 2000	Women 2000	Men 2006	Women 2006	% Change Men 1988–2006	% Change Women 1988–2006
Illiterate	11.6	33.9	5.5	21.7	4.0	19.6	-65.5	-42.1
No Diploma	9.6	8.6	4.0	4.7	5.2	8.0	-45.2	-7.1
Primary	51.8	42.8	49.6	48.9	40.5	40.6	-21.7	-5.0
Secondary	11.5	6.2	14.9	8.2	18.6	11.8	62.0	89.8
High School	7.1	5.0	13.1	9.1	12.6	9.0	78.4	79.7
Vocational	3.8	1.7	5.9	3.2	9.6	5.2	154.9	206.5
University	4.7	1.8	7.0	4.3	9.4	5.8	100.0	214.7

Note: Covers individuals age 15+.

Source: Dayioglu and Kirdar using 1988, 2000; and 2006 HLFS.

**13. Women are getting married at a later age.** Marriage is almost universal in Turkey. Data indicate that nearly 98 percent of women marry by age 49 (Dayioglu and Kirdar 2009). In contrast, divorce is an unlikely event (less than 1 percent among women aged 15–49). Compared to 1988, women are postponing marriage, which, in theory, would allow them to study and/or participate in the labor force (Figure I.4). Still, given that the LFP rates among married women remain rather low (and married women account for a large share of the potential workforce), achieving higher female participation would depend heavily on the change in the participation behavior of married women. Plausible explanations behind the low LFP rates of married women include childbearing, societal norms that see women's proper role as motherhood, lack of affordable childcare facilities, reliance on informal arrangements for childcare, and female seclusion.

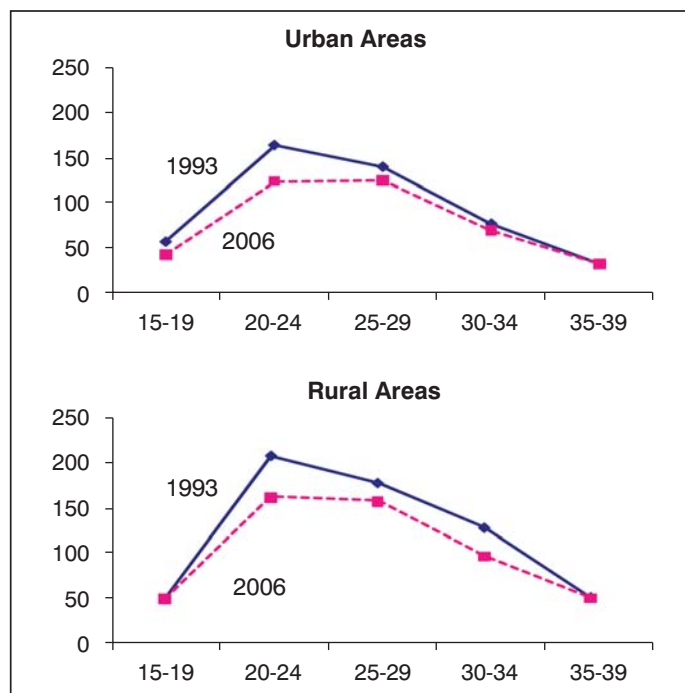
**14. Marriage in Turkey occurs early in life.** The average age for first marriages is 20.7 years among women aged 15–49. Marriage seems to be a strong determinant of female LFP. In urban areas, we find that married women are less likely to participate in the labor market than single women for all age groups. Married women aged 25–29 display very low participation rates (20 percent), while participation rates for single women in the same age bracket are much higher (60 percent). The participation gap diminishes at later ages as women with a high propensity to work get married. In rural areas, between the ages of 20 and 35, married women are also less likely to participate; however, the gap is much narrower than in urban areas.

**15. Total fertility rates have fallen substantially in Turkey in the last 30 years.** Not surprisingly, fertility rates in rural areas remain higher than those in urban

<sup>4</sup> Figure I.3 highlights the fact that female participation in Turkey follows an inverted U-shape as it is the case in most countries. A particular feature of Turkey is the fact that women withdraw from the labor force at rather young ages (between 30 and 35 years of age). This is due to significant drops in female LFP at childbearing and during motherhood. For university graduates, drops in female LFP are also explained by early retirement. Under the old social security law, women could retire with full benefits with 20 years of service (the requirement for men was 25 years). The early retirement opportunity for women with full benefits (that is being gradually phased out) helps explain why women, especially in urban areas, retire earlier than men (Dayioglu and Kirdar, 2009).

areas. In 2003, women were expected to give birth to 2.2 children, on average, compared to 5.7 children in 1968 and 3 children in 1988. Note that during 1993–2006, there was a substantial drop in fertility rates registered for women aged 20–24 (in both urban and rural areas) (Figure I.5). Interestingly, for women in higher age groups (25–34), drops in fertility rates are more noticeable in rural than in urban areas. There is a rigid sequencing of demographic events in Turkey (Dayioglu and Kirdar 2009). Women generally give birth to their first child less than two years after marrying. Although the marriage age has gone up, the lapse of time between marriage and first birth has remained rather constant over the past 30 years. Data from the 2003 Turkey Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS) indicate that the average age for women at first birth is 22.5. Indeed, the average woman in Turkey is expected to be married and have a child before age 25 and to have a second child before age 30.

Figure I.5: Fertility Rates, by Age Group (Births per 1,000 women)

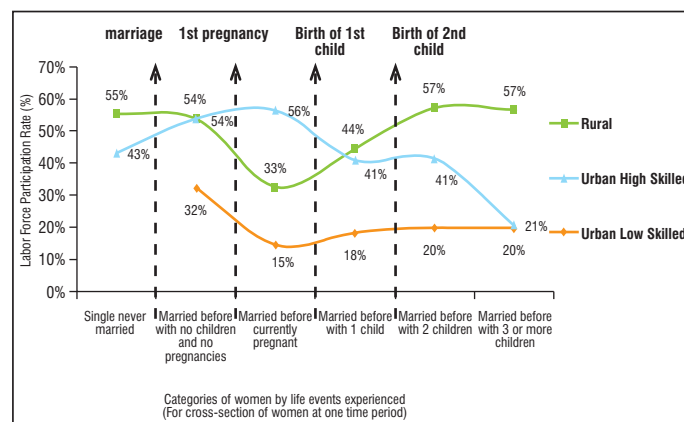


Source: Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009).

**16. Still, having children is associated with lower LFP, especially among less educated urban women.** By the end of their productive years, less than 2 percent of all women in Turkey fail to have a child. Notwithstanding these general patterns, the fertility rate is closely associated with women's education level. While an

illiterate woman expects to have 3.7 children before the end of her reproductive years, the corresponding figure among women with a high-school education or more is 1.4 children. For less educated married women in urban areas, the probability of participation declines from 32 percent to 15 percent after their first pregnancy and remains low thereafter. The situation is somehow different in rural areas: during pregnancy, rural women decrease their supply of labor (probably due to the nature of the work required in agriculture), but their participation levels go back to a roughly similar level after the birth of the first child—as women return to their usual agricultural duties. Also interesting is the participation behavior considering life events for educated women in urban areas. Among this group, single women display participation rates of 43 percent. Marriage and pregnancy increase their participation levels to 54 and 56 percent, respectively. This is surprising, since marriage and childbearing are generally associated with lower female LFP. However, after having their first child, participation rates for educated women drop to 40 percent (a 15 percentage point decrease) and stabilize thereafter (Figure I.6).

Figure I.6: Life Events and Labor Force Participation (Women aged 20–65)



Source: Aran and others (2009).

**17. It is surprising that despite all these factors, female LFP in Turkey is low by international standards and has been decreasing.** Given the recent economic and demographic developments, it is puzzling that LFP in Turkey has been decreasing almost steadily during the past 30 years. While the participation rate of women was 34.3 percent in 1988, it was down to 23.5 percent in January 2009 (Table I.4).

**Table I.4: Main Labor Market Indicators in Turkey (1988–2009)**

<i>Labor Market Outcomes in Turkey</i>	1988	2000	2006	January 2008	January 2009	OECD	EU-19
Employment Rate							
Male	75.1%	68.9%	64.5%	60.3%	58.3%	79.0%	74.4%
Female	30.6%	24.9%	22.3%	19.0%	19.9%	59.4%	59.2%
Total	52.6%	46.7%	43.2%	39.3%	38.7%	69.1%	66.8%
Unemployment Rate							
Male	7.5%	6.6%	9.7%	11.5%	15.6%	7.5%	6.6%
Female	8.4%	6.3%	10.3%	11.8%	15.2%	7.1%	8.0%
Total	8.4%	6.5%	9.9%	11.6%	15.5%	7.3%	7.2%
Labor Force Participation Rate							
Male	81.2%	73.7%	71.5%	68.1%	69.1%	80.5%	79.7%
Female	34.3%	26.6%	24.9%	21.6%	23.5%	61.2%	64.3%
Total	57.5%	49.9%	48.0%	44.4%	45.8%	70.7%	72.0%

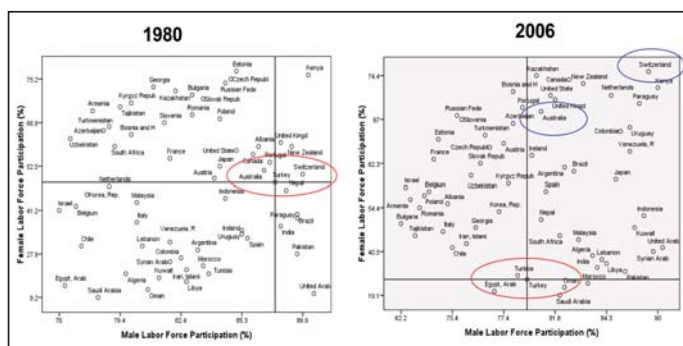
Source: Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009); TÜİK, OECD Stat Extracts for 2007, and EUROSTAT 2007. Definitions of LFP may not be the same across sources; for more information please see Appendix A

**18. Indeed, Turkey is one of the few OECD countries where female LFP has dropped compared to the 1980s.** In the 1980s, Turkey enjoyed levels of female LFP similar to those of more developed countries, such as Austria, the Netherlands, and Switzerland (Figure I.7); probably due to high participation rates of women in agriculture. By 2006, most of the OECD countries that in the 1980s displayed a similar rate of female LFP experienced further increases in female participation, while Turkey experienced the opposite. By 2006, Turkey had one of the lowest levels of female LFP in the world along with other Islamic countries like Egypt (Arab Republic), Morocco, Tunisia, and Saudi Arabia.

control for seasonality, we use data on Labor Market Indicators from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) for January 2008 and 2009 (Table I.4). Data indicate a large deterioration in overall employment and unemployment outcomes. Indeed, unemployment in Turkey seems to have reached a record high (at 15.5 percent) and employment reached a record low (at 38.7 percent). Note, however, that LFP for both men and women displayed a slight increase (from 68.1 to 69.1 percent for men and from 21.6 to 23.5 percent for women), probably due to the “added worker effect” in times of economic downturn (that is, wives and other family members decide to participate in the labor market in order to compensate for the loss of income or unemployment in times of recession) (Baslevant and Onaran 2003). In addition to having a low and decreasing female LFP, Turkey displays low and decreasing employment rates and high and increasing unemployment rates. Compared to OECD and EU standards, Turkey displays lagging labor market indicators.

## Effects of the Economic Crisis on Women’s Behavior

**20. In times of economic downturn, more women in Turkey are likely to join the labor force.** In times of economic downturn, some household members lose their jobs or suffer a decrease in labor income. Also, many new entrants to the labor market fail to find a job,

**Figure I.7: Trends in Participation Rates—World Outlook**

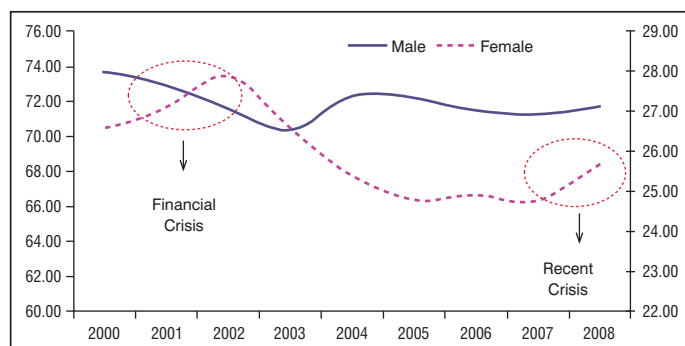
Source: Aran and others (2009)

**19. Female participation has, however, slightly increased in light of the recent economic crisis.** In order to analyze most recent trends, and in order to



and individuals who are currently employed face a higher risk of losing their jobs. As a response, some members of the household who were not participating in the labor market before the downturn decide to participate in order to compensate for the actual or possible decline in their total household income. This increase in the labor force is known as the “added worker effect” (Baslevant and Onaran 2003). In Turkey, the added worker effect is likely to be observed among females. Indeed, female participation in Turkey rose during both the 2001 financial crisis and the recent economic downturn (Figure I.8).

**Figure I.8: Labor Force Participation Rate, by Gender (%)**

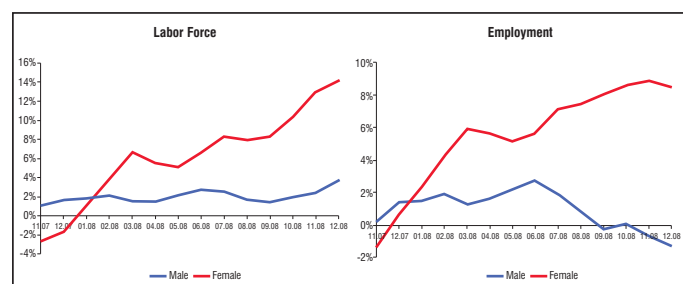


Source: Authors' calculation using TÜİK data.

**21. Since December 2007, women's LFP and employment have been increasing rapidly,** probably due to the added worker effect. During December 2007–December 2008, the male non-agricultural labor force in Turkey increased by 4 percent—from approximately 14.3 million to 14.9 million (Gursel and others 2009). During the same period, the female non-agricultural labor force increased by 14 percent—from approximately 3.5 million to 4.0 million. During December 2007–December 2008, the increase in the female non-agricultural labor force was far more rapid than that of males (Figure I.9). During December 2007–December 2008, women's non-agricultural

employment grew from 2.9 million to 3.2 million, approximately 9 percent. On the contrary, men's non-agricultural employment during the same time period actually decreased from approximately 12.6 million to 12.4 million (-1 percent).

**Figure I.9: non-agricultural Labor Force and Employment (Annual percentage change)**



Source: Gursel and others (2009).

**22. Thus, increasing female LFP is not the main driver of higher unemployment in Turkey.** TÜİK data for December 2007–December 2008 indicate that employment for females is increasing irrespective of their education level, implying that the upward trend in female LFP is not the sole determinant of rising unemployment in Turkey (Gursel and others 2009). It seems that higher unemployment in Turkey is mainly driven by the trends in labor market outcomes among males (that is, higher participation but lower employment). While the overall increase in the labor force in Turkey was evenly split between men and women—there were approximately 500,000 and 530,000 new women and men joining the labor force during December 2007–December 2008—the majority of the newly unemployed in the same time period were men (690,000 new male unemployed compared to 250,000 new female unemployed). As mentioned, this was partly because employment among women increased while employment among men decreased during the same period of study.

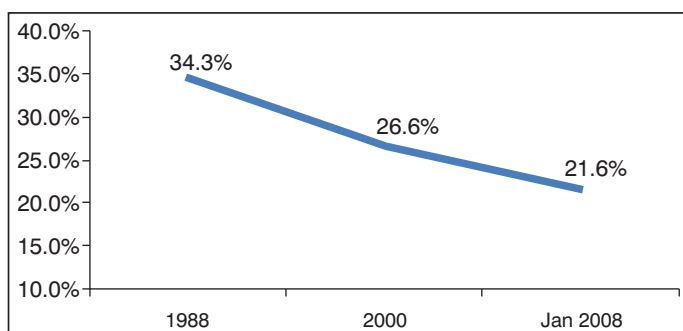
## CHAPTER II. Trends Over Time: Why Has Female Labor Force Participation Been Decreasing?

**T**his chapter aims at understanding why female labor force participation (LFP) in Turkey has been declining over the past two decades. Analysis indicates that urbanization and agricultural shedding have been two main engines contributing to this trend. Urbanization has contributed to a decrease in overall female LFP because the size of the female urban working-age population became larger (that is, more women moved from a higher-participation rural environment to a lower-participation urban environment). Agricultural shedding has also been an important determinant for female LFP since women generally supply their labor in households engaged in agriculture. In many cases, shifts in family activities away from subsistence agriculture (especially in cases where the husband and/or household head move away from agriculture) may lead to a withdrawal of women from the labor force.

### Recent Trends

**1. This chapter examines the declining labor force participation (LFP) rates of women in Turkey and explores the main reasons behind this phenomenon. In a span of two decades (1988–2008), female LFP in Turkey declined from 34.3 percent to 21.6 percent (Figure II.1).**

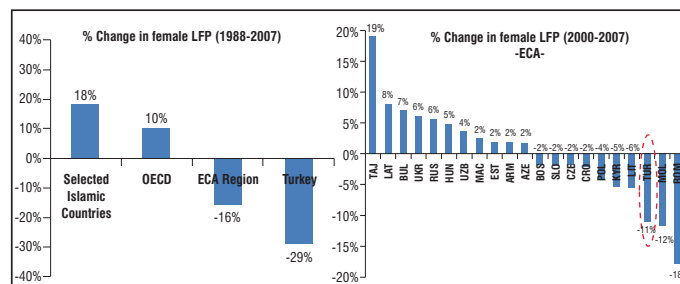
**Figure II.1: Female Labor Force Participation Rates in Turkey, 1988–2008**



Source: Processed from Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009) and TÜİK.

**2. Turkey is one of the few countries with a low female LFP rate that has experienced a further decrease in the indicator since 2000.** However, Turkey is not the only ECA country that has experimented steady drops in female LFP since the 1980s. While female LFP has increased steadily in most OECD countries in the past 30 years, female LFP decreased significantly in almost all ECA countries in the aftermath of the reform (and especially between the late 1980s and late 1990s). After 2000, however, some ECA countries have experienced an increase in female LFP, while others like Moldova, Romania, and Turkey have experienced a decrease (right panel of Figure II.2). Interestingly, while Turkey’s level of female LFP is somehow comparable to that of other Muslim countries, the great majority of these countries have actually seen an increase in female LFP since 2000. As such, Turkey’s trend is unique; it is one of the few countries with a low level of female LFP rate that has experienced a further decrease in the indicator since 2000.

**Figure II.2: % Change in Female LFP [Turkey in the International Context]**



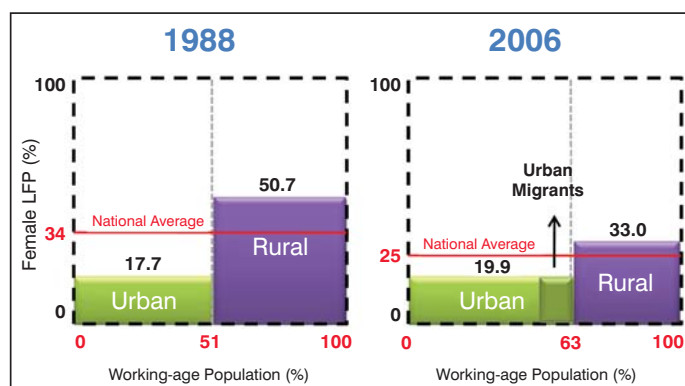
Note: Selected Muslim countries: Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Algeria, Iran (Islamic Republic), Afghanistan, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt (Arab Republic), Turkey, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq.

Source: processed from WDI, TÜİK, OECD Stat Extracts, and EUROSTAT.

**3. Urbanization and agricultural shedding are the two main factors contributing to a lower female LFP in Turkey.** An important reason for the fall in the female LFP rate in Turkey (from 34 percent in 1988 to 25 percent in 2006) has been migration from rural to urban areas. In general, the urban and rural labor markets in

Turkey are quite different in many ways: employment and participation rates in rural areas (still driven by agricultural employment) are much higher than in urban areas, especially among women; and unemployment in rural areas is much lower than in urban areas. Turkey has witnessed a rapid process of urbanization since 1988. The share of urban to total working-age population rose from 51 percent in 1988 to 63 percent in 2006. Note that female LFP in rural areas is much higher than in urban areas. Urbanization contributed to a decrease in female LFP since more women moved from a higher-participation rural environment to a lower-participation urban environment (many migrants from rural to urban areas seeking better opportunities and hoping to find better access to education and health services) (Figure II.3). However, female LFP has also decreased due to a rapid decrease of female LFP in rural areas—from 50.7 percent in 1988 to 33 percent in 2006—a trend that is mainly explained by a general reduction in agricultural employment as a share of total employment in rural areas.

**Figure II.3: Population Shares and Participation by Stratum, 1988 Compared to 2006**



Source: Processed from Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009) and TÜİK.

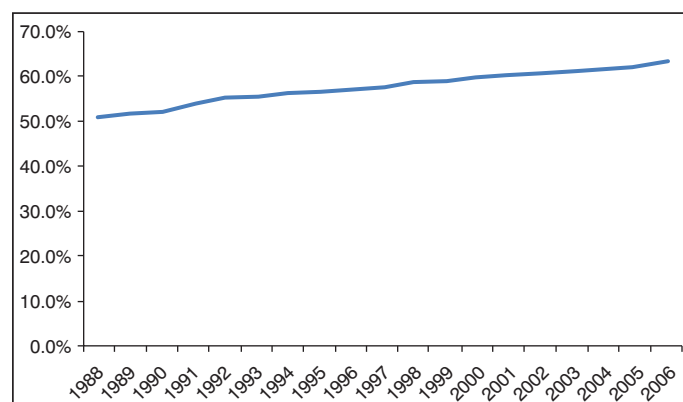
**4. Contrary to common belief, LFP in urban areas has not decreased as will be discussed in detail in this chapter.** Indeed, female LFP within urban areas actually increased slightly during the period of study, from 17.7 percent in 1988 to 19.9 percent in 2006.

## Urbanization

**5. Turkey has witnessed high levels of migration from rural to urban areas since 1988.** The share of urban to total working-age population (WAP) rose from

51.1 percent in 1988 to 63.3 percent in 2006 (Figure II.4). While the rural WAP increased by 2.5 million people (from 16.5 million to 19 million) during 1988–2006, the urban WAP increased by roughly 15.5 million people (from 17.2 million to 32.7 million) during the same time period. Migration flows reached a peak during 1995–2000. During this period, about 6.7 million people (11 percent of the total population) migrated. Of this total, a great majority (80 percent, about 4.8 million) moved from rural to urban areas. Since one of the main reasons behind migration is the search for better economic opportunities, migration decisions and labor market choices—regarding LFP and job characteristics—will be factors that strongly reinforce each other. As a consequence of internal migration, one of every three women in Turkey has become an internal migrant. An important factor to note is that most women who migrate from rural to urban areas used to work in the agricultural sector but withdrew from the labor force once they moved to urban areas.

**Figure II.4: Urban as a Share of Total Working-age Population**



Note: Covers individuals age 15+.

Source: TÜİK.

## 6. Migrant women are more educated and more likely to be married than non-migrant women.

Among the defining characteristics of female migration in Turkey over the last three decades is the extensive internal migration from rural to urban areas, mainly characterized by movements from the Eastern to the Western regions, and from the inland to the coastal parts of the country. The top 10 migrant-receiving provinces (in terms of absolute numbers) are in the Western part of the country and/or along the Mediterranean coast. Turkey Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS) data for 2003 indicate that about half of all migrant women

currently reside in Istanbul and in the Mediterranean region (Figure II.5). Migrant and non-migrant women display a similar age distribution but differ in their distribution of education and marital status (Ozden 2009). Migrant women are more educated and more likely to be married than non-migrant women (Table II.1). The higher education levels of migrants is a feature frequently observed in migration studies due to a positive selection bias (in the place of origin, migrants tend to be better off than non-migrants since migration implies costs and risks). Also, migration decisions in Turkey, as in most parts of the world, are made intra household because many women migrate in order to accompany their husbands and/or household heads.

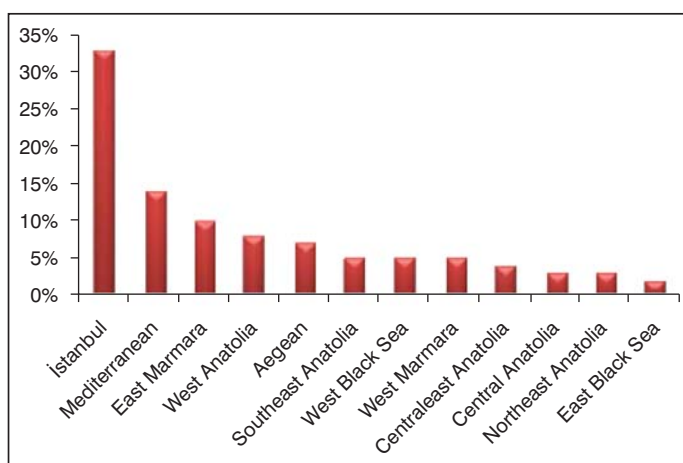
the urban LFP rates if the participation propensities of rural migrants differed from those of urban residents. The general perception in Turkey is that one of the reasons for a declining LFP in the country is the fact that migrant women have pushed the urban average female LFP down (because they have lower LFP rates than urban non-migrants). This is not the case. Recent studies (Dayioglu and Kirdar 2009; Aran and others 2009; Ozden 2009) find that migrant women in urban areas, on average, are slightly more likely to participate in the labor force than non-migrant women. Results using 2003 TDHS data indicate that while 29.6 percent of migrant women in urban areas are in the labor force, among non-migrants this rate is 27.0 percent. In other words, migrant women are in fact slightly more likely to be in the labor force.<sup>5</sup> According to Aran and others (2009), participation rates of migrant and non-migrant women in urban areas are actually quite similar, except among those who attained university education. Among the latest groups, female LFP rates are slightly higher among migrant women than among non-migrant women (Figure II.6).

**Table II.1: Profile for Migrant Compared to Non-migrant Women**

	Non-migrant	Migrant		Non-migrant	Migrant
<b>Marital Status</b>			<b>Education</b>		
Never married	13%	9%	Primary school	68%	56%
Married	81%	86%	Secondary school	9%	9%
Widowed	4%	3%	High school	15%	19%
Divorced	2%	2%	University	9%	15%
Living together	1%	1%	Graduate degree	0%	1%

Source: TDHS 2003.

**Figure II.5: Distribution of Migrant Women by Region**

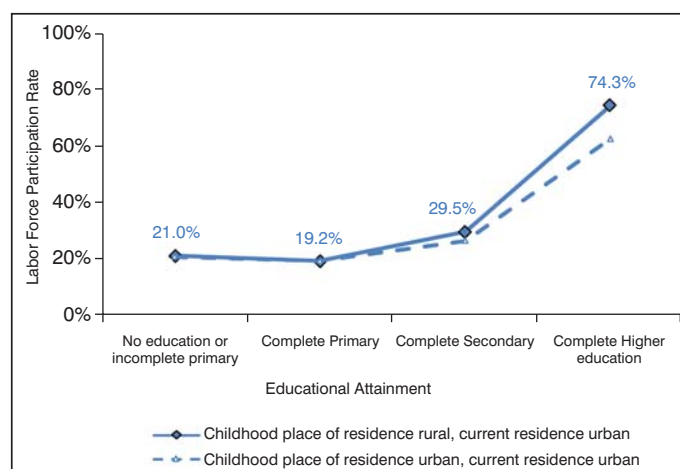


Note: The sum of all bars equals 100 percent.

Source: TDHS 2003.

**7. Female LFP in urban areas increased slightly in recent years.** The move out of agriculture in rural areas and the resulting migration to urban areas would change

**Figure II.6: Female Participation by Migration Status in Urban Areas**



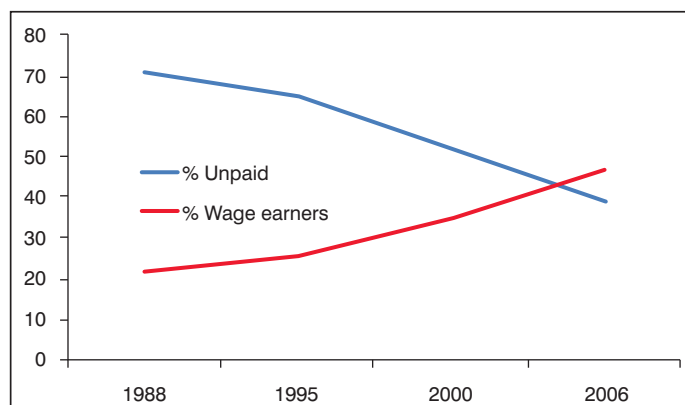
Source: Aran and others (2009).

**8. Urbanization seems to have contributed to improving the quality of female employment.** As a consequence of urbanization and improvements in educational attainment, the type of jobs that women are obtaining today are very different from the ones they obtained two decades ago. In 1988, 71 percent of all

<sup>5</sup> This result is consistent with findings by Ozden (2009). According to the author, in urban areas migrant women are more likely to participate in the labor force than non-migrant women (26 percent compared to 24 percent, respectively).

women in Turkey were employed as unpaid family workers, mainly in the agricultural sector. By 2006, unpaid employment among women was only 38 percent (a 46 percent decrease). On the contrary, in 1988, only 22 percent of all women were employed as wage earners. This share almost doubled (reaching 43 percent) by 2006. Indeed, by 2006, the share of women working as wage earners surpassed that of women working in unpaid jobs (Figure II.7). Also, the share of female wage earners registered in social security increased by 16 percent in only three years (from 27 percent in 2003 to 32 percent in 2006). All these changes indicate that employment quality among working women has improved significantly in recent years, influenced largely by the change in the urban/rural demographic structure. Although female employment in agriculture is decreasing rapidly (from 57 percent in 2003 to 47 percent in 2006), the agricultural sector is still the largest sector employing women in Turkey (Table II.2).

**Figure II.7: Female Employment by Employment Type, 1988–2006**



Source: From Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009).

**Table II.2: Descriptive Statistics on Female Employment by Type and Sector, 2003–06**

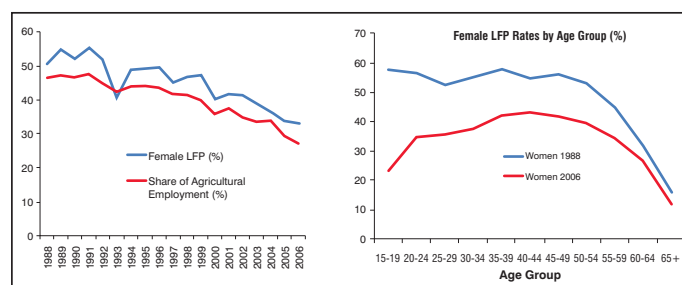
	2003	2004	2005	2006	% Change
<b>Sector of Activity</b>					
Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	57.0	55.8	50.2	47.2	-17.2%
Manufacturing	13.2	13.9	14.8	14.6	10.6%
Construction and utilities	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	16.7%
Services	29.1	29.7	34.3	37.4	28.5%
<b>Employment Type</b>					
Registered regular employee	27.4	26.8	29.8	31.9	16.4%
Unregistered regular employee	6.1	7.7	9.6	10.3	68.9%
Casual employee	6.1	6	5.7	5.6	-8.2%
Employer	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.2	50.0%
Self-employed	11.5	9.7	13.1	12.7	10.4%
Unpaid family worker	48.1	49	40.9	38.3	-20.4%

Source: Aran and others (2009).

## Agricultural Shedding

**9. We will now turn our focus to the decreasing LFP rates of rural women.** Female LFP rates in rural areas have been declining rapidly—from 50.7 percent in 1988 to 33 percent in 2006. The decline in LFP has been particularly prominent since 2000. As illustrated in the left-hand panel of Figure II.8, the decrease in female LFP in rural areas has occurred hand in hand with a decline in overall agricultural employment. Indeed, in 1988, the agricultural sector in Turkey accounted for about 47 percent of overall employment; by 2006, this share decreased to 27 percent.

**Figure II.8: Trends in Rural Labor Force Participation Rates and Agricultural Employment**



Source: Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009).

**10. Agricultural shedding is an important determinant of female LFP since women generally work in households engaged in agriculture.** Rural women generally work as unpaid workers and perform several activities such as seeding, harvesting, feeding animals, and milking cows, among others. Indeed, farming is a culturally accepted type of employment for women in Turkey. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter III, families in Turkey share traditional values that define the roles of men and women in society. There are certain types of employment where it would not be socially acceptable for women to work. Among households working in agriculture and farming, female employment is not only acceptable but also promoted and encouraged among women living in rural areas.

**11. The fall in rural female LFP is linked to a change in preferences in lifestyle choices of an emerging middle class.** According to World Bank (2009a), per capita consumption in rural areas has increased noticeably in recent years. Younger cohorts are becoming more educated and thus look for better life and employment opportunities. Young men in rural areas



are rapidly moving from agricultural employment into better-paid jobs in manufacturing and services. According to 2006 Household Labor Force Survey (HLFS) data, rural male workers in agriculture earn on average 2.34 Turkish Lira (TL) per hour while rural male workers in non-agriculture earn on average 3.21 TL per hour (that is, 37 percent higher wages). As such, the move from agriculture into services and manufacturing is associated with higher welfare among rural households.<sup>6</sup>

**12. At the same time, young women are getting married to men that no longer work in agriculture as much as they used to.**

In many cases, shifts in family activities away from subsistence agriculture (and especially in cases where the husband and/or household head move away from agriculture) cause a withdrawal of women from the labor force. For rural women, moving from unpaid work in agriculture to becoming full-time housewives (or students) is perceived positively by rural households and is regarded as a rational life choice. This socioeconomic phenomenon is regarded in Turkey as the process of young/rural women becoming more middle class. Indeed, as shown by the right-hand panel of Figure II.8, the observed decrease in rural female LFP has been particularly noticeable among women from younger cohorts.

**13. There are several reasons why employment in agriculture has decreased in recent years.**

As mentioned, an important factor explaining the decrease in participation among rural women is the fact that fewer households are engaged in agricultural activities. As indicated in Table II.3, there has been an important decrease in the share of individuals and households in rural areas that work in family-run agricultural establishments. For instance, the share, in rural areas,

of household heads that are self-employed in agriculture dropped from 41.3 percent to 30.5 percent during 2000–06. This is a remarkable decline in such a short time and it probably meant a significant loss of jobs for many women.

**14. During 2001–07, agriculture and fishing experienced a loss of employment of approximately 25 percent**

(more than 2 million jobs lost in the sector). There has been a substantial reallocation of labor from agricultural activities into industrial activities and services. This has occurred because non-agricultural sectors of the economy (mainly wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants, other services, and manufacturing) displayed outstanding growth in both output and employment demand in the past seven years (Taymaz 2009). During 2001–07, the decline in agricultural employment was partly compensated by new jobs in the wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants (1.1 million), other services (0.75 million), manufacturing (0.66 million), and other sectors. In addition, since 2000, there has been a significant worsening of the terms of trade between agriculture and manufacturing (Dayioglu and Kirdar 2009). The prices of agricultural products not only determine the wage rate in agriculture but also the earnings of households in the agricultural sector. Falling terms of trade in agriculture would imply lower wages in the sector and therefore lower supply (which is likely to decrease LFP rates among both men and women). Declining employment in agriculture may also be explained by a general fall in food prices in the early 2000s; by the fact that agricultural subsidies in Turkey were significantly reduced during 2000–05 (Box II.1); and by technological developments in agriculture that have made human labor redundant (such as tractors, cultivators, and ploughs) (Peker 2004; Yavuz 2005).

**Table II.3: Declining Share of Agriculture in Rural Areas**

	2000	2006	% Change
Percent of Household Heads in Rural Areas Engaged in Agriculture	44.2%	33.6%	-23%
Percent of Household Heads in Rural Areas Engaged in Agriculture on Own Account	41.3%	30.5%	-26%
Percent of Households with at least One Member Engaged in Agriculture on Own Account	19.3%	14.5%	-24%
Percent of Households in Rural Areas with at least One Member Engaged in Agriculture on Own Account	48.4%	36.8%	-23%

Source: 2002–2006 HLFS, TÜİK.

<sup>6</sup> HLFS figures only provide information on wage earners. As such, earnings from agricultural self employment and/or the sale of agricultural products are not included in these figures, which could undermine total agricultural earnings.

### Box II.1: Turkey's Agricultural Reform Implementation Program (ARIP)

The ARIP was initiated in 2000/01. The program's initial objective was to address a need for fiscal rationalization for public support to agriculture and to support a wider agriculture development agenda. The program was driven by the European Union (EU) harmonization process. Agricultural support schemes were revised with a view to increasing effectiveness, efficiency, and quality in production, taking into consideration EU pre-accession requirements.

During the first stage of the program (2000–05), the ARIP introduced a series of reforms on agricultural subsidies focused mainly on reducing the fiscal support to state and quasi-state marketing enterprises and to credit subsidies and debt write-offs in the rural finance system. The subsidy reduction program eliminated fertilizer subsidies and significantly reduced deficiency payments (output price supports) for most of the supported agricultural products. In partial compensation for these subsidy reductions, the government introduced a Direct Income Support (DIS) program. Starting in 2001, the DIS program has made annual payments of roughly US\$90/hectare to all farmers on the basis of their cultivated area. Direct payments to farmers compensate almost half of the income loss arising from the cuts in agricultural subsidies. In 2008, the DIS program was discontinued.

The second stage of the program started in 2005. The ARIP moved from a fiscal rationalization focus to strengthening the emphasis on competitiveness-enhancing agricultural and rural development measures, such as investment in farmer's organizations, the introduction of agro-environmental schemes, the promotion of land consolidation activities, and credit support.

**15. A decline in agricultural employment is not necessarily a bad thing.** Such a decrease may be a consequence of economic progress and probably contributed to improvement in employment quality among working women in rural areas. Data indicate that the decline in rural agricultural employment occurred hand in hand with a decrease in unpaid work and with an increase in self-employment and wage employment (Dayioglu and Kirdar, 2009). Also, women working in non-agricultural jobs enjoy more favorable working conditions than women working in agricultural jobs (for example lower informality, and a lower probability of working unpaid) (Table II.4). As such, rural women moving away from agriculture into non-agricultural

employment are likely to improve both the quality of their employment and their pay. The downside of the story is the fact that many of the women who lose their jobs in agriculture, as discussed, shy away from the labor force, thus contributing to lower LFP rates.

**Table II.4: Statistics on Employment Quality by Sector, Rural Areas**

	<i>% Unpaid</i>	<i>% Informal</i>
Agriculture	77.5%	98.7%
Non-agriculture	7.4%	36.4%

Source: 2006 HLFS.

## CHAPTER III.

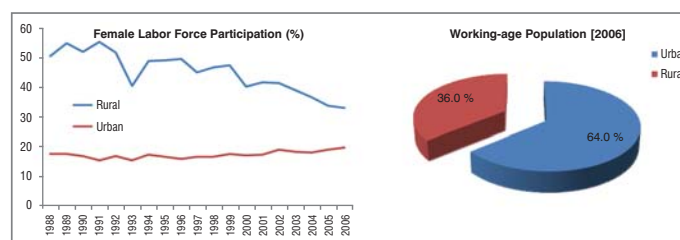
### Why is Female Labor Force Participation in Turkey Low by International Standards?

**T**his chapter aims at understanding why female labor force participation (LFP) in Turkey remains low. Analyses indicate that female LFP remains low mainly due to very low participation rates of women with low levels of education in urban areas. This group faces complex cultural and economic barriers that constrain their participation in the labor market. Economic barriers mainly relate to the existing precarious work conditions (high likelihood of working in the informal sector; low salaries, lack of affordable childcare, and long working hours, among others), and cultural barriers mainly relate to women's role as caregivers and to family/social demands for women to remain home. Indeed, urban women with low levels of education may be facing an “under-participation trap”.

#### Urban Trends

**1. Female labor force participation (LFP) in Turkey remains low mainly due to very low participation rates in urban areas.** Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) data indicate that overall female LFP in urban areas is quite low—at 19.9 percent in 2006. In rural areas, female LFP is significantly higher—at 33 percent in 2006. The national average female LFP (at 25 percent in 2006) is somewhat closer to the urban average. This is because the majority of the working-age population (64 percent) lives in urban areas (Figure III.1). As such, the behavior and trends of female LFP in urban areas is likely to have an important impact in overall female LFP in Turkey.

**Figure III.1: Labor Force Participation and Working-age Population by Stratum**



Source: Processed from Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009) and Aran and others (2009).

**2. Female LFP in urban areas has increased slightly since the 1980s, mainly because urban women are becoming more educated.** Female LFP in urban areas increased from 17.7 percent in 1988 to 19.9 percent in 2006. According to Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009), the main factor explaining such an increase in LFP is that urban women (the population and the labor force) became more educated during the reference period. Since more education attainment is associated with higher levels of participation (as discussed in Chapter I), improvements in the education distribution (especially if such improvements boost the share of women attaining university education) are likely to positively affect female LFP. While in 1988, only 2.8 percent of the urban female working-age population had attained university, by 2006, this figure had increased to 8.1 percent. The education composition of the labor force also displayed positive improvements: while in 1988, 12.9 percent of the labor force was university graduates, by 2006, the figure had increased to 28.5 percent. Similar improvements took place at all education levels above primary school. As a result, the proportion of illiterate and functionally literate individuals and primary school graduates (in both the population and the labor force) dropped significantly during the period of study (Table III.1).

**Table III.1: Distribution of Female Population and Labor Force by Education, Urban Areas**

	1988		2000		2006	
	Population	Labor Force	Population	Labor Force	Population	Labor Force
% Illiterate	26.1	12.5	14.4	4.3	14.8	4.2
% No Diploma	8.3	5.0	4.3	2.0	6.9	3.5
% Primary School	43.2	34.1	46.2	27.9	39.4	26.3
% Secondary	9.2	8.61	10.9	8.0	12.8	9.8
% High School	7.7	19.3	13.2	21.1	11.4	15.8
% Voc. School	2.7	7.7	4.4	10.3	6.7	12.0
<b>% University</b>	2.8	12.9	6.5	26.5	8.1	28.5

Note: Covers individuals aged 15+.

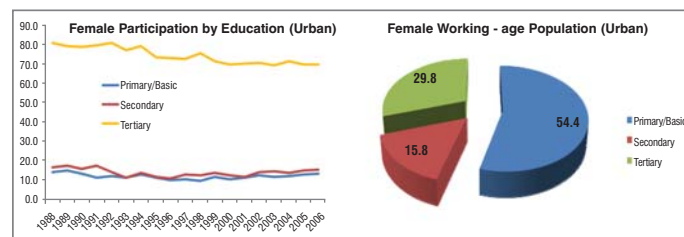
Source: Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009) using the 1988, 2000; and 2006 HLFSSs.



**3. More relevant to the main problem of low female LFP is the fact that female LFP rates remain very low (and have not improved) among urban poorly educated women,** which constitute the largest share of the urban working-age population. LFP rates in urban areas are low mainly due to the fact that poorly educated women (a large share of the overall urban working female population) participate sporadically in the labor force. While participation rates among educated women in urban areas (that is, those who have attained tertiary education) are quite high (69.8 percent in 2006), LFP rates among women who have attained only primary and secondary education are surprisingly low, at 13.3 and 15.3 percent, respectively. LFP rates among educated women in urban areas—albeit high—decreased from 80.3 percent in 1988 to 69.9 percent in 2006. Such a decrease primarily occurred between 1988 and 1999,

after which participation rates stabilized at roughly 70 percent (Figure III.2). However, the main reason for this decrease remains unclear. Analysis commissioned for this Report attempted to explore possible explanations, but results obtained were inconclusive (Box III.1).

**Figure III.2: Labor Force Participation and Working-age Population by Education (Urban areas)**



Source: Processed from Dayioglu and Kirdar (2009).

### Box III.1: Why Has Labor Force Participation Declined among Educated Urban Women in Turkey?

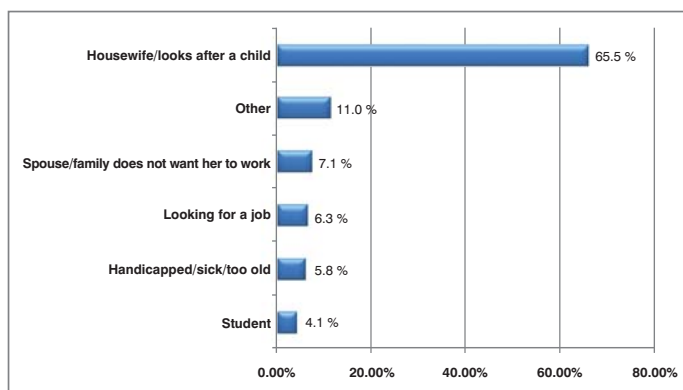
- **Are real wages for this group decreasing?** If so, this would contribute to a decrease in their labor supply. Unfortunately, wage data are not available prior to 2000. After 2000, real wages for educated urban women have been stable (Dayioglu and Kirdar 2009).
- **Is the competitive work environment creating a disincentive?** The increasingly competitive work environment of today as compared to that in the 1980s along with changing market conditions may have limited the chances for women to find jobs. This may have led women to give up on looking for a job and to prefer staying at home instead.
- **Are reservation wages increasing for this group?** Economic theory argues that individuals may supply fewer hours of labor after their incomes reach a certain “high” point (this is explained in labor economics as the backward bending supply curve, which captures people’s preference for increased leisure over increased remuneration). However, econometric analysis (Dayioglu and Kirdar 2009) does not find household wealth to be a significant determinant of the participation rates for educated urban women.
- **Have observable characteristics changed for women in this group?** Women who participated in the labor force in the 1990s displayed different characteristics from women who participate in the 2000s. But, if anything, changes in characteristics of educated urban women should have favored female LFP: participating women after 2000 are more likely to never have been married, younger, and household heads than women in the early 1990s, all characteristics that are positively associated with female LFP (Dayioglu and Kirdar 2009).
- **Is there selection bias?** There could also be unobservable differences in traditional datasets between women who participated in the labor force in the early and late 1990s. For instance, the first batch of university graduates in Turkey in the 1980s was probably a very small and rather homogeneous group. Due to the rapid increase in access to university, the university graduates in later years are more heterogeneous (in terms of their value system and preferences). It could be that more recent university graduates are less driven to work and/or perhaps have more conservative values. To test this hypothesis, further qualitative analysis is required.

## Why Less-educated Urban Women Do Not Work?

**4. Why has female LFP among poorly educated urban women remained low and unchanged?** As discussed in Chapters I and II, Turkey went through major structural and demographic changes such as urbanization, declining fertility rates, and improvements in the education distribution, among others. Despite all these changes, female LFP among poorly educated urban women has remained very low and unchanged. What is the main driving force for the women not to enter the labor market? Is it their choice not to join the labor market? Are they excluded from the labor market? This section aims at answering these questions.

**5. Data indicate that poorly educated urban women who do not enter the labor force are mainly housewives.** Data from the Turkey Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS) indicate that the main reason the majority (66 percent) of urban poorly educated women are out of labor force is their role as housewives. Also, 7 out of every 100 women claim that they do not join the labor market because their family would oppose them doing so (note that these women are probably housewives, too). The remaining 27 percent are not in the labor market because they are looking for a job, because they are in school, because they are handicapped/sick, or due to other (not stated) reasons (Figure III.3).

**Figure III.3: Main Reasons for Female Inactivity (Urban poorly educated women)**



Source: Processed from Aran and others (2009).

**6. Qualitative analysis indicates that women see advantages and disadvantages of being housewives.** According to focus group discussion (FGD) participants, housewives spend most of their time cleaning, cooking,

ironing, and taking care of the family. Indeed, according to female FGD participants, household work may actually be quite demanding. Women who participated in the discussions find advantages and disadvantages of being housewives. Some of the advantages relate to the fact that housewives have more time to care for their family and children. As such, family priorities (and the efficient use of the resources brought by their husbands) take precedence over any other priority, such as work. However, participants also shared some disadvantages of their role as housewives, such as a feeling of dependence, stress, low self-esteem, boredom, little time for self, lack of social security, and a sense that their work and role in society is undervalued. On the contrary, male FGD participants (generally the husbands of the female participants), claimed that being a housewife is an easy job, associated with staying at home with plenty of spare time. While some male participants accepted that childcare could be wearisome at times, they claim that the activity fits the female nature and thus it is not perceived as real work. According to their husbands, housewives are nurturing, affectionate, and self-sacrificing; their main role is to save/spend the family's money and to care for their families.

**7. But not all housewives are so by choice.** The great majority of the women who participated in the FGDs (most of whom were housewives) stated that they would like to work for money. Participants claimed that by working they could help finance the education of their children, have access to social security, contribute to their family budget, and help the family in times of shocks (such as illness or unemployment of a family member). Also, participants argued that working could give them some self-satisfaction by ensuring more independence, by providing them with their own income, by increasing their self-confidence, and by being (and feeling) more productive. For more detailed information, the reader may refer to the quotes on "willingness to work" in Appendix B.

**8. Poorly educated women in urban areas face complex cultural and economic barriers that constrain their participation in the labor market.** According to FGD participants, there are several constraints to labor force participation, some involving economic barriers and some involving cultural barriers. Economic barriers mainly relate to the existing precarious

work conditions for poorly educated women in urban areas (high likelihood of working in the informal sector, low salaries, lack of affordable childcare, and long working hours, among others), while cultural barriers mainly relate to women's role as caregivers and to family/social demands (from husbands, neighbors, and extended family) for women to remain home (Figure III.4). Indeed, family pressure (from husbands, parents, and in-laws) is one of the main constraints to employment faced by poorly educated women. Family pressure arises, among others, due to prevailing conservative values, mistrust, safety concerns about the available working conditions, and worries about what others would say about husbands who have a working wife. As shared by FGDs participants, a working wife may be interpreted by society as a signal that husbands are not able to provide a living for his family. As such, it poses potential reputational risks that are socially quite important. For more detailed information, the reader may refer to the quotes on “reasons for not working” in Appendix B.

**9. Women's roles in Turkey are still affected by the “extended family” dynamics.** Although a majority of households in Turkey are nuclear family units, the larger, extended family continues to play an important social role in the lives of most individuals, especially among the lower-middle-class and lower-class families. By

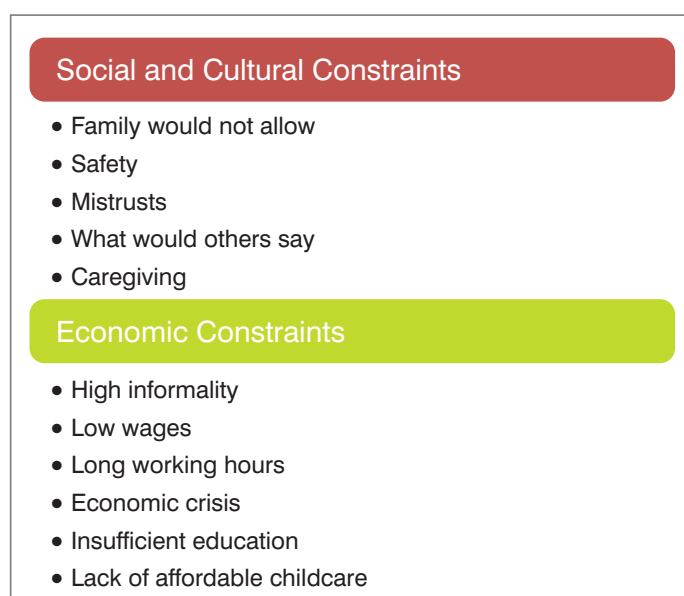
expressing approval or disapproval of its members' social behavior, the extended family also functions as an effective mechanism of social decision making. Even among modernized urban dwellers, family loyalty, family obligations, and family honor remain strong considerations. Thus, even though Turkish culture professing to have modern values may define the “ideal” family as one in which equality exists between spouses, wives who actually attempt to establish themselves as equal partners could face (in some cases) resistance from their husbands. This unequal burden placed upon women to uphold family honor highlights the ambiguous role of women in society.

**10. Pregnancy and childcare are important constraints to employment.** As mentioned in Chapter I, mothering and childcare constitute important determinants of female LFP, especially in urban areas. Many female FGD participants argued that they had to stop working due to pregnancy and/or childcare. Most women claim that their kids are young and they would not want to leave them alone or unattended (although some of them argue that other family members and/or friends could help care for their children if they had to work). Most female FGD participants, however, feel that providing care for their children is their responsibility. Also, participant women were aware that they could not afford a private daycare center or a paid babysitter with the wages they could earn if they worked. Participants mentioned they would need to pay at least 500 TL monthly to hire somebody to take care of their children. To afford this, they would need to find a job that would pay them more than 1,500 TL, which, according to them, was beyond what they could earn given their skills and education level.

## The Under-participation Trap Hypothesis

**11. Beyond cultural constraints, poorly educated women in urban areas may be facing what has been referred to as an “under-participation trap”.** Urban women with low levels of education are very likely to work in the uncovered/informal sector. Informal jobs generally offer women wages that are low compared to what they would have to pay to hire someone else to do their domestic activities such as childcare, cooking, and cleaning. Consequently, labor supply (employment and participation) among women who would only have chances to work in the informal sector is also likely to

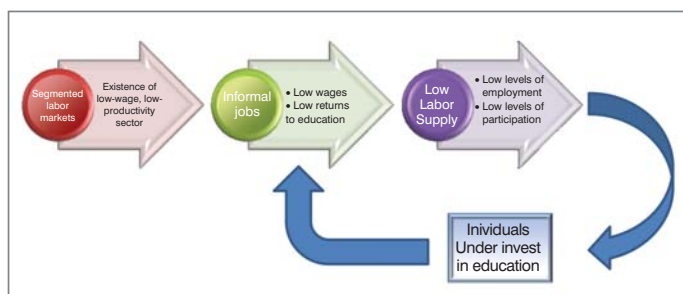
**Figure III.4: Constraints to Female Participation (Poorly educated urban women)**



Source: Processed from GfK Report.

be low. Low wages and low returns to education may cause families to under-invest in the education of girls because they think they have little chance to participate in the labor market when they grow up. This will feedback into the labor market and contribute further to keeping wages low, which in turn will keep labor supply low. This cycle is often known as the under-participation trap (Booth and Coles 2007; Taymaz 2009) (Figure III.5).

Figure III.5: What is an Under-participation Trap?



Source: Authors' elaboration.

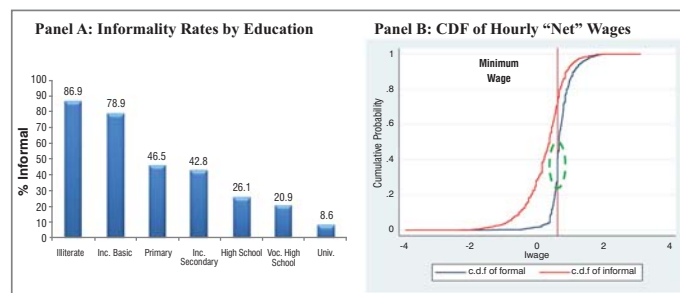
**12. Are poorly educated women in urban areas facing an under-participation trap?** To answer this question, this section analyses three main factors: labor market segmentation, returns to education, and working conditions.

**13. Many workers in the urban labor market in Turkey work in the informal (low productivity) sector.** A segmented labor market implies the existence of dual sectors in the labor market: a covered “high-productivity” sector (with good-quality jobs) and an uncovered “low-productivity” sector (with low-quality jobs). Labor market segmentation is characterized by scarce and constrained mobility across sectors (workers queue) and by participation in the uncovered sector being not optional (that is, exclusion). The urban labor market in Turkey indeed displays symptoms of segmentation. First, firms in the formal sector display higher productivity levels than firms in the informal sector (Taymaz 2009). Second, among poorly educated workers, flows from informality to formality are rather scarce.<sup>7</sup> Third, among poorly educated wage earners, informality in Turkey seems to be caused by exclusion and not by choice (World Bank 2009b). Finally,

controlling for productivity, there are significant wage rate differentials (of up to 40 percent) between workers in formal and informal sectors in Turkey (Angel-Urdinola and others 2009). According to the World Bank (2009b), the lack of flexibility in the formal sector (high tax wedges, high firing costs, and inflexible working hours, among others) constitutes the determinant of segmentation in the Turkish labor market.

**14. Poorly educated women are particularly vulnerable to joining the informal labor market, which offers them very low wages.** Informality rates among poorly educated urban women are quite high (Figure III.6, Panel A). Moreover, net hourly wages among informal women are quite low. As illustrated in Figure III.6, Panel B, the distribution of net hourly wages among formal women has stochastic dominance over the distribution of hourly wages among informal women (that is, formal wage rates are higher than informal wage rates at all points of the wage distribution). Poorly educated women in the formal sector are likely to earn wages at, or slightly above, the official minimum wage. On the contrary, most women in the informal sector (77 percent) earn wages that are below the minimum wage (Dayioglu and Kirdar 2009). As mentioned, low wages constitute an important reason for low levels of labor supply.

Figure III.6: Employment Status and Wages for Poorly educated Urban Women in Turkey



CDF = Cumulative density function.  
Lwage = Natural logarithm of hourly net wages  
Source: World Bank using 2006 HLFs.

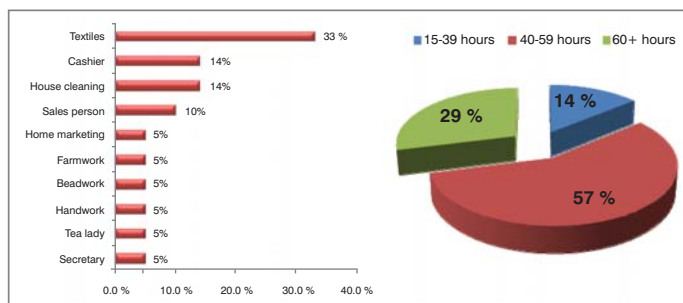
**15. Besides low wages, informal jobs offer women very precarious working conditions.** According to the FGD findings, urban women with low levels of education mainly work in the textiles sector, as house

<sup>7</sup> According to data from a World Bank informality survey, only 2 out of every 10 poorly educated workers in the labor market (in all age groups) are expected to transition from the informal to the formal sector.



cleaners, as cashiers, and in sales (Figure III.7). This is consistent with results from HLFS data, which indicate that the majority of less educated urban women (80 percent) work in manufacturing (46 percent), services (19 percent), and sales (14 percent). Note that the textiles sector constitutes a large employer for poorly educated workers in urban areas. However, this sector is regarded by women as one with very difficult employment conditions. Beyond jobs in the textiles industry, FGD participants argued that the employment conditions in available jobs were very precarious, in general (see Appendix B). Many of the interviewed women who had some type of work experience affirmed that lack of social security was the most important reason for having stopped working. Participants complained that available jobs would require long working hours and difficult transportation arrangements (especially for cleaning ladies). This claim about long working hours is consistent with findings using HLFS data. As illustrated in the right-hand panel of Figure III.7, the majority of all urban women (86 percent) currently employed in the labor market work more than 40 hours per week. Furthermore, about 3 out of every 10 working urban women with low levels of education work more than 60 hours per week. Under the aforementioned conditions, many women appeared quite discouraged from looking for jobs. For more detailed information, the reader may refer to the quotes on “reasons for not working”, “reasons for having stopped working”, and “reasons for not wanting to work” in Appendix B.

**Figure III.7: Employment Opportunities and Hours of Work for Urban Women with Low Levels of Education**



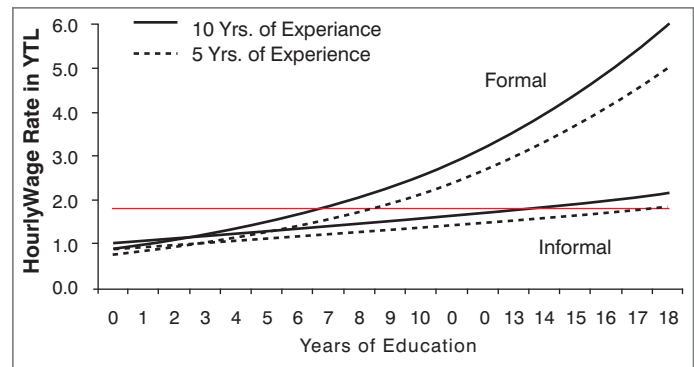
Note: Home marketing activities are related to selling products such as cosmetics and underwear.

Source: World Bank using 2006 HLFS and focus group discussions, Istanbul, February 2009.

**16. Returns to education in the informal sector are very low, which could explain why some women tend to “under-invest” in education—thus leading to the under-participation trap.** FGD participants argued that

education pays off only if one has a profession. Indeed, 2006 HLFS data indicate that returns to education in the informal sector (where most poorly educated women are likely to work) are very low. Even with more than 10 years of education, informal urban wage earners are likely to earn wage rates that are at, or below, the minimum wage. On the contrary, returns to education are significant in the formal sector (which is, as mentioned, a symptom for market segmentation). Indeed, formal workers expected to earn wages above the minimum wage after having attained six years of education (which corresponds to basic education attainment) and to experience significant wage increases with extra education. Returns to work experience are also significantly lower in the informal sector (Figure III.8).

**Figure III.8: Wage Rates, by Years of Education, in Urban Areas (Formal compared to informal wage earners)**

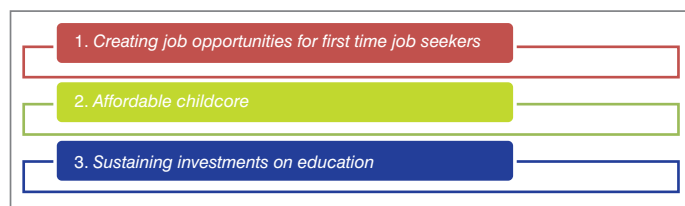


Source: Angel-Urdinola and others (2009).

**17. According to FGDs participants, insufficient education is one of the main constraints to participation.** Most participants in the FGDs agreed that finding a job is much easier for women who have attained a high-school degree or above. Also, participants acknowledged that many of the constraints to LFP are eased once women attain at least high-school education. Indeed, working women with a profession (i.e. university education) are perceived quite positively. FGD participants argued that the employment possibilities for less educated women are almost limited to the textile industry, to the provision of cleaning/domestic services, and to retail activities in the market place. Unfortunately, these type of available jobs, according to the participants, are exactly those that the more “conservative” segments of society seem not to favor. For more detailed information, the reader may refer to the quotes on “importance of education” in Appendix B.

**18. How can the under-participation trap be reversed?** Policies that can help improve women’s opportunities for more and better jobs in Turkey include: (Figure III.9):

**Figure III.9: Policy Framework to Reverse the Under-participation Trap**



Source: Authors' elaboration.

**19. Interventions should aim at promoting formal employment for women with low levels of education,** and especially for those transitioning from school to work. More flexible labor market regulation may reduce the barriers of businesses hiring women. For instance, the Government of Turkey has introduced recently a program that subsidizes employers’ social security contributions for newly hired women for up to 5 years. Programs like this are likely to contribute to increase the rate of employment for women, especially in times of healthy economic performance (Box III.2). Interventions should aim at decreasing high levels of informality among workers with low levels of education. To do so, a comprehensive set of policies that involve taxation, enforcement, inspections, and a more flexible labor market are required. For more details, the 2009 Turkey Country Economic Memorandum (CEM) describes a policy framework to mitigate structural and non-structural factors of informality. Labor regulation should aim at containing direct and indirect costs of “formal” hiring to avoid incentives for lower labor demand for unskilled formal employment.

**20. Revisions in labor regulation may contribute to improve labor market segmentation and thus increase female LFP:**

- **Minimum wage policy:** As illustrated in Figure III.6, the minimum wage seems to be binding for working women with low levels of education.

This can be seen by the spike of the CDF at the level of the minimum wage. Since 2001, the minimum wage in Turkey has increased by about 77% in real terms – a rather large increase (from 1.03 TL per hour in 2001 to 1.83 TL per hour in 2006). According to estimates from the 2006 LFS, this has occurred hand-in-hand with a 14 percent increase in informality rates among wage earners (from 27 percent in 2001 to 32 percent in 2006). Raising the minimum wage increases the cost of “formal” unskilled labor and thus contributes to lower the demand of labor for individuals in this group (which in turn contributes more to labor market segmentation).<sup>8</sup>

- **Tax Wedges:** While the tax wedge in Turkey has been historically high, the 2008 employment package introduced important reforms that reduced non-wage costs significantly, especially among less educated workers. In particular, the 5 percentage points across the board reduction in social security contributions and exceptions for employer contributions for newly hired youth and female workers in the first year and reduced rates over a five year period are designed to boost “formal” labor demand for poorly educated women. Unfortunately, the impact of such programs may be undermined by the low levels of growth in labor demand due to the ongoing economic crisis (Box III.2).
- **Labor Market Flexibility:** Turkey still has rather strict employment protection legislation (EPL) for workers in the “formal” sector. EPL covers many areas such as the types of contracts permitted, worker’s rights, and employment protection rules. According to World Bank (2009b), Turkey and Mexico display the most protective EPL among OECD countries. This is primarily due to a rather generous severance payment system and to the existence of regulation that limits temporary and fixed terms contracts. Rigid and generous EPL is likely to contribute to labor market segmentation and will likely have an adverse effect on harder-to-employ individuals, such as youth and women.

<sup>8</sup> While the minimum wage seems binding for poorly educated urban women in the formal sector, this is not the case among poorly educated urban men in the formal sector (which constitute the majority of all formal urban unskilled employment). Indeed, as documented in World Bank (2009), the minimum wage in Turkey is not necessarily binding among unskilled workers (on average). This is because men in the formal sector generally earn wages that are higher than the minimum wage. The wage gap between men and women in the formal sector is partly explained by the fact that men work in better-paid sectors and partly due to other unobserved factors such as discrimination and/or effort.

### Box III.2: Impact of the Targeted Social Security Reduction for Youth and Female Employment

Relying on ranges of demand elasticity estimates from introduction of similar subsidies under Law 5350 (Betcherman, Daysal, and Pages, 2007), World Bank estimates indicate that the introduction of the targeted labor subsidy to youth and women could lead to a *net* creation of approximately 163,000 to 235,000 new jobs during the first year. This net job creation results from an increase in the number of jobs among those targeted by the program (youth and adult-females – in the range of 225,000 to 317,000) accompanied by a decrease in jobs among those excluded from the program (adult-males) as the subsidy would not apply to them. The range of estimates is included in the Table below:

New Jobs due to Introduction of Subsidy (July 2008-July 2009)	
	<i>Range of New Jobs*</i>
Youth (18-29)	145,000 to 205,000
Adult Females (30-64)	79,000 to 112,000
Adult Males (30-64)	-62,000 to -82,000
Net Job Creation	162,000 to 235,000

\* World Bank (2007). Labor Annex Project Appraisal Document for CEDPL II. Washington, DC.

- **Protection of Women:** There are some provisions in the labor regulation that may make it more expensive (or constrained) for employers to hire women. For instance, women cannot work in coal mines, underground quarries or in dangerous jobs. Labor Law still views child care as the responsibility of the mother, requiring workplaces employing more than 100 female workers to set up nursing rooms, and those with 150 women workers or more to provide day care. That the establishment of day care depends on the number of women workers and not on the total number of workers creates an asymmetry in the cost of employing female and male workers. Labor Law recently extended maternity leave from 12 weeks to 16 weeks, with the flexibility of using all but three weeks after the birth of the child. The law also allows women to have 6 months of unpaid leave following the end of 16 weeks of paid maternity leave. Although the

new maternity provision enables women to maintain their job attachment, it may also lead firms to shy away from hiring women workers. There are no provisions in the law for paternity leave. Also, should a female worker quit her job due to marriage she is entitled to receive a severance payment (a similar measure exists for men leaving their jobs to do their military service). Although all these measures may seem to benefit women, they may also work to decrease women's work attachment and employer's demand for female workers.

**21. Many women could be encouraged to work by having access to affordable care for their children.** This could be achieved by promoting early childhood development programs (ECD), such as preschool education and public/subsidized childcare programs (Box III.3).

### Box III.3: Public Childcare Programs in Chile and Colombia

#### “Chile Grows with You” (*Chile Crece Contigo*):

The Government of Chile launched a social policy initiative in 2006 promoting full support for the country’s children as of their birth. Through it, boys and girls are protected from the moment of conception with relevant and timely services that allow for early stimulation and provide opportunities for their comprehensive development. Under the policy, Chilean children from the poorest families are eligible to attend daycare centers and preschools for free. The aim is to ensure that all children have access to primary health care, and that all the families receive tools to better support the growth of their children not only in terms of health and nutrition, but also psychological support. *Chile Crece Contigo* offers educational programs for all citizens (specialized aid in education), strengthened legislation, and standards of protection for maternity and paternity, and accompaniment for all boys and girls from the first prenatal control until entry into the school system through improved prenatal controls, healthy birth, and improved health controls, especially for the first two years. The program offers direct action to help the poorest 40 percent households—those who make less than 300,000 pesos (about US\$560) per month.

#### Colombia’s Community Mothers:

In the mid-1980s, the Colombian government, alarmed by very high rates of infant mortality and malnutrition, launched this far-reaching program to protect preschool-age children, with the help of the United Nations and the Inter-American Development Bank. Welfare centers were created that were run by volunteers known as “community mothers” who organized, on their own or with the help of NGOs, education and care facilities for about 3,000 children. Each mother takes about 15 children into her home and gets the equivalent of about half the legal minimum wage (about US\$130 a month) and the right to social security and a pension.

As a rule, the mothers look after the children between eight in the morning and four in the afternoon, Monday through Friday. They organize their day themselves, guided by the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF) educational aims, which focus on making the children aware of values such as solidarity, friendship, and respect for differences. Before being hired, the “mothers” take a short course to prepare for their future role and take a self-assessment test. The “mothers”, who now number 82,000, are becoming increasingly important and are in great demand by families disrupted by the violence, which, as of January 1998, had forcibly driven 1.1 million people (42,000 families) from their homes.

*Source:* De Tournemire (1990); and Dolan (2006).

**22. Subsidizing childcare and preschool education has several externalities that positively affect the welfare of future generations.** First, International evidence (MIT 2006) suggests that high-quality early childhood education and care helps prepare young children to succeed in school and eventually in life. This translates into economic returns because they are associated with lower repetition and dropout rates throughout a student’s lifetime. Second, and directly relevant for this Report, a developed child care education industry could be economically important because it creates jobs and allows parents (mainly mothers) to be economically active. A recent World Bank Report on Equality of Opportunities in Turkey (World Bank, 2009a) highlights that ECD interventions may contribute to break intergenerational transmissions of poverty and inequality.

**23. Sustaining Investments in Education and ‘Vocational Education and Training’ (VET) are likely to facilitate employment for first time job seekers.** Since more education attainment is associated with higher levels of participation, improvements in the education distribution (and especially if such improvements boost the share of women attaining university education) are likely to positively affect female LFP. Also, investment in VET is likely to prepare women, and especially young women, with the skills needed to qualify for good jobs in the labor market. International evidence indicates that investments on VET help women to get formal jobs, and promotes gender equality in earnings and labor market opportunities (Box III.4).



### Box III.4: Youth Training and Gender Equality

Improved access to desegregated training opportunities will help increase the employability of young women and improve their future earnings and socio-economic conditions. Ensuring that adolescent and young girls are provided with quality formal and non-formal education programs is essential, including vocational training that would lead to their empowerment and to more opportunities for decent work in their adulthood. At the same time, reassessing gender and youth employment policies such as addressing the mismatch between education and market demands, occupational segregation, strengthening vocational training, and forecasting labor needs would be effective in creating a “virtuous circle” of employment and productivity. The following are some examples of projects related to youth training and gender equality:

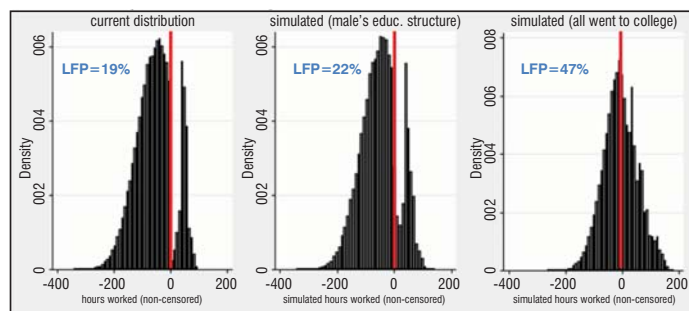
- *The “FORMUJER” Model* (Latin America – 1999/2004): the objective of the project was to promote and strengthen the capacities of formal training institutions of Latin American countries. It successfully increased possibilities and access of low-income women to training and employment. Self-esteem of participants was reinforced and developed through enhancement of their employability and competencies.
- *Promoting decent work through enhanced access to training* (India - 2002): project designed to promote women’s employment by extending the services of formal vocational training institutions to the informal sector.  
Approximately 70% of the women trained became involved in income generating activities, most of whom were self-employed, increasing their monthly household incomes and improving their health and that of their families.
- *Increasing employability through skills development and entrepreneurial education* (Caucasus and Central Asia - 2004): project implemented to enhance skills development and entrepreneurial training of young women and men through improved vocational training, career guidance and “business training”. This project resulted in increased percentages of entrepreneur women (40%) and the development of policies and action plans to ensure that both women and men had equal access to skills development and entrepreneurial training.

Source: ILO (2007, 2008) , ILO/Cinterfor (2004)

**24. Investments in education quality are also important.** Recent studies consider skills development, entrepreneurial education and vocational training as “building blocks” for generating strategies to achieve gender equality. They have determined that young women, particularly in developing countries, are often unable to take advantage of training opportunities due to barriers to entry, discrimination in selection and gender stereotyping. However, what is important is not just the level of education achieved, but also the quality and relevance of the education and training. Indirect discrimination against girls results in stereotyping them as less interested or capable in certain subjects – for example, math and sciences. Women’s lack of training in non-traditional occupations causes preference for male recruits in many formal economy jobs resulting in a high number of young women in the informal economy (ILO 2007, 2008; ILO/Cinterfor, 2004).

**25. Interestingly, investing in education alone is not the solution.** Since higher investments in education are associated with higher participation rates, one could argue that, with time, further (and sustained) improvements in education could solve the issue of low female LFP in urban areas. However, analysis indicates that this may not be the case. Despite improvements, men in Turkey are still far more educated than women. In such a context, a fair (and rather egalitarian) policy goal could be to try to equalize the male/female education attainment distribution. A simple micro-simulation exercise indicates that such a policy would only marginally contribute to increasing the female LFP (from 19 to 22 percent). This is because the majority of urban women, and especially those with no university education, display a very low (and even negative) probability of joining the labor market given their age, education, and family structure (Figure III.10). Indeed,

**Figure III.10: Effects of Higher-education Attainment in the Hours of Work Supplied by Urban Women (Micro-simulations)**



Note: Sample: Urban women aged 15–54.

Source: Angel-Urdinola and Haimovich (2009) using 2006 HLFS data.

simulation results indicate that in the extreme case that all urban women in Turkey attained university education, female LFP would rise to only 47 percent. This suggests that education, while being an important determinant for the existing low levels of female LFP, is not the only factor.

## In Summary

### 26. Improving female employment in Turkey (access and quality) is a process that requires policy interventions on several fronts:

*(a) Creating job opportunities for first time job seekers:* Interventions should aim at promoting formal employment for women with low levels of education, and especially for those transitioning from school to work. Currently there are barriers

to businesses hiring women. Turkey has strict regulations of temporary employment, with the latter having been proven to often be the entry point for young women into the labor market. The Government of Turkey has recently introduced a program that subsidizes employers' social security contributions for newly hired women for up to 5 years. Programs like this are likely to contribute to increase the rate of employment for women, especially in times of healthy economic performance.

*(b) Affordable childcare:* Many women could be encouraged to work by having access to affordable care for their children. This could be achieved by promoting early childhood development programs (ECD), such as preschool education and public/subsidized childcare programs. A forthcoming World Bank report on Equality of Opportunities in Turkey highlights that ECD interventions may contribute to break intergenerational transmissions of poverty and inequality.

*(c) Sustaining investments on education:* Higher education attainment is associated with higher levels of female participation. Investment in Vocational Education and Training (VET) are likely to prepare women, and especially young women, with the skills needed to qualify for good jobs in the labor market. International evidence indicates that investments on VET help women to get formal jobs, and promotes gender equality in earnings and labor market opportunities.

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# **APPENDIX A**

## *Data and Definitions*





## Quantitative Data

<b>HOUSEHOLD LABOR FORCE STATISTICS (HLFS)</b>											
Responsible	Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK)										
Objective	Information on the structure of the labor force in the country.										
Sample Size	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Year</i></th> <th><i>Sample Size</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1988</td> <td>11,160 households</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1994</td> <td>15,000 households</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2000</td> <td>7,800 households per month / 23,000 households per quarter</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2004</td> <td>13,000 households per month (NUTS2 level estimates on key variables)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>	1988	11,160 households	1994	15,000 households	2000	7,800 households per month / 23,000 households per quarter	2004	13,000 households per month (NUTS2 level estimates on key variables)
<i>Year</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>										
1988	11,160 households										
1994	15,000 households										
2000	7,800 households per month / 23,000 households per quarter										
2004	13,000 households per month (NUTS2 level estimates on key variables)										
Sampling methodology	Two stage stratified clustered probability sample involving 8 sub samples. Since 2000, the same households were included in the survey for four times over a period of 18 months.										
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducted regularly since 1988, initially on a biannual basis. Data released quarterly since 2000 survey and on a monthly basis (using a moving average of three months) since 2005.</li> <li>Survey questionnaire modified to some extent over time but definitions of key variables have remained constant over the 1988-2006 applications.</li> <li>Information on fertility is missing and wage data only available in recent applications</li> </ul>										

<b>TURKEY HOUSEHOLD BUDGET SURVEY (HBS)</b>									
Responsible	Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK)								
Objective	Measure of consumption and poverty statistics in Turkey								
Sample Size	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Year</i></th> <th><i>Sample Size</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2002</td> <td>800 households per month / 9600 annually</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2003</td> <td>2,160 households per month / 25,920 annually (NUTS-1 level)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2004</td> <td>720 households per month / 8,640 annually (urban and rural level)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>	2002	800 households per month / 9600 annually	2003	2,160 households per month / 25,920 annually (NUTS-1 level)	2004	720 households per month / 8,640 annually (urban and rural level)
<i>Year</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>								
2002	800 households per month / 9600 annually								
2003	2,160 households per month / 25,920 annually (NUTS-1 level)								
2004	720 households per month / 8,640 annually (urban and rural level)								
Sampling methodology	Sample households selected by stratified two-stage cluster sampling method, changing every month within a year.								
Other	The Report uses 4 years of data available: 2003-2006 Earnings data collected by HBS is more detailed than that collected by LFS data.								

<b>TURKEY DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY (TDHS)</b>									
Responsible	Hacettepe University Institute for Population Studies (HUIPS)								
Objective	Rich information for women such as fertility, husband's background, region and place of birth, migration status and other social- and cultural-related variables.								
Sample Size	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Year</i></th> <th><i>Sample Size</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1993</td> <td>8,619 households and 6,519 ever-married women younger than 50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1998</td> <td>8,059 households, 8,576 women age 15-49 and 1,971 husbands</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2003</td> <td>10,836 households and 8,075 ever-married women age 15-49 (NUTS1)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>	1993	8,619 households and 6,519 ever-married women younger than 50	1998	8,059 households, 8,576 women age 15-49 and 1,971 husbands	2003	10,836 households and 8,075 ever-married women age 15-49 (NUTS1)
<i>Year</i>	<i>Sample Size</i>								
1993	8,619 households and 6,519 ever-married women younger than 50								
1998	8,059 households, 8,576 women age 15-49 and 1,971 husbands								
2003	10,836 households and 8,075 ever-married women age 15-49 (NUTS1)								
Sampling methodology	The TDHS-2003 sample was selected through a weighted, multistage, stratified cluster sampling approach.								
Other	The survey has been conducted in 5-year intervals since 1968. Information of women's labor market participation collected since 1998.								

## Quantitative Data

<b>FEMALE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN TURKEY</b>		
Responsible	GfK (Growth for Knowledge) Türkiye – Study commissioned by the World Bank	
Objective	Explore reasons for low female labor participation in Turkey Generate insights to enhance the female labor participation in Turkey	
Place / Date	Urban Istanbul, February 12-23, 2009	
Methodologies	<i>Focus Group Discussions</i>	<i>In-house Visits</i>
Sample Size / Quantity	8 mini focus group discussion / 4-5 respondents each	9 visits
Approx. Time	2 hours	1hour
Specific Location	GfK Türkiye Qualitative Studios (facility equipped with one-way mirror)	Participants' residencies
Other	The recruitment process was done through phone calls. A field brief and screening form was applied to each participant. ESOMAR rules of multiple participation were followed. The participants were given incentives for participating in the research.	
	Focus group sessions were video and audio taped. Visits were audio taped. Recordings will be filed for six months by GfK Türkiye.	

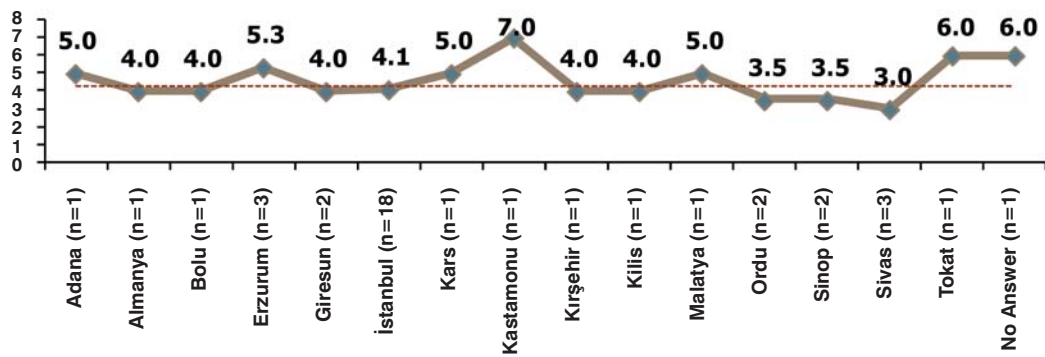
<i>Focus Group Discussions Detail</i>				
<i>Qty.</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Marital Status and Number of Children</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
3	FEMALE Inactive, who quit working at least 3 months ago	18-24	Married & Single	2
		25-35	Married (with children and without children)	At least 1
		36-45	Married (with children under 6 and without children)	At most 2
3	FEMALE Inactive, who have never worked before	18-24	Married & Single	2
		25-35	Married (with children and without children)	At least 1
		36-45	Married (with children under 6 and without children)	At most 2
2	MALE	18-45	Husbands of the female respondents	
<b>8</b>	<b>Total Focus Group Discussions</b>			

<i>In-home Visits Detail</i>				
<i>Qty.</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Marital Status and other characteristics</i>	
1	FEMALE Inactive, who quit working at least 3 months ago	18-24	Married with children	
1		25-35	Married without children	
2		25-35	Married with children	
2		36-45	Married with children	
1	FEMALE Inactive, who have never worked before	18-24	Single	
1		18-24	Married with children	
1		36-45	Married with children	
<b>9</b>	<b>Total In-home Visits</b>			

**Total Sample Characteristics - Detail**

<i>Ever worked</i>		<i>Age</i>		<i>Marital Status</i>		<i>Household Size</i>		<i>Number of Children</i>	
<u>Cat.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Cat.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Cat.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Cat.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Cat.</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	53	18-24	25	Married	87	2 people	5	1 child	14
No	48	25-34	37	Single	10	3 people	20	2 children	49
		35-44	38	Divorced	3	4 people	35	3 children	26
						5 people	28	4 children	3
6 people	8	5 children	3						
7 people	5	No children	6						

**Birthplace Based Household Size**



## Indicators, Variables and Definitions

<b>MAIN EMPLOYMENT INDICATORS USED IN THE REPORT</b>		
$U = \text{Unemployed population}$		$WAP = \text{Population aged 15 to 64}$
$E = \text{Employed population}$		$LF = \text{Population in the labor force } (U + E)$
<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Calculation</i>
LFP rate (%)	Share of labor force in the WAP	$LF (U + E) \div WAP$
Employment rate (%)	Share of employed in the WAP	$E \div WAP$
Unemployment rate (%)	Share of unemployed in the labor force	$U \div LF$
Inactivity rate (%)	Share of WAP <b>not</b> in the labor market	$WAP - LF \div WAP$
Joblessness rate (%)	Share of WAP not working, excluding students	$U + (WAP - LF) - \text{Enrolled} \div WAP$

<b>EMPLOYMENT INDICATORS USED IN OTHER SOURCES</b>	
<b>Turkstat - Turkish Statistical Institute</b>	
<i>Labor Force Participation</i>	Ratio of the labor force to non-institutional population for age 15 and above.
<i>Unemployment</i>	All persons at working age (15 and above) who were not employed (neither worked for profit, payment in kind or family gain at any job even for one hour, who have no job attachment) during the reference period who have used at least one channels for seeking a job during the last three months and were available to start work within two weeks. Persons who have already found a job and will start to work within 3 months, or established his/her own job but were waiting to complete necessary documents to start work were also considered to be unemployed if they were available to start work within two weeks.
<b>Eurostat - Statistical Office of the European Communities</b>	
<i>Unemployed persons</i>	All persons 15 to 74 years of age (for years 1995-2000, all person 16 to 74 years in Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Iceland, and Norway) who were not employed during the reference week, had actively sought work during the past four weeks and were ready to begin working immediately or within two weeks.  The duration of unemployment is defined as the duration of a search for a job or as the length of the period since the last job was held (if this period is shorter than the duration of search for a job).
<i>Employed persons</i>	All persons who worked at least one hour for pay or profit during the reference week or were temporarily absent from such work.
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	The number of people unemployed as a percentage of the labor force. The labor force is the total number of people employed and unemployed.
<b>OECD - Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</b>	
<i>Labor Force Participation</i>	Indicates the ratio of the labor force to non-institutional working-age population (age 15-64).
<i>Unemployment</i>	All persons above a specified age, who during the reference period were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Without work, i.e. were not in paid employment or self-employment during the reference period.</li> <li>• Currently available for work, i.e. were available for paid employment or self-employment during the reference period.</li> <li>• Seeking work, i.e. had taken specific steps in a specified recent period to seek paid employment or self-employment. The specific steps may include registration at a public or private employment exchange; application to employers; checking at worksites, farms, factory gates, market or other assembly places; placing or answering newspaper advertisements; seeking assistance of friends or relatives; looking for land, building, machinery or equipment to establish own enterprise; arranging for financial resources; applying for permits and licenses, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>WDI - World Development Indicators</b>	
<i>Labor Force Participation</i>	Indicates the ratio of the labor force to working-age population (age 15 and above).

# **APPENDIX B**

## *Quotes from Qualitative Analysis*





## Perceptions of Being a Housewife without a Profession

- All women
- Husbands

### DEFINITION OF SELF

- *“Even if the husband cheats you, you have to be loyal to him”*
- *“Since you have children you cannot go to cinema freely whenever you want”*
- *“You have plenty of time so you can spare more time for your husband and for your kids. You can be more responsive to the needs of them. You try to be understanding towards them, to behave motherly to them”.*
- *“You do not improve yourself doing the same things, gossiping with neighbors. So by time you feel inferior near others”*
- *“There is no freedom when you are living with your mother in law. I have to take permission for everything from her”.*
- *“I am always alone at home; I have limited contact with my neighbors and relatives. So I cannot feel myself confident when I am in a social environment with strangers”.*
- *“My mother in law or my husband always underestimate me saying “you did not have education, you do not have any talent so what you can do outside, how you can earn money” this makes me really sorry and that decreases my self confidence”*
- *“Everybody expects you to be tidy and clean so you become more meticulous compared to a working woman”*
- *“Since most of the time is spent at home, you do not spare time for personal care. You do not do much make up or go to a coiffeur apart from the special days”.*
- *She chooses to be quiet and can not object to the husband or mother in law since she has no economical independence”*
- *“I do not clean and do some housework if I do not like. I sleep after the kids go to school. I watch TV most of the time”.*

### LIFE-STYLE AND VALUES

- *“Being a housewife means a monotonous life. You are doing the same things every day. Nobody appreciates you. Moreover when there is one thing missing, the husband complains and says you, “what you did the whole day long”, devaluing the work you do. The kids always expect things from the mother, not from the father”*
- *“After 23:00 when everybody goes to their rooms, I take my tea and watch TV, that is the only moment that I am with myself and I relax”*
- *“When you are a housewife, all family members pass on the responsibilities to you. The kids do not clean their rooms”*
- *“The housewife tries to pass her time doing the house chores as well as handiwork as knitting. It is boring. When she gets bored at home, she goes outside to the market to relax. You become slow and lazier over time”.*
- *“You think a lot before buying something, you cannot spend freely. You have to prioritize the needs with your limited sources”*

### FEELINGS OF SELF

- *“When the kids were smaller, I was like their friend, I was holding their hands and we were travelling around together. Now they have their friends. I became alone and introvert”*
- *“As a housewife our work is ungrateful. We do not have anything in return of our effort. That is not motivational. You feel yourself worn out after some time”*
- *“You feel as if you are tired and get bored doing the same things and being dependent on your husband and your kids. It is extremely difficult to ask for money from your husband. This is really stressful”.*
- *“If the husbands say no to a thing then she cannot insist for the thing she wants and that makes her submissive. If she behaves differently, her husband would behave badly to her. So she lives with this fear”*

### HUSBAND’S QUOTES

- *“When I spend twenty minutes with kids at most, I get exhausted. But since she’s used to it naturally, she enjoys being with kids and doesn’t get tired as much as we do”*

## Perceptions of Being a Working Women “with” a Profession

- All women

### DEFINITION OF SELF

- *If the woman has an economical independence then she lives like a “lady”. She wears beautiful dresses, appears well cared. She is following the latest trends. In weekends, she spends time outside eating, travelling different places, going to cinemas, etc. She goes to holidays. She lives the life to its fullest”*
- *“If she works in a good position she does not have to explain everything to the mother in law or the husband. She is stronger. She lives freely. She can do what she likes to do. People around her respect her”.*
- *“She always tries to improve herself to make a better career. Everybody respects her. She is stronger in front of her husband. She can defend herself well”.*
- *“Every day of her life is different from the day before. She has a dynamic and lively life”.*

### LIFE-STYLE AND VALUES

- *“She has to go to work even if she does not feel well. She has the responsibility of delivering a good job. She has the stress of the boss over her. In weekdays she cannot find much time to spare for herself”*
- *“Working woman plans the time well. She has to program her schedule in advance. For example she cooks the meals at night. She uses readymade foods, spinach that is already washed to be able to cook it fast. However, a housewife has time to wash the spinach and spare more time for preparation of the food”*
- *“Working woman knows how to behave properly outside. She has self confidence in getting into social interaction with people, making new friendships, and satisfying her needs by herself”.*
- *“She cannot find enough time to be with her children and her husband. Someone else takes care of the kids. There might be lack of love, lack of communication, and some problems might occur as an end result”.*

### FEELINGS OF SELF

- *“When you see that you achieve in your work, then you become more self confident, more dynamic, and more productive”.*
- *“You become shrewd when you work outside. Nobody can cheat you easily”.*
- *“She gets help from her husband for the household chores. Her husband is tolerant to her and that makes her satisfied”*
- *“It is not easy to work outside and to be housewife, to spare time for the family; working women get tired”.*
- *“Decisions are taken together with the husband. There is equality in relations. She does not fear when she wants to say something. She has high self-esteem”*
- *“She has the courage to share opposing views with her husband and defend herself. She is more self confident”*

## Perceptions of Being a Working Women “without” a Profession

- All women

### DEFINITION OF SELF

- *“You work and cannot take the money for yourself. The husband gets it from you. You end up working and having nothing in return. That makes you exhausted”.*
- *“Since she comes home very tired she does not have the energy to spare for her husband and kids and herself. They cannot live as a family; there are very limited relations towards each other. That is a very difficult life condition”.*
- *“At least she has some independence at the weekend to travel and visit friends”*

### LIFE-STYLE AND VALUES

- *“When you come home, the husband and the kids expects everything from you. You get tired” (an elder woman who has worked before)*
- *“You wake up early in the morning to go to work as a cleaning woman, then you arrive and you do the house chores at home. You go to bed very late at night. It is very difficult to wake up early in the next day. You get exhausted over time”. (a younger woman who has never worked before)*
- *“The husband goes to a coffee house; the woman arrives late; she cannot really take care of the kids. When the woman and the husband become angry they use bad language, this effect the psychology of the family in a bad way”. (a younger woman who has worked before)*

### FEELINGS OF SELF

- *“You become depressed, angrier, and less tolerant to the kids”.*
- *“Working for long hours, getting tired, and not having time for the well being of one’s self makes you worn out”*
- *“Others do not behave good towards you at work so you feel the inferiority”*

## Reasons for Having Stopped Working

- Women who have worked before

### EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

- *“I was working as a shop manager in a market. They had told me that they signed me in social security. After a while I checked and saw that they had not signed me in social security. I wanted social security, but they told me they couldn't employ with social security. So, I decided to quit. Social security is very crucial for working individuals”*
- *“I didn't like the conditions and decided to quit. I was working from 8 am to 9 pm and earning 650 TL. I thought it would be better and more comfortable to stay at home..”*
- *“I had worked as a textile worker. They started my social security, but then they discontinued it. They retained my wages in some cases. ...I told them “I am not going to work anymore..”*
- *“I worked as a housekeeper in a lady's home for about 1 year. She didn't give my travel expenses but she was very nice, telling me that her house was also mine. However, I had to quit since it was very far, it was in Ulus..”*
- *“If our financial conditions don't get worse, I never think about working again. I decided to quit my job because I didn't like the people at the workplace and I couldn't trust them. It is easier and more comfortable for me to be at home”*
- *“I was working in a cleaning company; we were giving cleaning services to offices. However, my employer did not cover for travel or food expenses”*
- *“There was no social security; they did not give travel expenses; so I quit”*

### CAREGIVING

- *“I was working even before marriage not for money, but for social actualization. I was curious about other people's lives and about new things. After marriage, since I got pregnant very soon, I didn't consider working anymore. Yet, I am thinking about starting to work, after my kid grows up. Housewives cannot improve themselves as they stay all day at home. But I want to improve myself and learn new things”*
- *“My mother-in-law was looking after my kid. But she was old; it became hard for her to take care of a small kid. Even more, my kid has been missing me and has become naughty. So, I had to give up working. Now, I can't start working because of my kid”*
- *“I was delivering beading work to approximately 70 women and was controlling their work. It took long hours and was very tiring. Then I had a medical problem and had to take care of the needs of my son, who is hearing-impaired. I had to quit”*
- *“I was working in textiles. Then, I got pregnant and this period was very hard. So, I had to quit because work conditions were very tiring”*
- *“My travel expenses were covered and I had social security. I had to quit due to pregnancy. Afterwards, I started to work again. But then my kid was diagnosed with bronchitis. I had to quit in order to take care of my kid”*
- *“I worked in a market for 3 years. When I got pregnant, I gave up working”*
- *“My daughter is so small that I don't want to leave her alone”*

## FAMILY

- *“There are many job opportunities now but my husband does not let me work because it would require long overtime hours and the workplace is very far”*
- *“My husband is a taxi-driver and he meets all sorts of people all day. He’s a little bit skeptical and mistrustful. He seems to be afraid that something bad can happen to me if I work outside. Some men can like me and come after me or purse-snatching can happen”*
- *“My husband seems to be afraid of losing me. He sees my self-confidence difficult to bare”*
- *“I had worked as an agricultural worker since my childhood in Adana. We migrated to Istanbul during my engagement period. And my father didn’t let me work here since then because Istanbul was a foreign and dangerous environment”*
- *“My husband says that if I ever find a job and start to work, I should go back to my father’s house; and to not ever come home again. He is from eastern Turkey and these people are traditionally against women working”*
- *“I was living in Istanbul with my brother and my parents were in Sivas in a village. I worked in the market of my father’s friend. There was a very good, family-like environment in the market. However, my father removed me from the work. My brothers did not let me work anymore saying that I had grown up. (...) I don’t know... they started to control me. For instance, they lay hand on my mobile phone”*
- *“I had a nice job offer from a patisserie in Divan, where my husband’s friend works. However, my husband didn’t want me to work there since he didn’t want me to be around too many men”*
- *“If I work, my husband gets happy because I will be supporting him. He never interferes with my working. He just says that ‘you can work as long as it doesn’t impede household order’. He knows that I like to work. I don’t like to lean my back against somebody. Even when I was single, I didn’t ask for money from my brother or father. I always earned my own money”*
- *“Before getting married, I was working in my brother’s market. Since it was our own place, I was comfortable. It was close to the house. After marriage, my husband didn’t want me to continue working, saying that his income was enough to support the family”*
- *“My brothers are very strict. My eldest brother gives me an allowance so that I don’t work”*
- *“My husband says that I will neglect my kids and household and that I will not cook properly for him..”.*
- *“My husband didn’t interfere me with beading or sewing at home. However, he doesn’t want me to go outside to work. My own father is also against women’s working. This might be why my husband is not letting me. My family can accuse him of not being able to support his family”*
- *“My husband had been fired and stayed 2 months unemployed. Even in this case he didn’t let me work. He told me that he is healthy enough to support his family and that he doesn’t need to depend on me..”.*
- *“My husband’s family is so conservative and reactionary. A woman has never worked outside the house in their family. They must have a concern about other people’s opinions..”.*

## ECONOMIC CRISIS

- *“I had to quit due to economic crisis. I want to work but there isn’t any nowadays”.*
- *“I was finding audience for a TV program and was serving tea there. It was close to my house. The conditions were good; I had social security, my wage was adequate, I was meeting new people. Then the program ended and I become unemployed”*



## Reasons for not Working

- (a) Women who have never worked before

### FAMILY

- *“My husband feels sorry for me. Because I have a herniated disk and rheumatism, I could not feel myself efficient. Last summer I found a job in a law office, they called me for an interview. When I told my husband, he told me not to go. He told me that I would get tired and there would be unrest in the family”*
- *“I intensely wanted to work. However, my husband has never approved. In his perception, a working woman is disrespectful, ungrateful, and disobedient towards his husband. Therefore, he thinks that if a woman works, there will be unrest and discomfort in the household”*
- *“Husbands are afraid of educated and knowledgeable wives so they do not want their wives to work outside and earn money. They are afraid of losing their power towards their wives and feeling subordinate. ”*
- *”My husband didn’t want me to work. He thinks that if a woman works, she would have to be involved with decisions”*
- *I always wanted to work. However, I was the only daughter of the family. We did not have any economic problems and my family did not let me. My father is still the same. He says that he will support me all my life. Likewise, they did not let me continue my education, forcing me to stay at home”*
- *“I did have headscarf when I was younger and single. But my father did not let me work. He said; I cannot make my own daughter work outside and girls are not supposed to work; we are men and know the work conditions out there; you are not lacking anything so why you would need to work at all!!! Indeed, you will have to marry within 3-4 years... After marriage, my husband did not allow likewise”*
- *“My husband and his family wouldn’t allow me to work because they believe women cannot even look through a window. And they say that since I’m from a village, I’m ignorant and cannot stand on my own legs”*
- *“I found a job as a cook two hours a day. I’m 40 and I have four kids, but my father raged. He said that he raised me and married me off, and always supported me; how my husband could not look after his family and could think of making me work... Far before my husband, my father will never ever give permission!!!*
- *“When I was single, I had to take care of my mother since she was sick. After marriage, my husband did not allow. He is from Erzurum and this region believes that women are not supposed to work”*
- *“My husband had been unemployed for 4 months. But even in that case he did not let me look for a job”*
- *“My parents say that I can work after I get married if my fiancée allows”*
- *“Two of my friends fell into debts. They started to work. There have been bad rumors and criticisms in the neighborhood that their husbands made them work to owe a car..”.*

### ECONOMIC CRISIS

- *“My husband isn’t against me working. I considered working for a while; I thought my mom can look after my kid. However, there is an economic crisis...”*

**INSUFFICIENT EDUCATION**

- *“I wish I had education. If I had graduated from high school, I would have had a proper CV and could find a good job. When they ask today about my education, I feel uncomfortable to say ‘primary school’”*
- *“I wish I had attended school after primary school too. As a primary school graduate, what type of job can I acquire?”*
- *“With my qualifications, I can only get a job as cook, let’s say. And this is what my husband wouldn’t let me do. He would say that it is not worth it to put up with other people’s caprices for a very low wage”*

**CHILDCARE**

- *“I also thought about working. However, then I got pregnant. And now, my kids are small”*
- *“If I hadn’t had kids, I could have considered working. But even if it was the case, what could I do?”*
- *“It is very difficult to leave a 10-year-old child behind in a city like Istanbul”*
- *“I will work when my kids grow up”*
- *“If my mother lived in the same apartment building, I could leave my kid to her and she could take care of my kid while I was at work”*
- *“When my little kid is 1,5 years old, I will work and my mother will look after him”*
- *“My kids are little now; they’re 5 years old and 7-months-old. My husband seems not to be letting me work ever. However, I’m so determined to work after my little one grows up to 2-years-old. I cannot depend on him forever”*

## Reasons for not Working

- (b) All women who declared that they “do not” want to work

**EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS**

- *“A friend of mine, who is working in textile production, has been using anti-depressants. She says she is too tired, unhappy and she has no freedom to spend the money she earns herself. She gives the money directly to her husband and her husband gives her some pocket money. She also works at home weekends, doing household chores. Is this being a working woman? She works but she doesn’t have her own money. Then, I live a more luxurious, comfortable and less tiring life than hers”*
- *“It depends on the quality of the job. There is so much difference between my friends who work in textile production and those who have a desk job in a pharmaceutical company“*
- *“I would not work in textile again. You’re under noise and dust all day”*
- *“If you asked me whether I would like to work or not, I would say ‘no’. What can I do today? Would I become a nurse, teacher, absolutely no... It doesn’t worth it. If I worked in textile, I would need hospitalization in the end; with no time for rest; bad working conditions, uncultured people, very low wages..”*
- *“If our financial conditions do not get worse, I never think about working again because it is more comfortable and easy at home and I don’t like and trust the people at the workplace”*
- *“Because my kids are small, I don’t want them to be raised by their grandmothers”*
- *“It’s very difficult to work with kids. If you earned 1,000 TL, it would be okay. But 800 TL isn’t enough. I can make beading at home, your kids are in front of your eyes at least”*

## Willingness to Work

- All women

### FUTURE OF THEIR CHILDREN

- *“My kids are growing up and their needs are also becoming more and more. If I earned my own money, I wouldn't need to say no to them”*
- *“To provide for a better future for my kids. To send them to extra courses for the examinations and help their school. Their wish for a computer, Internet..”.*
- *“I want my kids to have an education as higher as possible. So, I would like to use the money I earn for their school needs”*
- *“Our house is a rental. Single income isn't adequate today. My kids are growing; they will feel an appetite for what they see around. So, If I worked, I would afford anything they want”*
- *“I want to give everything to my child”*
- *“I want to save money to buy a house for my daughter. If something bad happens to me, she would at least have her own house”*
- *“My parents did not send me to school and I suffer for this. I want my kids to continue their education. If needed I would go clean a house, or wipe the stairs to help them continue their education. My son is now a university student”.*
- *“We send 300 TL monthly to my son. If I worked, I would send 500 TL instead of 300 TL. Then, my son would live in better conditions and could spend more comfortably”*
- *“In order to spend my time better, and have my own money to spend for my kids and myself; however my husband would not give me permission to work. Because people would say that he is just squandering his wife's money. Otherwise, I would like to work”*
- *“I would not only support my husband, but also provide a better future for my kids. Honestly speaking, we didn't live a good childhood; stuck between Istanbul and the village. I don't want my kids to go through similar things. I want to send them to better schools to get better education”*
- *“My daughter goes to a private classroom for exam preparation. However, my father pays for it and I feel uncomfortable about it. I want to support my kids' future on my own”*
- *“My son is going to military service in May and I want to work very much in order to support him and make him comfortable there. Children grew up at the same time and they can take care of themselves. Our economic condition is not very well, so I want to contribute to the family income and alleviate my husband's burden”*

### FINANCIAL REASONS

- *“I would like to contribute to the budget of the family. My husband had been working in a textile firm, however he had to quit since the firm closed down due to the economic crisis. He now works in an automobile repair shop. And there are so many bills that we cannot afford”*
- *“In order to have social security..”.*
- *“I want to give support to my husband. I don't want him to overstrain himself with working. Moreover, I would like to buy beautiful clothes for him and dress him up with new things..”.*

### SELF-CONFIDENCE

- *“If I had a chance, I would like to work. First, you become more self-confident. Then, you are respected and more perceived as a human being”*
- *“A working woman is not so much dependent on her mother-in-law or father-in-law..”*
- *“To gain my economic independence, in order not to ask for money from my husband; if I were to have my own income I would do what I want, I would spend my money the way I would like to”*
- *“I would like to work not only because of economical condition; but also to be a creative person”*
- *“No one could belittle you”*.
- *“I could spend my own money, be more free and independent. I could buy anything I want without asking someone else’s permission. But since my husband’s family is conservative and rigid, they don’t let girls work outside the house. They even don’t let them going to school”*
- *“Since I worked before, I’m more stubborn and knowledgeable as compared to my sister-in-law. Therefore, my mother-in-law can’t harass and belittle me as she did my sister-in-law; I can answer back. But she always humiliates and threatens her with sending back to the village” (the sister-in-law of a 23-year-old married woman who has never worked).*
- *“The most crucial reason for me is to have more faith and confidence in myself. I don’t want to be dependent on someone else financially”*
- *“With the money I earned, I would have vacation and would become more social”*
- *“I would change the decoration of my house”*
- *“Besides the economical advantage, I would like to feel productive”*.
- *“I want a change in my life”*
- *“I believe housewives do not improve themselves. I do not want to stay behind, I want to improve myself”*.
- *“When I was working I was less concerned about life. When you stay at home, you feel stressed and depressed”*
- *“For instance, I see an expensive dress on a window-shop and I can’t buy since I’m not working”*
- *“Working is wonderful. You feel more energetic and are more scheduled and organized when you work regularly. When you’re at home, you can’t be organized”*
- *“I feel exhausted and moody at home. If I work, I know I feel better”*
- *“Even if we were in good financial condition, I would like to work because spending time outside the house helps to deal with stress and psychological burdens”*

### FAMILY SHOCKS

- *My husband is a driver. If he had an accident and becomes paralyzed, or has a stroke and cannot bring an income; then I would work” (a younger woman who has never worked before)*
- *“If any medical problems, then I would work”*

## Employment Opportunities for Unskilled Women

- All women

### RETAIL AND MANUFACTURING

- *“For example my husband works in a market. Sometimes they pay his social security tax, sometimes they do not. There is no guarantee of social security”.*
- *“In certain retailers there is a premium system. You get a minimum wage but with the premiums you can earn more”*
- *“When you work without a social security you receive a higher wage. You can earn about 1,500 TL monthly”*
- *“Men always earn more than women. Even if they do the same job, men have higher wages”*
- *“I feel it’s hard to bear all the long hours, noise of the machines and tiring work of textile now. You get exhausted mentally as you get older. So, I’m thinking of cleaning in a hospital or something similar when I look for a job in the future”*
- *“I don’t like to work in textile again. All the noise and dust negatively affects you. Serving tea type of job could be better for me” (an elder married women who worked before)*
- *“Textile work is a bad sector because the work environment is uncomfortable. People frequently swear at each other.”.*
- *Domestic work is no good for me. I don’t want beading at home either. Office cleaning could be a good choice. It’s easier, wages are higher, and work hours aren’t such long”*

### HOME-BASED BUSINESS

- *“I don’t do activities like beading at home because it is very tiring and time-consuming. Your home gets dirty. Yet, the money you receive is funny”*
- *“It takes too much time. You have a strict deadline, therefore you cannot take care of the house and your kids enough”*
- *“Since I have a kid at home, I would not want a home-based work. He wouldn’t let me do anything”*
- *“If I work at home, then my social life would not get better and the money I would earn would be very low”*
- *“I tried beading at home but it made me exhausted and put too much pressure on me”*
- *“I made lacework to towels and earned 25 TL per day. It took all my day”*
- *“If they provide the ingredients you can cook for a company for 600 TL, which is quite good”*
- *“I cannot look after someone else’s child. If something happens to the child, God forbid, I will be held responsible for it”.*

## Importance of Education

- All women

### IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

- *“A high school graduate can find better jobs. Let’s say jobs that you need to work on a computer” (a 23-year-old married woman who has never worked)*
- *“My sister has only primary school education. When her husband was unemployed, she looked for a job. Even in the market they did not employ her as a shop assistant for the vegetables section since they wanted someone who had at least a secondary school degree. This is the way it is! There’s no job for primary school graduates nowadays..” (a woman who has worked before)*
- *“The type of jobs available for a primary and a high school graduate would differ. A primary school graduate can get cleaning or housework, while a high school graduate can get a desk job” (a woman who has never worked before)*
- *“Employers perceive primary or secondary school graduates as passive. A high school diploma is requested even for a secretary job” (a woman who has worked before)*
- *“I sent my CV to a law firm to apply for a secretary position. They told me that all my qualifications were adequate and would hire me if I had a lyceum diploma” (a woman who has worked before)*
- *“If I had received higher education, why would I work in textile or do cleaning? I could have worked in a fancy office as an accountant or secretary and could have been in the shoes of people I admire” (a 28-year-old married woman who has worked before)*
- *“All the doors are getting closed when you say that you are only a primary school graduate” (a woman who has worked before)*
- *“I couldn’t get a job as a cash clerk since I’m not a high school graduate” (a woman who has worked before)*
- *“Not important just in terms of wages. With higher education, people respect you more..” (an elder woman who has worked before)*
- *“With high school education I could have better job opportunities. Let’s say I could work in higher quality and more decent environments. This also would prevent discomfort feelings of my husband; he would be peaceful while I was at work” (a 39-years-old married woman who has worked before)*
- *“I don’t want my daughter to depend on her husband”*
- *Education is so important. Even the university graduates cannot find a job today. We can find only cleaning type of low quality jobs. If we had graduated from high school, we could have found desk jobs like answering phones at least” (a woman who has never worked)*
- *“I’m from Erzurum, my family did not send me to school. I can hardly read and write. I can never forget the horrible feelings of not being educated at school. Now, I would clean the stairs, do cleaning at homes and make my children finish their education. My son entered Istanbul University and this is my daughter’s last year” (a woman who has never worked)*
- *“I have two daughters and I tell both of them not to be dependent on their husbands. They cannot be as lucky as we are..” (a woman who has never worked)*
- *“I tell my daughter not to become a housewife so that she could live in better conditions, both socially and financially” (a woman who has never worked)*
- *“If I had a daughter, I would like her to graduate from university and to work so that she could stand on her own feet and wouldn’t be in contempt. She would have self-confidence” (a 23-year-old married woman who has never worked before)*
- *“I want my daughter to graduate from university so that she will be knowledgeable and intellectual and she will have high self-esteem. All of these will help her choose a better husband” (a younger woman who has never worked)*
- *“I tell my daughter to study and study so she can go to university and have a better life. She would have a chance to experience varied social interactions” (a younger woman who has never worked)*
- *“Textile requires skills but I would like my daughter to have a normal job” (a woman who has worked before)*
- *“My daughter is studying hard. I hope she would have a career in the future. And if she has any problems in her marriage, she will stand on her own feet” (a woman who has worked before)*
- *“I want my daughter to go to university; hopefully it would be Boğaziçi University. If she studies there, I think she would have a better future” (a 22-years-old, married woman who has worked before)*
- *“I will dedicate my whole life to my daughter; to make her get higher education. She wants to be a doctor, I hope she will..” (a 28-year-old married woman who has worked before)*
- *“I tell my daughter to study and to have higher education. I say that otherwise you’ll have to stay at home and your husband won’t send you to work outside” (a woman who has worked before)*
- *“There are malevolent people around. If she did not receive education, she might be desperate. If she has a profession, then she can work in a high quality environment” (an elder woman who has worked before)*
- *“I give myself as an example to my daughter. If she doesn’t study and work, she will become a servant at home like me” (a 36-years-old, married woman who has worked before)*



## Community Approach to Working Women

- All women

### ATTITUDES TOWARDS WORKING WOMEN

- *“Nowadays you cannot support the family with one income”*
- *“Living conditions force women to work, so it is more accepted than in the past”.*
- *“They do not consider what their social surrounding is thinking about them”*
- *“Today, men want working women because they cannot make it alone. Also today’s couples want everything”.*
- *“My mother-in-law says: ‘I could not work, you work’”.*
- *“Now, even women in the rural areas, work”.*
- *“A man cannot afford even the expenses of a child by himself”.*
- *“I think today it is perceived as normal. I do not think that people would question the reasons of a woman working because everyone knows she is legitimate and trying to support her family”.*
- *“They do not consider what their social surrounding is thinking about them”*
- *“Before, the community used to say to the men ‘Do you let your wife to work because you cannot take care of your family’”.*
- *“They used to think that a woman should be dependent on a man so that she cannot leave him”.*
- *“Neighbors used to ask the reason why women were working”.*
- *“Neighbors used to blame women for not staying at home with her kids”.*
- *“Before, it was impossible for a woman to work among men”.*
- *“According to men; if a woman works, she would have self-confidence so that she would behave rebellious and would not behave as her husband wants”.*
- *“They perceive working women as immoral. Women should stay at home”.*

### WHO DECIDES IF A WOMAN WORKS

- *“This decision should be given with the husband. You live in the same house, you share a life together”.*
- *“Women cannot take work related decisions by themselves”.*
- *“If the family needs money, then woman should work in whatever the husband says because the issue is the children’s future”.*

### MEN AND WOMEN WORKING TOGETHER

- *“It is a normal situation. There is not a perception in our society that women and men cannot be together”.*
- *“Everyone is in search of earning money, so having women and men in the same place does not matter”.*
- *“Some feel comfortable, some do not”.*
- *“You cannot act comfortably”.*

### HEADSCARF

- *“People cannot be excluded according to their beliefs because it is their personal choices”.*
- *“At many work places, headscarf is forbidden. They are threatening one’s job”.*
- *“Women with the headscarf cannot find a job because of their beliefs and choices. On the other hand, I have seen the job announcements which is written ‘Women with the headscarf is what we’re looking for.’ which is the opposite”.*
- *“The situation should not be dependent on headscarf because if a person is independent and productive, she should not be excluded. Headscarf should be in the secondary”.*
- *“They despise the women with headscarf. They perceive it as illiteracy”.*
- *“To work at an environment where headscarf is disliked, is annoying”.*
- *“Disrespect... Why does headscarf disturb them?”*
- *“I cannot work at a place which there is headscarf restriction”.*
- *“My children’s teacher get offs her headscarf when she goes to school. She gets on it when she returns home”.*



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