

# WOMEN'S LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT IN TURKEY

## PROBLEM AREAS AND POLICY SUGGESTIONS II

*May 2013*

**KEiG**

kadın emeđi ve istihdamı giriřimi

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## Preface

During the four year period following the publication of the first report on women's work and employment in 2009, we have observed a transformation caused by crises and the design and consequential effects of the policies aiming to increase women's employment in general that have tended to increase the association of women's employment with flexible and low-quality work without job security, and the reinforcement of the separation between women's jobs and men's jobs.

As women, we consider the conditions and quality of employment increases for women, and the long-term consequences of the trend, as of more crucial importance than the short-term targets mentioned. That is the reason why we believe we are in a crucial stage, which requires our diligent monitoring and questioning of employment policies in terms of their potential for creating positive transformation.

An increase in women's employment has coincided with a parallel increase in women's share of low-quality employment, a bigger representation in insecure jobs, and the general soaring of flexible and informal working. Women have participated in the labour market in bigger numbers due to decreasing household income; while their domestic labour burden has, let alone being lightened, become even heavier under the pressure of rising poverty rates. The family-centred character of the policies on women, which was supposed to prioritize the equality of women and men, has been a general declaration of the political reluctance for struggling with the primary problem complicating women's employment.

In order to present the general outlook with a solid perspective based on the shifts and transformations in the labour market that has taken place since 2009 in terms of their impact for women, KEİG prepared this report. This report contains an analysis of women's situation in

the labour market for the relevant period, of the effects of male-dominated labour division for women, an overall critique of the policies on women's employment and policy recommendations based on a gender equality perspective.

KEİG strives to be active in the monitoring and evaluation of policies in the area of women's work and employment and to produce policy recommendations that are to be publicised and advocated at both the national and local levels, together with its member organizations. This report, as well, has been written in line with this target and produced together with the 27 women's organizations forming the KEİG platform and working in the area of women's employment.

We are thankful to all the women who have contributed to the preparation of this report on behalf of the KEİG Platform.

## **KEİG, Women's Labor and Employment Initiative Platform**

KEİG is a platform, founded, aiming to give voice to women's perspective and common demands of women's organizations, in policy development processes, concerning the issues of women's work and employment. Our primary mission is to gather together the works, prepared on various issues in various contexts but all targeting to increase the visibility of women's work and the rate of women's employment, on a common platform in order to strengthen their power in politics, policy production and intervention in public policies. With the virtue of that platform formation, KEİG would be able to play an active role in influencing the general direction of all types of economic and social policies. KEİG is predicated upon a strategy of connecting and networking together the women's organizations that are concerned with the issues of women's work and employment, in order to compile and put into use the whole body of studies, academic works, researches, and experiences that has been accumulated so far. KEİG also supports newly-organizing groups in this field of civil society work.

### **What does KEİG do?**

The women's organisations taking part in KEİG perform their activities based on collective work as a principle. The political work consists of the following parts: Observing local and centric implementations for Women's Employment, distributing the information inside the network, reporting based on the data obtained and sharing the requests with the institutions concerned. Besides, the continuous communication with women's organisations provides the distribution of the political discourse. It conducts in depth discussions on the subjects of women's labour and employment by means of seminars, panels and conferences and helps women's representation in the economic realm become more widespread.

It participates at the workshops held by Grand National Assembly of Turkey-The Commission on Equal Rights for Women and Men, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry

of Family and Social Policies, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Development and Ministry of EU and shares its evaluations of the reports presented from the women's point of view. The platform of KEİG has recently put young children's education and childcare into its agenda, in 2013. It conducted analysis of the situation in the cities where the platform had members. There was research held on the service of care solved by women's labour in the society as well as the conditions and areas of implementation of the legislations. Discussions were held with women on how the service of young children's education and care should be like. The specifications of this service, left to women for years, to be performed in the best manner this time by the society, were determined. Consequently, Childcare is a Right Platform was formed. The requests of women on young children's education and care can be found on the website [www.kreshaktir.org](http://www.kreshaktir.org) (only in Turkish)

### KEİG Platform Members

- Association for Solidarity and Development of Housewives EVKAD / ADANA ● Work Group for Home-based Working Women / ANKARA ● Association for Women's Education and Employment KEİD / ANKARA
- Women's Group of Union of Turkish Medical Doctors /ANKARA ● Antalya Women's Consultancy and Solidarity Center / ANTALYA ● Koza Woman Association / BURSA ● Çanakkale Entrepreneur Women's Cooperative of Production and Marketing / ÇANAKKALE ● The Association of Valuing Women's Labor / DENİZLİ
- Southeastern and Eastern Businesswomen Association DOĞÜNKAD /DİYARBAKIR ● Foundation of Women's Center KAMER / DİYARBAKIR ● Selis Woman Consultancy Center / DİYARBAKIR ● Association for the Support of Women Candidates KADER / İSTANBUL ● Group of Women Engineers / İSTANBUL ● Group of Women Unionists / İSTANBUL ● Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) – New Ways /İSTANBUL ● Foundation of Solidarity with Women KADAV / İSTANBUL / KOCAELİ ● Petrol İş Women's Magazine / İSTANBUL
- Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey KAGİDER / İSTANBUL ● Social Development and Gender Equality Policies Center SOGEP / İSTANBUL ● Buca House of Women's Culture and Solidarity BEKEV / İZMİR
- Çiğli House of Women's Culture and Solidarity ÇEKEC / İZMİR ● İzmir Association for Women's Solidarity İZMİR
- Black Sea Woman Solidarity Association KarKad-Der / TRABZON ● Yaşam Evi Women's Solidarity Center / URFA
- Van Women's Association VAKAD / VAN ● KEFA Feminist Researchers Studying on Women's Labor

# WOMEN'S LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT IN TURKEY

## ISSUES AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS II<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

KEİG's first report on the issues of women's labour and employment in Turkey was published in 2009. This first report reviewed the employment policies initiated and implemented by recent governments and administrations and presented policy recommendations on actions to address the issues identified. Four years have passed since then. As a follow up to that, the current report reviews the trends observed, along with the policies introduced, over the last four years regarding women's employment.

As of 2012, the female population not in the labour force is two and half times that of males in Turkey. The urban unemployment rate for women is 6 percentage points higher than for men; and men's employment rate<sup>2</sup> (64%) is almost three times that of women (22%). In fact, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries' average for labour participation of women is 62%. The European Union (EU) Lisbon target

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<sup>1</sup> This report is written by Nuray Ergüneş, Özge İzdeş and Emel Memiş. Significant contributions are made by the KEFA and KEİG members.

<sup>2</sup> Employment rate is the ratio of employed persons to non-institutional the working-age population.

rate for women in employment is 60% and the corresponding rate for men is 70%. Moreover, the European Employment Strategy sets the Europe 2020 target rate for both women and men at 75%. As indicated by these figures, despite being one of the fastest-growing economies in the world over the recent years, Turkey has been struggling with high unemployment and keeping women economically marginal, being ranked 92 out of 187 countries, based on UNDP's Human Development Index<sup>3</sup>.

Human development indicators that take into account the gender gap present a more tragic picture for Turkey. According to the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap-2012 report, Turkey was ranked 105 out of 135 countries in 2006; whereas, in 2012 fell even more behind and was ranked at 124. In economic participation and economic opportunities for women, the gender gap in Turkey is the widest in Europe and the Central Asia region. Even though Turkey is one of the selected emerging economies among OECD members, Turkey is ranked last with respect to women's economic participation.

Promoting women's employment in Turkey has become a key priority for policymakers in recent years. That growing interest could partly be attributed to the advocacy and lobbying activities of women's organizations, as well as to Turkey's endeavour to re-establish her floundering reputation within the EU alignment process. However, the main motivating factor has been the re-invented advantage of the policies targeting the 'disadvantaged population' in fostering economic development. A declining fertility rate coupled with a larger working-age population has stimulated the economy, expanding production. On the other hand, lower dependency rates have facilitated an opportunity for women to improve their lives (Özbay, 2013). Women are viewed as an untapped pool of labour resource, with the potential for higher economic growth. The motto 'Women's Employment, the New Dynamics of the Turk-

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<sup>3</sup> UNDP, 2011.

ish Economy' adopted by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies clearly displays this view.

The draft document of the National Employment Strategy (2012-2013), released last year, determined the targeted rate for women's labour force participation<sup>4</sup> in 2023 at 35 percent, which was revised and increased to 38 percent later on. Without a doubt, higher employment is a crucial factor in women's participation in decision making processes; and it stands at the core of women's economic empowerment. Promoting women's employment is also seen as an essential tool to achieve development. Beyond this, gender equality in the working life is, by itself, stated as a development goal by international agreements. Thus, despite their contested content and the variations in implementation processes, policies adopted to promote low labour force participation of women in Turkey (29.5 percent) are taken as a belated but very welcome improvement by many national and international institutions and agencies.

As a matter of fact, gender mainstreaming had already been endorsed as a strategy in the Fourth World Conference on Women held by the representatives of 189 countries in Beijing in 1995. However, this perspective was appropriated by Turkey, after a long delay, in 2008 when the General Directorate of Women's Status and Issues (KSGM) prepared the Gender Equality National Action Plan (2008-2010). Following this plan, the Prime Ministerial Circular no. 2010/14 on 'Increasing Women's Employment and Achieving Equal Opportunity' was issued on the 25th of May in 2010, an important step undertaken for the implementation of this action plan.

The first article of the Prime Ministerial Circular no.201/14 was about forming a National Monitoring and Coordination Committee on the Employment of Women. Other articles have focused mainly on the provision of vocational training for women in particular sectors;

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4 Labour force participation rate is the ratio of employed and unemployed persons to non-institutional working-age population.

the issue of “equality of opportunity for women and men” in in-service training programs; the monitoring and enforcing of child care and day care centre obligations, prioritizing projects on the improvement of women’s social involvement who are subject to violence and single women whose husbands died or who are divorced.

Steps undertaken by the government to promote women’s employment have been fundamentally oriented towards increasing women’s educational level, extending flexible working conditions to a wide range of working practices, and improving women’s entrepreneurship. These policies are not able to provide long-term solutions that would bring a structural transformation to achieve gender equality. In fact, over the recent years, there has been a relative increase in women’s labour market participation. Nevertheless, this rise has not been adequate for ensuring the emancipation of women to the level of nurturing gender equality. Policies have not integrated a perspective that targets a transformation in the existing traditional gender division of labour. Rather, they put the deregulation of the labour markets and flexibilization at the centre of the measures, which is worrisome.

Thus, here, in order to make a review of the actions undertaken and policies introduced in the post-2009 period in Turkey, in the following, we present the recent trends in women’s employment and highlight the relevant current issues on the subject.

# RECENT TRENDS AND ISSUES IN WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

Household Labour Force Survey (HHİA) data compiled by TurkStat show a rise in women's employment over the period 2009-2012, by 24.5% (Appendix, table 1). This increase is primarily due to the rise in services sector employment (32.7 % of the total increase). The number of women in low-level occupations has increased over the same period by 34.7%. This, being higher than the total change in the number of employed women, indicates that women's employment has increased more in low-level types of jobs during this period. The sales and services occupation sector follows the low-level occupations in creating new jobs for women (Appendix, table 2). Leaving its place to services for the first time, the agricultural sector is no longer the primary sector of employment for women. The decline in women's employment in manufacturing is closely associated with the severe impacts of the recent global crisis experienced in 2008-2009 in Turkey. Due to the crisis, women lost their jobs massively in female-dominated manufacturing sectors and those jobs have not been recovered yet (İzdeş, 2011). Thus, the decline in the share of women employed in the manufacturing industry has persisted over the period (Appendix, table 1).

In Turkey, being employed without being registered in any social security institution means working without any social protection. No change has been observed in the number of employed persons with social security over 2009-2012, and the rate of employed women in agriculture without security is still very high (96.1%). In agriculture, 80% of unpaid family workers lacking social security are women. The decline in women's employment in agriculture did not pull down the rate of employed women without social security. Over the last four years, the rate has declined for men by 2.9%, while we observed a rise of 15.5% among women in the same period (Appendix, table 3). This clearly shows that women find jobs, but more in vulnerable and informal types of employment. The International Labour Organization states that, with the recent crisis, vulnerable employment is becoming widespread, particularly for women, and that has become a serious issue across the globe (ILO, 2011; ILO, 2013).

Further, the gender biased structure of the Turkish labour market has prevailed over the period between 2009-2012. Sex segregation in the market, meaning separating those deemed 'women's work' and 'men's work', has continued to increase the concentration of women in particular sectors and professions. Women have continued to primarily work in the services sector, in labour-intensive manufacturing sectors and agriculture. Gender segregation has also been observed in promotions and occupational distribution.

There are major outcomes of this segregation on the working conditions. Women work without security and are vulnerable to sexist attitudes and actions that discriminate against them. Moreover, informality leaves employed women out of a system that could protect them when faced with serious health issues and in old-age. As such, they are deprived from using their rights in employment termination as well (Ecevit, 2010). Employed women, in addition to being squeezed into particular sectors and occupations, earn lower wages in comparison

to their male counterparts<sup>5</sup>. In agriculture, daily wage rates for women and children are far below that of men. Furthermore, working without security and with flexible hours reduces women's wage incomes even further.

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<sup>5</sup> İlkaracan and Selim (2007) found that when individual characteristics such as education level, tenure, age, marital status, occupation, profession, part-time/full-time, firm size, working in an informal job, and being a union member are controlled for, a 6% point gender wage gap is observed in the public sector, and in the private sector, the corresponding difference is much higher, as high as 21.2%.

## MALE-DOMINATED SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND LACK OF PUBLIC SUPPORT

As observed in every aspect of our social life, the main determining factors for women's labour force participation and unemployment are the male-dominated social relations, values and norms. Women are not able to participate in the labour market due to their domestic responsibilities. Empirical research provides supporting evidence for this argument. According to 2006 time-use data in Turkey, women (15-64 years old) spend on average 5 hours 17 minutes per day on care work and household maintenance. The corresponding figure is only 51 minutes/day for men. According to the time spent for unpaid care by women aged between 15-64, Turkey ranks as the top country among the thirty OECD and non-OECD countries. The difference between women and men in unpaid work time is four times higher than the gap in EU countries. Unequal division of labour at home maintains this unequal pattern even when women participate in the labour force and are engaged with paid work in the market. Employed women in Turkey work a 'double day'<sup>6</sup>. In poor households, the gender gap in

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<sup>6</sup> Men spend only half an hour time on unpaid care work when working in the market; whereas, employed women spend more than half of their total work time (4 hours per day) in their domestic responsibilities (Memiş et al., 2012).

unpaid work time widens even more; the higher work burden due to poverty is shared and disproportionately burdened on women.

The reasons for not participating in the labour force are not limited to domestic responsibilities. The lower education level of women and inadequate public support stands as other significant barriers for women. Moreover, the upsurge of conservatism as a growing pillar of the existing male-dominated social structure strictly positions women at home. Not allowing girls to go to school, and the seclusion and exclusion of women from the public space are other examples of this. On the other hand, women who escape from male-dominated pressures and participate in public life find themselves dealing with sexual harassment that is frequently experienced in workplaces. Inadequacy/lack of transportation services, of proper lighting in the streets and workplace neighbourhoods, and/or unsatisfactory security measures affect women's employment adversely, particularly for the jobs with night shifts.

The conservative surge, in fact, has influenced every space of social policy. Major impacts have been surfacing in family-centred policies<sup>7</sup>, which constantly emphasise the significance of motherhood and marriage, aiming to keep women at home maintaining their traditional roles. The new regulations, interfering in the rights of women to make their own decision on pregnancy and birth manifest this adverse effect as well. The design of policies with a family-centred perspective, instead of a gender-equality perspective, proves that the fundamental issue in women's employment is still being disregarded. In addition to the policies for women's employment, the social assistance programs perpetuate this perspective as

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<sup>7</sup> The background research for the social support programme on widowed women introduced in 2011 by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy identified that there are 20,000 divorced women in need in addition to 150,000 widowed women, yet the support programme excluded divorced women based on the idea that improving the living standards of divorced women would increase divorce rates and motivate women to have their own autonomous households (Özar and Yakut-Çakar, 2012).

well. Reduction of women's work burden is an urgent need and possible only through the re-distribution of care responsibilities in a more equitable fashion in society. However, the care services deficit, the lack of care facilities, nurseries and preschools in workplaces, has continued to be a barrier against women's labour market participation and impairs gender equality. The share of beneficiaries of the services for early childhood care and education services is very small and the provisioning of these services is clearly inadequate in Turkey. İlkaracan (2010) states that there is no publicly delivered care for children under age three. Except for a few opportunities for children within the age group 3 to 5 years, and 16 weeks of maternal leave regulation, the government has not been taking any responsibility. The ratio of children attending preschool education is only 4.4% for 3-year-old children, 16% for 4-year-olds, and 61% for 5-year-olds.

# POLICIES ON WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

The policies on women's employment, in the intervening period, have mainly focused on increasing the educational level of women, promoting women's entrepreneurship and the flexibilization of the labour market. Drawing attention to the gap between women and men in terms of educational level, several measures for women's education have been given priority in the policy documents. Undoubtedly, there is a positive relationship between educational level and labour force participation of women. However, low labour force participation of women cannot be solely explained by the gender gap in educational level<sup>8</sup>. In Turkey, the labour force participation of women increases in parallel to women's educational level, but this increase is accompanied with higher unemployment rates (Appendix, table 4). Any education policy that is not complemented with an employment policy would not generate the

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<sup>8</sup> Ilkkaracan (2010) analysed women's labour force participation using the 2008 Household Labour Survey data by education level and marital status and found that labour force participation rate for single women was 2-3 times higher when compared with married women at all education levels. Corresponding differences for men are quite low. Limiting the sample to primary, work-age urban population, Ilkkaracan found that while labour force participation of single women with primary-school education is 40%, this rate decreases to 15% for married women with the same level of education. The figures for high school graduates are 60% to 25%, and university graduates are 85% to 70%.

expected employment increase. Measures to increase the educational level of women should be complemented with policies supporting diversification in employment sectors and occupations open to women. Policies targeted to changing the gender segregated structure of the labour market need to be designed simultaneously with progressive education policies. Otherwise, the increasing educational level of women would not be enough to improve women's employment level.

The second focus area of the policies on women's employment has been the flexibilization of the labour market. Flexibilization is defined as the adjustment of the labour market to the technological changes and shifts in the production structure. It is asserted that 'employment-friendly growth' strategy, which is placed against 'jobless growth', calls for the removal of rigidities in the labour market (Ergüneş, 2010). Setting out from this understanding, pulling the employment cost for employers further down and widening the area of flexible forms of employment came out as the central objectives of the draft document of the National Employment Strategy (UİS), released in February 2012. The UİS draft identifying 'rigidities' as the primary problem of the labour market in Turkey has proposed flexible work and the replacement of 'job security' with 'employment security' as a solution to these 'rigidities'.

With flexibilization, the inclusion of irregular types of work in the social security system coverage and the eventual legalisation of them is envisaged. Irregular types of work, referred to here, are mainly part-time, temporary employment through the private employment bureaus, teleworking, on-call work, and working from home. Policies towards flexibilization of the labour market are trying to be legitimised on the grounds of the assumed employment-increasing effect of flexibilization for women and young people. Behind this cover, in fact, the primary aim is to disseminate and normalise these working types in the market. Even when flexible working arrangements are covered by the social security system, it is almost

impossible for those who work on flexible terms to enjoy employment rights due to the high percentage of premium payments and the very long periods of contribution anticipated. As yet, flexible working is not that common, but in the current state, women already lack access to social security through employment<sup>9</sup>. This is a fundamental issue on the agenda today. It is highly likely that more flexibility will worsen the problem. The UİS draft disregards the fact that the promotion of women's employment through the further flexibilization of labour markets can only provide jobs in female-dominated sectors<sup>10</sup> with poor working conditions that do not secure even retirement rights for them<sup>11</sup>.

Furthermore, the UİS draft also considers that women ought to engage in 'women-type' work and jobs, and does not target a transformation in the structure of the labour market, which is segregated and divided to the disadvantage of women. As is, the proposal will only perpetuate the existing system, where women are locked into labour intensive and 'pink collar' jobs and where flexible work arrangements are common. In our opinion, it is of the utmost importance to undertake 'specific' measures against the further squeezing of women into a limited number of particular sectors, and should support the increase in women's employment in every sector, particularly skill-required capital-intensive employment sectors.

The UİS draft also discusses probable subsidies and incentives for employers to be enjoyed in their additional employments. The effectiveness of the subsidies for new hires and new investments in the private sector is limited with the capacity of the employers who would take advantage of them. For example, two new regulations have been made in Labour

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<sup>9</sup> 68.4% of women access social security through their husbands, 12.9% through their parents and 2.7% through their children (Elveren, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Textiles and clothing, along with finance, are typical example sectors. For a detailed analysis on the textile sector and working conditions of women workers in Turkey, see Dedeođlu (2012).

<sup>11</sup> For a comprehensive discussion on what is in the UİS draft for women and the young and what is missing, see Toksöz (2012).

Law<sup>12</sup> to promote employment of women and the young. The first one was introduced in 2008 by the law no. 4447, bringing a reduction in social security contributions for employers if they hire women or young persons. The contributions would be paid by the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) for five years at yearly decreasing percentages. The second one was introduced in 2011 by the law no. 6111 in provisional article no. 10 and stated that if employers hire an unemployed person registered to the Employment Agency (İŞKUR) who had attended vocational training programs of İŞKUR, the employers' social security contributions would be paid by UIF for a specified period of time. The number of beneficiaries of the first regulation is quite a few. The second regulation has been more effective. As of March 2013, we have observed that the number of workers who have benefited from these subsidies is 257,105 in 122,677 workplaces, but only 55% of them are women. These figures underline the need for 'specific' measures to adopt for women's employment. It would be quite optimistic to assume a common recipe would work for all 'disadvantaged' groups in the society.

On the other hand, the New Incentive Programme (NIP) prepared to increase investment and employment in Turkey follows the principles of the UIS draft and supports dissemination of flexible working arrangements through their acquiring a legal status. In order to increase women's employment states, active labour market policies and industry policies need to be aligned and women's entrepreneurship needs to be improved. Further to these, work from home, part-time work, and on-call work are encouraged. However, it is worthwhile to mention at this point that 90% of the self-employed women workers, including entrepreneurs, work without social security in Turkey. Women's entrepreneurship is promoted with

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12 Planned expenditures for the reduction in employer's social security contributions to increase women and youth employment in the 2008-2010 period was 219 million TL. With the law no.5763 introduced in 2008, the employer's share would be paid fully during the first year. Its term was extended until 2015 with the last fiscal stimulus package implemented in 2009. As of March 2013, the treasury's share for this incentive amounted to 38.4 million TL.

an expectation that women would be more able to reconcile work and family responsibilities if they have their own businesses. Once again, women are viewed as being primarily responsible for care services. Through women's entrepreneurship, they are consequently expected to be able to continue carrying the burden of care for children, the elderly and the sick. Hence, women facing the pressure to reconcile work and family life, would be forced to take jobs in flexible forms of work with low pay.

Common practice in promoting women's entrepreneurship are the microfinance/microcredit schemes. Microcredits were originally introduced for poor people who lack access to financial credit, and when official financial institutions do not provide services that the poor can reach. The National Gender Equality Action Plan (2008-2013) emphasises microcredit schemes to address women's poverty. Microfinance, despite the claims<sup>13</sup> that they improve women's lives through the development of women's entrepreneurship, only alleviates the impacts of the issues at micro scale, rather than wiping out the macro issues of poverty and inequalities in the credit market.

Microfinance may be an alternative solution to increase women's employment; however, getting a favourable result for women's employment by improving entrepreneurship is the least likely way. For, as much as entrepreneurship requires risk-taking and holding tight in the market, it is very different than a regular job with social security. If women who participate

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**13** Ergüneş (2013) discusses the operating mechanisms of microcredits and practises where she shows how the mechanisms of microfinance contradicts with targeted outcomes by giving examples. The credit loans provided by micro-credit schemes in fact target poverty eradication by promoting women's entrepreneurship. However these small loans sometimes used for daily expenditures such as for buying food, paying for accumulated rents not paid, to buy fertilizers during sowing-time. Although women should have full control of the loans there are cases that men decide on the loan use and application. In addition a biggest issue faced by women who deliver micro credits is limited market for the goods brought to the market since their products are usually traditional handicraft products with no differentiation. These loans when used by women in home-based work ensures the continuity of housework and care work as well. However, working from home is not perceived as a real job and these small loans make no change on that. Women do not see that themselves as employed.

newly in the labour market get through these risks and make a big leap forward that improves their status in society, that would not go beyond making a few 'success stories'. Microcredit schemes have no power to transform male-dominated social structures as they cannot create 'miracle stories' (Ergüneş, 2010). Thus, the gap between the resources used for microcredit schemes and accomplishments gained are not striking.

Entrepreneurship training, employment-guaranteed training programs and public work programs (TYÇP), implemented in response to the crisis in 2008, are extensions of the measures for promoting women's entrepreneurship. Implementation of these training programs targeting women's employment that perpetuates the segregated structure of the market divided as 'men's work and women's work' (KEİG, 2012). Women are primarily directed to vocational training in hairdressing, needlework, and caring for the sick and elderly<sup>14</sup>. And although a majority of the attendees in training are women<sup>15</sup>; they are not so effective in placements and receiving permanent jobs<sup>16</sup> when the programs end.

Public work programmes targeting the unemployed, by design, are not providing permanent jobs; and it is also not possible to say that jobs provided by public work programmes have a characteristic that would transform the gender-biased structure (KEİG, 2012).

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**14** Among the training programmes provided by İŞKUR where women attendees constitute 75% to 100% are: training on cosmetics, care, textiles and clothing, and clerical work. In courses like office work, accounting, cooking, pastry baking, cleaning, and marketing that are so called 'women's-type' jobs, the share of women corresponds to 50-74%. Women are almost absent in training courses on manufacturing, machinery and mechanical work (Yücel, 2013). As another example, the Skill's 10 Project training courses, introduced with a coordination between employers and and Specialized Vocational Training Centre (UMEM), were focused more on male-dominated fields, like machine operating and car repair. Unlike İSKUR's vocational trainings, 7,856 women vis-a-vis 19,453 men attended these courses.

**15** Women beneficiaries attending the courses provided by the Public Training Centres since 2010 add up to 61% of 3,588,355 attendees; in the case of vocational training courses, this figure is 18% out of 284,543 beneficiaries; 90% of 52,549 attendees in courses offered in Girls Technical and Vocational schools are women.

**16** Based on 2011 İSKUR data, KEİG (2012) found major variation across regions in women's and men's work placements. For example, in the Marmara region, among the applicants, 23% of women vis-a-vis 35% of men were placed. In Southeast Anatolia, only 8% of women and 20% percent of men were placed by İSKUR.

Similar trends have been observed in the outcomes of İŞKUR's 'Operation on Promoting Women's Employment'<sup>17</sup>. Women are directed to particular sectors and jobs and the project keeps the gender-based segregation in the market intact. Adoption of transformative policies and measures is a must in order to overcome the segmented structure of the market that locks women in low-paying and 'women's-type' jobs.

Concerning all of the above, we argue that *the way to women's emancipation and achieving gender equality requires the provision of decent working conditions through macroeconomic policies and regulations enabling the equal sharing of domestic care between families and the public sector, and between women and men. We hereby share our demands once again below that still remain applicable today:*

#### 1. Disseminate care and pre-school education services:

Design childcare services in accordance with the different living and working conditions of families; and diversify these services in terms of time, place and the kind of services provided.

- Increase the rate of participation in pre-school education to 33% for ages 0-3 and 100% for ages 3-6 by 2023, in line with the EU objectives.
- In the pre-school and child development departments in higher education institutions, create specific training programmes for the 0-3 age group and train instructors and child development specialists to be employed in institutions targeting those age groups of children.

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<sup>17</sup> An Operation of Supporting Women's Employment was carried out in the growth centres in the NUTS II regions for increasing women's employability, easing their process of getting a job, minimizing the obstacles before their participation in labour force, and in particular enabling the public employment services of İŞKUR to be more effective on the local scale. Supported by EU and Turkish funds, this project was carried out between 2009 and 2013, with a budget of 27,150,589 Euros. For a summary of the project outcomes, see KEİG (2012).

- Design and disseminate study-hours (etude) arrangements for primary school children after school. These programmes aim to help children in their educational development, and support parents during work hours, freeing them from the childcare burden.

## **2. Grant 6 months of parental leave following 16 weeks of paid maternity leave:**

Implement the first 2 months of parental leave as salaried and nontransferable from father to mother (implying the right to be used only by fathers), and promote and supervise fathers on the grounds that they use this right in accordance with its aim.

Design flexible parental leave, providing the possibility to use it partially according to the workers' will and on the basis of a mutual agreement made with the employer. For instance, it should be possible to use the 180-day parental leave in the form of once-a-week daily leave through as much as 180 weeks, without exceeding the total amount.

## **3. Design and implement maternity and parental leave with a wider perspective of complying with the availability of pre-school childcare services in the earlier ages:**

Prevent women from leaving the labour market because of childcare responsibilities by enabling them to enjoy access to pre-school childcare and education services as soon as the legal parental leave ends.

## **4. Disseminate care services concerning other dependent family members (the aged, the disabled):**

Diversify care services concerning dependent family members (the aged, the disabled) in terms of time, place and the kind of services provided to help women and men maintain their work-life balance.

Cash transfer is the only existing practice regarding care for the elderly and the disa-

bled that addresses the lowest income groups in society. Care services supported with the aforementioned joint suggestions (including daytime institutional care, boarding institutional care, and also the option for home care outside of working hours) will diversify the options for all different groups in society. In this context, it is imperative to provide these services, financed by a public care insurance fund, created by the contributions of families according to their income levels, exempting those families with lower income from paying contributions.

**5. Decrease working hours composing the full-time work status and improve working conditions:**

Inspect the compliance of working hours implementations in the workplace according to the legal maximum limit of 45 hours. Decrease this length of time for male and female workers, enabling them to achieve work-life balance.

**6. Struggle against unregistered employment:**

Standardize registered employment that rests on decent working conditions, and on access to the rights of legal care leave, as well as job security after the leave, among others.

**7. Targeting, through macroeconomic policies, a mode of production and distribution securing a just life, which is respectful to the environment, rather than being aspirant towards more and rapid growth:**

Policies aiming to eliminate the obstacles to women's participation in employment and to raise the supply of women's labour must be supported with macroeconomic policies that will increase the demand for the labour force in general, and the demand for women labour in particular. Incentive programmes targeting private sector investment are the means to increase employment only indirectly. Macroeconomic policies targeting employment directly as the primary goal should be developed. In addition to involving

different scale investments that will create employment capacity through public investment programmes, measures should be designed to promote private sector investments that will provide decent working conditions. Employment increase generated by investments should respect the equality of women and men. The expansion of the investments on care services should be one of the main components of the investment policy. The investment gap in priority sectors, like education and health, cannot be overcome by promoting only private sector investment. It should not be forgotten that these services, including education and care services, are public responsibilities as well.

#### **8. Support agricultural production dominated by women's labour:**

Prevent women's withdrawal from the labour market due to migration (rural to urban). Reduce dependence on foreign markets in food supply for future generations. Product-based farm subsidies, subsidies to organic agriculture, seed growing and livestock should be provided, rather than income support, as direct payments. New areas for investment should be promoted, such as new food production plants and ecotourism outside traditional agricultural production.

*Further, the aim of macroeconomic policies should not be to grow more and rapidly within an extremely unfair income distribution, but to generate a mode of production and distribution that is fair and respectful to the environment, in which women and men live under equal conditions and the world's resources can be passed to the next generation.*

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## Appendix

**Table 1**

### Change in Sectoral Composition of Women's Employment

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Services</b>
<b>2009</b>	5871	2446	901	2524
<b>% Share</b>	100.0	41.7	15.3	43.0
<b>2012</b>	7309	2872	1088	3349
<b>% Share</b>	100.0	39.2	14.9	45.8

Source: TurkStat, Household Labour Survey, <http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/isgucuapp/isgucu.zul>. accessed 12.05.2013.

**Table 2**

### Change in Occupational Composition of Women's Employment

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Share</b>
<b>Total</b>	5,871	7,309	1,438	100%
Legislators, senior officials and managers	189	220	31	2%
Professionals	595	780	185	13%
Technicians and associate professionals	437	535	98	7%
Clerks	601	775	174	12%
Service workers and shop and market sales workers	594	867	273	19%
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	1,852	2,101	249	17%
Craft and related trades workers	338	321	- 17	-1%
Low-level occupations	1,083	1,459	376	26%

Source: TurkStat, Household Labour Survey, <http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/isgucuapp/isgucu.zul>. accessed 12.05.2013.

Table 3

**Change in Sectoral Distribution of Employment for Women Who Are Not Registered to Any Social Security**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>Non-agriculture</b>	<b>Paid non-agriculture</b>
<b>2009</b>	3.426	2.353	1.073	631
<b>% Change</b>	16%	17%	12%	15%
<b>2012</b>	3.959	2.757	1.202	725

Source: TurkStat, Household Labour Survey, <http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/isgucuapp/isgucu.zul>. accessed 12.05.2013

Table 4

**Labour Force Participation (LFP) and Unemployment Rates (U) of Women by Education Level**

	<b>2009</b>		<b>2012</b>	
	LFP	U	LFP	U
Illiterate	15	3	16.7	1.4
Illiterate and have not completed any educational institution	19.2	9.1	20.7	5.2
Primary school	23.3	9.4	28.3	6.4
Elementary education	18	18.3	20.7	13.2
Secondary school, vocational school at secondary school level	22.8	20	27.9	15.4
High school	30.4	26.3	30.6	19
Vocational or technical high school	39.1	25.9	38.1	19.4
Higher education (university, faculty or upper)	70.8	16.3	70.9	14.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>15.5</b>

Source: TurkStat, Household Labour Survey, <http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/isgucuapp/isgucu.zul>. accessed 12.05.2013



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