



WOMEN'S LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT IN TURKEY

PROBLEM AREAS AND
POLICY SUGGESTIONS

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Problem Areas and Policy Suggestions**

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PREFACE

The economic crisis that started in 2008 in developed countries has since turned into a global depression by influencing developing countries too. The effects of the economic crisis show themselves as a big breakdown in production and a noticeable increase in unemployment. We are in a period in which there are not enough satisfactory clues regarding the improvement of the economy, and the duration and scope of the economic crisis.

While it is expected that the economic crisis will create millions of unemployed people and intensify poverty, women will be one of the most affected groups from the situation. We think that a specific approach for women is needed, not only because of the economic crisis, but also because of the sexist structure of economics. The existence and growing intensity of gender inequalities and maledominated structures are two main preconditions of making profit in this economic system. Women are subject to oppression and inequality, both at the workplace and in the family. Consequently, KEIG has prepared this report to question women's place in economic life, to determine the problems and to recommend solutions, at this very time of economic crisis. This report will focus on women's situation in the labor market, the social security issue, critiques regarding proposed solutions for women's employment up until today and recommendations.

This report was prepared together with 27 civil society organizations, which compose the KEIG Platform and are working on women's labor and employment. The Women's Labor and Employment Initiative Platform (KEIG) aims to design policies in its mandate and to advocate them at the local and national levels together with its member organizations. We would like to thank all women who contributed to this report.

Women's Labor and Employment Initiative Platform (KEİG)

KEİG - WOMEN'S LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE PLATFORM MEMBERS

- Antalya Women's Consultancy and Solidarity Center (Antalya) • Avcılar Women's Cooperative (İstanbul) • Buca House of Women's Culture and Solidarity (İzmir) • Çanakkale Entrepreneur Women's Cooperative of Production and Marketing (Çanakkale) • Çiğli House of Women's Culture and Solidarity (İzmir) • The Association of Valuing Women's Labor (Çanakkale) • Association for Solidarity and Development of Housewives (Adana)
- Association for Supporting Women Entrepreneurs (Denizli) • İzmir Association for Women's Solidarity (İzmir) • Kadav New Step Women's Site (Kocaeli) • KADER (İstanbul) • Association for Women's Education and Employment (Ankara) • Women's Labor and Social Working Group (Ankara) • 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 (İstanbul) • KAGİDER (İstanbul) • Foundation of Women's Center (Diyarbakır) • KEFA Feminist Researchers Studying on Women's Labor (İstanbul)
- Kırkörük Cooperative of Struggle Against Violence Against Women (Ankara) • Petrol İş Women's Magazine (İstanbul) • Selis (Diyarbakır) • Social Development and Gender Equality Policies Center (İstanbul) • Women's Group of Union of Turkish Medical Doctors (Ankara)
- Van Women's Association (Van) • Yaşam Evi Women's Solidarity Center (Urfa).

INTRODUCTION

The neoliberal system surrounding our lives for the past thirty years has finally brought the world into economic turmoil, the duration of which is indefinite as is the extent of havoc it will create. The destruction caused by neoliberal policies is not limited to the existing economic crisis; today we are also faced with environmental, food and energy crises.

The current crisis of this unequal and destructive system has resulted in the dreadful increase of unemployment and poverty on a global scale. As was the case in most of the previous crises, state intervention is suggested as the only way out of this crisis. All over the world, and primarily in developed countries, the public sector has had to take on the losses of the financial sector and big-scale enterprises by consecutive bailout plans to try to make the system work again. The cost of these bailout plans will be increased by the external and internal debts of the public sector, high interest rates, inflation, decreased real wages and salaries, further limitations in public services and increased taxes, all of which will again be born by the public, especially by women.

One of the main sources fostering this system is sexist inequality. While capitalism forms mechanisms within patriarchal structures and relations that will increase its profit, it reinforces and maintains the patriarchal system. For instance, the fact that neither the state nor employers ever attempt to provide widespread child and elder care or undertake any costs for these services is a result of the role imposed on women by the patriarchal system. On the other hand, this is also how local and global producers can find women to do piecework in their homes for very low wages. Thus, women, who are confined to their homes both by patriarchy and capitalism, earn much less than a low-paid workshop employee, even though they both do the same work.

Women undertake nearly all the housework and care services (like the care of children, the elderly and the ill) required by the family and society. A significant part of this work should be provided under the scope of public services, by crèches and day care centers that should be established by initiatives of central and local governments. However, neoliberal policies that restrict public expenditures encourage these care services to be marketable goods which can be attained only by those who can afford it while they remain inaccessible for those who don't have the money. Funds allocated from the state budget to public services is further limited during times of crisis, which results in intensified volumes of care services to be laid upon the shoulders of women. Also, as family incomes get lower, women undertake these services, which are available in the market because they are no longer affordable. As a result, while spending more of their labor on housework and care services, women become bound to accept any job that may provide an income just to compensate for the decrease or lack of men's earnings.

It is said that women are the first ones to be laid off in times of crises. Although this is generally true, it is a known fact that in certain sectors, the men who work with relatively high wages and social security are laid off and replaced by women as a cheap and compliant labor force. Such examples show us that sexist inequalities and domineering relations between women and men are complementary and transitory between the spaces inside and outside the home. The distribution of male/female roles at home and outside grows stronger by feeding on one another.

Furthermore, all other social inequalities and relations of domination foster the sexist system. Exactly for this reason, we want a world in which not only the domination over women and gender inequalities, but all social inequalities are eliminated. We want a world where ecological balance is restored and food security is provided. We want a world free from exploitation, oppression, violence and wars. We think that women's liberation can be possible only in such a world.

Although egalitarian legal reforms are sine qua non first steps for the elimination of sexist oppression, we know that this alone is not sufficient to eradicate all kinds of discriminatory and unequal practices. We know that sexist domination practices have an infinite variety of facets, ranging from a country's mode of resource utilization to the expenditure items in family budgets; from social protection to environmental conditions and infrastructure services; from the regulation of school hours to the availability of crèches and day care centers; from violence against women to the perception of women as sex objects, and the evolution of oppressive gender roles.

In this study, as the KEIG Platform, we have availed ourselves of the experiences and knowledge of women's movements in Turkey and abroad, and aspired to determine the fundamental problems, especially in the economic sphere, in order to take a step towards the eradication of all kinds of structures, relations, laws and implementations that engender discrimination against and domination over women. We have developed suggestions on the primary actions and changes that need to be undertaken within these problem areas. Surely, both our assessments and suggestions are yet to be perfected in order to create the world we want.

We have a long road ahead of us.

MAIN PROBLEM AREAS

Women's employment in rural areas and the breakaway from agriculture

Despite the rapid decrease in agricultural employment, agriculture continues to be the sector with the highest level of women's employment. According to the November 2008 data¹, the share of agricultural employment in the overall employment of women is 45 percent. The decrease in agricultural income has led men to gradually leave this sector, resulting in the feminization of agriculture. In rural areas, on top of the care services they provide for their families, women also carry on production activities at home (production of bread, tomato paste, cheese, yogurt, etc.) and also participate in agricultural production outside the home. Mostly women undertake the laborintensive work in small and middle scale enterprises; their workload is usually heavier than that of the men.

In addition to their domestic labor, women participate in agricultural production and are subject to hard working conditions and a heavy workload. Moreover, a significant number of these women work without pay in the fields of male members of their families, or the income they make in activities such as marketing or paid labor is confiscated by the men. Taking into consideration the laws regulating heritage, women should have inherited a substantial amount of land, yet we see that this has not happened, especially in the Eastern and Southeastern regions. Due to patriarchal traditions, women are still obligated to part with their legal rights in favor of men. Another problem is the fact that 98 percent of the women who work in agriculture are not registered. Because of this, a huge number of women in rural areas are excluded from the social security system.

¹ Unless otherwise specified, all statistical data in this report is taken from the Household Workforce Survey of TUIK.

On the other hand, women of families that own little or no land, also participate in production as migrant or temporary workers. Migrant agriculture workers constitute the most disadvantaged group in agricultural employment. These workers, most of whom are Kurdish, are at times subjected to illtreatment also due to their ethnicity. Their earnings are very low in addition to the extremely unfavorable conditions of housing, health, work, sustenance and transportation. They have to stay in patchy tents near the fields and lack facilities like hygienic toilets, bathrooms, laundry, kitchen or clean drinking water. In these adverse conditions, women try to carry out tasks like cooking, washing clothes and dishes and childcare. Moreover, the dangerous modes of transportation to and from their villages and the work area threaten their very lives. The gathering and transportation of migrant workers and their modes of work are all realized in a system of intense patriarchal relations.

Another problem area awaiting an urgent solution is women's withdrawal from agricultural employment. Women, who have receded from agricultural employment due to agricultural mechanization or migration to urban areas, do not have easy access to nonagricultural employment opportunities, and thus are left with the options of either becoming a "housewife" or taking on informal jobs in the cities. Neoliberal policies that started to be implemented in the agriculture sector in the 1980s have picked up speed, especially since 2001, through the abolition of agricultural subsidies and the introduction of direct income support, and have led to the demise of smallscale producers and the constant decrease in the number of agricultural production fields and animals. As a result of these policies, between the years 2001 and 2007, 1.164 million women working in agriculture, mostly as unpaid family workers, were excluded from agricultural employment; the rate of women's employment in rural areas decreased 10 points in these 6 years, from 41 to 31 percent; while the nonagricultural unemployment rate of women in rural areas increased from 11 to 19 percent. Consequently, it is evident that although there is a rapid breakaway from agricultural employment, nonagricultural employment opportunities are far from compensating the resulting gap with regards to women.

Low level of women's employment in urban areas

The increase in employment in non-agricultural sectors, which is concentrated in the cities, falls far behind the increase in the population joining the labor force. Governments ignore the fact that the problem of the low levels of employment we face today is essentially a problem of the low employment levels of women, or the exclusion of women from the labor market. In cities, with regard to women over the age of 15, only 1 out of every 5 women is employed.

According to the Population Census data, economic growth in Turkey between the years 1955-1990 created only 1.3 million jobs in non-agricultural sectors for women, while it created around 7 million jobs, that is, 5.5 times more jobs, for men. In other words, the economic development process was oriented to industry and services rather than agriculture, which fostered growing gender inequalities. As a result of this, Turkey is one of the ten countries to have the lowest employment rate of women.

The number of women working in labor-intensive sectors like garment production has increased as a result of the governments' attitude, beginning in the 1980s, to increase Turkey's international competitiveness in the export of labor-intensive products. Yet, women work in small workshops, in bad conditions, with low wages and without social security. Thereby, the unregistered sector has grown increasingly, and mostly women's labor is used in export-oriented production and commerce.

Unregistered employment

According to the December 2008 data, 58 percent of employed women are engaged in the unregistered sectors. For men, this rate is 38 percent. An important development in the 2000s

is that the rate of increase in unregistered non-agricultural work is twice the rate of increase in non-agricultural employment. Considering that mostly women work in marginal and unregistered jobs in urban areas, it can be said that the significant part of the increase in employment in non-agricultural sectors is oriented to women's labor. Given that formal statistics cannot measure unregistered work in full, it is clear that the rate of women's unregistered work is more than the formally stated statistics.

Women work unregistered in small family enterprises in the manufacturing industry or in the services sector as unpaid family workers, without receiving any payment for their labor. Unregistered work is very common among self-employed women (79 percent), as well as in the manufacturing industry or services sector, and is very high in comparison with men (52 percent). Unregistered work is a serious problem among women wage earners as well, as one-fourth of women wage earners are unregistered.

There are thousands of women working as unregistered workers in small enterprises in the services sector, in jobs such as secretary, telephone operator, hairdresser, manicurist, cashier, etc. Various women's groups or organizations work for unregistered working women to get organized. For instance, the Cooperative of Women Working Without Social Security (Güvencesiz Çalışan Kadınlar Kooperatifi - İMECE) is an organization that includes domestic servants, care workers, cleaning women and charwomen. Home-based women workers also have their own organizations. The establishment of the Solidarity Network of Home-Based Working Women in Turkey (Home Net Turkey) in 2007 represents an important milestone in the organizing process of home-based working. This network is not solely a support or income generating organization. It is also an important institution in terms of being a home-based women workers' rights-based organization.

The unions are insufficient at organizing unregistered workers in Turkey; the organization of unregistered workers can be ignored. The demands of these workers (i.e. subcontracted workers)

can be the first to recede during the collective bargaining process, even when the existence of such an organization is accepted. Furthermore, unions can sometimes demand some kinds of unregistered work to be banned.

**There is sectoral and occupational gender segregation.
Women's promotion chances are very limited.**

The segregation of women's jobs versus men's jobs, both sectoral and occupational, is very distinct. Forty percent of employed women in cities are white-collar workers, and the percentage of women working generally in the services sector as unskilled labor is almost the same (40 percent). The percentage of blue-collar women workers is approximately 20 percent. Women work in non-agricultural sectors mostly as nurses, salespersons, teachers, administrative staff, receptionists and cleaning workers in hotels. Women usually work in jobs closely related to domestic labor and care work. One of the foremost results of this sexist segmentation is the high pay gap between men and women workers doing jobs of the same value. Although the percentage of women in professional occupations is relatively high (29 percent), eliminating the visible and invisible barriers to the promotion of women will not be possible. Women are hardly represented in middle and junior management positions; the percentage of women in lawmaking, senior management and administrator positions was only 3 percent in 2006, while it was 11 percent for men.

There is a huge pay gap

Most of the women who manage to participate in the labor force are employed in jobs with low wages and without promotion opportunities, and it is not possible for them to receive the same wage as men, even when they do work of the same value. There is a pay gap of 22 percent

between the average wages of women and men in cities in Turkey.² Studies indicate that the pay gap between women and men working in the private sector is more than 50 percent, and there is an undeniable wage inequality between women and men even when factors such as education and work experience are taken into account.

The fact that women receive lower wages than men doing jobs of the same value is determinative in two aspects. Firstly, it makes women dependent on men. This dependency is both economic and political, and there is a fostering relationship between these two. While a man's wage is determined as a family wage, a woman's wage is considered as supplementary to the man's. Secondly, with regard to capital's exercise of control over labor, it perpetuates the segregation of women's jobs versus men's jobs by splitting the labor market.

Exclusion from social security

It is expected of a social security system to provide a life with human dignity for all citizens during old age, pregnancy, parenting, and unemployment periods; to furnish income and care security to them during times of accidents, illness, and disability; and to provide survivor's pension security for the ones left behind in case of death, by using the redistribution role of the state with a consideration for inequalities in social life. An important part of the population has been excluded from the social security system, which was already limited and deficient, with the Social Security and General Health Insurance Law no. 5510.

The new social security system, like the old one, includes only the individuals working and

² World Bank (2006) Turkey Labor Market Study Report No. 33254-Tr, p.55.

contributing into the system; in other words, it includes only the registered workers instead of the whole society with a citizenship rights-based approach. The second negative nature of the new social security system is that the insurance provided to a large number of contributors will only be on paper. These people will be destitute of most of the aspects of social security since they will not be able to fulfill the requirements (especially for old age insurance) or to pay the contribution fee (especially for health services) for making use of these benefits.

Women are one of the primary groups that are excluded from social security. Housewives and uninsured working/employed women are made dependent on their husbands and fathers (if they are insured) with regard to social security. The consideration behind this implementation has two important aspects:

Firstly, the social security system prefers to approach women as persons dependent on their fathers or husbands instead of supporting and taking them under protection as individuals contributing to social production.

Secondly, this law excludes a lot of paid women working inside or outside the home. This group is divided into two categories. The first category is composed of women receiving wage and income uncovered by the said law. For instance, charwomen in houses (daily servants), temporary (seasonal) workers in agriculture, small-size manufacturing workers who earn less than minimum wage and are exempt from income tax, trades people, home-based workers and unpaid family workers. The second category is composed of unregistered women who are in illegal employment and whose social security contributions are not paid by their employers.

Voluntary insurance, which was proposed as an alternative for housewives by the previous social security system and has benefited only a limited number of women until now, has become inaccessible for this small group too, because of the high premiums.

It was expected of the social security system that promised to protect its citizens from the risks in life, to define a right of social security for situations where it is impossible for women to stay in the family. It is crucial to give the right to health insurance and social monthly pay, with no premium, to women who are subjected to domestic violence in order to make these women able to leave the place of violence and to support them to start a new life on their own with free will.

Male-dominated structures of unions exclude women

The rate of unionization in Turkey is around 9 percent, and the number of workers with union membership is 892,000.³ Women workers make up only 10 percent of union members and are not represented on union boards, where only 19 out of 489 board members are women.⁴ This data reveals the male dominant structure of unions in our country.

There is no elected women's organization within the structures of Türk-İş, DİSK and HAK-İŞ – the three main confederations of worker's union's in Turkey. While Türk-İş and DİSK have one women's bureau each in their headquarters, there is no formal bureau in HAK-İŞ. There is only an expert working in women's issues in HAK-İŞ. Although a decision was made in 1993 relating to the establishment of women's committees in every member union of Türk-İş, it cannot be said that this decision has been implemented. On the other hand, the Women's Labor Platform established by Türk-İş is an important step; however, it could not fulfill its mission and it has become non-functional.

³ Toksöz, Gülay (2007) Women Labor in Turkey, ILO, Ankara.

⁴ Çelik, Aziz (2007). Women and Unions, <http://www.bianet.org/bianet/kategori/kadin/93376/kadinlar-ve-sendikalar>.

The ratio of women members in public employees' unions is relatively high when it is compared with workers' unions. However, women are under-represented in the decision-making and administration bodies of these unions, too. There are approximately 2 million permanent civil servants in the public sector, one-third of who are women. According to the 2008 data of the Ministry of Labor, there are 930,000 civil servants who are members of unions.⁵ It is presumed that one-third of these union members are women. However, the composition of the administrative bodies of public employees' unions confederations is not much different than that of workers' unions confederations.

The presidency seats are occupied by men in the three biggest confederations of public employees' unions (Türkiye Kamu Sen, Memur Sen and KESK), which have the highest number of members. There are no women members on the administrative boards of confederations, except for KESK. This situation is not much different in unions, too. There are no women presidents of union members of Memur Sen and Kamu Sen. There are chairwomen in three member unions (Eğitim Sen, SES ve Tüm Bel Sen) of KESK. Women make up 17 percent of the administrative boards of the member unions of KESK, 4 percent in those of Kamu Sen, and only 3 percent in those of Memur Sen.

These data show that a male-dominated structure still exists in the decision-making and administration bodies, even though the percentage of women employed in the public sector is high and one-third of union members are women.

⁵ July 2008 Union Statistics of Ministry of Labor.

A CRITICAL OVERVIEW OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

This section describes our critiques regarding some solutions for increasing women's employment that have been recommended frequently in recent years. With these critiques, we aim to refute the cliché that the increase of women's employment is only possible by "increasing women's educational levels, having a flexible labor market and increasing women's entrepreneurship". In the following section, we make recommendations to improve women's labor and employment on the bases of the issues discussed above. Many of these recommendations are composed of our demands regarding the rights for which we have struggled for many years and that we will keep on fighting for.

Increasing the educational levels of women cannot be a solution for all of the problems of women regarding employment

Different groups have frequently raised the correlation between education and the problems of women's labor and employment, and the fact that women have less access to educational opportunities than men is considered to be one of the main reasons for gender inequality in employment. This is a partially true determination. Funds allocated to education should be increased and all children should have access to qualified, equal and free education. There are serious measures to be taken in the field of education to extend literacy courses for women, to increase girls' schooling rate and educational levels, and to guarantee equal access for women to all education opportunities. However, the fact that education is not solely enough to

increase women's employment is revealed clearly by current statistics, too. The labor force participation rate of women is considerably low when compared to men with the same educational level. For instance, according to the data of December 2008, the labor force participation rate of primary school graduate women is 21 percent, while it is 70 percent for men with the same educational level; the labor force participation rate of high school graduate women is 34 percent, while it is 75 percent for men with the same educational level; the labor force participation rate of university graduate women is 72 percent, while it is 84 percent for university graduate men. The inequality between women and men having the same educational level is crucial. The fostering of a male-dominated ideology by various centers of power, including family and state institutions, lies at the root of this injustice. In addition to the deficiency of formal and informal occupational training opportunities for women, the type of education foments the segregation of women's and men's jobs and mostly reproduces the sexual division of labor.

Although there has been no legal constraint in accepting persons of the opposite sex to technical schools for girls and boys since 1975, and there is a similarity in the curriculums of these schools, only a limited transformation could be done in the traditional gender composition of these schools. Still, 80 percent of students in occupational technical girls' schools are girls and only 12 percent of students in occupational technical boys' schools are girls.⁶ It is necessary to combine the General Directorates of Technical Education for Girls and Boys into one structure that will not involve a gender codification.

6 Tan, Mine (2008). Education, Gender Inequality in Turkey: Problems, Priorities and Recommendations, "in Update of the Report: Towards Gender Equality: Education, Working Life and Politics, TUSİAD-KAGİDER, İstanbul, p. 49, 84.

Flexible work can be accepted only with the existence of fair wages and social security

Flexible and part-time work are conditions that may be preferred by some workers. However, employers make use of different types of flexible work to decrease labor costs. Furthermore, according to the new Social Security and General Health Insurance regulations, it is almost impossible for persons working flexible and part-time to get pension rights. These types of work can only be accepted in the existence of fair wages and social security.

Women's employment problem cannot be solved solely by women's entrepreneurship

Women's entrepreneurship has gone beyond the issue of women's employment in recent years. Women's entrepreneurship is proposed as the unique solution for increasing women's employment, instead of being discussed as a part of women's employment. Furthermore, it is claimed that women's entrepreneurship will eliminate poverty, empower women, ensure gender equality and improve the national economy. Yet, the increase in the number of women entrepreneurs – in fact it is not increasing considerably – is far away from reaching the claimed targets.

Starting from the 1990s, the issue of women's entrepreneurship increasingly became one of the main topics on the agendas of women's organizations, trade associations of entrepreneurs/employers, civil society organizations, governmental institutions and international organizations. Women's organizations working on women's rights and civil rights came face-to-face during their experience sharing and awareness raising activities with the increasing

demands of women to earn enough money in order to have economic independence and/or to fight against poverty. At the same time, some international institutions encouraged projects on women's entrepreneurship as a "new" component of the neo-liberal program for the struggle against poverty. As these two processes overlapped, women's organizations started to respond to the call for project proposals from international institutions, without evaluating their capacities and opportunities sufficiently. The effects of these small-scale projects implemented by women's organizations, with limited capacities, are limited, too.

On the other hand, governmental institutions, such as KOSGEB and İŞKUR, and trade associations of entrepreneurs/employers, such as TOBB, TESK, TÜSİAD, TÜRKKONFED, approach women's entrepreneurship as a social responsibility project, without changing their own organizational structure. These institutions should firstly transform their organizational structure and functioning to ensure and internalize gender equality to improve both women's employment and entrepreneurship. Although there is a strong interest in the women's entrepreneurship issue, we cannot say that the male dominant structure in the organizational functioning of these institutions has been abolished.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Gender equality approach should be included in Development Plans

Development Plans are the main policy documents presented to the public by governments. The 9th Development Plan 2007-2013 has established five economic and social development axes:

- 1) Increasing competitiveness,
- 2) Increasing employment,
- 3) Improving human development and social solidarity,
- 4) Ensuring regional development, and
- 5) Improving the quality and efficiency of public services.

Women are mentioned only as a disadvantaged group under the issue of social policy in this basic policy paper. However, all development axes have sexist effects and results. Because of this, we make the following recommendations:

1. Ensure gender equality should be adopted as the fundamental principle of Development Plans, and it should be linked to quantitative and qualitative targets within the development axis and sectoral priorities.
2. Authorities should act in accordance with the target of ensuring gender equality while maintaining both financial and monetary policies, and medium-term programs, medium-term financial plans and annual plans should be redesigned to this effect.
3. Special budget items should be included in the budget for active measures to transform sexist structures.

4. Implementation results should be evaluated and audited continuously by independent monitoring mechanisms.

A government commitment should be built to adopt a gender mainstreaming strategy that Turkey has committed to in the presence of international institutions, the United Nations being the foremost, on the largest scale. Coordination between central and local administrations should be ensured in accordance with this new vision. It is obvious that this new strategy necessitates financial resources be restructured to eliminate gender inequalities. Gender budgeting should be implemented in Turkey to put this strategy into effect beyond commitments.

Gender budgeting is essential for equality

Gender sensitive analysis of all income and expenditures should be done, and preparation of gender sensitive budgets at all levels should be provided for ensuring gender equality.⁷

The European Parliament prescribed several resolutions in 2003 to consider gender equality at all levels of budgeting and to structure all income and expenditures to promote gender equality.

The report⁸ of the Council of Europe, published in 2005, evaluated gender sensitive budgeting implementations in 12 countries and mentions Conditional Cash Transfer Application within the scope of the Social Risk Mitigation Project, implemented by the Social Solidarity Fund, as the only example for Turkey. As is known, this implementation, started in 2003, is a child-focused application targeting the poorest 6 percent of the population. In its education component, the

7 http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/budgeting/budgeting_en.html

8 Gender Budgeting, <http://www.coe.int.equality>

National Ministry of Education is involved by making higher payments for a female child, with the consideration of the relatively low schooling rate of female children. It also targets to empower women by making these payments to mothers. The Ministry of Health is involved in the health component by targeting the prevention of infant, child and maternal mortality, and to reduce morbidity. The Conditional Cash Transfer is implemented through local representatives (governorships and district governorships) of the central administration.

The Public Financial Management and Control Law no. 5018, introduced in late 2003 and in implementation since 2005, underline participatory budgeting and transparency. This new settlement also highlights performance assessment and effectiveness monitoring of expenditures. It envisages the strategic planning and determination of target coherence with a vision and mission in every level of public institutions. The Public and Financial Management and Control Law is the proper tool for designing gender sensitive budgeting in every level of public administration. However, at present, the question of which public institution has included what kinds of arrangements to eliminate gender inequalities in their strategic plans remains unanswered since this goal is not explicitly stated in the general strategy, and hence, is not in the budgeting procedures either.

Employment strategies should be prepared

Creating new employment areas and ensuring that they are open to women is one of the basic responsibilities of the state and the private sector. In this regard, active employment policies devoted to the mitigation of unemployment should be formed, and a comprehensive women's employment policy should be incorporated. A plan that is comprised of concrete and time-limited targets should be done to implement these policies in a timely manner. Related institutions and mechanisms should be provided with enough funds and human resources, via allocated funds

from the budget, to make them able to implement the equality policies that will be determined. In addition, employment policies should consider income inequalities between regions.

New steps should be taken in order to make rural women's labor visible; to increase the schooling rate of female children in rural areas; to ensure equal access of women and men to land ownership, new techniques, loan opportunities and markets; and to support and increase the number of women's cooperatives by including a gender approach to these policies.

Discrimination in employment, vocational training and promotion should be eliminated

Public and private sector institutions should develop active mechanisms that will ensure the questioning and transformation of gender-based discrimination that women are subjected to in every aspect, such as employment, vocational training and promotion, to ensure gender equality and to struggle against all kinds of discrimination. Labor relations in the Labor Code should be defined to include an "engagement process" to eliminate discrimination during the recruitment process.

Along with training in vocational skills, training programs that will increase knowledge and skills in "women's human rights" and will raise awareness on the limitations created by gender roles should be included as a prerequisite in employment training programs targeting women, and implemented by public institutions and private institutions with public funds. On the other hand, vocational training programs should be formed as a part of the employment strategy that will be developed in accordance with employment demand, and in different areas other than sewing, needlecraft and carpet weaving, which are considered to be "women's jobs". Vocational courses with employment guarantee should have a quota for women.

Sexual harassment should be prevented

There is an urgent need for institutional structures devoted to preventing gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment at the workplace to be developed and maintained. The scope of the Labor Code should be expanded to include the ban of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, along with gender-based discrimination.

The establishment of counseling and solidarity bureaus against sexual harassment in the workplace should be provided.

Working conditions should be improved

The scope of the Labor Code is very narrow with regard to women's employment; the necessary regulations should be put in this code, not only for increasing women's employment, but also for improving working conditions. In this regard, women working temporarily and for a daily fee in in-house services should be covered by the code.

An Agriculture-Labor Code should be urgently introduced, and this code should be prepared with a gender approach.

An objective job classification system for wages to be based on should be developed in order to be able to implement the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

A minimum wage should be determined for dependent home-based workers, too. Legal regulations and mechanisms that make home-based workers able to declare and enroll themselves as home-based workers should be formed, and the inclusion of these workers in the social security

system should be ensured.

Efficient auditing should be provided by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, İŞ-KUR and the Social Security Institution in order to protect the working rights of all workers. In this regard, all auditing personnel should be trained on gender equality in accordance with international standards within the scope of their vocational training.

Positive discrimination should be implemented

Positive discrimination should be implemented until a balanced structure between women and men in working life is established; the state should encourage the implementation of positive discrimination.

Regulations are needed to ensure decisive gender equality in economic, social and political life. Temporary special measures and support policies should be implemented in recruitment and promotion processes in public and private workplaces until equality in social life is reached.

Women's representation in unions should be ensured

Laws no. 2821 and 2822, which block unionization, should be amended. These current laws block unionization with their regulations on the threshold for obtaining the authorization for a collective labor agreement and they almost make it impossible to strike. Related regulations of the law do not provide protection when employers dismiss workers because of being a union member. A worker who affiliates with a union takes the risk of being fired. This situation hinders the development of unions and makes it difficult for unions to act as democratic institutions.

Federations of worker's unions should make structural arrangements that will provide for gender equality within their institutional structures. These arrangements should be determined by statute. The ratio of women in administrative positions of unions should be increased via temporary special measures.

Demands and policies regarding women should be included in the policies and papers of unions on issues of organizing, collective labor agreements, education, law and external relations.

Women's quotas should be imposed in the general training programs of unions. Childcare services should be provided for children of women members of unions during the implementation of training programs.

Gender training programs for men, including employed men experts and administrators of unions, should be implemented.

Improving women's rights should be one of the main topics of the struggle maintained by unions. Collective agreements should include decisions that eliminate discrimination against women in the workplace, as they include decisions that will provide gender equality. Demands for crèches, parental leave, equal pay, etc. should be joint demands of workers, rather than being demands of women workers only.

Women should be considered when designing the policies regarding organizing. Women should be employed to organize women workers with regard to the principle of "persons organize persons who are similar to them".

Unions should set up a budget to be used for activities related to the organizing of women.

The Law on Unions should be amended to provide the right to be a member of unions for all workers, including unregistered workers. Unions should struggle against exploitation, together with unregistered workers, rather than seeing them as a competitive element.

Policies regarding reconciliation of work and family life are urgently needed

Because of the sexist approach that “women are responsible for the housework–family–care of children, men earn money out of the house”, women typically never participate in the labor force, or they do all the work in-house without sharing with any family member even when they participate in the labor force. This unequal division of labor is an important reason for the labor force participation gap between women and men, for some branch of professions to be closed to women, for pay gaps and for low representation of women in administrative positions and unions.

We do not accept such working conditions that put women in a work-family dilemma in the name of providing equality. We ask that the workload within the family, a vast amount of which is shouldered by women, should be undertaken by public services. Our demands regarding the reconciliation of work and family life can be classified under three headlines:

Maternity leave: The implementation of maternity leave should be complemented with “paternity leave”, and it should be provided for families to look after their babies at least for six months after child birth, within the scope of a paid leave implementation. On the other hand, implementation of in-service training - which will make it easier for women to adapt to changed working conditions after they return from maternity leave - by employers, should be ensured and it should be guaranteed that women will work at the same or same value position after maternity leave. The Labor Code should be amended with regard to this issue.

Working hours: When long working hours are combined with the “second working day” of women at home, women may decide to leave their jobs. Working hours should be shortened for all workers to make them able to allocate time for their private lives and families.

Arrangements regarding services: The responsibilities of women and men should be reconsidered with a gender equality perspective, and mechanisms should be introduced to transform the existing mentality. In this context, the responsibilities shouldered by women, such as care for children, the elderly and the ill should be accepted as social responsibilities to be undertaken equally by women and men, and these services should be provided via allocating public and private sector resources.

In this regard, in Regulation no. 25522 on Work Conditions of Pregnant or Nursing Women and Nurseries and Childcare Centers, the obligation of opening nurseries is connected with the condition of having a workplace with between 100 and 150 female workers, and the obligation of opening childcare centers is connected with the condition of having a workplace with more than 150 female workers. This regulation should be amended to determine the conditions according to the number of “women and men workers”, and the number of total workers that will be determined as a condition for opening these facilities should be decreased in order to diffuse responsibility between women and men equally, to prevent discrimination in the engagement process and to expand the responsibility for crèches. For instance, considering that the ratio of workplaces with 150 and more workers in manufacturing is very low (0.7 percent in total manufacturing workplaces), the obligations in this manner should be introduced to central and local administrations and to small-scale employers to expand the responsibility for crèches. Also, the obligation of opening nurseries and crèches should be introduced to the Industrial Zones and Small Industrial Estates.

In addition, enterprises should be closely audited and documented (presently it is impossible to receive information and data on workplaces with more than 150 workers and their crèches)

with regard to the implementation of this article by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MLSS). Fines for determined violations of these obligations should be a deterrent.

The central government has entered into no obligation regarding crèche services for children 0-4 years old, other than the limited implementation of kindergartens for 5-year-old children started by the Ministry of National Education (MNE). Pre-school education is delegated completely to families, and especially to women. The government should take the necessary measures regarding implementation and funds allocation to extend the care and pre-school education institutions urgently.

Short school hours push women out of working life because they have to take care of their children at home. School hours should be made to fit with the working hours of adults via after school programs, especially for primary school students.

The prerequisite for cash transfers allocated to families from the Social Solidarity Fund (SSF) for elderly and disabled care, which necessitates that the person providing the care work not to work outside the home, should be abolished. Cash transfer implementation for elderly and disabled care is an implementation that confines women to the home. It also confines the elderly and disabled people to the home and isolates them from social life. Because of this, institutional care for disabled people is very important, not only for rehabilitation, but also as a tool for socialization. The government should clearly present how much funds it has allocated and what kinds of implementations it has carried out regarding care for the elderly and disabled people.