

United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

Question Letter on Results of 66th Session “Empowerment of Women in Changing Working World in terms of Economy”

*In the second paragraph of Article 128 of Turkish Constitution, "The qualifications, appointments, duties and powers, rights and obligations, salaries and allowances and other personnel matters of civil servants and other public officials are regulated by law. However, the provisions of collective agreements regarding financial and social rights are reserved." On the other hand, the general principles, procedures and principles of the exams to be held for the selection of those who will be appointed to public service and duties for the first time, and the pre-selection of those who will be appointed to professions by subjecting a special competitive examination in public institutions and organizations, are published in the Official Gazette dated 03/05/2002 and numbered 24744. It is regulated by the "**General Regulation on Examinations for Appointees**". Within the framework of the above-mentioned provision and explanation;- Salaries of civil servants are determined in a transparent manner by laws and collective agreements, based on objective criteria such as cadre title, class of service and length of service. The procedures and principles regarding the service and the selection of those to be appointed to their duties are regulated in a transparent manner based on the objective criteria with the **General Regulation on Examinations for Those Appointed for the First Time to Public Duties**.*

- Which specific measures were implemented to support entry and re-entry of women to the labour market and their progress in the labour market?

Half-Time Working Benefit

*“**Half-Time Working Benefit After Birth and Adoption of Children**” is paid to those meet necessary application and premium payment conditions in the period in which women giving birth and woman or male employees adopting children below the age of 3 have non-paid leave for half of weekly working time between 60 and 360 days, depending on the number and circumstances of birth as of the end of maternity leave.*

Half-time working benefit aims the harmony of working and family lives that enables women to take care their children without being distant from working life, and the protection of woman employment. It was put into practice in 2016. It is implemented for the care and raising of children as of the end of maternity leave after birth used in the scope of Labour Law. On condition that the child is alive, in case woman employees and woman or male employees who adopt children below the age of 3 desire, non-paid leave can be given as half of the weekly working time for the durations of 60 days for the first birth, 120 days for the second birth and 180 days for the following births (In multiple births 30 days are added to these durations. In case the child is born as disabled these durations are applied as 360 days).

Application and Benefitting Conditions for Half-Time Working Benefit are; (1) having paid unemployment insurance premiums for minimum 600 days within the last three years before the birth or adoption; (2) having worked actually for half of the weekly working time; (3) applying to the nearest İŞKUR unit within 30 days after the date the paid maternity leave expires with Half-Time Working Certificate After Birth and Adoption.

Job Clubs Project

Job Clubs project is an intensive job and vocational counselling programme, which aims to give methodical and motivation support for the groups, which require special policy such as women, in particular, youth, disabled, long-term unemployed, ex-convicts and drug addicts. The main goal of Job Clubs operating in 80 units in 72 provinces is to motivate individuals within the group requiring special policy in the labour market for participating in working life and to provide them with method support in this process. In this context, self-reliance of participants and their belief on finding job are increased by using methods such as group interview, individual working and peer counselling. Together with the cooperation started with Directorate General of Status of Woman in 2013, job and vocational counselling services are delivered to women in Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres (ŞÖNİM) and women's shelters. In this context, active cooperation is made with women's shelters, ŞÖNİMs and NGOs.

Mother at Work Project

***The Mother at Work Project** was implemented with the aim of increasing women's employment and preventing unemployment by including women in employment-guaranteed vocational training courses and on-the-job training programs. The project is implemented in vocational training courses and on-the-job training programs with at least 50% employment guaranteed. Women with children between the ages of 0-15 can benefit from the project. Women that would benefit from the project will be directed to job clubs to benefit from intensive job and vocational counselling services in provincial directorates having job clubs. However, in provinces that have no job clubs, women are enabled to benefit from job and vocational counselling services at first. Thereafter, women will be directed to vocational training courses with employment guarantee at minimum fifty percent and on-the-job training programmes organised by İŞKUR.*

In addition, in order to meet the qualified labour force needs of employers in the industrial and manufacturing sectors, childcare support is provided for women participating in vocational training courses and on-the-job training programs organised by İŞKUR in the industrial and manufacturing sectors. Among women participating in these programmes, woman trainees/participants with children between the age of 2 and 5 and whose children are attending a kindergarten/day care centre have been given care support of maximum 400 TL for only one child during the course period.

Additional Employment Incentive

It is aimed to cover all premiums and taxes of each insured employed by private sector employers in addition to the average number of insured persons in the previous year. In this context, monthly support is provided between 1,556.53 and 3,792.47 TL (high amount for the IT and manufacturing sector) per insured. If young people (18-25 years old), women and disabled citizens are recruited, the benefit period is applied as 18 months.

Incentive for Women, Youth and Those Having Vocational Competence Certificate

Since 2011, employers' shares of social security premiums ranging from 6 months to 54 months, up to the upper limit of earnings subject to premium, have been covered with this incentive. In order to benefit from this incentive, additional employment must be provided according to the 6-month average number of insured.

Public Works (TYP)

These are programmes that are applied by İŞKUR in the periods or places, in which unemployment is intense, with the aims of preventing especially unemployed people who have difficulty to be employed from becoming distant from working life and providing them with temporary income support; through actualising a task or service for social benefit.

Women, in particular, individuals over the age of 35, the disabled, ex-convicts, and those who were injured in the fight against terrorism without being considered disabled can primarily benefit from the programme.

Operations at Programming or Procurement Phase

1. Strengthening normative and legal frameworks (paragraphs 40 (a) to (j))

- What specific actions have been taken to enact, strengthen and enforce laws and regulatory frameworks that **ensure gender equality** and prohibit discrimination against women in the world of work?

***Operation for Promoting Decent Future of Work Approach with a Focus of Gender Equality** is designed for supporting gender equality policies in Turkey. It includes service and grant components.*

Under service component, it is aimed to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Department of Employment Policies (DEP) of the General Directorate of Labour (DG Labour) in the MoLSS, its relevant stakeholders, social partners and NGOs within the scope of decent future of work approach with a focus of gender equality through delivering trainings, establishing commonly used monitoring mechanisms for strategy documents, preparing advocacy strategy, conducting research, organizing workshops and conferences, etc. Trainings will be delivered on improving skills and qualifications of the staff in drafting legislations and national documents to strengthen policy-making process, promoting decent future of work on international labour standards, gender equality, etc. The monitoring system which will be established among the stakeholders of the *National Employment Strategy* will be tailor-made and IT based. An advocacy strategy will be a guideline for awareness raising activities in the field of increasing gender equality and employment with a focus of decent future of work approach. All research on sector studies, impact assessment, mobbing and employment of persons with disabilities will be conducted within the scope of the decent Future of Work approach. This method will contribute to the preparation, revision, improvement and/or implementation of legal framework in alignment with the EU acquis, promote evidence-based policy making, and implement employment policies at national level. Workshops and conferences aim to have feedback/comments from relevant stakeholders about the research to disseminate decent future of work culture and to discuss needs of regions in terms of gender equality.

Grant component of the operation aims to enhance employment and employability particularly for women through vocational trainings in the field of information technologies, industry 4.0 and e-commerce, career guidance and counselling services in e-commerce, awareness raising activities on employment and entrepreneurship in the field of industry 4.0. The skills in the field of informatics will be improved through the informatics trainings to. In addition, product design, marketing and sales skills will be improved through e-commerce trainings. With regards to the gender equality studies on awareness raising, social awareness will also be developed on the issue, particularly in the field of gender-based discrimination and employment supported by technology. Therefore, entrepreneurship and employment will be supported with the grant component. In this context, the grant component of operation is expected also to contribute to the national documents through encouraging women's participation in the labour market.

Operation for Empowering Women through Cooperatives is another project which consists of only service component to contribute to increase women employment and empower women through promoting and supporting women's cooperatives. Trainings for women with the potential of establishing cooperatives/becoming cooperative partners and/or for women who are already cooperative partners will be delivered; a consultant pool will be established. Institutional capacity building trainings for the staff of related institutions, NGO representatives and academics will be organized. Awareness-raising activities including an international conference and workshops will be carried out. Scientific and technical studies including research on good practices and innovative fields, a mapping and clustering study on women's cooperatives, a women's cooperative ecosystem model will be accomplished. Local stakeholder and domestic experience sharing meetings will be organized to strengthen the coordination and cooperation mechanisms and to develop marketing networks.

- What specific actions have been taken to enact, strengthen and enforce laws and regulations that uphold the principle of **equal pay for equal work** or work of equal value in both the public and private sectors?
- What measures have been taken to enact, strengthen and enforce laws and policies to **eliminate all forms of violence and harassment against women** in the world of work and provide means of effective redress in cases of noncompliance?

2. Strengthening education, training, and skills development (paragraphs 40 (k) to (n))

- What measures have been taken to mainstream **a gender perspective into education and training programmes in order to facilitate the effective transition from education or unemployment to work?**

Operation for Labour Market Support Programme for NEETs (NEET PRO) is designed for supporting policies targeting NEETs in Turkey. When considering that the vast majority of NEETs are women in Turkey, the implementation of this project has utmost importance. More importantly, at least %40 of the final beneficiaries of services and trainings will be women. The project includes service and grant components.

Under service component, it is aimed to increase policy making and implementation capacity of İŞKUR to provide better active labour market policies for youth not in education, employment or training (NEETs) through generating trainings, developing individual action plan (IAP), implementing and monitoring jobseekers allowance (JSA) model, following outreach strategy, conducting field and academic researches about NEETs, and carrying out study visits. In order to raise awareness of NEETs, their families and other stakeholders regarding participation to labour market of NEETs, conferences and some of visibility activities will be realized. Additionally, the grant

projects to be contracted under the grant component of the operation will be visited for providing inputs for IAP and JSA model to be developed under this component.

Within grant component, local grant projects targeting 15- 29 years old NEETs will be financed. In addition, it will be strongly recommended to potential grant beneficiaries to apply with a private sector company as an associate in the relevant field in order to increase effectiveness of the grant projects and to strengthen the labour demand and supply sides interaction. The target groups (young people, who are NEET) of the grant projects will be expected to be registered to İŞKUR database. As a result, the main goal of this project is to produce policies to contribute the effective transition from education or unemployment to work for women.

Operation for Increasing Attendance and Enrolment Rates in Secondary Education is designed for supporting policies to increase attendance and enrolment rates with a specific focus on girls in regions where girls are under more risk of leaving the education system than boys.

Under service component, a comprehensive prevention, intervention and compensation model will be developed and implemented to increase attendance and enrolment rates in secondary education. Early Warning System will be developed to determine girls and boys at risk of early school leaving for further development of relevant measures. Guidelines and a national strategy paper will be prepared. Home visits and information meetings for parents of students who are under the risk of early school leaving (especially girls) will be arranged. Awareness raising activities aiming to promote the model and interventions will be conducted. Scientific and technical studies will be executed. Workshops, conferences, study visits, etc will be organized, etc.

Under supply component, activity classrooms will be established and/or equipped in pilot schools containing basic materials and equipment necessary for arts, music, drama, science etc. activities. This support will be in the form of supply tender for materials which will be necessary for the implementation of the prevention, intervention and compensation model to be developed within the service component. Equipment to be procured within this framework are items such as 3D printers, laptops, microprocessors and microcontrollers, various musical instruments, equipment for arts and traditional crafts etc. By considering that completion of education is crucial for the effective transition from education or unemployment to work, this project aims to support girls to conclude their education and then participate to labour force.

Operation for Improving the Quality of Vocational Education and Training through Establishment of Sectoral Centres of Excellence (IQVET) is another project aiming to increase quality of vocational and technical education by developing the knowledge, skills and competencies in line with the EQARF and EQAVET through training administrative and teaching staff of the Directorate General for Vocational Education and Training (DG VET) and relevant stakeholders; improving learning environments; providing VET as an attractive option for students, increasing cooperation between schools, social partners and private sector through establishing Sectoral Centres of Excellence (SCoE). In general, the project is structured in line with expectations of the private sector and the business world. In return, increasing quality of the VET will lead to improved employability, high level income and personal qualifications and satisfaction. The project also integrates disadvantaged persons and **women with economic activities with the emergence of new education opportunities or increase in their quality**. In this framework, it includes three components as service, supply and grant.

Under service component, effectiveness of quality assurance system (QAS) currently implemented by the DG VET will be increased especially through ad-hoc consultancy

and trainings provided for the staff of DG VET and relevant stakeholders. Activities such as trainings, meetings will be organized in order to increase participation of private sector to the implementation process of the QAS. Principles and procedures of the SCoE will be developed as a part of in-service training system of the DG VET. Theoretical and practical trainings will be provided to the staff of SCoE on planning, preparing training programs and coordinating on the job trainings for developing and updating the knowledge of VET teachers. Various theoretical and practical trainings such as material development; usage of training materials; vocational guidance and career consultancy; foreign language, mathematics and science applications considering vocational and technical education will be given to the VET teachers. Besides, awareness raising activities to promote vocational and technical education will be organised. A pilot implementation of the modular credit passing system will be conducted and feasibility report on this system will be prepared.

Under supply component, Vocational and Technical Institution will be equipped to serve as SCoE. The equipment to be procured for these centres as MoNE will establish them from scratch. The supply component for these centres will complete and support the approach as well as create an image for these centres. Host schools for SCoE will be chosen according to the success of these schools in that field, schools that can provide accommodation nearby, schools that have enough available space for SCoE and schools with high equipment level. SCoE will work within the in-service training system of MoNE as training provider and coordinator of on-the-job training in their fields.

The grant component is designed for increasing quality of VET, training of teachers and establishing cooperation among vocational secondary education institutions, representatives of the business world, professional organizations, NGOs working in the field of education, such as representatives of business world (TESK, TİSK, TOBB etc.), employees (HAK-İŞ, TÜRK-İŞ etc), foundations which have previous work on VET. The system is even though structured in cooperation and with broad participation; there are still many problems to be handled sector wise. The Grant Scheme will not only fill in the necessary gaps for a complete fulfilment but also increase the sense of ownership of the sector through active participation of all stakeholders by the projects. All the actions will be realized by embracing the “partnership approach”.

3. Implementing economic and social policies for women’s economic empowerment

(paragraphs 40 (o) to (mm))

- What steps have been taken to promote decent **paid care and domestic work** in the public and private sectors?
- What actions and investments have been made to support **gender-responsive social protection and care infrastructure and services**?

Operation for Improving Day Care and Home Care Services for the Elderly (YAGEP) aims to provide social protection and care services to the elderly in Turkey and in terms of longevity, by considering that women live longer than men, this project will support care policies to be provided to the elderly women. The project includes service and supply components.

Under service component, it is aimed to improve the sustainability and efficiency of social and health care systems for the elderly with a focus on quality home care and day care services. To this aim, an elderly care model will be developed and various sub-activities such as swot analysis, desk studies, focus group meetings, etc. will be conducted for the design of the model. Also, pilot implementation of the model will be carried out. Apart from these, training modules will be prepared and trainings will be

delivered to trainers and service providers working in the elderly care services. Besides, awareness raising activities will be organised; studies will be conducted and other activities such as organising summit on the elderly policies, gathering local steering committees will be arranged.

Under supply component, day care centers in 10 pilot provinces of Turkey will be equipped to diversify care services to the elderly.

- What specific measures have been implemented to promote **women's entry, reentry and advancement** in the labour market?

Operation for Sustainable Integration of Disadvantaged People to Labour Force in TRB1 Region aims to increase the social inclusion of **women** and youth in poverty or at risk of poverty in the TRB1 Region through enhancing their access to labour market. In this framework, vocational and skill build-up trainings, professional career guidance and counselling services will be carried out to increase the employability of target groups. Trainings will be delivered to the staff of beneficiary and relevant public bodies. Technical visits to successful vocational training centers will be organized. An awareness-raising campaign aiming to change attitudes and promote diversity in the workplaces will be designed for the target groups as well as actions including meetings, info seminars, conferences and publicity in target provinces. Scientific and technical studies regarding the employment of the target people and a social entrepreneurship model based on the needs of the TRB1 Region will be conducted.

4. Addressing the growing informality of work and mobility of women workers (paragraphs 40 (nn) to (qq))

- What measures have been implemented to promote the **transition from informal to formal paid employment** for women?

5. Managing technological and digital change for women's economic empowerment (paragraphs 40 (rr) to (ss))

- What specific actions have been taken to support women's access to skills development and decent work in **emerging fields, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics**?

Under grant component of *Operation for Promoting Decent Future of Work Approach with a Focus of Gender Equality*, grant projects aiming to strengthen employment of women in emerging fields, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics will be supported.

6. Strengthening women's collective voice, leadership, and decision-making (paragraphs 40 (tt) to (aaa))

- What specific efforts have been implemented to support **women's participation and leadership in trade unions, workers' organizations and employers' organizations**?

Operation for Empowering Women through Cooperatives aims to strengthen women to become decision-makers as cooperative partners and/or to be successful in executive positions in cooperatives. To this aim, consultancy services and trainings on leadership will be delivered to women working for cooperatives.

7. Strengthening the role of the **private sector** in women's economic empowerment (paragraphs 40 (bbb) to (eee))

- What efforts have been undertaken to encourage **private firms and institutions to mainstream gender equality** considerations in policies and practices?

- What action has been taken to increase **investment and support for women entrepreneurs**?

Please see explanations above provided for *Operation for Promoting Decent Future of Work Approach with a Focus of Gender Equality* and *Operation for Improving the Quality of Vocational Education and Training through Establishment of Sectoral Centres of Excellence*.

As report submission must strictly adhere to established deadlines, it will not be possible to reflect in the report contributions received after 30 September 2021.