

**FACT SHEET ON THE REPORT TO BE PREPARED WITHIN SCOPE OF THE UN  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION NO. 72/234 ON "WOMEN IN  
DEVELOPMENT"**

Women's active participation in economic life is one of the most essential indicators of development and increasing welfare levels of countries as well as its contribution to women's individual development.

In Turkey, thanks to the measures and incentives aimed at ensuring more women's participation into work life, women's labour force participation rate has increased up to 34,2% while women's employment rate has risen to 29,4% as of 2018.

The issues including women's empowerment in the labour market, promotion of their participation in the work life are among Turkey's priorities. In this regard, the National Employment Strategy includes the aim to increase the rate of women's labour participation up to 41% and to decrease the informal employment rate to 30% in 2023. As a result of the efforts exerted, the aforementioned rate decreased to 42,1% in 2018 while it had been 72,5% in 2002.

2019 Presidential Annual Programme includes the policy priorities of women's economic and social empowerment, conducting activities regarding gender-responsive budgeting, developing incentives to implement active labour force programs and provide employment with the aim of ensuring women's labour force participation.

**The Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women's Empowerment (2018-2023)** which was prepared under the coordination of Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services and put into effect in 2018 sets the issues of strengthening women's economic status, supporting women's entrepreneurship, reconciliation of work and family life as the policy priorities. The aforementioned Strategy Paper and Action Plan constitutes an essential instrument for reflection of legal developments into practice and making all relevant parties take responsibility. It is aimed with the Strategy Paper and Action Plan to ensure inter-sectorial cooperation and coordination and to provide a holistic contribution to the initiatives to be carried out in the process of women's empowerment in Turkey.

Highly important reforms have been carried out at both legal and implementation level for enhancement of women's status in the labour market. Although there is not any point to prevent women's participation into work life in the basic legal legislation such as Turkish Civil Code, the Labour Act and Turkish Criminal Code and the Constitution in particular; provisions with affirmative action have been introduced.

While the Labour Law No. 4857 includes the equal treatment obligation of employers, some forms of prohibitions of discrimination are regulated specifically. Discrimination due to gender or pregnancy is prohibited; it is regulated that differential remuneration for equal or equivalent work is not permissible and application of special protective provisions due to the employee's sex shall not justify paying him (her) a lower wage.

In addition; there are important regulations including providing half-time employment due to childbirth and part-time employment for parents in order to ensure balance between work and

family life; exemption of crèches from taxes for five taxation periods as of the taxation period they come into operation.

A provision regarding women in home-based services was inserted to the Law No.5510 as per the Law No.6552 and dated 10<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Accordingly, those in insured employment in home-based services have been considered in the relevant proceedings depending on whether they are recruited less or more than 10 days a month as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. Those recruited less than 10 days a month shall be insured against occupational accidents and diseases, their premiums shall be covered by the employers and the insured shall be entitled to pay their long-term (pension) and general health insurance premiums until the end of the following month, if they choose to do so. The premiums of those recruited for ten days and longer a month are paid by their employers in scope of easy employer practices.

In addition to legal amendments, the issues such as increasing women's participation into employment, promoting women's entrepreneurship, extending women's cooperatives, facilitating women's access to all resources, particularly financial resources and ensuring women's active participation in development processes are among our main working areas.

Within this scope, many activities and projects have been carried out in order to ensure women's effective and dignified participation in the work life. These activities are briefly as follows:

- **“Mom’s Job, My future Project (2013-2019)”** was put into practice in order to establish nurseries in Organized Industrial Zones (OIZs) within scope of the cooperation protocol signed on 21st January 2013 among the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, the Ministry of Industry and Technology, and Borusan Holding Inc.. Under the Project, nurseries in OIZs in the provinces of Adiyaman, Afyonkarahisar, Balıkesir and Malatya were constructed and they continue to operate.
- **Engineer Girls of Turkey Project (2016-2020)** was put into practice through the partnership among the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, Ministry of National Education, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Limak Holding. The Project aims to give support in all spheres for the female students who want to be engineers and enable them to be role models of their profession. The final target to be reached under the project in line with this target is girls who are attending high school and universities. In this regard; more than 300 female students have benefitted from scholarship program so far, and 111 female students are provided with internship support during 2018-2019 academic year. Furthermore; internship and employment opportunities, English language program, trainings on “Social Engineering” and leadership program are organised for female scholarship holders and various activities are organized as part of the mentor- mentee network which was created. Within scope of awareness-raising activities for high schools as another target, 21.400 persons have been reached in total during the organisations for teachers, parents and students in 10 pilot provinces.
- On the occasion of **“International Day of Women and Girls in Science”** and **“International Girls in Information and Communications Technology Day”**; **“Training on Conscious and Safe Use of Information Technologies and Internet”** and **“Digital Literacy”** training programs are carried out in cooperation with the private

sector regarding efficient use of opportunities provided by the digital technology. 2.863 women have benefitted from these trainings so far.

- **“The Cooperation Protocol on Strengthening Women’s Cooperatives”** was signed on 30th October 2018 between the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Ministry of Trade. Under the aforementioned Protocol; **“the Workshop on Strengthening Women’s Cooperatives”** was organized on 15th November 2018 in cooperation with relevant parties in order to discuss the current situation of women’s cooperatives in Turkey, their problems and solution offers. Taking into consideration the protocol obligations and workshop results, the initiatives are underway in partnership with the Ministry of Trade and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.
- **“The Seminars on Financial Literacy and Women’s Economic Empowerment”** are organized under the coordination of Provincial Directorates of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services in cooperation with ISKUR, SMIDO, TOBB Women Entrepreneurs Board, TISVA (Turkish Foundation for Waste Reduction) and HABITAT Association with the aim of awareness-raising on money management, income, expense, savings, asset, debt, investment, investment instruments, individual pension system etc.. 7.100 women participated in the seminars held in 23 provinces between 2017 and 2018. In 2019, it is planned to continue these seminars. In order to extend them to 81 provinces, **“Trainers’ Training on Financial Literacy”** was organized for 100 members of profession working at the affiliated institutions and Provincial Directorates of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services. It is aimed to reach 7.000 persons in 20 provinces by the end of May through the trainings by the members of profession who have received trainers’ training.