

1. Strengthening normative and legal frameworks

- 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?

In order to ensure gender equality and prohibit discrimination against women in the world of work, many regulations listed below have been implemented since March 2017.

- With the article added to the Unemployment Insurance Law No. 4447 in 2018; in terms of providing new employment opportunities, according to certain conditions, insurance premiums of men over 18 years old and under 29 years old and women over 18 years old for 24 to 54 months will be covered from the unemployment insurance fund. The application has been extended until 31 December 2022 with the Presidential Decision.
- With the article added to the Unemployment Insurance Law No. 4447 in 2018, private sector employers are provided with premium and tax support for 18 months for each female insured person they will employ, in addition to the average number of employees in the previous calendar year. The implementation period of the support was extended until 31 December 2022 by the President's Decision.
- In 2018, by making a regulation in the Income Tax Law; an exemption from income tax has been provided for the amount of nursery support provided that the employer makes the payment not to exceed 50 percent of the monthly gross minimum wage for each child of female employees and that the payment is made directly to the crèches and nursing homes that provide these services.
- With the regulation made in 2019, women who were determined to sell the products they produced in their homes without opening a shop, without being subject to any employer's employment contract, by working continuously and profitably in their own business, without hiring outside workers and transforming the business into an industrial style, can earn 30 days of insurance service every month by paying disability, old-age and death insurance and general health insurance premiums by increasing 28 days for 2021 and one point for each following year.

In addition to these, statements about the economic empowerment of women have been included in the higher policy documents that determine the general framework of policies and activities:

In the women's section of the **11th Development Plan (2019-2023)**, the main objective is to prevent all kinds of discrimination against women and to ensure their empowerment and benefit from rights and opportunities equally in all spheres of social life. Goals aimed at strengthening the position of women in economic life, until the end of 2023 are;

- 38.5%,for female labour force participation rate,
- 34% for female employment rate,
- 20% for the rate of women among the self-employed,
- 10% for the rate of women among those working as employers.

Also, the following measures are included:

- Vocational training and skill development opportunities for women will be strengthened, especially in the fields of technology production such as coding and software to increase female employment in the labour market.
- Practices that harmonize work and family life, especially facilitating access to care services, will be implemented dynamically in order to increase women's participation in labour force and employment.
- In order to develop women's economic activities, consultancy and guidance services will be provided to women entrepreneurs in their business development processes, and women will be given priority in support in this area.
- Mechanisms targeting the development of women's economic activities in digital environments such as websites, portals and applications will be established, and trainings and seminars will be organized to empower women entrepreneurs in e-commerce.
- For cooperatives established by women; supports offered in fields such as training, entrepreneurship and consultancy will be disseminated and it will be easier for women to establish cooperatives by making necessary legal arrangements.
- In order to increase the effective participation of women in economic life, it will be ensured that practices such as training, internship and on-the-job training continue effectively, taking into account the different labour needs of the provinces.
- Support mechanisms will be provided to increase women's entrepreneurship in rural areas.
- Within the framework of the changing needs of the labour market, activities will be carried out to guide girls to professions in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, taking into account the newly developing professions.

In the **Medium Term Program (2022-2024)**, the following policies and measures have been determined:

- Dissemination of Job Club programs aimed at women's entry into the labour market and their permanence,

- For sustainability of the necessary activities for the effective participation of women in economic life, facilitating business establishment and development processes, encouraging them to participate more in e-commerce platforms, providing supportive services by strengthening women's cooperatives and development of financial literacy among women,
- In order to harmonize work and family life and to encourage participation in the workforce, disseminating quality, affordable and easily accessible child, disabled and elderly care facilities.

Similarly, in the **Presidential Annual Program of 2021**, the main purpose of "preventing all kinds of discrimination against women, ensuring that women benefit equally from rights and opportunities in all spheres of social life and that they are empowered" has been emphasized.

Within the framework of "Increasing Employment of Groups Requiring Special Policy", which is one of the main policy axes of the **National Employment Strategy (2014-2023)**, the importance of increasing women's employment opportunities was emphasized and it has been aimed to reduce the unregistered employment rate of women to 30%. Within the framework of the main objective of removing the barriers to women's participation in the labour force and employment, policies to increase their participation in the labour force and employment, and to combat unregistered employment have been determined.

With regards to the rights of women, the **Strategy Document and the Action Plan on the Empowerment of Women (2018-2023)** coordinated by our Ministry has 5 main pillars on education, economy and employment, health, media and participation to the decision-making mechanisms.

In the Strategy Paper and Action Plan, policies aimed at empowering women in the economic field; are designed to provide more active participation of women in working life and to have a voice in economic life in line with changing labour market dynamics. Strategies determined in this field can be summarized as;

- Re-evaluating the labour market legislation and making necessary improvements for effective implementation within the framework of the goal of further empowerment of women,
- Strengthening opportunities for vocational training and skills development in order to increase the employment of qualified women in the labour market,
- Strengthening the economic position of women and developing economic and social policies to combat informality, especially unpaid family labour,
- Preparation of certification infrastructure and equality of opportunity between companies and men and development of public-private sector cooperation,
- Improving women's entrepreneurship and strengthening the economic position of women, in particular by spreading the use of information and communication technologies,
- Increasing efforts to engage women who require special policies in economic life.

In order to implement these strategies, a total of 40 activities have been identified.

- 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?

N/A

- 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?

N/A

2. Strengthening education, training, and skills development

- 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?

In the Strategy Document and the Action Plan on the Empowerment of Women (2018-2023) coordinated by our Ministry, the objectives of increasing the sensitivity of education and training processes and stakeholders to the equality of women and men and to women's groups that require special policies have been defined. Some of the identified strategies are as follows:

- Capacity building for institutions to ensure gender equality in education,
- Increasing the awareness all educators/trainers on gender equality,
- Increasing the gender sensitivity of curricula and educational materials.

In the Economy part of the Strategy Document and the Action Plan, the strategy of strengthening vocational training and skill development opportunities for increasing the qualified employment of women in the labor market has been determined, and some of the activities under this strategy are as follows:

- Efforts will be made to employ women in occupations that are not limited to traditional employment areas and where they are less involved than men.
- Efforts will be increased to train female workforce in the IT sector.
- Vocational training courses will be provided in order to train female workforce in the tourism sector.
- Course programs for training qualified female personnel in the field of health will be increased.

- It will be ensured that qualified female workers are trained in the fields needed by the construction industry.

In addition, within the scope of the Mother at Work Project, implemented together with Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) to support the employment of women with children in the 0-15 age group, intensive counseling services are offered to women in Job Clubs, and then they are directed to vocational training courses or on-the-job training programs with 50% employment guarantee. Women are paid a higher participation fee during these courses and programs. Since the beginning of the project in 2018, 56.939 women have benefited from the Mother at Work Project.

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

- **What steps have been taken to promote decent paid care and domestic work in the public and private sectors?**
- Within the framework of the aim of reconciling work and family life, "Private Nursery and Day Care Centers" have been exempted from income and corporate taxes for five taxation periods, starting from the taxation period when they became operational.
- Investments of at least 500 thousand Turkish liras to be made by the private sector for kindergartens and day care centers and pre-school education have been enabled to benefit from regional supports. With another regulation, if the employers provide nursery and day care support for the children of female employees, this support is not added to the income tax base of the female employee and is exempted from taxation.
- Free use of children in need is provided at the rate of three percent of the existing capacity of private kindergartens and day care centers and children's clubs.
- Within the scope of "My Mother's Job My Future Project" carried out by our Ministry in cooperation with the private sector; kindergartens were opened in organized industrial zones to increase women's employment, especially in the industrial sector and ensure that children benefit from institutional care services.
- Women who attend courses and programs organized by Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) in the industry sector and have children between the ages of 2 and 5 are provided with care support throughout the course/program.

- Finally, with the "Project of Supporting Registered Women's Employment through Institutional Child Care Services" initiated by SGK, it is aimed to reach 10.250 women; with the Project named "Promoting Registered Women's Employment through Supporting Trained Caregivers" it is aimed to reach 3,700 women.
- What actions and investments have been made to support gender-responsive social protection and care infrastructure and services?

Considering the fact that women are more affected by poverty and face the risk of poverty more, the social assistance programs run by our Ministry aim to strengthen women's economic and social status and increase their participation in social life. In this context, for 2019;

- 61% of social assistance beneficiaries,
- 67% of regular social assistance beneficiaries,
- 54% of the temporary social assistance beneficiaries are women.

Aid programs for women are as follows:

- Conditional Education and Health Benefits Programs
In order to increase the enrollment rates of female students and the transition rates from primary to secondary education, the amount of payments made to female students is higher than to male students.
- Aid Program for Widowed Women
Because the living standards of women drop significantly when their spouses pass away. The program is carried out to support them.
- Birth Assistance and Multiple Birth Assistance Programs
Within the scope of the program, cash aid is provided for each children born alive.

In addition, social assistance women beneficiaries are registered in the Turkish Employment Agency system to ensure their employment.

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

In order to raise awareness of women on issues such as money management, income, expenditure, savings, wealth, debt, savings, investment, investment instruments, and the private pension system, and to provide information on support and incentives for women's economic empowerment, the "Financial Literacy and Women's Economic Empowerment Seminars" are

held under the coordination of our Ministry. In the seminars, representatives of institutions such as Social Security Institution (SGK), Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) and Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization (KOSGEB) provide women information on subjects such as vocational courses, entrepreneurship and insurance/social security. Since 2017, 570.591 people have been attended these seminars through 184 events held in 81 provinces.

4. Addressing the growing informality of work and mobility of women workers

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

In the "Financial Literacy and Women's Economic Empowerment Seminars" organized for raising awareness of women on issues such as money management, income, expenditure, savings, wealth, debt, savings, investment, investment instruments, and the private pension system, and providing information on support and incentives for women's economic empowerment, information on insurance/social security and its importance are provided by Social Security Institution (SGK). Since 2017, 570.591 people have been attended these seminars through 184 events held in 81 provinces.

5. Managing technological and digital change for women's economic empowerment

- **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?**

In the Strategy Document and the Action Plan on the Empowerment of Women (2018-2023) coordinated by our Ministry, activities of "Efforts will be increased to train female workforce in the IT sector.", "Participation of women in 'Digital Literacy Trainings' will be increased." and "Women and girls will be supported to obtain vocational qualification certificates in professions in the media, communication, publishing and information technologies sectors." have been envisaged. In this context, trainings are planned to be provided on database, software, network technologies, digital marketing, computer games and applications and information security, etc., are needed for women.

In addition, on the occasion of the "International Girls in Information and Communication Technologies Day" and the "International Day of Women and Girls in Science", in order to encourage girls to science and communication technologies and to raise awareness in the society, successful role model women in science and girls have been brought together and

trainings have been held. In addition, trainings have been organized for women and girls on safe and conscious internet use, effective use of e-mail, use of cloud technology, and basic data and digital literacy.

Within the Engineer Girls of Turkey Project carried out in cooperation with our Ministry, Ministry of National Education, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Limak Foundation, it is aimed to ensure that female students who want to become engineers are supported in every field and become examples of the profession. The project started in 2016 and will end in December 2021. Within the scope of the university program of the project, along with the scholarship opportunity to the students; internship and employment opportunities, English language training, trainings on 'Social Engineering' certificate program and mentoring support are provided. In this context; to date, a total of 560 female students have benefited from the scholarship program. Within the scope of the high school program of the project, trainings of trainer programs have been carried out with the participation of a total of 307 teachers, and role model studies and awareness raising activities have been organized by the teachers who participated in the training of trainers in 125 high schools in 40 provinces. The number of students, parents and teachers reached so far within the scope of these activities is 26.849. In addition, the "Ask the Engineer" application was launched on the Project website; 44 volunteer female engineers answer the questions posed by the students. In addition, the "TMK Talks" program, which includes the speeches of competent people on certain topics, is broadcast on the YouTube channel of the Project every month.

6. Strengthening women's collective voice, leadership, and decision-making

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

N/A

7. Strengthening the role of the private sector in women's economic empowerment

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

In order to encourage women's participation in the corporate boards of companies in Turkey, with the "Project of Consultation on the Roadmap for Promoting Gender Diversity on Corporate Boards in Turkey" initiated in September 2019; a Roadmap has been developed that will emphasize that this issue is not just a social issue; at the same time, an issue that will the

positively affect the effectiveness of the board of directors and the performance of companies. The Project was financed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), supported by Sabancı University's Corporate Governance Forum in the consultation process as a facilitator, and our Ministry took part in the Steering Committee. In the upcoming period, studies will be carried out for the implementation of the Roadmap created within the scope of the Project.

Within the scope of the Equality Seal Program (Equality Management Model in Business) of Engineer Girls of Turkey Project carried out in cooperation with our Ministry, Ministry of National Education, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Limak Foundation; it is aimed to close the gaps that may occur between the genders in the working life and to establish standards related to this through the only global equality certificate program carried out under the ownership of the United Nations for public and private sector organizations. The pilot implementation of the program, which envisages the establishment of an internal management system in which companies constantly monitor the equality of opportunities and balance between women and men in their own structures and business relations, and take reformative measures, has been carried out at Limak Investment. In this context, an Equality Committee was established to manage the program; in-service trainings were held to develop a common understanding. The implementation of the 1-year action plan developed by the Equality Committee has been completed. The activities for the dissemination of Equality Seal studies continue, and within this scope, studies are carried out in 4 companies of the Limak Tourism Group.

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

The activities carried out by the institutions such as Ministry of Trade, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization (KOSGEB) etc. for women entrepreneurs have been tracked.