

**Updated Shadow Report on the 8<sup>th</sup> Periodic Review of Turkey**

**Submitted by**

**The Executive Committee on NGO Forum for CEDAW**

**to the**

**United Nations**

**Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination**

**Against Women**

**for submission to the 82<sup>nd</sup> Session of CEDAW**

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## INTRODUCTION

1. This Shadow Report<sup>1</sup> is an updated version of the Shadow Report prepared for the 8<sup>th</sup> Periodic Review in 2021 and aims to draw attention to discrimination against women and girls in Turkey. The forms of discrimination experienced have been grouped under 5 headings: Legal Framework, Participation in Political Life and Decision-making Mechanisms and Special Temporary Measures, Employment, Education and Violence against Women (VAW). The discrimination faced by women with disabilities, LGBTI+women, refugees, asylum-seekers and migrant women and girls is discussed under each heading.
2. **Since 2016, none of the CEDAW Committee Recommendations have been implemented or progress made regarding findings of the Shadow Report on the 7<sup>th</sup> Periodic Review including those highlighted by the Committee in the Concluding Observations.**<sup>2</sup>
3. The introduction of a legal package called the “internal security law”<sup>3</sup> ushered a period of significant regression of rights and freedoms. This process **transformed into a phase of re-designing the entire legal system in the aftermath of the state of emergency, declared on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016.** A constitutional amendment, enacted following a referendum during the state of emergency, ended the parliamentary system of government. **A healthy and effective separation of powers between legislature, executive and judiciary has not been ensured within the Constitutional structure<sup>4</sup> as powers continue to accumulate at the Presidential level.<sup>5</sup> All the legal regulations and amendments, introduced in violation of the Constitution and international standards, have rendered institutions dysfunctional and put independent and impartial Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), primarily**

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<sup>1</sup> The Executive Committee on NGO Forum for CEDAW consists of 20 independent gender-based women's and LGBTI+ organisations that are working to promote and protect women's and LGBTI+ rights. However, this report is the product of a collaborative effort including many other women's rights organisations.

<sup>2</sup> CEDAW/C7TUR/Q/7, paragraphs 9, 10 and 11

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/kanunlar/k6638.html> The Law no. 6638 on Amending the Police Powers and Duties Law, the Law on the Gendarmerie's Organization, Duties and Authorities, and Some [Other] Laws

<sup>4</sup> CEDAW/C7TUR/Q/7, paragraph 8

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.avrupa.info.tr/sites/default/files/uploads/Memo\\_Turkey\\_TR.pdf](https://www.avrupa.info.tr/sites/default/files/uploads/Memo_Turkey_TR.pdf)

women's organisations, at risk of being closed down<sup>6</sup> or being appointed trustees by the Ministry of the Interior.

4. **All these changes within the legal system and increasing autocratic tendencies have directly impacted women's rights and significantly limited and reduced the activities of independent women's organisations.** Democracy and freedom to participate are ignored and prevented through legal amendments, resulting in **a complete absence of legal security.** The constitutional debate introduced by government in February 2021 yields possibilities leading to new anti-democratic practices.<sup>7</sup> First, a Human Rights Action Plan<sup>8</sup> containing goals to expand human rights and freedoms was announced on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021, and then came **the announcement on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021 of withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention with a presidential decree issued at midnight, revealing reason for concern.**<sup>9</sup> A campaign, initiated in 2020 with support from government officials,<sup>10</sup> men's groups, cults and media opposing the Convention, was concluded with a notification to the Council of Europe of the decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention in utter disregard of women, women's organisations, Parliament and Constitutional provisions.<sup>11</sup> **The campaign against the Convention, backed by government, proceeded by targeting independent women's organisations, LGBTI+women and LGBTI+women's organisations,<sup>12</sup> attacking Law no. 6284 on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women (Law no.6284) and finally CEDAW and even the Lanzarote Convention.<sup>13</sup>** No state institution, including the General Directorate on the Status of Women (GDSW) or the Committee on Equality of Opportunity for Women and Men (KEFEK), reacted to the decision or provided explanations. **Turkey's unprecedented withdrawal from the**

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<sup>6</sup> <https://siviltoplumsusturulamaz.org/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://bianet.org/archives/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=women%27s+coalition&sec=english>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-56270862>

<sup>9</sup> <https://kadinkoalisyonu.org/the-istanbul-convention-is-a-guarantee-for-womens-and-lgbtis-human-rights-the-istanbul-convention-saves-lives/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/politika/2020/07/02/numan-kurtulmus-istanbul-sozlesmesinin-imzalanmasi-yanlisti>

<sup>11</sup> [https://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution\\_en.pdf](https://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf)

According to the Constitution, withdrawal from a convention on fundamental rights and freedoms cannot be regulated through a Presidential decree.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/428580/ankarada-kadin-meclislerinin-istanbul-sozlesmesi-eyleminde-iki-gozalti>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.amerikaninsesi.com/a/icisleri-bakani-suleyman-soylyu-lgbt-sapkinlari-twitter-tweet-uyari-nefret/5762054.html>

**Convention, as the first signatory, constitutes a grave threat to the struggle for women's rights and the implementation of Law no. 6284 and CEDAW.**

5. **The GDSW, the “so-called” national mechanism, has lost its function and become invisible.** Meanwhile, equality institutions, including **KEFEK, the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey (HREIT) and the Ombudsman Institution (KDK), are not only unable to fulfil their duties and responsibilities, but HREIT, in particular, is leading campaigns against the Istanbul Convention and Law no. 6284.** There is currently no institution left to advocate for women's rights and develop policies with a gender equality (GE) perspective.
6. The GDSW does not involve women's NGOs in any activities including the preparations of the Country Report or policies that will affect women. **Policies, which are not developed with a participatory approach, are stripped of GE elements.** Furthermore, all activities are limited to the protection of the family and removal of the definition of "gender" and the concept of “the individual” from all documents (Development Plans, Action Plans etc.) prepared by public institutions, demonstrating that the obligations related to promoting GE have been abandoned.
7. **This serious shift in paradigm means, the discourse and actions of collective political will, which does not recognize women as individuals, defining them within the family and by virtue of motherhood, are becoming increasingly extreme.** Despite constant criticism from NGOs for its continued failure in developing women-centred policies, the government seems to be persistent in pursuing and implementing policies with family focus and failing to recognize women as individuals. While developing such strategies and policies, **instead of women's and LGBTI+women's NGOs who have always created a climate of solidarity at the local, national and international level, making significant contributions to all legislation enacted for women's rights, the government has been highlighting the support of government-organised non-governmental organisations (GONGOs), whose numbers have grown exponentially, as if they were independent NGOs.**
8. Furthermore, **they label women and human rights advocates who do not share their views and prefer different lifestyles as terrorists,** detaining them, targeting them and threatening to close down their organisations. LGBTI+women are openly declared deviant and targeted. Lawsuits are being filed against gender and rights-based NGOs,

alleging engagement in "unlawful and immoral activities", and even the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS) began to demand participation in these lawsuits. LGBTI+ organizations, on the other hand, are declared deviant and targeted by high-level public authorities.<sup>14</sup> An investigation has been launched against the Ankara, Diyarbakır, İstanbul, İzmir, Urfa and Van Bar Associations, who condemned the hate speech of the President of Religious Affairs, describing LGBTI+s as "deviant".<sup>15</sup> Due to the Boğaziçi University protests, investigations were launched against students and the LGBTI+ Student Club was closed.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, a lawsuit has been filed, on various procedural grounds, against Tarlabası Community Center, which was systematically targeted by Islamic press for including sexual orientation and gender identity in their gender education program for children.<sup>17</sup>

9. The **Country Report** is **riddled with contradictory and inaccurate information**. A significant portion of the limited gender-disaggregated data is outdated, misleading and contradictory, and are maintained by public institutions and organisations, not shared with CSOs or made public. Although some of the awareness raising trainings on GE and VAW, mentioned in the Country Report and claimed to be organised by various public institutions like the GDSW, were completed over 10 years ago (eg: training for law enforcement, religious officials or health workers) and participants have either retired or left their positions, the government continues to submit the same data in every periodic review, as if it were new. **Since 2015, no information has been provided regarding the design, type, location, trainers qualifications or the content of these trainings and impact analyses are either not performed or not shared.**
10. GE and discrimination have been removed altogether in the 11<sup>th</sup> Development Plan (2019-2023), **broader policies and the policy documents of all ministries.**

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-55901951>

<https://www.duvarenglish.com/in-new-hate-speech-turkish-interior-minister-soylu-says-lgbti-associations-funded-from-abroad-news-60010>

<https://kaosgl.org/en/single-news/hate-speech-from-the-president-of-turkish-religious-affairs>

<sup>15</sup> <https://kaosgl.org/en/single-news/what-happened-after-the-hateful-khutbah-of-the-religious-affairs-administration-of-turkey>

<sup>16</sup> <https://ifex.org/turkey-hundreds-of-arrests-and-lgbtqi-students-targeted-in-crackdown-on-bogazici-university-protests/>

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/02/interior-minister-soylu-bogazici-istanbul-lgbt-protests.html>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.sivilsayfalar.org/2022/03/03/tarlabasi-toplum-merkezi-kapatilma-tehditi-altinda/>

11. **The inadequate implementation of “the welfare state principle” has made women, the most visible face of poverty and the largest group applying for social assistance.** The pandemic has led to greater unemployment, dispossession, and poverty among women with an ever-growing impact in every field.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

### Chronic Shortcomings and Regression:

12. **In the 36 years since Turkey became party to CEDAW, barely any progress has been achieved in the prevention of discrimination and violence against women or in implementing GE. While it was hoped that the existing chronic gaps, would one day be addressed, intention to abandon even the existing legal commitments has been clearly announced for the first time, with the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention as the first major step in this direction.**
13. After the positioning of the President as the single Executive power, all public institutions and organisations, primarily the judiciary, were restructured parallel to the regression in legislation. The Council of Judges and Prosecutors (CJP) was restructured to be more dependent on the Executive. **Consequently, "Judiciary" has become one of the least trusted institutions in Turkey.**<sup>18</sup> Another step towards increased influence of the Executive on judiciary, was a legal amendment to the Attorneys’ Law no. 1136, making it possible to establish multiple Barr Associations in one province, despite opposition from all Barr Associations. **The 2022 amendment aims to place attorneys under the control of the Executive by establishing ‘GONGO’ Barr Associations.**<sup>19</sup> Using the state of emergency as a pretext, several municipalities were appointed trustees, which placed them directly under the authority of the Executive.<sup>20</sup> The advisory, support and equality units, which had been established for VAW within municipalities were closed down. Efforts to also place civil society under the influence of the Executive gained momentum with the closure of rights-based women's organisations. Additional legal regulations introduced in 2021 were added

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/gundem/yargitay-baskani-da-yargidan-sikayetci-5665659/>  
<http://sodev.org.tr/sodev-yargi-bagimsizligi-ve-yargiya-guven-arastirmasi-raporu-aciklandi/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.dw.com/tr/%C3%A7oklu-baro-d%C3%BCzenlemesi-tbmmde-kabul-edildi/a-54136119>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/kayyimlarin-ilk-isi-kadin-merkezlerini-kapatmak-oldu-717802>

to the already restrictive legal framework provided by Law no. 2860 on Collection of Aid and Law no. 5253 on Associations regarding freedoms of NGOs.<sup>21</sup>

**14. Women with disabilities<sup>22</sup>, refugee, asylum seeker and migrant women<sup>23</sup>, and elderly women<sup>24</sup> facing intersectional discrimination, living in difficult contexts, cannot exercise their fundamental rights and freedoms and the crimes committed against them often go unpunished.**

**15. The chronic gaps awaiting progress for the last 36 years are as follows:**

- Comprehensive legislation on preventing discrimination, in accordance with the Convention, is yet to be introduced.<sup>25</sup>
- Turkey has neither a constitutional provision on equal political representation nor a parity law on its agenda.
- Civil Code amendments on the following issues have been demanded for years:
  - Increasing the minimum marriage age to 18,
  - Ensuring that women can keep their own surnames after marriage and give their surnames to their children,
  - Eliminating the 300-day waiting period for divorced women before remarrying,
  - Applying the regime of participation in property acquired prior to divorce to marriages before 2002.

**16. Non-implementation or insufficient implementation of national and international legislation regarding existing rights and freedoms is deepening every day:**

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<sup>21</sup> Law no. 7262 on Preventing Financing of Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. While the abundance of legislation in the context of legal activity is a chronic issue, the Presidential System of Government has transformed the introduction of "legal packages," introducing individual amendments to laws on different subjects, which should normally be an exception, into a rule by squeezing various restrictions to fundamental rights and freedoms, and controversial topics into package laws, leading to the enactment of such laws with less opposition and public debate.

<sup>22</sup> Law no. 5378 on accessibility was extended for the second time in 2020, "the Year of Accessibility", using the pandemic as a pretext.

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/423282/multeci-kadinlar-cinsel-siddete-maruz-kaliyor-kurumlara-guvenmedigi-icin-basvurmuyor>

The "pilot province" practice for refugees restricts access to services and rights for women, trying escape violence, live alone or are single parents.

<sup>24</sup> <https://tr.sputniknews.com/turkiye/202103251044112314-87-yasindaki-kadinin-dogdugundan-beri-kimligi-yok/>

<sup>25</sup> The provision in Article 122 of the Turkish Penal Code has many shortcomings addressing a very small portion of discriminatory acts in an indirect manner.

- Most legal practitioners focus on protecting the family and refrain from "exaggerating"<sup>26</sup> the issue of VAW, making the **implementation of Law no. 6284 particularly challenging.**
- Courts still allow child marriage due to legal proceedings such as "adjustment of age" and "being allowed in emergencies" leaving children's rights unprotected.<sup>27</sup>
- Barriers hindering access to adequate alimony are created for divorced women and their children, who live in poverty.
- Civil courts regard men, engaging in acts of violence and women, failing to fulfil their traditional roles as equally at fault in divorce cases, leading to sexist distribution of labour and ignorance of VAW crimes.
- Public hospitals are ordered not to perform abortions.<sup>28</sup>
- Provisions of the Penal Code are not implemented effectively against perpetrators of VAW, eg: psychological findings are not accepted as evidence in the absence of clear physical signs of violence, except for acts of serious injury or killing.
- No amendments have been made regarding the substantive or procedural rules in the Penal Code or Criminal Procedure Code, to ensure that gender-based violence and discrimination, including the widespread and different types of violence against women such as stalking, forced marriage and digital violence, will be criminalized to prevent impunity in accordance with international standards as mandated by the Istanbul Convention. However, random changes are made to abolish acquired rights without the knowledge of women's organizations or even parliamentarians.
- Because there is no security of law, with the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention and uncertainty in all areas, **every proposal for legislative change raises concerns.**<sup>29</sup>
- Hate crimes against LGBTI+women are neither investigated nor prosecuted.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> <https://tele1.com.tr/akpli-nergis-kadin-cinayetleri-abartiliyor-oldurulen-erkek-sayisi-bunun-12-kati-342766/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.4721.pdf> Article 124/II of the Turkish Civil Code

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.morcati.org.tr/attachments/article/370/kamu-hastaneleri-kurtaj-uygulamalari-arastirma-raporu.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> <https://esikplatform.net/en/category/english/>

<sup>30</sup> <https://kaosgl.org/en/single-news/we-are-forced-to-ask-the-state-to-stop-using-hate-speech>



- The Misdemeanour Law is exploited by law enforcement and watchmen to criminalise trans-women.<sup>31</sup>
- Women who had to kill their perpetrators to protect their own lives cannot benefit from articles on self-defence or reduced sentences.

**17. Despite the prohibition of compulsory mediation in VAW cases by the Istanbul Convention, since 2017, women have been forced to meet and reach settlements with perpetrators of violence. Withdrawal from the Convention has also increased concerns in this respect.**

- Protection of women's personal data is insufficient.
- Perpetrators of VAW are granted reduced sentences for good conduct or unjust provocation, with justifications such as culture, customs, religion, traditions or so-called “honour”.
- In criminal proceedings, not requiring heavy sentences, decisions to defer announcement of judgment are rendered, committed perpetrators are protected by practices like probation, remission, pardon, etc. and policy of impunity and criminal injustice for discrimination and VAW continues.

18. No information is provided regarding mechanisms like protection desks mentioned in the 7<sup>th</sup> Country Report and Interim Report of 2018. The Draft Law on Judicial Support and Victim Services mentioned in Article 51 of the Interim Report is still pending. Regulations and pilot implementations that protect victims are not implemented, either.

**19. Further examples of regression include:**

- The roadmap for shifting from established commitments in legislation was announced and adopted primarily in a 479-page report by the Divorce Committee, established in Parliament (2016), opening all legal regulations regarding discrimination and VAW to debate.
- This Committee recommended removing GE from all official documents, developing proposals for amendments, making issuing injunction orders under Law no. 6284 difficult in the pretext of “protecting the family” and even proposed abolishing the Law entirely.

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<sup>31</sup> <https://kaosgidernegi.org/images/library/2020human-rights-of-lgbti-people-2019-report-1.pdf>

- Its proposals on women's surnames, marriage age, alimony and property regimes in the Civil Code and Article 103 of the Penal Code, which regulates issues around sexual exploitation of children, which could mean pardoning child-aged early and forced marriages, are persistently kept on the agenda.
- It also proposed introducing mediation services mediated by graduates of theology using religious references for VAW and divorce cases, disempowering women, aiming to convince them to return to the context of violence.
- Such proposals have constantly been kept on the agenda by government officials and with debates organised, seeking only inputs from GONGOs and anti-women's rights groups. Crimes against women and perpetrators of such crimes are extolled by highest-ranking officials.
- Hate speech, targeting LGBTI+women, from highest government officials has become prevalent.<sup>32</sup>

20. Following the discussion of **withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention the same men's groups, media and certain cults stated that CEDAW would be next.**<sup>33</sup>

21. **These debates and amendments resulted and will continue to result in a lack of systematic and continuous implementation of CEDAW.**

#### COVID-19:

22. Under the extraordinary legal regime onset by COVID-19, VAW and domestic violence have increased in Turkey, just as they have globally.<sup>34</sup> While the State failed to introduce any special temporary measures, the CJP announced, in article 10 of its circular on Additional Measures for COVID-19 (30<sup>th</sup> March 2020), that **"injunction orders issued under Law no. 6284 must be considered<sup>35</sup> in a manner which does not negatively affect the health of those liable, due to the pandemic."** This order, which

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/statement-report/end-hate-speech-and-targeted-attacks-against-lgbti-people-turkey>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr/abdurrahman-dilipak-istanbul-sozlesmesinden-sonra-yeni-hedefin-ipucunu-verdi-435366h.htm>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/4/statement-ed-phumzile-violence-against-women-during-Pandemic>

<https://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Salg%C4%B1nda-Kad%C4%B1n-Olmak-K%C4%B1sa-Rapor-Final.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.hsk.gov.tr/Eklentiler/files/uu.pdf>

is in violation of the law, instructed that judges may not issue restraining orders against perpetrators of violence using COVID-19 as a pretext.

23. While most women, subjected to violence during the pandemic, do not have anywhere to plead their cases, prosecutors, courts and law enforcement officials, often provide misleading and/or incomplete information, preventing the women from accessing their rights to escape violence.<sup>36</sup>
24. With amendments to legislation on execution of sentences (2020), as part of COVID-19 measures, perpetrators, convicted for acts of VAW were released without any precautions or informing victims and their families.

**Call for Action:**

- a) Strong recommendations should be issued to the government to re-enact the legislative amendments directly impacting women's human rights, revive legal securities which were removed and implement the Constitutional provisions on equality.
- b) Obligations of the State in preventing discrimination and VAW, as per international customary law as observed in CEDAW GR 35, should be reiterated, including obligations related to sexual orientation and gender identity in accordance with CEDAW GRs 27 and 33. It should be highlighted that withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention does not end the commitment and obligation to prevent violence and discrimination against individuals with different sexual orientations or gender identities and immediate measures should be recommended.

**PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE AND DECISION-MAKING MECHANISMS AND SPECIAL TEMPORARY MEASURES**

25. **The call for protection of constitutional order, the Committee underlined in its Concluding Observations, has unfortunately gone unheeded. Basic human rights are diminishing by day. Even the slightest effort to seek one's rights, like 8<sup>th</sup> March**

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<sup>36</sup> <https://en.morcati.org.tr/reports/combating-violence-against-women-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak-monitoring-report/>

celebrations, results in imprisonment, investigations, detention and physical violence.<sup>37</sup> Finally, the unjust sentence and political ban given to the provincial chairperson of Istanbul for the main opposition party, reflects the barriers faced by all women in politics and decision-making mechanisms.<sup>38</sup>

26. Independent women's organizations have been replaced by GONGOs in policy-making, decision-making and legislative processes.
27. **The limited participation of women in politics and public life demonstrates the systematic nature of ongoing sexist exclusion.**
28. **Turkey's rankings in international indices are clear indicators of the grave situation.** Turkey ranked 92<sup>nd</sup> in 163 countries on the 2020 Social Progress Index, 162<sup>nd</sup> in equality of political power by gender, 133<sup>rd</sup> in 156 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index<sup>39</sup> and 114<sup>th</sup> in political participation.
29. **Political participation of women has not improved, either.** As of 2021, the ratio of women parliamentarians is 17.24% with only 1 woman minister. 34 provinces in 81 have no women Parliamentarians. Only 2 in 18 parliamentary committees are chaired by women (KEFEK and the Petition Committee),<sup>40</sup> no women Chairs of Parliament, only 2 women governors in 81 provinces. Only 8.54% of university rectors and 25.09% of ambassadors, 11,56% of mayors,<sup>41</sup> 11% of municipal council members, 3.7% of provincial council members and 3% of mukhtars are women. These numbers are extremely low compared with the global average (26%). **Structural, socio-economic and institutional barriers, inhibiting equal political participation, and violating the principles of CEDAW still exist.**
30. **There are no special measures to ensure the political participation of women with disabilities or data on their representation.**
31. **Participation of LGBTI+women remain a red line in politics** and is never put on the political agenda. They are invisible to politics.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-56355921>

<https://gazetekarinca.com/2017/03/kayyumlarin-ilk-hedefi-kadin-kurumlari-iste-kapatilan-52-kadin-merkezi/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://m.bianet.org/english/print/261787-chp-responds-to-kaftancioglu-s-sentence-we-are-strong-you-are-weak-erdogan>

<sup>39</sup> <https://tr.euronews.com/2021/04/01/cinsiyet-esitsizligi-endeksi-nde-turkiye-156-ulke-aras-nda133-s-raya-geriledi>

<sup>40</sup> <https://komisyon.tbmm.gov.tr/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.ysk.gov.tr>

<sup>42</sup> <https://kaosgl.org/en/single-news/lsquoakp-could-not-reach-its-goal-with-hate-campaignrsquo>

32. **There are no positive developments in equal representation and participation since 2016. Therefore, our observations and calls for action have not changed.**

**Call for Action:**

- a) Constitutional provisions and a parity and equal representation law should be enacted to ensure equal representation and participation of women.
- b) All laws on political parties and elections should be amended to align with equal representation and participation of women.
- c) The political participation and representation rights of LGBTI+women and women with disabilities should be guaranteed by law.
- d) Necessary measures should be introduced to eliminate all forms of violence faced by women at all levels and stages of participation in politics and decision-making mechanisms.

**EMPLOYMENT**

33. Since the introduction of the Presidential System of Government, all the policy documents developed through the 11<sup>th</sup> Development Plan,<sup>43</sup> (July 2019), **reject “the gender perspective”**, focusing instead on women's empowerment through gender stereotypes and roles, further deepening inequalities.

34. **The low participation level of women in the labor force, increasingly continues. The ratio of women in the total workforce is 32.8%. Women make up only 28% of employment. 19.5% of employed women work part-time, which is quite high compared to men (9.3%). 70% of the female population aged 15-24 could not participate in the labor force, 78% could not participate in employment, and the unemployment rate was 27.4% (December, 2021).**<sup>44</sup>

35. **The Program for Protecting the Family and the Dynamic Structure of the Population (ÖDÖP) (2015), defines women in terms of their “roles as mothers” and causes women to work in flexible and precarious jobs.**<sup>45</sup> While one of the obstacles to women's participation in the labour market is care responsibilities, the approach

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<sup>43</sup> [https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Eleventh\\_Development\\_Plan-2019-2023.pdf](https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Eleventh_Development_Plan-2019-2023.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Isgucu-Istatistikleri-2021-45645>

<sup>45</sup> <http://disk.org.tr/2015/01/ailenin-ve-dinamik-nufus-yapisinin-korunmasi-paketine-itirazimiz-var/>

encouraging at least three children per household, **constitutes an indirect barrier to women's labour force participation.** These mechanisms reduce the duration women stay in the labour market, delay retirement, hinder career developments, prevent progress in their professions and prevent women from being employed in the private sector. Employment participation of women without children is 50.7%, while this rate drops to 25.2% for women with children under the age of 3 (2020).<sup>46</sup> **The program also encourages early marriage,<sup>47</sup> presenting marriage as the only option for young women aged 15-29, who are not in education or employment.**

36. **The National Employment Strategy (2014-2023) does not identify any objectives for women's groups<sup>48</sup> for whom special employment policies are needed.**
37. No data exists related to **The National Monitoring and Coordination Board on Women's Employment<sup>49</sup>** to be established to monitor and evaluate the activities of all stakeholders for identification of existing problems and their elimination, to ensure coordination and cooperation.
38. **While the most significant problem in the agricultural sector is informality (93.7%), 90.8% of women working in agriculture lack social security due to high premium payments.<sup>50</sup>**
39. **Women often work in small businesses, are employed in low-profile jobs and in informal economy where professional competences are not sought.<sup>51</sup>** Only 30.3% of women benefiting from social security. Gender-based discrimination also manifests itself in distribution of women's employment by occupation. Only 0.34% of employed women work as managers, and employment is concentrated in professional occupations (teacher, nurse, etc.), office and sales services, and jobs that do not require qualifications.<sup>52</sup> Private sector employers will benefit from incentives for employing women until the end of 2020 under provisional articles 19 and 21, added to the Unemployment Insurance Law no. 4447 (2018). **However, there is no**

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<sup>46</sup> <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Istatistiklerle-Kadin-2021-45635>

<sup>47</sup> [https://sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/22AileninveDinamik\\_Nufus\\_Yapisinin\\_Korunmasi\\_ProgramiBASKI.pdf](https://sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/22AileninveDinamik_Nufus_Yapisinin_Korunmasi_ProgramiBASKI.pdf) Policy 3.4.

<sup>48</sup> The working poor, irregular women migrants/refugees/asylum-seekers, sex workers, women whose spouses are incarcerated, LGBTI+, etc.

<sup>49</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Periodic Country Report, paragraph 145

<sup>50</sup> <https://ekmekvegul.net/gundem/tarimda-calisan-kadınların-yüzde-90i-kayıt-disi>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.tuik.gov.tr/>

<sup>52</sup> <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Istatistiklerle-Kadin-2021-45635>

**monitoring or data sharing on how/whether these incentives increased women's employment.**

40. Child-care services are limited to the number of female employees, preventing women from entering the labour market due to care responsibilities. While the **Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women's Employment (2018-2023)**<sup>53</sup> foresees legislative amendments, they are pending.
41. **As of December 2021, female unemployment was 14.7%. According to research of DİSK-AR, it is quite high in both narrow definition unemployment (16.9%) and broad definition unemployment (31.6%).**<sup>54</sup> **The rule making it mandatory to employ persons with disabilities is not implemented in all sectors, and relevant administrative sanctions are not enforced effectively.** The public sector favours employment of men with disabilities. While women with disabilities are the last group to be included in employment, they are the first to be laid off.<sup>55</sup> **The labour force participation rate of women with disabilities is only 12.5%** (TurkStat, 2019).<sup>56</sup>
42. LGBTI+women experience gender-based discrimination in job applications, too, and cannot participate in the labour market with their open identities due to risk of not being employed.<sup>57</sup> Not experiencing fear of discrimination in all areas of life is a basic human right.<sup>58</sup>
43. **Delays in recognizing educational credentials force educated refugee and asylum-seeker women to work in low-skilled and informal jobs.** Most refugee women, employed in casual work, faced unemployment and hunger during the pandemic.

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<sup>53</sup> <https://www.aile.gov.tr/ksgm/ulusal-eylem-planlari/kadinin-guclenmesi-strateji-belgesi-ve-eylem-planlari-2018-2023/>

<sup>54</sup> <http://arastirma.disk.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Mart-2022-Issizlik-ve-Istihdam-Gorunumu-2021-Yillik.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/akuned/issue/52842/678904>

<sup>56</sup> A parliamentary inquiry on “Resolving Issues Faced by Citizens with Disabilities and Increasing Employment Opportunities,” was proposed on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, Persons with Disabilities Day. However, the proposal was rejected because ruling party voting against it.

<sup>57</sup> <https://kaosgldernegi.org/images/library/2020ozel-sektoreng2019.pdf>

<https://kaosgldernegi.org/images/library/2020kamu-eng-2019.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> <https://kaosgldernegi.org/images/library/ozelsektor21eng.pdf>

<https://kaosgldernegi.org/images/library/kamueng.pdf>

## COVID-19:

44. **51% of employed women had to interrupt their careers due to COVID-19 (26% were fired and 25% took unpaid leave).** School closures, no/limited access to markets, increased hygiene/care requirements triggered an unprecedented increase in demand for household production and care labour. Women became the main actors in coping with this increased demand by increasing their working hours both in unpaid work and paid work.<sup>59</sup> **The number of women excluded from the labour market has further increased during the pandemic.**<sup>60</sup>
45. Those working in informal, casual and precarious jobs, **32.5% of which are women,**<sup>61</sup> were affected most by the pandemic. As of late 2021, 35.9% of women are employed informally.<sup>62</sup> Although women, working in home-based jobs, work informally, they are not included in official data related to informal employment. New data sets must be developed to determine whether women working at home can be categorised as home-based workers.<sup>63</sup>
46. The gender pay gap was 15.6% in 2018. While the pay difference between women with children and those without was 11%, the difference between mothers' pay and fathers' pay was 19% with mothers earning lower than fathers<sup>64</sup> and the wage gap between men and women was 17.2%.<sup>65</sup>
47. **The remote work model has increased gender-based inequalities, and closure of schools and child-care centres, as well as family members staying at home, substantially increased women's workloads.**

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<sup>59</sup> <https://www.tr.undp.org/content/turkey/en/home/library/corporatereports/COVID-gender-survey-report.html>

<sup>60</sup> <https://ihd.org.tr/en/ihd-special-report-economic-and-social-rights-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

<sup>61</sup> <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Isgucu-Istatistikleri-Ocak-2021-37486>

<sup>62</sup> <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Istatistiklerle-Kadin-2021-45635>

<sup>63</sup> <https://tuikweb.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=30906>

(In the section on the breakdown of average duration of home-to-work commute, 7% women employed in paid and casual work, 34.4% self-employed women and 15.9% women who work in unpaid family work stated that they work at home.)

<sup>64</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---ilo-ankara/documents/publication/wcms\\_756659.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---ilo-ankara/documents/publication/wcms_756659.pdf)

<sup>65</sup> <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Istatistiklerle-Kadin-2021-45635>



### Call for Action:

- a) All policy documents including the Development Plan should be revised with a GE perspective.
- b) All national policies encouraging women's employment, should develop legal and institutional mechanisms needed to ensure work-life balance as a major component.
- c) A National Strategy for Women's Employment should be developed including independent women's organisations, trade unions and professional associations as major components.
- d) All legal regulations regarding child-care services should be developed based on number of employees, not women.
- e) Special regulations, protecting women should be included in social assistance, employment and income protection programs during emergency periods (earthquakes, pandemics, etc.).
- f) TurkStat needs to develop modules for disaggregated data collection for domestic services and home-based workers.
- g) The scope of all labour laws should be expanded to prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and disability.

### EDUCATION

- 48. The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) removed the concept of 'gender' from all policy documents, curricula and textbooks.
- 49. The "Promoting Gender Equality in Education Project" (**ETCEP**) began with EU financing (2014) as one of MONE's exemplary projects, implemented in 162 schools. **In early 2019, the project was abandoned due to reactions from certain circles.**<sup>66</sup>
- 50. **Compulsory education lost its uninterrupted 12-year structure with the introduction of the 4+4+4 education system (2012).** The enrolment rate for girls aged 10-13 was **96.10%** in the 2019/2020 school year while it **dropped to 84.85%** in the **14-17 age group**. In the 15-29 age group, 18.3% of young persons, neither in education nor in

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<sup>66</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-47610198>

employment were men while 40.8% were women. This difference manifests itself in the lives of girls as unpaid domestic labour, care givers for elderly and children and **child-aged, early and forced marriages.**

51. Dismissal of students who marry and their transfer to Open High Schools (OHS), Open Vocational High Schools (OVHS) or Open Imam and Preacher High Schools (OIPHS) via e-school **through the amendment to the Regulation on Secondary Education Institutions (2017),**<sup>67</sup> has focused attention on increasing ratios of girls (%43.7)<sup>68</sup> in OHS and **child-aged, early and forced marriages.**
52. Girls' enrolment in Vocational - Technical Secondary Education decreased by 4.2% in 2018-2019, compared to the previous academic year. Meanwhile, girls make up the majority in religious education with 55.9%<sup>69</sup> and in OIPHS with 60.2%.<sup>70</sup> **The increasing direction of girls to religious education is concerning.**
53. Despite the MoNE, Board of Education provision on safeguarding GE in review criteria, used for textbooks and resource books, it examines/approves/publishes, **many books approved by the Board include visuals and discourse containing gender inequalities.**<sup>71</sup>
54. The Council of Higher Education (YÖK) removed the **Conclusions of the “Gender Sensitive Higher Education Workshop,”** (Position Paper) prepared by the Committee on Women's Studies and Issues in Academia (2015), **from its website in February 2019 and ended the Gender Equality Project.**<sup>72</sup>
55. The titles and activities of **Women's Studies Centres** in universities became **“Women's and Family Studies Application and Research Centres.”**<sup>73</sup> “Family-centred policies” in higher education, reflect YÖK’s approach to GE.

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<sup>67</sup> [https://ogm.meb.gov.tr/meb\\_iys\\_dosyalar/2019\\_09/13111232\\_YONETMELYK.pdf](https://ogm.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2019_09/13111232_YONETMELYK.pdf)

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.egitimreformugirisimi.org/egitim-izleme-raporu-2020-egitim-yonetisimi-ve-finansmani/>

<sup>69</sup> [https://dspace.ceid.org.tr/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1/1068/06123056\\_meb\\_istatistikleri\\_orgun\\_egitim\\_2017\\_2018.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://dspace.ceid.org.tr/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1/1068/06123056_meb_istatistikleri_orgun_egitim_2017_2018.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

<https://dspace.ceid.org.tr/xmlui/handle/1/851>

<sup>70</sup> <http://dspace.ceid.org.tr/xmlui/handle/1/1068>

<sup>71</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344541762\\_2017\\_Mufredat\\_Reformu\\_Sonrasi\\_Ders\\_Kitaplarinda\\_Toplumsal\\_Cinsiyet\\_Esitligi\\_Gender\\_Equality\\_in\\_the\\_Textbooks\\_of\\_2017\\_Curricula](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344541762_2017_Mufredat_Reformu_Sonrasi_Ders_Kitaplarinda_Toplumsal_Cinsiyet_Esitligi_Gender_Equality_in_the_Textbooks_of_2017_Curricula)

<sup>72</sup> <https://kaosgl.org/en/single-news/chair-of-higher-education-council-we-cannot-be-related-with-any-abbreviation-like-lgbti>

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.diken.com.tr/yonetmelik-degisikligi-ailesiz-kadin-calismalari-merkezi-bile-olamadi/>

56. **“The establishment of women's universities for female students only,” included in the 11<sup>th</sup> Development Plan and the 2021 and 2022 Annual Presidential Programs, will lead to significant levels of discrimination,** violating the Constitution, the “principle of co-ed education” of the Basic Law of National Education and women's rights to education. Women studying in mixed higher education institutions could also face harassment, violence, and discrimination. The detention of women who voice such concerns is even graver.<sup>74</sup>
57. Despite the provisions of the Primary Education and Education Law (Art.59, 1 and 2), stipulating, “persons of primary education age, not attending school, may under no circumstances be allowed to work,” perceiving the situation of child labour is impossible due to the lack of data. Moreover, employment has affected non-enrolment rates for girls (35.6%) aged 15-17 more heavily than boys (21.7%).<sup>75</sup>
58. **While the literacy rate for women is 95.3%, it is 67.6% for women with disabilities.** The level of education for women with disabilities is lower than men with disabilities at all educational levels.<sup>76</sup> Girls with severe disabilities do not usually attend formal education and are directed to open high schools.<sup>77</sup> **Only 1 in 10 children with disabilities can benefit from inclusive/integrative education,** significantly reducing girls' chances of attending schools.
59. LGBTI+women have to hide their identities in education, too. Regulations in dormitories involve ambiguous criteria, like “acting against public morals” or “not leading a chaste life,” used to justify discrimination against LGBTI+women.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/kadin-universitesi-istemiyoruz-diyen-kadinlar-gozaltina-alindi-haber-1513527>

<sup>75</sup> <https://dspace.ceid.org.tr/xmlui/handle/1/852>

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.tohad.org/tohad/bm-engelli-kisiler-turkiye-raporu/>

<sup>77</sup> <https://turkey.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Engelli%20kadinlar%20ve%20kiz%20cocuklari-Haklar-TAPV-UNFPA-BA.pdf>

<sup>78</sup> In 2019, the Credit and Dormitories Institution cut the scholarship and loan payments of students who attended the "Middle East Technical University LGBTI+ Pride March" and were detained. In the same year, an administrative investigation was launched about the trainers for having included "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" among the topic addressed in a training event on "Sexism and Bullying Based on Sexual Orientation", and the trainers were singled out as targets

<https://www.dw.com/tr/odt%C3%BC-onur-y%C3%BCr%C3%BCy%C3%BCC5%9F%C3%BC-duru%C5%9Fmas%C4%B1nda-beraat-yok/a-51215355>

60. Problems facing refugee children, registered with Temporary Education Centres and e-schools continue, particularly due to language barriers. Refugee girls are often directed to Imam and Preacher Schools because they speak Arabic.

#### **COVID-19:**

61. **The interruption of educational activities on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 was one of the first and most comprehensive measures related to COVID-19.** The transition to remote digital education created challenges in accessing education particularly for girls and women,<sup>79</sup> which are multiplied in risk groups with special needs. In homes with only one computer or tablet and multiple children, priority favours boys. **Few households have IT tools for each child. Accessing relative data was not possible.**<sup>80</sup>

#### **Call for Action:**

- a) The 4+4+4 education system must be abolished and compulsory education should be uninterrupted 12 years.
- b) GE training must be incorporated into every level of education, including restructuring of all curricula and textbooks from a GE perspective.
- c) Mechanisms should be developed to take the burden of child and elderly care off women and girls. Pre-school education should be mainstreamed and included in compulsory education.
- d) Necessary special measures should be taken to ensure that women and girls, especially including those in rural areas, remain in school in all levels of education, to eliminate inequality between girls and boys.

#### **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

62. **Turkey is abandoning existing mechanisms, laws, and international conventions against VAW.** The pressure created by hostile attitudes of the few against the concept of GE echoed in government, **leading to withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention stating, “[The Convention] has been manipulated by a group that has been trying to**

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<sup>79</sup> <http://www.keig.org/covid-19-Pandemi-egitim-toplumsal-cinsiyet/>

<sup>80</sup> <http://www.ceidizleme.org/medya/dosya/87.pdf>

**normalise homosexuality which does not agree with the social and family values of Turkey.”<sup>81</sup> The government claimed, “due to the withdrawal femicides have decreased by 26%.”<sup>82</sup> Such an impact cannot be possible in such a short time, and no official data is available on femicides. The “Research on Domestic Violence Against Women in Turkey” (2008 and 2014) has not been conducted since. In 2022, threats against women's NGOs advocating for women's rights have increased. An action of closing has been filed against the We Will Stop Femicide Platform Association, which advocates for women's rights, on the charge of "acting against the law and morality".<sup>83</sup>**

63. **Major issues like ensuring coordination between institutions, establishing institutional mechanisms, and arbitrariness and ignorance of personnel charged with implementation are still prevalent due to failure to implement Law No. 6284.**
64. ALO 183 Hotline has been replaced with “ALO 183 Social Support Line,” covering all disadvantaged groups. **Thus, it is no longer a VAW hotline.**<sup>84</sup> The services provided for VAW are insufficient, misleading, slow and often put women at further risk.
65. **When women apply to law enforcement, they are often misinformed/not informed, deterred from filing complaints, going to shelters or forced to show evidence, pushed to make peace with perpetrators, face discourse normalising VAW and their complaints are often not filed or those that are usually end up inconclusive.** Bureaus for Combating Domestic Violence and VAW fail to ensure women's rapid access to specialised support, causing them to become repeatedly victimized in the process of going from one institution to the other.<sup>85</sup>
66. There are **no preventive and sustainable holistic practices related to sexual violence, no rape crisis centres, no sexual violence counselling or solidarity centres.**
67. **Severe issues still exist on the nature and implementation of injunction orders issued under Law No. 6284:**
  - Shrinking durations of injunction orders (1 or 2 months),
  - Rejected reapplications,

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<sup>81</sup> [http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/turkey\\_step\\_back\\_final.pdf](http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/uploads/turkey_step_back_final.pdf)

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.yeniakit.com.tr/haber/fesat-sozlesme-bitti-siddet-yuzde-26-azaldi-1532995.html>

<sup>83</sup> <https://www.stgm.org.tr/en/we-will-stop-femicide-platform-association-danger-closure>

<sup>84</sup> <https://www.aile.gov.tr/ss/engelli-ve-yasli-hizmetleri-genel-mudurlugu/alo-183-sosyal-destek/>

<sup>85</sup> [https://www.morcati.org.tr/attachments/article/255/6284\\_Kanun\\_Uygulamalari\\_Raporu.pdf](https://www.morcati.org.tr/attachments/article/255/6284_Kanun_Uygulamalari_Raporu.pdf)

- Law enforcement officers failing to notify perpetrators in time, causing time-sensitive injunction orders to become dysfunctional.
68. **Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres (ŞÖNİM) are required to follow up the implementation of confidentiality orders in all institutions, often deny their obligation because they do not do so.<sup>86</sup>**
69. **The institutional and financial structures of ŞÖNİM's are inadequate, economic, psychological, legal, and social assistance is not duly delivered; assistance provided by social workers, lawyers and psychologists are limited.**
70. Women requiring shelter are initially referred to law enforcement for "security" reasons, creating a deterrent effect on women.
71. **The number and capacities of women's shelters are inadequate.** The MoFSS has only **112 shelters hosting 2,779 women** in 81 provinces. 3 shelters affiliated to the General Directorate of Migration Management serve with a capacity of 4290. 1 shelter affiliated to an NGO serves with a capacity of 20. **Independent women's organisations are not supported to operate women's shelters.<sup>87</sup>**
72. **According to the Regulation on Opening and Operating Women's Guest Houses (shelters), women with disabilities or mental health disorders, women over 60, women with sons over 12 or children with disabilities and LGBTI+women are not admitted under various pretexts.**
73. "Security measures" like curfews, body searches and confiscation of phones, can limit the freedom of women in shelters causing them to return to the violence.<sup>88</sup>
74. **There is no standard for data collection on VAW and a serious lack of data and information.**
75. Although abortion until the tenth week of pregnancy is legal, in practice, women cannot have abortions in public hospitals.<sup>89</sup> **State policies related to sexual/reproductive rights and practices violate women's rights and bodily**

<sup>86</sup> [https://www.morcati.org.tr/attachments/article/255/6284\\_Kanun\\_Uygulamalari\\_Raporu.pdf](https://www.morcati.org.tr/attachments/article/255/6284_Kanun_Uygulamalari_Raporu.pdf)

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.siginaksizbirdunya.org/en/assemblies/concluding-declarations>

<sup>88</sup> [https://www.morcati.org.tr/attachments/article/255/6284\\_Kanun\\_Uygulamalari\\_Raporu.pdf](https://www.morcati.org.tr/attachments/article/255/6284_Kanun_Uygulamalari_Raporu.pdf)

<sup>89</sup> <https://www.morcati.org.tr/attachments/article/370/kamu-hastaneleri-kurtaj-uygulamalari-arastirma-raporu.pdf>

**integrity.**<sup>90</sup> Poor and/or non-Turkish-speaking women are particularly unable to access the right to abortion.

76. **The gravest practice, subjecting girls to multiple discrimination and violence is child-aged, early and forced marriage.** There is no direct data available on these informal marriages. However, 4% of women aged 15-19 already have children or are expecting. Lack of education (20%) and poverty (9%) also contribute to these marriages. 21% of women aged 25-49 married before the age of 18 while 4% married before the age of 15.<sup>91</sup> **Despite the grim picture, preventive measures and policies are not developed.**
77. Men make up 44.2% of the elderly population while women make up 55.8% (2020).<sup>92</sup> **A study identified 155 cases with 39% being linked to violence, abuse, neglect, rights violations and discrimination against elderly women.**<sup>93</sup>
78. When LBTI+women are victimized, they are seen as deviants, deserving the offences committed against them. Hate crimes go unpunished, creating an encouraging socio-political environment.<sup>94</sup>
79. Migrant women, subjected to violence are transferred to removal centres for deportation, even if they have been placed in women's shelters, **resulting in continued violence and women's inability to file complaints.**
80. Refugee and asylum-seeker LBTI+women are also subjected to intersectional discrimination and refugee trans-women encounter violence everywhere due to their appearances.

#### **Covid-19:**

81. **COVID-19 posed further challenges for women in shelters.** Women are not admitted to shelters outside their province. Once settled, they cannot be transferred to other cities.
82. **VAW with disabilities increased by 18.7% during the pandemic.** 39.6% were subjected to at least one type of violence. **69.8% of news articles on abuse against**

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<sup>90</sup> <https://www.diken.com.tr/kurtaj-arastirmasi-istege-bagli-sadece-10-hastanede-yapiliyor-gunah-diyen-oldu/>

<sup>91</sup> [http://www.hips.hacettepe.edu.tr/tnsa2018/rapor/TNSA2018\\_ana\\_Rapor.pdf](http://www.hips.hacettepe.edu.tr/tnsa2018/rapor/TNSA2018_ana_Rapor.pdf)

<sup>92</sup> <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Istatistiklerle-Yaslilar-2020-37227>

<sup>93</sup> [http://www.senex.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/Senexizleme\\_Nisan2021.pdf](http://www.senex.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/Senexizleme_Nisan2021.pdf)

<sup>94</sup> <https://kaosgildernegi.org/images/library/2020nefret-suclari-raporu-2019-kucuk.pdf>

**women involve women with disabilities.** Women and girls with disabilities are not informed about sexual health, increasing their risk of being subjected to sexual violence.<sup>95</sup> Disability access is challenged by lack of disability-friendly ŞÖNİMs.<sup>96</sup>

**Call for Action:**

- a) **As the record number of 800 women lawyers from NGOs from all over Turkey<sup>97</sup> demanded in the trail for nullity suit sought at the State Council on 28th April 2022, it should be recommended that the decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention be revoked.**
- b) Turkey needs to develop holistic VAW policies and independent women and LGBTI+women organisations should be actively involved in the process.
- c) Law No. 6284 must be implemented effectively, monitoring/evaluation mechanisms must be developed, and results must be shared.
- d) GE and VAW training programmes must be developed with diversified and differentiated contents and disseminated.
- e) The number and service capacities of women's shelters should be increased, and **all women must have access to shelters** without discrimination.
- f) Sexual violence crisis centres must be established.
- g) Migrant, asylum-seeker, and refugee women must be able to enjoy services related to VAW without a legal status requirement. These Services must be provided in multiple languages.

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<sup>95</sup> <https://www.sivilsayfalar.org/2020/12/16/engelli-kadinlarin-ureme-sagligi-konusunda-farkindaliklarinin-arttirilmesi-buyuk-onem-tasiyor/>

<sup>96</sup> <https://turkey.unfpa.org/en/publications/sexual-and-reproductive-health-combating-gender-based-violence-women-and-girls>

<sup>97</sup> <https://yetkinreport.com/en/2022/04/28/another-corner-in-turkeys-istanbul-convention-journey/>