



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
16 October 2012

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**
Fifty-fourth session
11 February–1 March 2013

Concluding observations of the Committee: Turkey

Addendum

Information provided by the Government of Turkey on the follow-up to the concluding observations of the Committee (CEDAW/C/TUR/CO/6)*

1. Turkey submitted its sixth periodical report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW Committee) in 2010 and defended it before the CEDAW Committee members in 2010 under the presidency of the State Minister responsible for Women and Family accompanied by Turkish delegates, in line with the liabilities arising from the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Convention) of which Turkey is a party since 1986.
2. The report was evaluated by the CEDAW Committee and the concluding observations were declared. In paragraph 48 of the concluding observations, written information was requested from Turkey on two topics within two years. The two topics are referred to in the paragraphs 17 and 23 of the concluding observations.
3. This report has been prepared by the General Directorate on the Status of Women (GDSW), Ministry of Family and Social Policies of the Turkish Republic as per the requirement of the “submission of written information” of the CEDAW Committee. The report is on the activities carried out towards the implementation recommendations expressed in the paragraphs 17 and 23 of the concluding observations of the Committee to Turkey dated 30 July 2010 numbered CEDAW/C/TUR/CO/6. The General Directorate also referred to the opinions of the relevant public institutions and agencies, as well as, academicians and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on women’s human rights during the preparation of the report.

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not edited.

A. Activities carried out regarding the headscarf ban mentioned in the paragraph 17 of the concluding observations

4. This section includes statistical information on status of women who wear headscarves, the regulations related to wearing headscarves in primary, secondary and tertiary education institutes and the employment status of women who wear headscarves.

1. Formulation of Statistical Data on Wearing Headscarves

5. Although there is not a certain legal arrangement on the wearing the headscarf in the spheres of educational, employment, political and public life in Turkey, various challenges have been experienced in practice based on the regulations. For this reason, there is no official recording system with which to determine the impact of the headscarf ban, which emerges as a ‘de facto’ situation only in implementation; furthermore, difficulties are also encountered in any attempts of formal data collection.

6. Although no formal statistical data exists, due to the social connotations of the issue, various NGOs have carried out a limited number of research studies.

7. Dilek Cindoğlu carried out a research study titled “The Headscarf Ban and Discrimination: Expert Professional Women Who Wear Headscarves” published in 2010 by The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) publications. The purpose of the study was to identify the problems, discriminations and handicaps encountered by women in work life due to the headscarf ban. TESEV published another study: “The Headscarf Ban and the Road Map” in 2012. The study is a follow-up to the 2010 report released by TESEV and the main purpose of the study is to identify the problems and offer solutions through which to eliminate the discrimination and the impacts of the headscarf ban experienced in both public and private sectors and in daily life.

8. The impacts of the treatment of women who wear headscarves on women’s issues was examined in light of the available data in the article by Fatma Benli titled “The General Situation of Women in Turkey and The Impact of The Headscarf Ban on Gender Indexes” included in the website of The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (extracted <http://www.osce.org/odihr/39070>)

9. The Hazar Education, Culture and Solidarity Association (Hazar) conducted a field study on the headscarf ban called “The Covered Truth of Turkey” in 2007. The study was conducted between January 5th and February 15th, 2007, on 1112 subjects from nine provinces (Adana, Ankara, Bursa, Diyarbakır, Erzurum, İstanbul, İzmir, Konya and Samsun) and based on face to face interviews with the subjects as well as a questionnaire. The purpose of the study was to inquire into the social and economic dimensions of the headscarf ban and its impacts on women.

10. However, because the results of these studies were insufficient in explaining the issue with all of its dimensions, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) have collaborated in order to conduct a study related to the headscarf ban. The study was formulated to include university students and lecturers and public officers, so as to collect the relevant data on the issue. Thus, for the first time in Turkey, during 61st Governmental period, action has been taken towards revealing the impacts of headscarf ban, which is one of the areas of concern underlined in the Concluding Observations on the 6th Country Report of Turkey by the CEDAW Committee.

11. Correspondences have started and official requests have been made to the Ministries and universities in order to collect the relevant data which will form a basis for the identification of the research sample. The final data for the study will be attained by the TUIK using qualitative research methodology. The results of this study will be included in

the seventh periodic report which is planned to be submitted to the CEDAW Committee in 2014.

12. Meanwhile, The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV), which is a research agency, has launched a survey study on “The Economic Impacts of the Headscarf Ban” As a part of the survey, three separate questionnaires have been prepared: the first is for women’s groups either wearing headscarves or not, working or non-working, the second is for men employees with wives who wear headscarves or not and the third for private company managers. The results of this study will also be evaluated by the TUIK and be submitted to the CEDAW Committee in the 2014 7th Periodic Country Report of Turkey.

2. Primary and Secondary Educational Institutions

13. Girl students are obliged to be without headscarves within the boundaries of the primary and secondary schools in Turkey. There is only one single educational system in Turkey and it is run by the Ministry of National Education (MEB). The regulation dated 22.07.1981 on “The Dress Code of Students and Public Officials Working within the Schools Affiliated to the MEB and other Ministries” states that “the students have to be bareheaded within the boundaries of the school” and embraces a provision that “they may wear headscarves during Koran lessons at the Imam Hatip High Schools” which offer religious education.

14. Although there is a conception that girls drop out school at earlier ages because of the provision that they must be without headscarves within the boundaries of the school, the gender gap between girls and boys in primary education has narrowed notably thanks to the recent developments achieved in Turkey related to education. According to the data of the 2011-2012 educational year, while the schooling rate of boys is 98.77%, it is 98.56% for girls.

3. Tertiary Education Institutions

15. The practice related to the students who wear headscarves in tertiary education institutions has changed since the CEDAW Committee’s session on Turkey held in 2010. In the Official Letter of the Board of Higher Education (YOK), dated 23.07.2010, it is stated that “lecturers are not authorized to expel students from class based on their manner of dress.”

16. The condition that the photograph to be submitted at registration by candidate students who are eligible for tertiary education be “of front view, bare-headed; easily recognizable, shot in the last 6 months” was also removed from the Higher Educational Programs Placement and Quota Manual published on July 5th 2011, by The Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM).

17. The Provision included in the 17th article (Annex: 25/10/1990 - 3670/12 article) of the Tertiary Educational Law valid for all universities countrywide as of 2012 states that “everyone has the right to dress as they wish in tertiary educational institutions provided they do not contradict the laws in force” and the provision is implemented for all forms of dress. There has been a decrease in individual discrimination complaints submitted to the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA), Human Rights Review Committee and Prime Ministry Board on Human Rights. Thus, it is possible to state that the headscarf ban has been lifted in universities.

18. The lift of the ban in tertiary education institutions is expected to generate positive improvements in the educational lives of women.

4. The Situation of Headscarf Wearing in Employment

19. The statistical data on women's participation in employment and the labor force in Turkey, reveal that they fall behind men in employment and their unemployment rates and that the poverty rates for women are far higher than men. Women's employment is not at a desirable level in Turkey. According to the 2011 data presented by TUIK, for women, the participation rate in the labor force is 28.8%, the employment rate is 25.6% and the unemployment rate is 11.3%.

20. The related studies reveal that the low rates in women's participation in economic life are based on a variety of reasons.

21. When women, who work as unpaid family workers in rural areas, migrate to the cities, as a result of urbanization, they encounter challenges in employment due to the distinctness of the labor force market. Women's lack of necessary educational and vocational qualifications, required by the labor force market in the cities, leads to their dropping out of the labor force market or their employment in informal economy with low pay.

22. The current situation in Turkey regarding the headscarf ban is cited as one of the reasons for the low rate of women's participation in employment. However, no official statistical data exists on the issue except for a limited number of studies (see the section: Formulation of Statistical Data on Headscarf Wearing)

23. The provisions on the code of dress for public officials are established in Annex: Article 19 of the Civil Servants Law No: 657. In accordance with the Law, civil servants have to conform to the code of dress set forth in the law, by-laws and directives. What's more, disciplinary sanctions are established in Article 125 of the Civil Servants Law. The article reads "violation of code of dress" is among the acts and deeds which call for notice.

24. Regarding the private sector, although there is no legal basis, there are some NGOs who believe that there are a limited number of occupations in which the women wearing headscarves can work.

25. The field research on the headscarf ban Titled "The Covered Truth of Turkey" identifies the unjust treatment faced by women wearing headscarves in working life. According to the research, among the women wearing headscarves: 32% have never worked before, 20.8% claim that they could not find a job because of their headscarf, 17.8% state that they are forced to work in background positions, 17.1% state that they had to work in positions other than their own profession, 12.7% are employed with lower pay, 10.8% think their productivity has decreased on account of the headscarf ban, 10.2% stated that they have been dismissed from the job, 6.7% stated that they have been deprived of the right to choose a job, 6% stated that they have had to wear wigs, 3.2% stated that they were not able to make a career, 2.3% stated that they got punishment/suspension from the job, 1.9% stated that they have had to remove their headscarf, 1.3% stated that they have had to leave their job, 1.1% expressed that they have worked in workplaces where the headscarf is not a problem, 1.4% stated that they have never had a problem because of the headscarf ban.

26. As mentioned before, the research conducted in this area has a number of restrictions in revealing the situation in Turkey from an overall perspective. To access official data will be possible once the studies to be conducted by TUIK and TEPAV are completed.

B. Regulations on combating violence against women included in paragraph 23 of the concluding observations

27. The state of the Turkish Republic considers violence against women as discrimination and a violation of human rights. Due attention has been paid to the issue during the preparation process of the report. Holistic and comprehensive measures have been launched as a part of “the zero tolerance principle towards violence against women” in collaboration with all public institutions and agencies and NGOs, under the leadership of the GDSW, Ministry of Family and Social Policies. Implementation of these measures has become one of our priority policies.

1. Strengthening the legislation

(a) Amendment of the Constitution

28. While the principle of equality between women and men was already explicitly included in the Constitution earlier, two provisions were added in 2004 and 2010. The provision that “Men and women have equal rights and the State is responsible for ensuring this equality in practice” was added to the Article 10 of the Constitution in 2004 and the phrase “measures to be taken to this effect cannot be considered contrary to the principle of equality” was added in 2010. The State has been given greater responsibility beyond preventing gender-based discrimination and has been assigned the duty of formulating policies, regulations and measures to provide equal rights and opportunities for women and men. Affirmative action practices were provided with a constitutional basis through the provision that “measures to be taken cannot be considered contrary to the principle of equality.” With such a revolutionary amendment, Turkey is one of the few countries that has included such a provision in her Constitution.

(b) The Istanbul Convention

29. The Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), adopted on 7 April 2011 in Strasbourg by The Committee of Ministers of The Council of Europe and opened to signature in Istanbul on 11 May 2011 and signed by 18 states to date, was ratified on 24 November 2011 by Turkey. Domestically, it came into force on 8 March 2012 after being published in the official gazette and instruments of ratification were deposited in the Council of Europe on 14 March 2012 making Turkey the first state to become party to the Istanbul Convention.

(c) The Law No: 6284 on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women

30. The Law No: 6284 on the “Protection of Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women” has been prepared by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies to broaden the scope of the existing Law No: 4320 on the Protection of the Family and to remedy its implementation gaps and to make necessary national legal arrangements in accordance with the Istanbul Convention.

31. The Law, prepared in accordance with meetings with public prosecutors working on violence against women, Family Court Judges, the representatives of women’s NGOs, Heads of Bar Associations of 16 provinces which have metropolitan municipalities and the written opinions of all relevant public institutions and agencies and NGOs, was approved in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) unanimously on March 8, 2012 and came into force after being published in the Official Gazette No: 28239 on 20 March 2012.

32. With the new Law No: 6284 special amendments were made in the law on the points underlined in the paragraph 23 of the Concluding Observations of the Committee: The Law No: 4320 was revised and strengthened, all forms of violence against women are prohibited, women and girl victims of violence have access to immediate support and protection services including protection orders, the perpetrators of violence are prosecuted and punished, special provisions were included on the provision of training programs and public awareness raising campaigns for public officials, judiciary, law enforcement officials and health care personnel to ensure that they combat violence and provide adequate support to the victims of violence. Also a number of initiatives were launched to enable the provision of additional counseling and support services including Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers and women's shelters, the Law ensures that temporary accommodation will be provided for victims of violence; when necessary they shall be provided with shelter in the recreational centers of public institutions. Furthermore, the Law sets forth provisions regarding the establishment of cooperation between Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers and NGOs.

33. The regulations brought by the Law No: 6284 on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women are as follows;

(a) The Law, which also covers all family members and allows no form of discrimination based on marital status in accordance with CEDAW, has a broader practical scope than the Law No: 4320. The main purpose of the Law is "to establish the rules and procedures on the measures to be taken for the protection of women victims of violence, potential women victims, children, family members and victims of stalking and for the prevention of violence." Furthermore, the principles to be followed in the implementation of the law and the provision of related services have also been defined;

(b) The concept of "violence against women" has been defined in the Law in accordance with the Istanbul Convention so as to include physical, verbal, sexual, economic and psychological violence;

(c) Preventive and protective measures to be taken regarding the victim and the perpetrator or potential perpetrator are established in the law in detail;

(d) Local state authorities are entitled to give protective orders such as provision of shelter and temporary financial aids, delivery of psychological, vocational, legal and social support services, temporary 'ex-officio' protection, provision of access to daycare services; moreover, in the presence of delay risks, the protection orders (accommodation and temporary protection) can also be ruled by the relevant local law enforcement chief officer and no evidence or evidential document will be sought during the ruling of these orders;

(e) The Law establishes that in case of a life risk, the judge may rule protective orders pertaining changing of the workplace and residential location of the protected person and imposition of a family dwelling annotation on the home of the victim and changing the identity and other relevant information documents of the protected person within the framework of the Witness Protection Act;

(f) The prevention orders which may be ruled by the judges for the perpetrator or potential perpetrator are as follows: The perpetrator is banned from acts and deeds which include threat, insult, contempt, humiliation; banished from the family residence and the dwelling is allocated to the protected person; prevented from approaching to the person or persons, damaging the personal belongings and household properties of the protected person; if she/he has a weapon or is holding a civil service position which requires carrying weapon debited on him, she/he is required to submit the weapon to the relevant public institution; she/he may be treated or even hospitalized if she/he has an alcohol or other intoxicating substance addiction; the Law sets forth that the prevention orders may also be

ruled by the local law enforcement officers in emergency situations on the condition that these orders are submitted for approval of the judge within 24 hours;

(g) In the event that the perpetrator is the wage earner of the household, the judge may also rule on custody, guardianship, alimony and personal communication rights based on the features of the case even if not demanded by the victim of violence. If the person liable for paying alimony has Social Security coverage, the alimony will be allocated 'ex-officio' from the wage or salary of the relevant person without seeking any application from the protected person;

(h) In cases where there is an ongoing investigation, prosecution or conviction received on account of weapon carrying, substance and intoxicating substance use, the relevant probation provisions will remain in effect;

(i) The Law establishes that anyone, who has a rational reason to believe that a violence act is in process, may report the case to the official authorities and officials; any civil servant, who receives such a notification is obliged to inform the other related officials of the case, who are to take necessary actions regarding the situation without any delay;

(j) The period allocated for the protection or prevention orders to be issued by the judges, upon a request by the Ministry, law enforcement officers or the Public Prosecutors or on demand of the relevant person, will cover a period of six month on the first occurrence. However, the period or the type of the order may be changed, extended or continued in accordance with the presence of violence or a risk of violence;

(k) No evidence or evidential document of an act of violence will be sought in order to issue a protective order, the order will be ruled and implemented without any delay and the rejection of such an order will only be conveyed to the protected person;

(l) The Law states that when necessary, together with the protective order, the identity information of the protected person and of the family members of the protected person or the information and addresses through which may reveal their identities will be kept confidential in all official records;

(m) The Law provides that the addressee shall have the right to object to a protection order within two weeks of issue, at Family Courts;

(n) According to the Law, the local law enforcement officers shall be in charge of and authorized for the implementation of the protection and/or prevention orders;

(o) Failure of notification or announcement of a protection or prevention order to the parties concerned shall not pose an impediment for the implementation of the order;

(p) In cases where the persons upon whom a provision of shelter order has been ruled, if the person concerned cannot be provided with the required shelter arrangements by the Ministry, they will be provided with temporary shelter in the recreational centers, dormitories and similar facilities of public institutions and agencies, on request by the local authority, in emergency situations or by the Ministry or local law enforcement officers;

(q) Law enforcement missions set forth within this Law are to be fulfilled by a sufficient number of personnel who have received training on human rights of children and women and gender equality;

(r) Under the heading of technical monitoring, technical tools and methods may be used in the implementation of orders issued by judges, however, voice and video records of persons may not be listened to, viewed or saved under any circumstances for this purpose;

(s) The law establishes that the perpetrator shall be sentenced to forced imprisonment from three to ten days in case of a violation of a prevention order; and from

fifteen days to thirty days, in the recurrence of the violation. The total period of forced imprisonment cannot exceed six months. In the event that the offence is in the scope of another criminal act, the perpetrator shall be exposed to a separate investigation and prosecution;

(t) The Law establishes the provision of support services and the establishment of “Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers,” which will operate on a 24/7 bases to actively provide monitoring and support services towards the implementation of preventive and protective orders in order to prevent violence.

(u) Some of the missions of the “Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers” are as follows:

- (i) To establish a databank related to the protection and prevention orders, the enactment and implementation of forced imprisonment and to keep records of the issued protection and prevention orders;
- (ii) To file applications, when required, for the enactment and implementation of protection orders;
- (iii) Prepare and implement individual and wide scale programs for the prevention of violence;
- (iv) To increase the number of call centers established within the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and monitor the applications made to these centers;
- (v) To cooperate with the NGOs working to stop violence;
- (vi) To offer guidance on the rights of the protected persons, the institutions they can seek support from in finding employment and similar issues; to engage in activities to provide for their participation in vocational courses;
- (vii) To follow up the results of protection orders and their effects on persons;
- (viii) To help the protected person solve their psycho-social and economic problems;
- (ix) To compile a detailed report on the background information of the victim of violence, the perpetrator, their family, environment and educational, personal, economic and psychological status upon request of the judge;
- (x) To ensure the participation of the perpetrator to training and rehabilitation programs which aim to change the attitude and behavior through raising awareness on anger and stress management and violence prevention; their treatment and examination at a health institution if the perpetrator has an alcohol or other intoxicating substance addiction or mental disorder; to conduct activities to provide their participation in vocational courses.

(v) The Law no: 6284 sets forth that the Ministry of Family and Social Policies is liable for the maintenance of coordination between the related institutions, the encouragement of public intuitions and agencies, real and corporate bodies to work collaboratively with the Ministry and that the personnel of these bodies shall help the Ministry officials when required.

(w) The Law includes a provision that personnel and members of all public institution, agencies and vocational associations shall be trained on “women’s human rights and gender equality” by engaging them in training programs; furthermore, lessons on “women’s human rights and gender equality” shall be included in the primary and secondary school curricula.

(x) The Law imposes new liabilities on the media regarding their engagement in awareness raising campaigns. The Radio and Television Institution of Turkey (TRT), other national, regional and local TV channels and radios are required to broadcast materials to be prepared by the Ministry or other institutions on mechanisms and policies targeting children and women and combating violence against women.

(y) In the event that a temporary financial aid order is ruled for a protected person, the person, who is over the age of sixteen, shall be paid a daily sum which amounts to no more than one out of thirty (1/30) of the net minimum wage amount, which is fixed annually. If the number of the protected persons is more than two, the amount is increased by 20% per additional person. The temporary financial aid is revocable from the perpetrator. In case of false declaration, the amount is revocable from the protected person.

(z) In the event that the person for whom a protection order has been ruled, does not benefit from health and treatment services on account of having no health insurance, she is entitled to make use of general health insurance. The Law establishes that the rehabilitation expenses of the persons with a protection order, who are out of the scope of general health insurance, are covered by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

(aa) The Law establishes that no fees or payments shall be charged for the applications and procedures, for the execution and implementation of issued orders referred within the scope the Law; all payments shall be exempt from all forms of tax.

(bb) If deemed necessary by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, the Ministry shall participate in every form of legal, criminal and administrative case and ‘ex-parte’ proceeding filed on the account of an act of violence or potential violence against women, children and family members.

(d) Restructuring of the Shelters

34. A Consultation Meeting was held on 21-22 September 2011 with the participation of Ministry of Family and Social Policies, Managers of Provincial Directorates, representatives from municipalities and women’s NGOs, which offer shelter services to “Strengthen Women’s Shelters in Quality and Quantity”. A new service model was introduced and discussed for the shelters in order to render them more effective and to provide across-the-board services to victims of violence. A Round Table Meeting was also held to analyze the outputs of the Consultation Meeting. As a part of these preparations, a “Draft Shelter Regulation” was prepared by the working group set up after the meetings to “Strengthen Women’s Shelters in Quality and Quantity”, so as to include provisions which assure that the staff to be employed in the shelters will have the necessary qualifications and that standardization and a flexible budget for their operations are ensured. Studies and activities are still continuing for the finalization of the draft.

2. Training activities and programs towards implementers

35. “Training Protocols” have been signed with the relevant Ministries in order to raise the awareness and sensitivity of the personnel working in institutions and agencies which offer services to victims of “violence against women, domestic violence, gender equality”, on “approach towards victims of violence and implementation of legal legislation.”

(a) “The Training Protocol on the Role of Law Enforcement Officers in the Prevention of Violence against Women and Procedures to be Followed” was signed with the Ministry of Internal Affairs in December 2006 and the training of 45.000 police was completed between the years 2006-2012;

(b) A Protocol on “Increasing the Institutional Capacity of Services Offered for Victims of Violence and Child Victims and the Development of Cooperation” was signed

in October 2009 between the General Directorate on the Status of Women, the General Directorate on Social Services and Child Protection and the General Directorate of Security. As a part of the protocol, a “domestic violence registration form” was developed and conveyed to all police stations via The National Police Network (Pol-Net). Risk assessment of the victim will be made by the police using this form and thus the attention of the unit to whom the form will be submitted will be attracted, thus, preventing the emergence of any potential negative situation. On the other hand, the Project on “The Role of Law Enforcement Officers in Prevention of Violence against Women and the Training of Expert Trainers” was launched in accordance with the Protocol. The aim of the Project is to train a group of expert trainers who are equipped to conduct all forms of training, seminars, symposia and scientific activities towards the prevention of domestic violence, within the General Directorate of Security and to form a police response model for domestic violence cases. The Project was completed in February 2011 and 19 police officers and 4 psychologists participated in the program;

(c) “The Training Protocol on the Role of Health Personnel in the Prevention of Violence against Women and Procedures to be Followed” was signed with the Ministry of Health and came into force in February 2008. As a result, the training of 65.000 health personnel was completed in 81 provinces countrywide;

(d) “The Project Protocol on the Role of Judiciary in the Prevention of Violence against Women and Procedures to be Followed” was signed with the Ministry of Justice in April 2009. The training of 326 Family Court Judges and Public Prosecutors was completed;

(e) “The Training Protocol on the Role of Religious Personnel in the Prevention of Violence against Women and Procedures to be Followed” was signed between the State Ministry Responsible for Family and Social Affairs and the State Ministry Responsible for Religious Affairs and the training activities within this context were launched in Ankara, in April 2010. The protocol aims to complete the training of 12.000 personnel in the Central Anatolia Region in the first phase. The second phase of the project will also be run in preferably selected provinces of other regions in which there are religious officials to be assigned by the Department of Religious Affairs and Family Counseling and Guidance Bureaus of the Department. Through the training programs, which will continue until the year 2015, around 100.000 religious officials will be trained. The training of the expert trainers to train the 100 religious officials has been completed;

(f) Three-day “Equality between Women and Men and Gender Equality” training programs are provided in order to exchange knowledge and experience with the executives working in public institutions and agencies on the challenges, causes, results and solution offers related to gender equality, to raise awareness and sensitivity in the participants and to ensure that gender perspective is mainstreamed in all aspects of their work. The training programs have been implemented for the Regional Directors of the rural areas, who carry out women oriented work in the field. The training programs for the Principals of Public Training Centers, the Regional Directors of Agriculture, National Education and, Social services in 81 provinces of Turkey were completed between March 2009 and October 2011. Training programs have also been implemented for managers, experts and assistance experts working within the central and field services of the Turkish Employment Agency between October 2011 and December 2011 and the training programs are still continuing. 2300 civil servants have participated to the training programs as of 2012;

(g) The issue of violence against children and women and domestic violence is included in the in-service training programs which are organized to increase the vocational and occupational experiences and knowledge of social workers (psychologists, pedagogues, social services experts) working in Family and Children’s Courts of the

Ministry of Justice. The training programs have been implemented between March 2012 and May 2012 and The Ministry of Family and Social Policies supplied the required expert support for the programs;

(h) A Cooperation Protocol was signed between the State Ministry Responsible for Family and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology on February 10th, 2012, which aims to improve entrepreneurship activities of women, the disabled, the relatives of martyrs and veterans and increase women's employment. The Protocol also aims to carry out activities which will increase entrepreneurship and employment of women;

(i) A protocol was signed between the State Ministry Responsible for Family and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security on 17 February, 2012. The protocol covers the following points which will contribute to increasing women's participation in economic life and the empowerment of women; reconciliation of work and family life and proliferation of daycare centers within this context, inclusion of gender equality and women rights subject in the training modules of labor training programs offered by Turkish Employment Organization (İŞKUR) for the unemployed and carrying out activities for the improvement of the life and working conditions of women who work as seasonal agricultural workers; ensuring access of women, who are victims of violence, who are to be released from prison in less than a year, whose husbands have died, who were abandoned by their husbands, whose husbands are in prison or who are divorced to İŞKUR;

(j) The Ministry of Family and Social Policies and Board of Higher Education have signed a Cooperation Protocol for the inclusion of gender equality and violence against women courses in undergraduate programs and applying positive discrimination towards women in scholarship allocation processes along with other topics covered within the Protocol;

(k) The Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the General Commandership of the Gendarmerie have also signed a Cooperation Protocol on violence against women, domestic violence, gender equality training programs, methods of approaching victims of violence and increasing the training and cooperation for the implementation of legislation on the issue on 12 April, 2012. Within the context of the protocol, a number of activities will be organized to include "gender equality" and "prevention of violence against women" courses in the curricula of the schools affiliated to the General Commandership of the Gendarmerie; meanwhile, soldiers and noncommissioned officers will be offered training on violence against women, tradition and honor killings; guiding and informative booklets will be prepared to hand out to the victims of violence, who seek help from the commandership of gendarmerie and police stations. Violence against women has become a distinct course for the first time in schools affiliated to the General Commandership of the Gendarmerie;

(l) As a part of the regulations introduced by "The Law on The Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence", which came into force on March 20th, 2012, a total of 16 meetings were held in 16 provinces in all 7 regions of Turkey with the participation of Deputy Governors, Provincial Directors and Deputy Directors of Family and Social Policies, Provincial Directors of Health, Provincial Directors of National Education, Provincial Directors of Social Security, Provincial Commanders of the Gendarmerie, Provincial Directors of Security, provincial Social Workers, personnel in charge of the one-step centers, the managers of the shelters, District Heads of Security, District Commanders of the Gendarmerie, District Governors, Public Chief Prosecutors/Prosecutors and representatives of the Provincial and District Justice Commission. The meetings targeted 5600 participants from all 81 Provinces of Turkey.

3. Public awareness-raising campaigns

36. The following are public awareness-raising campaigns:

(a) Girls' education, women's employment and women's participation in decision-making processes, violence against women, honor killings, women's human rights and gender equality issues have been included in the "Citizenship" training programs offered for all soldiers and non-commissioned officers. All of the training modules including the educational materials and posters have been prepared by the GDSW and submitted to the Turkish General Staff. In this context, each year 450 000 soldiers and non-commissioned officers participate in these training programs;

(b) The Declaration titled "Count Me In" which highlights the importance of the involvement of men in combating violence against women was delivered within the context of the November 25th, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The Declaration was first signed by the Prime Minister and supported by the men members of the Parliament. The declaration was signed by over 15,000 men between November 2011 and March 2012;

(c) Printed and visual publications, posters, brochures and manuals are being published and spot films are being prepared to draw attention to violence against women, and to raise social awareness and sensitiveness on combating violence against women. For example, brochures prepared for the week of November 25 and March 8 was all distributed. In addition, the footballers took the field with banners on which "stop violence against women" was written in the Premier League Matches played on the November 25th, in order to draw public attention to the subject. In addition, the National Lottery tickets, drawn on March 9, 2012, were prepared with the theme of "8th March International Women's Day";

(d) "Gender and the Media Workshops" are being organized since 2008 for students, who are to be future media professionals, from various faculties of communication in Turkey, in order to raise their awareness on gender equality and violence against women. The workshop programs last for 5 days and the first two days of the program are completely allocated to lectures. Within this context, workshop activities were carried out with the cooperation of the Mediterranean University and Izmir University of Economics in July and November of 2010.;

(e) Activities on "The Role of Local Media Professionals in Combating Violence Against Women and News Writing Workshop" have been carried out since 2008. The training activities aim to raise awareness of local media professionals on violence against women and gender equality. 170 media professionals have attended the workshop so far. The training programs were delivered in the provinces of Kars and Antalya in 2010.

4. Counseling and other support services for victims of violence

37. Gender equality national mechanisms took their final form through a Decree Law, published in the Official Gazette on June 8, 2011 and the GDSW has been restructured as one of the main service units of the newly established Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

38. According to the latest regulations, the responsibilities of the Directorate General on the Status of Women are as follows:

(a) To conduct and coordinate the protective, preventive, educative, improving, counseling and rehabilitative social services activities towards women on behalf of the Ministry;

(b) To coordinate the activities towards the determination of national policies and strategies for the prevention of discrimination against women, the protection of women's human rights and the social status of women and the promotion of women to become active in all spheres of social life; to implement, monitor and evaluate the implementation of these policies and strategies;

(c) To identify the principles, procedures and standards regarding the social services provided by public institutions and organizations, voluntary organizations, real and legal persons and ensure their compliance;

(d) To prevent all forms of discrimination against women and carry out activities and projects to improve women's rights and support activities conducted in this area;

(e) To develop social awareness through informing and enlightening the public about women's human rights;

(f) To conduct activities for the prevention of all forms of violence against women, tradition and honor killings, harassment and abuse and provide support for women to develop solutions to the problems arising from family and social life;

(g) To conduct activities which will provide the advancement of women in all areas including health, education, culture, employment and social security and increase their participation in decision making mechanisms.

39. Combating violence against women was included in the areas of responsibility of the GDSW by the "Directive on Organization and Duties of the GDSW of Ministry of Family and Social Policies," prepared on the basis of the Decree Law on Organization and Duties of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. According to the relevant article of the directive, engaging in activities to prevent all forms of violence, harassment and abuse against women, providing support for women to develop solutions to the problems arising from family and social life," were counted among the main tasks of the GDSW. Thus, the GDSW has been endowed with a more executive structure including the task of policy development and becoming a more effectively functioning mechanism spreading throughout the field with its provincial organization and adequate budget.

40. The task of management and administration of women's shelters has also been assigned to the GDSW. Currently, the GDSW under the Ministry of Family and Social Policies has 60 women's shelters and the total capacity of these shelters is 1427. In addition, there are 28 women's shelters under the municipalities and 3 women's shelters run by NGOs, offering services to private legal entities and victims of human trafficking. The activities on opening shelters which are currently 88 in number as of March 2012, continue to gain momentum.

The number of women's shelters by years (affiliated to the GDSW)

<i>Years</i>	<i>Number of women's shelters</i>	<i>Capacity of women's shelters</i>
2010	43	943
2011	53	1180
2012	60	1427

41. In the legislation, women's shelters are defined as "boarding social services agencies in which women or men subjected to physical, emotional, sexual and economic abuse and their children, if any, can meet their temporary accommodation needs during the passing of their psycho-social and economic problems."

42. According to the regulation in force, a woman's length of stay in the shelter is three months. This time can be extended for three more months with the proposal of the director of the shelter and the approval of the provincial directorate. At the end of the period, the situation of the woman will be evaluated in the meeting of the Coordination and Review Commission to avoid any problems that may result from the implementation of the provision and extension of the stay period until they solve their problems.

43. Rent allowance is offered for women who leave the shelters, their children are granted educational aids; cooperation protocols are signed with Municipalities to help them find jobs, a number of initiatives have been launched with the Public Housing Administration to provide studio apartments for women and their children who leave the shelters, in which they can avail of temporary accommodation, because they have found jobs.

44. Before they leave the shelters, women are also informed of the protective and preventive day-time services and the organizations they can benefit from, free of charge, in case of need. Within this context, they are provided with information about family counseling centers and community centers. It is also possible to build a connection with the family members or the spouses of the victims upon the request of the victim in order to conduct therapy with the family members to solve the problems leading to the woman seeking shelter.

45. Vocational studies are carried out to help women cope with the trauma they have experienced and support them in sustaining healthy relationships in non-violent environments (provided by psychologists, social workers, child developers working in women's shelters) and women victims are supported to maintain their lives as they wish. Within the scope of this work, they are also assisted in building healthier family relationships by resuming vocational studies via Provincial Community Centers and Family Counseling Centers, where their families reside, upon their request to be with their families or spouses, if they want to be provided with such support.

46. One of the objectives of the GDSW in combating violence against women is "the restructuring of the women's shelters." The purpose of this objective is the standardization of the physical conditions, strengthening of the quality and quantity of staff, establishment of a common communication network, opening of specialized shelters. Within this framework, the aim is to open at least one shelter, one first step station, a call center (Alo 183) and a Violence Prevention and Monitoring Center in each of the 81 provinces by 2015, while increasing the total capacity of the shelters to 3000. The secondary legislation is already being prepared towards this objective.

47. Another important mechanism in combating violence against women is counseling services for women who have been subjected to violence, who are at risk of violence and who need support. Within this framework;

(a) The "Alo 183 line" provides services for women and children who have been subjected to violence, who are at risk of violence and in need of support related to psychological, legal and economic consultation services to ensure that they have access to the type of services they need in the shortest time possible by informing them of the field service organizations they can benefit from;

(b) As the Board of Law Commission on Women's Rights, the Women's Counseling Centers, affiliated to the Bar Associations, are engaged in activities for the achievement of equality between men and women in basic laws, such as the Civil Code and providing free of charge counseling services for women, who do not have enough information on women rights, which places to apply to and how to apply for these services;

(c) The Union of Turkish Bar Association Women's Law Commission (TÜBAKKOM), composed of the representatives of Bar Associations within which there are Women's Law Commissions, carry out activities towards developing solutions to problems arising from any form of discrimination against women including domestic violence;

(d) A variety of services for women victims of violence are also delivered by non-governmental organizations. Legal and psychological support services are offered in counseling centers and shelters are also available for women victims, when required;

(e) Psychological and legal counseling and economic assistance is delivered for the women victims of violence in "48 Family Counseling Centers" and in "95 Community Centers" of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the situation of women who demand shelter are evaluated and they are directed to the relevant units;

(f) 40 Multi-Purpose Community Centers (ÇATOM), affiliated to the South-eastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration of the Ministry of Development, provide services to women on such issues as education, guidance and vocational training;

(g) Psycho-social support services are provided on domestic violence in "103 Psycho-social Support and Crisis Intervention Units" created within the emergency services of hospitals in 51 provinces;

(h) In addition, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies has launched a program with which to provide each family with a Family Social Support Specialist;

(i) The First Step Stations, which render easily accessible and rapid intervention services for women, are in the process of being increased and improved to provide services in all provinces, countrywide;

(j) The establishment of "Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers" within the context of the Law on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women" is underway.

5. Cooperation with NGOs and other relevant parties

48. Non-governmental organizations, which play a key role in the establishment of democracy in countries and serve as a bridge between the state and the community, conduct remarkable activities in the process of strengthening the social role of women and gender equality. The transformation of the needs and demands of society to public policy depends greatly on an effective cooperation between NGOs and public authorities. The Ministry of Family and Social Policies, assigned the duty of conducting activities to ensure equality between women and men in our country, has included the representatives of women's NGOs, actively working in the field of women's rights in all preparation, implementation and monitoring processes of its work and will continue to do so in all future activities.

49. During the preparation and adoption process of "The Law on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women" by the Parliament:

50. A number of meetings were held with the participation of:

(a) The Heads of the Bar Associations of 17 provinces which have Metropolitan Municipalities on September 13th, 2011;

(b) Approximately 100 representatives of NGOs and the participation of representatives of relevant institutions on 19th, September 2011;

(c) 20 Family Court Judges from Ankara and 2 Public Prosecutors responsible for cases of domestic violence on September 22nd, 2011;

(d) In addition, a meeting was held with a team of representatives from 236 women's NGOs on October 22nd, 2011;

(e) The written opinions of 68 public institutions and agencies were received on the draft Law. In this context, a number of meetings were held with the participation of NGOs and academicians on December 27, 2011, January 12, 2012 and January 15, 2012;

(f) A set of workshops were held to receive the opinions of women's NGOs in the preparation process of "The Draft Shelter Directive" between the 4- 6 April 2012.

C. Conclusion

51. In the light of the information given in the first section on work carried out with regard to the situation of the women wearing headscarves and the positive recent developments in combating violence, we hope we will have more concrete evidence to submit to the Committee on these issues by the next reporting period.

52. We would like to express our commitment to continuing our work and studies on both subjects with the cooperation of all other stakeholders (local authorities, NGOs, trade bodies, private sector and the media) including the public institutions. The Law amendments and the comprehensive activities conducted with regard to the implementation of the new Law are just the beginning.

53. We would like to express to the Committee members that we are well aware of the problems related to implementation in our country and that the steps we have taken so far will shed light on our continuing efforts to overcome these problems.
