



**Convention on the Elimination  
of All Forms of Discrimination  
against Women**

Distr.: General  
9 December 2014

Original: English

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under  
article 18 of the Convention**

**Seventh periodic report of States parties due in 2014**

**Turkey\***

[Date received: 26 November 2014]

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



## Introduction

1. The 7th Periodic Country Report<sup>1</sup> was prepared by the General Directorate on the Status of Women (KSGM), the Ministry of Family and Social Policies (ASPB) of the Republic of Turkey in a participatory process, integrating the contributions of relevant government agencies, academicians and non-governmental organization (NGOs) working in the field of women's human rights and gender equality. The report aims to highlight achievements and improvements made vis-à-vis each article of the Convention since 2008 and to identify the fields of work on which more efforts must be spared. The follow up report requested by the Committee in the Concluding Observations<sup>2</sup> on the 6th Report was submitted to the Committee in July 2012.

2. The Concluding Observations were translated into Turkish and sent to the relevant institutions and authorities such as the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women (KEFEK) of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM), women members of the parliament, the relevant Ministries and published on the website of KSGM, all as stated in the 8th and 46th paragraphs of thereof. Additionally a number of meetings were organized regarding the Concluding Observations under the presidency of the State Minister responsible for Women and Family, who was in charge, with the participation of NGOs and universities.

3. The preparatory activities of the 7th Report were launched within the last quarter of 2013. As recommended in the 50th paragraph of the Concluding Observations, a meeting was organized with a broad participation of the relevant stakeholders, NGOs and local authorities in December 2013. The participating partners to the meeting submitted their opinions and views on the rough draft. The report acquired its final form after the written opinions requested to involve more concrete proposals in the report and views of the parties on the second draft report were received.

4. KSGM participated to the preliminary meetings organized by the CEDAW Executive Committee for NGOs and took due notice of the NGOs views and opinions in order to reflect their sensitivities on the report.

5. All General Recommendations of CEDAW Committee released so far have been translated into Turkish and KSGM publicized the Recommendations by publishing them on its website.

### Article 1

6. In views of the terms highlighted in the 10th and 11th paragraphs of the Concluding Observations, we would like to point out to the following particulars on Turkey's efforts to combat discrimination against women:

7. Although the definition of "discrimination against women" is not included in the Constitution as described in the Convention, equality between women and men is among the main principles of the Constitution. There is not a specific legal regulation which makes a definition of "discrimination" and establishes the provisions regarding discrimination. However though, the international conventions

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<sup>1</sup> Periodic Country Report shall hereinafter be referred to as Report.

<sup>2</sup> It shall hereinafter be referred to as The Concluding Observations.

shall prevail in case of any contradiction among the conventions on human rights and the national legislation, in pursuant to the Article 90 of the Constitution.

8. The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), which Turkey became the first to ratify in 2012, adopts the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of sex.

9. In accordance with the Law No. 6284 on Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women, which was built on the Istanbul Convention and came into force in 2012, all women, children and other family members, as well as the victims of unilateral persistent stalking are included within the scope of the Law.

#### **Article 2-a**

10. The principle of equality between women and men is acknowledged explicitly in the Constitution. With an amendment made to the 10th Article of the Constitution in 2004 the provision that “women and men have equal rights, the State is liable for ensuring this equality in practice” was added. Following the amendment another provision was added to the same provision in 2010 stating that “any measures to be taken to this aim shall not be contrary to the principle of equality”. The recent amendments paved the way for temporary special measures in the Constitution and it was underlined that any regulations to be put into practice in favour of women to achieve de facto equality shall not be contradictory to the principle of equality.

#### **Article 2-b**

11. The 122nd Article of the Penal Code on discrimination was re-arranged under the heading of “hatred and discrimination” with an amendment to the Turkish Penal Code in March, 2014. The Law sets forth that any person who prevents another person from the enjoyment of public goods and services or from engaging in an economic activity on grounds of the differences arising from the person’s “language, race, ethnicity, colour, sex, disability, political view, philosophical belief, religion or sect” shall be punished with an imprisonment beginning from one year to three years.

12. In addition, the “Workplace Danger Class Notice on Occupational Health and Security” dated December, 2012 was issued and replaced “the Regulation Amending the Regulation on Heavy and Hazardous Jobs”. Thus, many jobs have been omitted from the list of heavy and hazardous jobs, removing the restrictions with regard to the employment of women and the youth. Women’s working in “underground and under water works such as mining, wiring, sewage draining and tunnel constructing” have been taken into the scope of the prohibitions and the Regulation enabled women to work in jobs which are labelled with heavy and dangerous status with a medical report. Hence, jobs which are regarded as solely “men’s job” on account of the gender bias, were removed from the gender stereotypes.

13. The provision that the self-employed women farmers shall be in scope of the premium on condition that they are head of family was annulled with an amendment to the relevant law.

14. In the 14th Article of the Law No. 6289 which came into force on April 11, 2012 and the 19th Article with the heading of “Authorities and Activities of Unions and Confederations” of the Law No. 4688 on Unions of Public Officials, it is

established that unions and confederations shall observe the principle of gender equality in their activities and events in line with their establishment objectives.

15. The 26th Article of the Law on Trade Unions and Collective Bargaining No. 6356 which came into force on November 7, 2012 establishes that the trade unions and confederations shall observe gender equality principle both in their works and activities as well as among the members in enjoyment of the activities of these confederations and trade unions.

16. The 10th Development Plan, covering the years 2014 and 2018 and of great importance in terms of translating de jure gender equality into practice in all spheres of life, was approved in the TBMM in July, 2013. The Plan includes a number of objectives relating to achieve gender equality as follows: Enhancing women's participation further in decision-making mechanisms, increasing women's employment, enhancing the educational level and skills of women, extending easily accessible secured flexible working facilities, crèches and childcare services to reconcile work and family life, adopting more flexible alternative models, raising awareness beginning from the early childhood periods through formal and non-formal education to eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against women and raising awareness on gender-responsive budgeting. The 9th Development Plan envisages measures for women under several headings rather than putting the issue under a sole separate heading. The 10th Development Plan, however, positions the gender equality policies mainly under the section titled "Family and Women". It also has a range of headings with reference to diverse goals, objectives and policies of gender equality.

17. In scope of the preparatory work of the 10th Development Plan, The Gender Equality Working Group drafted a detailed report covering the problematic aspects and proposals of solutions relating to five basic fields which are "education and training, health care, violence against women, employment and decision-making and political participation".

18. The Prime Ministerial Circular No. 2010/14 on Promotion of Women's Employment and Equal Opportunities" took effect on 25th May 2010. Within the scope of the circular, "The National Monitoring and Coordination Council on Women's Employment" comprised of the representatives of the relevant institutions and agencies was formed up to identify the existing problems in the field of women's employment, monitor and evaluate the activities launched by all relevant parties to bring a solution to these problems and to ensure coordination and cooperation. The Council has convened only once so far. In accordance with the information requested by the Committee with regard to the 33rd paragraph of the Concluding Observations, Turkey draws attention to the following activities: The KSGM has prepared a survey which aims to reveal the gender perspectives of the institutions which are in scope of the Circular. The results of the survey will be shared in the Council. In addition, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (ÇSGB) releases annual reports to monitor the implementation of the Circular.

#### **Article 2-c**

19. Turkey increased the number of referral mechanisms which function to protect women's human rights. With an amendment made to the Constitution in 2010, the provision that "each person shall be able to resort to Constitutional Court if she/he claims that any of the constitutionally guaranteed rights and freedoms covered by

the European Convention on Human Rights is violated by the public authority” was re-regulated. In parallel with the abovementioned amendment, another regulation was introduced in 2011 to make the individual applications more tangible and practicable. With the recent amendments, the person who has been subjected to gender-based discrimination shall also be able to make an individual application to the Constitutional Court.

20. Ombudsman, affiliated to the TBMM, was established in 2012 with a public entity and a special budget. The Ombudsman works to supervise and screen out all acts, deeds and approaches of administration in terms of law and equity and to research and provide recommendations by a human rights-based justice understanding. The institution has a woman Ombudsperson specially charged with the issues of “women’s and children’s rights”. The institution started accepting application of complaints as of March, 2013. Both real and legal persons whose interest has been violated can apply to the Ombudsman. No violation of interest is sought in the event that the complaint is about the violation of human rights, fundamental rights and freedoms, public issues, child rights and women’s rights and on-site examinations and investigation are carried out. Likewise, in cases of withdrawal of the complaint, fulfilment of the demand by the administration, death of the complainant or termination of the legal personality, the examination and investigation can still continue.

21. As recommended in the 42nd and 43rd paragraphs of the Concluding Observations, the “Law on the Human Rights Institution of Turkey” was adopted on 21 June, 2012 in the TBMM to carry out activities on protection and promotion of human rights. The Human Rights Institution is authorized and responsible for carrying out activities with regard to the protection and promotion of human rights and prevention of violations; combating torture and maltreatment, screening out complaints and applications and keeping the track of the results of the complaints and applications; launching initiatives for the solution of the existing problems; carrying out training activities to this end; doing researches and examinations in order to monitor and assess the progress recorded with regard to human rights. In accordance with the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles in Examination of the Applications of Human Rights Violation Claims, international conventions are among the basic criteria in assessment of the complaints referred to the Institution.

22. The units and entities which function in the determination and implementation of policies on gender equality are involved within the executive organs. Here are some examples of the aforementioned units which function to determine and implement the policies on gender equality; the “Working Group on Women Services at Rural” within the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (GTHB), “Head of Department on Women and Reproductive Health” within the Ministry of Health, “Gender Equality Unit” within the Ministry of Development, “Gender Equality Branch Office” within the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (ÇSGB), “Gender Team” within the Turkish Statistical Agency (TUIK). Furthermore, “Department on the Rights of Victims” was set up within the Ministry of Justice. The Department aims to provide deliver all forms of material and spiritual support and services to the victims of crime including both women and children.

23. Within the scope of the “UN Joint Programme on Fostering an Enabling Environment for Gender Equality in Turkey” run by the UN, ASPB and KEFEK, 31 laws were reviewed and screened out with a gender perspective and a number of

meetings were organized, in which the local administration chiefs from 26 provinces, mayors, NGOs and deputies had gathered and exchanged ideas.

24. The UN Joint Programme on Promoting and Protecting Women and Girls' Human Rights "Women Friendly Cities Project" aimed to establish and strengthen local mechanisms on gender equality. With the Project, which covers the period of April 2011 and April 2014, local gender equality action plans have been drafted in 12 provinces and gender equality units and commissions have been established within the local government. The Ministerial Circular No. 2010/10 of the Ministry of Interior was issued in order to enable the extension of the activities introduced within the scope of the Project throughout Turkey.

#### **Article 2-d**

25. The National Action Plan on Gender Equality (2008-2013) and National Action Plan on Combating Domestic Violence Against Women (2007-2010) was implemented to ensure that the current legislation is effectively translated into the practice and mobilize the relevant institutions and agencies with regard to their missions in achieving gender equality. The National Action Plan on Combating Domestic Violence against Women was updated for the years 2012 and 2015; put into practice. The updating activities of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality are being carried out under the headings of promotion of gender equality in Turkey, participation in decision-making mechanisms, health, education, employment, environment, poverty and the media. The Action Plans identify the purposes, objectives, implementation periods and the responsible institutions; are monitored through the monitoring and evaluation meetings in which the responsible institutions and agencies participate.

26. The training programmes which are also referred in Articles 2-f and 5-a, aim to gain a gender perspective for the personnel working in the public institutions and agencies as well as mainstream a gender perspective in main plans and policies.

#### **Article 2-e**

27. See Articles 1 and 2-c.

#### **Article 2-f**

28. Taking into consideration the points underlined in the 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th paragraphs of the Concluding Observations, we would draw your attention to the following points as the Republic of Turkey:

29. A legal work was undertaken within the ASPB to combat violence against women and "The Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women" was prepared. The Law, prepared in accordance with the meetings with the participation of representatives of NGOs, public prosecutors and Family Court Judges working on violence against women, Bar Heads; and the written opinions of all relevant institutions and agencies were received. The Law which was approved in the general assembly of the TBMM unanimously on March 8, 2012 came into force on March 20, 2012.

30. The Law broadens the concept of gender-based violence and defines the concepts of "violence", "domestic violence" and "violence against women" in such a way as to comprise physical, verbal, sexual, economic and psychological violence.

Preventive and protective measures regarding the protected person, perpetrator and potential perpetrator are established in the Law in detail. Local authorities and chief law enforcement officers are also entitled to rule preventive orders along with the family court judge within the boundaries of the provisions established by the Law. Thus, it enabled ruling of protective and preventive orders both at weekends and on holidays. The Law also provides for confidentiality and security of the victim and it is specified that where necessary, identity information of the persons and other family members under protection or other details which could disclose their identity shall be concealed in all official records upon request or ex officio along with the protection orders. The Law also establishes in detail the sanctions to be imposed on the perpetrator so as to increase efficiency and deterrent power of the protection orders in the event that the perpetrator acts in violation of them. In this context, the law envisages sentencing the perpetrator to coercive imprisonment for a period of three days to ten days and a 15-30 day-period for each repetitive contradictory act. The Law sets forth the establishment of “Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres (ŞÖNİM)”, which provide support and monitoring services to actively monitor the implementation of preventive and protective orders to prevent violence and establishes the services to be offered by these centres. It is envisaged in the provisions of the Law that implementation of the protection orders shall be prosecutable using the technical tools and methods with a judicial decision. See the Follow up Report submitted after 6th Report and the additional information submitted after the Follow up Report for detailed information about ŞÖNİMs.

31. The Implementation Regulation was prepared in accordance with the opinions and views of the relevant institutions and organizations and came into force on January 18, 2013.

32. Taking into account the concerns underlined in the 23rd paragraph of the Concluding Observations; while the number of shelters affiliated with the government was 43 in the 6th Report period, it rose to 48 with a capacity of 1014 in 2011, the year when the ASPB was established. The number of shelters increased quickly upon the establishment of the Ministry. Currently, there are 129 women shelters in total with a capacity of 3,365 (92 owned by KSGM, 3 affiliated to the NGOs and 34 affiliated to the local government). There are only five provinces without a shelter, efforts have been accelerated to open shelters in the provinces without any. As of May 2014, a total of 39,352 people, 26,980 of whom are women and 12,372 are children, have benefitted from the shelters affiliated to the Ministry.

33. The Regulation on the Opening and Operation of Women’s Shelters regarding the restructuring of the women’s shelters was drafted with the participation and contributions of all relevant institutions and agencies as well as NGOs and came into force on January 5, 2013.

34. First step stations, which function under the women’s shelters, are the service units where women victims of violence seeking shelter are observed preliminarily, their psychological and economic states are examined and they can stay up to two weeks after their provisional acceptance. Three first step stations were opened in July, 2011 and 25 first step stations are currently available in service throughout Turkey as of May, 2014. There are ongoing activities regarding the opening of first step stations in provinces where needed in accordance with the magnitude of the province and the amount of the applications made to the provinces.

35. In scope of the Law No. 6284, 31,828 protective orders 198,961 preventive orders were ruled as of May 2014 along with 3,231 sentences of coercive imprisonment.

36. The draft law on the re-assessment and the extension of the scope of the sexual crimes, which are established by The Penal Code and increasing the punishments imposed for such crimes was accepted in the TBMM on July 17, 2014. The punishments deemed for sexual crimes have been aggravated and the major form of the crime has been regulated and the scope of the crime has been extended. The abuse of the influence stemming from the guardianship relations, step-kin relationships, fosterling relationships, perpetration of the crime through the exploitation of the environment in which the people collectively co-habit have been regulated as aggravating circumstances in the perpetration of the crime. The subparagraph which leads to implementation difficulties and read as the punishments shall be increased in cases of mental and physical health impairment of the victim has been abolished from the relevant article to prevent a secondary victimization in the forensic science processes. A number of regulations have also been introduced on the issue of child abuse. The punishments deemed for sexual intercourse with a minor have been aggravated. Execution of the act between the persons with a restraint of marriage or between the persons with a fosterling or custodial parent's relationships has been regulated as a crime for the first time. The regulation aimed to punish interfamilial sexual abuse. Perpetration of the crime through use of convenience stemming from the public services, by the guardian, caregiver, custodial parents or the health care provider or through the use of the facilities provided by the electronic communication tools or in the form of exposition, have been regulated as aggravating circumstances.

37. See the Annex Table 2 for the information on the sentences ruled for the cases filed in accordance with the articles of the Penal Code which establish the custom killings (82-1/k), sexual assault (102), sexual abuse of children (103), sexual intercourse with a minor (104) and sexual harassment (105). See the Annex Table 3 for the information on femicides.

38. There are now an increased number of training programmes, which are offered to all segments of society including especially the service providers and policy makers for gender mainstreaming, translating the available legal framework into practice in prevention of violence against women and achieving mental transformation. In the training programmes, participants are mostly provided with information particularly on CEDAW (as recommended in the 13th paragraph of the Concluding Observations) and Istanbul Convention, the Law No. 6284 on as well as all existing relevant legislation in Turkey. Some examples of the trainings which are considered to contribute to the recommended points made out in the 20th, 21st and 22nd paragraphs of the Concluding Observations are listed as follows:

39. 71,000 police officers, 65,000 health personnel and 21,000 religious officials have been trained on combating violence against women and gender equality since 2007. A set of seminars were organized for 336 Family Court Judges and Public Prosecutors. Furthermore, a group of expert trainers on domestic violence against women was formed up within the Law Enforcement Agency. Additionally, 3,300 public officials have participated in the "Trainings on Equality between Women and Men and Gender Equality". An "Impact Assessment Analysis" of the training programme was conducted in 2013. The Impact Assessment Analysis revealed that

the training programmes are so rewarding and must be further improved and continued.

40. The subject on “Combating Violence against Women” was added to the school curricula of Gendarmerie Schools Command, as a one-term course. Trainings launched in 2012 for the personnel of Gendarmerie General Command still continue. Trainings of trainers are also organized for the personnel of the Turkish General Staff. Following the completion of the trainings of trainers, the soldiers and non-coms who are doing their military services will be trained on gender equality and combating violence against women, in face-to-face lectures rather than distant training classes.

41. The online “Domestic Violence against Women Incidences Registration Form” was brought into use at all police stations countrywide through POL NET. The police make a risk assessment of the victim through the form and necessary measures are taken by the police after the risk assessment. Additionally, trainings were delivered to police officers at all police station chiefs responsible for taking statements (registrars) as well as the chiefs of police station on the implementation of the law No. 6284 in 2014.

42. Seminars were organized on gender equality and violence against women in 2012 for 315 psychologists, pedagogues and social workers who work at family and children courts as well as high criminal courts and the subjects were included in the in-service trainings.

43. “Violence against Women” and “Gender Equality” issues have been included in the in-service trainings of Chief Clerks and Court Clerks working in the provincial organizations of the Ministry of Justice. And 778 personnel have benefitted from the trainings so far.

44. “Violence against Women” and “Gender Equality” issues have been included in the trainings which are organized for the personnel who are to work in “ALO 183 Social Services Hotline for Family, Women, Children and the Disabled”.

45. Violence against women and gender equality seminars were organized for 250 Chief Administrative Officers and approximately 190 District Governor Candidates.

46. Violence against women and gender equality trainings were organized for The ASPB Provincial Directors and 250 members of profession under the roof of the ŞÖNİMs.

47. A variety of administrative measures are also introduced along with the training programmes.

48. The Monitoring Committee on Violence against Women was set up in 2007 and has convened seven times so far. The meetings of the Committee are organized with the participation of the public institutions and agencies, universities and the representatives from non-governmental organizations under auspices of the Minister and the coordination of KSGM.

49. “The National Action Plan on Combating Domestic Violence against Women” was implemented between 2007 and 2010. The implementation of the measures set forth in the Action Plan is monitored through periodical meetings. The Plan was updated with the participation and contributions of the relevant public institutions and organizations, NGOs and women research centres of universities and the

“National Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women 2012-2015” came into force on July 10, 2012. The implementation phase of the Action Plan is continued through semi-annual periodical evaluation and monitoring meetings.

50. “Pilot Application on Electronic Support System” was started in two cities on October 18, 2012. As a part of the pilot application, safety pushbuttons (panic buttons) are handed out to women victims of violence upon court decision to monitor the ruled protective and preventive orders. It is planned to formulate a model for the extension of the system throughout Turkey and determine the necessary infrastructure within the scope of the Project on Strengthening the Capacity of Women’s Shelters financed by the European Union Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

51. Judicial support services are rendered by the Women’s Counselling Centres of the Bar Associations and Legal Assistance Offices and as for domestic violence, psychosocial support services are available at the “Psychosocial Support and Crisis Response Units” formed by the Ministry of Health within the emergency rooms of hospitals.

52. “The Pilot Survey Project on Building a Database/System on Violence against Women” was run between 2012 and 2013 to standardize the data on combating violence against women and a model was developed for the required violence against women database. On the other hand, the activities for integration of the database systems which are used within the KSGM have been completed nearly.

53. The National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey (2008) is the most comprehensive one conducted nationwide so far, in terms of making out the prevalence of domestic violence against women, forms, causes and results of violence as well as the risk factors (See Annex Table 4). The updating activities of the Research were started in 2013 and the results of the research are planned to be publicized in late 2014.

54. The “Women’s Shelter Project for Combating Violence against Women” with a budget of €9,601,000, which will be financed within the framework of the IPA and conducted between 2014 and 2016, is being implemented. The activities which are to be launched in 26 provinces aim to enhance the cooperation among the central and local government and the local NGOs aside from the support services for women victims of violence. Within the context of the Project, it is envisaged to prepare provincial action plans and develop workflow and standards of the service units as well as to deliver trainings on violence against women and gender equality for the personnel working at the ŞÖNİMs, women’s shelters, General Directorate for Security, domestic violence bureaus, health personnel and the Ministry of Justice personnel. It is aimed to reach out to 175,000 health and security personnel through trainings to be delivered to 1,550 trainees in total including 700 trainings of trainees. 19 projects designed by the NGOs were provided with grants amounting to €3,000,000 roughly.

55. An impact analysis will be conducted in 2014 to make out to which extent the provisions of the Law No. 6284 are being implemented and the preventive and protective orders ruled within the scope of the Law are instrumental in preventing the incidences of violence against women.

56. The headscarf ban was lifted for the women who are working as civil servants in pursuant to the “Regulation on Clothing and Attire for the Personnel Working in

Public Institutions and Agencies” as amended on 8 October, 2013; the amendment also made in the TBMM by law enabled women deputies to wear headscarves and trousers in the Parliament<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, there are women whose employment opportunities were hindered on account of the headscarf ban; yet continued to work upon the State Council decisions. For instance, the case filed by a food engineer on grounds that the official document that she requested from the professional chamber to perform her job was rejected on account of the fact that the document could not be issued with a headscarved photo was concluded in favour of the woman. In other cases, applications of the female schoolteachers who were dismissed from their jobs on the grounds of wearing headscarves were examined and the court decision regarding their dismissal was reversed. See the Follow-up Report submitted after the 6th Report for the information on the implementations regarding the headscarf freedom in the tertiary educational institutions.

57. Furthermore, the “Humanitarian Assistance Programme for Combating and Responding to Gender-Based Violence” has been run for the Syrian citizens arriving in Turkey and the personnel in their service, since April, 2013 in cooperation with the KSGM, Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) and UNFPA. In addition, meetings have been held with the Syrian women to exchange information on early and forced marriages and build solidarity among women and around 400,000 of information brochures were printed in Arabic and Turkish and distributed.

#### **Article 2-g**

58. See the 6th Report.

#### **Article 3**

59. KSGM was restructured in 2011 as a service unit of the ASPB. KSGM is responsible for carrying out and coordinating the social service activities of protection, prevention, education, improvement, guidance and rehabilitation for women, aside from policy-making. Women’s shelters were brought into service under the roof of KSGM, and provided with a higher number of staff members and greater budget (See Annex Table 1).

60. The Advisory Committee on the Status of Women was active between 2004 and 2011. After the KSGM became a main service unit of the ASPB, the Advisory Committee was formed over again in December 2013.

61. KEFEK was constituted within the TBMM on March 24, 2009. KEFEK is responsible for keeping the TBMM informed about the national and international progress in terms of equality between men and women, discuss the issues assigned to the Committee and present opinions about the bills, draft laws and decrees submitted at the TBMM in its capacity as a main or secondary committee. The Committee screens out the applications with regard to violation of rights, violence and discrimination against women and warns the relevant authorities, if necessary. See the 6th Report and the Article 2.

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<sup>3</sup> See the Follow-up Report and answers provided for the extra information request in scope thereof for improvements in terms of the headscarf ban as mentioned in the paragraphs 16 and 17 of the Concluding Observations.

**Article 4.1**

62. Taking into consideration the points underlined in the 18th and 19th paragraphs of the Concluding Observations, we draw your attention to the following provisions on the temporary special measures:

63. The 10th Article of the Constitution (See Article 2-a) paved the way for the formulating policies of temporary special measure to promote equality between women and men.

64. The Conditional Cash Transfer Programme constitutes a practice of the temporary special measures practices which are employed in Turkey. The programme aims to enable the children of poor families to get educated. Girls are provided more financial assistance than boys by a rate of 14.3 per cent in the basic education and 20 per cent in the secondary education respectively. One of the most significant points in provision of the conditional cash transfer is that the payments are directly made to mothers to empower women and strengthen their status in the family.

65. 62.74 per cent of the capacity of the dormitories, which are affiliated with The General Directorate of Higher Education Credit and Hostels Institution and constituted to meet the sheltering needs of students at tertiary education, are spared for the female students.

66. The Law No. 6111, which came into effect in 2011, stipulates that women's insurance premiums of the employer's shares shall be covered by the state for a period of 12 to 54 months so as to promote new employment opportunities for them. 144,028 women have enjoyed the incentive as of February 2014.

67. Furthermore, women who are in need and whose husband passed away are regularly paid bimonthly allowances (Nearly an amount of \$125<sup>4</sup> a month).

68. In addition, some political parties started to employ quota/parity applications for women within the recent years. See the Article 7-a for the temporary special measures which are employed to encourage women's political participation.

**Article 4.2**

69. Maternity leave and similar aspects are regulated by the Civil Servants Law and the Labour Act (See the 6th Report). The laws mentioned were amended in 2011, resulting in new provisions which envisage that the female workers or civil servants shall be entitled to using the periods of pre-natal leave unused due to a premature delivery, having these periods added on the post-natal time of leave.

70. The amendments to the Civil Servants Law made in 2011 introduced new provisions stating that female civil servants shall be exempted from night watches and night shifts before and during the twenty-fourth-month of the pregnancy as well as the first year following the delivery. In pursuant to the Article as amended on 12th July 2013, this period was extended to two years.

71. The concept of "paid leave" which is included in the Civil Servants Law, was changed as "maternity leave".

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<sup>4</sup> 2 TL (Turkish Liras) = \$1.

72. The period of breast-feeding leaves has been re-arranged. The female workers are entitled to 1.5-hour daily breaks for breastfeeding their babies up to one years of age. The civil servant mothers are provided three-hour breast-feeding breaks daily for the first six months upon the expiry of the maternity leave, one and a half hours daily for the next period of six months. Civil servant mothers shall decide how to use the breast-feeding breaks.

73. See the Article 12.2 for the incentives which are available to enable the protection of motherhood.

#### **Article 5-a**

74. The following activities were launched within the context of the decision made by the CEDAW Committee on the violation of 2-a/c; 5-a; 11-a/b with regard to the application of R.K.B v. Turkey; the decision text of the Committee was translated into Turkish and disseminated. In order to provide a more effective and efficient implementation of the provisions of the 5th Article of the Labour Act, CEDAW as well as the Optional Protocol thereto, the Turkish version of the decision text was sent to Supreme Council of Judges and Public Prosecutors, Public Prosecutors, Public Prosecutors of Regional Court of Justice, the Presidency of Justice Commission of the Court of Original Jurisdiction and information of the judges and prosecutors was requested from the institutions with regard to the decision. Furthermore, it is planned to include a subject on “prevention of racial and gender-based discrimination in justice” in the pre-professional trainings for judges and prosecutors delivered by the Turkish Academy of Justice as of the 2014 training period. On the other hand, the experts contacted to the applicant and attorney of the applicant and received information about the applicant’s socioeconomic situation, the financial and social loss caused by her dismissal. Although it was revealed that the applicant had to be departed from her profession for a certain period of time following her dismissal, she was employed in a job similar to her previous job and she sustained a healthy family life (based on her own statements). The applicant was informed about the social services offered to her by the state however the applicant stated that she did not have any requests with regard these services.

75. Taking into account the recommendations included in the 20th and the 21st paragraphs of the Concluding Observations, KSGM participates in a number of panels, in-service trainings and seminars organized by the public institutions and agencies, local administrations and NGOs as well as the events and organizations held by a variety of institutions abroad to combat against gender stereotypes; presentations and trainings are delivered on gender equality, education of women and girls, women’s participation in decision-making mechanisms and women’s health. Information on CEDAW is also included in the aforementioned trainings as recommended in the 13th paragraph of the Concluding Observations.

76. “Gender Equality and Media Workshops” held for the students of the communication faculties had 434 participants. 198 media professionals participated in “The Role of the Local Media Professionals in Combating Violence against Women and News Writing Workshops” held for the local media professionals.

77. An “Impact Assessment Analysis” of the training programmes was conducted. The Analysis revealed that the training programmes are so rewarding and must be further improved and continued.

78. On the other hand, the subject of “gender equality” was included in the in-service training programmes for the personnel of the Ministry of National Education (MEB) and the personnel working at the central and provincial organizations of ASPB.

79. A number of gender equality oriented training activities, role model meetings and seminars will be carried out for teachers working at girl’s technical and vocational high schools, students and the families within the framework of the Projects launched in 10 pilot cities in cooperation with the ASPB, the MEB and the NGOs in 2013.

80. The “Count us in” Declaration was opened for signature to enable the participation of men in combating violence against women within the framework of the 25th November events. The first signatory of the declaration was the Prime Minister of Turkey and the declaration was also supported by the male deputies.

81. Within the framework of the Protocol signed between the KSGM and UNFPA, a team of 100 trainers was formed up to develop the institutional capacity of both central and provincial organization of the Ministry in terms of gender equality and combating violence against women and deliver trainings in provinces.

82. The amendment made in 2011 to The Law of the Radio and Television Supreme Council prohibits any programmes contradictory to gender equality, these provisions are also reflected on “The Regulation on Broadcasting Services and Principals” and it was deemed that the commercial communication shall not include any women-abusive objects and women’s bodies shall not be used as a sexual meta or commodity in launching of the products, services or in images.

83. On the other hand, as recommended in the 49th paragraph of the Concluding Observations Turkey works in close collaboration with the bodies and organizations of the UN system and will continue this cooperation into the period ahead. It is planned to enhance the cooperation with the executives of UN Women Regional Office which started launching its activities to disseminate the gender equality perspective in the region.

84. See Article 11-a for other activities.

#### **Article 5-b**

85. The “Family Training Programme (AEP)” was introduced by the ASPB in 5 fields (including intra-familial communication, health, economics, justice and media). The intra-familial communication puts a significant emphasis on the equal distribution of household duties and sharing of the childcare responsibilities. A similar training programme is organized for the prospective spouses within the framework of the “Pre-Marriage Training” programme. Both trainings are carried out in all of the 81 provinces. The training programmes received nearly 180,000 participants. The “Project on the Implementation and Dissemination of Family Training Project”, which was launched in 2012, aim to get more couples who are planning to get married and married couples to benefit from the Family Training Programmes; and to spread the programme countrywide through local administrations, non-governmental organizations and the relevant public institutions and agencies.

86. The objective of “The Family Training Programme for 0-18 Age Group” by the MEB is to develop the “parenthood skills” of the parents with children at the age of 0 and 18 and thus enable the children or the adolescents to fulfil their potential. As a part of the programme, Father Support Trainings and Mother Support Trainings are organized. The father support programme aims to inform the fathers about the needs of a child, adopt a democratic and equal approach in distribution of the household responsibilities, develop and enhance intra-familial and marital communication and employ the skills and approach they have acquired as a result of the programme, in their close environments. 216,264 attendants in total benefitted from the AEP for 0-18 Age Group between 2012 and 2013.

#### **Article 6**

87. A number of improvements have been recorded in Turkey in combating human trafficking within the recent years thanks to the legal amendments introduced so far in accordance with the provisions included in the 6th Report, and the establishment of National Task Force and National Action Plan on Combating Human Trafficking. The Second National Action Plan prepared by the National Task Force was implemented in 2009. The programme on protection of foreign victims is run with the support of the NGOs. A number of projects are being run on combating human trafficking in cooperation with some organizations such as International Organization for Migration (IOM) and International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

88. Taking into consideration the recommendations underlined in the 26th paragraph of the Concluding Observations, Turkey draws your attention to the following institutional and legal progresses and improvements: The Law No. 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection was published on April 11 2013. With the new Law, the Department on the Protection of the Victims of Human Trafficking, which was restructured within the General Directorate of Migration Management of the Ministry of Interior, was assigned the duty to carry out the works and proceedings with regard to the protection of the victims of human trafficking and manage the operation of the emergency hotlines as well as the shelters for the victims of human trafficking. There are three shelters functioning exclusively for the victims of human trafficking and supported by the NGOs. Furthermore, women victims of human trafficking can also benefit from the other services which are offered within the context of combating violence against women as well as the non-specialized shelters. A new “six-month humanitarian visa and short-term residence permit practice” was introduced for the victims of human trafficking during the time of their treatment, care and legal proceedings to enable the issuance of a residence permit for a certain period. The Law on Foreigners and International Protection also includes protective provisions for the victims of human trafficking as well as the unaccompanied children.

#### **Article 7-a**

89. In her Constitution and national legislation, Turkey guarantees the right to political participation regardless of any discrimination including sex (see the 6th Report).

90. When compared with the previous years, the rate of women in the parliament has shown a sharp increase by the year 2007. While the parliamentary

representation rate of women stood at 4.4 per cent in 2002 general elections, it rose to 9.1 per cent in 2007 general elections and the highest representation rate reached to 14.4 per cent in 2011 (See Annex Table 5). The number of deputy women at the parliament was 79 as of 2011. The number of women in the Council of Ministers, which has a member of 26, is 1.<sup>5</sup> Considering the organizational structure of the TBMM, 3 out of 4 parliamentary deputy speakers are women. In addition, women chair 3 out of 17 parliamentary specialized committees under the roof of TBMM.

91. There has been an increase in the number of women who stood as a candidate for nomination both in the general elections and local administration elections as well as those who have been nominated as a candidate by the party (See the Annex Table 6). It is considered that the increase achieved in the number of women's representation in the recent elections is a fruit of social expectation with regard to women's involvement in politics, women's positive attitudes and approaches towards politics as well as the special measures introduced by the parties to increase women's representation (women's exemption from nomination fee, women's inclusion in the top of the candidate lists).

92. There has been a significant increase in the number of women as a result of the local elections held on 30 March, 2014 when compared to 2009 elections. Although there was no female metropolitan municipality mayor in 2009, women comprised of 10 per cent of 30 metropolitan municipality mayors elected as a result of the 2014 local elections. As a result of the 2014 local elections, women comprised of 2.73 per cent of mayors, 10.72 per cent of members of local council, 4.79 per cent of provincial council members. (See the Annex Table 7).

93. In parallel with the increase in women's representation, more women started to be involved in the executive bodies of the political parties. See the Annex Table 8.

94. The women's branches of the political parties in Turkey, which have a background of 50 years, is an integral form of organization in terms of women's political visibility. Women's branches play an active role both in the election processes and within the party.

95. Even though the number of female candidates and representatives in local and national politics is on the rise, the numbers are still far from satisfactory. As also recommended in the 29th paragraph of the Concluding Observations, increasing the social awareness on women's increased involvement in the decision-making mechanisms is vital. The activities launched by the NGOs during the pre-election periods raised social awareness on the involvement of more women in decision-making and power mechanisms. "The Academies/Schools of Politics" founded by various NGOs and political parties particularly in the election terms have been instrumental in increasing women's level of information as to the politics and "political preparation" activities carried out.

#### **Article 7-b**

96. According to the June 2014 data of the DPB, women comprise of 37.25<sup>6</sup> per cent of the personnel who are employed in public institutions and agencies. See the

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<sup>5</sup> The Minister of Family and Social Policies.

<sup>6</sup> The rate does not include the staff number of The Secretariat of the National Intelligence Organization, Merkez Bank, Ziraat Bank, Türkiye Halk Bank, Local Government and the Soldiers of the Turkish Armed Forces.

Annex Table 9 for the rate of women who occupy the executive posts within the top levels of bureaucracy. When the position of women in the civil administration is examined, it is seen that there is 1 woman governor and 6 out of 458 deputy governors are women. 21 out of 860 district governors in total are women. Speaking of the top levels of bureaucracy, 1 out of 22 women is at the seat of undersecretary and 3 out of 71 deputy undersecretaries are women at the Ministries (See the Annex Table 10).

97. When the profiles of the personnel working at the courts, which make up the judiciary body, are examined; it is revealed that women account for 39 per cent of the judges of the judicial courts and 20 per cent of those at the administrative courts (See the Annex Table 11).

98. The personnel of the supreme courts are distributed by sex as follows: Women account for 10 per cent of the members and rapporteurs of the Constitutional Court and 34 per cent of the members, judges and prosecutors of the Court of Cassation and the Court of Appeals. As of February 2014, a female member occupies the post of the President of the Court of Appeals.

99. As of February 2014, around 41 per cent of the university instructors are women. Women account for 28.4 per cent of the professors, 33.1 per cent of the associate professors and 42.8 per cent of the academicians (2014 Data by Student Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre (ÖSYM)). Women occupy the rectorate posts of 14 universities out of 176 universities.

100. Gender-based and more detailed information on decision-making and power mechanisms has been started to be compiled and released to the public. Since 2008, the desired increase has not been observed in the rate of women at top government posts. However though, awareness has been created on the matter and it is believed that the years ahead will bring the desired increase.

#### **Article 7-c**

101. Trade bodies and trade unions are establishing boards, commissions and working groups on women issues to mainstream a gender perspective in their structuring and to actively function within this field. There are no female leaders at the trade bodies and trade unions. See the Annex Table 12 for the number of women who are at the high-level executive posts.

102. A number of legal regulations have been introduced to mainstream a gender perspective in the activities of the trade unions. See the Article 2-b for the relevant regulations. The regulations are expected to increase women's representation at the trade unions.

#### **Article 8**

103. 28 out of 214 ambassadors who are working within the Foreign Affairs are women. (See the Annex Table 13). The number is the highest one achieved so far. Additionally, women account for 14 of 39 Envoy-Undersecretaries or First Class Ambassadors in active service abroad, 22 of 65 Deputy Undersecretaries, General Directors and Deputy General Directors at the centre and 314 of 1,210 diplomats.

104. Turkey participates regularly in the international meetings with her women delegation comprised also of the representatives from NGOs. Moreover, Turkey has high-level female officials at the UNESCO, UNDP and CEDAW Committee.

105. The rate of female members is 17.92 per cent at 12 international commissions, of which the TBMM is also a member (KEFEK, 2014).

#### **Article 9.1**

106. See the 6th Report. See the Annex Table 14 for the information about the number of asylum seekers from Turkey.

#### **Article 9.2**

107. See the 6th Report.

#### **Article 10-a**

108. With the amendment made in 2012 to the Fundamental Law of National Education the duration of compulsory education has been increased to 12 years in total; 4 years for primary education, 4 years for secondary education and 4 years for high school education.

109. 10th Development Plan includes objectives and purposes stating that “access of all children to education especially including the disabled children and girls in primary and secondary education will be ensured, grade repetition and school drop outs will be reduced”. Raising social awareness through formal and informal education in order to eliminate discrimination against women is among the objectives of 10th Development Plan.

110. The Annual Programmes envisage adopting measures to eliminate and change the unfavourable conditions for girls nationwide so that the school dropout rates in primary and secondary education shall be reduced and thus, increase the rate of transition to secondary education. It is pointed out accordingly that access to education shall be promoted through such mechanisms as scholarship, mobile education and conditional cash transfers; the available education campaigns shall be continued; construction of girls’ lodgings shall be prioritized in places with particularly low rates of transition from primary to secondary school.

111. Significant improvements have been recorded in Turkey with regard to women’s and girls’ enjoyment from the right to education within the recent years.

112. The pre-school education is optional and covers the education of children aged younger than the compulsory primary school age. Nearly 27.71 per cent of the children at 3 to 5 years of age are involved in a form of pre-school programme. The enrolment rate of girls in pre-school periods has been recorded as 36.58 per cent between 2013 and 2014.

113. The primary education covers children 6 to 13 years of age, compulsory primary schools with 4 years of education and compulsory 4-year secondary education. The rates of primary school enrolment have shown a continuous increase over the last five years for both girls and boys. While the net school enrolment rate in primary education was 96.49 per cent in total in the 2008-2009 academic year, the rate for boys and girls were recorded as 96.99 per cent and 95.97 per cent, respectively. By the school year of 2013-2014, the net school enrolment rate in

primary education was realized as 99.57 per cent; whereas the rates for boys and girls were 99.53 per cent and 99.61 per cent, respectively. While the net school enrolment rate in the secondary education was 94.52 per cent in total, the rates for boys and girls were recorded as 94.57 per cent and 94.47 per cent, respectively. The sex ratio in primary education has increased by 10 per cent within the last decade and reached to 100.82 per cent for primary education and 103.69 per cent for secondary education (See Annex Table 15 and 16).

114. The secondary education covers all general, vocational and technical educational institutions which provide compulsory formal or non-formal education based on primary education of 4 years. The rates of secondary school enrolment for both girls and boys have shown a continuous increase over the last five years. While the net school enrolment rate for secondary education was 58.52 per cent in total in the 2008-2009 academic year, the rate for girls and boys were 56.30 per cent and 60.63 per cent, respectively. These rates were then recorded as 76.65 per cent and 77.22 per cent and 76.05 per cent respectively in the academic year of 2013-2014 (See Annex Table 15).

115. In the school year of 2013-2014, girls made up 52.63 per cent of the students who attended the official and formal general secondary education programmes. 45.5 per cent of the students at the vocational and technical schools which rear intermediate staff for the labour market were girls. The girl's rate of transition from primary to secondary education, which was 85.2 per cent in 2008-2009 school year, rose to 93 per cent in the 2013-2014 educational year.

116. Tertiary education covers all educational institutions based on secondary education which provide at least two years of education. Women constitute 45.83 per cent of the tertiary education students in Turkey. When the school enrolment rates are examined, it is seen that the tertiary enrolment rate, which was 27.69 per cent in total in the school year of 2008-2009, rose to 38.50 per cent in the 2012-2013 school year. The tertiary education enrolment rate for women rose from 25.92 per cent to 38.61 per cent (See Annex Table 15). Women constituted 41.89 per cent of graduate and 43 per cent of PhD students in the 2013-2014 educational year (YÖK, 2014).

117. The rate of women who attend open secondary schools available for those who are out of the formal education at all ages is 63.4 per cent and the rate of women who continue open high schools is 44.8 per cent by the data of 2013-2014 school year.

118. The campaigns and projects continue to be conducted in collaboration with international organizations, private sectors and NGOs with the aim of reducing the school dropout rates of girls. The "Cooperation Protocol on Access to Primary Education and Monitoring of School Continuation" was signed by the MEB, the Prime Ministry, ASPB, ÇSGB, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Health on January 13, 2011.

119. "Catch-up Class Education Programme" was run to ensure that children aged between 10 and 14, who could not keep pace with their peers continuing their education for various reasons though they are in the compulsory school age or never enrolled in school or are permanently irregular, acquire the qualifications essential for their attendance to school together with their peers and they maintain their

primary education. 62 per cent (September 2008-April 2010) of the students in coverage of this programme were comprised of girls.

120. The Operation on “Increasing the School Enrolment Rates Especially for Girls” was launched in 2009. The operation, which aimed to increase the enrolment rates of girls in especially secondary and vocational education, reduce school drop-out rates of girls and enhance the vocational skills and competence of women and girls as well as raise the awareness of families on the importance of education, progressed into the second phase in 2011. The second phase aims to generate improved vocational and technical training programmes and create a more efficient and effective monitoring system.

121. The MEB launched a “Project on Promotion of Gender Equality in Education” in 2013. In scope of the Project, a gender equality assurance tool, which is a tool of assessment and evaluation for all the school personnel, is going to be developed and put into practice as a pilot scheme at 40 schools in 10 provinces; all the curricula ranging from the pre-school to secondary education, textbooks and training materials are going to be reviewed, the legislation is going to be amended to render it responsive to gender equality and 60,000 of instructors and managerial staff members will be trained accordingly. Moreover, it is targeted to reach out to 100,000 of people by means of the media activities and regional campaigns aimed at raising awareness in scope of the project activities.

122. A “Project on Developing Vocational Skills” was started by the MEB in 2011. The Project will offer vocational training to those without a profession and the disadvantaged groups with unemployable professions or occupations, anyone seeking to change profession; and help them acquire professional/vocational competency by upgrading their skills available. The aim of the Project, to be run between 2011 and 2015, is to conduct a needs analysis into the current conditions of the disadvantaged groups in 35 pilot cities and deliver the trainings to the disadvantaged groups in view of their requirements. Women and girls, who are victims of violence, are included among the priority groups of this project.

123. The “Project on Specialized Vocational Centres” was put into practice in 2010 in cooperation with the MEB, ÇSGB, İŞKUR and a university. The Project was primarily started in 19 provinces to enhance the vocational knowledge, skill and qualifications of the youth in line with the requirements of the labour force market and provide them with employment opportunities and the implementation of the Project is continuing in 81 provinces. Within the context of the project, a total of 59,801 women have participated in the vocational training courses so far between 2011 and 2014 and 31,037 of the participant women have been employed.

124. Vocational training courses for women are also provided by the informal educational institutions affiliated to the MEB. In 2012 and 2013, 1,121,820 women benefitted from these courses free of charge.

#### **Article 10-b**

125. Education is available for everyone without any discrimination whatsoever; compulsory for boys and girls and free of charge in public schools. Boys and girls are accepted into all the educational institutions with the vocational trainings included, on equal footing. The textbooks used at schools are handed out free of

charge. Additionally, see the Article 10-d for the Regional Boarding Primary Schools (YİBO).

126. Mobile education practices are applicable to ensure that the primary and secondary school students as well as students/trainees with special educational needs and those who are having difficulty in accessing to the schools due to various reasons are transported daily to the schools used as transportation bases, so that they are provided with access to quality education and training. In the school year of 2012-2013, a total of 812,041 primary and secondary school students, 397,207 of whom are girls, benefitted from these practices.

#### **Article 10-c**

127. Within the framework of the activities regarding the elimination of gender discriminatory pictures, expressions and all similar discriminatory components from the textbooks, a “Gender Equality Commission” was set up within the MEB to achieve the strategies and objectives of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2008-2013 and the curricula were reviewed with a gender equality perspective.

128. The Commission was nullified in 2012 and a system was built, in which the textbooks to be used in the courses for formal and non-formal educational institutions, would be reviewed electronically by the educators. Within this scope, The Regulation on Textbooks and Education Aids. The Regulation rules that textbooks shall offer an approach which support the fundamental human rights and condemned all forms of discriminatory objects strongly. Another assessment criteria set by the Board of Education and Discipline accordingly was provision of a “balance in the samples and characters used in the textbooks in terms of gender equality”. Another pleasing improvement has been the inclusion of “Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy” subject as a compulsory lesson (2 hours weekly) for the fourth classes. It refers to gender discrimination and the fact that gender inequalities pose a violation of human rights. The pilot implementation of the “Democracy and Human Rights” lesson was started in the school year of 2012-2013 as an optional subject for the secondary education. It is aimed to raise awareness on gender equality under the theme of Pluralist Perspective for Diversity. See the Article 10-a for information on the “Project on Promotion of Gender Equality in Education”.

#### **Article 10-d**

129. The following activities were carried out in view of the recommendations in the 31st paragraph of the Concluding Observations: According to MEB data pertaining to the school year of 2012-2013, girls had a bigger share in the scholarships available for promoting education in Turkey (See Annex Table 17).

130. The arrangement put in place to meet the accommodation requirements of students who continue their education detached from their families fall into two categories, which concern public boarding and paid sheltering options. Formulated to ensure girl children’s attendance and sustainability in education, the YİBOs have grown in number, from 203 in 1999-2000 to 429 in 2013-2014. By the figures of 2013-2014, girls comprise 80,875 (50.9 per cent) of 159,053 students who attend these schools, which were transformed into regional boarding secondary schools upon transition to 12 years in compulsory education (The MEB Statistics).

131. There is also an increase in the number of girls who benefit from the student lodgings as another boarding option offered by the MEB. According to the 2013-2014 data, girls make up 139,836 (43.7 per cent) of 319,725 boarding students in total (The MEB Statistics).

132. The placements handled by the General Directorate of Higher Education Credit and Hostels Institution are yet another boarding option offered by the government agencies and authorities, giving priority to girls over boys. As a result of this policy of special measure, 61.4 per cent of the whole capacity of the dormitories owned by the General Directorate of Higher Education Credit and Hostels was reserved for girls in the school year of 2013-2014 (The MEB Statistics).

133. The Conditional Cash Transfers (see the 6th Report for details) are applicable within the frame of the special provisional measures for girls. According to the results of “The Impact Assessment of the Conditional Cash Transfers” dated 2010 and 2012 though, the rate of school absenteeism decreased by 50 per cent and the decline in school absenteeism rate of girls was higher than that of boys. In addition, the rate of transition to secondary schools among girls benefiting from the transfers was realized as 79.36 per cent, whereas it was 50.08 per cent among those girls who received no financial aids. The results of the impact assessment showed that the cash transfers contributed to the school attendance of girls (See Annex Table 18).

#### **Article 10-e**

134. According to 2013 data of the TÜİK, the illiterates (6 years of age and older) comprised 4 per cent of the total population; while the rate of illiterate women was 6.6 per cent and that of men was 1.3 per cent. In 2008, these rates stood at 7.7 per cent, 12.3 per cent and 3.1 per cent respectively. When the figures are compared with the ones in 2008, it is seen that the rate of illiterate women among adult population decreased (See Annex Table 19). The majority of the illiterate population is comprised of those aged 50 and older.

135. The following activities were carried out in view of the recommendations in the 30th and 31st paragraphs of the Concluding Observations: A literacy campaign titled “Mother and Daughter at School” was launched in 2008 to eliminate women’s illiteracy. 2,551,567 trainees attended the literacy courses held in scope of this campaign between the years of 2008 and 2012 while 1,802,272 of them received literacy certificates. Aside from the campaign mentioned, 47,014 courses were opened by the end of school year 2011-2012 and 76.7 per cent (575,618) of 750,126 trainees were women (The MEB Statistics).

136. The “Vocational Training Project”, launched in December 2012 by the ASPB, aimed to enable the women who had to stay out of the formal education to get re-educated and canalize them into Vocational Open Education High Schools so that they get recruited eventually. Within the scope of the project, approximately 40,000 women were referred to trainings and around 5000 women registered to Vocational Open Education High Schools as a result of the activities carried out.

#### **Article 10-f**

137. It is observed that the measures and policies embraced to ensure girls have equal opportunities of education with boys have served to close the gap between

girls and boys in education through measures and policies (See Annex Table 15 for school enrolment rates).

138. A close look at the reasons why girls drop out of school reveals most the fact that they are unable to get enrolled within the school age (See Annex Table 20).

139. In pursuant to a Law enacted in 2012, the period of compulsory education was raised up to 12 years from the previous period of 8 years (See Article 10-a) and some new provisions were introduced.

140. With due regard to the recommendations in the 30th and 31st paragraphs of the Concluding Observations, the MEB has run a “Project on Increasing the Primary School Enrolment Rates”. In scope of the project, an inclusive situation analysis is going to be conducted into the reasons of absenteeism. Based on the results of this analysis, policies will be proposed to handle absenteeism, the relevant parts of legislation will be revised and made applicable.

141. Social Solidarity Centres have been inaugurated by the ASPB for Roma women within the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations in 12 provinces which are densely populated with Roman citizens. Vocational training programmes and the Family Training Programmes are being run for Roman women in 22 cities densely populated with Roman citizens.

#### **Article 10-g**

142. There are 4,721,371 sportspeople with licenses and 27 per cent of them are women. Less than half of the licensed sportspeople do sports actively and the active sportswomen account for 25 per cent (549,972) of them (Statistics of The Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2014). When it is examined from the point of female population in Turkey, 3.5 per cent of women are licensed sportspeople and those who do sports actively comprise 1.8 per cent of all female population. On the other hand, 29.7 per cent of the students still attending the sports high schools were girls according to 2013-2014 school year data (The MEB Statistics). The data of the school year of 2012-2013 pointed out that 32.2 per cent, of those who continued to the Academies of Physical Education and Sports and 37.2 per cent of those attending the Schools of Sports Sciences and Technologies were girls (ÖSYM Statistics).

143. Women’s participation in sports has increased dramatically in recent years. In 2009, the rate of women registered to the federations was 27 per cent (449,046), whereas by the end of 2013 it rose to 30 per cent (839,117) (TÜİK Statistics). This increase is considered to be a reflection of the successful infrastructural investments in Turkey and the role model set for girls and women by the achievements of our sportswomen in Olympiads and international competitions.

#### **Article 10-h**

144. See the Article 5-b for detailed information on family trainings. In scope of the awareness raising efforts for men, reproductive health care and family trainings are held at the military units. The religious officials are also trained so that they can enlighten men about the reproductive health care. The Ministry of Health carries out the awareness raising activities on the reproductive health care by means of the “Pre-Marriage Consultancy Programme” and “Contraceptive Methods Programme”.

Public awareness trainings are held at the Family Health and Community Health Centres.

145. The subjects of reproductive health care and sexually transmitted diseases are also included in the education curricula starting from the 8th grade of schools to raise awareness early.

#### **Article 11.1-a**

146. The policies and projects, implemented in Turkey within the recent years have taken effect and increases have been witnessed in women's labour force participation and employment. While women's labour force participation rate was 24.5 per cent and employment rate was 21.6 per cent in 2008; they rose up to 30.8 and 27.1 respectively in 2013 (See Annex Table 21).

147. While women's unemployment rate was 11.6 per cent in 2008; it rose to 11.9 per cent in 2013 (See Annex Table 22).

148. Women make up 42.4 per cent of the total informal employment in Turkey (2013 TÜİK Data). While the rate of informality among the employed women had been 58.4 per cent in 2008, it decreased to 51.9 per cent in 2013. The highest rate of informality among women belonged to unpaid female family workers (95 per cent) (Annex Table 23). The 10th Development Plan covers goals and strategies geared towards reducing the rate of informal workers.

149. Out of the female labour force, 56.6 per cent are either paid or casual employees; 31.5 per cent are unpaid family workers; 10.7 per cent are self-employed and 1.2 per cent are employers. While the rate of female entrepreneurs is 11.9 per cent in our country, the rate of male entrepreneurs is 28.2 per cent. It is observed that share of the unpaid family workers in women's employment shrinks gradually (from 34.4 per cent in 2008 to 31.5 per cent in 2013), as the share of the paid or casual workers gets bigger (from 53.2 per cent in 2008 up to 56.6 per cent in 2013) (See Annex Table 24).

150. The most prevalent reason why women are isolated from the labour market is the burden of household responsibilities on them by a rate of 58.7 per cent. Educational background follows the household responsibilities (See Annex Table 25). Speaking of women's labour force participation by their levels of education on the other hand, the highest rates were reported as high education graduates, by 72.2 per cent (2013). The gap between the labour force participation rates of men and women gets the smallest at this level of education (See Annex Table 26).

151. The sectors, where women's employment is mostly concentrated, include the services (47.7 per cent), agricultural (37.0 per cent) and industrial (15.3 per cent) sectors respectively. A comparison to the data of the year 2008 reveals a shift from the agricultural sector to the service sector in women's employment (See Annex Table 27).

152. The national legislation is free from any forms of discrimination whatsoever, regarding women's entry into work life or the sustainability of their employment in the later periods (See the 6th Report). See also the Article 4.1 for the special provisional measures for employment. A variety of activities have been carried out to improve the working conditions of women and overcome the biases in the labour

market, in view of the recommendations in the 32nd and 33rd paragraphs of the Concluding Observations (See also the Article 11.1-b and the Article 11-2).

153. The National Employment Strategy was developed to solve the structural problems of the labour market as well as settling the problem of employment permanently. The Strategy is geared towards increasing women's rate of participation in labour force up to 41 per cent by 2023 and reducing the informal employment rate down to 30 per cent.

154. In scope of the Project called "More and Better Jobs for Women: Empowerment of Women for Decent Jobs in Turkey" and run jointly by the ILO and İŞKUR, preparations are currently underway for "The Action Plan on Women's Employment".

155. "The Step by Step in Anatolia Meetings" have been held in various regions of Turkey since 2012 in order to enable exchange of the achievements of the locally successful female entrepreneurs and their experiences on the path to success.

156. The World Economic Forum Gender Equality Task Force (the Equality at Work Platform) was formed in 2013 under the roof of the ASPB, with the collaborative efforts of public and private sectors. The objective of The Equality at Work Platform, set up with 76 prominent firms in Turkey among its members, is to reduce Turkey's economic participation and opportunities gap of 0.414 (2012), which is indicated in the Gender Gap Report, by 10 per cent in the next three years ahead. The ultimate goal set for 2013 has been fulfilled by 31 per cent and this figure rose to 0.427. According to Gender Gap Report 2013, Turkey climbed from 124th to 120th row among 136 countries in the general index rating.

157. In scope of the "Project on Promotion of Women's Access to Economic Opportunities", which was launched in 2013, the research projects relating to women's employment and entrepreneurship, women's cooperatives and sector based analysis of women's circumstances are supported and surveys are conducted into these topics.

158. Within the frame of "The Project on Promotion of Gender Equality in Work Life" run by the ÇSGB between September 2010 and March 2012, it was aimed to align the Turkish legislation with the EU Acquis, enhance the capacity of the institutions which are responsible for the implementation of the Acquis and raise awareness on the issue. Under the project, a number of amendments were introduced on gender equality to the Law No. 4688 and 6356 (See the Article 2-b). "Gender Equality in Work Life Award" is granted every year regularly in order to raise awareness among enterprises which function within the private sector.

159. The "Operation on Provision of Support to Women's Employment" was implemented by the ÇSGB within the scope of IPA between 2010 and 2013. In scope of the Operation, 131 projects received support and 10,000 women were provided with vocational skills and personal development trainings. Labour Force Market Analyses were conducted in 5 provinces and the employment opportunities which are accessible by women target groups were identified, which all resulted in drafting of an Active Model of Labour Force Policies.

160. Within the scope of the Operation, the "Project on Promotion of Social Integration of the Disabled" was run by the ASPB and it has been set as a criterion

in distribution of project grants to be provided for the NGOs to consolidate the full and equal participation of the disabled women in the economic and social activities.

161. The total sum of grant under “The Project on Social Integration and Promoting Employability of The Disadvantaged” designed by the ÇSGB in scope of IPA is €30 Million. The target group of the Project comprises the disabled, Roma people and others with a life style similar to theirs, the poor and those on the verge of poverty, with those living in the slum areas included, the ex-convicts/detainees and present convicts and detainees, the parents of the child workers, the displaced people, women victims of violence, drug addicts and other disadvantaged people (other groups facing discrimination and prevalent prejudices at the labour market, etc.). “Women” included as a subcategory in all the target groups are considered as a group of special vulnerability.

**Article 11.1-b**

162. See the 6th Report.

**Article 11.1-c**

163. The restrictions on choice of a job and occupation are eliminated in pursuant to “The Communique on Workplace Hazard Classes based on Occupational Health and Safety” mentioned in the Article 2-b. See the Article 10 for vocational and technical education.

**Article 11.1-d**

164. The 2010 Structure of Earnings Survey of Turkey revealed that while gender pay gap seemed in favour of women in total (-1.1 per cent); a review by the educational background showed that it indeed favoured men at all the levels of education. The higher education and upper levels constitute the education level where the paid female workers concentrate by 35.3 per cent; whereas this group corresponds to the primary and lower education levels among men by a rate of 27.4 per cent. Considering the gender pay gap by different occupational groups, it turns out that this criterion favours men’s earnings in all the occupational groups, with the “management” group excluded (See Annex Table 28). See also the Article 2-b, Article 4.1 and the 6th Report.

**Article 11.1-e**

165. See the Article 4.2 and 6th Report.

**Article 11.1-f**

166. See the Article 4.2 and 6th Report.

**Article 11.2-a**

167. In pursuant to the Article 41 of the Social Security and General Health Insurance Law No. 5510, as amended in 2008, the working women who are under coverage of the Labour Act may as well get themselves indebted and pay their outstanding insurance premiums pertaining to the periods of unpaid parental leaves. This shall be applicable for maximum two children. The period to be considered payable may not exceed two years for each child. It is intended to extend the scope

of this practice of birth premium borrowing to ensure more people use it for a greater number of children. See the 6th Report for further details.

#### **Article 11.2-b**

168. It is targeted to reconcile the work and family lives further in the 10th Development Plan. On the other hand, activities have been taken up to enact the legal amendments aimed at the reconciliation of work and family life. See the Article 4.2 for details relating to the maternity leaves.

#### **Article 11.2-c**

169. Within the framework of the component of Promotion of Women's Participation in the Labour Force and Employment under the Priority Transformation Programmes of the 10th Development Plan, a measure was envisaged to "extend the child, patient and the elderly care services". Another priority transformation programme called "The Programme on Conservation of Family and the Dynamic Demographic Structure", likewise, covers measures relating to "the extension of the opportunities of quality, affordable and easily accessible crèche and pre-school education through stronger reconciliation of work and family life". In scope of "The Programme on Conservation of Family and the Dynamic Demographic Structure" run under coordination of the ASPB, action plans have been designed, including also the opening of crèches in the organized industrial zones.

170. Cooperation has been built in several ways in order to promote opening of the crèches where women working at the organized industrial zones can entrust their children and enact the necessary arrangements to this end. Accordingly, "Mom's Job, My Future" Project was launched to raise awareness on extension of the crèches. The Project aims to set up crèches in the organized industrial zones of 10 cities in total by the end of 2017.

171. A "Survey into Demand and Supply of the Childcare and Early Childhood Education Services in Turkey" is underway in scope of "The Project on Promotion of Women's Access to Economic Opportunities in Turkey". Based on the results of the survey, a childcare model will be developed in view of our domestic needs.

172. The childcare leaves of the civil servants have been re-arranged as below: The period of unpaid post-natal care has been extended to 24 months, which could also be shared with the spouses. The paternity leave, which is applicable for the civil servant fathers, has been 10 days instead of the previous 3 days. In case of the decease of a mother during the period of maternity leave, either before or after the childbirth, the civil servant father shall be entitled to take leaves as long as the periods envisaged for female civil servants.

#### **Article 11.2-d**

173. See the 6th Report.

#### **Article 11.3**

174. See Article 4.2.

**Article 12.1**

175. According to the TÜİK 2013 data, the life expectancy at birth is 74.7 for men and 79.2 for women. Women outnumber men in the population 65+ years of age (the rate of women 57 per cent and men 43 per cent in the elderly population). While the rate of infant mortality was 13.9 per thousand in 2009 (13.1 per thousand in baby girls); it decreased to 10.8 per thousand in 2013 (10.2 per thousand in baby girls) (See Annex Table 29).

176. The practice of family doctors has been taken up in scope of the Health Transformation Programme in Turkey. Family planning and reproductive health services are offered free of charge at 189 Mother and Child Care and Family Planning Centres under the roof of 957 Community Health Centres and 6,600 Family Health Centres (Ministry of Health 2012 Data).

177. Induced abortion is applicable in Turkey since 1983, upon request until the 10th week of the pregnancy in pursuant to the Population Planning Law No. 2827. The rates of induced abortion have diminished thanks to the extension of the modern contraceptives (10 per hundred pregnancies in 2008).<sup>7</sup> Efforts are being maintained to keep them down.

178. Thanks to the activities aimed at combating the early marriages (See the Article 16.2) and awareness raising activities, the rate of adolescent pregnancies was reduced from 4 per cent in 2008 to 2.9 per cent in 2012 in Turkey (See Annex Table 30).

179. In order to achieve healthy family planning, a number of programmes have been applied such as The Programme on Follow-up of Women 15 to 49 Years of Age and Pre-Marriage Consultancy Programme. Between 2006-2013, trainings were delivered to 27,000 health staff on the subjects of introduction to reproductive health care, safe motherhood, contraceptive guidance, sexually transmitted infections and reproductive health services for the youth.

180. TÜİK data revealed that 910 out of 3225 (39.3 per cent) suicides were committed by women in 2012. Regionally speaking, the highest rates of suicide among women belonged to the Central Eastern Anatolia and Southeastern Anatolia (42 per cent and 41 per cent respectively). The National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey (2008) tried to explore how the suicidal attempts of women were associated with violence and it was found out that 33 per cent of women subjected to physical or sexual violence considered ending their lives and 12 per cent tried to end it. The concerns mentioned in the 34th and 35th paragraphs of the Concluding Observations were viewed meticulously by Turkey. The data collected relating to the women's suicides has contributed to visibility of the issue. ASPB visited Urfa and Ardahan, where women's suicides are a wide phenomenon, in search of the motives of suicide and produced proposals of solution. It is believed that the protective and preventive measures focused on combating violence against women, just as mentioned in the Article 2-f will serve to prevent women from falling in despair and tending to commit suicide.

181. In view of the concerns mentioned in the paragraphs 34 and 35 of the Concluding Observations, the National Strategic Action Plan on HIV/AIDS (2011-

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<sup>7</sup> The data is obtained from the Demographic and Health Survey of Turkey repeated every five years. The results of the survey conducted in 2013 are yet to be declared.

2015) was put into force. The Action Plan serves the specific aim of prioritizing the protection and prevention efforts for the high-risk groups, enabling easy and uninterrupted access of those living with HIV to treatment and enhancing their quality of life. The rate of women among the cases of HIV/AIDS in Turkey is 22.94 per cent according to 2012 data (See Annex Table 31).

182. The Demographic and Health Surveys are conducted every five years in Turkey. The latest survey was completed in 2008. The Surveys are used to collect data pertaining to pregnancy, childbirth and postnatal services for women, family planning services, the conditions in infant and child care services and observing the deficiencies and improvements from the survey results. The data of the 2014 survey has not been declared yet (See the 6th Report for the data of the 2008 Survey).

### **Article 12.2**

183. In scope of the Health Transformation Programme, pregnancy check-ups and infant follow-ups have been listed among the mandatory fields in performance assessment of the health care personnel.

184. The Maternal Mortality Monitoring Programme has kept track of maternal mortality cases since 2007. The maternal mortality monitoring and screening boards are available in each province and on national basis. These boards screen each maternal death on its file in detail and identify their specific reasons of death. Thanks to these efforts and others like them, the rate of maternal mortality has been on a downward trend lately. The rate of maternal mortality was 19.4 per a hundred thousand live births in 2008, whereas it declined to 15.9 in 2013 (See Annex Table 32). On the other hand, the total rate of fertility has diminished in recent years. The overall fertility rate, which had been 2.15 in 2008, decreased to 2.07 in 2013 (See Annex Table 33).

185. The percentage of women who receive pre-natal care rose gradually between 2009 and 2013. A review of the data does not reveal remarkable gaps among regions (the rates vary from the lowest of 97.4 per cent to 98.6 per cent as the highest). The average number of follow-ups per pregnant and puerperant was 4.4 and 2.9 respectively in 2013 (See Annex Tables 34 and 35).

186. The rise in prenatal care has also meant a rise in the childbirths at hospitals. The rate of hospital deliveries was 89.4 per cent in 2009, whereas it rose up to 98.1 per cent in 2013 (See Annex Table 36). It is believed that the conditional health transfers, which are provided to the pregnant women on the condition that they deliver their babies at hospitals and have their pregnancy check-ups regularly, play a role in this increase. 101,398 women benefitted from these cash transfers in 2013 (ASPB Data, 2014).

187. Due to the recent upward trend of the caesarean births, efforts are being sustained to reduce the rate of caesarean deliveries down to the level recommended by the World Health Organization. “Mother Friendly Hospitals Programme” was launched to build environments which observe the patient rights and safety during the pregnancy, delivery and puerperal periods of the expectant mothers.

188. On the other hand, a “Guest Mother Practice” was taken up in 2008 in order to curb the regional gaps in hospital childbirths and provide care for more pregnant and puerperants, in view of the recommendations in the 34th and 35th paragraphs of the Concluding Observations. With this practice, the pregnant are identified in the

regions where transportation gets impossible due to unfavourable climate and transport conditions and when the delivery gets imminent, they are transported to the city centres where they are accommodated and deliver their babies at the hospitals. 187,720 pregnant women were invited between the Octobers of 2008 and 2013 and 27,716 women were lodged accordingly until they delivered their babies. “The Mothers’ Hotel” practice is typically used by the mothers of the babies kept at the neonatal care units.

189. In addition, activities have been carried out with regard to women’s and pregnant women’s health using such programmes as the Emergency Obstetric Care Programme and Pregnancy Information Class.

#### **Article 13-a**

190. In pursuant to the Civil Servants Law, the civil servants, whose spouses do not work, receive family assistance. This assistance is applicable both to the male and female civil servants.

191. However though, it is not a legal obligation for the employers to provide family assistance as per the Labour Act. Therefore, it is employer’s decision to define the circumstances of such assistance. Yet, gender discrimination is forbidden in the practices of the employers as per the Labour Act (Article 5).

#### **Article 13-b**

192. For purpose of settling the problem of financial resources, cooperation has been established to increase the loans provided to women by the private sector. For instance, the Credit Guarantee Fund has increased the guarantee support for women to ensure that the banks broaden their credit facilities.

193. “Applied Entrepreneurship Trainings” are being held by The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization (KOSGEB) in scope of its Programme for Promotion of Entrepreneurship and an entrepreneur receives support higher by 10 points if female, under the “New Entrepreneurs’ Support”.

194. “Women in Business Operation” launched with the concerted efforts of The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and ÇSGB with a total price of nearly 38 million euros aims at providing the firms either owned by women or engaging them at the management positions with profitable loans via the contributor banks to expand them and thus promote employment; and supporting the contributor banks technically in their efforts to improve their infrastructure as required for setting up woman-centric credit mechanisms in Turkey.

#### **Article 13-c**

195. See the Article 10-g for sports activities.

#### **Article 14.1**

196. Trainers’ trainings were held for the local personnel with the theme of “Equality of Men and Women and Gender Equality” to include them later in the trainings of the female farmers. See the Article 2-b for social security rights of the female farmers.

**Article 14.2-a**

197. Prepared by the GTHB, the National Action Plan on the Empowerment of Rural Women (2012-2016) was built on the outputs of 1 national and 9 local Rural Women Workshops having NGOs and female farmers among its participants. The Action Plan includes goals and strategies regarding poverty, education, health care, social insurance, agricultural production, entrepreneurship, organizing, employment, marketing, and use and conservation of natural resources. It is believed that the Plan will contribute to improvement of rural women's conditions in line with the recommendations in the paragraphs 36 and 37 of the Concluding Observations.

**Article 14.2-b**

198. See the Article 12.

**Article 14.2-c**

199. See the Article 2-b.

**Article 14.2-d**

200. From 2004 onwards, GTHB has delivered trainings to the female farmers on the subjects of general cooperatives and cooperatives' fields of activity. The trainings are in support of women, who set up their cooperatives and run a project, to make them entrepreneurs. There are 43 Agricultural Development Cooperatives formed by women and with women comprising the majority of shareholders. By way of affirmative action, 17 cooperatives benefitted from the support programme and started operation.

201. "The Knowledge and Project Contest: Women Farmers Compete" has been held by the GTHB since 2004 covering 81 provinces of Turkey in order to observe the outcomes of all the training and education efforts aimed at the female farmers in the rural area. The contest is completed in two steps, which are the knowledge contest firstly and project contest secondly. The 6 projects ranking the highest between 2011 and 2013 were supported and realized, and 6 agricultural enterprises were set up.

202. In scope of the "Women Farmers Training Project" run in cooperation with the ASPB and GTHB, trainer's training programmes were implemented with the themes of climate change and women, cooperative system, rural development and organization, entrepreneurship and leadership, and gender equality. These trainings helped the project to reach out to 771 female farmers in 5 pilot cities. There are ongoing efforts to extend these training all over to 81 cities in Turkey.

203. On the other hand, the other courses under coverage of life-long learning, with the literacy courses included, are continued at the Public Education Centres organized in the districts and thus, rural women are provided with access to them.

**Article 14.2-e**

204. A workshop was held with the theme of "Common Solutions to the Problems of the Women's Cooperatives" to develop proposals of concrete solutions to the problems of women's cooperatives and set a roadmap. The proposals of legislative amendment were put forward in consequence of the activities.

205. On the other hand, a research has been underway into women's cooperatives in order to highlight their role in women's empowerment and identify the circumstances of the women's cooperatives available in our country in scope of the Project on "Promotion of Women's Access to Economic Opportunities in Turkey". In the wake of the research, "Women's Cooperatives Support Model" is going to be developed. Support is going to be provided to set up women's cooperatives in 3 cities to be decided so as to apply the model and trainings will be delivered to this end. See the Article 14/2-d for the other ways of support to women's cooperatives.

206. The Female Farmers Agricultural Extension Project run by the GTHB is aimed at raising awareness among women on agricultural production and sustainable agricultural activities in order to multiply the facilities and opportunities of entrepreneurship and employment. 19 cities benefited from the project between 2010-2013 and female farmers received support under 48 projects. In addition, 21,465 women were trained in scope of the project trainings on extension activities.

#### **Article 14.2-f**

207. For purpose of socioeconomic improvement of the female farmers, trainings have been held by the GTHB on household resources and management, nutrition, child development and education, handicrafts, etc. 211,216 women and girls were trained in 14,685 farmers' meetings between 2010-2013. In addition, in scope of "The Training over Hill and Dale Support Programme", trainings are delivered to rural women and girls with the topics of health, child development, environment and our rights, in order to improve the life skills of rural women and girls. See also the Article 14-2/d.

208. In scope of the Southeastern Anatolian Project, the Multi-Purpose Community Centres (ÇATOM) available for women and young girls (see the 6th Report for detailed info) are still active in 44 centres in 9 cities. The centres have reached out to around 235,000 women. The follow-up and evaluation of the Community Centres active since 1995 is done in monthly, six-monthly and yearly meetings sticking to a format built on the indicators decided with a participatory approach. Aside from these reports, a Social Impact Assessment is conducted every two years.

#### **Article 14.2-g**

209. In pursuant to The Law No. 6537 on Soil Conservation and Land Use as amended, it is intended to prevent fragmentation and thus aridity of the agricultural lands. The National Action Plan on Empowerment of Rural Women includes the goals and strategies about informing women about their viable legal rights and how to use them, in scope of the efforts aimed at land consolidation.

#### **Article 14.2-h**

210. Another serious problem in the rural areas is the seasonal agricultural workers. An Action Plan was designed to improve the available circumstances for the seasonal agricultural workers in terms of transportation, accommodation, education, health care, security, social relations, labour and social insurance and "The Project on Improving Work and Social Living Conditions of the Seasonal Migrant Agricultural Workers" was launched. The Seasonal Migrant Agricultural Workers Monitoring Boards set up in cities, follow up the relevant activities. Proper mass settlements were established in the shortest distance to the spots where the seasonal

agricultural workers concentrate, in order to satisfy the minimum requirements such as cooking, laundry and dishwashing as well as the restrooms and bedrooms; regular care and suitable circumstances were enabled for pregnancy check-ups, puerperal follow-ups, vaccines for the infants and other health checks.

#### **Article 15**

211. The legal framework in Turkey has been expanded with the inclusion of gender equality and relevant policies have been made widespread. In this scope, fundamental legislation and the Constitution in particular, have been modified in many aspects. See the 4th and 5th Combined Report, 6th Report Articles 1, 2-a/b/f and 4-1/2 for the improvements mentioned above.

#### **Article 16.1-a**

212. See the 4th and 5th Combined Report.

#### **Article 16.1-b**

213. See the 4th and 5th Combined Report.

#### **Article 16.1-c**

214. See the 4th and 5th Combined Report. The 40th paragraph of the Concluding Observations refers to the period of time it takes for a woman to get re-married after a divorce, as required by the Civil Code. However, the period of suspension is rescindable upon a court ruling.

#### **Article 16.1-d**

215. See the 4th and 5th Combined Report

#### **Article 16.1-e**

216. See Article 10-h and 12/1 for the family planning activities

#### **Article 16.1-f**

217. See the 6th Report

#### **Article 16.1-g**

218. Turkey points out to the following development in parallel with the recommendation in 40th paragraph of the Concluding Observations: It is ruled in the unanimous decree dated 19th December 2013 issued by the Constitutional Court that it shall constitute a breach of the Constitution, in the event that a court declines a woman's petition to use her maiden name. This decree is based on the decisions of The European Court of Human Rights and the CEDAW Convention as per the Article 90 of the Constitution. The decision resulting from a personal petition has enabled women to appeal to the courts to use their maiden names. On the other hand, it involves legal adjustments to get hold of this right through an administrative action without necessarily going to the court. Proposals have been submitted at the Assembly to amend the legal provision.

**Article 16.1-h**

219. See the 4th and 5th Combined Report.

**Article 16.2**

220. Turkey points out to the following efforts in view of the concerns expressed in the 20th paragraph of the Concluding Observations: KSGM set up an “Early Marriage Prevention Unit”. In addition, “The Committee on Prevention of Early Marriages” was set up on 18th July 2013 under the roof of the ASPB, with its members being comprised of the representatives of the government offices and agencies, universities, NGOs and the Ankara Bar Association. The Committee had its first meeting in September 2013, which yielded decisions on starting legislative work, conducting qualitative and quantitative researches and setting the victim/survivor support services. Moreover, questions on early and forced marriages were added on the questionnaire form of The National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey within the framework of its renewal activities.

221. The ASPB updated The National Strategy Paper on Child Rights and the Action Plan in 2014 in view of the activities carried out by KSGM, in order to address the efforts aimed at combating the early and forced marriages in a holistic approach. The update covered identifying and keeping track of the girls without access to education as well as ensuring they return back to school, identifying adolescent pregnancies and adopting due measures for notification thereof and carrying out information activities accordingly.

222. According to the “statistics on marriage” of the TÜİK, the average age at first marriage is 23.6 and 26.8 for women and men respectively in Turkey as of 2013. While the age at first marriage was 22.9 among women in 2008, men had their first marriages at the age of 26.2. The age at first marriage has shown an ever-rising trend.

223. The number of marriages below 18 years of age had a downward trend between 2008 and 2013 (See Annex, Table 37).

## Abbreviations

ASPB	Ministry of Family and Social Policies
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women
ÇATOM	Multi-purpose Community Centres
ÇİM	Child Monitoring Centres
ÇSGB	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
FTP	Family Training Programme
GTHB	Ministry of Food, agriculture and Animal Husbandry
IPA	European Union Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
İŞKUR	Turkish Employment Agency
KEFEK	Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
KOSGEB	Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization
KSGM	General Directorate on the Status of Women
MEB	Ministry of National Education
NAP	National Action Plan
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
OIZ	Organized Industrial Zone
ÖSYM	Student Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre
SHÇEK	Social Services and Juvenile Protection Agency
ŞÖNİM	Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres
TBMM	Turkish Grand National Assembly
The Law No. 6284	Law on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women
TNSA	Demographic and Health Surveys of Turkey
TÜİK	Turkish Statistical Institute
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
YİBO	Regional Primary Boarding Schools