

## Equal Futures Project – Policy Recommendations (Turkey)

### Turkey

**Introduction:** The Equal Futures Project aims to advance gender equality, youth participation, and social inclusion in Turkey, in line with the European Union's commitment to promoting equality, nondiscrimination, and youth empowerment. These recommendations are evidence-based, drawing on project findings and EU policy frameworks to guide policymakers, local authorities, and civil society in implementing inclusive and effective strategies.

### **RECOMMENDATION 1: BOOST WOMEN'S LABOUR-FORCE PARTICIPATION & FLEXIBLE WORK POLICIES**

**Objective:** Substantially increase female employment rates and retention, particularly in sectors where women are underrepresented.

**Context & Rationale:** Female labor-force participation in Turkey remains below EU averages. Barriers include unpaid care responsibilities and rigid work contracts. EU directives highlight the need for flexible work, affordable childcare, and shared parental leave.<sup>1 2</sup>

#### **Recommended Actions:**

1. Implement legislation requiring flexible and remote work options.
2. Expand affordable early-childhood and after-school programs.
3. Promote shared parental leave policies to encourage gender-balanced care responsibilities.

**Stakeholders:** Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of Family and Social Services, employer unions, women's rights NGOs.

**Implementation Considerations:** Monitor uptake of flexible work, evaluate compliance, provide incentives for firms meeting gender-inclusion benchmarks.

**Expected Impact:** Higher female employment rates, improved retention post-childbirth, reduction in gender employment gaps.

## RECOMMENDATION 2: INTEGRATE GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING & INTERSECTIONAL POLICY DESIGN

**Objective:** Ensure national and local policies and budgets systematically address gender and inclusion across all government domains.

**Context & Rationale:** While Turkey has piloted gender-responsive budgeting, mainstreaming across ministries remains limited. EU policy emphasizes gender impact assessments and budget transparency.<sup>3 4</sup>

### Recommended Actions:

1. Require ministries and local governments to submit gender-impact assessments with budgets.
2. Train public officials in gender-responsive planning and intersectional analysis.
3. Establish a public equality budget portal for transparency.

**Stakeholders:** Presidency of Strategy & Budget, Ministry of Family & Social Services, UN Women, local administrations, youth and refugee advocacy groups.

**Implementation Considerations:** Build capacity in smaller municipalities, especially rural and refugee-dense areas; ensure accessible data systems.

**Expected Impact:** More equitable resource allocation, improved targeting of marginalized groups, increased transparency.

## RECOMMENDATION 3: EMPOWER YOUTH FEMINIST ACTIVISM & INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION

**Objective:** Strengthen youth-led advocacy in gender equality, social inclusion, and civic engagement.

**Context & Rationale:** Engaging young people, particularly women and minority youth, enhances innovation in policy-making and societal change. EU strategies encourage youth participation in governance.<sup>5 6</sup>

### Recommended Actions:

1. Establish a youth-feminist grant fund for local projects.
2. Include youth representatives in local equality councils and national policy forums.
3. Organize annual youth-led gender inclusion forums connecting policymakers, civil society, and young activists.

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**Stakeholders:** Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Family & Social Services, municipal youth offices, youth NGOs, feminist networks.

**Implementation Considerations:** Ensure geographic, socioeconomic, and demographic diversity; provide mentorship and training in advocacy and project management.

**Expected Impact:** Increased youth-led initiatives, stronger policy influence by youth, enhanced collaboration between youth and decision-makers.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4: ENHANCE EDUCATION & SKILLS FOR MARGINALIZED YOUTH**

**Objective:** Reduce barriers for disadvantaged youth, including refugees, to access education and labor-market opportunities.

**Context & Rationale:** Educational disparities hinder youth from fully participating in society. EU frameworks support inclusive education and vocational pathways.<sup>7 8</sup>

##### **Recommended Actions:**

1. Provide scholarships and targeted vocational/apprenticeship programs.
2. Offer mentoring, career guidance, and upskilling opportunities.
3. Develop programs addressing the specific needs of refugee and minority youth.

**Stakeholders:** Ministry of Education, municipalities, universities, NGOs.

**Implementation Considerations:** Ensure accessibility, language support, and culturally sensitive curricula; monitor participation and outcomes.

**Expected Impact:** Improved skills, higher employment rates among marginalized youth, reduced educational inequalities.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 5: PROMOTE INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE PRACTICES & LEADERSHIP ACCESS**

**Objective:** Reduce gender and minority segregation and increase representation in leadership roles.

**Context & Rationale:** Lack of transparency in promotions and leadership pipelines limits inclusion. EU guidelines promote merit-based access and mentorship programs.<sup>9 10</sup>

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### **Recommended Actions:**

1. Introduce transparent promotion and recruitment processes.
2. Implement mentorship programs for women and minority employees.
3. Set measurable targets for diversity in leadership positions.

**Stakeholders:** Ministry of Labour & Social Security, private and public employers, trade unions.

**Implementation Considerations:** Monitor progress annually, adjust programs as needed, provide guidance to employers on implementation.

**Expected Impact:** Increased diversity in leadership, reduced workplace inequality, improved retention and career progression for underrepresented groups.

### **RECOMMENDATION 6: STRENGTHEN DATA COLLECTION & MONITORING FOR EQUALITY OUTCOMES**

**Objective:** Enhance evidence-based policymaking by collecting and analyzing disaggregated equality data.

**Context & Rationale:** Reliable data is critical for monitoring progress and accountability. EU strategies emphasize collection of gender, youth, disability, and minority-disaggregated data.<sup>11 12</sup>

### **Recommended Actions:**

1. Implement national and municipal data collection systems with disaggregated indicators.
2. Publish annual equality reports accessible to the public.
3. Engage civil society in evaluating and providing feedback on data usage.

**Stakeholders:** Statistics Authority, Ministries, civil society organizations.

**Implementation Considerations:** Standardize data collection methodologies, ensure privacy protection, train personnel, and maintain transparency.

**Expected Impact:** Evidence-based policies, improved monitoring of inclusion outcomes, greater government accountability.

## REFERENCES / EU FRAMEWORKS

1. Directive (EU) 2023/970 on Pay Transparency.
2. EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025.
3. European Pillar of Social Rights.
4. EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027.
5. Council Recommendation on the European Child Guarantee (2021).
6. European Commission Guidelines on Youth Participation in Policy (2020).
7. EU Work-Life Balance Directive (2019/1158).
8. EU Guidelines on Inclusive Education and Lifelong Learning.
9. EU Guidelines on Combating Stereotypes in Education and Employment.
10. EU Guidelines on Inclusive Workplace Leadership Practices.
11. Eurostat Guidelines on Gender-Disaggregated Data Collection.
12. EU Recommendation on Strengthening Equality Bodies (2022).