

**Pilot Project on Active Labour Market Policies for
Advancing Gender Equality through Decent Employment
for Women in Turkey**

Final Report



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Acronyms

ALMPs • Active Labour Market Policies

SPO • State Planning Organization

ILO • International Labour Organization

İŞKUR • Turkish Employment Agency

ITC • International Training Centre

KİHYÇD • Women's Human Rights: New Solutions Association

KSGM • Prime Ministry, Directorate General of Women's Status

MoLSS • Ministry of Labour and Social Security

SHÇEK • Prime Ministry, Social Services and Child Protection Agency

TÜİK • Turkish Statistics Institute

UNDAF • BM Development Assistance Framework

UNMDG • UN Millennium Development Goals

WHRP • Women's Human Rights Programme

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1 • Project Summary

The Pilot Project on Active Labour Market Policies for Advancing Gender Equality through Decent Employment for Women in Turkey was implemented jointly by İŞKUR and ILO Ankara Office from 01 January 2009 to 31 March 2010. The duration of the project covering the provinces of Ankara, Gaziantep and Konya is 15 months. The target group of the project comprises unemployed young women in these project provinces registered with the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR).

The overall objective of the project is to build capacity, at province level, of İŞKUR personnel and social partners; assist the development of gender sensitive policies and programmes; enhance the employability of unemployed women in target provinces by referring them to active labour market policies and build awareness in women's human rights.

The budget of the project funded by the Norwegian Government is 398,748 US Dollars. While ILO's Ankara Office is in charge of technical and operational aspects of the project the institution responsible for implementation is İŞKUR within the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS). During its implementation, the Project received technical support from the ILO International Training Centre (ITC), ILO Gender Equality Bureau, Prime Ministry Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK) and Women's Human Rights: New Solutions Association (KİHYÇD). The Project Steering Committee composed of the representatives of workers' and employers' organizations and İŞKUR took active part in the project through the meetings of Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards. The UN organizations which are the members of the UN Gender Equality Group extended support to the project in awareness raising activities.

Under the project, many successful activities were carried out which contributed to the internalization of gender sensitive approaches by İŞKUR, enhancement of women's employability through vocational trainings organized in project provinces and creation of awareness in gender equality. For ensuring inter-agency coordination in activities and reaching success, the project implementation strategy was based on two components namely institutional development and direct assistance:

1. With the institutional development component, İŞKUR, relevant ministries and social partners were provided technical support to help them gather information and develop technical capacity and partnering skills so as to contribute to the promotion of women's employment. Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) geared to promoting women's employment were successfully implemented by İŞKUR with the support of ILO. While İŞKUR implemented gender sensitive programmes, Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards developed employment strategies focusing on women's employment with the active participation of social partners.
2. With the direct assistance component, vocational training courses that would equip women in target provinces with necessary information, skills and attitudes to increase their employability were delivered. Trainings were materialized with the technical support of İŞKUR Province Directorates and successfully completed with an impact much higher than original expectations. This component included vocational trainings, training on women's human rights and seminars in job seeking techniques and entrepreneurship.

Project activities were carried out within the framework of two basic principles:

- Development and promotion of gender sensitive employment policies and programmes
- Ensuring the active participation of social partners to the process of developing employment policies.

Within the framework of these principles, significant results were achieved at province level with close cooperation with national stakeholders particularly in mainstreaming gender equality and supporting women's employment and active participation of social partners to project activities was ensured.

2 • Women's Employment in Turkey

The global economic and financial crisis which had severe implications starting from the late 2008 is expected to create millions of unemployed people and further aggravate poverty. According to the recent ILO report on Global Employment Trends, the number of unemployed people increased to 212 million in 2009 and the number of unemployed young people increased by 10.2 million from 2007 to 2009, which means that 13 out of every 100 young persons at economically active ages are unemployed (ILO, 2010:16-17). In such an environment where unemployment at global level has reached serious dimensions, women stand as the most vulnerable of all. Adverse effects of the crisis were felt tangibly in Turkey as well and low rates of women's employment which became nothing less than chronic with the crisis of 2001 fell further down to the lowest rates in the history of the Republic. While women's rate of labour force participation was around 70% in the 70s, it fell to 34.5%

in 1988 and further down to 26% in 2009 (Ecevit, 2008; TÜİK, 2010). The rate of employment for women is only 23.2% (TÜİK, 2010). These figures mean that in Turkey only one in every four women is in labour force and only one out of every five is employed. Furthermore, the rate of unemployment among young women which is 25% is another alarming figure requiring urgent attention. All these show that in Turkey women are being pushed further away from labour market as a result of gender based division of labour and gender roles shaped upon this division.

Yet, the situation in other countries and in EU is much different. Women's labour force participation is 51.6% as world average and the average for the EU and other industrialized countries is 52.9% (ILO, 2010:83). The rate of employment of women is 48% as the world figure, which is slightly higher at 48.3% in EU. In the face of this situation, decisions adopted at the Lisbon Summit in 2000 envisage the rate of women's employment in EU to be increased to 60% until 2010.

Behind the low rates of labour force participation and employment of women in Turkey, there are different while at the same time cross-cutting reasons. It is for these reasons that women's employment has its social, cultural and political connotations as well as economic ones. Therefore, solution requires consistent policies and programmes addressing economic, political, social and cultural factors together.

So far, many academic studies have been conducted to identify basic issues underlying women's employment. Consequently, there is a diagnosis on the causes of the problem; the next step should therefore be the implementation of sustainable policies consisting of solutions to identified problems. Under the Labour Act no. 5763 which is known as "Employment Package" as adopted on 15 May 2008 and other legislative acts amending earlier legislation, social security contributions of newly employed persons in the age group 18-29 and women over age 18 will be subsidized by the State at falling rates over a period of five years. This provision which will remain in force until May 2010 is intended to promote and encourage the employment of young women. According to data provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, so far 64,345 persons, 32,831 women and 31,514 men have been employed under this law (MoLSS, 2010).

The Gender Equality National Action Plan (2008-2013) prepared by the Prime Ministry, Directorate General of Women's Status (KSGM) identified, with the participation of relevant parties, goals, objectives and implementation strategies to be the basis of public

policies to be pursued in such areas as education and training, poverty, violence, participation to decision making and employment so as to promote gender equality. In the context of the Action Plan, the İŞKUR was assigned particularly important tasks in promoting women's employment and combating gender discrimination in labour markets. More specifically these tasks include expanding vocational training courses with employment guarantee for women; encouraging women's entrepreneurship by giving support in terms of training, credit and counselling; and adopting measures to fight all kinds of discriminatory attitudes that women face in employment and work (KSGM, 2008:40-41).

Promoting women's employment is also one of the headings in the 9th Development Programme of the State Planning Organization (SPO). With advances in level of education, higher chances of employability through active labour market policies and facilitation of entry into labour market, the Programme targets raising the rate of labour force participation up to 29.6% by 2013. Further, the National Employment Strategy prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security envisages 40% as women's rate of labour force participation by 2023.

Turkey is among the countries ratifying ILO Conventions 100, 111, 122 and 142 that promote gender equality and women's employment.¹ However, Turkey has not yet ratified the ILO Convention No. 183 which guarantees maternity leave and is an important achievement towards gender equality. In line with the ILO's decent work agenda and target, Turkey and ILO signed the Memorandum of Understanding "Decent Work Country Priorities" in Lisbon on 10 February 2009. With this document, the Government of Turkey and ILO confirmed their commitment to close cooperation to promote gender equality and women's employment.

In the texts of UN Millennium Development Goals (UNMDG) and UN Development Assistance Framework 2006-2010 (UNDAF) to which Turkey is a State Party, strategic targets are set in terms of promoting women's employment and achieving gender equality. The UN Millennium Development Goals envisages the elimination of all forms of gender inequality until 2015 while the UN Development Assistance Framework emphasizes the

¹ ILO Convention no 100 on equal pay, no. 111 on Discrimination (in jobs and occupations), no. 122 on Employment Policy and no. 142 on Development of Human Resources.

importance of adopting all pertinent measures to ensure that women fully benefit from all their rights.

3 • Project Objectives

One of the major starting points for the project is the phenomenon of “growth without employment” which is being observed after the 2001 crisis as underlined in the 2007 report “State of Women’s Employment in Turkey” prepared for ILO Ankara Office by Gülay Toksöz. Turkey enjoyed an average annual growth rate of 7.7% in the period 2002-2007. This satisfactory record in economic growth, however, was not translated to any significant growth in employment. Indeed, the net average annual rate of growth in employment in the same period remained under 1% (Ercan et al., 2010:5). It is well established that the absence of high increases in unemployment as a result of growth without employment is due to working-age women largely remaining outside the labour force. As stated earlier, women’s labour force participation is steadily falling and as evidenced by the experience of the last 30 years, this tendency bears the risk of turning into a chronic feature.

Women's very low labour force participation rates were used as a starting point in launching the project to promote women's employment in Turkey with two overarching goals:

- At province level, improving the capacity of İŞKUR personnel and social partners and contributing to the adoption of gender sensitive approaches in women's employment,
- Enhancing the employability of women by referring unemployed women registered with the İŞKUR in pilot provinces to active labour market policies and developing a model for ensuring gender equality in employment.

With these in mind, labour force participation rates of women were examined at province level while designing the project and based on this examination three target provinces were identified. Labour force participation rates of women in these provinces were as follows in 2006:

Table 1: Labour force participation and employment rates of women in the age group 15-29 in target provinces (2006 data)

	ANKARA	GAZİANTEP ²	KONYA ³
Labour Force Participation	23,5%	8,8%	15,9%
Employment	19,3%	8,3%	13,5%

Source: TÜİK Household Labour Data, 2006

At this stage where the TÜİK 2006 Household Labour Force data were considered and province level data were compared, it was decided to select Ankara, as one of the pilot provinces for its relatively higher than country average values in women's labour force participation, and provinces of Gaziantep and Konya whose status as regional focus of economic development was accompanied by women's labour force participation levels lower than the country average.

² Includes information on Adıyaman and Kilis as well in NUTS II region.

³ Includes information on Karaman as well in NUTS II region.

In line with objectives stated above, outcomes expected from the project can be gathered under three headings:

1. Improving the technical capacity of İŞKUR directorates and social partners in target provinces particularly in the implementation of active labour market policies geared to promoting the employment of women and their participation to labour force.
2. Creation of mechanisms to be monitored by local governance institutions to enhance women's employment in target provinces.
3. Promoting young women's employability in target provinces through vocational training and ensuring their participation to labour force.

Throughout the Project many activities under these main headings were carried out and project activities were successfully completed within the envisaged time period.

4 • Project Activities

Throughout the project and in line with project objectives gathered under three headings, there were many parallel and interlinked activities. As a result of these activities carried out in close cooperation with national stakeholders including İŞKUR General Directorate and its Provincial Directorates significant outcomes were obtained.

4.1 • Project Steering Committee

A Project Steering Committee was established to ensure participatory approach and regular information flow regarding project activities. Members of the Steering Committee included Director of ILO Ankara Office in charge of project coordination, İŞKUR's Foreign Relations Department as the unit responsible for project implementation, and representatives from workers' and employers' organizations. In the first meeting of the

Committee held in Ankara on 27 January 2009, there was exchange of opinions on the content and method of activities to be carried out in line with project objectives. The second meeting of the committee took place on 6 October 2009 where members were informed about project activities. In the last committee meeting on 22 December 2009 members were provided information about the latest status of the project and members stated their opinion concerning project closing activities. In all meetings held with the full and regular attendance of members, highly fruitful discussions took place on project activities. Thanks to regular communication among committee members, all members were kept informed about current developments taking place, which in turned secured their active participation to the process.

4.2 • Analysis of Women's Employment in Target Provinces

This first report on the project was prepared in order to engage in a situation analysis to grasp the state of women's employment in target provinces, investigate the causes of low rates of labour force participation and to discuss ways of increasing these rates. The report was also useful, with its province-based labour market analyses, in the identification of the content of vocational training courses to be delivered in targeted provinces.

As stated above Prof. Yıldız Ecevit analyzed labour markets in target provinces to lay the ground for the selection of training courses to be launched to enhance the employability of women registered with İŞKUR. Also containing the outcomes of this field survey including qualitative and quantitative assessments regarding the state of women's employment in target provinces, this report by Prof. Ecevit was prepared in May 2009 with the title "Preliminary Steps and Recommendations for Work to Enhance Women's Employment in Three Cities of Turkey."

Outcomes of the report based on field surveys and interviews conducted in target provinces were shared with the members of Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards and representatives of İŞKUR Province Directorates, related governmental institutions, women's organizations, universities, professional chambers and workers' and employers' organizations in workshops taking place in Ankara on 7 May 2009, in Gaziantep on 21 May 2009 and in Konya on 25 May 2009. In these well attended workshops, fruitful discussions took place on the findings of the report and vocational training topics to be selected at province level.

4.3 • İŞKUR's Trainings in Gender Equality

Two-week trainings delivered by Mostefa Boudiaf and Johanne Lortie from the ILO International Training Centre (ITC) in Turin took place in Gaziantep (08–12 June 2009) and in Ankara (15–19 June 2009). The primary objective of seminars organized under the heading “Ensuring Gender Equality in Public Employment Services” is to analyze how public employment services can contribute to economic, social and educational policies of Turkey and to mainstream a gender sensitive approach to supply and demand matching in labour market.

Representatives of workers’ and employers’ organizations represented in Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards also participated to seminars organized for İŞKUR’s central staff and personnel of Provincial Directorates. While personnel from Gaziantep İŞKUR Directorate remained in their province for trainings, personnel from Konya and Ankara Directorates took their training in Ankara. The number of participants in Gaziantep was 14 and in Ankara was 21, making 35 participants in total. Simultaneous translation services were available throughout trainings and there was effective communication between trainers and trainees.

The content of training can be broken down into four major headings. Firstly, a general framework was drawn on the role of public employment services and overall trends in the world in this respect. In this session, emphasis was placed on the increasing role of public employment services together with the global economic crisis accompanied by case studies related to interview techniques, job placements and vocational and institutional guidance. In all sessions, active participation by trainees was encouraged through group work. For instance, in seminars given in both provinces, participants were asked to give a portrait of job seekers applying to İŞKUR after which, almost all participants gave the figure of an unemployed man. This case alone clearly shows how necessary training in gender issues is.

In the second session of trainings, the focus was on mainstreaming gender in İŞKUR activities and gender stereotypes confronted at work. There were elaborate discussions on the meaning and content of the term “gender” in order to bring participants to a common understanding on gender equality. Also addressed in this session were such topics and cases as obstacles and prejudices that women face at work, factors blocking women’s access to employment and practices of direct or indirect discrimination. In this session the Programme Expert made a presentation on the present picture related to women’s

employment in Turkey. In seminars in Ankara as well, a representative from the General Directorate of İŞKUR made a presentation giving information about İŞKUR activities for promoting women's employment.

In the third session, there were presentations on international norms regarding labour market analyses and the experience of different countries in methods employed while designing and launching active labour market policies. Major headings in this part included basic concepts of labour market information, local trends, labour market analysis and labour market policies.

In the last part of trainings, participants were informed in groups about vocational counselling.

At the end of trainings, participants were asked to share their views concerning the training. The most salient feature was that the level of contentment was very high. It was observed that ITC seminars delivered with the active participation of İŞKUR staff were of particular value in terms of creating a common understanding on gender equality, exposing of existing explicit and/or implicit stereotypes about women's employment and discussing what İŞKUR can do on its part in supporting women's employment. Stating their high level of satisfaction with the training, participants asked gender equality training to be a permanent part of training within İŞKUR and considered as in-service training.

4.4 • Vocational Training for Women

With technical support from İŞKUR Provincial Directorates, vocational training courses were organized in line with project objectives to enhance the employability of unemployed women registered with İŞKUR in target provinces. Skill and occupation building courses constitute the most important pillar of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP) pursued by İŞKUR. Vocational training courses are organized at province level in the form of service outsourcing under the supervision of İŞKUR Provincial Directorates. As such, these courses offer a significant opportunity to both men and women registered with the Agency in gaining a new occupation or advancing in already existing ones. Participants are entitled to per diem 15 TL and insured for occupational accidents and hazards.

In identifying vocational training courses, special attention was paid to the needs of labour markets in target provinces. Findings of the report prepared by Prof. Yıldız Ecevit were of great help in identifying course topics. Based on the findings of this report and the

outcomes of the Labour Market Survey conducted countrywide for the first time in Turkey by İŞKUR in 2009, there were efforts, in cooperation with İŞKUR Provincial Directorates, to identify vocational training courses to be offered to local women in line with the needs of the province concerned. In the identification of courses, the approval of Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards was as decisive as the preferences of Provincial Directorates.

İŞKUR cannot launch training courses exclusively for men or women since a legislative change in 2006 forbade any gender specification in requests and advertising for labour force. Nevertheless the project assigned special emphasis on courses that would be particularly attractive for women trainees. The table below gives information about courses and trainees at province level.

Table 2: Information Concerning Courses and Trainees Supported by the Project

Province	Course	Number of Trainees			Training Dates	Employment Guarantee
		Men	Women	Total		
ANKARA	TV Assembling	20	13	33	June-November 2009	
	Aesthetician	20	---	20	June-September 2009	
	Sales Advisor	31	---	31	October-December 2009	50%
	Age 0-6 Childcare	100	---	100	October-December 2009	
	Computerised Accounting	66	---	66	October-December 2009	15%
	Tridimeks (Three-dimensional graphic design)	55	---	55	October-December 2009	25%
	Sewing Operator	150	---	150	December-March 2009/10	50%
	Medical Secretary	20	---	20	December-March 2009/10	50%
<i>Sub Total</i>		462	13	475		
GAZİANTEP	Carpet Designer	22	---	22	October-November 2009	

	Computerised Accounting	24	---	24	September-November 2009	
	Executive Secretary	60	---	60	June-November 2009	10%
	Sales Advisor	17	---	17	June-October 2009	
	Office Management	41	---	41	November-January 2009/10	10%
Sub Total		164		164		
KONYA	Stylist	19	5	24	June-September 2009	50%
	Sales Advisor	14	---	14	August-October 2009	50%
	Office Management and Secretarial Work	26	15	41	September-November 2009	50%
	Computerised Accounting	30	19	49	September-December 2009	50%
Sub Total		120	48	168		
TOTAL		746	61	807		

Vocational training courses under the project were organized in 13 different branches and 807 trainees, 746 of whom were women, completed courses and received their certificates. Province level information is as follows:

- Ankara: 8 courses with 462 women trainees,
- Gaziantep: 5 courses with 164 women trainees
- Konya: 5 courses with 120 women trainees

Ankara comes to the fore as the most successful province in terms of the number of courses and trainees.

Due to project budget constraints, a part of costs of vocational training courses organized was covered by the project budget. However, there were 18 courses in total launched under the project and 746 women benefitted from these courses, which is a remarkable success.

As for the age and educational background of trainees; 73% of trainees were in the age group 15-29 and 82% were high school or higher education graduates. Since the project mainly aimed at reaching women in younger age groups, the outcome was successful. Examining rates of women unemployment in three provinces, it was observed that unemployment was most pronounced in the age group 15-24. Therefore, women unemployment in target provinces is a phenomenon concerning younger women in the first place (Ecevit, 2009: 86). Consequently, the project mainly focused on the employment of young women in its efforts to curb unemployment and giving a sustainable character to the employment of young women.

4.5 • Trainings in Women's Human Rights

In cooperation with the Prime Ministry, Directorate General of Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK) and Women's Human Rights-New Solutions Association (KİHYÇD), for the first time in Turkey, a training module on women's human rights was integrated with vocational training courses offered by İŞKUR. In this respect, the outcomes of the project represent a model to be adopted by other initiatives in future.

The Training Programme on Women's Human Rights (WHRP) developed jointly by SHÇEK and KİHYÇD is being implemented since 1998. The WHRP is a programme aiming at raising awareness concerning human rights violations faced by women in various areas, equipping women with information and skills needed to develop solutions for related problems and supporting women in their efforts to take part in the process of democratization as equal and free individuals (Kardam, 2003). As such the WHRP focuses on violence against women, role models and legal rights. The content of the training module was further enriched in line with project objectives and special weight was given to the economic and employment related rights of women. It was for the first time with this project that the WHRP included training in women's right to employment. Thus, a training module which was not configured originally as employment-focused gained an additional employment focus with this project.

Trainers were social workers who had earlier received training as trainers in WHRP. The WHRP is delivered in closed groups comprising 20-25 participants. The training encourages direct communication among participants, includes role plays to encourage active participation and group discussions and small group work as well. The content of the WHRP consisting of 16 thematic headings as applied in the projects is as follows:

- Getting acquainted, Introduction to the Women's Human Rights Training Programme and Identification of Needs
- Women's Human Rights
- Constitutional and Civil Rights
- Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
- Strategies against Violence
- Women's Economic Rights-Part I
- Women's Economic Rights-Part II
- Communication-Part I
- Communication-Part II
- Child Training and Child Rights Sensitive to Gender Roles
- Women and Sexuality-Part I
- Women and Sexuality-Part II
- Women and Reproductive Rights
- Women and Politics
- Feminism and Women's Movement
- Organization of Women

These trainings in which each topic is addressed in sessions of 3-4 hours are mostly completed in a rather long period as 16 weeks. However, considering time constraints of both the project itself and vocational training programme, the length of WHRP trainings were re-designed specifically for this project. Consequently, trainings comprising 16 topics were shortened so as to be delivered in 11 sessions by combining some topics. In determining the length of trainings two methods were employed: In target provinces such as Konya where there were WHRP trainers within the SHÇEK Provincial Directorate and in Gaziantep where there was a limited number of trainers, training was delivered as 10-

day intensified programmes. In Ankara, on the other hand, training was extended over a longer time period, 5-6 weeks, with two sessions per week. Thanks to the approval given by the Women's Human Rights-New Solutions Association and cooperation with the SHÇEK Directorate General, the duration of trainings was re-adjusted according to the project and consequently considerable number of women trainees could be reached in three target provinces. The cost of WHRP trainings was fully covered by the project budget.

Since there was no WHRP trainer in Konya, training was given by social workers identified and assigned by SHÇEK Directorate General. In Gaziantep, the major part of the training mission was undertaken by a person in charge of trainings at province level and, when needed, supported by social workers of the Directorate General in Ankara. Finally, in Ankara, trainings were delivered by social workers from community centres in Ankara under the coordination of İŞKUR Ankara Directorate. In sum, there were 16 trainers giving WHRP training to 33 groups in total and 731 women in three provinces completed their training and received their certificates. Out of 746 women taking part in vocational training, 15 either could not attend WHRP training at all or dropped out for personal excuses.

The number of WHRP groups by provinces is as follows: 20 in Ankara, 7 in Gaziantep and 6 in Konya. Again by provinces, the number of women trainees awarded WHRP certificate is: 457 in Ankara, 163 in Gaziantep and 110 in Konya. Due to higher number of available trainers and in parallel to the number of vocational training courses launched, the largest number of WHRP courses is observed in Ankara.

The WHRP training programme was implemented within the framework of a schedule developed after direct consultations with İŞKUR Province Directorates and firms offering vocational training services or employers. In this context, firms in target provinces were visited one by one and provided information about the WHRP. Following these preliminary consultations protocols were signed to include WHRP in the vocational training module, which was followed by a joint programme including such details as the dates and hours of training activities. All firms covered in this process were much interested in having their own trainees receive the WHRP and they were quite cooperative. The approval given by İŞKUR Province Directorates for the delivery of WHRP and the motivation they gave to firms facilitated positive outcomes from contacts with these firms.

The WHRP training took place from August 2009 to 2010. Particularly trainings conducted in Ankara were periodically observed by an ILO programme expert and trainees were given information about the ILO in general and the project in particular. At the end of trainings, participants were handed in evaluation forms to solicit their opinions concerning the training. Examining these evaluation forms and opinions of responding trainees, the following are remarkable: Before all, participants are unanimous in stating their contentment for having participated to training in women's human rights. In fact, their contentment found reflection in the quality and effectiveness of training. Another important point is that participating women now have much more confidence in themselves. It is observed that there is significant level of self confidence and high level of awareness on gender equality characterizing almost all participants.

The basic target that the project wanted to reach through WHRP training was to create awareness among women on their legal rights and gender equality on the one hand and to encourage them for employment. Feedback from trainees indicates that both targets were achieved.

The synergy created with WHRP trainings offers a solid ground for future trainings. For example, after the completion of trainings in Gaziantep, one of the training institutions receiving this training asked for the delivery of the same training to others who could not benefit from this round. The fact that this request comes from trainees is an indicator of the success of the project.

4.6 • Trainings in Job Seeking Skills

In line with project objectives, seminars were organized on job seeking skills and smooth transition from school to work in collaboration with the universities. The training "Job Seeking Techniques: When Starting Work" was given to 112 students in Gaziantep and Konya, 86 of whom were women, as a result of close cooperation with Konya Selçuk and Gaziantep Universities. Women university students were particularly encouraged to attend this training.

In trainings, the project was introduced and information was provided on the policies and programmes of the ILO. The training delivered by a Human Resources Expert and an Institutional Communication Advisor who was a professional trainer covered the following topics of discussion:

- Responsibilities that work entails,
- Various sources in finding jobs,
- Preparing CV in English and Turkish,
- Giving professional impression,
- Points to keep in mind during interviews and types of interviewing,
- Rules of behaviour giving chance in working life,
- Expectations from work,
- Adjusting to new environments
- New rules at work

Trainings were delivered within a 2-day training programme and full participation of students was achieved. Trainings sessions were made lively and colourful with games and other activities that encourage participation and besides relevant training materials participating students were also handed in ILO brochures on Gender Equality Campaign which were available in Turkish. Following intensive interest and requests, copies of campaign brochures were provided to all students and university administrations. In both provinces, participating students stated that it was for the first time that they received such a comprehensive training in job seeking techniques and, that sections on job finding sources and rules to be observed during interviews were particularly useful. This high level of satisfaction on the part of students is an indicator of the success of the training.

Initially while the programme was being developed, it was planned to deliver trainings in universities in three target provinces including Ankara. However, finding out that universities in Ankara were already engaged in supporting their student's job seeking activities through such occasions as "career days", it was decided to shift to Konya and Gaziantep where such facilities did not exist.

While there is some diversification in channels of job seeking with the recent surge in the use of Internet, it is still the case that people need expert help in matters such as ways of using these channels actively, basic points to observe in preparing CVs and particularly rules to be mindful of when being interviewed for jobs. It is true that there are some

universities organizing seminars on this issue for their senior grade students; however, experience in Gaziantep and Konya suggests that in spite of intensive request by students, many universities fall short of adequate response. Trainings conducted in Gaziantep and Konya helped close this gap to a certain extent and created awareness on the importance of training in job seeking techniques.

4.7 • Trainings in Entrepreneurship

Gaziantep is distinguished for its unique model of industrialization and rather developed spirit of entrepreneurship. In cooperation with İŞKUR and Şahinbey Municipality, the training “Basic Entrepreneurship for Women” was conducted by professional experts from 14 to 26 December 2009. 112 women participated to this training. These participants were selected from among 590 trainees who earlier participated to “Start Your Business” training organized jointly by Şahinbey Municipality and İŞKUR in “Home Textiles-Furniture”, “Machine Embroidery” and “Cake-Biscuit Cooking”. Before starting this training, for selecting trainees and obtaining information about ongoing courses, a preliminary field trip was organized where relevant persons were interviewed and necessary information was supplied about the nature and content of trainings.

The module on basic entrepreneurship training was developed on the basis of participant profiles and findings of the field survey which was conducted prior to training. Reduced in length to 15 hours to reach maximum possible number of women, the training covered the following sub-headings:

- Building self-confidence
- Get to know yourself and business idea
- Learning about the market and planning the business
- Commitment needed to start a business
- Introduction to business management and marketing
- Client relations and sales
- Production and operations
- Financial and resource planning

■ Starting a business and relevant organizations

■ Legal and administrative frames in starting a business

Those who successfully completed courses were awarded “Participation Certificates”.

To encourage trainees’ active participation, a participative training technique was adopted including various simulations and games. It is confirmed by trainees in their evaluation forms that cases studies prepared with due account of local context in terms of market situations and socioeconomic conditions, entailing active participation, were highly appealing and the impact of training on trainees was above initial expectations. Another point worth noting is that “self confidence and knowing oneself” was stated by participants as the most interesting and useful part of the training. Satisfied with the training they received, participants asked for sustenance of this kind of trainings. These trainings made it clear that training in building self-confidence is a component that must exist in all trainings in enhancing women’s employment and employability.

4.8 • Awareness in Women’s Employment

In order to offer an overall framework on the impact of global economic and financial crisis on developing countries from a gender equality perspective and to build awareness on the issue, Gülay Toksöz prepared the report “Labour Markets in Crisis Conditions from a Gender Perspective.” In her report dated December 2009, Gülay Toksöz examined the impact of the crisis on labour markets and women’s employment in Turkey by focusing on pilot provinces. The report also includes suggestions on measures to be adopted to combat the adverse effects of the crisis. The report is a significant source in that it critically assesses the literature on the impact of global crisis particularly on women’s employment as well as measures adopted so far. The findings of the report were discussed in workshops conducted in Ankara on 16 December 2009, in Konya on 18 December 2009 and in Gaziantep on 23 December 2009. These workshops were participated by İŞKUR Province Directorates and representatives from related governmental organizations and agencies, women’s organizations, universities, chambers and workers’ and employers’ organizations. Highly fruitful discussions took place on the impact of the crisis on women’s employment and labour force participation.

4.9 • Needs Analysis for Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards

Meetings of Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards were supported from the very start of project work. Established in 2008 with relevant legislative arrangement, Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards meet four times a year. Under the chair of the Governor, members of the boards include representatives of the Provincial Directorates of İŞKUR, National Education and Industry and Trade, universities, Municipality, chambers and workers' and employers' organizations. These boards aim at mobilizing local initiatives, developing local level employment policies and strategies through a participatory approach, developing local action plans and following up the implementation of these plans.

Decisions taken by boards are binding. As such, these boards stand as the most authoritative organs at province level in determining employment policies and they occupy a strategic place in the implementation of plans and programmes. Therefore, all meetings of boards in project provinces were followed regularly by the ILO Director in Turkey and programme expert during the implementation stage and issues related to women's employment were imparted to the agenda of these meetings. In analyzing labour markets and particularly when there was need to gather and assess gender disaggregated data, special emphasis was placed on strategies geared to promoting women's employment. The importance of gender disaggregated data is among common points of emphasis in all reports produced under the project (Ercan et al. 2010; Ecevit, 2009; Toksöz, 2009). It is observed that this particular emphasis on gender equality has had its positive impact on the work of provincial boards and that the issue of women's employment has started to appear among the main items of their agenda.

To further improve the capacity of board members, Hakan Ercan, Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör and Özlem Yılmaz conducted field-level face to face interviews with board members. Based on this experience, a report was prepared on the role of boards in promoting women's employment and further steps that could be taken in this regard. The report was completed in January 2010 with the title "Factors Affecting Women's Labour Force Participation and Suggestions for Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards: Ankara, Gaziantep and Konya." The report was discussed in workshops organized in Ankara on 16 December 2009, in Konya on 18 December 2009 and in Gaziantep on 23 December 2009.

For its tripartite composition, workers' and employers' organizations as well as chambers are the members of the board. However, this composition does not include women's organizations that may be supportive in formulating policies related to women's employment. Therefore, the potential of women's organizations to contribute was highlighted during the meetings and board members' awareness is further raised on this issue. Provincial Employment and Vocational Training As a result, it was observed that for the last three meetings of boards, İŞKUR Directorates invited representatives from women's organizations and attending representatives actively participated in the discussions. Additionally, the fact that the Deputy Governor of Gaziantep stated his opinion in favour of special board sessions to discuss the problems of women, youth and disabled persons during the closing meeting on 12 March 2010 is one of the most concrete examples of awareness created as a result of the project.

4.10 • Job Opportunities for Women

To ensure that women supported under the project could actually find "decent jobs", vocational training was preferred starting from the outset of the project, while priority was given to those courses appearing more promising in terms of employment opportunities.

Given the rates of employment guaranteed by province level vocational training courses, an employment increase by 25% is envisaged by the end of the project. Expected rates of employment at province level are as follows: Ankara 27%, Gaziantep 6% and Konya 41%. According to information provided by İŞKUR Province Directorates as of 15 March 2010, quantitative data in regard to employment creation are as follows:

■ Ankara: 106

■ Gaziantep: 12

■ Konya: 61

Information about courses participated by women finding jobs is given below in Table 3:

Table 3: Information concerning women employed in target provinces

Province	Course	Number of Women Employed	Percentage (Realized)	Percentage (Expected)
ANKARA	Sales Advisor	12		
	Age 0-6 Childcare	9		

	Sewing operator	75		
	Medical Secretary	10		
TOTAL		106	23 %	27 %

Province	Course	Number of Women Employed	Percentage (Realized)	Percentage (Expected)
GAZİANTEP	Sales Advisor	5		
	Computerized accounting	3		
	Carpet design	1		
	Executive secretarial work	3		
TOTAL		12	1 %	6 %

Province	Course	Number of Women Employed	Percentage (Realized)	Percentage (Expected)
KONYA	Stylist	9		
	Sales personnel	5		
	Computerized accounting	15		
	Office management and secretarial work	32		
TOTAL		61	51 %	41 %

Source: Information gathered from İŞKUR Provincial Directorates, March 2010

According to data given in table above, Konya is the province where the rate of employment is the highest.

4.11 • Project Visibility

Special attention was paid to publicize project activities in wider circles through both national and local media. Articles about the project featured in various periodicals and news about project activities were covered by national and local media (See Annex 1 for examples of media coverage).

Turkish versions of brochures produced during the Gender Equality Campaign 2008-2009 by the ILO Gender Equality Bureau were printed in 500 copies each. These brochures focusing on women's employment and gender equality themes as well as 350 copies of an

agenda book for 2010 were distributed to İŞKUR General Directorate and its Provincial Directorates, UN Agencies, members of Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards, workers' and employers' organizations, women trainees supported by the project, university students, women's organizations and others attending closing meetings (For the list of translated brochures see Annex 2.)

To further enhance the visibility of the project, the "From Cocoon to Silk: Home-Based Workers Cooperative"⁴ were commissioned to produce environment-friendly cloth bags. Articles and news features introducing the project as well as other visual materials contributed significantly to the visibility of the project and helped in publicizing it before wider circles.

4.12 • Closing Meetings

Closing meetings of the project took place in Konya on 11 March 2010, in Gaziantep on 12 March 2010 and in Ankara on 16 March 2010.

Closing meetings were participated by staff from the headquarters and provincial directorates of İŞKUR, members of Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards, WHRP trainers, women trainees supported by the project, academics, and representatives of UN Agencies, social partners and women's organizations. Special attention was paid to ensure the presence of women trainees in these meetings.

Closing meetings were organized in two sessions. In the first session project outputs were shared with participants and both WHRP trainers and trainees conveyed their experience in relation to women's human rights training. After this first session, the second session consisted of a panel discussion "Importance of Women's Employment and Policies for Promoting Women's employment in Turkey."


Presentations made and experience shared during widely participated closing meetings in target provinces were welcomed by and aroused interest in both participants and the media (For the news coverage of closing meetings see Annex 3.)

⁴ "From Cocoon to Silk Home-Based Women Workers Cooperative" is one of the two women's cooperatives established in Turkey by home-based women workers. The cooperative was established in Ankara in 2007 to ensure more active participation of women to economic life by solving product-organization-marketing related problems of home based women workers.

Inclusion of the module on women's human rights in vocational training courses supported under the programme in order to build awareness in gender issues was praised by participants as a very significant step forward. In meetings held in three provinces, it was stressed that gender training which was initiated with the project should be continued by İŞKUR countrywide and in a more systematic manner. One of the outcomes of the project is the request for the delivery of the Training in Women's Human Rights Programme to all participants of vocational training courses conducted jointly by İŞKUR and Gaziantep Şahinbey Municipality and to the students of Gaziantep University as well.

5. Project Outcomes

The following are the outcomes of activities carried out in line with project targets:

-  Analyzing labour markets in three provinces as well as the implications of global crisis and emphasising the importance of provincial employment and vocational training boards, three reports have been published. Outcomes of these reports were shared with project stakeholders and other relevant parties in workshops organized in target provinces. As a result of these workshops reaching over 400 persons in total contributed to spreading awareness in gender issues and women's employment to wider circles.

- Training seminars were organized to improve the technical capacity of İŞKUR personnel on women's employment and public employment services; 35 İŞKUR personnel received this training.
- To enhance the employability of women, vocational training courses were organized in 13 different branches in target provinces and 746 women attended these trainings.
- In Gaziantep, 112 women successfully completed their training on "Introduction to Entrepreneurship". With these training and vocational training as well, 858 women gained skills making them employable in such a short period as one year.
- So far 179 women who received vocational training have been placed in jobs.
- 731 women attending vocational training also took the Training Programme in Women's Human Rights. With this practice, vocational training courses were supplemented with a module on women's human rights.
- Trainings in "job seeking techniques" were organized in Konya Selçuk and Gaziantep Universities, participated by 162 trainees, 86 of whom were women.
- In total, 944 women benefited from activities organized under the project.
- Special efforts were made especially with local and national media to enhance the visibility of the project and various periodicals spared space to articles on the project.
- Brochures published in 2009 under ILO's Gender Equality Campaign were translated into Turkish. These brochures were disseminated to and shared with project stakeholders including İŞKUR in the first place, social partners, universities and women trainees.
- For project visibility, special notebooks and environment-friendly project suitcases were prepared for the year 2010. These materials were distributed to İŞKUR General Directorate, İŞKUR Provincial Directorates, UN Agencies, workers' and employers' organizations, women trainees supported in the project, university students, women's organizations and guests participating to closing meetings.

The budget realization rate at the end of the project was 94% (Annex.4). With planned and programmed budget utilization, resources were used efficiently and project activities were completed in time and successfully. Within a short period of time as one year 944 women in total were reached and for the first time in Turkey women receiving vocational training also received training in women's human rights as the component of the training. With courses organized in target provinces many women were made employable and a significant increase is achieved in their labour force participation (Table 3).

Table 4: Labour force participation rates of women aged 15 + in target provinces (annual)

	2006	2007	2008	2009
ANKARA	22.7	22.1	22.8	23.6
GAZİANTEP⁵	8.3	10.8	15.8	14.5
KONYA⁶	15.1	18.8	27.6	30.3

Source: TÜİK Household Labour Data, 2010

Given that gender training to İŞKUR personnel was quite successful and that project outcomes aroused significant interest, both the İŞKUR General Directorate and its Provincial Directorates request the continuance of the project and cover all provinces in Turkey including those selected as targets.

We extend our thanks to the General Directorate of İŞKUR, its Foreign Relations Department and Directorates in target provinces for their close cooperation and technical support they gave at all stages of the project.

⁵ Includes information on Adıyaman and Kilis in NUTS II region.

⁶ Includes information on Karaman in NUTS II region.

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