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WAVE Violence against Women Country Report Turkey

Prepared by
Çiğdem Tozlu and Asuman Göksel
on behalf of the Turkish Social Sciences Association

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Basic Country Information

Throughout history, Turkey has been engaged in international legal frameworks for combating violence against women. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was ratified on 11 June 1985, and it entered into force in 1986. Turkey approved the CEDAW Optional Protocol on 30 July 2002, and it entered into force on 29 February 2003.

Turkey was the first country to sign the Council of Europe's Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, also known as the Istanbul Convention, on 11 May 2011. The Turkish Grand National Assembly ratified it on the 24 November 2011, and it entered into force on 8 March 2012.

1. National Legal framework

a. Major legal basis and legislation to combat VAW in Turkey and significant reforms in the last 20 years

Violence against women has been addressed as a crime in the Turkish legislation by the end of 1990s and has been included in particular pieces of legislation in Turkey. The major legal framework that refers to violence against women directly or indirectly includes the Constitution, Civil Code, Penal Code, Labour Law and Municipality Law. In 1998, Law No. 4320 on Protection of Family became the first legal document, which directly aimed at preventing violence against women and providing a description of “domestic violence”. It was amended in 2007 and eventually was replaced by a new piece of legislation, Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women, in 2012. In addition to those, relevant Prime Ministry and Ministry Circulars and Regulations also contribute to the legal framework for combating violence against women in Turkey.

Constitution of the Republic of Turkey

The principle of equality between women and men in Turkey has been strengthened with the amendments made to the Article 41 in 2001 and the Articles 10 and 90 in 2004 of the Constitution. The principle of equality between women and men was further strengthened with the amendment made to the Article 10 of the Constitution in 2010 (Beijing20 National Report).

In 2004, the statement of “Men and women have equal rights and the State is liable for ensuring this equality in practice” was added to the Article 10 of the Constitution; and in 2010 “the measures to be taken with this aim cannot be contradictory to the principle of equality” was added to the end of the second subparagraph. By the time being, the Article 10 reads as:

“X. Equality before the Law

ARTICLE 10. (As amended on May 7, 2010)

All individuals are equal without any discrimination before the law, irrespective of language, race, colour, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such considerations.

Men and women have equal rights. The State shall have the obligation to ensure that this equality exists in practice. Measures taken for this purpose shall not be interpreted as contrary to the principle of equality.

Measures taken for the protection of children, the elderly, disabled people, widows and orphans of martyrs as well as for invalid and veterans would not be considered a violation of the principle of equality.

No privilege shall be granted to any individual, family, group or class.

State organs and administrative authorities shall act in compliance with the principle of equality before the law in all their proceedings.”

In 2010, the Article 41 of the Constitution, under the title of “Protection of the Family and Children’s Rights”, was enhanced by added “is based on the equality between the spouses” to the provision that “family is the foundation of society”. By the time being, the Article 41 read as:

“ARTICLE 41. (As amended on May 7, 2010)

The family is the foundation of the Turkish society and based on the equality between the spouses.

The state shall take the necessary measures and establish the necessary organisation to ensure the peace and welfare of the family, especially where the protection of the mother and children is involved, and recognizing the need for education in the practical application of family planning.

Every child has the right to adequate protection and care and the right to have and maintain a personal and direct relation with his/her parents unless it is contrary to his/her high interests.

The State shall take measures for the protection of the children against all kinds of abuse and violence.”

Under the title of “Ratification of International Treaties”, the Article 90 of the Constitution constitutes an important instrument for the enhancement of human rights and women’s rights in Turkey, to the extent that it gives priority to the international agreements ratified by Turkey over national regulations. In 2004, the provision of “in case of contradiction arising from the difference between the provisions of the duly ratified international agreements on fundamental rights and freedoms and the provisions of domestic laws, provisions of the international agreements shall be predicated” was added to the Article 10. By the time being, the Article 10 reads as follows:

“ARTICLE 90. (As amended on May 22, 2004) The ratification of treaties concluded with foreign states and international organisations on behalf of the Republic of Turkey, shall be subject to adoption by the Turkish Grand National Assembly by a law approving the ratification.

Agreements regulating economic, commercial and technical relations, and covering a period of no more than one year, may be put into effect through

promulgation, provided they do not entail any financial commitment by the state, and provided they do not infringe upon the status of individuals or upon the property rights of Turkish citizens abroad. In such cases, these agreements must be brought to the knowledge of the Turkish Grand National Assembly within two months of their promulgation.

Agreements in connection with the implementation of an international treaty, and economic, commercial, technical, or administrative agreements which are concluded depending on the authorisation as stated in the law shall not require approval of the Turkish Grand National Assembly. However, agreements concluded under the provision of this paragraph and affecting economic or commercial relations and the private rights of individuals shall not be put into effect unless promulgated.

Agreements resulting in amendments to Turkish laws shall be subject to the provisions of the first paragraph.

International agreements duly put into effect bear the force of law. No appeal to the Constitutional Court shall be made with regard to these agreements, on the grounds that they are unconstitutional. In the case of a conflict between international agreements in the area of fundamental rights and freedoms duly put into effect and the domestic laws due to differences in provisions on the same matter, the provisions of international agreements shall prevail.”

Civil Code No: 4721

In 2001, the new Civil Code No. 4721 was adopted as a part of Turkey’s efforts to align its legislation with the EU within the context of Turkey’s EU candidacy. In the comprehensive report prepared by Women for Women’s Human Rights – New Ways in 2005, it is argued that, also with the involvement of the women’s movement in the reform process, the new Civil Code adopted “a new approach to the family and to women’s role in the family”, by abandoning the previous approach that “assigned women a legislatively subordinate position in the family with rights and duties defined in respect to the husband” with the one that defines “the family as a union based on equal partnership” (WWHR, 2005: 8). Accordingly, a number of positive changes were also reflected upon the language of the legislation: the terms “the wife” and “the husband” are replaced by “the spouses”; and, the legal language was considerably simplified and out-dated terminology was replaced by comprehensible, modern terms, ensuring that the law became more accessible for everyone (WWHR, 2005: 9).

Some of the important articles of the Civil Code are summarised in the Report Prepared on Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Turkey) as follows:

- The provision stating that “the head of the family is the husband” was replaced by the statement that “the conjugal union is governed by both spouses”.
- The provision of “both spouses have custody over the children” and “custody over children born out-of-wedlock belongs to the mother” was introduced.
- The new Law acknowledged the equal division of property acquired during marriage.

- While subsistence of households and the children belonged to men in the previous Law, the new Law introduced the provision that “spouses participate in the expenses of the conjugal union in proportion to their powers with their labour and properties”.
- With the new Law, the legal age of marriage has been equalised for both women older than the age of 17.
- The amendment introduced with regard to the family residence brings limitation to the disposition over the family residence by either spouse without the explicit consent of other spouse. Neither of the spouses alone may annul the rental contract without explicit consent of the other.

The new Civil Law also includes provisions regarding violence against women. They are summarised by the General Directorate of Women’s Status (2008c) as follows:

- The partner may file the marriage to be annulled, if she/he is forced into marriage by threatening her/his or her/his relatives lives, health or honour (Article 151);
- Either one of the spouses can file for divorce if the other has plotted against her/his life, has treated her/him very badly or in a way which is severely detrimental to her/his honour (Article 162);
- In case divorce was filed, throughout the case, the judge takes temporary measures especially related to the accommodation and subsistence of the partners, management of the estates, and care and protection of the children (Article 169);
- Filing for divorce on the grounds of infidelity entitles the injured party to claim general damages (Article 174).¹

Penal Code No. 5237

In 2002, the reform of the Penal Code came to the agenda as a part of the Turkey’s EU candidacy process and it was finalised in 2004. It contains over thirty amendments that are considered as a major step towards gender equality and protection of women’s human rights in Turkey (WWHR, 2005: 14). It is important to state that the campaign conducted by “TCK Kadın Platformu” (Women’s Platform on the Turkish Penal Code), composed of more than 30 NGOs has been quite influential in achieving a holistic transformation with regards to safeguarding women’s rights, and their bodily and sexual autonomy (WWHR, 2005: 14). During 2003-2004, within the context of the campaign, numerous conferences, meetings and press conferences were held in several cities. The campaign was successful to the extent that most of women’s demands were accepted as a result of the campaign for the reform from a gender perspective (Acar et.al. 2006).

The report prepared by Women for Women’s Human Rights – New Ways in 2005 summarises the major amendments as follows (WWHR, 2005: 14-15):

- Sexual crimes are regulated as crimes against individuals/crimes against the inviolability of sexual integrity, instead of as crimes against society, family or public morality.

¹ English translations of these Articles are based on Women for Women’s Human Rights (WWHR) – New Ways (2002) The New Legal Status of Women in Turkey, Written by Ela Anıl, Canan Arın, Ayşe Berktaş Hacımırzaoğlu, Mehveş Bingöllü, Pınar İlkaracan. Available online at: <http://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/static/yayin/kitapcik/yeni-yasal-statu.pdf>.

- All references to vague patriarchal constructs such as chastity, morality, shame, public customs, or decency have been eliminated and definitions of such crimes against women brought in line with global human rights norms.
- As the first article states that the aim of the law is to “protect the rights and freedoms of individuals,” the Law brings progressive definitions and higher sentences for sexual crimes; criminalizes marital rape; brings measures to prevent sentence reductions granted to perpetrators of honour killings; eliminates previously existing discrimination against non-virgin and unmarried women; criminalises sexual harassment at the workplace and considers sexual assaults by security forces to be aggravated offences.²
- Provisions regulating the sexual abuse of children have been amended to explicitly define sexual abuse and remove the notion of “consent of the child.”
- Provisions legitimising rape and abduction in cases which the perpetrator marries the victim have been abolished.
- The article granting sentence reduction to mothers killing the newborn children born out of wedlock is removed.
- The article regulating “indecent behaviour” has been amended to include only sexual intercourse in public and exhibitionism.

Major provisions of the new Penal Code regarding violence against women are summarised in a publication by the General Directorate of Women’s Status (2008) as follows:

- Sexual offences are considered as offences against sexual immunity. (Article 102)
- Instead of the concept of rape, sexual abuse and child molestation concepts are used. (Article 102 and 103)
- Basic definitions of sexual abuse and the offence of sexual abuse are made. (Article 102/1 and 102/2) If as a result of the offence, corporal and spiritual health of the victim is deterioration, the offender is sentenced to a heavier punishment. (Article 102/5)
- Sexual intercourse with a child who completed the age of fifteen without using force, threat and fraud is sentenced to imprisonment upon filing of a complaint. (Article 104)
- Sexual harassment at work is introduced and qualified forms of sexual harassment are identified. (Article 105)
- “Killings in the name of custom” is defined as an aggravated circumstance for homicide, and the offender is foreseen to be sentenced to heavy life imprisonment. (Article 82/1)
- If a woman gets pregnant as a result of an offence and in cases where the pregnancy period does not exceed 20 weeks, the permission to end pregnancy in a hospital by the specialist physician is granted to women. (Article 99/1)
- Considering Turkey’s obligations for the international conventions, “torture” and “torment” are defined as independent offences. If the offence is committed against a pregnant woman, a child who cannot protect herself/himself due to corporal or spiritual disability, increased punishments are foreseen. (Articles 94-96)

² Furthermore, in the cases that are committed with moral motives, the law predicts a penalty increase.

- Sexual harassment, child molestation; forced pregnancy, and forced prostitution are considered as offences against humanity, if they are systematically committed with political, ideological, racist and religious motives, and according to a plan against a particular group; and the convict is sentenced to heavy imprisonment (Article 77/1 f, g, h).
- Forcing a person into sex work, or enabling or cooperating for it, or providing a venue for the act are grounds for penalty. (Article 227)
- Genital examination without the proper authorization from a judge or a prosecutor is defined an offence. (Article 287/1)
- In light of the obligations due to international conventions, penal arrangements regarding women and children trafficking are done. (Article 79 and 80/3)

Some of those articles of the Penal Code No. 5237 read as follows:³

“Sterilization

ARTICLE 101-(1) Any person, who involves in sterilization without the consent of man or woman, is sentenced to imprisonment from three years to six years. If the sterilization process is performed by an unauthorized person, then the punishment is increased by one third.

(2) Even if the abortion is based on the consent of parties, performance of this act by unauthorized persons is still subject to punishment from one year to three years.”

“Offences against Sexual Immunity

Sexual abuse

ARTICLE 102- (1) Any person who attempts to violate sexual immunity of a person, is sentenced to imprisonment from five to twelve years upon complaint of the victim.

(2) In case of commission of offence by inserting an organ or instrument into a body, the offender is punished with imprisonment for no less than twelve years. In case of commission of this offence against a spouse, commencement of investigation or prosecution is bound to complaint of the victim.

(3) If the offence is committed;

a) Against a person who cannot protect himself because of corporal or spiritual disability,

b) By undue influence based on public office,

c) Against a person with whom he has third degree blood relation or kinship,

d) By using arms or participation of more than one person in the offence,

the punishments imposed according to above subsections are increased by one half.

(4) In case of use of force during the commission of offence that can result with the serious consequences of wilful injury, the offender is additionally punished for felonious injury.

(5) In case of death of vegetal existence of a person as result of the offence, the offender is sentenced to heavy life imprisonment.”

³ English version of the Penal Code No: 5237 is available online at http://www.unodc.org/res/cld/document/tur/2004/criminal_code_law_no_5237_html/Turkey_Criminal_Code_Law_No_5237_2004.pdf.

“Child molestation

ARTICLE 103-(1) Any person who abuses a child sexually is sentenced to imprisonment from eight to fifteen years. Sexual molestation covers the following acts; a) All kinds of sexual attempt against children who are under the age of fifteen or against those attained the age of fifteen but lack of ability to understand the legal consequences of such act, b) Abuse of other children sexually by force, threat or fraud.

(2) In case of performance of sexual abuse by inserting an organ or instrument into a body, the offender is sentenced to imprisonment for no less than sixteen years.

(3) In case of performance of sexual abuse by antecedents, second or third degree blood relations, step father, guardian, educator, trainer, nurse and other persons rendering health services and responsible from protection and observation of the child, or by undue influence based on public office, the punishment to be imposed according to the above subsections is increased by one half.

(4) In case of execution of sexual abuse against the children listed in paragraph (a) of first subsection by use of force or threat, the punishment to be imposed is increased by one half.

(5) The provisions relating to felonious injury are additionally applied in case the acts of force and violence cause severe injury to the person subject to sexual abuse.

(6) In case the offence results with death or vegetal existence of the victim, the offender is punished with heavy life imprisonment.”

“Sexual harassment

ARTICLE 105-(1) If a person is subject to sexual harassment by another person, the person performing such act is sentenced to punishment from three months to two years upon complaint of the victim. In the cases which the felony is committed against children, the offender is sentenced to imprisonment between six months to three years.

(2) In cases where these acts are committed through

a) abuse of a position of influence arising from public works, a relationship of service, or due to intra-family relations,

b) or committed by guardian, trainers, tutor, caretakers, adoptive parents or persons providing health care services or persons who are responsible for protecting and caring or,

c) by taking advantage of a shared workplace,

d) the abuse of advantages provided by postal services or any electronic communication material

e) the exposure of oneself, the penalty imposed in accordance with the above paragraph shall be increased by one half. If the victim has been forced to quit their job, school or leave their family, the penalty shall be not less than one year.”

Labour Law No. 4857 (2003)

Although it does not clearly define what sexual harassment mean, the Labour Law adopted in 2003 lists sexual harassment as a employee right to break the contract for just cause (Article 24/II-c). Similarly, the Law gives the employers the right of breaking the

employment contract by the initiative of the employer in the cases of sexual harassment by the employee (Article 25/II-b). The relevant articles read as follows:

“Article 24. The employee is entitled to break the contract, whether for a definite or an indefinite period, before its expiry or without having to observe the specified notice periods, in the following cases. (...)

II. For immoral, dishonourable or malicious conduct or other similar behaviour (...)

c.) If, in cases where the employee was sexually harassed by another employee or by third persons in the establishment, adequate measures were not taken although the employer was informed of such conduct. (...)” (Article 24/II-c)

“Article 25. The employer may break the contract, whether for a definite or indefinite period, before its expiry or without having to comply with the prescribed notice periods, in the following cases: (...)

II. For immoral, dishonourable or malicious conduct or other similar behaviour (...)

b. If the employee sexually harasses an other employee of the employer. (...)” (Article 25/II-c)

Municipality Law No. 5393 (2005)

The Municipality Law No. 5393, enacted in 2005, gives the duty of providing services for the female victims of domestic violence to the municipalities by indicating that “Metropolitan municipalities and municipalities with a population of more than 50,000 shall open shelters for women and children” (Article 14). However, in the Law, no sanctions are foreseen for the municipalities which do not take the initiative to open any shelters. By the amendments made in 2012, providing shelters for women and children became obligatory for Metropolitan Municipalities and the municipalities whose population is more than 100.000. Still, for other municipalities the provision of the same services left optional in accordance with their financial situation and service priorities.

Law No. 4320 on Protection of Family (1998)

The Law No: 4320 on the Protection of Family, which was enacted in 1998, provided a description of domestic violence in a legal document for the first time. The Law was amended in 2007 to broaden its scope. The Regulation regarding the implementation of the Law was enacted in 2008. Eventually in 2012, it was annulled with the Law no. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women.

According to Law No. 4320 on the Protection of Family⁴:

- If domestic violence occurs, a request can be filed directly with the public prosecutor for a protection order against the offender.
- The victim of violence does not have to file this request in person; a family member, a friend or a neighbour may file for her.
- There is no need to go to the police or to police stations; the request is filed directly with the office of the public prosecutor.
- This is not an application to prosecute the offender but the lodging of a complaint and a request for protection.

⁴ <http://www.kadinininsan haklari.org/eski/wwhr.org/category/law-no.html>.

- Upon receiving the application, the judge immediately issues a protection order that removes the offender from the woman's vicinity (the home, workplace, etc) for a period up to six months. The offender is banned from approaching the woman's vicinity.

The law composed of four articles, the last two identifying the date of entering into force and implementing agency. Accordingly, the first two articles are as follows⁵:

“ARTICLE 1. If a spouse or child or another member of the family living under the same roof is subject to abuse, and notification is made either by the victim or by the Public Prosecutor, in addition to the provisions of the Turkish Civil Code, taking into consideration the specific circumstances, a Justice of the Peace can pass one or more of the following rulings or take any other measures that are deemed appropriate. The accused spouse can be ordered:

- a. Not to use violence or threatening behaviour against the other spouse or children (or another member of the family living under the same roof);
- b. To leave the dwelling shared with the spouse or children if there are any and not to approach the dwelling occupied by the spouse and children or their place of work.
- c. Not to damage the property of the spouse or children (or of others living under the same roof);
- d. Not to cause distress to the spouse or children (or others living under the same roof) using means of communication;
- e. To surrender a weapon or other similar instruments to the police;
- f. Not to arrive at the shared dwelling while under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating substances nor use such substances in the shared dwelling.

The above-mentioned measures can be applied for a period not exceeding six months and, if the accused does not abide by the rulings, s/he shall be warned that s/he is liable to arrest and confinement. The judge shall take into account the standard of living of the victim and rule on maintenance payments accordingly. Under the first paragraph of the statute, no fee is charged for applications.

ARTICLE 2. A copy of the protection order is entrusted to the Public Prosecutor by the court. The Public Prosecutor monitors the application of the order through the police. In the event of the order being implemented, the police, without the need for the victim to submit a written application, will themselves conduct an investigation and transfer the documents to the Public Prosecutor within the shortest possible time.

The Public Prosecutor can file a suit at the Magistrates Court against the spouse who does not abide by the order. The location of the case and the avoidance of loss of time in its expedition are governed by Law No 3005 on the Criminal Courts. The spouse who has not abided by the protection order can be sentenced to a prison sentence of three to six months.”

In 2007, an amendment was made in the Law on the Protection of Family No.4320 and it was adopted in the Parliament on 26 April 2007. The amendments extended the Law on

⁵ English translation of the Law is retrieved from <http://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/eski/wwhr.org/category/law-no.html>.

Protection of the Family to all individuals in the family, including family members living separately and abolished all fees for applications and administrative transactions related to court proceedings (European Commission, 2007: 18).

Law no. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women (2012)

The gaps in implementation of the previous Law No. 4320 necessitated a revision. As a result, the Law No:6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women was enacted on 20 March 2012, after being published in the Official Journal No 28239. For the preparation of the new Law, 241 women's organisations came together under the roof of "End the Violence Platform" and a group of representatives from this Platform cooperated with the Ministry of Family and Social Policy for the making of the Law by providing their recommendations for the new Law depending on their experiences with the previous Law. When some of the proposals of the Platform were not incorporated into the Law at the stage of signature by the Council of Ministers, the Platform organised a press conference to share its experiences with the law making process and its criticisms regarding the eventual outlook of the new Law (Mor Çatı, 2014: 2).

By 2012, the Law No. 6284 is the major legal instrument to combat violence against women in Turkey. The Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women includes protective measures such as not to come closer, suspension, not to disturb with communication tools etc. as regulated by the previous Law No. 4320. Going beyond those, the new Law includes more comprehensive arrangements regarding the scope of the victims of violence; regarding the measures to be taken for the prevention of violence, decision of protection and inter-institutional cooperation; and regarding the temporary financial support (Mor Çatı, 2014: 2). The protective and preventive measures foreseen in the Law are not defined only against physical violence but also in a way to cover sexual, economic and psychological violence. The scope of the target group was enlarged to all women children, their family members, as well as the victims of stalking.

The aim of the Law No. 6284 is defined in Article 1 as follows:

"ARTICLE 1- (1) The aim of this law is to protect the women, the children, the family members and the victims of stalking, who have been subject to the violence or at the risk of violence, and to regulate procedures and principles with regard to the measures of preventing the violence against those people."

In addition to the general outlook as given above, the Report Prepared on Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Turkey) summarises major features of the Law No. 6284 as follows:

- The Law refers to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Article 1/2b).
- The Law defines the concepts of "violence", "domestic violence" and "violence against women" in a way to include physical, verbal, economic and psychological violence (Article 2).
- Preventive and protective measures for the victims of violence, perpetrator and potential perpetrator are established in the Law in detail.

- 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 (Article 8(6)).
- 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 (Article 13(2)).
- The Law indicates that while implementing the cautionary decisions taken, the technical means and methods may be used with a judicial decision (Article 12(1)).
- The Law enabled the ruling of protective and preventive orders both at the weekends and on holidays.

In addition, the Law No. 6284 also regulates the establishment of the Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres (ŞÖNİMs):

“ARTICLE 14- (1) The Ministry shall establish the Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers, where necessary qualified personnel especially the women are employed and perform a duty, and where the support and monitoring services are provided to the persons to prevent the violence and efficiently implement the protective and preventive measures. They operate on a basis of seven days and twenty- four hours and their procedures and principles are identified by regulation.

(2) Monitoring studies are conducted and support services are provided to the persons in these centres in order to prevent violence and efficiently implement the protective and preventive measures.”

Upon the entry into force of the Law, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies issued the Circular No: 2012/13 on the Regulation on the Implementation of the Law No: 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women in April 2012 to provide a clarification regarding the implementation of the Law and guidance for the implementers. The Implementation Regulation came into force on 18 January 2013. Furthermore, the Regulation on the Opening and Operation of Women’s Shelters, for the restructuring of the women’s shelters, was prepared and entered into force on 5 January 2013.

Circulars and Regulations

There are a number of Prime Ministry and Ministry circulars and regulations regarding the implementation of the policies to combat the violence against women. They can be listed as follows:

- Prime Ministry Circular No. 2006/17 on the “Measures to be taken to prevent the Acts of Violence against Women and Children and Custom and Honour Killings” was issued in 2006, based on the work of the Research Commission established in the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

- Ministry of Justice Circular No. 2006/35 on the “Implementation of the Law on Protection of Family was issued in 2006 in order to eliminate implementation deficits of the Law.

- Ministry of Interior Circular No. 2007/6 on the “Coordination of the Measures for the Prevention of Custom and Honour Crimes” was issued in 2007 to remind the public prosecutors to take all the protection measures immediately for the women and their children under the risk of or exposed to violence related to custom and honour.

- Ministry of Interior Circular No. 2010/10 was issued in 2010 to extend the United Nations Joint Program on Protection and Promotion of the Human Rights of Women and Girls and to promote and protect the human rights of women and girls at local level in Turkey.

- Prime Ministry Circular No. 2011/2 on “Prevention of Mobbing at Work” was issued in 2011.

- Ministerial Circular No: 2012/13 on the “Regulation on the Implementation of the Law No: 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women” was issued in 2012 to clarify and provide guidance for the implementation of the Law.

- Ministry of Family and Social Policy Circular on the “Opening and Operation of the Women Shelters” was published in the Official Journal No. 28519 on 5 January 2013.

Action Plans

There are two National Action Plans to Combat Violence against Women in Turkey: National Action Plan on Combating Domestic Violence against Women (2007-2010) and National Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women (2012-2015).⁶

b. The main institutional actors with responsibility for VAW in Turkey

Until 2011, the portfolio regarding women was structured under the responsibility of a State Minister in charge of Women and Family Affairs, through the General Directorate for the Status of Women (Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü - KSGM), with the assistance of the Agency for Social Services and the Protection of Children (Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu - SHÇEK) located under the Prime Ministry. General Directorate on the Status of Women (KSGM), established in 1990 but suffered from an institutional affiliation problem by being attached to different central administration units throughout its history, used to act as the national machinery with the mandate to develop national policies and plans for governmental services and programs to eradicate violence against women until then. In addition, Agency for Social Services and the Protection of Children (SHÇEK) was a state agency which opened the first women’s guesthouse and used to provide services for battered women or those at risk of encountering violence through guesthouses for women. Besides guesthouses, SHÇEK used to serve women through its community centres where social workers counselled women, and different education programs were offered.

In 2011, the *Ministry of Family and Social Policy* was established in 2011 with the Governmental Decree No. 633 on the Organisation and Duties of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, which is the main institutional actor with the responsibility for violence

⁶ More information on the National Action Plans can be found in Section entitled “Key measures taken against VAW”. In addition, according to the information provided by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, the preparations for an Action Plan Combating Violence against Women has already been started.

against women in Turkey. Accordingly, the General Directorate on the Status of Women was reorganised and was affiliated to the Ministry of Family and Social Policies as a general directorate in 2011. The women's shelters, previously handled by SHÇEK, were placed under the roof of the KSGM and the budget and personnel capacity of the General Directorate have been increased. The Ministry of Family and Social Policy merges a number of institutions under its roof, responsible for social protection, social assistance, women, children, the disabled and family issues, in an effort to overcome the institutional fragmentation in this field (European Commission, 2011: 79).

Throughout the 2000s, a number of research committees have been established in the Turkish Parliament to conduct research on the prevalence and reasons of violence against women in Turkey and to make proposals for policies to combat it. Parliamentary Research Commission for the "identification of the causes for and measures to combat with violence against women and children, and custom and honour crimes" was established in 2005 in order to address the issue of honour killings in depth and to determine the causes of violence against women and children. Following the report of the Parliamentary Commission, the Prime Ministry Circular No. 2006/17 on the "Measures to be taken to prevent the Acts of Violence against Women and Children and Custom and Honour Killings" was issued in 2006. In line with the Circular, the "Violence Against Women Monitoring Committee" was established under the responsibility of the relevant State Ministry.

Another Expertise Committee, namely the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women (KEFEK) is established in the Parliament in 2009, with the aim to reflect equality between women and men to practice and to develop solutions to the problems in this regard (KSGM, 2012). Moreover, the Committee aims "to keep track of the national and international progress in protecting and promoting women's rights and achieving gender equality, inform the Parliament on the relevant improvements, negotiate the primary and secondary tasks referred to it, and present opinions at the specialised commissions regarding the bills, motions and decrees submitted at the Parliament" (Report Prepared on Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action - Turkey). The Commission also established sub-committees on "Identifying the Defects in the Legislation on Violence against Women and its Implementation", "The Role of Media in Achieving Gender Equality", "Early Marriages", "Role to Gender Equality in the Education System", "Psychological Violence Inflicted upon Women due to Sex of Their Children, Bride Price and Traditional Marriages", "Mobbing at the Workplace" (KSGM, 2012). Additionally, in 2014, a temporary "Parliamentary Commission for the Investigation of the Reasons of violence against Women and Necessary Precautions" was established for a three-month period.⁷

Other ministries, namely Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Interior also have various responsibilities for combating violence against women in Turkey.

In Turkey, family courts were established in 2003 with the Law No. 4787 on the Establishment, Mission and Jurisdiction of Family Courts. They are in charge of cases concerning "the protection of the financial entity of the family, fulfilment of financial

⁷ For detailed information see https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/ARASTIRMA_ONERGESI_GD.onerge_bilgileri?kanunlar_sira_no=13

obligations resulting from marriage, placement of poor members of families in social homes, protection of children, fulfilment of obligations regarding allowances for children, placement of deserted children in relevant institutions, management and protection of the property of children and protection of physically or mentally disabled children” (Bjornberg and Richmond, 2003: 21).

c. Main problems regarding the implementation of the law regarding VAW in Turkey

For the implementation of the legislation regarding violence against women in Turkey, a number of criticisms can be listed. Despite the existence of a variety of legal arrangements in the Turkish legislation, implementation can somehow be considered as ineffective and selective, majorly due to lack of resources, including insufficient human resources and funds; lack of monitoring, evaluation and follow up of measures; inadequacy of support mechanisms such as shelters and intervention centres; and lack of indicators and objectives. In this section, depending on two comprehensive sources, namely the annual Progress Reports by the European Commission; and, civil society texts and reports, a categorical summary of the major problems regarding the implementation of the legislation regarding violence against women in Turkey, especially throughout the 2000s will be provided.

European Commission repeatedly states that “gender equality, combating violence against women, including honour killings, and early and forced marriages remain major challenges for Turkey” (European Commission, 2012: 26). Although the reform initiatives and legal changes in the 2000s have been appreciated, Turkey is expected “to turn legislation into political, social and economic reality” (European Commission, 2013) and show more efforts to combat honour killings, domestic violence and forced marriages in Turkey (European Commission, 2012: 67).

In order to translate the legislation into political, social and economic reality, the Turkish government is highly recommended to “to proactively promote changes in stereotypes and in the perception of gender roles in all spheres” (European Commission, 2012). According to the European Commission (2014), instances, in which women under judicial protection were reported to be killed, raise questions about the effectiveness of the existing legislation and its implementation.

One of the identified problems relates to the financial and human resources in terms of law enforcement. The European Commission states that implementation of the Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women requires additional human resources and coordination (European Commission, 2014). The criticisms about the effectiveness of the implementation of the Law No. 6284, the clarity of some of its provisions and the inadequate number, competences and training of the staff dealing with domestic violence have been voiced both by the civil society organisations and the European Commission (European Commission, 2014) and it is recommended that national and international resources should be allocated for the sustainability of actions, policies and circulars on women’s rights and gender equality (European Commission, 2012).

Another main problem, which is identified by the Progress Reports of the European Commission, regards the attitudes of the law enforcement officers and executors. Instances in which “‘consent’, ‘undue provocation’ and ‘appearing older’ were used to justify a reduction in sentences for sexual crimes” can still be observed often (European

Commission, 2013, European Commission, 2014). There are also some court judgements in which “the rulings attempted to justify violence inflicted on women and sometimes on juveniles with reference to the victim’s family background and attitude” (European Commission, 2012: 27). In some other cases, it is observed that “police officers tried to convince domestic violence victims to return to their alleged abusers rather than help them pursue their complaints” (European Commission, 2012). The cases “in which the victim of violence sought help in vain from the authorities and ended up being killed” also shows that there is a need for awareness-raising and training for members of the judiciary and law enforcement officers on the existing legislation, especially on the new Law No. 6284 (European Commission, 2012). In addition, concerns about the inadequacy of the capacity of the family courts have also been repeatedly voiced (European Commission, 2012; European Commission, 2013) and it is argued that they were established without the necessary expertise and on-the-job training (Shadow NGO Report, 2010).

An important category of main problems regarding the implementation appears in relation to the insufficiencies of women’s counselling centres and, established in 2012, Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres (ŞÖNİMs). For example, as of 2010 the number and service quality of those centres were considered to be insufficient (Shadow NGO Report, 2010). According to an evaluation made in 2014, for a total of 14 ŞÖNİMs⁸ existing in Turkey, the staff appointments were not completed and appointed staff were not trained (European Commission, 2014). Women’s NGOs, which would like to open such shelters, cannot do that due to lack of financial support (European Commission, 2014). For the municipal women’s centres opened in line with the Law No. 5393, the problem of lack of “qualified staff with a background in social work, psychology, law and health, and capable of responding effectively to the legal, social, educational and health needs of women and children” is identified (Shadow NGO Report, 2010). There are actually no clear follow-up mechanisms or sanctions for municipalities who do not establish shelters in line with the Municipality Law No. 5393 (European Commission, 2014; Shadow NGO Report, 2010) or no monitoring mechanisms established their efficient functioning (Shadow NGO Report, 2010).

Another main implementation problem regards data collection. Non-existence of official and detailed statistics on the instances of violence against women, including killings and early and forced marriages is a major concern (European Commission, 2012; European Commission, 2013; European Commission, 2014). The research conducted in 2008 and 2013 provide a set of data, many of which have also been used in this report; however not all the categories are covered in those researches. For instance, the number femicides are not available in the researches.

A recent monitoring report by Mor Çatı Foundation (2014) identifies the problems in terms of the implementation of the Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women through first-hand experiences of the victims of violence. The report argues that symbolic numbers of ŞÖNİMs are far from providing the supports indicated in legislation, which results in difficulties for the women victims of violence in accessing to shelters, in-kind and financial support, child care support, vocational training and job finding support; and the institution is insufficient in terms of fulfilling its coordination responsibilities as assigned to it by the Law No. 6284 (Mor Çatı, 2014: 21). More specifically, the report indicates a number of implementation problems regarding the

⁸ The number of ŞÖNİMs have increased to 40 by January 2016.

number and location of ŞÖNİMs; quality and behaviours of the staff; and, quality of the services provided by ŞÖNİMs.

Regarding the number and location of ŞÖNİMs, the Mor Çatı (2014: 17) report states that total number of ŞÖNİMs all over Turkey is not sufficient. For example, in Istanbul, with a population of over 14 million inhabitants, there is only one ŞÖNİM. In addition, the existing ŞÖNİMs are not usually located at central locations, which can cause severe transportation problems for women. Many interviewees indicated that they could reach ŞÖNİMs only by phone, due to the difficulties in accessing the facility, as well as hesitance of scheduling face-to-face meetings by the staff (Mor Çatı, 2014: 17).

Regarding the quality of ŞÖNİM staff, the Mor Çatı report states that a deal of personnel did not have comprehensive and consistent knowledge about the functioning of the Law No. 6284; they are not equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills to provide necessary support for women to fight with violence; and, they were not sensitive to the issue of violence against women (Mor Çatı, 2014: 21-22). This is considered as a reason that would complicate the economic, psychological, legal and social empowerment of women (Mor Çatı, 2014: 21-22).

In terms of service provision, the report states that the interviewees were not happy with their experience with ŞÖNİMs, either for their face-to-face or on the phone communication, because they did not feel to receive sufficient attention from the staff (Mor Çatı, 2014: 18). Although ŞÖNİMs are obliged to work in line with 7/24 principle by Law, some women were declined due to the non-existence of experts after 5 pm, and women were directed to the police station instead (Mor Çatı, 2014: 21). In addition, although the Law foresees a detailed needs analysis for the victims of violence, the report states that for none of the women who had experiences with ŞÖNİMs, any needs analysis was conducted (Mor Çatı, 2014: 18).

In addition to the domestic implementation problems, Turkey has also been subject to international jurisdiction regarding violence against women. In a case, namely Opuz v. Turkey case, at the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), the Court found that “Turkey had violated the rights to life, to be free from torture and the prohibition against gender discrimination, as defined by the European Convention on Human Rights”⁹, by not being able to protect a women who was subjected to violence by his husband although the victim filed several complaints with the Turkish authorities¹⁰. Court also decided Turkey to pay 36.500 Euro to Ms. Opuz in 2009. However, by 2014, “implementation of the ECHR judgment in the Opuz v. Turkey case relating to effective judicial decisions with preventive or deterrent effect for offenders” was still pending (European Commission, 2014).

Looking at the main implementation problems regarding violence against women in Turkey, it is not surprising to see that Turkey has continuously been advised “to make further sustained efforts to turn legislation into reality as regards women’s employment, education and political representation, tackling violence against women, and early and forced marriages” (European Commission, 2013: 64).

⁹ <http://www.womenslinkworldwide.org/wlw/sitio/caso-interna.php?idcaso=216&idi=en>

¹⁰ <http://bianet.org/bianet/dunya/115094-turkiye-aihm-de-kadini-korumadigi-icin-mahkum-olan-ilk-ulke>

2. Legal Definition of VAW in Turkey

Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women defines domestic violence as “any physical, sexual, psychological and economical violence between the victim of violence and the perpetrator of violence and between the family members and the people who are considered as a family member whether they live or do not live in the same house” (Article 2/b). The same article refers to violence against women as “the gender-based discrimination directed against a woman just because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately and any attitude and behaviour violating the human rights of women and defined as violence in this Law” (Article 2/ç). Finally the Law defines violence as “the acts which results or will probably result in person’s having physical, sexual, psychological and financial sufferings or pain and any physical, sexual, psychological, verbal or economical attitude and behaviour which include the treat, pressure and arbitrary violation of person’s freedom as well and conducted in social, public and private space” (Article 2/d). Article 96 of the Penal Code No. 5237 criminalises torment to spouse or family members with three to eight years of prison sentence.

In the Turkish legislation, intimate partner violence takes the form of marital rape and sexual abuse in the family. Article 102 of the Penal Code No. 5237 is entitled “Sexual Assault” and criminalises marital rape with a prison sentence between five to ten years upon complaint. If the offence is committed against second or third degree blood relative, the penalty can be increases by half. Sexual abuse of children is regulated in Article 103 of the same Law which foresees prison sentences ranging from 5 to 20 years for sexual abuse in the family. In case of sexual abuse by an antecedent relative, second or third degree blood relative, stepfather, adoptive parent, guardian, tutor, trainer, caretaker, persons providing health care services or persons who are responsible for protecting and caring for the child, or by abusing the influence gained through a service relationship, or by more than one person, the penalty imposed in respect of offences under the above paragraphs shall be increased by half.

Article 102 of the Penal Code No. 5237 also regulates rape and sexual assault. Sexual assault is defined as “any sexual behaviour violating a person’s bodily integrity”. The definition of rape has been expanded to include anal and oral penetration as well as the insertion of any object or any organ to the body.

Sexual harassment in the workplace is criminalised in the new Turkish Penal Code No. 5237 under the Article 105 Paragraph 2. Article 24 of the Labour Law, however, grants workers the right to immediately terminate their contract in case of sexual harassment by the employer or co-workers, another improvement for women workers.

3. Administrative data and sources in Turkey

a. National Criminal Statistics (police)

Criminal records are publicly available, but not separate for police and gendarme. The latest records are available for the time period of 2008-2011. The data consist of applications to police and gendarme together. However, a separate set of data is available for applications to gendarme in 2013.

The police records on domestic violence are not open to public access. The data for the time period of 2008-2011 can be retrieved from a report of the Turkish Grand National Assembly Committee for Human Rights Investigation for Violence against Women and Family Members.¹¹ The report is available online. The gendarme records, on the other hand, can be obtained from the official web page of General Commandership of Gendarmerie.¹²

The statistics of police and gendarmerie are specifically gathered for domestic violence. The gendarme records are disaggregated with respect to gender of the victim. Also, gendarme records include information about victims, such as their education levels, occupations, etc. Unfortunately, neither of the records provides information on relationship and age. Nor is there any information on perpetrator.

b. National Criminal Justice Statistics (courts)

Criminal records are available; however not periodically provided. The most recent comprehensive, systematically collected data set is provided in 2012. Apart from that, there are pieces of information prepared to present specific issues, such as numbers for sexual assault crime and conviction, available for 2013.¹³

In addition to judicial statistics, prison statistics also available for public access. Statistics are annually published on the internet realm, and a comprehensive and historically comparative data set is provided in 2012.¹⁴ The most recent data is available for 2013.

Criminal statistics are available on the official web page of the Ministry of Justice General Directorate of Criminal Records and Statistics, and on that of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK).¹⁵

Criminal cases involving domestic violence are not regarded as a separate category from the other criminal cases, since they can be regulated by several codes in different courts. For instance, domestic violence is recorded under divorce cases, if it is taken to a family court as a reason for divorce. Or, it is recorded as offences against family and as violation of the Law no. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women, if the cases are taken before criminal courts or civil courts. In criminal and civil court records, cases are documented either as mentioned above, or can be specified as sexual assault, sexual crime or homicide, depending on the case.

In the prison statistics, domestic violence is not mentioned as a type of crime. Rather, in accordance with the judicial records, cases are documented as homicide, assault, sexual crimes, threat or bad treatment.

¹¹The PDF version of the report can be reached via http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/komisyon/insanhaklari/docs/2012/raporlar/29_05_2012.pdf

¹²The official webpage of the General Commandership of Gendarmerie: <http://www.jandarma.gov.tr>. The PDF version of the report for 2013 can directly be reached via http://www.jandarma.gov.tr/asayis/Aile_Cocuk/aile_ici_siddet_2013.pdf

¹³ Ministry of Justice General Directorate of Criminal Records and Statistics. Judicial Statistics 2012: http://www.adliscil.adalet.gov.tr/ist_arsiv_2.html

¹⁴Turkish Statistical Institute. Prison Statistics 2013: http://www.tuik.gov.tr/Kitap.do?metod=KitapDetay&KT_ID=12&KITAP_ID=136

¹⁵Turkish Statistical Institute. Criminal Records Database: <http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/girenhukumluapp/girenhukumlu.zul>

Data is available for the types of sentences with other kinds of results including conviction, exculpation, accord, dismissal of action, etc.

c. Other administrative data resources and recording systems

The Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) carries out population surveys, which are available on an online database.¹⁶ The studies conducted by the KSGM are also considered as official statistics. Moreover, the institution collects and shares information provided from other administrative resources. Besides the online database, the institution also provides published materials. Unfortunately, the most recent data provided by TÜİK on domestic violence dates back to 2008 research conducted by the KSGM.¹⁷ In addition the data on violence against women only covers domestic violence cases.

4. Population surveys in Turkey

Besides the national records, there are a number of population surveys individually or jointly conducted by the governmental institutions, academics and civil society organisations (CSOs) in Turkey. In this section, brief information about some of the latest studies, as listed below, will be summarised:

- Survey on Violence against Women in the Family in Turkey (2013-2014)
- Violence against Women in the Family in Turkey (2008-2009)
- Violence against Women in Turkey (2007-2008)
- The Perception on Violence against Women from Women's and Men's perspectives (2012-2013)
- Turkey Population and Health Survey (2013-2014)
- Turkey Population and Health Survey (2008-2009)

Survey on Violence against Women in the Family in Turkey (2013-2014) (*Türkiye'de Kadına Yönelik Şiddet Araştırması*)

The study was carried out for the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, General Directorate of the Status of Women by the Hacettepe University, Institute of Population Studies. As stated by the Minister of Family and Social Policies in the foreword of the report, the aim of the survey is to render social policies more durable and comprehensive by taking *family* that is the basis of society and the main contributor of its continuity, as the centre unit.

Later in the introductory chapter of the study, Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu and Tarım listed the objectives of the survey as:

1. Providing nationwide data to form a basis for the development of further policies and programmes addressing violence against women,

¹⁶ Turkish Statistical Institute Database:

<http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTabloArama.do?metod=search&araType=vt>

¹⁷ The results of the research conducted in 2014 will be integrated into the database soon.

2. Comparing the current results with the data gathered in 2008, and revealing the change in the prevalence of violence against women,
3. Detecting hardships of the legal measures taken violence against women (especially in the application of Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women),
4. Presenting opinions and suggestions of victims, perpetrators and support service personnel on measures taken and hardships in application,
5. Assessing the existing legal framework (2015: 38-39).

Sample size: 15.072 household had been interviewed for the study.

Year of study: The survey was conducted in 2014, and published in 2015

Frequency of study: One of the purposes of the study is to observe differences since 2008 when the first nationwide study on VAW had been carried out by the same institutions. Despite it is not announced as a periodical study, this one can be considered as the consecutive of the 2008 Violence against Women in the Family in Turkey.

Coverage: In order to cover a wide variety of findings, the study consists of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

1. **Types of violence:** In the study, six types of violence, namely physical, sexual, psychological, economic, verbal abuse and stalking are specified. These categories are also divided into some sub-categories related to the area studied. Accordingly, physical violence is specified whether it is medium or high level physical violence. Sexual violence is divided into three categories: sexual intercourse by force, sexual intercourse by fear and being forced to perform a sexually insulting action. Also coexistence of physical and sexual violence is studied separately. The study also covers violence practiced by non-partners, child molestation, prevention from working and receiving education, stalking, and early marriage as practices of violence.

In the study, due to its prevalence in Turkey, other types of co-habitation such as intimate relationships established by religious union are also regarded as marriage. Therefore, figures on married women include incidents happened in intimate relationship. However, intimate partnership violence is not studied separately.

2. **Frequency of violence:** The questions about the frequency of violence were asked whether women had experienced it at any period of their life or in the last 12 months. Moreover, women are asked to specify the frequency of violence they had experienced by choosing among options: one or two times, a couple of times and many times.
3. **Consequences of violence:** Physical and psychological consequences of violence are also included to the study. For the former, samples were asked about any injuries following the act of violence and the number, severity and types of those injuries. Also, women were asked to assess their current health condition to provide information on long-term effects on the general health of victims. For the latter, women were asked to assess their mental condition in the last four weeks, and if they had ever thought about ending their lives. Additionally, victims with children at

school age were asked about any behavioural disorders of their children, in order to demonstrate the psychological consequences on children.

In order to determine practical hardships in keeping administrative records, women are asked about how their application was aggregated in hospitals, when they seek help as a victim of violence.

- 4. Attitudes and awareness:** In order to understand attitudes of married and single women towards gender and violence the sample was asked to express their sympathy with some statements, such as ‘in some cases a man can beat his wife’, ‘it is the duty of a women to have sexual intercourse with her husband although she does not want to’, ‘a women should be able spend her money however she wants’, etc. The study also provides information about the opinions of women on the reasons of violence they had experienced.

Moreover, women are asked about their knowledge on legal measures and mechanisms combating violence against women.

Definition of VAW: The definition used in the WHO Multi-country Study on Women’s health and Domestic Violence against Women¹⁸ was employed.

Information about reporting to the police: In the study reporting to the police and women’s opinion about police was covered. Additionally, in order to determine practical hardships due to the attitude of the police, women are asked to share their experiences when they made an official application.

Information about women’s use of other services: In the study women’s use of other services was mentioned.

Women’s unofficial applications to support mechanisms and their results are also covered in the study.

Other: In the study, focus group and in-depth interviews are organised with men, women and social services personnel to shed light on opinions, attitudes and processes they have been through. In addition, questions about Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres (ŞÖNİMs) are asked to make an assessment of this newly introduced application.

Violence against Women in the Family in Turkey (2008-2009) (*Türkiye’de Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Araştırması*)

As the first most comprehensive survey in Turkey at the time, this survey was conducted for the Ministry of State, General Directorate of the Status of Women by a consortium composed of Hacettepe University, Institute of Population Studies, ICON Institute and

¹⁸ In the survey the definition made in 1993 at the 85th plenary meeting of United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women is adopted. In the meeting, violence against women is defines as ‘any act of gender-based violence that results on, or likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life.’ (For more information see http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study/summary_report/chapter1/en/)

BNB, with the financial support of the European Union.¹⁹ As indicated by the Minister of State in the Foreword of the Report, the survey aimed at “producing nation-wide data in order to more effectively fight with and develop policies and programmes regarding violence against women”.

Sample size: The project is designed to reach all regions and sub-regions of the country. Also, rural and urban population is represented with separate sample groups in accordance. The planned sample size was 28,048 households. Due to the unavailability of households during the survey period and unwillingness of participants, the sample size reduced to 17,168 households, which made the turnout 88%. Among the planned household sample size 22,822 were women. Only one woman from each household was planned to be interviewed. Women could be married, engaged, promised to marriage, or just in a relationship. The selection was made through Kish method, a method for randomly selecting members within a household to be interviewed. At the end of the selection process 14,854 women were selected, and 12,795 (86.1% of the selected sample) were interviewed. The age range of the samples is between 15 and 59.

Year of Study: The survey was conducted in the second half of 2008, and published in 2009.

Frequency of survey: The survey was the first of its kind, and is not conducted in a regular base. The second one was conducted in 2013.

Coverage: In order to cover a wide variety of findings, the study consists of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

1. **Types of violence:** In the study, there four types of violence, namely physical, sexual, psychological, and economic, are specified. These categories are also divided into some sub-categories related to the area studied. Accordingly, physical violence is specified whether it is medium or high level physical violence. Sexual violence is divided into three categories: sexual intercourse by force, sexual intercourse by fear and being forced to perform a sexually insulting action. Also coexistence of physical and sexual violence is studied separately. The experience of violence before and under the age of 15 is also examined separately.
2. **Frequency of violence:** The questions about the frequency of violence were asked whether women had experienced it at any period of their life or in the last 12 months.
3. **Consequences of violence:** Physical and psychological consequences of violence are also included to the study. For the former, samples were asked about any injuries following the act of violence and the number, severity and types of those injuries. Also, women were asked to assess their current health condition to provide information on long-term effects on the general health of victims. For the latter, women were asked to assess their mental condition in the last four weeks, and if they had ever thought about ending their lives. Additionally, victims with children at

¹⁹ Available online in Turkish at:
http://kadinistatusu.aile.gov.tr/data/542a8e86369dc31550b3ac33/ana_rapor_mizan_1.pdf.

school age were asked about any behavioural disorders of their children, in order to demonstrate the psychological consequences on children.

- 4. Attitudes and awareness:** In order to understand attitudes of married and single women towards gender and violence the sample was asked to express their sympathy with some statements, such as 'in some cases a man can beat his wife', 'it is the duty of a women to have sexual intercourse with her husband although she does not want to', 'a women should be able spend her money however she wants', etc. The study also provides information about the opinions of women on the reasons of violence they had experienced.

Definition of VAW: The study uses the CEDAW definition of violence, which is also used by the WHO Multi-country Study and the EU Human Right Agency (FRA). Besides physical, sexual and psychological violence that are covered in the WHO and FRA, the study includes economic violence as another type.

Information about reporting to the police: The study includes information about reporting the cases to the police as a way of coping with domestic violence. Also, it provides information about non-reporting to the police by including sharing with friends and family members, and using other services as alternative options to reporting to the police.

Information about women's use of other services: The study includes information about women's use of other services that can provide assistance to victims, by shoring the proportion of women who seek help from services other than police, such as public prosecutors and lawyers, hospitals or other health agencies, women's organisations, municipalities, or NGOs.

Other: The study provides information about women's physical violence as response and leaving their home. Age, residence, education and income are also added as independent variables.

Violence against Women in Turkey (2007-2008) (*Türkiye'de Kadına Yönelik Şiddet*)

The study was conducted by two scholars, Ayşe Gül Atay (Sabancı University) and Yeşim Arat (Boğaziçi University), and financially supported by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK).

The study aims to take a step towards identifying women's actual experience of and struggle against violence. Furthermore, the study targets to reflect upon how VAW is described and perceived in Turkey and what kinds of methods have been devalued in the struggle against domestic violence at both non-governmental and state levels.

Sample size: Since the study focuses on women who experience violence from their partners, samples were chosen among women who are married or was married at some point in their lives. In total 1800 women attended to the survey. 1520 of the total questionnaires represent the whole country, whereas to represent some issue specific regions, two sub-regions were added to the survey. Therefore, the study group entitled 'East' (consisting of North East Anatolia, Central East Anatolia and South East Turkey) was studied via 506 questionnaires, 280 of which was conducted separately and 226 was

chosen among the questionnaire that focused on the general situation in Turkey. Lastly, the study group named 'Central West' covers all regions apart from the East group. The sample size for this group was 1292 (1520-226) women. The age range of samples is 17+.

Year of Study: The study lasted for 18 months in total. The questionnaires were conducted in the first half of 2007 and the study was published in 2008.

Frequency of survey: The survey is not conducted in a regular base.

Coverage: The study employs quantitative method, namely questionnaires.

1. **Types of violence:** In the study violence was studied under four categories: husband's control over his wife's daily routine, i.e. whether they are subjected to husband's permission to do something; physical violence; sexual violence and economic violence, i.e. whether they are allowed to work.
2. **Frequency of violence:** Subjects were asked to indicate the frequency of violence they have experienced as never, only one time, several times, sometimes, usually, it used to happen before but not now, and no comment.
3. **Consequences of violence:** Consequences of violence was not covered within the scope of the study.
4. **Attitudes and awareness:** Participants were expected to answer questions about their opinions on violence, how would they respond if they or their friends experience violence at present. Participants were asked if they are aware of the law on the protection of family, and if they have ever benefited from the law. They were also asked their opinions about the organisations' and agencies' performance in performing their duties regarding to combat violence against women. The participants were asked if they believed that state agencies could prevent violence of partners; and if they would agree with the sentences that "the number of shelters is enough", "their taxes should be used to build more shelters", and "husbands who beat their wives should be convicted in courts".

Definition of VAW: The study did not provide information about the definition of violence employed. After examining the coverage of the study, it can be concluded that the definition used was in line with the CEDAW definition on violence.

Information about reporting to the police: Information about reporting and non-reporting to the police was not included in the study.

Information about women's use of other services: Information about women's use of other services that can provide assistance to victims was not included in the study.

Other: The study provides data on the validity of stereotypes in the country, such as the east-west gap in terms of prevalence of violence. Age, residence, education, income and the profile of victims (language, religion, etc.) were also added as independent variables.

The Perception on Violence against Women from Women's and Men's Perspectives (2012-2013) (*Kadına Yönelik Şiddet Algısı - Kadın ve Erkek Bakış Açılıyla*)

The study was conducted by two faculty of Kırıkkale University, Dolunay Şenol and Sıtkı Yıldız, and financed by the Mutlu Çocuklar Association.

The aim of the study is to provide an answer to the question whether domestic violence is perceived by women and men differently, and if so, presenting the scale of the difference and suggesting solutions in line.

Sample size: The study was conducted with 3500 female and 3502 male participants. The samples were chosen from seven cities of Turkey, namely Adana, Ankara, İstanbul, İzmir, Erzurum, Trabzon, Malatya, representing seven geographical regions. Apart from Ankara with 502 male participants, and İstanbul with 501, samples were equally distributed to cities with equal number of women and men (500 women and 500 men for each city). Answers were assessed separately for each gender. The age range of samples is 18+.

Year of Study: The data was collected in January 2012, and the survey was published in 2013.

Frequency of survey: The survey is not conducted in a regular base.

Coverage: The study employs quantitative method.

1. **Types of violence:** The authors indicate that types of violence against women are determined in line with the definition of WHO which differentiates violence as physical, verbal, psychological/emotional, economic and sexual.
2. **Frequency of violence:** Participants were asked to indicate the frequency of violence they had experienced by choosing among the options provided: sometimes, usually and always.
3. **Consequences of violence:** Consequences of violence were not covered in the study.
4. **Attitudes and awareness:** Respondents were asked to specify the reasons of violence they had been exposed to and experienced. In order to demonstrate their attitude, they were expected to show their sympathy with some statements, such as "sometimes violence is necessary", "if violence is not severe it can be tolerated", "violence aiming disciplining can be supported", "partners should divorce in cases of beating", "women tempt men for violence", "men should be free to use violence in some occasions", "woman deserve violence if she does not satisfy the needs of her husband", "man should be arrested if he uses violence over his wife", "some behaviours of women deserves violence", "violence against women can be tolerated if the woman provokes it", etc.; and to answer questions, such as who have the right to use violence.

Definition of VAW: The study employs the definitions used in various WHO surveys. In addition, one of the positive aspects is that, violence is considered as a social phenomenon.

Information about reporting to the police: The study provides information about reporting the cases to the police as a way of coping with domestic violence. It also provides proportion of women who do not share their experiences with anyone, or who just share their experiences with their friends and family members. And why they have avoided sharing their experiences with anyone was also asked.

Information about women's use of other services: The study presents the proportion of women who seeks help from shelters and other solidarity associations. Respondents were also asked if they have received any psychological assistance.

Other: Age, education and marital status were added as variables.

Turkey Population and Health Survey (2013-2014) (<i>Türkiye Nüfus ve Sağlık Araştırması</i>)

The study is conducted by Hacettepe University, Institute of Population Studies with the contribution of the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK), and as the Ministry of Development the major beneficiary. The survey aims to provide general information about population and health situation of the country, and present the changes since the previous survey conducted in 2008.

Sample size: The planned sample size was 14,490 households representing each region in accordance with its population. 11794 households participated in the study. This makes the turnout 93.0%. In households, 9,746 women were interviewed. The age interval of women answering questions about violence is between 15 and 49.

Year of Study: The data were collected in September 2013 - January 2014 period, and the survey was published in October 2014.

Frequency of survey: The Turkey Population and Health Survey conducted in a regular basis by the Hacettepe University, Institute of Population Studies since 1968.

Coverage: The study employs quantitative methods. Domestic violence and attitudes towards gender roles are mentioned under the title of 'Women's Statue' with some other issues, such as employment. Therefore, the survey supplies limited information about VAW. Attitudes of women towards physical violence and gender roles, behaviours aiming to control women and decision making on reproduction are the topics covered.

1. **Types of violence:** Types of violence was not specified. The study mentions domestic violence in terms of physical violence, and adds attitudes to control women's behaviour separately.
2. **Frequency of violence:** Only the frequency of behaviours aiming to control women is specified by choosing among the options provided: usually, sometimes, never, and not applicable.
3. **Consequences of violence:** Consequences of violence are not covered in the study.

4. **Attitudes and awareness:** In order to demonstrate their attitudes towards domestic violence, women are provided with several potential reasons justifying husband's violence against his wife and they were expected to express their opinions whether they agree with or not. They were asked about their opinions on gender roles, and asked about showing their sympathy with some gendered stereotypes. There were no attempts to provide information on awareness.

Definition of VAW: The definition used was in line with the WHO definition of violence.

Information about reporting to the police: Information about reporting and non-reporting to the police was not covered in the study.

Information about women's use of other services: Information about women's use of other services that can provide assistance to victims was not covered in the study.

Other: Age, employment, marital status, number of children, residence, geography, education and household wealth were added as variables. Difference between spouses in terms of age and education level was studied separately.

<i>Turkey Population and Health Survey (2008-2009) (Türkiye Nüfus ve Sağlık Araştırması)</i>

The study is conducted by Hacettepe University, Institute of Population Studies with the contribution of the Ministry of Health and the General Directorate on the Mother and Child Care and Family Planning. The survey aims to provide general information about population and health situation of the country.

Sample size: The planned sample size was 13,521 households representing each region in accordance with its population. 10,525 households participated in the study. This makes the turnout 88.0%. In households, 7,442 women were interviewed. The age interval of women answering questions about violence is between 15 and 49.

Year of Study: The data were collected in October 2008, and the survey was published in October 2009.

Frequency of survey: The survey is not conducted in a regular base.

Coverage: The coverage of the study is same with its consecutive.

Definition of VAW: The study did not provide information about the definition of violence employed in the study. After examining the coverage of the study, it can be concluded that the definition used was in line with the WHO definition of violence.

Information about reporting to the police: Information about reporting and non-reporting to the police was not covered in the study.

Information about women's use of other services: Information about women's use of other services that can provide assistance to victims was not covered in the study.

Other: Age, employment, marital status, number of children, residence, geography, education and household wealth were added as variables.

5. Situation of Violence Against Women in Turkey

a. Prevalence

In the studies and surveys summarised above, data about violence against women only show insignificant differences; therefore, focusing on the most relevant and recent data from various surveys would be sufficient to show the extent of violence against women in Turkey. Moreover, since the surveys on VAW focus on married women, or women who married at least once in their lifetime, surveys on domestic violence and VAW can be used together. Lastly, in all studies, samples are chosen among women over the age of 15.

According to the Survey on Violence against Women in the Family in Turkey conducted by Hacettepe University in 2014, the percentage of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at any time in their lives is 37.5%. The number increases to 39.0% in the rural areas, while it slightly decreases to 37.0% in the urban areas. The cases of violence increases in correlation with age as 28.1%, 34.0%, 42.2% and 42.7% for the age groups between 15-24, 25-34, 35-44 and 45-59 respectively. Considering that early ages correspond with the early years of marriage, the figures indicate that women experience violence in the early years of their relationship. On the other hand, education level demonstrates a negative relation with the experience of violence. In fact, while the figure for experiencing physical and/or sexual violence in lifetime goes up to 43.3% for women who have no education or have not completed primary level, it decreases to 41.1% for women who have completed primary education, 36.7% for women who have completed secondary level 26.8% for high school graduates and 21.8% for women who have completed higher education or more. Likewise, income level and violence against women presents a negative correlation: 43.3% in low-income families, 40.1% in middle-income and 31.0% in high-income families.

In the same study, the percentage of women who have experienced *physical violence* at least once in their life is 35.5%. The most common type of physical violence is slapping or throwing objects. The density of physical violence shows significant discrepancies among regions, ranging from 27% to 43%. Violence against women is most prevalent in the Central Anatolia region.. Additionally, although the percentage of serious violence activities -activities other than slapping in the face or throwing objects- remains lower (15.5%) than minor violence activities (19.4%), those types of activities have tended to be repeated. In fact, while 43.6% of women stated that they have experienced major acts of violence (threaten with or using sharp objects or gun) for many times, the percentage of minor violence activities remains at 35.5%.

The percentage of women who have experienced *sexual violence* is 12.0. The most common type of sexual violence is unwilling sexual intercourse due to fear from possible destructive actions partners might take (8.9%). 7.4% of women reported that they had been forced to be involved in sexual intercourse. And 3.3% said that they have been forced to do something sexual they found degrading or humiliating (HÜNEE 2015: 88).

Among victims of violence, 26.9% have experienced both physical and sexual violence. This number rises up 33.7% in the North-East region. On the other hand, 66.9% of the victims reported that they have only experienced physical violence. The survey revealed that sexual violence is often experienced together with physical violence, and this tendency shows regional variety (HÜNEE 2015: 89).

The survey reveals that marital status is the most effective variable in violence against women cases. There are two striking results that need to be elaborated. The first one is that while for the never-married women (engaged or have/had a relationship) the figure for the experience of violence is 6.7%, it increases five times for currently married women (33.5%). The results for sexual violence draw a similar picture with divorced or separated women taking the top result with 44.2%, and single women having a small proportion of 1.2%.

Sexual assault is one of the most striking examples of violence against women. Since neither surveys nor official records provide any information, sexual assault cases can be traced through Bianet -a news webpage that spends extra attention to violence against women and gender equality. Bianet publishes monthly and yearly numbers of violence against women cases gathered through a detailed investigation of local and national newspapers, and other media resources. According to information retrieved from Bianet, in 2014, 109 women were raped or survived through an attempt to rape.²⁰ 35 of victims (32.11%) were girls aged 12-17, while 14 (12.84%) were non-Turkish residents, and 14 (4.5%) were disabled. 32 victims (29.36%) were forced to prostitution. Finally, 56.8% of victims were raped by men they do not know, 11.93% was raped by their current or ex-partners, and 11.93% was raped by their friends or acquaintances.

Finally, psychological violence or abuse is another type of violence experienced and reported by women. 43.9% of ever-married women reported that they had experienced psychological violence at least once, with insult or swearing of partner being the most common type (36.8%). In addition, almost one of every five ever-married women (20.3%) reported that she had been belittled, while 21.2% reported that they had been threatened by their partner. On the other hand, although it is not a classical type of violence, noting behaviours aiming to control women's lives is essential, since it is a common case in Turkey. To illustrate, 61.5% of women say that their partners always want to know where they are. While 43.4% of men get angry when they learn their wives or partners talk to another man, 33.6% interfere with women's outfit (HÜNEE 2015: 96).

The comparatively low rate of violence physical and sexual experienced by never-married women indicates that single women abstain from reporting their experiences with other sex when compared to ever-married women.

When it is compared to the previous survey conducted in 2008, in the latest study the figures for physical and sexual violence decreases two or three points, while psychological violence or abuse remains unchanged.

²⁰ Full article: <http://bianet.org/bianet/kadin/161558-erkekler-2014-te-281-kadin-oldurdu>

b. Consequences of Violence Against Women

Violence against women poses physical and psychological drawbacks that can negatively affect the lives of victims and accordingly public health in general. Consequences of violence can directly be observed if there are physical consequences, or they can indirectly reveal themselves in time as psychological cases both on victims and others in their lives.

According to the Survey on Violence against women in the Family in Turkey conducted by Hacettepe University in 2014, one out of every four ever-married women in Turkey reported physical injury as a result of physical or sexual violence. The data do not significantly differ between rural and urban areas, but there is discrepancy among regions: while the percentage of physical injury is 17.3% in the Central-East Anatolia region, it is 29.1% Istanbul. In addition, the correlation between education, income and violence, is not significant for the consequences of violence. In other words, consequences of violence are not related to women's education and income levels; all victims tend to experience similar consequences. On the other hand, there is a positive correlation between education level and reporting injuries, that is reporting injuries increases in line with the education level.

In terms of the density of consequences, 29.7% of the victims reported that they have experienced violence for five or more times, while it is five or more times for 29.7%. Furthermore, 47.4% of the victims reported that they have needed professional help for at least once (HÜNEE 2015: 125). Tezcan, et al. (2009) interpret similar findings in the previous survey as "These findings present injuries that do not occur sporadically, but happen frequently and with serious consequences."

The Ministry of Health (2014) shared the health records of 2013 in response to a parliamentary question on 'work and applications undergone in line with various aspects of the Law No. 6284'. In the response paper, it is indicated that, in 2013, 13.853 women applied to medical institutions complaining about injuries resulted from domestic violence. However, it should be noted that this number only reflects the cases when domestic violence is officially recorded, or reported by victim. As observed in surveys mentioned in this study, although confidentiality is assured, in many cases, women hesitate to make an official complaint.

The most common injury types are small scratches and scars (62%), and damages to eardrum and eyes (65%). However serious injuries are also observed. In fact, 4% of women reported burnt, another 4% reported damage in internal organs, and 12% reported gash and laceration (HÜNEE 2015: 129).

Another alarming consequence of VAW comes with the findings on pregnancy. 8.3% of the women reported that they have experienced physical violence from their spouses or partners. The ratio rises up to 10.6% in the North-East region and decreases to 6.5% in the East-Marmara region (HÜNEE 2015: 129).

In the survey, women were asked their recent psychological problems, and if they have thought about committing suicide ever. It is observed that experiencing mental problems is more common among victims of physical or sexual violence. To illustrate, while 45.3% of the women who have not experienced violence reported that they felt unhappy in the last four weeks, the number rises up to 69.5% for the victims of violence. 13.2% - which is

three times higher than women with no experience of violence - of the victims reported suicidal tendencies. Lastly, while there are various psychological consequences, besides suicide and feeling unhappy, feeling of stress, nervous and anxious, feeling exhausted often, unwillingness to handle daily activities, loss of appetite, feeling of having a stomach disease and focusing problems are other common drawbacks of violence (HÜNEE 2015: 136-8).

The study also provides figures of actual attempts to commit suicide. Accordingly, attempting to end life is five times more common among women who have experienced violence compared to women with no experience of violence (HÜNEE 2015: 136).

Without any doubt, the worrying picture of violence against women reveals itself when homicide numbers are reflected upon. Since no official information available for homicide cases, they can also be followed through Bianet. According to information retrieved from Bianet, in 2014, at least 281 women were killed and 560 women were injured by men.²¹ At least 58 (20.64%) of those who were killed, was killed because they had wanted to divorce, while 25 (8.9%) were killed since they had not been protected well by state services. Finally, 11 women were killed by men who had been brought before courts due to using violence before, but had not received any penalty. Indeed, 3.9% of women were killed by men who had committed violence, but been acquitted, condoned or under probation. These numbers indicate the severity of the threat of violence for women in Turkey.

Last but not the least, witnessing and experiencing violence indirectly have some negative impacts on children. According to the survey "The Perception on Violence against Women from Women's and Men's Perspectives", 15.5% of the victims reported that despite they have been exposed to violence, they also practice violence against others. Among these, 73.5% uses violence against their children. The two of most common justifications brought up by women is that "victims deserve it" (47.4%) and "psychological problems" (20.4%). Besides revealing the indirect consequences of violence against women on the third person, these findings support the theory that violence is a learnt behaviour (Şenol and Yıldız, 2013).

Moreover, among the children who have witnessed domestic violence, 52% are reported as having sobbing crisis; 53% are withdrawn and silent; 31% is violent against mother and other children; 33% are having nightmares often; and, 28% wet the bed; while these numbers are, respectively 35%, 42%, 17%, 28% and 22% for the children of women experiencing no domestic violence (HÜNEE 2015: 143).

Violence against women does not only have serious physical and psychological consequences on the victims, but it also generates problems in terms of public health by damaging many people's lives, and negatively affecting the well-being of the second generation. Many women report physical injuries, and even more complain about mental problems which affect their daily practices, and prevent them enjoying their lives. More importantly, the experience of violence results in women's acceptance of it as a means of communication, and using it on others in their lives as it has been practiced on them.

²¹ Full article: <http://bianet.org/bianet/kadin/161558-erkekler-2014-te-281-kadin-oldurdu>

c. Attitudes and Awareness

One of the key questions of surveys on violence against women is that if there is a valid justification of violence. The answer is asked by Altınay and Arat (2008) as follows:

“There are different opinions concerning violence and beating in the family. According to some, under no circumstances should husbands and wives act violently toward one another; in other words, according to such people, there is never a valid justification for beating. Others, however, think that in some circumstances, men can beat their wives. What are your thoughts on this matter?”

With no significant interregional differences, 89.4% of the interviewees responded no to this question. Altınay and Arat (2008) note that the result they obtained is remarkably divergent than the studies conducted 20 years ago²². The scholars emphasise that, to the extent that domestic violence has been addressed very differently than before in the public arena since the 1990s, and legal measures have been taken against it, perceptions and attitudes towards violence have accordingly changed.

In the Survey on Violence against women in the Family in Turkey women are asked their ideas about the reasons of violence they had experienced. “Problems with partner’s family” is the most common reason mentioned by victims (33%). This figure is followed by reasons related to men (being jealous of women, childhood/bringing up issues, psychological and physical problems, men’s problems with his ex/current wife) by 28%, and economic problems (financial hardships, men’s work related problems, men’s unemployment) by 27%. Lastly, 24% of women mentioned “women related reasons (disobedience, being jealous of men, refusing sexual intercourse, want for divorce/separation, forced marriage, ignoring household chores, blaming herself ” as the reason of violence. Women related reasons are mostly valid in the cases when women blame themselves (HÜNEE 2015: 149-50).

Women have the tendency to compare themselves with the situation of other women *in their circle*. This tendency also affects their toleration of violence; indeed, 8.5% of the women agree that violence can be tolerated if it is not intended for serious harm. Many women reported that when they shared their experience, they had realised that other women in their circle were also the victims of violence (Şenol and Yıldız, 2013: 38).

In terms of the *frequency*, 6.7% of the women have experienced physical violence only once in their lives; while 8.2% have experienced several times, 6.1% have experienced occasionally, 4.1% have experienced frequently, and 9.1% have no longer experienced violence. The number of women who experienced violence from their previous husbands, but not from their current husbands is nine in every 1,000 (Altınay and Arat 2008, p. 39).

The numbers are lower for the cases of sexual violence. While 0.6% of the women have experienced sexual violence only once in their lives, 3.0% have experienced several times, 5.9% have experienced occasionally, 3.2% have experienced frequently, and 1.4% have

²² Altınay and Arat (2008) mention several representative and non-representative studies, such as the one conducted by Yılmaz Esmer and his students in 1991, Leyla Guncur in 1993-94 and Family Research Institution in the same period, in which almost half of the participants agreed on the statement that violence can be rightful in some cases.

no longer experienced sexual violence. However, these figures do not reflect all cases, since 3.9% of the respondents did not answer the question (Altınay and Arat 2008: 47-8).

Another striking point is that among the women who have experienced violence at least one in their lives, 44.3% in general and 54.7% in the rural areas reported that they had never shared it with anyone before. As for those who have spoken about their experiences, the majority told about their experience to their family (37%), friends and neighbours (24%), partner's family (17.4%), and 1.4% shared with an institution unofficially (HÜNEE 2015: 154). 38.5% of victims reported that they did not receive any help from people who had witnessed or talked about women's experience of violence from their spouses or partners. In the case of witnessing or sharing incidents, women most commonly receive help from their family (19.4%). The figure is followed by men's family (9.8%), and friends and neighbours (7.8%), and 0.8% of women reported that they received help from their unofficial application to an institution (HÜNEE 2015: 156).

Regarding the *awareness of laws and political initiatives* to prevent domestic violence, women's struggle can be examined in two parts: individual struggle which covers personal standing up against bad treatment and solidarity within social circle; and, benefiting from legal and institutional mechanisms, which means being aware of and open to apply mechanisms against violence against women. At the individual level, 23.6% of the respondents said that they would not do anything if they experience violence; while 22.3% said they would respond in the same way they are treated; 33.8% said they would end their relationship and apply police or courts; 9.3% said they do not know what to do; and, 18.5% said they would seek for a solution at home (Altınay and Arat, 2008:94). This indicates that, although a significant majority of women agrees that there is no justification of violence, they are not equipped to deal with real-life presence of future violence (Altınay and Arat 2008, p. 54).

On the other hand, women remain more recessive if they are expected to intervene in others' relationships. To illustrate, 44.6% of the women indicated that they would not intervene if they have heard about their neighbour beaten up by her spouse; while 18.7% stated they would try to stop the men; and, only 13.3% said that they would call the police (Altınay and Arat, 2008: 56).

In terms of applying to legal and institutional mechanisms, the Survey on Violence against Women in the Family in Turkey presents a worrying picture of victims of violence. 89% of victims said that they did not apply any institution, while only 7% reported that they applied to the police, and 5% applied to the family court, 4% to a health institution, 3% to a prosecution office, 1% to the bar association, and 1% to the gendarme (HÜNEE 2015: 162). In the Survey (2015:163) it is argued that women have the tendency to share their experience of violence in their social circle, rather than making an office application.

Related to their official applications to institutions, victims were also asked about their awareness about the existing institutions they can apply to. Among victims, the police, shelters, gendarme, prosecution office and health institutions are the most known institutions working on the issue (86.2%, 85.2%, 73.6%, 71.1% and 70.4% respectively). These figures are followed by family court (68.8%), governorship/sub-governorship (63.6%), Ministry of Family and Social Policies and its local branches (61.0%), women's organisations (59.4%), 183 Violence Line (55.9%), bar associations (45.0%), women

consulting centres of municipalities (39.6%), and Centre for Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres (12.4%) (HÜNEE 2015: 165).

Besides institutions, women are asked about their awareness of related laws. More than 80% of women reported that they were aware of protective measures and possible penalties stated in the Law No. 6284 to Protect Family and Prevention of Violence against Women. 92% of women who are aware of the Law No. 6284 said that they learned about the law by means of media and 50% is from their friends and family. Learning at school, or from a public institution, or posters/billboards, and civil society organisations remains below 5% (HÜNEE 2015: 184).

Finally, in the survey “Violence against Women in Turkey” (Altınay and Arat 2008), women were asked about their expectations and opinions about state institutions in preventing violence against women and protecting women. Accordingly, majority of the women stated that state institutions have failed at their responsibilities, police being the most disapproved. Moreover, this situation is supported by the answers given to the question about the behaviour and attitude of police, in the Survey on Violence against Women in the Family in Turkey. In fact, 81.4% of women who had applied to the police reported that the police did not take their statements, while 2.9% said that their husbands or partners accompanied them while they were giving their statements (HÜNEE 2015: 167). More interestingly, 29.1% of victims reported that they were reconciled with their spouses or partners by the police (HÜNEE 2015: 168). On the other hand, the institutions thought to do the best job at fulfilling their responsibilities were women’s organisations (34%) and the courts (28%). Only 20% or less of respondents stated that they thought other institutions (Parliament, municipalities, the police, the gendarme, and bar associations) carried out their responsibilities (Altınay and Arat 2008: 60).

The percentage of respondents who believe that the state can prevent violence by educating men was approximately 60%, while 53% said that the state can prevent male violence by establishing shelters; by supporting organisations and associations active in this field (45%); by giving heavy sentences to offenders (45%); and by educating the police on this matter (33%). For a portion of women, percentages of which vary between 14% and 22%, these measures can prevent violence only in *some* situations. In addition, 85% of the women stated that the number of shelters was not enough, and 87% approved of having their taxes used for this purpose. Lastly, 92% of the women in Turkey would like the courts to penalise men who acted violently, while the figure is 80% for the Eastern region sample (Altınay and Arat 2008: 61).

Unfortunately, there is no information available about women who have recently seen or heard a campaign about violence against women or domestic violence.

To conclude, most promisingly, a remarkable proportion of women believe that violence is not acceptable in any circumstances. Nevertheless, their decisiveness cannot reflect itself in the real-life cases, when it comes to confronting men and/or supporting other victims. Finally, although regardless of educational and regional differences women disapprove violence, those differences become visible in terms of awareness.

6. Key measures taken against Violence against Women and Its Evolution and Impact

The major legislative measures taken against violence against women are summarised under the Section 1 – Legal reforms. In this section, other types of key measures such as the National Action Plans to combat violence against women in Turkey are outlined.

a. National Action Plans

General Directorate on the Status of Women (KSGM), to be attached later to the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, produced two National Action Plans to Combat Violence against Women for the 2007-2010 and 2012-2015 periods. The aim of the National Action Plans is to implement all necessary measures taken to prevent violence against women in collaboration with all stakeholders. While the former plan takes a limited approach regarding violence against women by referring to it in “domestic” terms, the latter plan separately emphasises domestic violence and a variety of other cases of violence against women, although it does not still make any reference to intimate-partner violence.

The first National Action Plan (2007-2010) sets six goals as follows:

- 1) To initiate legal measures and recover failures of execution in gender equality and to combat domestic violence against women,
- 2) To demolish adverse attitudes and behaviours causing and promoting domestic violence, to raise awareness and change sets of minds about gender equality and domestic violence against women,
- 3) To initiate and implement legal measures to strengthen socio-economic position of women,
- 4) To provide and conduct accessible protective measures to women and their children experiencing VAW,
- 5) To provide rehabilitation services for the victims and perpetrators of VAW,
- 6) To set up an inter-sectoral co-operation mechanism among organisations providing services for the victims of domestic violence and their children.

In order to determine failures, the activities planned and initiated in this plan have mostly focused on research on existing practices. Additionally, measures aiming to increase the employability of women, such as skills training and consulting, as well as financial support mechanisms to promote female entrepreneurship are established. Activities aiming gender empowerment are followed at educational level by awareness-raising campaigns, as well as imposing sanctions on ones who prevent their children completing compulsory primary education. In terms of protective measures, the Plan takes attention to the quantity and quality of shelters, and encourages local administration units to take measures together with civil society organisations working on the same issue. Another protective measure is establishing a violence complaint line for immediate help. A free telephone line “ALO 183 Violence Line” was established in 2007 in line with the Plan. Last but not the least, the Plan assumes some treatment and rehabilitation mechanisms. For this end, domestic violence is planned to be considered as a health condition, and special units are intended to be established in hospitals. However, although psychological support is provided in trauma centres of medical schools, this plan has not been fully realised. In order to realise these goals, the Plan assumes co-operation of the General Directorate with Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs, Ministry of

Education, Council of Higher Education, Turkish Labour Agency, Ministry of Health, local governments, private sector and civil society organisations.

The second National Action Plan (2012-2015) sets more practical and result-oriented goals. The Plan aims to “implement necessary measures with the cooperation of all parties in order to eliminate all kinds of violence against women in the country” (p. 20). The goals of the National Action Plan are identified as follows:

1. To make legal arrangements regarding gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence and eliminate the problems of implementation,
2. To create social awareness and ensure a mentality change regarding gender equality and violence against women in order to eliminate negative attitudes and behaviours that produce and perpetuate violence against women,
3. To arrange and implement health services for the women victims of violence, for their children (if exists) and for those who perpetrate violence or has the potential to perpetrate violence,
4. To strengthen the inter-organisational/inter-institutional and inter-sectorial cooperation mechanisms in order to ensure service provision for women who are exposed to violence and their children if exists.

The second National Action Plan employs the targets set in the first Plan, but along with domestic violence, it adds the terms gender equality and violence against women into its area of focus. The Plan states that regulations with zero tolerance to violence should be initiated as soon as possible. Accordingly, on 20.03.2012 Law No. 6284 to Protect Family and Prevention of Violence against Women was enacted. Secondly, as a protective measure, the number of shelters and the services they provide are planned to be increased. Later, it is announced that at least one shelter is going to be established in each province. Moreover, free day-care services are going to be provided for residents of those shelters. Additionally, to prevent violence and ensure effective implementation of protective and preventive measures, Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres (ŞÖNİM) are established. ŞÖNİMs are still in trial period and have successfully been implemented in 14 provinces. ŞÖNİMs function as a first stage unit for victims of violence against women. Besides victim support services, ŞÖNİMs provide rehabilitation and anger management services for the perpetrators of violence. Finally, as promoted in the Plan, the Law No. 6284 presents electronic support services for some cases. This project has been implemented in two cities (Adana and Bursa) for the time being. By 8 March 2014, this number has increased to 4 with the application of electronic bracelet mechanisms that can watch both victims and perpetrators in Ankara and Izmir.²³ To conclude, the National Action Plan of 2012-2015 suggests more concrete measures, ensured by the new law in the following period. More measures have been taken by the state agencies in the 2012-2015 period.

Nevertheless, a report²⁴ prepared in 2014 by Purple Roof Association points some problems in implementation. These problems are listed as follows:

²³ Up to date information is obtained through the contributions made by the experts of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

²⁴ Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı (2014), 6284 Sayılı Kanun Uygulamaları İzleme Raporu. Available online (in Turkish) at: <https://www.morcati.org.tr/tr/yayinlarimiz/izleme-raporlari/255-6284-sayili-kanun-uygulamalari-izleme-raporu>

- The lack of enough knowledge, or indifference of male support personnel (police officer, social service worker etc.) about the issue,
- The judgemental and/or unwilling attitude of male support personnel,
- The discouraging suggestions of male support personnel (providing insufficient information, saying nothing is going to change etc.),
- Problems about confidentiality,
- Non-functioning of private house provision services in necessary conditions (i.e. if victim has a son aged over 12, or a disabled child),
- Difficulties that non-Turkish victims face,
- Forced conciliation mechanism,
- Hardships that women face in physically accessing ŞÖNİMs especially in big cities,
- Centrality of support mechanisms (ŞÖNİMs are established as central institutions. If a women demands shelter service, for instance, she first has to apply a ŞÖNİM, and then the ŞÖNİM directs her to a police station, only after police station she can be settled to a shelter).

As it is seen, despite the legal measures, problems related to the implementation, especially those related to the attitudes and values of the implementation personnel, pose a significant obstacle for the victims of violence against women in benefiting from their rights provided by the legal instruments. Additionally, the introduction of new institutions causes more bureaucratic difficulties in some cases. All these problems hinder the realisation of targets set within the context of the National Action Plans.

b. Complaints of intimate partner violence brought to court

Since it is not disaggregated separately, intimate partner violence cannot be monitored. Therefore, no data is available on intimate partner violence.

c. Free Legal Aid

Judicial assistance is provided to everyone who cannot afford following or applying courts as a precondition for the principle of rightful, legal jurisdiction. Judicial assistance includes exemption from fees and other costs, as well as the appointment of a free of charge lawyer.²⁵ Furthermore, women's rights commissions at Bar Associations provide free legal services. Finally, Centre for Judicial Support to women (KAHDEM), serves free of charge for all cases of the violation of women's human rights.²⁶

d. National Level Awareness-Raising Campaigns

There are several national level awareness-raising campaigns that are currently carried out by state agencies and CSOs. In order to present one example from each category, the following are four examples of these campaigns chosen in accordance with a categorisation, namely, women's organisations (directly) struggling against violence against women, women's organisations indirectly contributing to struggle against violence against women, other civil society organisations contributing to struggle against violence against women, and ad hoc organisations. Although it is mentioned as another category of

²⁵ Ministry of Justice (No date available), Adli Yardım El Kitabı.
<http://www.hukukiyaritim.gov.tr/sayfalar/AdliYardim.pdf>

²⁶ A detailed information on the services of KAHDEM can be found at the official webpage of the organisation at http://www.kahdem.org.tr/?page_id=4

organisations in this report, an example from gender and women studies at universities will not be provided here, since several examples are mentioned in the sections on population surveys, trainings and toolkits.

Let's Say Stop (Dur Diyelim): The campaign is initiated by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies right after the brutal murder of Özgecan Aslan in February 2015. The motto of the campaign is "We will not be mere spectators of violence against women, we will do our share of work". A web page (<http://durdiyelim.com>) is set up for the campaign to enable politicians, celebrities and public figures sharing supportive videos on the issue. Also, the campaign is supported in the social media by starting a page on Facebook, initiating the hashtag #durdiyelim on Twitter and sharing videos on Vimeo. Finally, a collage of videos of politicians and celebrities has been shown on different TV channels as a public spot. The aim of the campaign is to demonstrate the state support behind the campaigns to combat violence against women, and show the decisiveness of the government for initiating measures. Since it uses social media and television, the campaign manages to reach almost all parts of the society which makes it one of the most comprehensive and wide-spread campaigns in its league.

Be a Man First! (Önce Adam Ol!): The Campaign is organised by Women and Democracy Association (KADEM) for the celebration of 25th of November - International Day against Violence against Women, of which the Association was the host of 2014. The organisation is founded by Sümeyye Erdoğan, the daughter of the Head of the Republic of Turkey. The association is in close relations with the government and state agencies. The motto of the campaign is that "one who beats a woman is not a man". The Campaign has a short video dramatising the exclusion of a man who beats his wife from the society. The video is broadcasted on TV and posters of campaign are demonstrated in public areas. The campaign is one of the most visible ongoing national awareness-raising campaigns run by a women's organisation²⁷. (For the short video and more, see <http://kadem.org.tr/once-adam-ol-kampanyasi-tanitim-filmi/>)

End Violence within Family (Aile İçi Şiddete Son): The campaign is launched by Hürriyet -a nation-wide daily newspaper- and supported by Aralık Association -a women's organisation-, Penti -a private textile brand-, and CNNTURK -a media company. In 2015, Hürriyet gave up carrying out the campaign and delegated it over to the Confederation of Turkish Women's Associations. The campaign is actively working on any kinds of domestic violence and forced marriage of young girls -child brides- since 2004. The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness on domestic violence; to create social sensitivity; to help changing attitudes; and, to contribute to the political processes addressing the issue. In 2007, as part of the campaign, a help line was introduced to provide immediate consultancy to victims of violence against women. Since 2007, the help line is used by 42,240 victims, and 15,674 victims of violence against women were assisted. The campaign is important, because, besides national awareness-raising, it takes immediate measures and physically helps victims of violence against women. Moreover, it is one of the long-lasting campaigns in combating violence against women in Turkey. (For more information, please check <http://aileicisiddeteson.com>).

²⁷ This campaign is included here, since it uses media effectively to reach a wide range of society. However, it is also important to state that the campaign is criticised by women's organisations and journalists defending women's right due to its masculine rhetoric. For more see <http://t24.com.tr/yazarlar/yilmaz-murat-bilican/adam-olma-degerleriyle-kadini-korumak,10715> , <http://erktolia.org/once-adam-olmana-gerek-yok-siddet-uygulama-yeter/>

Platform to End Violence (Şiddete Son Platformu): The Platform brings together 270 women's and LGBT associations to take attention to the changes made in the Turkish Penal Code. The Platform is active since 2011. It has been organising demonstrations and publishing statements on the issue. The major claim of the Platform is that while there are significant aggravations in penalties for some cases, no change has been made for the cases of violence against women. Although the changes at Turkish Penal Code were finalised, the Platform has continued its activities whenever there are discussions on legal practices, or incidents of violence against women in Turkey. The platform and its activities are important, because it brings a great number of Civil Society Organisations together. Also, it takes attention to legal deficiencies, and voices legal demands of women. (For a list of news about the activities of the platform see <http://www.bianet.org/konu/siddete-son-platformu>)

7. Training

References to a variety of training programmes can be found in the National Action Plan for 2012-2015 under the title of awareness-raising and changing perspectives towards gender. The objectives for the trainings are indicated as follows:

- To ensure co-operation in providing trainings and seminars for public organisations, local governments, trade unions, universities, professional organisations, media and representatives of civil society organisations, in order to facilitate the transfer of the gender, and combating against VAW and domestic violence into state plans, policies and programmes,
- To provide visual and printed materials for policy and decision-makers, service providers and general public, in an effort to raising awareness and changing perspectives towards gender equality and violence against women,
- To organise seminars, trainings, conferences etc. for men,
- To include informative aspects to education materials, and review the existing ones to identify gendered statements,
- To prepare and deliver informative materials about gender equality, violence against women and health and reproduction for couples before marriage,
- To prepare media programmes for the radio and television channels, and to identify the existing ones,
- To include gender equality, violence against women and domestic violence topics in the course materials at under graduate and graduate studies, especially at the medical and social sciences departments.

Moreover, in the Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women, training is deemed necessary for the public personnel such as judges, and police force, who are engaged in related services.,

Lastly, prior to the Law No. 6284, the Circular No. 2006/17 on Measures taken against Violence against Women and Children and Honour Killings is initiated in 2006 which also lays the base for the new Law. The Circular takes attention to the necessity of training of service providers not only to train them about legal procedures but also to eliminate

operational hardship, especially due to the discouraging attitudes. Related to the Circular, the Protocol on the Project of Training about Procedures and Role of Police in the Prevention of Violence against Women is enacted. In line with the protocol, trainings for police officers are organised. The trainings are implemented at two levels. At the first level, 270 trainers were trained for further trainings. At the second level, these trainers were sent to each city and 40,400 police officers have been trained (KSGM, 2008a).²⁸ Furthermore, a second protocol is agreed on the training of health personnel in 2008. The Protocol followed the same procedure with the former, and conducted its processes at two stages (KSGM 2008b).²⁹ At the end of the project 60.000 health staff is trained (KSGM 2011a).³⁰ By this way, besides training personnel, experts for further projects were prepared. Similar projects were carried out for judicial staff in line with the Protocol on the Project about Procedures and Role of Judicial Personnel in the Prevention of Violence against Women in 2009, for religious staff in accordance with the Protocol on the Project about the Contribution of Religious Officials in the Prevention of Violence against Women in 2010, for gendarmerie following the Protocol on the Project about Increasing the Institutional Capacity of and Co-operation and Co-ordination with Gendarmerie in the Prevention of Violence Against Women in 2012.³¹ Finally, in line with the statement in the Circular No. 2006/17 that is "Gender equality trainings must universally be assured for the employees at all public institutions, universities and private sector organisations.", training programmes were carried out for the staff of Turkish Radio and Television Institution (TRT), Public Training Centres and Provincial Directorates of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, women's shelters and social services (KSGM 2010, 2013). At the end of the projects 326 judicial personnel, 748 personnel from Public Training Centres (KSGM 2010)³², and 2018 personnel from Provincial social services and directorates of education (KSGM 2011b)³³ are trained. Unfortunately, the results of the trainings for the personnel of other institutions are not available. Later on, with the National Action Plan for 2012-2015, the trainings have been extended for ŞÖNİM (Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres) personnel.

The main public actor working on gender equality and violence against women related trainings is the General Directorate on the Women's Status at the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs, which is responsible for operating governmental policies and measures on gender equality issues among various other contributors, such as academia and civil society organisations. A list of trainings provided by the Foundation for Women's Solidarity (KDV) is as follows.

- In 1993, KSGM signed a protocol entitled "Improve and Support Training and Research on Women's Issues" with the Middle East Technical University Gender and Women Studies Graduate Programme (METU-GWS). Within this protocol, METU-GWS prepared and realised three training courses for developing gender sensitivity for security personnel and reducing domestic violence against women in 1998-1999. The target group of those trainings were the Police Departments in three Turkish cities

²⁸ For the full report see <http://kadininstatusu.aile.gov.tr/data/54295027369dc32358ee2bb4/6.pdf>

²⁹ For the full report see <http://kadininstatusu.aile.gov.tr/data/54295027369dc32358ee2bb4/8.pdf>

³⁰ For the full report see <http://kadininstatusu.aile.gov.tr/data/54295027369dc32358ee2bb4/18.pdf>

³¹ For the list and content of protocols and activity reports see <http://kadininstatusu.gov.tr/uygulamalar/kadina-yonelik-siddetle-mucadele>

³² For the full report see <http://kadininstatusu.aile.gov.tr/data/54295027369dc32358ee2bb4/17.pdf>

³³ for the full report see <http://kadininstatusu.aile.gov.tr/data/54295027369dc32358ee2bb4/20.pdf>

(Diyarbakır, Trabzon and Ankara), as well as one for the Police Academy students in Ankara (Acar et al., 2006, p. 72).

- In 2012, a protocol on both parents' better domestic training on gender equality was signed with the Mother-Child Education Association (AÇEV). As a preliminary process, AÇEV provided trainings for 81 Ministry and 15 ŞÖNİM directors. Afterwards, the trainings were repeated for 100 more Ministry personnel. Finally, in Gaziantep, one of the pilot cities, 27 mothers and 26 fathers were trained as supportive specialists, and started to conduct further trainings (KSGM 2013).³⁴
- “The Project for Strengthening Mechanisms to Prevent Violence in Co-operation with Local Partners” was conducted by local organisations -İzmir Women's Solidarity Association, Adana Women's Consulting Centre and Association for Shelter House Protection (AKDAM)- under the supervision of the Foundation for Women's Solidarity (KDV). For the project, the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs was the major beneficiary and the European Union financed the project. The project has been designed for the 1 February 2014 – 31 April 2015 period, and aimed to strengthen the capacities of the participant organisations by providing trainings for their members.³⁵ For this end, 25 members from each organisation are trained. Furthermore, seven members are trained to be trainers. Later on, the trainees provided free psychological and judicial assistance to victims at Women Solidarity Centres. Finally, in order to raise awareness, home meetings were organised for women (KDV, 2014).
- “Women's Human Rights Training Programme (KIHEP)” was directed by Women for Women's Human Rights - New Ways (WWHR) in co-ordination with Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK), and Sabancı Foundation as the donor. The idea of the project stems from a research conducted by the WWHR between 1994 and 1996 in Istanbul, Ankara, East and South-East Anatolia, which revealed two striking results: women's unawareness of their rights and not benefiting from them. KIHEP is actively carried out since 1996. Similar to other programmes, in KIHEP, first local trainers were prepared for independent activities in their constituencies, and later accompanied by WWHR professionals for several months, they started working with women in the field. The programme focused on 15 themes, such as human rights, constitutional and civil rights, violence against women and domestic violence, strategies against violence, economic rights, gender roles-sensitive children education, women and sexuality, women and reproduction rights, etc. Following the training, 63% of the participants noted that the violence they experience ended, and 22% said it decreased. Moreover, amelioration of emotional and economic situation of women had been reported. 54% reported that they returned to education, while 29% were employed in a paid job and 13% started her own business. The project has then been conducted by the WWHR in many cities.³⁶

Lastly, in shelters, vocational trainings are provided for women to rebuilt their capacities and skills, and facilitative their access to labour market.

³⁴ For the full report see <http://kadininstatusu.gov.tr/uygulamalar/kadina-yonelik-siddetle-mucadele>

³⁵ For more about the project see <http://www.kadindayanismavakfi.org.tr/2014-devam-etmekte-yerel-isbirlikleri-araciligiyla-siddetle-mucadele-mekanizmalarinin-quclendirilmesi>

³⁶ For more about the programme see <http://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/programlar/kihep/kihep-nedir/>

To conclude, the examples provided above shed light to main actors, target groups and content of trainings on violence against women. A considerable amount of trainings is provided by public and civil organisations for the police, social service workers, individual trainers, and personnel of related public institutions and civil society organisations, as well as for ordinary women and men who can be exposed to or involved in violence. The trainings aim to provide expertise for the trainers on the issue and raise general awareness. The content of trainings ranges from legal procedures, rights and responsibilities, parental responsibilities in domestic trainings on gender, to psychological assistance and rehabilitation, and vocational training.

8. Victim support services

Regarding the opening and strengthening institutional capacities of victim support services, such as shelters, community houses, Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres (ŞÖNİMs), are included in the National Action Plan, Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence against Women, and Municipal Law No.5393. Support services for victims, their children and rehabilitation of perpetrators are included in the National Action Plan within the context of the medium and long-term targets. Moreover, the provision of psychological assistance for professionals in the cases of burn-out and secondary trauma stress is mentioned. Both laws point out to the necessity of shelters and other services not only to provide a place to stay for the victims, but also to support them in their recovery process. The Law No. 5393 deems each municipality whose population is 100.000 or more responsible of opening shelters for women and children. Furthermore, the Law No. 6284 specifically states that support services operate for both protection and prevention purposes. Some examples of those services can be summarised as follows.

Firstly, in 2013, ŞÖNİMs have been presented as the main institutions for the support purposes by the General Directorate of the Status of Women (KSGM). In detail, the Law No. 6284 lists the responsibilities of ŞÖNİM towards the victims as:

- Managing applications for protection, and co-ordinating other services provided by various actors on the same issue,
- Providing consultancy on rights, support mechanisms, employment and other issues, and encouraging them attending vocational training courses,
- Assisting to solve psycho-sociological and economic problems.

And the responsibilities of ŞÖNİM towards the perpetrators are:

- Providing training and rehabilitation on anger management, coping with stress and violence,
- Assisting to get help from health centres in the cases of drug and alcohol addiction,
- Encouraging attending vocational training courses, if necessary.

Rather than being a service provider, ŞÖNİMs work as consultancy co-ordination units (KSGM 2013). Moreover, since they are appointed as central units, they collect and provide data on the issue. According to the information provided by KSGM (2013) as a

part of a pilot project in 14 cities in 2013, 10.825 women, 257 men and 1.129 children benefited from ŞÖNİMs. By the beginning of 2016, the number of ŞÖNİMs have increased to 40, and 60.522 women, 5.126 men and 84.100 children have benefited from their services.³⁷ The reasons for applying are listed as: experiencing violence (47%), demand for shelter (33%), consultancy (16%) and other related reasons (4%). 75% of the victims are guided by law enforcement, while the figures are 5% for public institutions, 4% for judicial institutions, 1% for denunciation, and 15% for individual applications (KSGM 2013).

ŞÖNİMs are good examples of victim support services in several aspects. Firstly, they include support not only for the victims, but also for the perpetrators, which enables them going deep in addressing problems. Secondly, they control and co-ordinate other state agencies, which can be considered as a promising step for the elimination of application problems, and standardisation of the quality of services. Lastly, ŞÖNİMs cover the lack of public institutions for providing information about violence against women. Nevertheless, as it is noted before, the intention of centralising services in one body brings some problems in terms of flexibility (Mor Çatı, 2011; Mor Çatı, 2014). In other words, victims are made to shuttle between institutions in their most vulnerable times when immediate action is needed.

Secondly, as it is the case in many countries, shelters provide the most needed help for victims, who need security and protection for themselves and their children (KSGM 2013). Shelters provide temporary assistance for victims of physical, sexual, economic and verbal violence together with their children to protect them from further violence, solve psycho-social and economic problems, and prepare them for a fresh start (KSGM 2013). The standard residence period in shelters is 6 months, but it can be extended if necessary. By August 2015, country-wide, there are 130 shelters (95 attached to the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, 3 belonging to civil society organisations and 32 run by the municipalities), with a total accommodation capacity of 3.354 people³⁸. By January 2016, country-wide, this number has increased to 135 shelters (100 attached to the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, 4 belonging to civil society organisations and 31 run by the municipalities), with a total accommodation capacity of 3.404 people.³⁹ However, this figure does correspond neither to CEDAW standards nor actual needs. In CEDAW, it is indicated that cities whose population is over 10.000 must have at least 1 shelter, those over 50.000 must have at least one consultancy centre, and those over 20.000 must have at least one sexual assault trauma centres. Measures taken in Turkey fall short of meeting these numbers. The current number of shelters in Turkey corresponds only one sixty-third of the required number (Milliyet 2013). Furthermore, a report prepared by Mor Çatı Foundation (2011, 2014) presents that conditions in shelters are not compatible with the standards, and do not serve for their purpose. For example, the staff in shelters is not sufficiently informed about their legal responsibilities, and about the opportunities for women in cities for a fresh beginning. In addition, confidentiality problems can be encountered, which put victims in danger. Many women reported that they cannot leave shelters, since perpetrators know where they stay (Mor Çatı, 2011). Women older than 62 are not accepted to shelters but are directed to the General Directorate for Person with Disabilities and Elderly Services of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. Women with

³⁷ Up to date information is obtained through the contributions made by the experts of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

³⁸ <http://kadininstatusu.aile.gov.tr/uygulamalar/turkiyede-kadin>.

³⁹ Up to date information is obtained through the contributions made by the experts of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

a son older than 15 can experience difficulties in receiving services (Mor Çatı, 2011).. Lastly, women say that in shelters, personnel have the tendency to interpret incidents by putting victims in the centre rather than the perpetrator, which make women feel disgraced. In short, besides being numerically insufficient, shelters seem to lag behind of providing protective and supportive services in the way they are supposed to be provided due to the unawareness or lack of knowledge of their personnel.

As a civil society organisation, Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation works for providing consultancy and a secure environment for the victims of violence. Since its foundation in 1990, Mor Çatı has provided social, judicial and psychological consultancy for over 35.000 women and children. Moreover, it provided shelter for 379 women and 453 children. In the Mor Çatı Shelter duration of residence is arranged in accordance to the needs of women in a way to give each woman the support they need for a fresh start. Moreover, in order to prevent sexual discrimination, male children of victims from every age are accepted in the shelter. Mor Çatı welcomes women from every age and group in its shelter. Last but not the least, personnel in the shelter are trained by Mor Çatı experts (Mor Çatı, 2015). Therefore, since it is organised to meet the needs of each resident, Mor Çatı Shelter is a good practice when compared to other shelters.

Finally, both KSGM (2014) and Mor Çatı (2015) reports show that legal advice is one of the most demanded support services in women's combat against violence. Women often seek for legal advice and free judicial support to end their ties with the perpetrator and receive a protection order. Both of the victim support services mentioned above provide legal assistance; however there is one project, Gelincik Project, that serves specifically for this purpose since 2011.

Gelincik Project is run by the experienced lawyers of Ankara Bar Association, who work on children and women rights for a long time. Besides judicial support, the project assists victims in finding shelters and jobs. The project has a free of charge telephone line (Gelincik Line- Gelincik Hattı) for women to reach them 7/24 whenever they need. Women, who cannot reach the Centre by their own means, are picked up by a private car accompanied by a women lawyer. Following the first meeting, victim is taken to medical jurisprudence. Afterwards, all necessary legal measures are taken and followed by the lawyers of Ankara Bar Association. In case victim does not wish to go back to her home, she is taken to shelters in co-operation. If the shelter does not have any available place, women are placed in a temporary guest house or hotel. Until the end of the case, lawyers support victims. By March 2014, Gelincik Line is called by 25.000 victims, and 2.923 women applied to the Gelincik Centre in person. 2.418 lawyer appointments have been made by the Centre, while 520 women have been placed in shelters and 210 women have been ensured to receive psychological support. Gelincik Centre works with 40 expert and 350 voluntary lawyers (Ankara Barosu, 2014). Gelincik Project is a good example of legal support mechanisms, since it supports women through the whole legal process, and also undertakes their protection by helping them to find a shelter.

In conclusion, the quality, accessibility and quantity still being in question, physical, psychological and legal victim support services are provided in Turkey. Legal measures support further enhancement of these services, and plans are made in that direction. Although there are some good examples, they remain geographically limited. And the countrywide practices, such as shelters, fall short of addressing the needs of victims.

9. Civil Society Organisations working with VAW in Turkey

Civil Society Organisations working with violence against women in Turkey can be categorised as follows:

- women's organisations (directly) struggling against violence against women,
- women's organisations indirectly contributing to struggle against violence against women,
- other civil society organisations contributing to struggle against violence against women,
- gender and women's studies at universities,
- ad hoc organisations.

A list of those types of CSOs in Turkey can be found in Annex.

10. Toolkits

1. General Directorate of the Status of Women (KSGM). (2015). Brochure for combating against violence in the family (*Aile İçi Şiddetle Mücadele Broşürü*). Ankara: KSGM

The booklet contains information about legal rights of women in struggling against violence against women, Istanbul Convention, Law no. 6284 and state services for the victims. It also provides sample petitions for women to facilitate the filing process to the courts. It contains information on protective and preventive measures, and the institutions combatting VAW.

Website: A copy of the brochure is available at

<http://kadininstatusu.aile.gov.tr/data/542a8e86369dc31550b3ac33/KADINA%20YÖN%20ŞİD.pdf>

2. Purple Roof Women's Shelter Association (Date unknown). Coping with Male Violence: Training Manual for Social Workers and Volunteers (*Erkek Şiddetiyle Başa Çıkmak: Sosyal Çalışmacı ve Gönüllü Kitabı*). Istanbul: Purple Roof Women's Shelter Association

The manual aims to help social workers and activists in their struggle against violence against women. The manual contains experiences of the members of the Purple Roof Association, and the lessons they had learnt.

Website: <https://www.morcati.org.tr/tr/yayinlarimiz/kitaplar/259-erkek-siddeti-ile-basacikmak-sosyal-calismaci-ve-gonullu-el-kitabi>

3. Ertükel, Dilek; Kendirci, Sema; Kezer, İmran; Somuncuoğlu, Sevna. (2014). Girls Are Children Too!: Training manual (*Kız Çocukları da Çocuktur!: Eğitici El Kitabı*). Ankara: Turkish Women's Consortium.

The booklet is prepared for the training project Girls Are Children Too!. The booklet is used at workshops provided for women on the damages of early-age marriage of girls. The booklet provides information about gender equality and legal rights, secure areas for girls, early and forced marriages, and advocacy and lobbying activities.

Website: Information about project can be found at

<http://www.turkkadinlarbirligi.org/allnews/null/0/233/KIZ+ÇOCUKLARI+DA+ÇOCUKTUR!>

4. Kıdık Örucü, Tülay. 2013. Handbook for women's rights (*Kadının Hakları El Kitabı*). Ankara: Ankara Bar Association.

The handbook contains practical information for women about their legal right when they face any type of violence from their family or society in general, their position as a mother and women in marriage, and rights during and after divorce. It also provides petition samples for complaints.

Website: A copy of the handbook is available at

<http://www.ankarabarusu.org.tr/Siteler/2012yayin/2011sonrasikitap/kadin-haklari-el-kitabi-2013.pdf>

5. Ankara Bar Association. 2012. Booklet for the police for the women and child victims of violence. (*Şiddet Maduru Kadın ve Çocuklarla İlgili Polis El Kitabı*). Ankara: Ankara Bar Association.

The booklet provides legal definitions and practices, with a clear language, related to violence against women and children. The booklet is prepared for the police.

Website: A copy of the booklet can be found at

<http://www.ankarabarusu.org.tr/Siteler/2012yayin/2011sonrasikitap/polis-el-kitabi.pdf>

6. The Foundation for Women's Solidarity (KDV). 2008. Violence against Women: Training manual (*Kadına Yönelik Şiddet El Kitabı*). Ankara: The Foundation for Women's Solidarity.

The manual is prepared as part of the Project for Raising Awareness for Violence Against Women and Promoting Local Co-operation in Central Anatolia Region. The project aims to bring together women's organisation working on violence against women and train the personnel in local administrations, in order to facilitate the activities of organisations and also make them more attentive to the issue. To that end, besides providing information about national and international legal mechanisms, the manual presents definitions and explanations of certain related concepts, such as gender, equality, violence (against women), domestic violence and honour killings.

Website: A direct link to the booklet is available at

<http://www.kadindayanismavakfi.org.tr/dosyalar/2008-Kadına-Yönelik-Şiddet-El-Kitabı.pdf>

7. General Directorate of the Status of Women (KSGM). (2008). Booklet for combating against violence in the family (*Aile İçi Şiddetle Mücadele El Kitabı*). Ankara: KSGM

The booklet contains information about legal rights of women in struggling against violence against women, and state services for the victims. It also provides sample petitions for women to facilitate the filing process to the courts.

Website: A copy of the booklet is available at
http://kadininstatusu.aile.gov.tr/data/542a8e0b369dc31550b3ac30/siddet_handbook.pdf

8. Alkan, Ayten. 2006. Municipality serves for women too: Women friendly municipality services: Why, How? (*Belediye kadınlara da hizmet eder: Kadın dostu belediye hizmetleri: Neden, nasıl?*) Ankara: KA.DER [Association for the Support and Training of Women Candidates].

The booklet aims to represent the role of municipalities in eliminating gender inequalities. The booklet, provides information about women friendly services, including shelters, at local level, and shares this information with municipality personnel through training and workshops. Moreover, in order to facilitate women's participation to local governments, workshops on gender empowerment are organised with women.

Website: A copy of the booklet can be reached via
<http://www.kaderankara.org.tr/dokumanlar-PDF/belediyekadinlarada.pdf>

9. Sancar Üşür, Serpil, Selma Acuner, İlknur Üstün, Aksu Bora, and Lara Romaniuc. 2006. Another point of view: gender inequality is not a 'woman issue' but a societal problem (*Bir de buradan bak: Cinsiyet eşitsizliği bir 'kadın sorunu değil', toplumun sorunudur*). Ankara: KA.DER [Association for the Support and Training of Women Candidates].

This booklet is prepared specifically for the use of UNDP personnel—developmental project developers and project executives and also aims to be used by public officials and policy-makers to acquire gender awareness and related skills.

Website: A direct link to the booklet is available at
<http://www.kaderankara.org.tr/dokumanlar-PDF/birdeburadanbak.pdf>

10. Işık, Nazik. 2004. The guideline on CEDAW for women and women's organizations (*Kadınlar ve kadın kuruluşları için kadınlara karşı her türlü ayrımcılığın önlenmesi sözleşmesi ve ihtiyari protokol "başvuru el kitabı"*). Ankara: Uçan Süpürge [Flying Broom].

This manual was prepared to be a guide for women who cannot solve their problems within the existing Turkish legislation and need to use the CEDAW procedure in order to secure their vested rights. This basic guidebook aims to help all women and women's NGOs fighting against violence towards women.

Website: No web pages are available for this booklet.

11. İlkaracan, İpek, Pınar İlkaracan, Filiz Kerestecioğlu, Zülal Kılıç, Ferhan Özenen, and Gülşah Seral. 1998, 2001. Women's Human Rights Training: Training Manual (*Kadının insan hakları eğitimi: Eğitici el kitabı*). İstanbul: Women for Women's Human Rights-New Ways.

The Human Rights Education Program for Women (KIHEP) was developed in 1995 by WWHR-New Ways to combat against violations of women's human rights and violence against women in Turkey. In this context, this book is a manual for gender trainers working within the project.

Website: A brief information about the booklet is available at <http://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/kadinin-insan-haklari-egitimi-egitici-el-kitabi-1998-turkce/>

12. Bora, Aksu. 2000. Realizing our power: A guideline for workshop with women (*Gücümüzü farketmek: Kadınlarla grup çalışması için rehber*). Ankara: Ankara University Research and Implementation Centre on the Problems of Women (KASAUM).

This guide aims to promote gender awareness and encourage women to participate into politics. It is specifically used to raise consciousness among women and to strengthen women's position in the society.

Website: The booklet is published and used by the Association for the Support and Training of Women Candidates- KA.DER in their workshops. An online copy is provided by KA.DER at <http://kaderankara.org.tr/dokumanlar-PDF/gucumuzufarketmek.pdf>

13. WAVE Training Programme on Combating Violence against Women. 2000. WAVE Office: Austrian Women's Shelter Network

The training manual is designed for use in training and further training courses for professionals in various fields, in Europe and Turkey. The manual contains basic information and training material relating to the issue of violence against women in intimate relationships, and specific modules for law enforcement, judicial, medical, psycho-social professionals.

Website: More information and a link for downloading the manual is available at <http://www.wave-network.org/content/wave-training-programme-combating-violence-against-women-0>

14. Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) – New Ways. 2001-2013. Our reproductive rights! (*Doğurganlık haklarımız var!*). İstanbul: Women's Human Rights New Ways.

The text is comprised of information on methods of birth control, abortion and infertility, and cautions women on the need to be aware of and to demand information about their potential effects on their health. Women for Women's Human Rights-New Ways series entitled Our Rights! constitutes part of the organisation's efforts to render laws accessible for all and to do this with a rights perspective. In this series aiming to be understandable by all, publications utilize very simple language and are rich in terms of visual material. The booklets in this series are also used by the women participating in the WWHR-New Ways has been carrying out in 44 cities in cooperation with the General Directorate of Social Services since 1998.

Website: A Turkish version of the booklet can available at
http://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/static/yayin/eyayin/index.php?p_id=2&id=5

15. Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) – New Ways. 2001-2013. Our sexual rights! (*Cinselliğimiz var!*). İstanbul: Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) – New Ways.

Our Sexual Rights! highlights the fact that a healthy and happy sexual life is everyone's right. The booklet aims to help women to prevail over the negative social prejudices and pressures on issues related to women's sexuality and to discover and enjoy of their sexuality. WWHR-New Ways series entitled Our Rights! constitutes part of WWHR's efforts to render laws accessible for all and to do this with a rights perspective. In this series aiming to be understandable by all, publications utilise a simple language and are rich in terms of visual material. The booklets in this series are also used by the women participating in the Women's Human Rights Education Program WWHR has been carrying out in 44 cities in cooperation with the General Directorate of Social Services since 1998.

Website: A Turkish version of the latest edition of the booklet can be reached via
http://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/static/yayin/eyayin/index.php?p_id=2&id=14

16. Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) – New Ways. 2001-2013. Our rights! (*Haklarımız var!*) İstanbul: ERA Publication Services.

WWHR-New Ways series entitled Our Rights! constitutes part of the NGOs efforts to render laws accessible for all and to do this with a rights perspective. In this series, which aim to be user friendly; publications use simple, clear language and are rich in terms of visual material. The booklets in this series are also used by the women participating in the Women's Human Rights Education Program WWHR, which has been conducted in 44 cities in cooperation with the General Directorate of Social Services since 1998. Our Rights! elaborates some basic rights gained with the enforcement of the legal provisions on the issue.

Webpage: A Turkish version of the latest edition of the booklet can be reached via
http://www.kadinininsanhaklari.org/static/yayin/eyayin/index.php?p_id=2&id=6

17. Üşür Sancar, Serpil. 2000. Training manual -against gender discrimination in political organisations (*Siyasal örgütlerde cinsiyetçiliğe karşı eğitim rehberi*).Ankara University Research and Implementation Centre on the Problems of Women-KASAUM.

The objective of this guide is to explain the significance of gender equality to women working in political organisations. This manual offers also some training activities for women working in political organisations, in order to recruit them with information and steps taken for gender empowerment at workplaces.

Webpage: A copy of the training manual can be reached via
<http://www.politics.ankara.edu.tr/serpilsancar/04.pdf>

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List of Abbreviations

In English	Abbreviation	In Turkish
Mother-Child Education Association	AÇEV	Anne Çocuk Eğitim Vakfı
Convention on the Elimination of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	CEDAW	Kadınlara Karşı Her Türlü Ayrımcılığın Önlenmesi Sözleşmesi
Civil Society Organisations	CSOs	Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları
European Union	EU	Avrupa Birliği
European Court of Human Rights	ECHR	Avrupa İnsan Hakları Mahkemesi
Hacettepe University Institution of Population Studies	HÜNEE	Hacettepe Üniversitesi Nüfus Etüdüleri Enstitüsü
Foundation for Women's Solidarity	KDV	Kadın Dayanışma Vakfı
(Parliamentary) Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women	KEFEK	TBMM Kadın-Erkek Fırsat Eşitliği Komisyonu
Women's Human Rights Training Programme	KIHEP	Kadının İnsan Hakları Eğitim Programı
General Directorate of the Status of Women	KSGM	Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü
Middle East Technical University Gender and Women Studies Graduate Programme	METU-GWS	Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kadın Çalışmaları Yüksek Lisans Programı
Social Services and Child Protection Agency	SHÇEK	Sosyal Hizmetler ve Çocuk Esirgeme Kurumu
Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres	ŞÖNİM	Şiddet Önleme ve İzleme Merkezleri
Turkish Statistical Institute	TUIK	Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu
Violence Against Women	VAW	Kadına Karşı Şiddet
World Health Organisation	WHO	Dünya Sağlık Örgütü
Women for Women's Human Rights - New Ways	WWHR	Kadının İnsan Hakları – Yeni Çözümler Derneği