



## **Declaration for the Education of Girls**

*Currently, 700.000 girls are left out of primary education in Turkey. Moreover, girls constitute the group with the highest non-completion risk as thousands of girls drop out of school each year. The number of women excluded from the education system exceeds millions and keeps growing.*

We remind that:

1. It is an inalienable duty of a democratic, secular, and social state governed by rule of law to make sure that all children, girls and boys, complete primary education of high quality.
2. No political or economic rationale can be the reason for obstructing the realization of this obligation.
3. NGOs, international organizations, and professional organizations' responsibilities on this matter comprise supporting public efforts and monitoring public officials' performance through pressure groups; however, these responsibilities do not substitute for this fundamental duty of the state.

*In accordance with these principles and with the recognition of our citizenship duties, we demand the political will, with all the competent bodies it entails, to exercise its duties expressed in the constitution, laws, and international treaties in order to provide all children, girls in particular, with access to quality education.*

*We expect the recommendations that originate from the abovementioned aims to be taken into serious consideration and to be implemented without leading to any kind of negative discrimination among children:*

1. Development of mechanisms that would facilitate the birth registration of girls and boys immediately after they were born. As for school-age children, completion of registration procedures at latest in the first year of primary school. Thorough application of the following clause expressed in the Population Services Law: “The school principals carry the responsibility to notify the local birth registration office on the declared identifications of unregistered children, and identification and addresses of their parents, guardians or caretakers”.
2. Making the database of Ministry of National Education (MoNE) “MEB-e-Okul” and Address Registry System “MERNIS” of General Directorate of Population and Citizenship Affairs at the Ministry of Internal affairs operate together to identify girls and boys who are at compulsory education age but are left out of the education system.
3. Inclusion of pre-school education for five-year-old (60-71 months) girls and boys into compulsory education regulation and immediate introduction of the Pre-School Education Law.
4. Responding the need for schools and classrooms in accordance with the policy priorities of the 9th Development Plan; giving priority to cities with the highest rate of student per classroom; building prefabricated schools and classrooms if necessary and compliant with population movements; making idle public buildings serviceable and utilizing them as schools or dormitories in accordance with local needs.
5. Providing all girls who lack schools in close proximity and bussed primary education with access to the regional boarding primary schools or boarding houses closest to their parents' residence starting from the sixth grade.
6. Increase in conditional cash transfers within the Social Risk Mitigation Project in favor of girls at the second tier of primary education; constant revision of selection criteria of conditional cash transfers in order to be able to reach all who need the transfers and to improve efficiency.
7. Implementation of a quota with the aim of girls benefiting more from the scholarships provided by the MoNE. Expansion of the existing scholarship system in favor of girls with the aim of reducing gender gap with respect to access to secondary education as it is emphasized in the 9th Development Plan.
8. Formation of units to restructure the content of teaching programs and methods, textbooks, and all educational means and tools through a gender-sensitive perspective within the Board of Education of the MoNE and the Council of Higher Education, with the participation of NGOs working on women's rights and girls' education.

9. Ensuring that gender awareness is a sine-qua-non of in-service training and a fundamental consideration in administration and inspection. To establish a centrally and locally organized Gender Equality Monitoring and Improvement Unit responsible for achieving this goal, and empowered to determine and warn teachers and administrators who, through their attitude and behavior, cause girls to abstain from enrolling in schools and/or to drop out.
10. Introduction of gender-themed courses into education faculties' undergraduate and graduate programs and having these courses taught by educators with gender-sensitivity training.
11. Consideration of gender-sensitivity in policies and practices in the area of pre-school education and presentation of this sensitivity within the scope of life skills.
12. Ensuring that girls who do not speak Turkish benefit from pre-school education; school administrators and teachers support to improve communication with the students and their parents during the first three years of education in order to facilitate their adaptation to education, in cases where such pre-school education can not be provided.
13. Encouragement and quota-like regulations to bring women teachers and educators into administrative posts at all levels of MoNE.
14. Transformation of mindsets towards efficient functioning of Student Councils and Parent-Teacher Associations in order to transform school administrations into more participatory and democratic structures.
15. Improvement of physical conditions of all schools in terms of safety and comfort, for girls in particular.
16. Realization of recommendations in the circular by the Prime Ministry on “Measures to Prevent Acts of Violence towards Children and Women and Honor Killings”; development of precautions against emotional violence, which is left out of the scope of the abovementioned circular and implementation of education programs aiming at transforming the mindsets of teachers and school administrators.
17. Identification of minimum standards at primary boarding schools, organization of all social and cultural activities in a way that would improve girls' life quality.
18. Provision of hot meals to every student at all schools in the bussed primary education system.

For the recommendations expressed above to be realized and as a fundamental requirement of being governed by rule of law:

- The political will should become transparent, accountable and open to supervision
- Public officials should be supervised to detect whether they perform their legally defined duties for girls to participate into and continue their education, and whether they fulfill their social responsibilities.

*We, whose signatures are below, declare that, through the civil initiative we have formed and with the aim of making sure that the political will exercises its duties to provide all children, girls in particular, with access to quality primary education, and for the development of holistic, sustainable and gender-sensitive policies towards this end, are going to work towards making our recommendations heard and their realization, and to continuously monitor the actions of the political will. We invite everybody to be with us and to take responsibility.*



**Gürkaynak  
Institute for  
Citizenship**

**KAYNAK**  
Kadın Yurttaş Ağı  
Women Citizens Network

**KADER**  
Association for  
Support and Training  
of Women Candidates

**KAGİDER**  
Türkiye  
Kadın  
Girişimciler  
Derneği  
Women  
Entrepreneurs  
Association  
of Turkey



**TEV**  
TURKISH EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
1967



*Prof. Dr. Mine Tan  
Prof. Dr. Fatmagül Berktaş  
Doç. Dr. Ayşe Gündüz Hoşgör  
Dr. Nur Otaran  
Willows Foundation Turkey Office Staff*

[info@kizlaricinegitim.com](mailto:info@kizlaricinegitim.com)



*This notification is formed by nongovernmental organizations and individuals who come together in the frame of the European Union funded project "Raising Women: Reducing Gender Disparity in Education through Functional and Political Literacy" and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*