

EQUAL CARE MANIFESTO FOR TURKEY

This document is adapted from the manifesto prepared by the Equal Care Day Initiative

Our Demands:

I. Acknowledgement and Appreciation

1. Creating value from unpaid care work should be defined in the macroeconomic assessment as it is decisive for social welfare (For example, in the calculation of gross domestic product).
2. Unpaid care work should be more appreciated, care work/professions should be re-evaluated and a coherent strategy should be developed to increase financial incomes.
3. Social insurance should be standardized for private care work such as the care for children, the elderly, sick and disabled, and this care work should be paid for. The state should implement social security funds to improve pensions, alimony and unemployment benefits, and also cooperate with other countries for the development of the country in terms of social security.
4. The scope of supports such as child allowance should be expanded and its amount should be increased.
5. The scope of free education and healthcare services should be extended, these services should be expanded and access to these services should be facilitated. For this purpose, investments in the country should be increased.

II. Fair Distribution

1. Current legal regulations should be implemented:
 - The recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) should be followed. For example, CEDAW Recommendation No. 19 (c): It proposes that

“in the process of assessing damages, women’s unpaid domestic and care responsibilities should be taken into account in order to determine appropriate compensation for damages for all civil, criminal, administrative and other actions.”¹

- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities should be implemented.²

- Regarding leave, The Labor Law No. 4857, and regarding social security, the Social Insurance and General Health Insurance Law No. 5510 and the Civil Servants Law No. 657 should be implemented. For example, according to the Article 7 (d) of Labor Law No. 4857: “Temporary workers should benefit from social services in their workplaces on the basis of equal treatment during the periods they work. Temporary workers should benefit from education and childcare services at the private employment office while not working”.³

- The Ministry of Family and Social Services’ Birth Aid Regulation No. 6399 should be implemented for women and men without any discrimination, and the amount of birth aid should be increased.

- Legal rights of pregnant and breastfeeding women should be improved, access to their rights should be ensured and working conditions should be regulated.

2. Gender, care and pluralism sensitive pedagogical training should be provided for childcare and education providers.

3. The period spent giving care should be included in the Curriculum Vitae and defined in a way that will be of equal status with other activities.

¹ CEDAW, The recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, <https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/media/35253/cedaw-33-sayili-genel-tavsiye-karari.pdf> (p.12)

² Disabled Rights Convention, <https://insanhaklarimerkezi.bilgi.edu.tr/media/uploads/2015/08/03/EngellilerinHaklarinalliskinSozlesme.pdf>

³ 4857 sayılı İş Kanunu, <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.4857.pdf> (p. 7)

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4. Equal division of labor within families and/or responsible individuals/communities should be supported and encouraged through alternative employment models, for example by significantly reducing working hours and creating a work-care model. In particular, these models should include the regulation of tax legislation (apportionment of taxation for married couples), supportive measures (parental-maternity leave) and the extension of non-transferable parental leave.
5. Pay equality between men and women should be ensured by taking into account the casual origins of the wage gap and the labor gap in the care process. Wage transparency should be applied legally.
6. Care responsibility should be fulfilled by private sector enterprises. Appreciative practices and contributions that reward private and institutional care work and ensure the livelihoods and health of care providers should be introduced.
7. In order to guarantee and protect the rights of care workers from foreign countries, Turkey should be a party to the ILO Convention No. 189 (Domestic Workers Convention) and this Convention must be implemented.
8. The ILO's "More and Better Jobs for Women" program should be supported. In this context, awareness should be raised on decent job opportunities, gender equality and labor standards for women through active labor market policies.⁴

III. Structural Support

1. Professional care support should be developed and expanded; for this purpose, unregistered work should be prevented.

2. Daily baby and child care services should be improved, institutions providing 24/7 care services should be opened, and financial support should be provided by facilitating access to baby and child care services.
3. Better working conditions should be introduced in care professions and wages should be increased.
4. Employees in the care professions should be allowed to participate in decision-making processes related to themselves.
5. Employees in the care professions should be given comprehensive training on their rights.
6. Institutional social responsibility should be developed and companies providing professional care services should be supported.

IV. COVID-19

COVID-19, declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020, has increased the need for care work and caused women to undertake caring labor 4 times more than men. Therefore, the following measures should be taken:

1. Women workers should be supported due to the increasing need for housework and care labor.
2. Policies and mechanisms based on gender equality should be developed.
3. Especially those working in the health sector should be supported in terms of care services.
4. In times of illness, care leave should be increased and people should be supported financially.
5. Institutions providing care services should be made widespread and the costs should be supported by the state.

⁴ Kadınlar için Daha Çok ve Daha İyi İşler: Türkiye'de Kadınların İnsana Yakışır İşlerle Güçlendirilmesi, https://www.ilo.org/ankara/projects/WCMS_380372/lang--tr/index.html

⁵ COVID-19 Küresel Salgın Sürecinde Türkiye'de Bakım Ekonomisi ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet Temelli Eşitsizlikler" (2020), UNDP, <https://www.tr.undp.org/content/turkey/tr/home/library/corporatereports/COVID-gender-survey-report.html>