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GREEN DEAL, SUSTAINABLE TRADE AND TURKIYE'S INTEGRATION

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## \*WOMAN MEANS "LIFE"

Prof. Dr. Rana ATABAY KUŞÇU

Women are more than just a day to be celebrated and remembered with statistics. It is more than just talking about their problems, finding solutions, and cursing every year.

The fifth of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG5) states "gender equality". It is a mistake to mitigate gender equality to just equal rights. With its targets and sub-indicators, SDG5; tells us that women and girls should have equal opportunities in education, be represented in leadership positions in the workplace, forced marriages should be prevented, should not be subjected to physical, psychological, sexual violence, live in similar conditions with men in unpaid housework and care work, and more.

According to United Nations data:

- Approximately 2.4 billion women worldwide do not have the same economic rights as men.
- Women earn 10 to 30 percent less than men for the same job.
- In 39 countries, women and men do not have equal inheritance rights.
- Women spend about three times more hours than men on unpaid housework and care work.

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- It will take 140 years for women to be equally represented in positions of power and leadership in the workplace, and 47 years for them to achieve equal representation in national parliaments.
- Women with disabilities are at least twice as likely to be victims of physical or sexual violence as women without disabilities.
- 49 countries do not have laws to protect women from domestic violence.
- One in five women between the ages of 20 and 24 are forced into marriage before the age of 18.
- At least 3 out of every 10 women between the ages of 15 and 49 are abused physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives.

### **Women are half of life.**

They should be saved from living in an endless race to survive and struggle for their rights. Unfortunately, this will also be provided by men. Because among the legislators and decision-makers; Despite several decisions taken and many signatures, their number, position, and power are still very inadequate.

### **Big steps should start with banning the phrase "But you are a woman".**

With these five words, the injustices that have been going on for centuries should not be thrown in our faces. Laws should not be viewed through 'human rights', but through 'women's rights'.

### **Civil society should be strengthened.**

Efforts to create a legal framework cannot develop without gaining strength from NGOs. Valuable women's associations and platforms are creating a struggle in very different areas. Construction and Women Association (İVKAD), Women in Technology Association (WTECH), The Women Entrepreneurs Association of Türkiye (KAGİDER), Yanındayız Association, Yenideniz Association, Women on Board Association Türkiye (WOB Türkiye), Green Collar Women Association (GCWA).

Each of these valuable associations that come to mind is an important source of power. All international structures, especially UNDP, prioritize the women's movement. The IOC (International Olympic Committee) says that the number of female and male athletes will be equal as of Paris Olympics 2024. Valuable steps are being taken in every field and they are not enough. Women and girls, who make up half of the world's population, should be included in development processes. There can be no sustainable development without equal and full participation in society.





INTERNATIONAL  
**WOMEN'S DAY**  
• 8 MARCH •

**EMPOWERMENT KNOWS NO  
BOUNDS; TODAY AND EVERY DAY,  
WE CELEBRATE THE STRENGTH,  
RESILIENCE, AND ACHIEVEMENTS  
OF WOMEN WORLDWIDE. HAPPY  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY!**

*\*Purple color themed newsletter special for March 8 International Women's Day!*



## Women's Struggle for Labour Identity

Assoc. Prof. Öznur GÜLEN ERTOSUN



Early examples of women's participation in business life date back to ancient times. For example, in societies such as Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, women were actively involved in areas such as agriculture, weaving and trade. Some women even ruled as pharaohs and became queens. Important women leaders such as Cleopatra played influential roles in this period. In medieval Europe, women were involved in domestic work as well as family business, especially in craftsmanship and trade. In the same period, in some European countries, women were seen as nobles or queens ruling their own lands, such as Elizabeth I in England. With the Industrial Revolution, women started to take part as labour force in factories and other industrial areas.

However, during this period, women's participation in labour life was usually at low wages and under poor working conditions. Women's equal opportunities in education, health, politics and employment are still among the most important issues in Türkiye, as in the whole world. Macro policies, legal regulations, society's perspective on gender inequality, and even family structures are important determinants of women's positioning in the labour market. In recent years, various policies and programmes have been implemented in Türkiye to increase women's employment and ensure gender equality. However, both academic and practical efforts on gender equality have not yet prevented women from being in disadvantaged positions. According to the 2022 craftsmanship TUIK report, although the female and male population in Türkiye are equal, the labour force participation rate of women is half of that of men. Moreover, approximately 20 per cent of managerial positions and 33 percent of university professors are held by women.

Women's gender roles have necessitated a struggle for their participation in business life and decision-making processes, albeit to varying degrees in every period and society. In Türkiye, developments regarding women's place in business life, which gained momentum in 2019 (UNDP Human Development Report), declined again due to the pandemic (2020 World Economic Report).



## REVIEWS Cont.

It is observed that reasons such as their support for education and care (such as children, patients, elderly family members), which are seen as a requirement of their gender roles, and the fact that they are the first to give up their livelihood in economic crises and extraordinary situations are obstacles to their steady progress in business life.

Women who strive to do justice to their multiple roles, on the other hand, have to work under higher levels of pressure than other employees who are not in the same situation, have to face role conflict and the possible reflections of role conflict on work-related outcomes, as well as problems related to work/life balance. Additionally, despite studies in the field of organizational behaviour focus on "women are wonderful effect", an undeniable number of findings suggest the impression that masculine characteristics are more attractive in the business world with concepts such as glass ceiling syndrome and queen bee syndrome.

However, with the blurring of the boundaries of the concept of the workplace, the rapid automation of the mechanical aspects of the business world and the influence of new generational business paradigms, management and business success now require feminine skills. These feminine skills have become critical elements for the distinctive and sustainable competitive advantage in the workplace. We hope that women, who make everything they touch beautiful, will receive the recognition they deserve in the business world...





## Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025

The EU Gender Equality Strategy delivers on the von der Leyen Commission's commitment to achieving a Union of Equality. The Strategy presents policy objectives and actions to make significant progress by 2025 towards a gender-equal Europe. The goal is a Union where women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are free to pursue their chosen path in life, have equal opportunities to thrive, and can equally participate in and lead our European society.



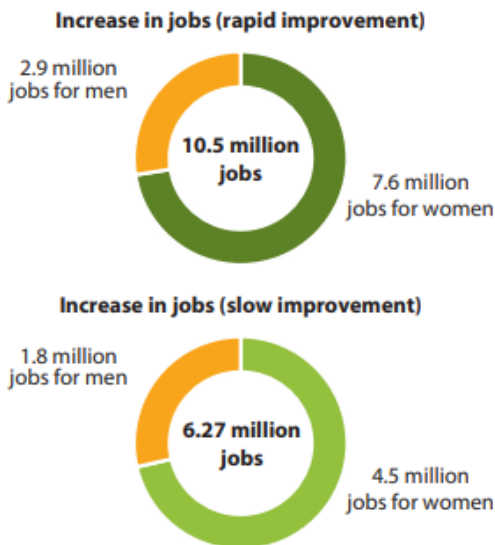
The key objectives are ending gender-based violence; challenging gender stereotypes; closing gender gaps in the labour market; achieving equal participation across different sectors of the economy; addressing the gender pay and pension gaps; closing the gender care gap and achieving gender balance in decision-making and in politics. The Strategy pursues a dual approach of gender mainstreaming combined with targeted actions, and intersectionality is a horizontal principle for its implementation. While the Strategy focuses on actions within the EU, it is coherent with the EU's external policy on gender equality and women's empowerment.

[For more detail](#)



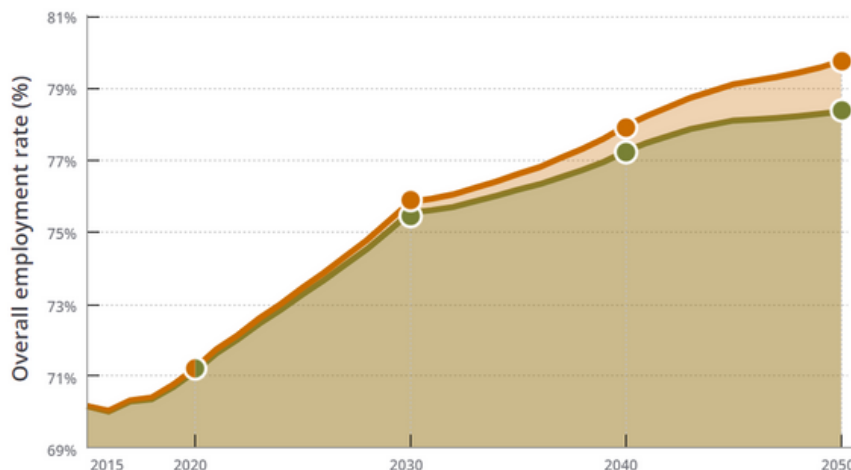
## Benefits of Gender Equality on Employment and Jobs

The employment rate in the EU will make a substantial leap if women have more equal opportunities in STEM education and the labour market. This would lead to a growth of the EU employment rate of 0.5-0.8 percentage points by 2030 and by 2.1-3.5 percentage points by 2050. In 2050 the EU employment rate would reach almost 80 % if there are substantial gender equality improvements. If more women join the labour force and/or get education in fields with skill shortages that have good future employment prospects, such as STEM, they are likely to find employment and make substantial contributions to the economy. Such a move would contribute to increased earnings and reduced wage gaps for women. Reducing the gender pay gap can also play an important role in attracting more women to the labour force.



New jobs occupied by women are particularly important as they can help to reduce poverty, one of the key priorities of the EU 2020 strategy. Women are generally affected by poverty more often than men because of lower employment and salary prospects. Hence, being in employment lowers the risk for poverty of women (EIGE, 2016).

[For more detail](#)





# REVIEWS

## Empowering Women: A Catalyst for Sustainable Development Goals 5 and World Women's Day on March 8th

Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by 2030. It acknowledges that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but also an essential requirement for a peaceful, successful, and sustainable society. On March 8th, the world celebrates International Women's Day, which highlights the successes and problems that women confront around the world. This day compliments SDG 5, emphasizing the need of empowering women for the good of society.

It is not just morally right to empower women; it is also economically necessary. The significance of decent work and economic growth is emphasized by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8. In order to do this, women's empowerment is essential. Societies benefit from higher production, better quality of life, and general well-being when women are given economic authority. Women's active engagement in the workforce encourages resilience and creativity in addition to contributing to economic progress.

World Women's Day, observed on March 8th, serves as an important reminder of both the progress accomplished and the obstacles that remain in the road toward gender equality. It honors women's successes in a variety of disciplines while recognizing the need of ongoing work to break down obstacles and stereotypes. The day is used to raise awareness of gender inequality, urging individuals and organizations to take real action in favor of women's rights.

The intersectionality of SDG 5 and World Women's Day highlights the link between gender equality and broader sustainable development goals. Women's empowerment is not a separate objective, but rather a catalyst that impacts many sectors of society, helping to attain a variety of SDGs. As we celebrate World Women's Day on March 8th, let us explain our commitment to promoting gender equality and empowering women, recognizing their critical role in creating a sustainable, equitable, and successful future for everyone.

### Gender Inequality in Europe: A Barrier to Macroeconomic Growth

Gender equality has long been a cornerstone of European Union policy. However, despite concerted efforts, persistent gender inequalities continue to undermine women's economic opportunities and hinder macroeconomic growth.

Despite progress, certain fields, particularly STEM sectors, remain heavily male-dominated, limiting women's access to lucrative career opportunities. In STEM fields, 75% of students are men, highlighting a significant gender disparity in educational and career paths.

Women continue to face barriers to full participation in the workforce, resulting in an 11.6% gender employment gap in the EU. This gap further widens with the number of children in the household, reflecting challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities.

Women experience lower pay on average, earning 16.1% less than men across the EU. Precarious employment, including part-time work, exacerbates this disparity, with 32.1% of women working part-time compared to 8.9% of men in 2015.

The unequal distribution of unpaid household responsibilities perpetuates gender inequality, with women shouldering the majority of caregiving duties. This imbalance often leads to women's underrepresentation in the workforce and limits their economic opportunities.

Persisting gender inequalities have profound implications for individuals, employers, and society at large. Women's underrepresentation in STEM sectors and the workforce limits their potential contributions to innovation and economic growth. The gender pay gap not only deprives women of fair compensation but also represents a significant loss of talent and productivity for employers. The unequal division of unpaid responsibilities perpetuates gender stereotypes and reinforces societal norms that hinder women's advancement.

Addressing gender inequality is not only a matter of social justice but also an economic imperative. By dismantling barriers to women's full participation in the workforce and addressing systemic inequalities, Europe can unlock the full potential of its talent pool and drive sustainable macroeconomic growth. Policymakers, employers, and society as a whole must prioritize gender equality and foster an inclusive environment where all individuals have equal opportunities to thrive.

**Fatma Melike AŞCI**  
Project Team  
Medipol Business  
School, Economics  
and Finance



**Sercan ASLAN**  
Project Team  
Medipol Business  
School, Economics  
and Finance



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