

C20 TURKEY  
POLICY PAPERS

# GENDER EQUALITY





Globally, women earn approximately

**77%** of what men earn, with the gap widening for higher-earning women.

At the current rate, pay equity between women and men will not be achieved before **2086** (ILO).

It is estimated that if women's unpaid work were assigned a monetary value it would constitute between **10%** and **39%** of GDP (UNRISD).

**31%-38%** of formal SMEs in emerging markets are owned fully or partially by women (IFC).

Worldwide, only **13.2%** of Chief Information Officers surveyed were women (Gartner).

Although women hold close to half of all jobs in the US, they hold less than **25%** of all STEM jobs (AAUW).

Global sex disaggregated data is missing across **28 areas** covering health, education, economic opportunities, political participation & human security (Data2X).

# GENDER EQUALITY



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## BACKGROUND

Gender inequalities are a pervasive and systemic aspect of economic life in G20 countries, as well as the rest of the world economy. These inequalities manifest themselves in terms of gender-based gaps in wages, income, ownership of assets such as land and capital, access to other productive inputs such as credit, education and knowledge.

At the root of these inequalities is a historical and universal gender-based division of labor. According to this, women tend to specialize in unpaid work such as unpaid care work, while men tend to specialize in paid work. Consequently, women are under-represented in paid work, while men are under-represented in unpaid work. Moreover, when performing paid work, women are mostly concentrated in informal, insecure and vulnerable employment. Women tend to be at the bottom of pay scales, and are thus subject to a higher incidence of poverty compared to men. They suffer an **additional economic “penalty”** since social protection and social insurance schemes are typically based only on the value of paid work.

## SYSTEMATICALLY RECOGNIZE AND MEASURE ALL FORMS OF WORK INCLUDING UNPAID CARE WORK

Studies reveal that in a number of countries, women’s share of total work, consisting of unpaid and paid work is more than 50 percent of the total work performed in those economies. Accordingly, through their work, women hold up more than half the sky.

4 The work of women and their specialization is invisible: it is neither considered as part of the “economy” nor is its economic value measured or recognized. The economy is defined to consist of activities which are “monetized” or go through the market sphere. Through unpaid care work, women provide care for children, the elderly, the disabled and the sick. They also re-produce the labor force of the next generation. Without the unpaid care work that is performed by women (as well as by men), the monetized sphere of the economy would not be possible.

In recent years, G20 leaders have acknowledged that women continue to suffer from discrimination in labor markets. Consequently, G20 leaders have committed to lifting obstacles preventing women’s full economic and social participation and to expanding opportunities for women. For example, in Brisbane 2014, the G20 Leaders’ Communiqué stated:

“Our actions to increase investment, trade and competition will deliver quality jobs. But we must do more to address unemployment, raise participation and create quality jobs. We agree to the goal of **reducing the gap** in participation rates between men and women in our countries by **25 per cent by 2025**, taking into account national circumstances, to bring more than **100 million women** into the labour force, significantly increase global growth and reduce poverty and inequality.”

At the 2013 St. Petersburg Summit, the G20 Leaders declared:

“We recognize the importance of ensuring that underrepresented and vulnerable groups are given both **incentives and support to find productive and rewarding jobs**. Special attention must be given to those groups facing the greatest barriers to finding or remaining in employment such as youth, **women**, long-term unemployed, low skilled workers, single parents, people with disabilities and older workers”

In addition the G20 leaders have committed to a number of country specific measures such as public employment programmes, hiring subsidies, and job search assistance.

The G20 countries have also committed themselves to launch a women's financial hub in an effort to increase financial inclusion of women.

At the 2012 Los Cabos summit, the G20 made a commitment to increasing the access of women and youth to financial services and education. The Leaders' Declaration following the summit stated:

“On Employment and Social Protection: We commit to take concrete actions to overcome the barriers hindering women's full economic and social participation and to expand economic opportunities for women in G20 economies. We also express our firm commitment to advance gender equality in all areas, including skills training, wages and salaries, treatment in the workplace, and responsibilities in care-giving.”

In addition to the G20's commitments, it is worth noting that the post-2015 sustainable development agenda includes gender equality and women's empowerment as a stand-alone goal.

The C20 welcomes these commitments by the G20 leaders, but finds them incomplete in the face of gender-based inequalities that permeate every aspect of economic life.

The statements made so far by the G20 leaders reveal a narrowly defined understanding of gender-based inequalities in economic life, focusing on the business case for reducing gender inequality in the economy. Women appear to be viewed as an underutilized and/or idle resource whose labor can be mobilized in labor markets to increase growth rates in G20 countries as well as the rest of the world economy. Reducing the gender gap in labor force participation (the “25% by 2025” commitment) is welcomed, but it is hardly a sufficient goal; especially since such a reduction can **also** be accomplished through a reduction in men's participation. Given the prospects for deflationary pressures in the world economy, potential for competitive currency devaluations and in general beggar-thy-neighbor policies, there is a risk of further instrumentalization of women's lower- waged paid work as a means for competition in the world economy.

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## **PUBLICLY INVEST IN CASE ECONOMY IN SIZE AND SCOPE COMPARABLE TO PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE**

Full economic and social participation of women in all countries, and economic empowerment of women on an equal footing with men, needs to be grounded in a **new** vision and understanding of economic life and the economy. It also needs to make an explicit acknowledgment of the fact that gender-based inequalities are a systemic aspect of the current functioning of the world economy, which has been generating persistent inequalities, unemployment and underemployment, non-living wages and, subsequently, poverty. Furthermore, gender-based inequalities in one economy get transmitted to other economies through international trade, investment, and the dynamics of competition.

### **SUMMARY OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Following up on previous commitments made during the G20 summits, and the post- 2015 agenda which includes women's empowerment and gender equality as a stand-alone goal, the C20 Gender Equality Working Group makes the following recommendations to ensure that women around the world can indeed realize their full potential as economic and political actors and participate in decision making at all levels of policy-making, to create a world economy that makes it possible to uphold the human rights and dignity of all.

## The G20 countries should,

1. Make a commitment to systematically recognize and measure all forms of work and embark on national income accounting that includes unpaid care work.
2. Transform unpaid care work partly into paid work by public investment in the care economy in size and scope comparable to public investment in infrastructure. Additionally, community-led solutions to provide such services should be publicly financed.
3. Adopt gender-equitable macroeconomic policies for inclusive growth.
4. Operationalise the Decent Work Agenda, create quality employment for women and eliminate gender-based wage gaps.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Recognize, measure and account for all forms of work, including unpaid care economy, for a decent standard of living and self-sufficiency.

The current conceptualizations, definitions and national income accounting practices that are prevalent in the overwhelming majority of states exclude the unpaid care economy from their conceptualizations of the “economy”. Since women are the main providers of unpaid care work, policies based on this incomplete understanding of the economy are bound to be gender-biased, and biased against people living in poverty, in rural communities and in LDCs.

Achievement of the G20’s inclusive growth and sustainable development goals should take as their starting point an *inclusive* and complete understanding of the economy by accounting for all types of work that are necessary to ongoing human sustenance. Such an approach would illuminate the differentiated kinds of work that women and men tend to do, as well as the deficits that women and men face in terms of consumption, production, time, and decent work. In particular, such surveys would shed a light on how men and women cope with loss of employment and livelihoods that result from macroeconomic crises as well as natural disasters. G20 policy-makers should therefore formulate macroeconomic and all other economic policies, including employment policies on the basis of such an inclusive understanding of the economy.

## CHAMPION TRANSPARENT BUDGET INITIATIVES AND CITIZENS RIGHT TO ACCURATE FISCAL INFORMATION

### Accordingly, the C20 recommends:

- The G20 leaders make a commitment to systematically **recognize** and measure all forms of work and embark on national income accounting that includes unpaid care work. This accounting should be done through time-use surveys that are repeated on an annual basis to capture the changes that take place in an economy in terms of the distribution of paid and unpaid work activity between women and men. This would provide policy-makers with a complete and accurate picture of all work performed by women and men in households, in their communities as well as in the market sphere. Governments should commit the necessary financial resources for such surveys.
- G20 countries should take the lead in reducing the burden of unpaid care work on women, partly by enabling men to undertake such work and the state to provide such service and partly by transforming unpaid care work into paid work.

- Reducing the burden of unpaid care work on women should be accomplished by a combination of policies. These include **paid maternity and paternity leave**, or more generally paid family care leave, which would enable men to shoulder on a more egalitarian basis the care of the children, elderly and sick in their families and communities. Countries should also carry out campaigns to encourage and enable men to devote time to such work and reduce the social stigma attached to men performing such caring labor in some societies. While it is extremely important to reduce social barriers to women's participation in labor markets, **it is equally as important to reduce social and economic barriers to men's participation in unpaid care work.**

## ANALYZE FISCAL POLICIES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF WOMEN, GENDER EQUALITY, AND POVERTY

The G20's emphasis on public investment in infrastructure is a running theme in various G20 statements and a crucial element of the G20's growth strategy. Such investments are viewed as a necessary prerequisite for increasing growth as public investments in infrastructure increase the productivity of capital. It is well-known that all economies have gender-based occupational and industrial segregations in the paid or monetized part of the economy. While public investment in infrastructure is an important means to increase productivity, it is also a means to employment creation. However, the use of public investment in infrastructure as an instrument for job creation has also led to a gender-bias in employment creation by governments since jobs in the construction industry tend to be male-only jobs.

In order to render growth **inclusive of women**, governments need to recognize that public investment in the care economy is just as essential as public investment in infrastructure, both as a means to redistributing the burden of unpaid care work and creating "decent" work for women, given the current and slowly changing gender-typing of occupations and industries. Indeed, studies carried out with data from the United States, Turkey and South Africa reveal that such public investment would have higher employment multipliers, thereby leading to higher overall employment creation per dollar spent by the public.

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### Accordingly, the C20 recommends that:

- Unpaid care work be partly **transformed into paid** work by public investment in the care economy in size and scope comparable to public investment in infrastructure. Additionally, community-led solutions to provide such services should be publicly financed.

## 2. Adopting Gender-equitable Macroeconomic Policies for Inclusive Growth

Following the 2007-08 recession, the world economy has been entangled in a "jobless growth", resulting in a vicious cycle of an increasingly unequal income distribution across households and slowing growth rates. Gender inequality constitutes part of this pernicious cycle. In Europe, macroeconomic policies rooted in a vision of austerity have been dominating the policy and programme actions of countries. Despite the lack of empirical evidence in support of the claims made by "austerians", such policies are being presented as "sound" macroeconomic policies, disregarding the potential for contradiction between such policies and the very aims that G20 countries have set for themselves, including increasing decent employment for women and achieving inclusive growth. The commitment of G20 countries to gender equality and inclusive growth would require prioritizing the well-being of millions of people over the protection of financial sectors and asset holders. It would, in other words, require a reexamination of the "austrian" measures that currently dominate the policy landscapes of many G20 countries.

Structural adjustment programs and austerity regimes are not new. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that the very austerity measures that are ostensibly designed to respond to the economic crises are actually exacerbating the problems they are intended to solve.

It is worth noting that research on structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilization policies conducted since the 1990s indicates the following:

a) The context of fiscal consolidation brings about an economic contraction in the short-term, resulting in a fall in incomes accompanied by increasing economic insecurity and risk of increased poverty. A common coping mechanism in response to such economic insecurity is the expansion of unpaid work for both women and men. However, women often act as the **providers of the last resort** in the face of economic insecurity and vulnerability.

## G20 COUNTRIES SHOULD NOT BROADEN THEIR TAX BASES THROUGH REGRESSIVE TAXES LIKE VAT

b) The cuts on social services and pensions imposed in the context of fiscal consolidation often result in a further increase of women's unpaid care work (including child-care, care of the sick and the elderly), which limits their capacity for full integration into the labor market.

c) As women's reservation wages are lower than men's, an environment of economic insecurity also leads to women's labour force participation at lower wages.

d) The damage to human life and well-being done by the economic crisis and "more of the same" policy measures adopted during the crisis continue to persist even when growth is eventually restored, resulting in entrenched poverty and inequality.

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These findings indicate that a narrow vision of "the economy" that focuses on the monetized sphere of the economy and the financial calculus, ignoring the unpaid care economy, represents an impediment to achieving inclusive growth and sustainable human development and well-being.

Gender equality in the economy cannot be treated as a by-product or an afterthought. It needs to become an integral and intentional part of microeconomic regimes and policies.

As has been proven in the case of fiscal policies, macroeconomic policies also have a social content. The ways the public resources are generated and spent often reflect the social and political priorities of governments and other policy-making institutions. A fiscal policy is not only an instrument of employment creation that is transferring between various income segments in a society; it is also an instrument that determines the level of gender equality in a society.

Hence, inclusive growth cannot be achieved without a **democratization** of the process of macroeconomic policy making that is often **presented** as a solely technocratic problem. Inclusive and gender-equitable growth requires an inclusive **process of macroeconomic policy making**.

### The C20 recommends:

- G20 countries should become the global champions of transparent budget initiatives and ensure that all citizens exercise their right to information.
- G20 countries should champion the productive and constructive engagement with diverse women's groups on issues of gender responsive budgeting and broader gender equitable macroeconomic policies. This is imperative for ensuring gender sensitive programmes and policies in G20 countries.

- G20 countries should further scrutinize and assess the “soundness” of their macroeconomic policies from the perspective of human well-being and gender equality. Fiscal policies, in particular, need to be analyzed from the perspective of women, gender equality and poverty, as opposed to the all-too widespread practise of scrutinizing them from the perspective of financial institutions and asset holders.
- G20 countries should champion the democratization of macroeconomic policy making by engaging in constructive dialogue with their citizenry, especially with diverse women’s groups when setting macroeconomic policy priorities in order to achieve inclusive growth and gender equality.
- The tax base should not be broadened through an increase in regressive taxes like VAT, which impact women disproportionately. Equitable and progressive national and international tax systems are imperative to achieving a gender inclusive development.

### **3. Operationalizing the Decent Work Agenda, Creating Quality Employment for Women and Eliminating Gender-based Wage Gaps:**

According to the ILO, despite the fact that women constitute 40% of the global labour force, women’s unemployment accounts for 73% of the global job deficit. Therefore, the G20 commitment of 25% reduction in the labour force participation gender gap by 2025 is a step in the right direction.

However, the extremely low growth rate of employment in some of the G20 countries needs to be taken into consideration in any programme that the G20 countries may design and implement with a view to achieving this goal. Since the onset of the crisis, the growth in jobs, especially for women, has mostly affected part-time and insecure jobs, giving rise to underemployment and stagnation in wages. Therefore, there is a risk that women may end up among the unemployed or underemployed, even when women’s labour force participation rate is increased.

Given the current challenges and risks in the world economy, consideration should be given to the risk that bridging the gender gap in the labour force participation rate may well be “achieved” through a fall in men’s labour force participation, as opposed to an increase in quality employment of women. Due to such real risks, the persistent gender wage gap, and other gender-based discrimination in the labour market, there is a need for the G20 countries to substantiate such targets with measures that would help women’s entry to quality jobs and receive equal pay for equal jobs. In many families around the world women are increasingly the sole or primary income earners, and as a result, their own and their families’ well-being depend on the quality of jobs they hold and the income they receive.

## **TAKE MEASURES TO SECURE LAND AND ASSET OWNERSHIP RIGHTS OF WOMEN TO PROMOTE EMPLOYMENT**

### **Therefore, the C20 recommends that:**

- G20 governments should devise a plan of action for achieving an absolute increase in women’s labour force participation based on the recognition of gender equality and fundamental rights at work as basic principles.
- G20 governments should commit to unwavering enforcement of policies, rules and regulations that help to create secure, registered, safe and non-discriminatory jobs that pay a living wage, as well as revising minimum wages to living wage levels.
- G20 countries should champion the implementation and enforcement of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, and the elimination of occupational segregation.

- As women's unemployment already accounts for almost three quarters of the global job shortfall, G20 governments should engage in both direct employment creation for women and in **employment guarantee programs that target women specifically**. Employment guarantee programs, if sufficiently large in scale, can also help to lift the wages of women and, therefore, make faster progress towards the closing of the gender wage gap through an increase in women's wages.
- Labor policies of the G20 countries should be reviewed and revised as needed to include clear provisions and rights for women in home-based work and in rural areas.
- All necessary measures to secure the land and other asset ownership and inheritance rights of women as a way of promoting employment for women should be introduced and enforced by G20 governments.
- G20 countries should introduce and implement programmes to increase women's access to technology and finance.
- G20 countries should introduce gender quotas, including for public procurement and corporate boards, as one measure to end the exclusion of women from the public and private sectors.
- G20 countries should also do everything in their power to promote alternative business models (e.g. women cooperatives and social entrepreneurship) and the establishment of micro, small and medium enterprises, in support of employment creation for women living in poverty.

G20 countries should develop specific policies targeting marginalized women (e.g. migrant, poor, disabled, minority, refugee, transsexual etc.) within their national employment strategies.

In addition to the above recommendations, the C20 suggests that a specific monitoring system is set up to track G20 members' progress in delivering on their gender commitments. Such a monitoring system should include women's organizations in G20 countries and beyond amongst the critical stakeholders.



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