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Enhancement of Participatory Democracy in Turkey:
Monitoring Gender Equality Project Phase II

Aging and Gender Equality

Mapping and Monitoring Study

Extended Summary

Gülçin Con Wright

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Yıldızevler District 721. St, Apt:4/9 Çankaya, 06550
Ankara, Turkey
Phone: +90 312 440 04 84

www.ceid.org.tr
www.ceidizler.ceid.org.tr

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GÜLÇİN CON WRIGHT received her Bachelor's Degree in Sociology Department at Boğaziçi University in 2007. In 2013, she obtained her Master's Degree in Sociology at Middle East Technical University, where she also worked as a department assistant. She was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship in 2013 to study at Purdue University, USA and she completed a Dual-Title PhD. degree in Sociology and Gerontology at Purdue University in 2018. After returning to Turkey, she worked as a part-time lecturer at Middle East Technical University, Bilkent University and TED University. She joined the Sociology department at TED University as an assistant professor in 2020. She is a member of 65+ Elder Rights Association, Turkish Sociological Association and Gender and Women's Studies Association (TOCIKAD).

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Acronyms

65+ YHD	65+ Elder Rights Association
ACSHB	Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services
ADLs	Activities of Daily Living
ASHB	Ministry of Family and Social Services
ASPB	Ministry of Family and Social Policies
BB	Metropolitan Municipality
CEID	Association of Gender Equality Monitoring
CoE	Council of Europe
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DPT	State Planning Organisation
EYHGM	Directorate General of Services for Persons with Disabilities and Older Persons
ENGKAD	Association for Women with Disabilities
EU	European Union
GE	Gender Equality
HDI	Human Development Index
IADLs	Instrumental Activities of Daily Living
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ISKUR	Turkish Employment Organisation
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
KDK	Ombudsman Institution
KEFEK	Committee on Equality of Opportunity for Women and Men
KEIG	Women's Labor and Employment Initiative Platform
KIH-YC	Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR)- New Ways
KSGM	Directorate General on the Status of Women
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEB	Ministry of National Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OWN	Older Women's Network
OZIDA	Administration for People with Disabilities
SB	Ministry of Health
SGK	Social Insurance Institution
SHCEK	General Directorate of Social Services and Child Protection Agency
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TAYA	Survey on Family Structure in Turkey
TCK	Turkish Penal Code
TDHS	Turkey Demographic Health Survey

TIHEK	Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey
TOHAD	Social Rights and Research Association
TUED	Turkey Retirees Association
TURKSTAT	Turkish Statistical Institute
TURYAK	Seniors Council Association
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission of Europe
UYSAF	International Federation of Respect for Older Persons
YADES	Support Program for Older Persons
YAGEP	Day Care and Home Care Services for Older Persons
YASAM	Ankara University Ageing Studies Application and Research Center
WEF	World Economic Forum
WHO	World Health Organisation

I. Introduction

A. Purpose of the Report

This report aims at establishing the current status of gender equality in the field of ageing. It also aims at presenting the norms and standards laid down in human rights instruments that are relevant to the rights of older persons. The overall objective based on these goals is to develop a common understanding on the rights of older persons in Turkey, monitor the existing practices in compliance with the rights and protect rights already gained, therefore avoiding any trends of backsliding. Moreover, the goals of the report include strengthening the advocacy of civil society organizations working on gender equality in the context of the rights of older persons, and in similar fashion, strengthening the gender sensitivity of civil society organizations working on ageing, as well as facilitating a gender-sensitive and rights-based monitoring in the field of ageing.

An international convention on the rights of older persons does not exist yet. The obligations of the states to fulfil the rights of older persons and ensure gender equality are carried out more indirectly. In this context, the most important obligation of the states with respect to the rights of older persons is expected to be incentivizing. Indeed, several significant developments in the last two decades point to the efforts to incentivize the development of new international instruments on the rights of older persons across the globe. Shortly after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared 1999 the International Year of Older Persons, Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing was developed as an output of the Second World Assembly on Ageing held in Madrid in 2002 (UN, 2002). In 2021, the United Nations (UN) declared the years between 2021-30 the Decade of Healthy Ageing. This development could be interpreted as a sign that international agencies and organizations would draft a declaration or a convention on ageing and old age in the following years. Given the absence of an international convention on the rights of older persons and the fact that the concept of multi-discrimination is yet to be well established, this report aims at providing a guidance to public institutions and civil society on how they could accomplish being gender sensitive while carrying out the process of fulfilling and monitoring the rights of older persons.

To this end, this report 1) will address the scope of the thematic area of ageing and the importance of gender equality in this area, 2) will put forth the norms, standards and criteria in line with international conventions, declarations and objectives with a view to demonstrating the current status of gender equality in the field of ageing, 3) will include an evaluation of the current situation in the world and in Turkey in the context of these identified norms, and 4) in the light of good practices and the data and with a view to ensuring that the field of ageing is sensitive to gender equality, the report aims at gathering the indicators, both required and already in use, and developing indicators for the field of ageing in the context of Turkey.

B. Development of the Rights of Older Persons

As is the case across the world, the average life expectancy in Turkey is increasing and the population is rapidly ageing. In 2018, for the first time in history, the older population in the world surpassed the population under the age of 5 (EYHGM, 2020). According to data by the UN in 2019, the older population accounts for 9 percent of the world population. Population ageing, experienced across the globe, is projected to rise increasingly and by 2050, one in six people worldwide is expected to be aged over 65 (UN DESA, 2019).

According to Older Persons in Statistics, published by TURKSTAT in 2020, the older population, which made up only 3,9 percent of the overall population in Turkey in 1935, increased by 22,5 percent between the years 2015-2020, rising to 9,5 percent of the overall population in 2020. Women amount to 55,8 % of older persons whose number has reached almost 8 million in a rapidly ageing population. By 2017-2019, life expectancy at birth is 78,6 years for Turkey. Life expectancy at birth is 81,3 years for women and 75,9 years for men. Moreover, the remaining life expectancy of an individual who turned 65 years has reached 18 years in average. Women who turned 65 observably have a remaining life expectancy of 19,6 years, whereas the remaining life expectancy is 16,3 years for men aged 65 (TURKSTAT, 2020).

To understand the ageing process, it is necessary to clearly establish what ageing refers to. Ageing refers to two facts. First, it refers to population ageing, which is the rise in the proportion of older persons in the population of a country. Secondly, it refers to the changes occurring in both physical and mental capabilities of a person as they age; in other words, the biological ageing each individual goes throughout the life course from the moment of conception to death.

The period of old age is socially constructed, in a similar fashion to childhood, youth and adulthood, it begins when an individual turns an age perceived as "older" and lasts until the end of his/her life. Every society has had their perception of who these "older" people are. However, societies have varied in their criteria in defining who is perceived or classified as older persons. Today, a need has emerged for a globally standard criterion for what counts as old age in order to conduct rights advocacy for older persons as a demographic group and to have policymakers shape the services so that they would fulfil and also guarantee the rights of older persons. The World Health Organization defines older persons as individuals aged over 65 years (WHO, 1998). Nevertheless, documents issued by most international institutions as well as indices and indicators used for ageing recognize the cut-off age of 60 to refer to old age. Therefore, it can be said that there is not a definite lower age limit for determining who is considered as an older person. In addition, individuals aged over 65 are further disaggregated due to the fact that they have very different qualities and experiences in how they go through old age. WHO classifies three age categories for later life: young-old for ages 65-74, middle-

old for ages 75-84 and oldest-old for ages 85 and older. These classifications are based on chronological age that is the number of years an individual has been alive. As is the case with all social policies concerning a specific age group, chronological age is used to identify who should be covered by policies for older persons with the lower age limit set as 60 or 65 years.

This report will address the rights, demands, policies and data with respect to the period of old age or older persons as a demographic group. In this context, age discrimination or ageism appears as one of the most serious violations of rights against older persons. Ageism or age discrimination works similarly to other forms of discrimination. Age discrimination is used to refer to all forms of discrimination, violations and stereotypes faced by individuals across various areas in their lives on the basis of their chronological age (Çayır, 2012). Ageism can be directed against both young people and older persons; moreover, age discrimination can exist both in interpersonal relations and also in practices entrenched within the government and various institutions. In other words, it is crucial that ageism be addressed at various levels including interpersonal, institutional/organizational as well as legal/structural. When age discrimination intersects with discrimination based on gender, resulting in gendered ageism, it is known to have an adverse impact on particularly older women and older LGBTI+.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights covers all other social position factors including sex, race, religion and language, whereas, it leaves out "age" as one of these factors. Age is a social factor that may emphasize rights and practices concerning not only older persons but also children and young people. All the same, despite the existence of rights-based conventions and declarations, older persons have been neglected as a demographic group. Today, debates on the "fragmentation" of human rights focus on the rights defined separately for various sociodemographic groups including women, children, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples. Those in favor of such fragmentation stress both the functionality of the rights when addressed individually and also the possibility of better fine-tuning when the rights of different groups are addressed separately due to the qualitative nature of the rights (Megret, 2011). Still, there are numerous underlying reasons in this fragmented structure for the insufficient awareness on age discrimination and the rights of older persons among international institutions and organizations.

In the United States of America, the advocacy for the rights of older persons is argued to first take shape in 1960s in the context of health and social security services (Hudson, 2004). Indeed, when one thinks of the rights in old age, the right to pension may come to mind first, followed by the rights to health and care. Therefore, long before the discussions on the rights of older persons began, there have been demands for rights including the right to pension, the right to care and the right to private health care for treatment of diseases associated with age; and services have been provided in response to these demands, based on an understanding of a welfare state (Morgan & David, 2002). Both the academic studies on the rights of older persons and the recommendations for advocating rights for older persons date back to as early as the 1950s. Yet, the first World Assembly on Ageing was held as late as in 1982 in Vienna by the United Nations with the participation of 124 countries including Turkey (UN, 1982). It was not

until 2009 that the subject of the rights of older persons entered the agenda of the UN Human Rights Council Advisory Committee (Megret, 2011:38). The lack of rights advocacy on and awareness of ageing is reportedly due the fact that the period of old age is perceived as a problem and that the focus is generally more on the “burden” that the ageing population will place on economy, the health system and the pension system (Megret, 2011). Another stated reason is the failure of advocacy efforts for the rights of older persons to make demands strong enough to bring the concerns of older persons to the agenda of the international human rights (Megret, 2011). For instance, it is still not fully possible to refer to a strong activism that would speak firmly and in an united voice to the questions of why the rights of older persons need to be addressed specifically and separately from the rest of human rights. Such an activism is yet to be put forward by older persons themselves.

The emergence of advocacy for the rights of older persons at the global level corresponds to the period following the first international assembly on ageing held by the UN in 1982 in Vienna. Indeed, five organizations working on ageing in the United Kingdom, India, Kenya, Canada and Colombia came together in 1987 to form the HelpAge International Network. The network, in addition to their numerous campaigns and publications on the rights of older persons, created the Global Age Watch Index in 2013. This index ranks countries based on several indicators on old age and ageing by compiling data from 96 countries including Turkey. Coining this initiative as a data revolution, the Network aims at ensuring that global advocacy efforts for the rights of older persons is based on data.

The Global Alliance for the Rights of Older Persons, another organization advocating for the rights of older persons, which was set up in 2011 and gained 390 members worldwide in only 10 years, works to promote and strengthen the rights of older persons. Rights-based work in the field of ageing is very broad and fragmented. The rights of older persons include the right to non-violence and non-discrimination, the right to health, the right to education and lifelong learning, the right to employment and labor, the right to pension and social security, the right to care, the right to dignity and autonomy in old age, the right to the city and the right to participate in society, the right to inheritance and property, and the right to participate in decision-making processes. Furthermore, since the later life is associated with disability and age-related health conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, dementia and other chronic diseases, it also covers the rights of people with disabilities and patients with special needs.

In the last decade, a large number of global networks advocating for the rights of older persons have come together in support of a common demand, calling on and if necessary, putting pressure on the United Nations to draft a declaration on the rights of older persons. The debates on the rights of older persons have gained momentum particularly in recent years, due to the ageing population worldwide and the increasing visibility of the needs, demands and hence the rights of the rising ageing population (Dural & Con, 2011). Older persons, the fastest growing demographic group, has become more visible with the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the lack of an established basis for addressing the rights of older persons as a human right issue and for protecting their rights under conventions, it does not come as a big surprise that the older persons are referred to as a homogenous group. The rights of older persons are still rarely covered by the human rights advocacy work addressing women and LGBTI+. Indeed, the work on the rights of older persons fails to broadly address intersectionality.

All this notwithstanding, the importance of gender equality in old age could be linked to several reasons. Firstly, it is a well-known fact that ageing has a female face (UN Women, 2015). There are more women than men in older population. According to a survey in 2020, women account for 55 percent of the population aged over 65 and constitute 62 percent of the population aged over 80 (DESA Population, 2020). Indeed, as previously stated above, women constitute the majority of older population in Turkey. Although women have a longer life span compared to men, they generally spend the later life suffering from diseases, poverty, loneliness and age discrimination (Arun & Arun, 2011).

Furthermore, women and LGBTI+ face unequal pay and opportunities compared to men over the life course. Coupled with gender inequalities in access to employment, these accumulated disadvantages reflect adversely on their old age as well. These two groups either do not have any access to pension and social security at all or have inadequate rights to pension and social security. Consequently, women and LGBTI+ are hit harder by poverty in old age. Besides, bearing in mind that women and LGBTI+ constitute a higher proportion of older persons who are widowed or never married, it becomes clearer that poverty in old age is closely intertwined with gender.

In addition, considering the inequalities in health situations and the barriers to access to health services faced by women and LGBTI+ throughout their lifespan, gender inequality has its impact on healthy ageing as well. Finally, the burden of care work unequally placed on women continues in old age, with older women continuing to take care of older family members, their children who are ill or have disabilities as well as their grandchildren. There are numerous research on the negative consequences of both physical and psychosocial outputs of such caregiving responsibilities.

All this notwithstanding, inequalities observed in the intersection of age and gender are usually forgotten or rendered invisible in both the advocacy work for the rights of older persons and the rights advocacy on gender issues, women rights in particular. Considering that the situation is the same both in the world and in Turkey, there is a serious gap in social policy and civil society with respect to the rights of older women and older LGBTI+ (Kocabiyik, 2018). Despite the fact that older women are higher in numbers in later life due to their longer lifespan than those of men, it is still not a common practice to emphasize gender in social policies and rights advocacy for older persons. Still, the problems and the needs specific to older women are rarely mentioned in studies on women's rights nor in the claims for human rights. It is recommended that age discrimination be included in all agreements and policy proposals made in the field of

women's rights and that the terms "women of all ages" (Lear, 2021) or "women over the life course" be used in relevant documents.

C. Flow of the Report

Chapter two of this report reviews the norms and standards, which provide the basis for gender equality in the field of ageing, in the context of international instruments including global conventions drafted by the UN guaranteeing the rights of older persons, some UN instruments without the status of a convention, recommendations of some UN sub committees on ageing and/or gender equality as well as Council of Europe conventions and instruments. Norms in the field of ageing are examined under the headings of equality/gender equality, older persons' self-actualization, and respect for the dignity of older persons, anti-discrimination, special protection for older persons, an independent (autonomous) life, care and participation. Furthermore, the standards and the criteria identified in line with international conventions and action plans are addressed in this chapter. This chapter finally points to some good practices from Europe and North America on the intersection of ageing and gender.

Chapter three provides an analysis of the current situation of older people and ageing in Turkey. To this end, the report firstly undertakes a mapping of the existing legislation on old age and ageing in Turkey and reviews the compliance of this legislation with human rights instruments and norms. Next, the documents, action plans and projects developed by ministries, affiliated agencies and institutions are considered in the context of gender and the norms identified in Chapter two. In addition, this chapter reviews the monitoring and evaluation work and reports of civil society organizations working in the field of ageing, including women organizations and LGBTI+ organizations. Executive structures, purposes, missions and visions of ageing organizations are considered in the context of gender equality; and civil society projects in the field of ageing are examined in terms of gender sensitivity.

Chapter four undertakes a mapping of international indicators and data sources at the international, and national level as well as in the field. The chapter firstly addresses indicators of Human Development Index (HDI), Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), followed by a mapping of the indicators of Global AgeWatch Index (GAW) and Active Ageing Index (AAI). Furthermore, the chapter reviews data on old age and ageing by OECD and WHO at the international level and by public institutions such as TURKSTAT, SGK and ISKUR at the national level. Subsequently, a mapping is provided of numeric data on the field collected at the national level as well as data on the sub-fields collected by relevant institutions.

Chapter four further reveals the current situation in Turkey, offering a mapping of gender equality in the context of possible gender inequalities experienced by older persons in their access to education, health, care, employment and pension/social security.

Chapter four provides a mapping of indicators for ageing that are being collected/used, followed by a suggested list of indicators for data collection.

The last chapter of the report provides a list of concepts and technical terms used in the thematic field of ageing.

II. Norms and Standards

A. History of Inclusion of Rights of Older Persons and Gender Equality in International Human Rights Instruments

This chapter addresses conventions, instruments without the status of a convention, action plans, declarations, conferences and recommendations which identify international norms with respect to the rights of older persons. The documents listed in Table 1, which identify the norms at the intersection of the rights of older persons and gender, are evaluated based on a chronological order. After addressing these norms, these documents and the standards are evaluated based on the objectives of particularly the action plans and strategy papers. The chapter then focuses on the criteria.

In this section, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) drawn up by the United Nations and the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities are put under review. Next, CEDAW General Recommendation no. 27 is examined in the context of its articles on the rights of older women (or women of all ages). Due to the absence of an international instrument that has the status of a convention on the rights of older persons, the review also covers the world assemblies on ageing held by the UN and the action plans that originated from these assemblies.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, 50 states came together in the USA shortly after the establishment of the **United Nations** and agreed on a number of guiding principles. In 1948, these guiding principles were adopted under the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**. Article 1 of UDHR, which went into effect in 1949 in Turkey, begins with the statement that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". In this sense, it establishes the norm of equality on the basis of sameness and provides it as a right for all human beings. Concurrently, in its article 2 stating that "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status", UDHR recommends that states adopt the norm of non-discrimination while protecting the freedoms of individuals under their rule. However, although several criteria are identified in the definition on non-discrimination in this article, it is noteworthy that in 1948 "**age**" was not addressed as a social position determinant that might cause discrimination. It was only many years later that the discrimination based on age was placed on the agenda of international instruments.

Article 7 of **UDHR** states that “All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law”. This statement does not make a reference to age or other social identity determinants for that matter; nonetheless, it is important that it establishes the equality of everyone before the law. Indeed, this statement is followed by the sentence “all are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination and against any incitement to such discrimination”, emphasizing the prohibition of discrimination. Article 25 provides for the right to health in “sickness, disability, widowhood and old age”. In this sense, UDHR addresses health services for older persons and long-term caregiving within the framework of human rights.

Following the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and prior to the third meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, Dr. Bramuglia (1948) called for drafting of a “Declaration of Old Age Rights”; nevertheless, there is still not such an international convention in place today. At the regional level, the **European Convention on Human Rights** was signed in Rome in 1950 and went into effect in 1953. Fundamental rights and freedoms were addressed in section one of this convention and anti-discrimination is mentioned in article 14, which was later revised in 2010. However, age is not included as a social identity determinant or a ground for discrimination in the content of the prohibition of discrimination.

The European Social Charter, which guarantees fundamental social, economic, civil and political rights recognized by the members of the Council of Europe and the other signatory states, was opened for signature in Turin in 1961 and went into effect in 1965. The Charter, revised in 1996, has started to replace its previous version since 1999. Article 23 of the revised version guarantees the right of older persons to social protection. **Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits Convention** drawn up by the International Labour Organization in 1967 is a revised version of decisions taken again by ILO in 1933 with the inclusion of significant additions. This convention lays down the principles and procedures for the states parties to provide old age benefits at aged 65 at the latest. The convention sets 65 as the age of eligibility for the survivors' benefit, an entitlement granted to the surviving relatives of deceased individuals. Nonetheless, it is important that the convention also stresses that no requirement as to age is made if the widow is invalid or is caring for a dependent child of the deceased.

Key principles on ageing were adopted at the **First World Assembly of Ageing**, held for the first time in Vienna in 1982. **The Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing** adopted the principles of independence, participation, care, self-actualization and dignity of older persons. Also adopted at the Assembly was the principle that older persons should be treated fairly in the provision of services and should not be discriminated against on the grounds of age, sex, race, ethnicity, disability or other status. Following this assembly and the plan of action, the Office of the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights presented the **UN Principles for Older Persons** in 1991. These principles are the expanded and elaborated version of the principles set out in the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing. UN Principles for Older Persons

call on all the governments to incorporate the principles of independence, participation, care, self-actualization and dignity of older persons, already set by the plan of action, into their national programs, identifying targets for each principle.

The European Urban Charter I, also known as the European Declaration of Urban Rights, which is adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe in 1992, was updated and renamed as the “Manifesto for a New Urbanity” in 2008. The Charter adopted by the members of the Council of Europe stresses that the urban spaces should be accessible for everyone “irrespective of their age or state of health”, placing an emphasis on the continued combat against all forms of discrimination on the grounds of age, culture, religion, sex and disability.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held by the UN in 1994 in Cairo with the participation of 179 countries, establishes the importance of women’s empowerment for the development of countries. The ICPD **program of action** comprising the decisions taken at the conference acknowledges the fact that the rights to sexual health and reproductive health are key to achieving sustainable development and human rights; and notes that older women and men have diverse sexual and reproductive health problems that are generally not mentioned.

The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in 1995 in Beijing with the participation of representatives from 189 countries, identified 12 critical areas of concern for the achievement of women’s equality. **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** includes a plan of actions agreed by participating countries in response to these critical areas of concern, affirming the commitment to increase the efforts to promote the human rights of all women and girls who face barriers on the grounds of “race, **age**, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability”. Moreover, the mention of “*women of all ages*” in several expressions and targeted actions in the Platform of Action points to a higher awareness of the intersection of age and gender, especially in comparison to many other international conventions signed around similar dates. It is a trail-blazing instrument in that it focuses on the female face of ageing particularly with respect to actions recommended in the area of health, addressing the widely neglected needs of older women including reproductive and sexual health services.

The influence of the Beijing Declaration can be observed in the importance placed on the intersection of age and gender in the **Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing**, the outcome of the **Second World Assembly on Ageing** held by the UN in 2002 in Madrid. Madrid International Plan of Action, supported by 159 governments, marks a global turning point in the development of the rights of older persons. This Plan of Action highlights key challenges including ensuring access to employment for older women who want to continue to work,

facilitating access by older women in rural areas to employment, economic activities and other services, introducing measures to reduce the poverty of older women, including older women in lifelong learning, as well as minimizing the risk of all forms of neglect, abuse and violence against older women.

Issues that are not covered under the CEDAW convention are brought to the agenda by CEDAW Committee General Recommendations. Indeed in 1999, **CEDAW Committee General Recommendation no. 24** refers to special measures for women's state of health and their equal access to health services, addressing also other disadvantaged groups including refugee women, displaced women, immigrant women, women and girls forced into prostitution as well as older women. Nevertheless, it was only 11 years later that a major decision was taken on the rights of older women and the situations specific to older women.

UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were set out and adopted at the UN Millennium Summit held in 2000 in New York. MDGs include eradication of extreme poverty, protection of environment, taking action to combat the climate crisis and equitable distribution of welfare and peace. However, the discussions on gender equality and women's empowerment, identified as a development goal, did not include older women among the disadvantaged groups in need of protection. The goals did not incorporate a sub target specifically addressing old age.

Two decades after the first world assembly on ageing held in Vienna, the **Second World Assembly on Ageing** was held in 2002 in Madrid, resulting in the **International Plan of Action on Ageing**. This plan of action still remains a landmark today since an international convention has yet to be made on the rights of older persons. Indeed, this instrument has shaped most countries' national plans of action on ageing. It still carries weight partly due to the sensitivity of its content to the intersection of age and gender, which was included under the influence of Beijing Declaration. Indeed, the influence of Madrid International Plan of Action could be seen in the General Recommendation on the rights of older women issued by **CEDAW**, which was drafted as late as in 2010. This Plan of Action sets out the main goals, objectives and commitments which include "the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all older persons" and "commitment to gender equality among older persons through elimination of gender-based discrimination".

Despite the continued absence today of a universal convention on the rights of older persons, the **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, covering the rights of individuals at the intersection of old age and disability, was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2006 and went into effect in 2008. A direct mention of older persons is made only in Article 25 on health and Article 28 on the adequate standard of living and social protection; nonetheless, the

content of several articles covers all individuals with disabilities. Given that the intersection of old age and disability has explicit consequences on health and participation in social life, the significance of this Convention becomes clearer for the rights of older persons. Only Article 28 of the Convention refers to ensuring access to social protection and poverty reduction programs for women and girls with disabilities and older persons with disabilities; however, the intersection of age, disability and gender is not addressed jointly.

CEDAW Committee **General Recommendation no. 27** on *Older Women and Protection of Their Human Rights*, adopted in 2010, provides elaborate explanations on the necessity of separately addressing the human rights of older women. The Committee expressed its concerns that the forms of discrimination faced by older women and the rights of older women are not adequately and systematically addressed in the reports drawn up by the states parties. The fact that women live longer than men and that they are subject to discrimination based on gender and age over the course of their lives, compounded with their diverse experiences in old age, is said to increase their “vulnerability” (Koçakgöl, 2019). CEDAW General Recommendation no. 27, which sets out the rights of older women and the methods of combatting the violations of their rights in an intersectional perspective, also uses the terms “sexual identity” and “sexual orientation”.

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence was signed by 45 countries and the European Union in 2011 in Istanbul. The convention, also known as the **Istanbul Convention** after the city in which it was opened for signature, provides definitions in its preamble on violence against women and domestic violence, underlining that violence against women is a manifestation of unequal power relations based on gender inequality. The purposes of the Convention include “the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, protection of women against all forms of violence, and prevention, prosecution and elimination of violence against women and domestic violence” as well as providing “protection of and assistance to all victims of violence against women and domestic violence”. However, the Convention fails to refer to the diverse vulnerability of older women to violence or the protection and assistance mechanisms specific to older women who fall victim to violence.

CEDAW Committee General Recommendation no. 29 on *Economic Consequences of Marriage, Family Relations and Their Dissolution* focuses on the economic consequences of marriage, family relations and divorce, pointing out that the laws in a number of countries create inequalities between widowed women and widowed men in terms of inheritance and ownership of property. Although there is not an explicit reference to older women, it can be construed that the Committee addresses the diverse experiences of older women since widowhood is generally experienced in the last stage of life.

Council of Europe **Gender Equality Strategy** (2014-2017) recommends sub areas for gender mainstreaming; however, the rights of older persons are not included in these sub areas. The work of the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Human Rights conducted between 2012-2013 resulted in the adoption of the **Recommendation on the Promotion of Human Rights of Older Persons** in 2014. This instrument recommends the member states of the Council of Europe to protect the rights of older persons and follow the good practices under the main headings of: non-discrimination, autonomy and participation, protection from violence and abuse, social protection and employment, care and administration of justice. The good practices presented under the headings of “non-discrimination” and “protection from violence and abuse” address older women as a group with diverse disadvantages.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which include 17 goals and 169 targets, were identified at the UN General Assembly in 2015 and went into effect in 2016. 17 SDGs include a number of targets and indicators addressing either older women directly or women in all stages of life and/or all adults. SDGs are important in that they are both inclusive as they include all adults and also intersectional as they target older women.

Despite all the efforts to eliminate gender-based violence and all forms of discrimination, the fact that violence against women still existed after 25 years led to the adoption of **CEDAW General Recommendation no. 35** on *Gender Based Violence against Women* in 2017, updating general recommendation no. 19. This Recommendation states, for the first time, that “gender-based violence affects women throughout their life cycle”. **CEDAW General Recommendation no. 36** on *the Right of Girls and Women to Education*, also adopted in 2017, addresses the need to ensure that particularly women with disabilities and children in vulnerable situations participate in education in the context of lifelong learning. Although General Recommendation no. 36 does not address the need to ensure that older women overcome their ignorance or participate in lifelong learning, it is noteworthy for its egalitarian and intersectional approach on lifelong learning.

The Yogyakarta Principles, adopted by a group of 29 human rights experts from 25 countries who met in Yogyakarta province of Indonesia in 2006, outlines principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics. While outlining these principles, the group of experts considered the fact that social status including race, age, religion, disability could accompany rights violations based on sexual orientation or gender identity; however, they did not provide any specific regulation for older LGBTI+ nor did they make any claims for their rights. **The Yogyakarta Principles plus 10**, adopted in 2017 with additional principles, fail to address older persons’ claims to rights or the violations that occur at the intersection of age, sexual

orientation and gender identity. This situation could be construed as an indication of both the lack of adequate awareness at the international level of the rights of older LGBTI+ and the discrimination at the intersection of age, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Building upon the first strategy developed in 2014, The Council of Europe adopted the **Gender Equality Strategy** (2018-2023) in 2018. This instrument refers to older women only under the strategic goal of preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence. The Strategy highlights the importance of collecting and producing information on diverse experiences of violence faced by older women, who have the status of “a vulnerable group”.

The United Nation declared 2021-2030 the **Decade of Healthy Ageing**. The plan of action for a decade of healthy ageing identifies barriers to healthy ageing and puts forward recommendations to overcome these barriers. WHO kicked off the decade of health ageing with the motto “ensure that no older persons are left behind”. The Baseline Report for the Decade of Healthy Ageing requires that both national and transnational agencies and institutions track the progress in the situation of older persons in 2023, 2026, 2029 and 2030.

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Policy Brief in 2020 on **Gender Equality in Ageing Societies** addresses three key points: Preventing the accumulation of gendered disadvantages over the life course by tackling inequalities at all levels to close gender gaps in education, employment, care, earnings and pensions; mitigating the risks resulting from gender inequality among older persons through redistribution and support; and anticipating the impacts of current reforms on future generations of women and men by mainstreaming age and gender in societal adaptations to demographic change. UNECE issued another policy brief in 2021 on **Ageing in the Digital Era**. By highlighting the barriers to digital technology adoption and use in later life, the policy brief recommends developing policies that are inclusive of older persons with a view to enhance their digital literacy and ensure their access to digital technology and services. The brief places an emphasis on the protection of the rights of older persons in the digital era, noting that older women are less likely to use and have access to digital technologies than older men. The brief also lays down good practices that have a gender focus.

B. Norms

1. Establishment of Norms

The above-mentioned international conventions and instruments are taken into consideration in establishing norms in the field of ageing and gender equality. Norms established in the field of ageing and gender on the basis of these conventions and instruments include equality/gender equality, prohibition of discrimination, and respect for the dignity of older persons, special protection for older persons, independent (autonomous) living, care and older persons' self-actualization. The key principles established at the **World Assembly on Ageing**, held for the first time in Vienna in 1981, is the point of origin for the norms established specifically for the thematic area of ageing. These principles of independence, participation, care, self-actualization and dignity of older persons were put down in writing in 1991 under the title of **the United Nations Principles for Older Persons**. The World Assembly on Ageing also laid down the principle of non- discrimination of older persons, stressing that older persons should be treated fairly in the provision of services regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, disability or other status. In this sense, the norm of prohibition of discrimination was highlighted at the first international assembly on ageing.

Equality/Gender Equality

UDHR was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 1 December 1948. Turkey ratified the Declaration on 6 April 1949. Article 2 of the Declaration recognizes equality on the basis of sex, stating that everyone is entitled to the rights and freedoms set out in the Declaration. Although article two does not refer to discrimination based on age, it can be argued that the term "without distinction of any kind" covers age discrimination, whose existence and impacts are more widely acknowledged today. Therefore, **UDHR** Article 2 covers a norm of gender equality in addition to a norm of equality in the general sense.

Article 2 "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty".

Article 7 of **UDHR** sets out the norm of legal equality. It stipulates that everyone is equal before the law and entitled to the right of equal protection of the law.

Article 7 "All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law."

Prohibition of Discrimination

Article 7 of **UDHR** (UN, 1948) stipulates that everyone is entitled to equal protection of the law without any discrimination. Article 7, using the expression "any discrimination... any incitement to such discrimination", covers age discrimination and gender-based discrimination both separately and also as a combination, thereby broadly defining the prohibition of discrimination.

Article 7 "(...) All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination."

The European Convention on Human Rights was signed by the members of the Council of Europe in Rome, on 4 November 1950. The Convention, which went into effect on 3 September 1953, collectively guarantees the rights stipulated by the **UDHR**. Article 14 of the Convention refers to the enjoyment of all the rights and freedoms set out in the Convention without any discrimination on any ground including sex. Therefore, the article also covers the right to enjoy these rights and freedoms without being discriminated against on the ground of age.

Article 14 "The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status."

The European Social Charter, signed in Turin on 18 October 1961 and went into effect on 26 February 1965, is a treaty agreed upon by the member states of the Council of Europe. Article E of the 1991 revised version of the Charter stipulates the prohibition of discrimination. Although Article E fails to refer to age as a prohibited ground for discrimination, the expression "without discrimination on any ground such as....other status" covers age discrimination.

Article E "The enjoyment of the rights set forth in this Charter shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national extraction or social origin, health, association with a national minority, birth or other status."

On 18 December 1979, **CEDAW** (its full name is the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women) was adopted by the UN General Assembly and went into effect on 3 September 1981. The Convention begins with a definition of discrimination against women in its Article 1. According to this definition, discrimination against women includes all forms of distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which create a barrier to women's enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this context, given that

the intersection of age discrimination and sexism creates barriers to women's access to human rights, this definition in **CEDAW** points up a quite comprehensive fact that requires attention in the protection of the norm of prohibition of discrimination.

Article 1 "For the purposes of the present Convention, the term "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."

In 2017, **CEDAW** adopted **General Recommendation no. 35 on Gender Based Violence against Women** which, in its definition of discrimination against women, recognizes that the age factor is inextricably linked to discrimination that affects women's lives. Bringing together for the first-time discrimination against women and the age factor, General Recommendation no. 35 should be considered a significant step in that it constructs the norm of prohibition of discrimination not only over the discrimination on the ground of sex or age, but also over the intersection of these two forms of discrimination.

"(...) confirms that discrimination against women is inextricably linked to other factors that affect their lives. The Committee's jurisprudence highlights that these may include ethnicity/race, indigenous or minority status, colour, socioeconomic status and/or caste, language, religion or belief, political opinion, national origin, marital and/or maternal status, age, urban/rural location, health status, disability, property ownership, being lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex, illiteracy, trafficking of women, armed conflict, seeking asylum, being a refugee, internal displacement, statelessness, migration, heading households, widowhood, living with HIV/AIDS, deprivation of liberty, being in prostitution, geographical remoteness and stigmatisation of women fighting for their rights, including human rights defenders."

The Global Report on Ageism prepared by WHO in 2020 points to the global prevalence of discrimination on the ground of gender, sexuality and their intersection with age and develops a number of key strategies to prevent these forms of discrimination. The report addresses ageism or age discrimination as a fact that intersects with gender-based discrimination in many areas of life, noting that older women and older LGBTI+ are more likely to face individual ageism, interpersonal ageism and institutional ageism. It is noteworthy that this report uses the term "gendered ageism" for the first time. Furthermore, the report provides data and findings on the current global situation, which made a significant contribution to identifying anti-discriminatory goals in **WHO Plan of Action for a Decade of Health Ageing** (2021-2030); thereby also promoting the recognition of non-discrimination as a norm in the field of ageing.

Respect for the Dignity of Older Persons

The norm of dignity was presented as a significant principle concerning old age at the **First World Assembly on Ageing** held in Vienna in 1982 and the **International Plan of Action on Ageing**. The UN **Principles for Older Persons**, based on the plan of action and published by the UN in 1991, refers to the norm of dignity in a number of ways, stating that older persons should be able to live in security and be free of abuse, that they should be treated fairly regardless of sex, age or disability or other status, and be valued independently of their economic contribution. Importance of the norm of dignity/respect for the dignity of older persons is better understood in view of older persons' increased likelihood of finding themselves in challenging circumstances, such as becoming distant from working life in old age, failing to make an economic contribution due to sickness or disability or being exempt from making an economic contribution after getting retired from work and requiring care while also becoming vulnerable to abuse.

Article 17 "Older persons should be able to live in dignity and security and be free of exploitation and physical or mental abuse."

Article 18 "Older persons should be treated fairly regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, disability or other status, and be valued independently of their economic contribution."

Special Protection for Older Persons

Article 25 of **UDHR** stipulates that everyone is entitled to security in the event of circumstances beyond his/her control including old age, while also referring to everyone's right to an adequate standard of living for a healthy life and well-being. The right to security, provided as a special protection mechanism against challenges in accessing adequate standard of living due to old age and widowhood, establishes the norm of special protection for older persons.

Article 25 "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control."

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 December 2006 and went into effect on 3 December 2008, has been signed by 181 states and the European Union by 2020. The Convention fundamentally defines the rights of persons with disabilities; nonetheless, it is addressed here due to the strong association between old age and disability. Indeed, Article 16 of the Convention stipulates that all measures will be taken to protect persons with disabilities "both within and outside the

home” from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including their gender-based aspects. Therefore, this provision covers the right of older persons with disabilities to special protection.

Article 16 “States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational and other measures to protect persons with disabilities, both within and outside the home, from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including their gender-based aspects.”

Independent (Autonomous) Life

UN Principles for Older Persons, drawn up in 1991, defines the norm of an independent (autonomous) life in old age based on a number of principles including access to health services, opportunity to work or decide to withdraw from the labor force, access to education and training, safety and adaptability of their living environment to personal preferences and capacities, as well as the ability to reside at home for as long as possible.

Article 1 “Older persons should have access to adequate food, water, shelter, clothing and health care through the provision of income, family and community support and self-help.”

Article 2 “Older persons should have the opportunity to work or to have access to other income-generating opportunities.”

Article 3 “Older persons should be able to participate in determining when and at what pace withdrawal from the labor force takes place.”

Article 4 “Older persons should have access to appropriate educational and training programs.”

Article 5 “Older persons should be able to live in environments that are safe and adaptable to personal preferences and changing capacities.”

Article 6 “Older persons should be able to reside at home for as long as possible.”

Article 15 of the first version of the **European Social Charter** adopted in 1965 stipulates on the right of persons with disabilities to an independent (autonomous) life and to participate in social life. The term “irrespective of age and the nature and origin of their disabilities” in the article indicates that the right to independence and participation in social life was defined in consideration of older persons with disabilities. However, this first text fails to address the right of all older persons to an independent (autonomous) life separately from disability.

Article 15 “The right of physically or mentally disabled persons to vocational training, rehabilitation and social resettlement: With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of

the right of the physically or mentally disabled to vocational training, rehabilitation and resettlement, the Contracting Parties undertake:..."

In the 1991 revised version, Article 23 of the **European Social Charter** incorporates the right of all older persons to an independent (autonomous) life by stipulating on the rights of older persons to social protection. The Charter's commitment to enable older persons "to choose their life-style freely" and "to lead independent lives in their familiar surroundings for as long as they wish and are able" is in compliance with the principles of the norm of an independent (autonomous) life established in the **UN Principles for Older Persons** (1991). Furthermore, article 23 of the European Social Charter additionally refers to older persons living in institutions. This additional provision in the article highlighting and encouraging the right of older persons to make their own decisions on the living conditions in the institution addresses the right of older persons to an independent (autonomous) life in conjunction with the right to care.

Article 23 "With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right of elderly persons to social protection, the Parties undertake to adopt or encourage, either directly or in co-operation with public or private organizations, appropriate measures designed in particular:

(...)

- to enable elderly persons to choose their life-style freely and to lead independent lives in their familiar surroundings for as long as they wish and are able, by means of:

b- the health care and the services necessitated by their state;

- to guarantee elderly persons living in institutions appropriate support, while respecting their privacy, and participation in decisions concerning living conditions in the institution."

Care

UN Principles for Older Persons (1991) establishes another norm specific to old age. Principles on the right of older persons to care services and their access to care are associated with all other norms that are addressed in this section. In fact, Article 11 of the **UN Principles for Older Persons** refers to older persons' access to health services to maintain their level of wellbeing and prevent or delay the onset of illness, which is a significant step for the self-actualization of older persons. In addition, the emphasis on independence in Article 12 is in line with the norm of an independent (autonomous) life. The reference in Article 13 to social protection in a humane and secure environment is also in line with the norm of special protection for older persons. Among the articles on care, Article 14 is of particular importance. This is because Article 14 gives references to the norms including the norm of equality in the

term “able to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms”, the norm of respect for the dignity of older persons in the term “full respect for their dignity, beliefs, needs and privacy” and the norms of both an independent (autonomous) life and self-actualization in the term “the right to make decisions about their care and the quality of their lives”.

Article 10 “Older persons should benefit from family and community care and protection in accordance with each society's system of cultural values.”

Article 11 “Older persons should have access to health care to help them to maintain or regain the optimum level of physical, mental and emotional well-being and to prevent or delay the onset of illness.”

Article 12 “Older persons should have access to social and legal services to enhance their autonomy, protection and care.”

Article 13 “Older persons should be able to utilize appropriate levels of institutional care providing protection, rehabilitation and social and mental stimulation in a humane and secure environment.”

Article 14 “Older persons should be able to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms when residing in any shelter, care or treatment facility, including full respect for their dignity, beliefs, needs and privacy and for the right to make decisions about their care and the quality of their lives.”

Older Persons’ Self-Actualization

The norm of self-actualization, appearing for the first time in Article of **UN Principles for Older Persons**, manifests itself again in Article 16 in the reference to access to the educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources of society. These two articles highlight the requirement to enable older persons to pursue opportunities for the “full” development of their potential and to access the educational, cultural, recreational and spiritual resources.

Article 15 “Older persons should be able to pursue opportunities for the full development of their potential.”

Article 16 “Older persons should have access to the educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources of society.”

Article 27 of **UDHR** stipulates that everyone has the right to freely participate in and enjoy the cultural and scientific life. Therefore, the norm of self-actualization and development of potential highlighted in the context of particularly older persons in the **UN Principles for Older Persons** in fact appears to be a right that was previously put in writing and granted to everyone. Older persons’ access to and participation in all kinds of educational, scientific and cultural activities that would enable them to fully develop their potential is especially important in view

of the likelihood of this demographic group, older women in particular, to be excluded from the community and from these kinds of activities.

Article 27.1 "Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits."

The norm of self-actualization of older persons also appears in Article 23 of the 1991 revised version of **The European Social Charter**. Article 23 commits to ensuring older persons' participation in public, social and cultural life and enjoyment of the right to fully participate in society as long as possible by means of services and facilities.

Article 23 "With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right of elderly persons to social protection, the Parties undertake to adopt or encourage, either directly or in co-operation with public or private organizations, appropriate measures designed in particular:

- to enable elderly persons to remain full members of society for as long as possible, by means of:

a- adequate resources enabling them to lead a decent life and play an active part in public, social and cultural life;

b- provision of information about services and facilities available for elderly persons and their opportunities to make use of them".

Article 7 of the **European Urban Charter** adopted by the Council of Europe in 1992, stipulates the provision of facilities to ensure that everyone has access to a wide range of sports regardless of age. Considering the association of sports activities with young age and the prevalence of age discrimination in sports due to stereotypes of older persons, it is highly important to ensure older persons' access to sports activities enabling them to fulfil their potential.

Article 7 "...citizens of European towns have a right to:SPORTS AND LEISURE:- to access for all persons, irrespective of age, ability or income, to a wide range of sports and leisure facilities;..."

C. Standards, Measures and Good Practices

1. Establishment of Standards

This part of the report aims at establishing standards on gender equality in the thematic field of ageing on the basis of international conventions and instruments. These standards will be considered under four headings: combatting multiple discrimination; providing an environment enabling older women/LGBTI+ to fully develop and fulfil their potential; providing and extending the coverage of care services, including long term and palliative care, appropriate for the needs and demands of older women and older LGBTI+; and providing an environment for older women to participate in decision making mechanisms. Standards considered under these four headings will be further addressed in association with the norms established for the thematic field of ageing. The measures are not considered separately in this part of the report due to the lack of age and gender specific measures in international conventions and instruments. Nevertheless, the standards addressed in this part of the report either have wordings that can qualify as a measure or contribute to identifying a measure.

Combatting Multiple Discrimination

Article 6 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008), drawn up by the UN, begins with recognizing that women with disabilities are at risk of facing multi discrimination and urges states parties to take all appropriate measures, in cognizant of this form of discrimination, to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy all human rights and freedoms. Therefore, the Convention specifies that combatting multi discrimination, including sexism and age discrimination, against persons with disabilities should be based on the measures to be taken by the states. As a much-needed step for combatting multi discrimination, Article 8 sets forth the standard of raising awareness of stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices with respect to persons with disabilities, including in particular discrimination on the basis of sex and age.

Article 6.1. "States Parties recognize that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination, and in this regard shall take measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by them of all human rights and fundamental freedoms."

Article 8.1.b. recommends promoting awareness-raising efforts "to combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities, including those based on sex and age, in all areas of life".

CEDAW General Recommendation no. 27 on *Older Women and Protection of Their Human Rights* (2020) addresses discrimination against women in view of its multi-dimensional nature. Recommendation 31 urges states parties to repeal or amend any laws, regulations and customs that are discriminatory, in particular against older women, and adopt practices to prohibit discrimination based on the intersectionality of age and sex.

Recommendation 31 “States parties’ obligations should take into account the multidimensional nature of discrimination against women and ensure that the principle of gender equality applies throughout women’s life cycle, in legislation and in the practical implementation thereof. In this regard, States parties are urged to repeal or amend existing laws, regulations and customs that discriminate against older women, and ensure that legislation proscribes discrimination on the grounds of age and sex.”

Consequently, the obligation of states to protect older women and older LGBTI+ from all forms of discrimination by combatting multiple discrimination at the intersection of multiple grounds including sex, age and disability in particular as well as other social factors, appears to be a standard in international instruments. It is apparent that this standard is in accordance with the norm of prohibition of discrimination and that it also tallies with the norm of self-actualization of older persons, since being discriminated against constitutes a barrier to older persons’ fulfilment of their potential.

Providing an Environment Enabling Older Women/LGBTI+’s Self-Actualization

In order to provide an environment enabling older women and older LGBTI+ to develop and fulfil their potential, it is necessary to provide their access to educational, economic and health related opportunities and facilities. Providing an enabling environment is closely related to the norms of self-actualization of older persons, respect for the dignity of older persons and an independent (autonomous) life.

a) Educational Opportunities

A major contribution to older women’s development of their potential would be to increase the literacy rate of older women and ensure their access to lifelong learning services so that they can achieve other competencies. Indeed, the norm of the right to education and the standard established with respect to this right are widely addressed in international conventions and instruments.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1991) sets an objective of introducing measures to eliminate multiple discrimination – including discrimination on the basis of sex and age—which constitutes the main barrier to access to educational opportunities at all levels. It also sets a standard of initiating all due procedures to achieve the goal of equal access to education. To provide an environment enabling older women and older LGBTI+ to fully develop and fulfil their potential, it is imperative to carry out practices needed to ensure that

they have access to education at all levels. Moreover, the standard set herein tallies with the norm of prohibition of discrimination.

Action 80.a. "(a) Advance the goal of equal access to education by taking measures to eliminate discrimination in education at all levels on the basis of gender, race, language, religion, national origin, age or disability, or any other form of discrimination and, as appropriate, consider establishing procedures to address grievances."

Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing lists the below actions related to older women's access to educational opportunities. The first action sets a standard and a criterion to achieve a 50 percent increase in adult literacy, in particular for women, by 2015. Considering that the illiteracy rate of older women is higher than that of older men and adults in other age groups, it is apparent that this action is directed at eliminating a very basic problem faced by older women in fulfilling their potential. The same action also sets a standard of ensuring that all adults have access to continuing education.

Action: "Achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults."

Sustainable Development Goals (2015) involve two goals that are related to access to educational opportunities. The first goal refers to the standard of ensuring equality between women and men in access to technical, vocational and university education by 2030. The goal further emphasizes the affordability and quality of the education which will be provided on the basis of gender equality. Although older women are not specifically mentioned, the standard can be said to cover older women since it uses the term "all women and men". The wording of the below mentioned second goal, in connection with the first goal, includes "increasing the number of adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills by 2030", while underlining that these skills are related to employment and entrepreneurship. Older persons, especially older women, are not the first group that comes to mind when tertiary education, vocational skills, employment and entrepreneurship are being discussed. However, considering that lifelong learning has become a standard at present, restricting older women's and older LGBTI+' access to the educational opportunities by limiting them to secondary education would amount to restricting their potential as opposed to developing it. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the principle of lifelong learning as far as the standards of education are concerned.

SDG 4.3. "By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university,"

SDG 4.4. "By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship."

In fact, **CEDAW General Recommendation No. 27** on *Older Women and Protection of Their Human Rights* (2010) refers to lifelong learning opportunities. According to Recommendation 40, states parties are obligated to guarantee that older women benefit from lifelong learning opportunities as well. Consequently, older women who have access to lifelong learning opportunities will be able to both develop their potential and also have the opportunity to live an independent (autonomous) life in the later stages of their lives.

Recommendation 40 “States parties have an obligation to ensure equal opportunity in the field of education for women of all ages, and to ensure that older women have access to adult education and lifelong learning opportunities as well as to the educational information they need for their well-being and that of their families.”

b) Economic Opportunities

Secondly, in order to combat poverty of older women, it is imperative that older women have the right to pension and social security, and that necessary social protection measures be taken for women outside these systems to prevent them from falling into poverty. In addition to providing for the pension rights of older women, it is necessary to offer older women who want to continue to work access to lifelong learning as well as opportunities to develop new competencies.

Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002) defines four actions that identify standards on older women’s access to and use of economic opportunities. The wording of the first action begins by acknowledging that women and persons with disabilities are at more risk of exclusion from working life and of dependency in later life. This action, which relates more to older women since disabilities are more common in old age, considers all types of special efforts to ensure older women’s participation in the labor market as a standard.

Action: “Make special efforts to raise the participation rate of women and disadvantaged groups, such as the long-term unemployed and persons with disabilities, thereby reducing the risk of their exclusion or dependency in later life.”

The second action pursues the same goal and refers to older women living in rural and remote areas, stressing the need to guarantee equal rights in the access to and use of economic opportunities. Another action in Madrid International Plan of Action sets a standard of promoting older persons’ self-employment initiatives and encouraging their small enterprises by introducing all kinds of programs, including access to credit, with the overall aim of preventing all forms of discrimination, in particular gender-based discrimination. The last action defines older women, especially the oldest old and older persons with disabilities, as priority groups for poverty eradication strategies and programs.

Action: “Ensure that the rights of older women in rural and remote areas are taken into account with regard to their equal access to and control of economic resources.”

Action: “Promote self-employment initiatives for older persons, inter alia, by encouraging the development of small and microenterprises and by ensuring access to credit for older persons, without discrimination, in particular gender discrimination.”

Action: “Ensure that the particular needs of older women, the oldest old, older persons with disabilities and those living alone are specifically addressed in poverty eradication strategies and implementation programs.”

The Convention of the Rights of Person with Disabilities (2008) sets a standard of ensuring access by persons with disabilities, in particular women with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, to social protection and poverty reduction programs. The importance of this standard becomes clear in view of the fact that a combination of disability, age and gender is a factor that increases exposure to poverty and can also be a source of discrimination as well as a barrier to access to social protection programs for poverty reduction.

Article 28.2.b. “To ensure access by persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, to social protection programs and poverty reduction programs.”

The standards set in respect of economic opportunities in the **Sustainable Development Goals** (2015) are primarily related to poverty. The first of these goals constitutes both a standard and a criterion for reducing by half the proportion of men and women of all ages in poverty according to national definitions by 2030. The second goal places importance on the economic empowerment of everyone, regardless of age, sex and disability, in the context of the standard of access to and enjoyment of economic opportunities. Older women and older LGBTI+ who are living in poverty will have less opportunities to develop and fulfil their potential and are less likely to live a decent and independent life in dignity. In this sense, access to economic opportunities, as defined by these two goals, tally with the previously addressed norms.

SDG 1.2. “By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.”

SDG 10.2. “By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.”

c) Health Opportunities

Finally, in order for older women and older LGBTI+ to fully develop and fulfil their potential, they should first of all continue to live a healthy life without any loss of ability; however, they should also have access to health services when they face health problems. In this sense, access to and enjoyment of health opportunities tally with the norms of self-actualization of older persons, respect for the dignity of older persons and an independent (autonomous) life.

This standard is addressed in the **European Social Charter** (1965) as a commitment to providing necessary care in case of sickness to any person who is without adequate resources and outside the social security system. This article in the Charter gives an emphasis to older persons, in particular older women. Nevertheless, since the need for health services and care due to sickness amplifies in old age and older women are more likely to be excluded from the social security system, this standard also identifies a further standard of ensuring older women's access to health opportunities.

Article 13.1. "Contracting Parties undertake to ensure that any person who is without adequate resources and who is unable to secure such resources either by his own efforts or from other sources, in particular by benefits under a social security scheme, be granted adequate assistance, and, in case of sickness, the care necessitated by his condition."

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) sets a more pronounced objective that emphasizes the health needs of older women arising from changes associated with ageing. It identifies a standard of developing programs and services to treat the health needs of older women, prioritizing in particular those who are physically or psychologically dependent.

Establishing sub-units under geriatric care units to cater to the specific health needs of older women in particular and conducting scientific studies in this field could also be covered within the scope of this standard.

Action 106.n. "Develop information, programs and services to assist women to understand and adapt to changes associated with ageing and to address and treat the health needs of older women, paying particular attention to those who are physically or psychologically dependent."

Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002) stresses the need to address the issues related to the health of older persons from a gender equality perspective. To improve the health status of older persons and reduce disability, the first action sets forth a standard for states and other authorized institutions, which requires that they become primarily aware of gender inequalities and set targets from this gender specific perspective. The second action underlines the need to have preventive health services and screening programs which are gender-sensitive and affordable.

Action: "Set targets, in particular gender-specific targets, to improve the health status of older persons and reduce disability and mortality."

Action: "Ensure that gender-specific primary prevention and screening programs are available and affordable to older persons;

At this point, it would be wise to focus back on the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** (1995) which defines an action collectively addressing the opportunities necessary to ensure an environment enabling older women and older LGBTI+ to fully develop and fulfil their

potential. This action sets a standard that requires governments and private sectors to cooperate and develop a national strategy with the aim of providing health, educational and social services to women of all ages living in poverty. Moreover, the action stresses the need to ensure that the provision of such services are gender sensitive and can reach rural and remote areas.

Action 60.d. ") In cooperation with the government and private sectors, participate in the development of a comprehensive national strategy for improving health, education and social services so that girls and women of all ages living in poverty have full access to such services; seek funding to secure access to services with a gender perspective and to extend those services in order to reach the rural and remote areas that are not covered by government institutions."

Providing and Extending the Coverage of Care Services by Including Long Term and Palliative Care, In Accordance with the Needs and Demands of Older Women/LGBTI+

International conventions and instruments set an important objective of providing and extending the coverage of care services, including long term and palliative care, appropriate for the needs and demands of older women and older LGBTI+ as well as removing the barrier to access these services. The norm of care is defined specifically for old age; and international instruments commonly have clarifications on how to provide care depending on this norm. Moreover, this standard, which is associated with the right of older women and older LGBTI+ to an independent (autonomous) life and the norm of respect for the dignity of older persons, can also be considered in relation to the prohibition of discrimination.

Firstly, it is immediately striking that **Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing** (2002) does not include any references to gender equality in its planned actions related to care. However, it is possible to develop highly critical standards based on these actions which are defined inclusive of all older persons. Primarily, according to the stated action, the purpose of long-term care and palliative care is "to meet the variable and changing health needs of older persons". Therefore, coordination, flexibility and sustainability are the intended targets of care services for the changing needs of older persons. Another action urges health and social care providers to include older persons in decision-making process related to their own care. In this sense, providing care services in line with the needs and decisions of older persons tallies with the norm of an independent (autonomous) life.

Action: "Promote the establishment and coordination of a full range of services in the continuum of care, including prevention and promotion, primary care, acute care, rehabilitation, long-term and palliative care, so that resources can be deployed flexibly to meet the variable and changing health needs of older persons."

Action: “Encourage health and social care providers to fully include older persons in decision-making related to their own care.”

Yogyakarta Principles +10 (2016) does not at all refer to the intersection of sexual orientation, gender identity and age; nonetheless, some of its articles on care provide guidance on care services offered in particular to older LGBTI+. For instance, Article 17/E refers to a couple of requisites that states should cover with respect to medical treatment and care. The first is ensuring that everyone should be able to make their own decisions about their own care; the second is ensuring that everyone is informed and empowered to make these decisions without discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation or gender identity. In this sense, paragraph E tallies with both the norm of an independent (autonomous) life and the norm of the prohibition of discrimination since it states that all older persons are able to choose care services according to their needs and demands. Paragraph F of the same article grants states the obligation to ensure that all care and treatment programs and services are sensitive to the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity, and that they are provided to everyone based on the principle of equality.

Article 17. “States shall;

E. Ensure that all persons are informed and empowered to make their own decisions regarding medical treatment and care, on the basis of genuinely informed consent, without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity;

F. Ensure that all sexual and reproductive health, education, prevention, care and treatment programs and services respect the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities and are equally available to all without discrimination.

Providing an Environment for Older Women/LGBTI+ To Participate in Decision Making Mechanisms

Creating an environment that enables older women to participate in decision making mechanisms emerges as another significant standard. This standard tallies with several norms. For instance, participation of older women in decision making mechanisms that concern their own lives is related with the norms of equality/gender equality and the norm of prohibition of discrimination. In addition, it is in line with the other norms including self-actualization of older persons, respect for the dignity of older persons and an independent (autonomous) life.

Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002) introduces a standard on the participation of older persons in decision mechanisms under two actions. The first action recommends taking measures to ensure older persons’, in particular older women’s, full and equal participation in decision-making processes, while the second action recommends promoting older women’s contributions to increase their self-esteem and to promote their participation in decision making mechanisms. Considering the fact that women’s participation in decision making mechanisms is denied at every stage in their lives, the second action is

significant in particular in that it aims at eliminating the problem of underestimating or failing to appreciate women's perspective.

Action: "Take measures to enable the full and equal participation of older persons, in particular older women, in decision-making at all levels."

Action: "Promote a positive image of older women's contributions to increase their self-esteem."

Recommendation 39 of CEDAW General Recommendation no. 27 on *Older Women and Protection of Their Human Rights* suggests that older women should participate in both public and political life and have the opportunity to hold public office, and that the barriers they face to vote and run in elections should be removed. In this context, this recommendation sets the standard that older women should not only participate in decision making mechanisms but also be at the center of these mechanisms.

Recommendation 39 "States parties have an obligation to ensure that older women have the opportunity to participate in public and political life and hold public office at all levels and that older women have the necessary documentation to register to vote and run as candidates for election."

2. Good Practices

This part of the report focuses on several gender sensitive good practices on ageing and old age. The common feature of these practices is that they are engaged in gender based rights advocacy.

The example of *The Older Women's Network, OWN* can be given as a good practice. The Network was established in 1991 as a UK-based international not-for-profit association with the support of a three-year project funded by the EU. Its aim was to link older women within and outside the EU and making policy recommendations at local, national and the EU level. In 2006, the Network was reformed and registered in the Netherlands as a think-tank and a lobby group that brings together older women active at local, national and international level. The network works primarily to challenge age discrimination but is also engaged in other fields including: advocacy in employment and labour relations, inclusive financial services; challenging violence and abuse; accessible life-long learning, appropriate, affordable long-term care, and targeted qualitative research. OWN works with several NGOs, government representatives, policy makers, professionals and researchers to implement its policies and conducts its own research under EU funded projects.

<https://owneurope.org/>

Active in the USA since 1978, *Sage Advocacy and Services for LGBT Elders* has been advocating for the rights of older LGBT and working to ensure that the current services become inclusive. SAGE defines itself as a movement rather than an organization, using the motto "We refuse to be invisible". Engaged in rights advocacy for older LGBT at local, state and federal level, SAGE is known as the largest and oldest organization dedicated to older LGBT. SAGE launched a national LGBTQ+ Senior Housing Initiative and advocates against housing discrimination faced by older LGBT. Furthermore, SAGE launched the Long-Term Care Equality Index to provide policies and good practices with the overall aim of promoting equitable and inclusive care for older LGBTQ+ in residential long-term care communities. In addition to all these efforts, SAGE conducts rights advocacy to ensure that policy makers better understand the intersection between ageing and HIV/AIDS.

<https://www.sageusa.org/>

Grandmothers Advocacy Network -GRAN advocates for the rights of older women both across Canada and also in sub-Saharan Africa under the motto of "Older Women Matter". GRAN reaches grandchildren-that is children and the youth-through grandmothers and advocates for the right to education and lifelong learning, the right to health, the right to freedom from violence, and the right to economic security and social protection. Strongly committed to social justice, equality and human rights, the network runs a campaign to eliminate violence against older women and makes recommendations to the member states of the UN on the peace and

security of women. Older Women's Network and Grandmothers Advocacy Network are also engaged in lobbying activities to expedite the work on drafting a UN convention on the rights of older persons and to ensure that specific attention is paid to the rights and needs of older women.

<https://grandmothersadvocacy.org/>

III. Analysis of the Current Situation in Turkey: Normative Political Structure

A. Development of Rights in the Field of Ageing in Turkey

The report provides a short history of ageing in Turkey, followed by an analysis of the current situation of gender equality in old age on the basis of policy documents and legislation such as laws and regulations. Since the history of the rights claims made with regard to old age is too short and negligible, it is understandable that the claim to gender equality in old age is only recently brought to the agenda. The history and the ensuing detailed analysis clearly show that the practices and policies concerning older persons are shaped based on an understanding of “service” rather than a “rights based” approach (Sarıipek, 2017a; 2017b).

Darülaceze (State Almshouse), an important social service institution dating back to the Ottoman Empire and lasting until the Republic of Turkey today, provides accommodation and care for older persons and the indigent. Established in 1895, Darülaceze provides services to the needy, older persons, persons with disabilities and orphaned infants and children abandoned on the street, irrespective of “religion, language, race, class and sex” (darulaceze.gov.tr). In 2011, Darülaceze was placed under the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and continues to provide care services in Istanbul for older persons in need of care and without next of kin.

The Social Services Law (Official Gazette, 1983) expanded the scope of services provided by the General Directorate of Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHCEK), defining the services as “social services provided to families, children, persons with disabilities, older persons and others who are in need of protection, care or help”.

The government addressed the status and the rights of older persons extensively for the first time in the **Situation of Older Persons in Turkey and National Plan of Action on Ageing** drawn up in 2017 by the then State Planning Organization (DPT). Turkey’s National Plan of Action developed jointly by DPT and SHCEK incorporates the measures identified by the United Nations Political Declaration and Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002) and is recommendatory in nature. The objectives set in the National Plan of Action generally fall under these sub-headings: health over the life course; abuse, negligence and violence; housing and living space; access to health and care services; training of caregivers; supporting care services and caregivers.

In 2011, the Administration for Persons with Disabilities under the Prime Ministry adopted the **Strategy and Plan of Action on Care Services** (2011-2013) developed in consultation with relevant institutions, which had responsibilities on care services and which would engage in future cooperation. This Plan of Action stresses that “the most disadvantaged group among

persons with disabilities comprises the persons with severe disabilities who are in need of care and quite difficult to be rehabilitated into social life as well as older persons who have acquired disabilities as they aged". Care services for older persons used to be provided under the umbrella of SHCEK, with the support of the Directorate General of Family and Social Research under the Prime Ministry and the Administration for Persons with Disabilities. With the establishment of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in 2011, these services started to be provided by the Directorate General of Services for Persons with Disabilities and Older People (Official Gazette, 2011). Following the European Commission's designation of 2012 as the "**Year for Active Ageing**", the Ministry of Family and Social Policies drafted, in the same year, the **Situation of Older Persons in Turkey and the National Plan of Action of Ageing** as well as the implementation program of the plan. The 10th Development Plan (2014-2018) prepared by the Ministry of Development included objectives with respect to ageing and old age; and, in addition, published the **10th Development Plan- Report of the Specialization Commission on Ageing**. Similarly, the **11th Development Plan- Report of the Specialization Commission on Ageing** was issued in addition to the **11th Development Plan**.

The Ministry of Health, in its **Plan on Action on Healthy Ageing** (2015-2020) drafted in 2015, notes that the purpose of the plan is to "ensure that people can sustain their health and functional capacities and live a life of dignity, and to foster their well-being by transforming the ageing of society from a threat into an opportunity". Indeed, the Ministry completed its **Research on Active and Healthy Ageing in Turkey** in 2016 and held the **Active and Healthy Ageing Summit** in 2017. Moreover, in 2016, the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services (ACSHB) launched the **Support Program for Older Persons (YADES)**, which required that, in addition to the available services provided by the municipalities, the project design of care services for older persons be approved and financially supported by the ministry. Finally, the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey (TIHEK) held a **Workshop on the Rights of Older Persons** in 2019 and ACSHB held the **1st Ageing Council** in the same year. At the **1st Ageing Council**, it was noted that the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services was in the process of developing an "old age vision paper" that covers 2019-2023.

Emergence of civil society organizations working on and actively addressing the rights of older persons is quite recent. The first civil society organization focusing on the rights of older persons in Turkey is the **65+ Elder Rights Association** set up in 2014. However, considering that Turkey is rapidly ageing, this matter will arguably gain more importance, especially with the pronounced violations of the rights of older persons during COVID-19 pandemic.

B. Mapping Relevant Policies: Determining the Compliance of Policy Papers with Human Rights Instruments (Structural Monitoring)

5 years after Turkey's first public policy paper on ageing and the plan of action introduced by DPT in 2007, the Directorate General of Services for Persons with Disabilities and Older Persons under the Ministry of Family and Social Policies (ASPB) drafted the **Situation of Older Persons in Turkey and the Implementation Program of the National Plan of Action on Ageing** (2013). According to this instrument, "programs will be developed for the protection and prevention of chronic diseases, and all such programs and related work will take it into consideration that the health problems and the service needs of women and health may differ based on the gender and biological sex". Furthermore, the instrument includes actions to promote the participation of women in the assemblies of older persons, a structure which will be established in district and village centers in order to "ensure that older persons participate in every stage of the decision-making process". **The National Plan of Action on Empowering Women in Rural Areas** (2012-2016) drawn up by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock in the same year addressed older women as a disadvantaged group among women in poverty in the rural area. However, the plan of action does not refer to a practice or policy specific to this group.

The 10th Development Plan (2014-2018) prepared by the Ministry of Development addresses, for the first time, practices and policies specific to older persons; nonetheless older persons are regarded as a uniform demographic group without any mention of the diversities within the group. **The 10th Development Plan- Report of the Specialization Commission on Ageing** drafted in 2014 has a specific heading of "reasons of poverty in old age, older women in poverty, possible social policies on the prevention of old age poverty and social protection as well as current practices". **The 11th Development Plan** prepared by the Presidency of Strategy and Budget (2019-2023) aims at creating "an environment where older persons do not feel excluded or lonely". However, in its target of tackling discrimination against older persons, the plan fails to emphasize the intersectionality of old age with any other social status including gender, disability or gender identity. Nevertheless, the **11th Report of the Specialization Commission on Ageing** emphasizes the fact that older women have different experiences than those of older men. This report sets an objective to "increase and promote employment opportunities for the demographic group of older women by considering the share of older women in poverty in the overall population, the possibility of women living longer than men as well as the fact that older women living alone outnumber older men".

Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper and Plan of Action (2014-2018) devised by the Ministry of National Education considers older persons and women to be among the disadvantaged groups with respect to access to lifelong learning opportunities. **TIHEK Strategic Plan** (2019-2023) individually addresses the "practices related to women's rights in the justice system" and

the implementation of “measures to facilitate older persons’ access to justice”. In a similar vein, the **Action Plan on Human Rights** (2021) drafted by the Ministry of Justice individually addresses the rights of older persons and women’s rights. On the other hand, the **IV. National Plan of Action on Combatting Violence Against Women** (2021-2025), prepared by the Ministry of Family and Social Services (ASHB), has an objective of facilitating access to justice for women who have been subject to violence. In addition to immigrant women, women and girls with disabilities, the plan also includes older women among the groups that require special policies. **The Plan of Action on Healthy Ageing** (2015-2020), drawn up by the Ministry of Health, states that “it is important to include gender based approach in strategies in order to ensure that older women and older men receive the services according to their needs”, noting that this is the only way the plan of action will succeed.

Women and older persons are usually regarded as two separate groups in the strategic plans and action plans of local governments. However, **the Local Plan of Action on Equality** (2021-2024), prepared by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İBB) is different in this regard and addresses older women as a separate group in its plan of action. Even though the policies and services targeting older women are limited, this local plan of action could set an example for similar plans by other local governments thanks to its intersectional perspective. None of the policy papers reviewed in this part of the report refers to older LGBTI+.

C. Mapping the Capacities of Civil Society Organizations and Other Public Actors (Structural Monitoring)

Most women organizations in Turkey rarely address the intersection of age with gender in their rights advocacy and/or monitoring work cognizant of intersectionality. Although the proportion of older women within the organizations is not low, there is only a few women organizations working actively on this demographic group. LGBTI+ organizations, where the age average of organization members is much younger, has only recently been focusing on the experiences of older LGBTI+. After briefly touching on women NGOs and LGBTI+ NGOs that either focus only on ageing or are actively working on ageing, this part of the report provides an evaluation of rights based on monitoring efforts.

Since 2019, **May 17 Association** has been working on the intersectionality of old age, and sexual orientation + gender identity on the basis of their 40+ Lubunya Initiative. In addition to its work related to HIV, intersex and local governments, May 17 Association's advocacy and activism work has become visible with the Older LGBTI+ project conducted as part of its Ageing Studies with the support of Etkiniz and the EU. In this project, the association first produced a report on the situation of older LGBTI+ in Turkey and across the world, followed by a book compiling the good practices, including the content of their online seminar held on the Rights and Problems of Older LGBTI+. The association currently continues its work on 40+ Lubunya Initiative.

Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) - New Ways Association is a civil society organization working to "ensure full equality for women and eliminate all forms of discrimination on the ground of sex or sexuality." This woman organization has declared itself to be against "all forms of discrimination on the ground of sex, gender, age, race, religion, political or other opinion, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, health, disability, descent, civil status, immigrant or refugee status or any other status". Furthermore, it effectively carries out rights based activities against these forms of discrimination.

Association of Women with Disabilities (ENG-KAD) aims at, inter alia, "ensuring access by women with disabilities to mechanisms for claiming rights and combatting all forms of discrimination" and includes older women with disabilities in its work and rights advocacy efforts. The Association has monitored the rights of all women and girls with disabilities, including older persons with disabilities, during the pandemic and published a report on "Monitoring the Human Rights of Women with Disabilities during Covid-19 Pandemic".

KEIG Platform, “bringing together 32 women organizations from 16 provinces working in different areas of gender equality, including labor, violence against women by men and political participation” does not refer to age discrimination in its approach to multi discrimination against women. However, the platform, in its 2015 publication “Informatory Note on Women’s Labor and Employment” indirectly alludes to family caregiving to older persons, which, according to the platform, constitutes a barrier to women’s employment, without exploring the role of older women in caregiving. The same report addresses old age insurance under a separate heading as a concern for women in the social security system.

Mavi Kalem Social Assistance and Solidarity Association states its position in support of freedom, human rights, democratic rights, health rights, gender equality, women’s rights, LGBTI+ rights, the rights of the child, and the prevention of discrimination. Although the association does not list the rights of older persons among these rights, it is engaged in activities that do not exclude older women and LGBTI+. In fact, in 2014, the association published a “Report on Women’s Health Policies in Turkey” with the aim of raising awareness of and finding solutions to diverse health problems based on gender and age. In this sense, the association has offered an intersectional perspective in the review of women’s health problems.

There are only a few civil society organizations working on ageing in Turkey and among these a fewer of them are engaged in rights advocacy, and merely a minimal number of organizations concurrently place importance to both age and gender. Some NGOs working in the field of ageing are geriatrics associations that function more like a professional organization and some others are raising awareness of old age in order to draw attention to the problems and needs of older persons. Associations that set off to conduct rights advocacy are quite new and consequently, their rights based advocacy work is relatively few.

Senex-Association for Ageing Studies, set up in 2019, works in the field of ageing with the aim of “developing an evidence-based scientific infrastructure, publicizing existing problems or the strengths, promoting public interest and awareness, and producing publications to raise awareness” in respect of the ageing process and old age and with a priority in higher education and social policy area. Since January 2021, Senex has been publishing monthly reports on Monitoring Violence and Violations against Older Persons, which are posted on its website. These reports include reporting and monitoring of violence, abuse, negligence, violations and discrimination against older persons based on a compilation of news items in the media and give importance to how these rights violations take place in relation to gender. Furthermore, by mid-2021, Senex completed its work on “Rights Violations and Discriminatory Practices against Older Persons during the Covid-19 Pandemic” and published a report on its website. The report reviews daily news items on rights violations and discriminatory practices against older persons published by several national newspapers in the space of six months. In addition,

by using discourse analysis, the report criticizes the media language that spreads discrimination. The report stresses that the discourse surrounding older women is particularly discriminatory. "SOLIS\e: Planning Age Friendly Spaces and Rights Based Services" is another important project launched by the association in late 2021. Under the project, which is at its initial stage, trainings will be given to institutions and persons that provide services to older persons and work on the development of age friendly spaces.

Set up in 2014, **65+ Elder Rights Association** is the first and only civil society organization in Turkey that conducts rights advocacy by older persons and for older persons specifically, with a view to pioneering the development of social policies on ageing. The association adopts a rights-based approach with the purpose of "raising awareness of age-based rights and gender problems related to age as well as focusing on the combat against age discrimination at the individual and societal level". In 2021, the association launched the "Digital Inclusion Project for 65+", funded by the EU with the goal of providing digital inclusion trainings for persons over 65. The project does not have a gender perspective.

Social Rights and Research Association (TOHAD) aims at carrying out rights advocacy activities for groups at risk of discrimination, abuse and loss of rights, including "persons with disabilities, persons with chronic diseases, older persons, women and children". Under the "Project on Monitoring the Rights of Older Persons" launched in 2013, TOHAD carried out a reporting exercise on the loss of rights experienced especially by "multi-disadvantaged persons with disabilities" and conducted lobbying activities as well. A major output of this project was the 2020 "Report on Monitoring the Rights of Persons with Disabilities from Legislation to Implementation", which took gender into account, but still failed to examine the rights of persons with disabilities based on the intersectionality of age and gender.

Foundation for Promoting a Life in Common sets its first and foremost objective as follows: In the face of "inhumane circumstances including hunger, misery, migration, diseases and inadequate education" caused by conflicts and wars and exacerbated by, inter alia, "differences in sex, ethnicity, religion or denominational faith" to the detriment of billions of people ranging from children, women to older persons and persons with disabilities, the Foundation aims to create a world that is libertarian and a champion of democracy and human rights, where labor takes priority. In 2020, the Foundation launched a project of a series of videos to draw attention to the rights violations experienced by "segregated and isolated older persons" during the COVID-19 pandemic. This project does not have a gender sensitive approach.

IV. Indicators and Data Sources

A. International Indices and Mapping the Indicators in the Field of Ageing

Table 1: International indices with indicators in the field of ageing

Index	Source	Components	Indicators
Human Development Index (HDI)	UN	Health	Life expectancy at birth, women
		Employment	Proportion of persons who receive Old Age/Retirement Pension
Indicators of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	UN	1. No Poverty	1.1.1. Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)
			1.2.1. Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age
			1.2.2. Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions
			1.3.1. Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable
		3. Good Health and Well-Being	3.3.1. Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations
			3.a.1. Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older
		4. Quality Education	4.4.1. Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill
			4.3.1. Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal

			education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex
			4.6.1. Percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex
		5. Gender Equality	5.2.2. Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence
			5.4.1. Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location
		8. Decent Work and Economic Growth	8.5.1. Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities
			8.5.2. Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
		10. Reduced Inequalities	10.2.1. Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by age, sex and persons with disabilities
		11. Sustainable Cities and Communities	11.2.1. Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
			11.7.1. Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
			11.7.2. Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months
Gender Equality Index	European Institute for Gender Equality	Work	Full time equivalent employment rate (%) (50-64 & 65+)
			Employed people in education, human health and social work activities (%) (50-64 & 65+)
			Ability to take an hour or two off

			during working hours to take care of personal or family matters (%) (50-64 & 65+)
			Career Prospects Index (0-100) (50-64 & 65+)
	Money		Mean monthly earnings (Purchasing Power Standard) (50-64 & 65+)
			Mean equivalent net income (Purchasing Power Standard) (50-64 & 65+)
			Population at-risk-of-poverty (%) (50-64 & 65+)
			Income Distribution \$20/80 (50-64 & 65+)
	Knowledge		Graduates of tertiary education (%) (50-64 & 65+)
			People participating in formal or non-formal education and training (%) (50-64 & 65+)
	Time		People caring for and educating their children or grandchildren, elderly or people with disabilities, every day (%) (50-64 & 65+)
			People doing cooking and/or housework, every day (%) (50-64 & 65+)
			Workers doing sporting, cultural or leisure activities outside of their home, at least daily or several times a week (%) (50-64 & 65+)
			Workers involved in voluntary or charitable activities, at least once a month (%) (50-64 & 65+)
	Health		Self-perceived health, good or very good (%) (50-64 & 65+)
			People who don't smoke (%) (65-74 & 74+)
			People who are not involved in harmful drinking (%) (65-74 & 74+)
			People doing physical activities (%) (65-74 & 74+)
			People consuming fruits and vegetables (%) (65-74 & 74+)

			Population without unmet needs for medical examination (%) (50-64 & 65+) People without unmet needs for dental examination (%) (50-64 & 65+)
Global Gender Gap Index	World Economic Forum	Health and Survival	Healthy life expectancy, year
Active Ageing Index*	UNECE	Employment	Employment rate (55-59)
			Employment rate (60-64)
			Employment rate (65+)
		Participation in Society	Voluntary activities: percentage of population aged 55+ providing voluntary work
			Care to children, grandchildren: Percentage of population aged 55+ providing care to their children and/or grandchildren
			Care to older adults: Percentage of population aged 55+ providing care to older relatives
			Percentage of population taking part in civil or religious activities (55+)
		Independent living	Physical activity (55+)
			Access to health insurance (55+)
			No difficulty in ADLs (55+)
			No difficulty in IADLs (55+)
			Relative median income (65+)
			No poverty risk (65+)
		Capacity/Enabling Environment	Independent living arrangements (55+)
			Remaining life expectancy at age 55
			Share of healthy life years in the remaining life expectancy at age 55
			Mental well-being (55+)
			Subjective welfare (55+)
			Social connectedness: (55+)
Physical security (55+)			
Use of ICT (55-74)			
Educational attainment (55-74)			
Global Age Watch Index**	Help Age International	Income Security	Proportion of people aged 65-plus in receipt of a pension (65+)
			Proportion of people aged 60-plus living in households where the equivalent income/consumption is

			below the poverty line threshold of 50 per cent of the national equivalent median income/consumption (60+)
			Average income/consumption of people aged 60-plus as a proportion of average income/consumption for the rest of society (60+)
		Health Status	Life expectancy at age 60 (by sex)
			Healthy life expectancy at age 60 (by sex)
			Relative Psychological Wellbeing (50+ Proportion of people who feel their lives have an important purpose or meaning)
		Capability	Employment rate (55-64)
			Proportion of the population aged 60-plus with secondary or higher education (60+)
		Enabling Environment	Percentage of people who have relatives or friends to count on if they are in trouble whenever they need them (50+)
			Percentage of people who feel safe walking alone at night in the area where they live (50+)
			Percentage of people who feel satisfied with their freedom to choose what they do with their life (50+)
			Percentage of people who feel satisfied with the local public transportation systems (50+)

* Gender Gap calculation is based on a female versus male comparison of all indicators, and the countries are listed accordingly.

** Global Age Watch Index collects data disaggregated by sex.

B. Ageing and Gender Equality Indicators on Which Data Are Collected and/or Used in Turkey

Table 2: Current indicators of ageing

Subject	Relevant Human Right/rights	Indicators (with available data)	Data source	Method of Data Collection	Frequency of Data Collection
Right to Education	Right to Education	Proportion of Illiterate Older Population by Sex	TURKSTAT, National Education Statistics Database	Administrative registry data	Once a year
	Self-actualization				
	Prohibition of - Discrimination	School Completion Rates of Older Population by Level of Education and Sex	TURKSTAT, National Education Statistics Database	Administrative registry data	Once a year
	Gender Equality	Number of People in 45+ Age Group Who Completed Literacy Course, by Sex	MEB, Dir. Gen. of Lifelong Learning, MEB Education Statistics	Administrative registry data	Once a year
Right to Health	Right to Health	Life Expectancy at Birth by Sex (Year)	TURKSTAT, Life Tables	Administrative registry data	Once in every 2 years
	Prohibition of - Discrimination	Life Expectancy at Age 65 by Sex (Year)	TURKSTAT, Life Tables	Administrative registry data	Once in every 2 years
		Healthy Life Expectancy at Birth by Sex (Year)	TURKSTAT, Life Tables	Administrative registry data	Once in every 2 years
	Gender Equality	Healthy Life Expectancy at Age 65 by Sex (Year)	TURKSTAT, Life Tables	Administrative registry data	Once in every 2 years
	Right to an Independent (Autonomous) Life	Distribution by Sex and Age Group of Individuals Experiencing Difficulty in Walking Without Assistance or Mobility Aids	TURKSTAT, Turkey Health Survey	Household Survey Data	2012
					2014
	Right to a Decent Standard of Living	Proportion of Individuals Experiencing Difficulty in Walking Up or Down Stairs Without Assistance or Mobility Aids by Sex and Age Group	TURKSTAT, Turkey Health Survey	Household Survey Data	2016
					2019
Self-actualization				2012	

		Proportion of Individuals with Visual Impairment by Sex and Age	TURKSTAT, Turkey Health Survey	Household Survey Data	2012 2014 2016 2019
		Proportion of Individuals with Hearing Impairment by Sex and Age	TURKSTAT, Turkey Health Survey	Household Survey Data	2012 2014 2016 2019
		Proportion of Individuals with Learning and Memory Difficulties Compared to Their Peers by Sex and Age	TURKSTAT, Turkey Health Survey	Household Survey Data	2012 2014 2016 2019
		Proportion of Older Persons Experiencing Difficulties with Personal Care by Age Group and Sex	TURKSTAT, Turkey Health Survey	Household Survey Data	2012 2014 2016 2019
		Number of Persons with Disabilities Still Alive and Recorded in the Database by Sex and Age	Ministry of Health, National Disability Data System	Administrative registry data	-
		Obesity Prevalence of Older Population by Sex	TURKSTAT, Turkey Health Survey	Household Survey Data	Once in every 2 years
		Number of Deaths of Older Persons by Age Group and Sex	TURKSTAT, Death Statistics	Administrative registry data	Once a year
		Proportion of Deceased Older Persons by Cause of Death and Sex	TURKSTAT, Death and Causes of Death Statistics	Administrative registry data	Once a year
		Number of Older Persons Who Committed Suicide by Sex, Age Group and Cause of Suicide	TURKSTAT, Suicide Statistics	Administrative registry data	Once a year
		Proportion of Deaths of Older Persons due to Alzheimer Disease	TURKSTAT, Death and Causes of Death Statistics	Administrative registry data	Once a year
Economic Situation	Right to Work	Poverty Rate of Older Population by Sex	TURKSTAT, Income Distribution and Living Conditions Survey	Household Survey Data	Once a year
	Gender Equality				
	Self-actualization	Proportion of Older Population at Risk of	EuroStat	Quantitative	2020

		Poverty or Social Exclusion by Sex			
	Right to an Independent (Autonomous) Life	Material and Social Deprivation Rate by Age Group, Sex and the Most Frequent Activity	EuroStat	Quantitative	Once a year
	Prohibition of - Discrimination	Labour Force Participation Rate of Older Persons by Age	TURKSTAT, Labor Force Statistics	Administrative registry data	Once a year
		Employment Rate of Older Population by Sex	TURKSTAT, Income and Living Conditions Survey	Household Survey Data	Once a year
		Wage Gap by Age (percentage)	TURKSTAT, Income and Living Conditions Survey	Household Survey Data	2015 2018
		Gender Pension Gap (%)	EuroStat	Labor Force Statistics	Once a year
		Gender Coverage Rate in Pension by Age Group (65-74)	EuroStat	Labor Force Statistics	Once a year
		Number of Older Persons Placed in Jobs by Province and Sex	ISKUR	Administrative registry data	Once a month
		Number of Registered Unemployed Older Persons by Province and Sex	ISKUR	Administrative registry data	Once a month
		Number of Older Persons Entitled to Unemployment Benefit By Province and Sex	ISKUR	Administrative registry data	Once a month
		Number of Active Labor Force Programs for Older Persons by Province and Sex	ISKUR	Administrative registry data	Once a month
		Number of Active Social Security Beneficiaries Aged 65-plus by Sex	SGK, Insured and Workplace Statistics	Administrative registry data	Once a year
		Number of Benefits and Pension Beneficiaries Under Social Protection	TURKSTAT, Social Protection Statistics	Administrative registry data	Once a year

Participati on	Self-actualization	Political Party Membership Rate of Population 65-plus by Sex	KONDA, Ageing Report	Quantitative Data - representative	2008 2018
		CSO Membership Rate of Population Aged 65-plus by Sex	KONDA, Ageing Report	Quantitative Data - representative	2008 2018
		Internet Usage Rate of Older Persons in the Last Three Months by Sex	TURKSTAT	Survey on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Usage in Households	Once a year

C. Current Situation in Turkey

Population ageing is a phenomenon observed across the world today. The population is ageing particularly in developed countries, driven by the increased life expectancy at birth and the dramatic decrease in fertility rate. The population in western societies is already considered aged, and the older population which is above 25 percent in some of these countries has the impact of reshaping these societies with their specific needs and problems.

By 2020, the proportion of older population to the overall population in Turkey is 9,5 percent. In 2020, Turkey ranked the 66th oldest country among 167 countries (TURKSTAT, 2020). As this ranking suggests, Turkey is currently not considered a fully aged population; nonetheless it is among the rapidly ageing countries.

According to population projections by TURKSTAT in 2018, population aged 65 and over in Turkey will rise to 8.867.951 by 2023 and will increase threefold to 27 million 413 thousand 359 by 2080. Consequently, older population is projected to rise to 25,6 percent in the overall population. Indeed, between 2015 and 2022, older population in Turkey rose by 22,5 percent to 7 million 953 thousand 555. The proportion of older population in the overall population rose to 9,5 percent, with men amounting to 44,2 percent and women 55,8 percent.

The proportions of young-old population (65-74) and oldest-old (85+) population within the old population in Turkey have increased in the last five years. A rise in the population aged 85 and over would bring along different needs and claims to rights. The median age for women in Turkey rose from 32,7 in 2015 to 33,4 in 2020. Although current information shows that women make up a larger proportion in the population aged 85 and over, it is not possible to access the age and sex disaggregated data in the TURKSTAT database. Nevertheless, it is important to have access to the female-male ratios in different stages of ageing, considering the fact that women and men experience life stages differently as a result of the intersectionality of age and gender.

Life expectancy at birth in Turkey is 78,6 (TURKSTAT, Life stages, 2017-2019). Life expectancy differs by sex and rises to 81,3 for women. Women tend to live longer than men due to biological factors; consequently, there are significant differences between women and men in life expectancy at birth and at age 65. Life expectancy for men at age 65 is 16,3 years, while it is 19,6 years for women. In other words, the difference between women and men in life expectancy at birth is 2,7 years, while it is 3,3 years at age 65. This means that women's experience of stages of old age lasts longer than that of men. On the other hand, although women tend to outlive men, they are, compared to men, at a disadvantage in living a healthy life especially in the advanced stages of life. 2017-2019 data by TURKSTAT show that healthy life expectancy at birth is 59,1 years for men and 54,4 years for women. That means that women are more likely to live a longer but unhealthy life in later stages of life. Consequently, we are left facing the reality of an older women population that will have to deal with health problems, with varying health and care needs.

Population ageing is manifest in the fact that the median age in Turkish population is increasingly getting older over the years. The median age of 19,1 for men and 23,4 for women in 1935 rose to 31,4 and 32,7 respectively in 2018. According to population projections by TURKSTAT, the median age will be 46,3 for women and 43,8 for men in 2080. Consequently, while half of the women population was aged 32,7 and over in 2018, half of the women population will be made up of women aged 46,3 and over in 2080. This situation would arguably have a profound impact as much on the structure of the society as on women's experiences.

As women tend to live longer than men, they are also more likely to become widowed. Indeed, the proportion of widowed older women is 47,7 percent by 2020, compared with 11,6 percent of widowed older men. On the other hand, while the proportion of married men among the overall older men is 83,8 percent, it is merely 45,8 percent for women. In Turkey, remarriage among women is not as common as it is among men due to both the norms based on gender inequalities with respect to remarrying after the death of a spouse and the fact that women outlive their spouses. Therefore, compared to men, women are highly more likely to live alone in later stages of life. Women constitute 75,3 of 1 million 478 thousand 346 older persons living alone (TURKSTAT, 2020). A comparison between the data of 2015 and 2020 reveals an increase in the proportion of divorced women in the population aged 65 and over in the last five years.

According to the data on the proportion of older population by household types, there is at least one older person in 5 million 903 thousand 324 households in 2020, with the older person living alone in 1 million 478 thousand 346 of these households. (TURKSTAT Address Based Population Registry System, 2020). Moreover, living alone is more common among older women than it is among older men. 75,3 percent of older single-person households are women, while 24,7 percent are men.

Literacy rates of older persons in Turkey in 2019 reveals that illiteracy rate of older women is 4,8 times more than that of men. (TURKSTAT, National Education Statistics Database, 2020). Illiteracy rate of older women is 26 percent, compared to a mere 5,4 percent of older men. Besides, the proportion of graduates of primary school among older men is 52,9 percent in 2019, compared to 39,7 percent of older women. A comparison between 2015 and 2019 points to a fall in the illiteracy rate of women and literate women who have not completed a school education, also showing a rise in the education levels, in particular primary school and above. However, the proportion of the level of primary education and above among older men remains quite higher than that of older women.

There is a striking inequality between women and men in terms of older population's participation in Turkey's labor force. 20,1 percent of older men participate in labor force, compared to a mere 5,6 percent of older women. Employment rate of older men is 3,5 times higher than that of older women. Dependency rate of older persons in Turkey was 14,1 percent in 2020, rising from 12,2 percent in 2015 and showing an increase in the space of four years. It is expected to rise even higher in the future according to population projections. (TURKSTAT, Labor Force Statistics, 2019).

Old age poverty among women is higher than it is among men based on the sex differences in labor force participation. In 2019, the proportion of older men in poverty was 12,1 percent, compared with 15,9 of older women in poverty. Furthermore, while old age poverty was higher in 2015, there has been a decline both for women and men in the space of four years. However, while poverty rate among older men dropped from 17,8 percent to 12,1 percent, the decline was smaller for older women, from 18,6 percent to 15,9 percent. (TURKSTAT, Income and Living Conditions Survey, 2015-2019).

According to EuroStat data in 2020, 28,7 percent of men aged over 65 and 32,6 percent of women aged over 65 are at risk of poverty or social exclusion. According to the same data, 33 percent of individuals aged over 65 and living alone is at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Turkey. However, it is not known how this proportion applies to women aged over 65 and living alone.

Sex inequalities in the health status of older population in Turkey point to, first and foremost, the higher obesity rate among older women compared to older men. Between 2010-2019, obesity became more prevalent among both older women and older men; nonetheless, the 5,7-point rise in obesity among older women is still higher than the 4,7-point rise observed among older men (TURKSTAT, Turkey Health Survey, 2010-2019). According to TURKSTAT data in 2019, 28 percent of older women and 14,5 percent of older men reported experiencing difficulty with having a bath and taking a shower. Compared to 14 percent of older men, 25,9 percent of older women reported experiencing difficulty with getting into bed or standing up from/sitting on a chair.

According to the data in the yearly bulletins published by the Directorate General of Services for People with Disabilities and Older People (EYHGM), by August 2021, there are 324 thousand 401 older women with disabilities among persons with disabilities registered in the database and still alive. The same figure is 247 thousand 888 for older men with disabilities. "Individuals who have not applied to hospitals to get a health board report for disability or who have not made contact to receive services" are not included in these figures (EYHGM, 2021).

According to data in 2019, the distribution by sex of causes of death among older persons reveals that the major cause of death for older women and men is the diseases of the circulatory system (TURKSTAT, Death and Causes of Death Statistics, 2019). The likelihood of death due to benign and malignant tumors among men in old age is higher compared to that of older women. Between 2010-2019, death among older persons due to Alzheimer disease remains, as an unchanging reality, higher for women than men. The data also shows that the sex gap has further widened over the years in deaths caused by Alzheimer disease, which is increasingly becoming more prevalent among older persons.

Finally, sex inequalities are also evident in the internet usage rates of older persons in Turkey. Although the internet usage rate of older population rose from 5,6 percent to 27,1 percent between 2015-2020, internet usage rate among older women was 20,4 percent in 2020, compared to 54,9 percent of older men. (TURKSTAT, Survey on Information and Communication Technology Usage in Households). Gender inequalities in access to technology and internet usage is more evident in old age, which appears to be a generational

phenomenon. Although technology and internet usage is observably higher in men than in women in other stages of life, the generation aged over 65 today has been subject to sharper gender inequalities since childhood, especially in education and working life. Therefore, although future generations are expected to have lower proportions of this type of inequality based on sex, it is not difficult to anticipate that future generations will also experience similar gender inequalities.

Data of August 2021 on care for older persons in Turkey show that the number of nursing homes under the Ministry of Family and Social Services is 162, accommodating 13 thousand 970 older persons (EYHGM, 2021). Between 2002 and 2020, the number of nursing homes under the Ministry increased by 2.5-fold (EYHGM, 2020). In addition to the nursing homes under the Ministry, there are 2 thousand 399 older persons receiving care services in 21 nursing homes run by other public institutions and 10 thousand 744 older persons in 268 private nursing homes. In addition, there are 25 assisted living facilities and 31 day care centers for older persons that are included in the capacity of nursing homes under the Ministry (EYHGM, 2021). However, demographic data on older persons receiving care in these institutions, including distribution by sex, are not shared.

D. Ageing and Gender Equality Indicators Recommended for Data Collection in Turkey

Table 3: Suggested and accessible indicators of ageing

Subject	Relevant Human Right/Rights	Indicator	Data source	Method of Data Collection	Frequency of Data Collection
Right to Education	Monitoring	Distribution of Participants of Literacy Courses by Sex and Age (SDG 4.6.1)	MEB, Directorate General of Lifelong Learning	Quantitative	Once a year
	Independent (Autonomous) Life	Distribution of External High School Graduates (Open Education) by Sex and Age (SDG 4.3.1)	MEB, Directorate General of Lifelong Learning	Quantitative	Once a year
	Older Persons' Self-Actualization	Participation Rate of Older Women in Formal and Non-Formal Education (SDG 4.3.1)	MEB, Education Statistics	Quantitative	Once a year
	Prohibition of - Discrimination				
Right to Health	Monitoring	Distribution of Major Chronic, Cognitive and Mental Diseases by Age and Sex	Ministry of Health, Directorate General of Public Health	Quantitative	Once a year
	Older Persons' Self-Actualization		TURKSTAT		
	Prohibition of - Discrimination	Utilization Rates of Primary Healthcare Institutions by Age, Sex and Disability	Ministry of Health, Directorate General of Public Health	Quantitative	Once a year
			TURKSTAT		
	Independent (Autonomous) Life	Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations (SDG 3.3.1)	Ministry of Health, Directorate General of Public Health SDG Reports	Quantitative	Once a year

Economic Situation	Right to Work	Daily Working Hours of the Employed by Age Group and Sex	TURKSTAT, Labor Force Statistics	Quantitative	Once a year	
	Older Persons' Self-Actualization	Gender Pension Gap by Age Groups	TURKSTAT, Income and Living Conditions Survey	Quantitative	Once a year	
		Proportion of Population Aged 65+ Living Alone and At Risk of Poverty and Social Exclusion	TURKSTAT, Income and Living Conditions Survey	Quantitative	Once a year	
	Monitoring	Number of Older Women Who Participated in Job Placement Programs	ISKUR	Quantitative	Once a month	
		Number of Older Women Who Took Carer's Leave	Ministry of Labor	Qualitative	Once a year	
		Availability of Information on the Classification of Complaints Filed with Provincial Directorates of Labor, by Sex and Age	Ministry of Labor	Qualitative	Once a year	
			TIHEK	Qualitative	Once a year	
	Monitoring	Respect for the Dignity of Older Persons	Proportion of Population Below the International Poverty Line*, by Sex, Age, Employment Status and Geographical Location (Urban/Rural) (SDG 1.1.1)	TURKSTAT	Qualitative	Once a year
			Proportion of Men, Women and Children of All Ages Living In Poverty In All Its Dimensions** According To National Definitions (SDG 1.2.2)	TURKSTAT	Qualitative	Once a year
	Right to Transport	Independent (Autonomous) Life	Distribution of Older Population Using Free Public Transport by Sex	Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure	Quantitative	1 in every 3 months

	Older Persons' Self-Actualization		Metropolitan Municipalities		
Right to Care	Care services	Distribution of People Receiving Care Services at Nursing Homes by Age, Disability and Sex	ASHB, EYHGM	Quantitative	Once a year
		Distribution of People Receiving Care Services at Day Care Centers by Age, Disability and Sex	ASHB, EYHGM	Quantitative	Once a year
			ASHB EYHGM	Quantitative	Once a year
Violence-abuse	Respect for the Dignity of Older Persons	Distribution of Women Staying at Women's Shelters by Age Group	ASHB, Directorate General on the Status of Women	Quantitative	Once a year
	Monitoring				

* International Poverty Line is the absolute poverty line set by the World Bank. It is set at \$1.90 a day for 2015-21.

** Poverty in the context of Sustainable Development Goals is calculated by using the Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI). MPI aims at measuring poverty in all its dimensions, addressing, in addition to the economic outputs of poverty, indicators of sub-headings including education, health and living standards. Therefore, the objective is to consider poverty in all its dimensions, including economic, social, political and legal dimensions. MPI could not be calculated for Turkey due to lack of data. For more information:

https://www.tr.undp.org/content/turkey/tr/home/library/human_development/2020-Multidimensional-Poverty-Index-MPI.html

Table 4: Suggested indicators of ageing that require research

Subject	Relevant Human Right/Human Rights	Indicator	Data Source	Method of Data Collection	Frequency of Data Collection
Right to Education	Monitoring	Distribution of Students of the University of the Third Age by Age, Disability and Sex	MEB, Directorate General of Lifelong Learning	Quantitative	Once a year
	Independent (Autonomous) Life	Distribution of Participants of Lifelong Learning Programs by Age, Disability and Sex	MEB, Directorate General of Lifelong Learning	Quantitative	Once a year

	Older Persons' Self-Actualization	Barriers to Older Women's Participation in Formal and Non-Formal Education	MEB	Qualitative	At the frequency required by the study	
	Prohibition of - Discrimination	Older Women's Access to Lifelong Programs and the Challenges They Face	MEB	Qualitative	At the frequency required by the study	
Right to Health	Monitoring	Reasons Older Women Cannot Access and/or Benefit From Health Services	Ministry of Health, Directorate General of Public Health	Qualitative	Once a year	
	Older Persons' Self-Actualization		Reports by CSOs			
	Prohibition of - Discrimination	Distribution of People Benefiting From Ministry of Health's Informative Trainings on Women's and Reproductive Health, by Age	Ministry of Health, Department of Women's and Reproductive Health	Quantitative - Qualitative	At the frequency required by the study	
	Independent (Autonomous) Life		Number and Quality of Trainings Provided to Personnel of Geriatrics Units on Women's and Reproductive Health in the Advanced Stages of Life	Ministry of Health, Directorate General of Public Health	Quantitative - Qualitative	At the frequency required by the study
			Number and Quality of Trainings Provided to Healthcare Personnel on Ageism and Age Discrimination	Ministry of Health, Directorate General of Public Health	Quantitative - Qualitative	At the frequency required by the study
			Challenges in Old Age in Accessing Sexual and Reproductive Health Institutions and Services	Reports by CSOs	Qualitative	At the frequency required by the study
			Older Women's Access to Information Services on Mental Health and the Challenges They Face	Ministry of Health, Directorate General of Public Health	Quantitative - Qualitative	At the frequency required by the study
Economic Situation	Right to Work	Number of Vocational and Training Programs for Older Women with Disabilities	Ministry of Labor	Qualitative	Once a year	

	Older Persons' Self-Actualization	(CEDAW M.3 & 11)			
		Distribution of Retirees by Sex and Age	Ministry of Labor	Quantitative	Once a year
		Reasons of Retirement by Sex and Age	Ministry of Labor	Qualitative	At the frequency required by the study
	Independent (Autonomous) Life	Problems Facing Older Women in Accessing Employment	Ministry of Justice TIHEK	Qualitative	At the frequency required by the study
	Monitoring	Proportion of Population That Has Convenient Access To Public Transport, By Sex, Age And Persons With Disabilities (SDG 11.2.1)	Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Metropolitan Municipalities	Quantitative	Once every three months
Violence-abuse	Respect for the Dignity of Older Persons	Proportion of women aged over 65 subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence (SDG 5.2.2)	ASHB, Directorate General on the Status of Women	Quantitative	At the frequency required by the study
	Monitoring	Proportion of Persons Victim of Physical or Sexual Harassment, By Sex, Age, Disability Status and Place of Occurrence, In The Previous 12 Months (SDG 11.7.2)	ASHB, Directorate General on the Status of Women	Quantitative	At the frequency required by the study

V. List of Concepts and Technical Terms

Instrumental Activities of Daily Living: include preparing meals; managing finances, paying bills; managing transportation beyond walking distance; house repairs, shopping; household chores; going to a doctor and buying medication.

Biological Age: refers to the age of an individual characterized by changes in anatomy and physiology that occur over time as the individual ages.

Biological Ageing: refers to physical changes that take place in the human body according to heredity, health and working conditions.

Life Expectancy at Birth: is a measure used to refer to the average number of years a newborn can expect to live, which is equal to the age at the time of death.

Home Care: refers to healthcare services provided in the client's own setting, including healthcare both during the diagnosis and post-treatment process, follow-up care for a chronic disease, as well as preventive health services and examinations without any existing health problems.

Day Care: refers to services provided to older persons for a variety of purposes, including improving the living environment of healthy older persons who live alone or with their families/relatives as well as older persons who have dementia, Alzheimer's disease and similar diseases; helping them with recreational activities for their leisure time; assisting them to meet their social psychological and health needs; providing guidance and professional counseling; providing support services to older persons with the difficulties they face and with activities of daily living; enriching their social relations by setting up activity groups based on their interests and organizing social activities accordingly; increasing the number of activities and enhancing older persons' quality of life by ensuring solidarity and understanding with their families when needed.

Activities of Daily Living: include mobility, elimination, bathing, dressing, toileting and feeding. The ability of older persons to perform ADLs is defined as either independent, partially independent or dependent.

Chronological Age: refers to the age of a person as measured by the calendar time that has elapsed from the person's birth to a given date.

Population Ageing: refers to a change in the age composition of a population, marked with a decline in the share of children and youth and a relative rise in the share of older persons (aged 60 and over).

Palliative Care: refers to a medical field and a type of care that provides assistance to patients who cannot fully recover from their current illnesses or who require supportive care in end of life.

Median Age: refers to the age of a person in mid-point when all the members of a population, ranging from a newborn baby to the oldest person, is listed from the youngest to the oldest.

Long Term Care: refers to care services provided over time, at home or in a professional setting, to individuals at an advanced age who require assistance and care.

Ageism/Age Discrimination: Although the term “ageism” also covers discrimination against young people, it is mostly used to refer to discrimination against older persons on the ground of their old age.

Old-Age Dependency: is the number of people in the population group aged 65-plus for every 100 people in the adult population aged between 15 and 64.

Ageing in Place: is the “increased ability of an older person to live in his/her own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably” instead of receiving institutional care. (Kalinkara vd., 2016).

Resources

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