

# Active Labour Market Strategy Project, New Opportunities Programme

## **Professional Training Program for the Girls with High School Degrees from Poor Households and the Encouragement of their Participation to Labor Force**

### Summary

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The project aims mainly to provide professional skills to 100 female students having migrated to Istanbul from rural areas, belonging to lower income groups that had not been able to attend university. With this project, it is aimed to contribute to the social and cultural developments of our young girls coming from rural areas, whose families are from the low income group and to help them acquire professional skills when they become a part of the labor force. Istanbul has been selected as the implementation area of the project activities. The Marmara region and especially Istanbul is the region where the rate of population increase is highest with 27.7%. Our young girls that are high school graduates living in regions such as Zeytinburnu, Ümraniye, Sultanbeyli, Kağıthane and Fatih in Istanbul with intensive rural population and coming from families belonging to the low income group have been selected as target group for this project. The project comprises of two main areas of activity. These are i) training activities, ii) guidance and career consultancy services. Of the total 100 students, 60 will be provided with training on "Office Management and Executive Secretarial Services" and 40 of them will be trained in the field of "Tourism and Hotel Management". With the career consultancy services to be provided, efforts shall be given to determine the girls that shall attend the courses and to provide them with employment opportunities. The successful participants shall be awarded with success certificates to be issued by the Continuous Training Center of İTÜ.

### Objectives

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The aim of this project is to provide professional skills to young girls having migrated from rural areas to Istanbul, living in households that belong to lower income groups, to provide them with the opportunity to become a component of the labor force with qualified skills, to provide opportunities for the improvement of their social status by improving their socioeconomic skills and to increase the role of women, who are at a disadvantageous position, in total employment. In Turkey, women are encouraged for a good education as indicated in the National Employment Policy Recommendations of the Ministry of Labor of the Turkish Republic. Especially the encouragement of active employment policies aiming to provide professional skills to women having remained outside the scope of formal education is recommended. Especially supporting young girls who have not been able to find the opportunity to continue their education in rural areas and helping them to become members of qualified labor force are among these recommendations.

The competition faced by the Turkish economy at the international level and the problems of adaptation caused by this competition affects deeply the level of employment and the ability to employ the existing labor force in economies such as that of Turkey where structural problems are present in the labor market. The high number of the unskilled labor force and the incompatibilities of qualifications of the existing labor force rank first among the structural problems about the labor market. Especially the problem of unemployment caused by the labor force having been broken off from the agricultural sector after the migration that took place from rural areas to urban areas is one of the significant problems that Turkey has faced. The facts that the agricultural activities are conducted mostly at the level of households and the existence of certain social and cultural implementations have become factors that encourage crowded families. However, as a consequence of the fact that the agricultural sector is undergoing a regression as well as the terrorist activities having taken place in the east and southeast Anatolian regions have increased the migration of the population engaged in agriculture to the urban areas. However, the survival of the large families that seemed reasonable in rural areas has become difficult in urban areas and the daughters of these families have suffered

disadvantages during the adaptation processes developed by these families in order to handle difficulties. Many of them are unable to find the opportunity to work after having completed their basic training and those that are able to work are expected to contribute to the family budget. The daughters of those families, not having any professional skills and not having been encouraged by their families to acquire skills are usually obliged to work in unrecorded production activities with very low wages. The most important drawback faced by those girls, wishing to acquire skills through a professional training is the high cost of such trainings. The courses and trainings provided by public institutions and organizations are not at a level to meet the existing demand and their financial burden is much higher than the level that their families can meet.

This project aims to provide professional skills to girls that are high school graduates. In this way it is aimed to increase the chances of these girls to be employed with better conditions. At the meantime, this shall provide the opportunity to improve the status of women in employment by taking as a reference the principle of equal opportunity and their disadvantageous status shall be improved. Within the scope of this project, we aim to provide professional skills to 100 female students that have not been able to attend university for their higher education. Of the total 100 students, 60 will be provided with training on "Office Management and Executive Secretarial Services" and 40 of them will be trained in the field of "Tourism and Hotel Management". Our female students shall be provided with the opportunity to find jobs in the institutionalized and reputable hotels operational in the tourism sector and the enterprises operational in the textile and ready made clothing sectors, to earn higher than their existing income and to be able to contribute to the family budget. Our young girls who will have the opportunity to work in companies conducting business within the recorded economy will also find the opportunity to be included within the scope of a social security system and be able to have a guarantee for their future as well.

#### Justification

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Lack of training and qualifications rank first among the measures recommended by the National Employment Policy determined by the Ministry of Labor to facilitate entry of women to the labor force market. Conducting lifelong training activities and supporting the existing qualifications are foreseen for meeting those needs. This project increases the employability chances of women to a large extent within the framework of the principle of equal opportunity according to those recommendations that have been made. The project proposes a training action aimed at creating training opportunities for high school graduate young girls, which will provide them with employment opportunities in accordance with the principles set forth by the New Opportunities Program. (See Guide articles 2..1.3.ii).

One of the main problems of Turkey today is the migration from rural areas to urban areas. While the decreases observed in agricultural incomes during the last few years, unemployment, unproductive nature of the earth and lack of earth for agriculture are among the traditional reasons of migration, the migrations that took place from the East and Southeast Anatolian regions of Turkey are among the reasons of mass migration movements observed during the previous years. Most of the families having migrated from rural areas are families that have many children. While the average number of members of a household is 4 in urban areas, the number is around 5 in families that have migrated from rural areas and especially from the East and Southeast Anatolian regions. The families that have migrated have first lived by their relatives or fellow countrymen in urban areas and then have occupied the lands that they have found to be empty and have constructed houses to live in. As costs of living are high in large cities, these families direct their children towards unrecorded employment. The families who are unable to meet the costs of education of their children give the priority to their sons in education and make their daughters work in low quality and low paying jobs either at home or outside. The parents, most of which are illiterate do not believe that there would be any benefit in sending their daughters to schools for further education. At this point, the daughters of those families that constitute our target in this project have limited opportunities to find well paying jobs outside the family as they are not skilled. Those that have found the opportunity to find jobs work in low paying jobs and lack social security.

Young girls who are high schools graduates, to be selected from among the population that has migrated from rural areas to urban areas are the target groups of the project. Although the students having been included in our target groups had found the opportunity to attend high school, they have not been able to attend university. Due to financial constraints, it is almost impossible for these students to participate further training programs to acquire skills and qualifications. There are

numerous reasons for choosing the target students from among families having migrated from rural areas to Istanbul. The most important one of those reasons is the fact that the rate of education and opportunities are lower in rural areas. While the overall ratio of literacy in Turkey in general was 85.6% according to the data of State Statistics Institute, this ratio falls to 68.8% in the Southeast Anatolian Region (GAP) of Turkey, from which intensive migration to Istanbul is observed. Furthermore, although the ratio of literacy among men in Turkey in general is 92% and in women is 77%, the ratios for the aforementioned region are 82% and 56% respectively. As the figures mentioned above indicate, when the basic training indicators are taken as a basis, it is revealed that the level of education of female population in the GAP region is much lower.

There are numerous reasons behind this unfavorable condition in rural regions and especially for women. The restrictions and constraints imposed on opportunities of education rank first among them. Similarly, when the figures of DIE are taken as a basis, it is observed that the GAP region is much behind the general ratio for Turkey with 75% and 92% respectively, when the ratio of female students attending schools are observed. Of the total 203 Boarding Regional Elementary Regional Schools in Turkey in general, only 45 are located in the East and Southeast Anatolian regions of Turkey. The position of the region and of the female students is also behind the average figures for Turkey when the ratios of secondary education are compared. While the ratio of citizens having received secondary education is 37% in Turkey in general, this ratio falls until 18% in the GAP region. The ratios of female students are much lower than these ratios. Such trainings, which are limited in number are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and are provided by the Governorships, officials governing provincial districts, Municipalities, Youth and Culture Houses, NGOs and Universities. When the opportunities of women to benefit from informal educational means are reviewed, it cannot be claimed that the opportunities provided by our country are sufficient. Within the framework of all the reasons explained above, approximately 100 young girls having a high school degree to be selected from families with rural background (especially from the East and Southeast Anatolian Regions) shall be provided with training that will help them acquire professional skills. When it is taken into consideration that the average number of household members that these girls come from is 5, the acquisition of professional skills by 100 female students and the income to be generated as they start working shall be able to provide the opportunity to improve the living standards of 500 persons.

These girls will be selected from five regions of Istanbul that has been subject to intensive migration, namely; **Zeytinburnu**, **Ümraniye**, **Sultanbeyli**, **Kağıthane** and **Fatih**. Istanbul is the province that has the most intensive population in terms of young population at working age and the economic conditions in these five regions selected as target in Istanbul and the limited resources of the administrative authorities of the region constitute one of the most important drawbacks of the implementation of such a policy. The daughters of families having migrated from rural areas with low levels of development and low living standards to Istanbul before all else suffer psychological problems. They are unable to adapt to the girls of their age who have been born and lived in Istanbul, they wish to imitate them, usually seek ways of earning money easily and seek the solution of their problems through illegal ways. Some of them prefer to get married at an early age in order to get rid of the psychological burden imposed by their families. However, similar problems continue to be present since the young girls from those sections of the society get married with people from the same social environment.

As noted in the aforementioned examples, women have less means to benefit from employment and social security opportunities. This project and similar projects will provide the means for equal opportunity between genders by increasing the employment and social security possibilities and qualifications of women. For this purpose, first of all, priority should be given for the education of women, their entrepreneurial efforts should be encouraged and opportunities should be provided for them to reach information and technology.

By taking into consideration the economic data of our country, two main areas in need of qualified labor force have been chosen when determining the areas in which training will be provided and the training programs have been established for these areas. As the implementations of information technologies increase, a business administration training based on these technologies is believed to be beneficial. This training aims to especially provide computer training to the participants and to furnish them with modern management techniques and principles. Tourism and Hotel Management is another training program. Our country is in need of qualified personnel in this sector and the employment opportunities and wages are much better in this sector when compared with other sectors. Also, many of the former graduates of İTÜ Continuous Training Center, which has extensive

experience in providing such trainings, now work in many reputable hotels. Our graduates will have internship opportunities after the end of their training and may also find the opportunity to be employed by the institutions where they have completed their internship.