

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: TURKEY AND ITALY AS MODELS¹

EKONOMİK KALKINMADA KADININ ROLÜ: TÜRKİYE VE İTALYA ÖRNEĞİ

Filiz KUTLUAY TUTAR²

Erdiñç TUTAR³

Handan YETİŞEN⁴

Abstract

Forming half of the world's population women haven't achieved to reach the point that they deserve in financial arena, which stands as one of the big obstacles for development in the macroeconomic level. Economic growth projects have evolved on a large scale since 1960s. Recently, much effort has been practiced to integrate women, who were considered as passive beneficiaries of economic growth previously, into economic development process. It has been understood that without the participation of women in economy, realization of social and financial growth is impossible. Various strategies on women and development have been developed. Significantly; the participation of women in labor has increased the momentum of economic development. In this context, no matter various categories exist, three different definitions have been labeled for gender mainstreaming and development which are; women in development (WID), women and development (WAD), gender and development (GAD). This study, addresses the statue of women in EU within the frame of women in development (WID), and compares Italy –as a member of European Union – and Turkey – which is in European Union full membership process. The reason why these two countries are compared is; both Italy's labor force participation rate and Italy's a likeness to Turkey in terms of its being under EU standards of women labor participation in labor market

Keywords: Economic Development, Women, Turkey, Italy

Özet

Dünya nüfusunun yarısını oluşturan kadınların, ekonomik arenada hâlâ hak ettiği konuma ulaşmamış olması, makro düzeyde ekonomik kalkınmanın önündeki engellerin birisini oluşturmaktadır. Ekonomik kalkınma politikaları 1960'lardan itibaren büyük değişimler geçirmiştir. Önceleri kalkınmanın pasif yararlanıcıları olarak görülen kadınların, son dönemde kalkınma sürecine dâhil edilmesi için çaba harcanmıştır. Kadınların ekonomiye katılımı olmaksızın sosyal ve ekonomik kalkınmanın gerçekleşmesinin mümkün olmadığı anlaşılmıştır. Kadın ve kalkınmaya yönelik olarak çeşitli stratejiler geliştirilmiştir. Özellikle kadının işgücüne katılım oranları arttıkça ekonomik kalkınma hızında artışlar sağlanmıştır. Bu bağlamda literatürde farklı sınıflandırmalar olsa da toplumsal cinsiyet ve kalkınma üzerine üç ayrı ekol tanımlanmıştır: kalkınmada kadın (WID), kadın ve kalkınma (WAD) ve toplumsal cinsiyet ve kalkınma (GAD). Bu çalışmada öncelikle, kalkınmada kadın (WID) yaklaşımı çerçevesinde dünya ve AB'de kadının statüsü ele alınmış olup, sonrasında bir Avrupa Birliği üyesi olan İtalya ile henüz tam üye olmayan fakat tam üyelik süreci devam eden Türkiye'nin karşılaştırması yapılmıştır. Karşılaştırma için bu ülkelerin seçim nedeni; İtalya'nın gerek cinsiyete göre işgücüne katılım oranı, gerekse kadın işgücünün emek piyasasındaki yeri açısından AB ortalamalarının altında olması yönüyle Türkiye'ye benzer özellikler taşımasıdır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Ekonomik Kalkınma, Kadın, Türkiye, İtalya.

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² Yrd.Doç.Dr., Niğde Üniversitesi İktisat Teorisi Anabilim Dalı, Niğde. flztutar@hotmail.com

³ Prof. Dr., Niğde Üniversitesi İktisat Teorisi Anabilim Dalı, Niğde. tutar80@hotmail.com

⁴ Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi, Niğde Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü İktisat Bölümü, Niğde.

handan_84@hotmail.com

Introduction

Every country resorts to different methods in order to maintain and increase the welfare level of the society. In order to increase the amount of real per capita production, review the demographic structure of the society and make the societal development possible, it is required to improve the welfare level. One of the most important things to ensure the societal development is participating in every stage of production while not allowing gender discrimination.

The first part of our study covers the description of the concepts *woman* and *development*. *Woman* and *development* are interrelated concepts. Women are not given any place within the economic development; when women participate more actively in the economic life, the economic development will be accelerated and thus the country will be growing positively in terms of any aspect. In the eighteenth century, women participated in the economic production only in the agricultural sector and they did not have their say about it. With the arrival of the industrialization, the number of women employees in agriculture and their participation in the economic life decreased. However, they should be economically more productive so that poverty level can be minimized and sustainable development will be ensured. A society's level of civilization and dignity is related to women. Women can improve themselves according to the value they are given by their countries. However, women's live levels are not equal with men's and this low level of women's lives has an effect on their social status. Furthermore, although women consist of the half of the world population, they are not active in the economic life. This section is about women's role in the economy and it gives the reason why women are so significant at the developmental stage.

In the second part of the study, the economic roles of the women in the European Union will be discussed. Gender discrimination took place in any society at any time and it is not easy to overthrow this discrimination which took place throughout history at all. But every society should allow women to participate in the economic life, which enables the country to develop on great scale. Women's Rights Association of the European Union handles this issue seriously making arrangements in order to abolish the gender inequalities. Today, the European Union countries have promised to make it possible and are continuing their studies developing some policies and solutions.

The last part of our study will be covering the economic statuses of women in Turkey and Italy. Detailed information will be given with respect to the roles of women in the economy and the society. Since the 1980s, Turkey has been continuing her studies in order to enhance women's social status and thus working together with the European Union countries. During the 1980s civil society organizations in Turkey became more significant making the momentum more powerful and the women's movement in Turkey reached to a better position with the European Union harmonization process. The economic roles of women in Italy, a European Union country, and the economic statuses of women in Turkey will be compared and explained with certain data.

Women and Development

Economic development is one of the most debated issues in the field of economics. Theories concerning economic development influence governmental behaviors and every field including material trade. Therefore, economic development affects millions of and extends to subgroups of the economy. (Hogendorn, 1990:3)

Economic development is strongly elevated when women enter the marketplace. Women's economic participation raises development, not only by decreasing the dependency ratio and increasing the proportion of wage earners to dependents who

must be supported, but also because women have been found to be significantly more likely to reinvest their earnings in things that benefit the family than men are. (Benard, Jones, Oliner, 2008:27)

Gender is an important factor for planning and implementing successful developmental projects and programs. This statement reflects a shift in emphasis from incorporating women into development activities to an emphasis on the incorporation of the consideration of gender issues relating to men's and women's roles and responsibilities (Women 2000, 1992)

Before the late 1800s women's primary roles as wives and mothers relegated them to tasks performed in and around the home. If they worked outside this sphere, it was generally in the context of assistant – albeit almost always unpaid– to their husband in the latter's main labor market occupation. The 1890s showed significant changes with women moving outside the home to take jobs as factory workers. These changes were attributed to two key factors. Women were giving birth to fewer children, which allowed them more time to explore income opportunities outside the home. In addition, technological advances were being used by wives and mothers to make their household tasks easier, again allowing more time to pursue other opportunities . (Andrea E.Smith-Hunter, 2006:2)

Confusions in economic development policies often arise from the fact that the developmental objectives are not correctly set; in other words, the idea of *development* is not correctly defined. If it is defined in terms of income, as it is usually done, then, the objective of the policy is concentrated on increasing the income, which implies that it may be achieved at the cost of everything else. In this case, women may be considered merely as a means to increase the income, even if the policy improves their well-being and it might be falsely argued that strengthening women's capability means utilizing their abilities for purposes other than their well-being. Therefore, any increase in income is achieved not for the benefit but at the expense of women while the real beneficiaries become men only. At present, such a case is still possible when the idea of development is considered in terms of income. Economic development may just result in the encouragement of the existing unequal relationships between genders rather than its minimization for the improvement of women's well-being. Or, women's well-being may grow worse because they are forced to work harder in order to improve the well-being of their male counterparts. Such a case often occurs when development is misconceived. Therefore, taking the idea of development in terms of capability is taking women's well-being as the very target. However, the definition of capability is still not very clear. Sometimes capability is considered just the same as the basic human needs. For current theorists, investments in human capital such as health and education is needed to improve the productive capacity of people but the final goal still remains to increase the income and how income is distributed among people or how it will improve the well-being of individuals is out of the scope of the current theories. In this case also, men remain the mere beneficiaries. Thus, such a narrow definition of capability becomes inefficient for solving issues related to gender. (Yukio and Maki, 2002: 2).

The debates about gender and development have gained a momentum in the last three decades. The inefficiencies taking place after the global revolution made women's and men's roles in the society more clear (resource allocation, rights, and opportunities) resulting in formulated policies and designed projects that can have adverse effects on the developmental incomes. While the theories over economic income are important, there is an increasing awareness about the fact that gender equality and women's empowerment have not been fully integrated into policy formulations and project designs. Gender is defined as the socially constructed roles, relationships and learned

behaviors of male or female and men and women play different roles at home and in society. We are forced to determine the rights, resources and powers to make decisions men and women have based on the social and cultural norms shaped according to gender which defines the relationship between men and women. Like race, ethnicity, and class, gender is a social category that determines one's choices in life, as well as his/her participation in the economy and the society. Gender norms, relations and behaviors vary from society to society and change over time. Studies have shown that in most societies, gender based norms and practices favor boys and men over girls and women in granting access to resources, opportunities, rights, voices, and decision-making powers at home and in the public spheres. Much of the gender and development literature suggests that gender norms and practices systematically put women in subordinate positions in society (Dejene, <http://eab.ege.edu.tr/>).

In popular discourse, Women in Development (WID) is associated with the wide range of activities concerning women in the development domain, which donor agencies, governments and NGOs (Non-Governmental Organization) have become involved in since the 1970s (Boserup, E, 1970). The 1975 World Conference of the International Women's Year at Mexico City, and the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985), gave a voice to the major preoccupations of women around the world, improved educational and employment opportunities, equality in political and social participation, and increased health and welfare services. In sum, the WID movement that emerged during this period demanded social justice and equity for women. A major formative influence on WID was the resurgence of the women's movement in northern countries in the 1970s. In addition to the WID agenda, there was the simultaneous effort by liberal feminists to get equal rights, employment, equity and citizenship for women in the United States. In other words, the idea of getting a fair political system in place for American is women. The liberal feminist approach has been very important globally, and was critical in determining the language of political strategy used by WID advocates (Razavi and Miller, 1995, <http://www.unrisd.org/>).

The women's economic agenda evolved from a WID (Women in Development) approach to GAD (Gender and Development) so from mainstreaming gender in all policies and programs to an emphasis on empowerment and Human Rights. The focus of analysis expanded to include not only local and national issues but also global systemic issues. The expansion followed the realization that the local WID programs, such as income generation, not only did not move women out of poverty, but they often resulted in more work with little reward because the negative impact of macro-economic developments wiped out any advances women were making. This evolution of focus and agenda charts developments in women's analysis of their social and economic experiences and their efforts to address the inequalities embedded in that experience in both in the South and in the North. The evolution of the Center's Global Women's Project has followed this trajectory.

The shift from WID to GAD was particularly important because it transformed the women's agenda. The WID agenda focused on two main goals: to generate discussions and research on the role of women in development, and to institutionalize a women's focus within development agencies and governments with the mandate to integrate women into development processes (Baltacı, 2011). The WID solution, integrating women into the development process, did not question the kind of development that was being fostered by the donor nations from the industrialized North. Furthermore, WID focused on women and generally ignored the consequences of different social realities, that is, the gendered worlds of women and men

(<http://coc.org/system>).

The Economic Status of Women in the World and in the European Union

The modern global economy now has become a reality. However, there are people in the world who work under such conditions that should no longer exist in the 21st century for incomes barely enough for their survival. Home-based workers spend long hours each day, yet are paid for only a certain amount of time. Rural women spend backbreaking hours on family lands, often for no payment at all. Those in urban areas work in unregulated factories, earning pennies for products that are shipped via subcontractors to markets far away, or they find jobs as waste-pickers, scavenging garbage heaps for items to sell. The working poor consist of both men and women. However, the more one looks upon the chain of quality and security, the more women they will see. Yet it is their work — including their unpaid work in the household as well as their poorly paid work in insecure jobs or small enterprises — that holds families and communities together. Informal workers are everywhere, in every country and region. Globalization has brought new opportunities for many workers, especially for those who are well-educated and gained the skills demanded in the high-tech global economy. On the other hand, it has deepened insecurity and poverty for many others, including women, who have neither the skills needed to compete nor the means to acquire them. The lives of these working poor people are the message of this report; too many of them, women and men work in unregulated and insecure jobs under conditions that are often unhealthy and unsafe. Rather than the formalization of the informal work as economies grow, labor is gradually turning from formal to informal, from regulated to unregulated, and workers lose job security as well as medical and other benefits. What we see is that growth does not automatically 'trickle down' to the poor. It can in fact widen the gap between rich and poor. As globalization intensifies, the likelihood of obtaining formal employment decreases in many places, with footloose companies shifting production from one unregulated zone to an even less regulated one elsewhere, employing workers in informal contract or casual work with low earnings and little or no benefits. In many developing countries, with the collapse of commodity prices and the persistence of agricultural subsidies in rich countries, many rural communities are disintegrating, forcing both women and men into the informal economy. That is partly the reason why, in developing countries, informal employment comprises from 50 to 80 percent of total non-agricultural employment. When agricultural workers such as coffee harvesters or cocoa growers who are unable to compete in the world market are included, the percentage of informal workers is dramatically higher. In nearly all developing countries (except for North Africa) the proportion of working women in informal employment is greater than the proportion of working men, over 60 percent of working women are in informal employment apart from agriculture.

Women workers are not only concentrated in the informal economy, they are in the more precarious forms of informal employment, where earnings are the most unreliable and the most meager. While in some instances, their income can be important in helping families move out of poverty; this is only true if there is more than one earner. This is a sobering fact to consider as we redouble our efforts to implement the Millennium Development Goals, including the elimination of poverty and the achievement of gender equality. Not achieving these goals is unthinkable. Widening gaps between rich and poor, and women and men can only contribute to greater instability and insecurity in the world (Chen and Vanek, 2005: 6).

Women, from the sixteenth century onwards, were increasingly flexible, casual workers able to turn their hand to the particular task required rather than skilled workers. This was a weakness as it was impossible to organize workers not working in a recognizable trade at this time. However, women were unionized from the early

nineteenth century in the cotton weaving industry. It is no coincidence that these women earned the best rate of pay and undertook similar skilled work to men in this sector. (Holloway 2010:16)

The Millennium Development Goals; the single most important success to date has been the unprecedented breadth and depth of the commitment to the MDGs a global collective effort that is unsurpassed in 50 years of development experience. It is not only governments of developing countries and the international community that have adopted the MDGs as their framework for international development cooperation, but also the private sector and, critically, civil society in both developed and developing countries. Besides being advocates for the MDGs, private foundations in the developed countries have become an important source of funding for a wide range of activities intended to achieve them (The Millennium Development Goals Report, 2008).

The year 2005 marks the fifth anniversary of the UN Millennium Declaration, adopted in 2000 and the tenth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. In the decade since Beijing, the number of people living on less than \$1 a day has fallen; the gender gap in primary and (to a lesser extent) secondary education has been reduced; and women enjoy greater participation in elected assemblies and state institutions. In addition, women are a growing presence in the labour market the global indicator used to approximate women's economic status (Chen and Vanek, 2005:6). The Beijing Platform for Action was the product of difficult negotiations between a much more diverse set of women's constituencies than had been evident in previous conferences. Not only did the official delegates represent different interests within and across the north-south divide, but the religious women's lobbies were now better organized than ever before and threatened to destabilize the north-south convergence that was emerging in the united opposition to neo-liberal fundamentalism. In spite of these divisions, the Platform for Action expressed a holistic and transformative vision for the future, a testimony to the remarkable negotiating skills and lobbying efforts of feminists within and outside the official conference (Kabeer, 2005).

The Platform for Action emphasizes that women share common concerns that can be addressed only by working together and in partnership with men towards the common goal of gender equality around the world. It respects and values the full diversity of women's situations and conditions and recognizes that some women face particular barriers to their empowerment (<http://www.unesco.org/>).

In many developed countries, women now account for more than half of the college and university graduates, and many developing countries have dramatically reduced gender gaps in literacy and in primary and secondary education. Yet even in developed countries, whose dependence on knowledge industries and knowledge workers is large and growing, there are still significant gaps in the job opportunities for women and in the wages paid to women compared with their male counterparts; these gaps are even larger in most developing countries (Hausmann and Tyson, 2008:1).

Gender equality refers to that stage of human social development at which the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of individuals will not be determined by the fact of being born male or female, in other words, a stage when both men and women realize their full potential (Lopez-Claros and Zahidi,2005: 1).

Today, the meaning of gender equality in the EU has evolved well beyond the pay gap to encompass work-life balance, the eradication of violence against women and girls, the suppression of human trafficking, and support to help women crack career glass ceilings in government, politics, IT, and business. The EU promotes equality between men and women in all its activities through gender mainstreaming (<http://www.eurunion.org/>).

Europe in general and EU Member States in particular have developed some of the broadest and most effective social policies against discrimination in the workplace and have accumulated much experience in addressing the practice. Nonetheless, research has revealed widespread discrimination exists in the labor market, primarily against immigrants and minorities. What's more, traditional forms of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnic origin, religion and age still persist in the European workplace. Further compounding these issues are the newly emerging forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation, disabilities, genetics and lifestyle that challenge Europe's ability to respond to these important workplace issues.

The data for 1995-2004 in the European Union (EU) confirm that women's participation in the labour force, currently reaching 62%, and in paid employment, at 47.1%, has continued to rise significantly. More broadly speaking, this indicates a narrowing of the gender gap in labour force participation for women. A key measure of women's improvement in employment is the availability of good-quality jobs for women in legislative, senior official or managerial (LSOM) positions. Higher participation rates for women in LSOM jobs indicate a reduction of discriminatory barriers. Although Women still represent a distinct minority in such positions throughout the world, holding only 28% of these senior jobs, there has been considerable progress. In the EU, women have increased their share of high-status positions over the past decade by 3.1% to current level of 30.6%. Given these advances, however, women in Europe still earn less than men. Throughout the EU, the difference in average gross hourly earnings between women and men has remained high at 15%. According to the European Commission, the difference in earnings levels between men and women results from non-respect of equal pay legislation and from a number of structural inequalities (<http://www.ilo.org/>).

Total population of the European Union in 2007 was 495,090,294, or 104.9 women for every 100 men, equating to 51.0% women compared with 49.0% men. In 2007, 80.8% of females aged 20 to 24 completed at least upper secondary education compared with 75.5% of males. In 2006, enrollment in tertiary schools was 18,782.5. 4 55.1% of those students were women, compared with 44.9% of men. Of the 27 cabinet members that make up the current European Commission, 9 are women, or 33.4%. At present, of the 785 Parliament seats, about 1/3 are women, or 33.3%. In 2008, 6 of the 36 members that make up the Court of Justice of the European Communities are women, or 16.7%; 7 of the 28 members of the Court of First Instance are women, or 25.0%; 2 of the 8 members of the Civil Service Tribunal are women, or 25.0%. There are currently 8 major political parties within the EU Parliament with 11 leaders; 2 are women, or 18.2%. In 2007, the total labour force participation rate for persons aged 15 to 64 was 65.4%; 58.3% of females were employed compared with 72.5% of males. In 2005, the total gross annual earnings of the total population were 28,992.40 Euros, with males earning €34,418.10 and females earning €26,585.40. Women earned 17.4% of what men in earned in 2007 (provisional value) (<http://www.catalyst.org/>).

The proportion of men of working age in employment exceeds that of women throughout Europe. In the EU-25 as a whole, some 72 % of men aged 15–64 were in paid employment in 2006 as compared with just over 57 % of women in the same age group. The proportion of men of working age in employment, however, varied, in the EU, from around 81 % in Denmark and the Netherlands to just under 63 % in Bulgaria and 61 % in Poland. For women, the proportion varied more, from just over 73 % in Denmark and just under 71 % in Sweden to just over 46 % in Italy and only 35 % in Malta. Outside of the EU, there was an even wider variation in employment rates between countries. In both Iceland and Switzerland, the proportion of men of working age in employment was slightly higher than in any EU Member State, at 87 %

and just under 85 %, respectively. In Iceland, moreover, the proportion of women in employment was significantly higher than in Denmark, at 80.5 %. At the other end of the scale, in Croatia, the employment rate of men aged 15–64 was just 62 % and for women, just over 49 %. In Turkey, the employment rate of women in this age group was only 24 %, while the rate for men was 68 %, lower than in most EU Member States but still considerably above the rate for women. The employment rate of both men and women is lower in the new EU Member States in central and Eastern Europe than before the transition when everyone able to do so was expected to work. In many of the countries, however, the rate has risen over recent years. In the rest of the EU, the main tendency has been for the employment of women to increase over the long term as growing numbers of women have entered the labour market. The employment of men has tended to change relatively little in most of these countries (Eurostat, 2008: 55).

A Comparative Analysis Between The Economic Statuses of Women In Italy And Turkey

Political and Social Aspects

The increase in female employment in developed countries has been aided by a big shift in the type of available jobs. Manufacturing work, traditionally a male domain, has declined, while jobs in services have expanded. This has reduced the demand for manual labour and put the sexes on a more equal footing.

In the developing world, too, more women now have paid jobs. In the emerging East Asian economies, for every 100 men in the labour force there are now 83 women, a number higher even than the average in OECD countries. Women have been particularly important to the success of Asia's export industries, typically accounting for 60-80% of jobs in many export sectors, such as textiles and clothing (www.policy.hu).

The European Employment Strategy (EES), launched in 1997, requires Member States to develop annual National Action Plans on employment based on common agreed targets. Gender equality was incorporated into this process by requiring gender issues to be addressed by the adoption of a specific female employment rate target of 60% by 2010 (2000 Lisbon Summit), and the introduction in the period 1997-2002 of a specific goal of promoting equal opportunities between men and women. On the pay equity front, Finland, France and Spain adopted proactive laws in 2005 and 2006 requiring employers not just to abstain from discriminating in remuneration on the basis of sex, but to take measures to promote equal opportunities in pay, for example through equal pay reviews and job evaluation methods, and to correct any pay differentials due to discrimination. Pay equity commissions or commissions with broader anti-discrimination jurisdictions can play a very helpful role in the achievement of pay equity. In Sweden, for instance, since 2001 the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman has undertaken information and education measures to assist workers and employers organizations in meeting their obligations under the Equal Opportunities Act, with special emphasis on wage mapping (<http://www.ilo.org/>).

Italy is one of the four major Western European powers, and is globally renowned for its food, culture, and history. While the tourism sector continues to expand and Italy's clothing, food, and automobile industries continue to find an international market, the overall economic picture is becoming clearer. Consumer spending is weak, and Italy's many small family-owned firms have struggled against global competition. The divide between the prosperous north and the rural and underemployed south has widened. Public finances are weak and corruption is high according to European standards.

Italy's immigrant population has recently faced increasing public hostility, fuelled by anxiety about crime. The Italian economy has changed dramatically in the last 50 years. Once an economy based on agriculture, Italy has now developed her industrial strength.

Gender inequality is relatively high for Western Europe, women are poorly represented in parliament (11%), and earn less than half of what men do, reducing Italy's score for opportunity. Health is good, both in terms of the 72.7 year life expectancy and in reported satisfaction with personal health. Charitable giving is also high, suggesting that community life is good. Italian formal-sector working hours are on a par with the rest of Europe at 40.5. However, this is not reflected in the amount of leisure time the Italians perceive they have at just 4.62 hours per day, this is the lowest figure in Europe (The 2008 Legatum Prosperity Index, 2008).

Until recently the world of politics has not been a central concern for twentieth-century Italian women's history. Many of the available writings on this theme are highly partisan insider accounts of women's role in political parties or celebratory texts on female roles in the Resistance. Some more analytical works exist but many areas are still little explored. These three books mark an important change. Being very different from each other, they contribute in their own way to shedding light on a highly complex and fascinating few years of Italian history, the formative period of the Second World War and its aftermath. During the war Italians fought on both sides and experienced what some have termed a 'civil war' in the north between Nazis, Fascists and the much studied Resistance movement. In contrast to Britain where the distinction between the home front and the battlefield was clear, the front-line traversed the entire Italian peninsula in the last 2 years of hostilities, rendering it a truly dramatic and terrible period for Italian women. After the war a new Republic was founded in which, for the first time, women could vote (Wilson, 1998).

The Italian basic law, the Constitution, states that Italy is a Republic grounded on labour, even if the "minimum necessary for survival" is granted to non-workers. According to this statement, the individual's position on the labour market contributes to defining the degree of citizenship that people are entitled to. Gender discrimination was also an issue in a significant law passed concerning social security for women. Under the pressure of women's movements, a maternity fund was introduced in 1910. But, the law was focused on a minority of industrial workers, excluding agricultural workers, domestic servants, shop assistants and workers in the public sector, who were the large majority of working women at that time (Ferrazzi, <http://www.bath.ac.uk>).

On the ground of general principles, Italian legislation provides equal opportunities for men and women in the field of scientific research and does not contain any discriminatory law. Women presence at the high and middle levels is, nevertheless, scarce. In the Italian juridical system, positive actions were introduced in 1991 with the purpose to reach a substantial equality between men and women in the job field, by creating the Equality National Committee and the Equality Counsellors as bodies with surveillance and control tasks. The Italian Parliament approved on March 8, 2000 a new law concerning the parental leaves, which stimulate the use of leave for both parents for children and relatives care and which supports bodies subscribing favourable contracts for the carrying out of familiar responsibilities (reversible part-time, flexible timetables). Italian Minister for Equal Opportunities has later proposed a bill "Measures against discrimination and for the promotion of the equal opportunities" for a full accomplishment of article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty. In the use of the European Structural Funds (2000-2006), innovative criteria were

introduced in order to ensure both equal opportunities for men and women and transparency in the choice process.

In 1996, for the first time in Italy, a (female) Minister for Equal Opportunities was appointed, performing under delegation of the President of the Council of Ministers, with the goal of mainstreaming important functions (<ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu>).

The activity of the Minister for Equal Opportunities has been focused, since her appointment, on a wider concept of equal opportunities aimed at fighting all kinds of discriminations, as mentioned in the Amsterdam Treaty. This has produced a broader intervention of equal opportunities policies beyond the traditional approach of gender equality. The large spectrum of functions appointed to the Minister, including crucial issues, such as immigration, children-care policies and international adoptions, has helped to set up a network of collateral and instrumental measures that represents the cultural and practical ground to equal opportunities policies even if exceeding the boundaries of proper gender equality issue.

While it cannot be denied that soon after the Beijing Platform, the Italian Government has endeavoured to pursue a certain number of equal opportunities policies, only in recent years, there has been the harmonization and rationalization of Governmental qualitative and quantitative actions in this important area of the political agenda.

The Directive focuses on the key concepts of the Beijing Conference; empowerment and mainstreaming. The building of a mainstreaming culture states the directive implies the need to overcome a sectorial notion of women's issues or a conventional idea of equal opportunities, consisting in a set of actions to overcome disadvantage. The most innovative aspect of mainstreaming consists in the need for initiatives, which cut across all government actions. The Directive identified priorities for action in Italy, to which further items have been added by the Declaration of Equal Opportunities, which was pronounced in 2001 by the newly appointed Equal Opportunities Minister, Hon. S. Prestigiacomo. The targeted areas for action include:

- promotion of women in decision-making processes and representation of women at all electoral levels,
- coordination and reform of institutional action and equal opportunities bodies,
- elimination of discrimination,
- international cooperation,
- training and education,
- promotion of female entrepreneurship and employment,
- gender policies on time-use, work organization and working-time,
- the National Plan for daycares,
- fight against pedophilia,
- violence against women and measures against trafficking in human beings,
- health care (including the fight against female genital mutilation)(<http://www.un.org>)

The first political election in which women voted in Italy (1946), and considering that the of the Italian Constitution reminds the role of the republic to promote formal and substantial equality of Italian citizens, which is situation of the gender disparities in Italy and how such disparities are distributed among Italian regions. In order to quantify such disparities a comprehensive framework for assessment is required. The 2nd June 2006 was the Anniversary for sixty years after the first political election in

which women could vote in Italy. In 2008 it will be the Memorial Day for the adoption of the Italian Constitution. It is the Constitution itself which remembers the role of the Republic to promote the formal as well as the substantial equality of all Italian citizens. Up to date, differences among individuals (citizens and not) still remain hard to reduce in Italy. In particular, gender disparities, as well as regional disparities, remain strongly evident, with a long-term dynamic trend, hence stimulating a great concern about the political process of the last sixty years (Costantini and Monni, 2006).

Women's rights undeniably are human rights. Therefore in all Treaties of the European Union gender is one of the grounds upon which the member states may not discriminate. But unfortunately there exists a breach between the existing rights and their implementation, as the governments - of EU member states as well as of candidate states - show a deficiency of dedication to guard these rights. It is about high time that the states implement and enforce the rights totally. In this respect it is important to have significant further improvement in the legal system, implement these new reformed laws and most important of all, change the culture in society to adapt more egalitarian attitudes. Especially in Turkey, gender issues are very carefully watched and are important milestones on her road to membership in the EU.

The Turkish women's movement has worked hard for the improvement of the situation and status of women. Especially since 1980, it was a lively women's movement, under and very difficult circumstances has succeeded in questioning the authoritarian regime, bringing private topics like violence against women to the political agenda, and finding solutions for women's problems particularly on a legal basis. The European Union's impact on this cannot be denied - as for example all of the Regular Reports deal with women's issues and problems point out deficiencies and ask for the improvement of women's status in Turkey. Still, there is a lot of work the Turkish state and women's groups have to do - for women and thereby for democracy and a better future for Turkey.

With the capitulation of power by the Turkish-nationalists in 1908, the Second Constitutional Period began. Several controversies arose during this period. On the one hand, in 1915 women were allowed to remove their burka while performing office work. On the other hand, they were sent home by the police, if the length of their skirts appeared to be shorter than officially allowed. The clothes and the mobility of women were under national regulations because of the quite weak intermediate institutions between the state and the individual. This central control can still be seen in today's attempts to regulate women's clothes. As in the past, contemporary global and social problems are discussed in reference to women's clothes. After the capitulation of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, Mustafa Kemal's resistance movement grew into the War of Independence. Following the declaration of the Turkish Republic on 29 October 1923, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk affirmed two objectives; the building of an independent Turkish state and the modernization of this state. Accordingly, he abolished the Sultanate and the Caliphate, ended sharia law in 1926, and adopted the Swiss Civil Code. The new laws forbade polygamy, instituted civil marriage, allowed the initiation of divorce proceedings by either partner, and guaranteed equality of women before the law. On 5 December 1934 women gained the right to vote. These reforms had one aim only to contribute to the process of Turkey's modernization and westernization. Besides this, they opened up new opportunities for women in education and the work place (Yeşilyurt, 2004).

8 February 1935 Turkey Grand National Assembly, 5th 17 female deputies were in period for the first time election results came into parliament, by election, this number reached 18. In 1985 Turkey, the United Nations, the Convention the Elimination of any Discrimination against Women to (CEDAW) has signed a contract in 1986 and came into force (<http://brown.edu>)

For Turkey in the EU integration process, gender equality in the way of the provision, changes in the clause of the Constitution, gender equality in the legal sense which is a guarantee equal to the meeting of the Civil Code, establishment of the Family Protection Act on the family courts, business law the most severe provisions in the Turkish Penal Code for honor killings are all very important developments in the new arrangements (Sarieroğlu, <http://www.celik-is.org>).

Economic Aspects

Turkey at the national level the Constitution and laws, the international level to confirm the ILO (International Labor Organization) Conventions and the United Nations against Women of All Forms of Discrimination Prevention Agreement and its members to be targeted to the European Union harmonization process within the legislation to transfer the required gender equality oversee EU directives and in this direction in policy development, legal arrangements and laws to the operation was committed to find concrete applications.

In the face of population growth rate employment growth rate in Turkey was always inadequate. In 15 years, the employment rate decreased at a rate of 1.2 percent.

During the 15-year period the employment rate decreased for both women and men, from men's employment rate of 75.1 percent in 1988 to 62.8 percent in 2003. In terms of the rate for women, while 30.6 percent in 1988 was 24.4 percent in 2003. Women's employment rate is around 50 percent in developed countries.

When we look at the sectors distribution of employment in Turkey in the 1988-2003 period, employment decreased agricultural sector and industrial sector employment share of services has increased. However, in developed countries is around 3-5 percent of agricultural employment, the agricultural sector in Turkey with 33.9 percent employment rate is too high. That the share of agriculture sector because of higher subsidies and loans given to agriculture sector are below. Another reason it is limited in cities is that employment opportunities, the industry sector, and investment are insufficient.

During the 15-year period in Turkey in the share of employment in the services sector, has increased rapidly, although the percentage of developed countries is still very low, considering the share of employment is. Moreover, as in the industrial sector and informal sector productivity factors should be considered. In the last ten-year period the total number of employed women is fixed at around 5-6 million, an increase it is not possible to talk about in trends. In 2003 employed were 58.5 percent of the total 5 891 thousand women in agriculture, whereas 41.5 percent of the activity was in non-agriculture (Türk İş Raporu, <http://www.turkis.org.tr>).

Turkey Statistical Institute in 2006, while reviewing the data;

- Labor force participation rate of women in Turkey 24.9% stopped. So only 1 of every 4 women workforce participate,

- In 2006 the unemployment rate for women is 10.3% of 17.9% of non-agricultural unemployment rate and the can be seen,

- Women's employment rate of 22.3% has regressed (Sarieroğlu, <http://www.celik-is.org>).

Women at work to Italy; 2005, 45.3% of Italian women between 15-64 years old work, 69.7 of Italian men between 15-64 years old work. If we consider the age from 35 to 44 years old, the 61.3% of women work against the 91.2% of men. This working gap between women and men becomes littler if the women had a good level of education.

The biggest number of women working in Italy is in the north regions of the country. In particular in Emilia-Romagna 60% of the total female population is working. In the south of the country, the difference between working men and women is very elevated. In Puglia the working women are less than 30%. The number of part-time contracts to make easier the job to women has increased in these last years. In 1993 part-time contracts were 793.000 in 2005 they were 1.906.000. In Italy the 25.6% of working women have part-time, against the 4.6% of men. The part-time is more used in north regions than in south ones. Being a mother and a worker at the same time; for a woman who has sons it is difficult to keep her professional position. When a woman becomes a mother often she loses her job. This doesn't happen to men who are fathers. Single women who work are the 86.7% on the total number of single women in Italy; married but without sons women who work are the 76.5%; married with sons women who work are 55.1%.

Also the number of sons is a condition that influences the female job women who work:

- with 1 sons: 66.2%

- with 3 or more sons: 36.4%

The number of sons doesn't change the job condition for men.

Unemployment; there is a considerable gap between male and female unemployment. The percentage of women without a job in 2005 was 10.1% - for men 6.2%. There is a gap also between graduated men and women: 7.7% of graduated women is without a job, against the 4.4% of unemployed graduated men.

Salary's differences between men and women; in 2004 the gap between male and female salaries were of the 7% and today the situation is less or more the same. In 2005 a woman earns about the 30% less than a man (<http://www.istat.it>).

Turkey in literacy rates of women and girl children go to school for the years of rate increases, but with the necessary literacy, and enrollment of girls and women and among men, there are important differences. In 2000 and 80.6 percent female literacy rate of is 93.9 percent of men. However, in terms of literacy among rural and urban areas and is a big difference. Literacy rate for men in the village's population is 91 percent, the percentage for female 73rd East and Southeast Anatolia, 56.6 percent of women literacy rate to fall to have.

Labor force participation rate of women increased as education levels rise is seen. Educated labor force participation rate of six high schools in the city in 2002 in 11.4 percent, 31.1 percent of high school and equivalent education, and 70.7 percent of high educated is. General and vocational education to labor market participation of women has played a key role. Women's labor force in Turkey decomposed structure reveals itself here; the lack of educational opportunities for women outside the agricultural sector of the labor force participation is extremely limited; we have the money to education as a chance to see almost all the experts can be involved in the profession (Türk İş Raporu, <http://www.turkis.org.tr>).

For Italy in these last years in Italy the education level of woman has growth. Women between 25-44 years old have higher qualifications than men. If we compare the scholastic years 1970/71 and 2005/06 the number of Italian women with a school qualification is more than triplicate and, today, the 19 years old women who get the diploma are the 80% of the total 19 years old Italian female population. And there are more girls than boys with a diploma in Italy. With a difference respect to some years ago, Italian women are more educated than Italian men. The 28.1% of women is graduated (2006) against the 19% of men graduated (2006) (<http://www.istat.it>).

Female entrepreneurship in Italy is growing. According to the data from the Ministry of Equal Opportunities, every 3 out of 10 entrepreneurs are women and 35% of new companies are driven by women. 69% of the companies driven by women are in the tertiary sector. However this is mainly confined to small companies, mainly due to the continuing problems of time management, work flexibility and finding initial funds to establish one's own company.

There currently exists law 215 "Positive action for female entrepreneurs", which was passed in 1992 with the main aim to:

- Promote entrepreneurship and vocational training of women entrepreneurs,
- To support the creation and development of female entrepreneurship,
- To promote the presence of female-run companies in diverse sectors of activity.

The law aims to provide more funds and support to women that want to start up an entrepreneurial activity, women that have already founded their own companies and intend to develop innovative company projects and women that intend to acquire resources in order to improve their products, insert new technology, research new markets (www.iro.ttu.ee/).

The proportion of women entrepreneurs in Turkey in recent years, with scale up 8.4% of all entrepreneurs reputation is. The most important reason for this case, market research, product development and quality, marketing techniques, such as lack of information about the use of technology in the high-cost, patriarchal values, with insufficient credits to reach the current credit difficulties are experienced (Kurtsan, <http://www.maxihaber.net>).

The first is the lack of awareness in the scientific community of discrimination against women scientists. The scientific community is usually perceived as very liberal and open-minded. It is characterized by high educational standards and, often, high cultural values. And, because of its international nature, exposure to other cultures and languages is commonplace. Perhaps because of this, even women scientists are, in many the cases, unaware of the subtle and permanent mechanisms of exclusion that shape their lives as scientists. Making women scientists aware of these subtle prejudices without arousing a sentiment of frustration or suspicion will require intelligent and careful work. To sensitize the scientific community at large to this issue is no less tricky, because its solution lies in sharing the power that is now in the hands of one gender. The second fundamental issue is the need to change the working culture in research institutions and in the organization of science. If we could implement all the proposals mentioned here at once, they would completely transform the way research is planned, supported and evaluated (Zucco, <http://www.nanofun-poly.com>).

Table 1:
Italy (2008)

	Rank	Score
Gender Gap Index 2008 (out of 130 countries)	67	0.679
Gender Gap Index 2007 (out of 128 countries)	84	0.650
Gender Gap Index 2006 (out of 115 countries)	77	0.646
(0.000 = inequality, 1.000 = equality)		
Key Indicators		
Total population (millions), 2006	59.38	
Population growth (%)	0.40	
GDP (US\$ billions), 2006	1,157.04	
GDP (PPP) per capita	28,156	
Mean age of marriage for women (years)	28	
Fertility rate (births per woman)	1.40	
Year women received right to vote	1945	
Overall population sex ratio (male/female)	0.96	

Gender Subindexes	Gap	Rank	Score	Sample Average	Female	Male
Economic Participation and Opportunity		85	0.587	0.587	-	-
Labour force participation		81	0.69	0.69	51	74
Wage equality for similar work (survey)		111	0.54	0.64	-	-
Estimated earned income (PPP US\$)		88	0.47	0.51	18.501	39.163
Legislators, senior officials, and managers		36	0.49	0.28	33	67
Professional and technical workers		68	0.88	0.72	47	53
Educational Attainment		43	0.996	0.929		
Literacy rate		54	1.00	0.87	99	99
Enrolment in primary education		84	0.99	0.97	98	99
Enrolment in		1	1.00	0.92	94	93

secondary education

Enrolment in tertiary education	1	1.00	0.86	78	56
Health and Survival	83	0.972	0.958		
Sex ratio at birth (female/male)	112	0.93	0.92	-	-
Healthy life expectancy	68	1.06	1.04	75	71
Political Empowerment	46	0.160	0.163		
Women in parliament	47	0.27	0.21	21	79
Women in ministerial positions	31	0.32	0.17	24	76
Years with female head of state (last 50)	40	0.00	0.13	0	50

Table 2:

Turkey (2008)

	Rank	Score
Gender Gap Index 2008 (out of 130 countries)	123	0.585
Gender Gap Index 2007 (out of 128 countries)	121	0.577
Gender Gap Index 2006 (out of 115 countries)	105	0.585
(0.000 = inequality, 1.000 = equality)		
Key Indicators		
Total population (millions), 2006	73.89	
Population growth (%)	1.25	
GDP (US\$ billions), 2006	261.87	
GDP (PPP) per capita	8.157	
Mean age of marriage for women (years)	22	
Fertility rate (births per woman)	2.20	
Year women received right to vote	1930-1934	
Overall population sex ratio (male/female)	1.32	

Gender Gap Subindexes	Rank	Score	Sample	Female	Male
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			Average		
Economic Participation and Opportunity	124	0.412	0.587	-	-
Labour force participation	125	0.36	0.69	29	80
Wage equality for similar work (survey)	85	0.61	0.64	-	-
Estimated earned income (PPP US\$)	110	0.47	0.51	4.385	12.368
Legislators, senior officials, and managers	110	0.08	0.28	8	92
Professional and technical workers	89	0.49	0.72	33	67
Educational Attainment	108	0.890	0.929		
Literacy rate	103	0.84	0.87	81	96
Enrolment in primary education	111	0.86	0.92	89	93
Enrolment in secondary education	113	1.00	0.92	64	74
Enrolment in tertiary education	97	0.75	0.86	30	39
Health and Survival	88	0.971	0.958		
Sex ratio at birth (female/male)	112	0.94	0.92	-	-
Healthy life expectancy	98	1.03	1.04	63	61
Political Empowerment	106	0.068	0.163		
Women in parliament	105	0.10	0.21	9	91
Women in ministerial positions	123	0.04	0.17	4	96
Years with female head of state (last 50)	21	0.06	0.13	3	47

Reference: HAUSMANN and TYSON, etc, (2008), p.1

As seen above;

Italy (67) gains 17 places in the rankings this year. The data show very significant improvements in the percentage of women among legislators, senior officials and managers, members of parliament and in ministerial level positions. **Turkey** (123) occupy some of the lowest positions in the rankings. Turkey's performance relative to

its own performance in 2007 shows a slight improvement, driven by gains in education and political empowerment, but women's economic participation shrinks further as gaps on wage equality for similar work widen (Hausmann and Tyson, 2008: 163,102).

Furthermore, there are some differences resulting from the structure of the Turkish society, including the marriage age for women, their fertility rate etc. and Italy fall behind Turkey concerning these issues. In our society, a woman's identity is determined by her function; women are given the duty of child bearing and taking care of the house and children and within the family they will struggle to become good wives and mothers. Such an attitude continues even in teaching programs and books as well. For example, the head of household is the father; the father earns money while the mother remains home and does some housework such as cooking and knitting. Due to these reasons, the vast majority of women always kept their distance to social production. At an early age, they are taught to adopt the social patterns of thinking and behavior according to gender based skills and the occupations like teaching, nursing etc. chosen by women are nothing more than an extension of their home care duties. The necessity of women's education and participation in the economy is a crucial issue at this regard as it is in all regards. The education should be given during the developmental process.

Conclusion

Female contribution to the economic growth and to the labor force development is undeniable. However, first of all, gender inequality against women should be abolished for such growth and development. Thus, it is required to find solutions against gender inequality problems in order to make economic, social, cultural and political development possible, which is the primary goal of a country. When women take education and participate in the labor force productively, this will have a tremendous effect on the development process. Otherwise, women will always come secondary to men in the patriarchal society and have no positive influence on the competition of world countries for development.

In both developed and developing countries women are kept subordinate to men. The aim of this article is to demonstrate the perspectives of these developed and developing countries concerning women.

Women's education is the very necessity for their participation in labor force. The participation of the educated manpower in the economy is, without a doubt, significant to the economic growth. Since the educational rate for women is low, their contribution to the economy is also inefficient. For instance, wide amounts of women work in the agriculture sector however, because their levels of education are low, the rate for their participation in the economy remains also low. As a result, women's income levels will be less than those of men widening the economic gap between the genders. Thus, women's education is so important a matter due to the reasons like this, all of which play a significant role in terms of overall economic development. In our article, we mentioned that in Turkey the educational rate for women has been gradually increasing in recent years and the efforts for the encouragement of young women's education have gained a momentum. As for Italy, the educational level of men and women remains equal, which keeps Italy at a higher level than Turkey.

The labor force participation rate in Turkey is 29% of women and 80% of men while in Italy it is 51% of women and 74% of men. As it is seen, female participation in the labor force is low in both countries however, Turkey falls behind Italy and the women's participation rate in Italy is higher than Turkey. The European Union spares a special budget for women's development and Italy benefits from it. Being not a member of the

EU yet, Turkey does not have such an opportunity to benefit from, which has a negative effect on the situation of Turkish women as well. However, women's employment and position in the society are regarded as important issues during the negotiations held with EU.

As a result, it can be seen that the female participation rate is low in both countries however, Italy is ahead of Turkey concerning this situation which, of course, results from the policies Italian government adopts and the lifestyles Italian people lead, and similarly in Turkey, the adopted traditions, customs, and lifestyles still effect Turkish women's social position in certain regions of the country as well. Nevertheless, the female participation in labor force rate in Turkey has been increasing changing this situation rapidly.

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