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**MEASURES TAKEN BY REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION**

**TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF GIRLS DURING COVID-19**

There is no distinction between girls and boys in terms of educational opportunities in Turkey. It is clearly stated in our laws as follows:

* As per Article 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, titled " Equality before the law”, “Everyone is equal before the law without distinction as to language, race, color, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such grounds. (Paragraph added on May 7, 2004; Act No. 5170/Article 1) Men and women have equal rights. The State has the obligation to ensure that this equality exists in practice. (Sentence added on September 12, 2010; Act No. 5982/Article 1) Measures taken for this purpose shall not be interpreted as contrary to the principle of equality. (Paragraph added on September 12, 2010; Act No. 5982/Article 1) Measures to be taken for children, the elderly, disabled people, widows and orphans of martyrs as well as for the invalid and veterans shall not be considered as violation of the principle of equality. No privilege shall be granted to any individual, family, group or class. State organs and administrative authorities are obliged to act in compliance with the principle of equality before the law in all their proceedings.
* As per Article 42 of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, titled “Right and duty of education”, "No one shall be deprived of the right of education [...] Primary education is compulsory for all citizens of both sexes and is free of charge in state schools [...] The State shall provide scholarships and other means of assistance to enable students of merit lacking financial means to continue their education. The State shall take necessary measures to rehabilitate those in need of special education so as to render such people useful to society.”
* As per the Fundamental Law of National Education numbered 1739, “educational institutions are open to all regardless of race, sex, or religion and no privilege shall be granted to any person, family, group or class in education.”
* The prevention of discrimination in education is stated with the first 4 articles of the Primary Education and Training Law numbered 222;
* Article 1–Primary education is the basic schooling that serves all Turks of both sexes and their physical, mental and moral development in accordance with national aims.
* Article 2–Primary education is given in primary education institutions; it is compulsory for children of both sexes of school age and free of charge in state schools.
* Article 3–(Amendment: 30/3/2012 - 6287/1 art.) Primary education is compulsory for children aged between 6-13. This starts in the September of the year when the child finishes age 5 and ends at the end of the school year when he/she finishes 13 and enters 14 age.
* Article 4–Children of both sexes, citizens of Turkey, are obliged to have their primary education at state or private schools.

All studies carried out by the Ministry of National Education are implemented without any discrimination between boys and girls. For this reason, all of the studies conducted during the COVID-19 process cover both girls and boys in our country.

As in the researches of many international organizations, Türkiye is one of the countries with the highest schooling rates. According to data of Ministry of Education (the year 2020-2021) a total of 18.085.943 students, 9.352.605 boys and 8.733.338 girls, receive formal education at the level of pre-school, primary and secondary education.

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| NET Schooling Rates | Age 6-9 | Age 10-13 | Age 14-17 |
| Total | 97,23 | 98,55 | 90,76 |
| Boy | 97,16 | 98,64 | 91,01 |
| Girl | 97,31 | 98,45 | 90,49 |

-Note 1. The calculation of NET schooling percentage according to age groups (birth year) is obtained by dividing the total numbers of students in the relevant age group without considering the education level (type) of the students to the total population of the students in the relevant age group.

-Note 2. The population and the number of students who reside in Turkey as Turkish citizens are taken into consideration while the school enrollment rates of 2020-2021 are being calculated. Foreign nationals residing in Turkey and the number of foreign students are excluded from the calculation and the end of the latest completed calendar year's student numbers and the latest completed population numbers (31 December 2020) are used in calculations.

As seen in the chart, there is no significant difference between schooling rates of girls and boys in Türkiye. Turkey has made remarkable progress in increasing access to all levels of education, including secondary education, in recent decades. According to the National Education Statistics published annually by the Ministry of National Education, the net enrollment rate, which was 48% in 2002, reached 87.93% in 2021. In addition, as of the 2020-21 academic year, the Gender Ratio in Secondary Education was 95.42, which is important in terms of showing that the difference in schooling between men and women has decreased.

As the General Directorate of Secondary Education, necessary attention has been paid to the issue of ensuring full access to secondary education, especially for female students, in the studies carried out to ensure everyone's access to education at secondary education levels.

**Studies Carried Out Within The Scope of Early Childhood Education and Primary Education**

Considering the difficulties encountered in pre-school education in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, there is no obstacle especially for girls, but the difficulties encountered in general can be counted as the closure of schools and problems in accessing distance education in distant places.

In this context, instruction was given to keep schools open in pre-school education, the daily education time was reduced, the number of children required to be in a classroom was reduced, activities were recommended to be held outdoors as much as possible, and a different distance education method was applied in pre-school education, apart from other education levels. In addition, new educational contents have been developed for children living in remote settlements, and the activity books prepared within this scope. The "My PlayBox" set, which was developed by Directorate General of Basic Education as a home-based model, were sent to children living in remote settlements.

In order to enrich pre-school education, the shooting of the “TRT EBA Anaokulu” program prepared for pre-school children on TRT EBA television was completed. This program broadcasted every weekday between 08:00-09:00 and 19:30-20:30 during 2020-2021 academic year.

**Studies on Curriculum:**

The following materials not only for girls but also for all primary and middle school students have been prepared and made available to the students and teachers. For our students not to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and to make them academically ready and qualified for a higher level, workbooks in each grade, digital contents, academic support materials, fascicles, supplemental materials for foreign languages, activity guides etc. have been prepared and published on http://www.eba.gov.tr and http://tegmmateryal.eba.gov.tr/ websites.

Especially for the teachers and students at the schools having multigrade teaching in rural areas, 17 workbooks have been prepared for Turkish (for 1-2-3-4 grades and Beginner Reading and Writing Books), Mathematics (for 1-2-3-4 grades), Science (for 3- 4 grades), Life Science (for 1-2-3 grades), Social Studies (for the 4th grade) subjects. The materials have been prepared in accordance with the needs and readiness of the students, based on activities that teachers can use during assignment hours and that students can do individually or in groups. These materials were handed out in briefcases designed for the students at the schools having multigrade teaching for the first time in 2020-2021 academic year.

Workbooks for Turkish, Mathematics, Life Science, Science, Social Studies subjects for the students at 1-2-3-4 grades were prepared, published and handed out to the students in 2020-2021 academic year.

Worksheets (16 books) consisting 112 fascicules in total for Turkish, Mathematics, Social Sciences and Revolution History and Kemalism subjects for middle school students (5,6,7,8 grades) have been prepared.

Digital contents that are pedagogically strong and highly interactive, prioritize the cognitive depth, have the subject integrity were prepared for the primary and middle school students in Turkish, Mathematics, English and Music subjects.

To support our students in all 4 language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing), English activity guides have been prepared for the use of teachers and students from the 2nd grade to the 8th grade. Materials in question also consist of activity guides that include student-centered projects with different disciplines like Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Visual Arts with an interdisciplinary approach. From the 2nd grade to the 8th grade in primary school, 70 fascicles in total, 7 books with 1642 pages and audio files containing listening texts have been prepared.

**Project-Based Studies:**

Increasing Quality of and Access to Early Childhood Education (ECE) Project, which is co-financed by the Republic of Türkiye and European Union, has been implemented since November 1, 2022. The purpose of this Project is to increase quality of and access to ECE services for 0-to-6-year-old children especially in the most vulnerable communities.

Home-Based Early Childhood Education and Care (ECCE) Service Model was developed for children who do not have an Access to ECE services. Within the scope of this Model, My Play Box learning kit, which includes materials supporting the development of children as well as the guide books for families, was prepared for children who do not have Access to ECE services, especially the most vulnerable ones. 3000 My Play Box learning kit was distributed and 2000 more will be distributed in the 2022-2023 education year.

**Opening TRT EBA TV Channels:**

Distance education has been started for primary and secondary school students over Education Information Network (EBA) and TRT between 23 March and 29 June 2020. In the 2021-2022 academic year, publications continue to eliminate learning deficiencies and to support their social, emotional and cognitive development. In the same academic year, lessons videos with short lectures and question solutions were prepared and published for the students to prepare for the exams and to repeat the subject. The questions prepared in this context are acquisition and skill-based questions, and the shooting of the said videos continues.

• Between 23 March - 19 June 2020, 770 hours of broadcasting were carried out in 77 days on

the EBA TV Secondary School channel, and 681 broadcasts were made in 68 days on the

TRT EBA TV Primary School channel. Nearly 300 Extracurricular activities have been

published.

• As part of the summer school, 216 hours of course content were broadcast on TRT EBA TV

Secondary School channel and 261 hours on TRT EBA TV primary school channel. "I Can Read and Write" Tv program for students who need support in the field of literacy and English lesson has been published for students to receive English education at A1 and A2 levels.

• In the 2020 – 2021 academic year, 1085 lesson videos were shot for the TRT EBA TV

Secondary School channel and 978 lesson videos were shot for the TRT EBA TV Primary

School channel.

• In the 2021-2022 academic year, a total of 500 lesson videos were shot (434 middle

school weekend support videos + 66 first grade lesson videos) on TRT EBA TV

Secondary and Primary School channel, and new video shootings continue. Short lectures and question solution videos are published in preparation for national and international exams at the weekends. In addition, documentaries and educational programs are broadcasted.

• Nearly 1000 extracurricular videos were published in the 2020-2021 academic year.

• In the 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022 academic year, 185 episodes were shot in the “Öğretmenler Odası” and “Bizden” programs and new video shootings continue.

In order to enrich pre-school education, the shooting of the 392 episodes “TRT EBA Kindergarten” program prepared for pre-school children on TRT EBA television was completed. Every day, in the morning and evening hours, the development of approximately 4 million children aged 3, 4 and 5 in our country and thousands of children abroad is supported with quality content. This program was published every weekday during the 2020-2021 academic year and continues to be broadcast in the 2021-2022 academic year. In order for children to receive more and more qualified education in every environment and at every opportunity, the program in question is also supported by a generation under the name of “Family”.

**Studies Carried Out Within The Scope of Secondary Education**

During COIVD-19 necessary attention has been paid to the issue of ensuring full access to secondary education, especially for female students. In this context, those projects carried out hereinbelow:

* **Technical Assistance Project for the Promotion of Gender Equality in Education (ETCEP):** Implemented with a budget of 3.1 million euros between 2014 and 2016 within the scope of IPA I, the project aims to promote gender equality in schools and an equality and gender-sensitive approach throughout the education system.
* **Secondary Education Integration Program (Ortaöğretime Uyum Programı):** The program was launched within the cooperation of UNICEF in order to reduce the absenteeism of students and to reduce the risk of school dropout during high school education. The program consists of a series of activities to be carried out with students and parents in the first days of the academic year. These activities are designed to achieve four main goals defined as informing parents and students about all aspects of high school education (including school buildings, activities, personnel and what is expected of them), equipping students with skills that will facilitate their adaptation to secondary education, supporting students' academic and professional development, and creating a protective and supportive educational environment. The Secondary Education Integration Program, which was approved as a national program by the Ministry of National Education in September 2018, is implemented in all secondary schools at the beginning of the academic year every year.
* **Project on Establishment of Design-Skill Laboratories in Secondary Education Institutions (Ortaöğretim Kurumlarında Tasarım-Beceri Laboratuvarlarının Kurulması Projesi):** As a part of the “2023 Education Vision”, MoNE has started to establish “Design Skills Laboratories” emphasizing that schools are not only institutions where knowledge is acquired, but also places where design, construction and production are carried out. These laboratories aim to provide learning environments in which 21st century skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, productivity, teamwork, multiple literacy and social emotional skills can be developed. In addition to equipping young people with the skills required by the new age, these laboratories are expected to play an important role in reducing absenteeism and early school leaving problems by providing helpful learning environments.
* The principle of ensuring equal access to services for women and men will be one of the main criteria in the selection of beneficiaries within the scope of IPA-II Operation to Increase Attendance and Schooling Rates in Secondary Education (IPA-II Ortaöğretimde Devam ve Okullaşma Oranlarının Artırılması Operasyonu**)**, which will be carried out in 14 provinces and 50 schools throughout Turkey.

In addition to those projects mentioned above, many measures has been taken to alleviate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education for high school students:

* Science Board Member of Ministry of Health Prof. Dr. Firdevs AKTAŞ provided information to the managers and assistant personnel working in the official school hostels of our Ministry through distance education.
* Measures taken by KYK (Credit and Dormitories Institution) and private student dormitories and institutions providing accommodation services in our country, and measures taken in institutions providing accommodation services in Germany, France, Belgium, Austria, Azerbaijan, Russia, Netherlands, Switzerland and England were examined. A guide on the precautions to be taken in school hostels was prepared in consultation with the Science Board and the Ministry of Health, General Directorate of Public Health.
* The final installments of the students staying in the official school boarding houses of our Ministry were cancelled with the approval of the authority, and the installments were refunded to the paying parents. The meal fees which had been paid in advance were refunded to daytime students receiving food service from school boarding houses.
* As a precaution against the pandemic in official school hostels affiliated to our Ministry, necessary studies were carried out to reduce the quotas for 81 provincial governors and to accommodate boarding students who will enter YKS (Higher Education Institutions Exam).
* The official school hostels affiliated to our Ministry supported the process as shelter service during the pandemic, and the school hostels served our citizens, health workers and police personnel within the framework of quarantine practices.
* Scholarship payments were made to the students’ accounts on a timely and regular basis.
* On days when there was a curfew under the age of 18, necessary procedures have been taken to ensure that students with scholarships do not suffer from unjust treatment, so that their parents or guardians could receive their scholarship fees from the bank.
* Videos were shot on awareness of disaster protection, hygiene education and healthy nutrition to be broadcasted on EBA TV.
* Through distance education, in service training was given to school principals working in boarding schools on Occupational Health and Safety, Hygiene and Sanitation.

**Studies Carried Out Within The Scope of Children Under Temporary Protection and Refugees**

The Ministry of National Education (MoNE) has been carrying out works that about Syrian children have education in our country since the flow of mass migration started. Education is not only a fundamental right for Syrian children, but also evaluated a vital importance subject because of getting through the difficult period where they live and be able to build in their own future.

Efforts have been continuing to increase educational opportunities and develop education policies for Syrian children as guests in Turkey. With the education services it provides to Syrian citizens under temporary protection in Turkey, the Ministry of National Education aims to build a good future for them and prevent Syrian children from becoming a lost generation.

Every child in our country has the right to benefit from equal and quality education opportunities in accordance with international agreements and legislation. Following the deepening of the Syrian crisis and the understanding that the process would not end in the short term, a circular numbered 2014/21 on 'Education and Training Services for Foreigners' was published by the Ministry of National Education in order to remove the obstacles to foreigners' access to education. New legislative arrangements are needed to do in this subject. For this reason, new circulars and legislation studies have been continuing by MoNE. Especially in order to increase the access of Syrian students under temporary protection to education and to adapt themselves to the Turkish education system under equal and quality conditions.

Currently, Turkey is hosting 5.013.631 foreigners and 1 million 384 thousand of them are school-age children (5-17). Today, %69 of foreigner children are enrolled in Turkish schools and receive the same qualified and comprehensive education as Turkish students.

As of 2021-2022, the enrolment rates by education levels are; 34% in pre-primary level, 77% in primary level, 81% in lower-secondary level and 49% in upper secondary level.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, 928,485 students were included in education and 454.902 of these students are female students.

The Conditional Cash Programme for Education (CCTE) is a national social assistance measure that has been implemented by the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS) since 2003. The extension of the cash component of the CCTE to foreigners throughout the country and the protection component has been implemented through a partnership between MoFSS, MoNE, Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRCS) and UNICEF since 2017. CCTE exists primarily to encourage regular school attendance. In November 2021, 706.067 beneficiaries were receiving CCTE.

Within the scope of the program, the monthly payments made to female students are higher than male students in order to encourage female students to continue their education and to prevent school dropouts. In addition, at the beginning of each academic year, an additional payment is made to all beneficiaries and an incentive payment is made to secondary and high school students.

Also in 2020, there are a total of 156,332 trainees from 135 different countries benefiting from public education centers in our country. 67,423 (43%) of these trainees are male and 88,909 (57%) are female. 83,214 of the trainees completed the courses and received certificates. The completion rate of the courses is 56.43%. Based on this information, it is possible to say that the majority of foreign trainees are women. The highest number of trainees among foreign nationals consists of Syrians. In 2020, women mostly enrolled in the Turkish for Foreigners Level A1 program. In 2020, 10,344 women participated in the Turkish for Foreigners Level A1 program.

**Studies Carried Out Within The Scope of the Students with Special Education Needs**

The measures taken to alleviate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education for all students with special educational needs, male and female, are as follows:

* Considering that our students with special education needs do not receive face-to-face education for a long time, and that they are also affected by the pandemic process in behavioral and social-emotional aspects, "Adaptation Education Guidance Program for Special Education Students" and "Adaptation Program for Special Education Students" have been created.
* For the use of all our stakeholders, as of April 19, the Private Education Mobile Application has been launched on Google Play and IOS AppStore. In this application, all content, activities, practices and textbooks on special education are offered free of charge to our students, parents and teachers.
* 19 applications has been published at www.eba.gov.tr, www.orgm.meb.gov.tr. Applications with approximately 4000 interfaces and animations prepared for all our special education students have been included in the mobile application. In addition, the Treasure in Me application, developed in cooperation with Turkcell, consisting of approximately 100000 interfaces and animations, has been also offered to our students with moderate to severe mental and autism spectrum disorders through our mobile application. It is thought that these applications have reached approximately 400,000 students.
* Filming of 40 short informative event videos, 60 instructional videos and 40 family information videos to be broadcast on TRT EBA TV was completed. It ihas been broadcasted on TRT EBA TV gradually.
* A Calendar of Fun Events with Our Special Children has been prepared and put into service during the distance education process. The calendar, which includes the writing and design of 10 daily events, has been prepared in 3 volumes.
* A set of 1500 pages and 6 books has been prepared for our students who receive education through Integration/Integration. With the "Preparation for Mathematics", "Numbers, Operations", "Geometric Operations", "Data Processing" and "Measurement" books included in the set, it is aimed to provide our students with the basic mathematical skills they may need. With our set, which we have adapted for our students to integrate activities related to the achievements in the 1-8th grade general education curriculum, it is aimed that the subject-achievements are permanent for our students. Our Inclusion/Integration students will be able to support the subjects and achievements they will need, with the help of teachers, by using the book and interactive digital program. 3000 copies of these sets were printed and delivered to 81 provinces.
* For the teachers of our students with special education needs and their families once a week or twice a week with digital meeting applications by academicians working in the field of special education. Training was given on issues such as what to do after the distance education process and the process of adaptation to school.
* "Effective Special Education in 7 Regions" meetings were held. At the first meeting attended by 850 of our stakeholders, the implementation process of distance education and framework programs was evaluated.
* Teleconferences were held with administrators working in the field of special education in order to effectively carry out the special education services offered during this period.
* The ways to be followed in the training to be given in the distance education and face-to-face education process were announced to the Governorships, and it was aimed to inform the administrators, teachers, students and parents about the process in this way.
* In order for the students with special education needs to benefit from the educational services for a longer period of time and to minimize the negative effects of the pandemic process, legal arrangements have been made so that the students studying in special education schools and special education classrooms can repeat a grade upon the request of their parents.