



“GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN”

**For the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK)
2026–2028**

Gender Equality Action Plan” 2026–2028 for The Scientific and Technological Research Council (TÜBİTAK) was updated and adopted by the President of TÜBİTAK, Prof. Orhan AYDIN, on March 2026.

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN
The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye
(2026-2028)

Ensuring equal opportunity is a constitutional principle in Türkiye and a key priority reflected in national strategic documents, including the 12th Development Plan and the 2030 Industry and Technology Strategy. TÜBİTAK, as the primary institution shaping the research and innovation ecosystem, is committed to building a scientific environment that is inclusive, fair, and conducive to excellence.

As Türkiye advances its research and innovation capacity, fostering gender¹ equality has become essential for strengthening human capital, increasing participation, and enhancing the societal impact of science. A gender-responsive institutional structure not only removes barriers to participation but also improves the quality, diversity, and relevance of research outputs.

This Gender Equality Action Plan (GEP) outlines TÜBİTAK's renewed approach for the 2026–2028 period. The plan focuses on measurable progress, data-driven decision making, and institutional transformation. It builds on past efforts particularly the *2019 Policy Principles for Increasing the Participation of Women Researchers*, while aligning with international standards and emerging needs of the R&D ecosystem.

The updated GEP places emphasis on:

- improving gender balance across leadership, personnel, advisory bodies, and reviewers;
- expanding equitable access to research funding, scholarships, and awards;
- promoting gender awareness and competence across all units;
- integrating gender perspectives into research content where relevant;
- developing a modern and inclusive work-life balance framework; and
- reinforcing mechanisms to prevent discrimination, harassment, and gender-based violence.

TÜBİTAK has defined the following activities and strategies to strengthen gender equality across the institution. These measures aim to enhance institutional capacity, promote equal opportunities in all funding and research processes, and foster an inclusive and balanced research ecosystem in line with TÜBİTAK's strategic priorities.

¹ TÜBİTAK interprets the term 'gender', throughout the document, as identical with 'sex' pursuant to the binary concept of biological female and male sex. The term 'gender equality' shall be interpreted as 'equality between women and men'

SECTION I
Institutionalization and Capacity Building for Gender Equality

To ensure sustainable and measurable progress in gender equality, TÜBİTAK will continue to strengthen its institutional structure through an established and streamlined governance model. This model focuses on clear roles, data-driven decision-making, and coordinated implementation across all units, and consists of a Gender Equality Officer (GEO), Unit Gender Representatives, a Gender Equality Task Force, and the GEP Committee.

SECTION	Subject	Planned Action	Time Schedule			Responsible Person/Unit/Department	Success Indicators
			2026	2027	2028		
I	Data Collection, Monitoring Benchmarking, Reporting, Awareness and Engagement	Institutionalize systematic, gender-disaggregated data collection, monitoring, and analysis across all relevant processes	X	X	X	GEO, GEP Unit Representatives, GEP Task Force, and HR	- Gender-disaggregated datasets maintained - Annual internal monitoring reports
		Publish annual monitoring and benchmarking reports on GEP implementation	X	X	X	GEO, GEP Task Force, and GEP Committee	Annual reports
		Conduct an ex-post evaluation of GEP implementation at the end of 2027 and coordinate the preparation of the succeeding GEP			X	GEO, GEP Task Force, and GEP Committee	- Ex-post analysis report to be prepared - Draft of the succeeding GEP to be presented to the Steering Committee of TÜBİTAK
		Organize annual institution-wide meetings to raise awareness of the GEP, encourage participation, and foster institutional ownership and inclusion	X	X	X	GEO, GEP Unit Representatives	≥50% staff participation per meeting
	External Learning and Networking	Actively participate in gender equality networks, workshops, and projects to integrate external best practices and innovative approaches	X	X	X	GEO	Participation in at least one external activity per year

SECTION II

Recruitment & Career Progression

A largely balanced gender distribution has already been achieved among TÜBİTAK's administrative staff, and gender equality is recognized as a shared institutional value. Building on this foundation, TÜBİTAK is strengthening its recruitment and career progression practices to ensure that gender equality is applied consistently across all units.

As part of the updated Gender Equality Action Plan, institutional mechanisms are being introduced to reduce the risk of unconscious gender bias in recruitment and decision-making. These measures aim to improve transparency and consistency for both administrative and researcher positions and to address differences between units and research institutes, particularly in male-dominated fields such as engineering.

At the same time, TÜBİTAK is enhancing its use of gender-disaggregated data by systematically monitoring recruitment, career progression, and staff turnover. Regular analysis of resignation trends will support evidence-based improvements in institutional practices.

Through these actions, TÜBİTAK aims to promote fair, inclusive, and sustainable recruitment and career development processes.

SECTION	Subject	Planned Action	Time Schedule			Responsible Person/Unit/Department	Success Indicators
			2026	2027	2028		
II	Data Collection and Monitoring	Set targets for each unit for increasing the percentage of the underrepresented gender and monitor annually	X	X	X	The General Secretary, HR, and GEO	Set targets for each unit and monitor annually
	Recruitment	Carry out a more intensive review of vacancy announcements to identify the systemic factors that caused the downturn	X	X	X	The General Secretary, HR, and GEO	All advertisements inviting and motivating applications from underrepresented gender
		Ensure gender balance in all recruitment committees	X	X	X	The General Secretary and HR	Reaching the targets set for each unit
	Training	Include gender equality training in orientation programmes	X	X	X	HR and GEO	Organized trainings

		Organize and require gender equality and unconscious bias training for all personnel with the priority given to the research funding units, human resources unit, and all staff involved in recruitment processes	X	X	X	HR and GEO	At least 50% of the employees succeeded in the quiz that is conducted after each training
	Career progression	Take into consideration the leave (maternity/paternity leave, caregiving, illness) period in performance evaluations	X	X	X	HR	Implemented evaluation measures for women and men after all types of care leave, prioritizing maternal leave
		Analyze systematically the reasons behind resignations for female and male employees	X	X	X	HR	Annual reports
		Aim gender balance in all career progression committees	X	X	X	HR and unit managers	At least 30% of the members are women

SECTION III Work-Life Balance

TÜBİTAK operates in full compliance with Labor Law No. 4857 and provides a range of work–life balance measures, including maternity and paternity leave, part-time working rights following childbirth, breastfeeding leave, and financial childcare support. Flexible working arrangements have also been available since 2019.

Building on these existing practices, TÜBİTAK recognizes that changes in working conditions have highlighted the need for more structured, transparent, and inclusive work–life balance mechanisms. Unequal distribution of care responsibilities continues to affect employees’ ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities, making it essential to strengthen institutional policies that support both women and men.

As part of the updated Gender Equality Action Plan, TÜBİTAK is further developing its work–life balance framework by clarifying flexible and remote working arrangements, strengthening care-related leave policies, and promoting a fair and transparent workload distribution. These measures aim to create an enabling work environment that supports productivity, well-being, and equal career opportunities for all employees.

SECTION	Subject	Planned Action	Time Schedule			Responsible Person/Unit/Department	Success Indicators
			2026	2027	2028		
III	Working modalities	Conduct regular staff surveys and focused consultations to identify work–life balance needs and challenges		X		HR and GEO	At least 40% of the employees participate in the survey and the availability of the result of the survey that addresses needs and issues related to work-life balance
	Institutionalization of care leaves and support mechanism	Review and update all care-related leave policies (childcare, elderly care, family care) in line with legislation and institutional needs	X			The President, General Secretary, HR, and GEO	Published updated care leave policies and support mechanism

SECTION IV Decision-Making and Leadership

TÜBİTAK recognizes the importance of integrating gender equality into decision-making and leadership processes. While institutional commitment to gender equality is well established, further steps are needed to ensure that decision-making structures and leadership appointments are consistently fair, transparent, and inclusive across all units.

To support balanced representation and strengthen inclusive governance, TÜBİTAK will implement targeted measures focusing on policy development, measurable targets, and capacity building for decision-makers.

SECTION	Subject	Planned Action	Time Schedule			Responsible Person/Unit/Department	Success Indicators
			2026	2027	2028		
IV	Decision-Making and Leadership	Set realistic and measurable targets to improve gender balance at all management and leadership levels and monitor progress	X	X	X	The President, The General Secretary, HR	Gender balanced leadership positions
		Promote gender balance in all decision-making bodies, boards, and committees	X	X	X	The President, HR, and The Research Funding Units	- At least 40% representation of underrepresented genders - At least one female candidate in all shortlists for all decision-making bodies and committees
	Capacity Building	Organize regular trainings on gender equality, unconscious bias, and inclusive leadership for decision-makers	X	X	X	HR and GEO	At least 50% participation

SECTION V

Integration of Gender Dimension into Research Content & Research-Based Activities

TÜBİTAK promotes gender equality in research and innovation as a key component of research quality and societal impact. As the national research funding organization, it is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all researchers while integrating relevant gender considerations into research content and evaluation processes.

Building on existing policies, TÜBİTAK will further strengthen the systematic integration of the gender dimension across its funding programmes, review mechanisms, and innovation activities, with particular attention to international collaboration, industry partnerships, and emerging research fields.

SECTION	Subject	Planned Action	Time Schedule			Responsible Person/Unit/Department	Success Indicators
			2026	2027	2028		
V	Raising awareness	Organize training and information activities for applicants, reviewers, and TÜBİTAK staff on gender balance and the integration of the gender dimension in R&I	X	X	X	Research funding units, Unit Representatives, and GEO	Trainings delivered; information days and stakeholder meetings organized
		Develop practical guidelines for panels, committees, and external reviewers on unconscious bias and gender considerations	X		X	Research funding units, Unit Representatives, and GEO	Guidelines published; gender clauses included in commitment documents
	Gender and Research	Require applicants to assess whether sex aspects are relevant to their research content	X	X	X	Research funding units, Unit Representatives, and GEO	Gender dimension section integrated into application forms
		Encourage balanced composition of research teams, where relevant	X	X	X	Research funding units, Unit Representatives, and GEO	Improved gender balance in project teams
		Monitor gender-disaggregated data in project teams and deliverables		X	X	Research funding units, Unit Representatives, and GEO	Annual monitoring reports published
		Set unit-specific targets to improve gender balance among reviewers and panel members	X			Research funding units, Unit Representatives, and GEO	Targets achieved at unit level
		Exclude career breaks (e.g. maternity/paternity leave, parental	X			Research funding units, Unit Representatives, and GEO	Update the programme conditions for the applicants

		leave, long-term illness, national service) from eligibility and evaluation criteria					
		Establish or strengthen reintegration opportunities for researchers returning after extended career breaks		X		The President and BİDEB	Researchers successfully reintegrated into research careers
	Gender and Innovation	Promote women's participation in technology-based entrepreneurship through dedicated calls		X		The President, GEO, related unit representatives, and the head of the related unit	Special calls to be launched
	TÜBİTAK Research Institutes	Promote gender-balanced research teams within TÜBİTAK institutes	X	X	X	HR and the relevant unit managers	Gender balanced research teams
		Monitor gender balance in research outputs (projects, publications, patents)	X	X	X	Unit Representatives of TÜBİTAK Research Institutes, and GEO	Annual reports published
		Promote gender balance in editorial leadership of TÜBİTAK academic journals	X	X	X	The President and ULAKBİM	Female representation in chief/associate editor roles
	Gender Neutral Communication	Provide training on gender-neutral language and inclusive communication		X		GEO, HR and Communication Unit	Participation of at least 50% of all employees
		Ensure balanced gender representation in visual materials, events, role models, and public communication	X	X	X	Communication Unit, Unit Representatives, and GEO	Increased visibility of underrepresented genders

SECTION VI
Violence Against Women, Combatting Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

TÜBİTAK is committed to ensuring a safe, respectful, and inclusive working environment. While harassment, discrimination, and violence are prohibited under national legislation, the renewed Gender Equality Action Plan aims to strengthen awareness, prevention, and confidential reporting and support mechanisms across the institution.

SECTION	Subject	Planned Action	Time Schedule			Responsible Person/Unit/Department	Success Indicators
			2026	2027	2028		
VI	Prevention, Trust and Institutional Strengthening	Establish and institutionalize a confidential, preventive, and victim-centered complaint and support mechanism, and ensure its visibility across the organization	X	X	X	HR and GEO	A link to be created on the TÜBİTAK portal homepage for the compliant system to make the application mechanism confidential and effective
		Conduct regular staff surveys and targeted consultations to assess awareness, trust, and effectiveness of complaint and support mechanisms	X			HR and GEO	Updated regulation
		Review and update Discipline Committee policies by integrating a gender-sensitive approach, including anti-mobbing, anti-bullying, and anti-harassment provisions	X			HR and GEO	Updated regulation
		Adopt online training on violence, sexual harassment and discrimination for employees and managers	X		X	HR and GEO	Participation of at least 60% of the employees and managers