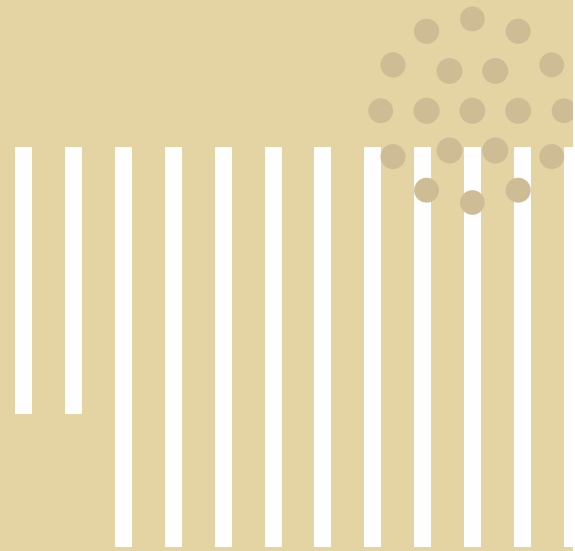


Readiness to Implement the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection: Türkiye





*The shaded areas of the map indicate ESCAP members and associate members.**

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List of Acronyms

ALMP	Active Labour Market Programs
ASHB	Ministry of Family and Social Services (Aile ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı)
ISAIS	Integrated Social Assurances Information System
CCTE	Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (Education Assistance for Refugees)
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease of 2019
DGSA	Directorate General of Social Assistance
ENEA	East and North-East Asia
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific
ESSN	Emergency Social Safety Net
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
İŞKUR	Turkish Employment Agency
NCA	North and Central Asia
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAYG	Pay As You Go
PTT	Post Telegraph and Telephone
SASF	Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation
SEA	South-East Asia
SED	Social and Economic Support Service
SGK	Social Security Institution (Sosyal Güvenlik Kurumu)
SSN	Social Safety Net Programme
SSWA	South and South-West Asia
TRY	Turkish New Lira
TÜİK	Turkish Statistics Institution (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu)
TRC	Turkish Red Crescent

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Introduction

Governments have increasingly recognized social protection as a key policy instrument to build a more productive, protected and healthy population in Asia and the Pacific. In 2020, ESCAP member States endorsed the Regional Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection (Action Plan), which serves as a shared vision, strategy and platform for promoting partnership and peer learning and identifying needs for capacity development. The Action Plan sets out 12 national actions that underpin the achievement of more inclusive and comprehensive social protection systems, ranging from upholding the right to social protection in legislative and regulatory frameworks, to ensuring a more effective design, coordination and delivery of social protection schemes.

To support member States in the implementation of this first ever Regional Action Plan, ESCAP has been mandated to develop a regional platform to facilitate peer learning as well as take stock of the readiness of countries to implement the Action Plan and achieve more inclusive and comprehensive social protection systems. So far, pilot stocktaking reports and consultations have been conducted in six countries across Asia and the Pacific (Cambodia, Maldives, Mongolia, the Philippines, Georgia and Türkiye) to share national experiences and pathways towards this vision.

The scope of social protection in the report refers to the extension of measures to provide basic income security to those who need it. It is aligned with ILO Recommendation 202 (2012) to promote a Social Protection Floor as a fundamental element of national social protection systems, as well as the aim to ensure progressively higher levels of protection.¹ This includes basic income security, at least at a nationally defined minimum level, for children, persons of active age who are unable to earn sufficient income, and for older persons. The social protection system referred to in this report is thus limited to basic income security through contributory and non-contributory benefits for key life contingencies.²

This report on Türkiye's Readiness to Implement the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection aims to:

- present an overview of the social protection situation, policies and approaches in Türkiye
- identify the potential impact a broadening of coverage could have on poverty and other areas
- initiate discussion on ways for the Government to implement the Action Plan

The report has incorporated comments and feedback from a review meeting with the Ministry of Family and Social Services conducted on 14 December 2023 with participation from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Social Security Institution, Office of the Presidency on Budget and

¹ ILO Recommendation No. 202 outlines the principles that should guide social protection policies and strategies, namely: (i) universal coverage in terms of persons protected; (ii) comprehensive protection in terms of risks covered; and (iii) adequate levels of protection. The Recommendation affirmed that all countries should prioritize the establishment of national Social Protection Floors as a fundamental element of their social security systems by a) guaranteeing at least basic levels of income security and access to essential healthcare for all and b) incrementally securing higher levels of protection, guided by Convention No. 102 and the more advanced standards, for as many persons as possible and as soon as possible. Source: ILO. Building the future of social protection for a human-centred world of work. A recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (social security), under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, 2008. International Labour Conference, 109th Session, 2021. Fifth item on the agenda.

² For the purposes of this report, the term non-contributory schemes is used to refer to cash benefits that are provided to individuals, regardless of any previous financial contributions. They are often funded through taxes or other sources of government budget. Contributory schemes refer to social insurance or individual accounts into which a member contributes into.

Finance, and the Turkish Employment Agency, UN RCO, ILO, IOM and UNFPA. The meeting served to gather inputs to the report and discuss ways for the Government to implement the Action Plan.

Chapter 1: Overview of Social Protection in Türkiye

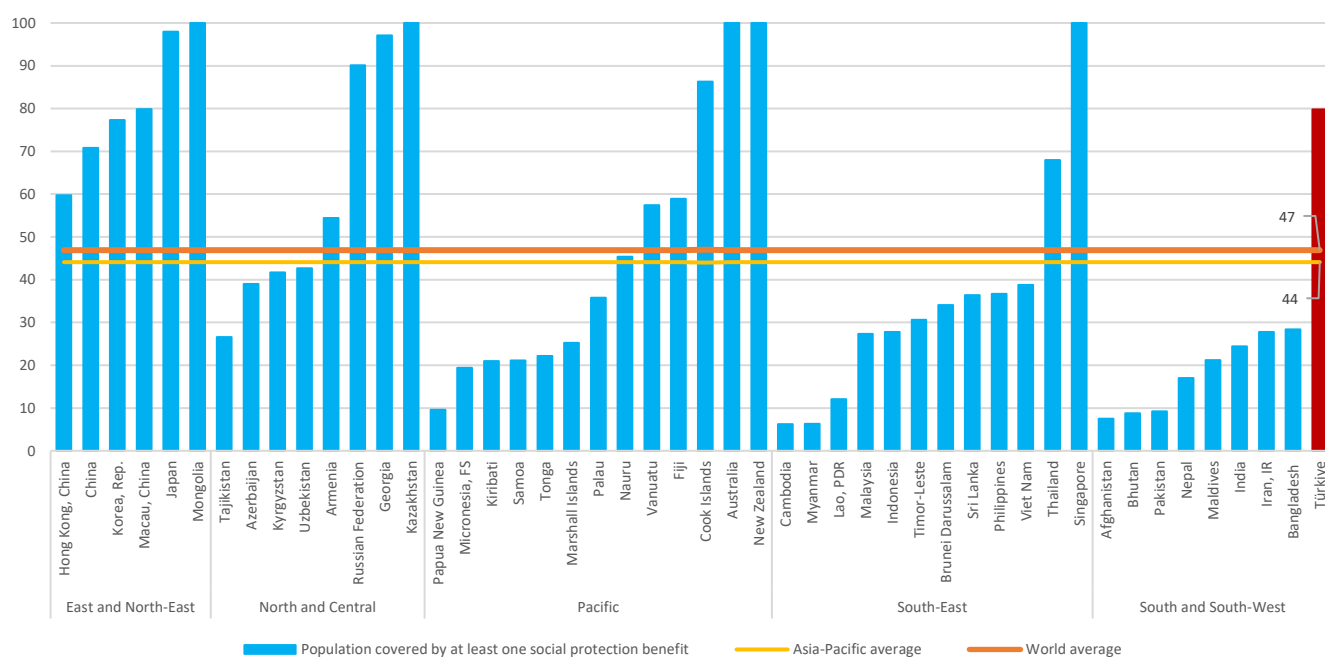
The Government of Türkiye has established various social protection schemes to strengthen the socioeconomic resilience of its population. The preamble to the Constitution of Türkiye, which reinforces the principle of a social state, recognizes the social protection system as an essential aspect of the country's governance and institutional heritage. As of end 2022, 14.4 per cent of the population live below the national poverty line.³ According to the International Labour Office, 28 per cent of the total workforce are in informal employment, with agricultural workers accounting for a large share of this proportion.⁴

This Chapter sets the social protection system in Türkiye in the regional context of Asia and the Pacific in terms of coverage, level of investment and workers' contributions.

1.1. Coverage of Social Protection is High

Across the Asian and Pacific region, less than half of all people are protected by at least one social protection scheme (Figure 1.1). In comparison with the regional average Türkiye provides a high level of coverage, where 80 per cent of the population is covered by at least one social protection scheme.⁵

Figure 1.1: Percentage of population covered by at least one social protection scheme (excluding health) in Asia and the Pacific, latest available data



Source: International Labour Organization, World Social Protection Database. Available at <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/WSPDB.action?id=32> (accessed in October 2023).

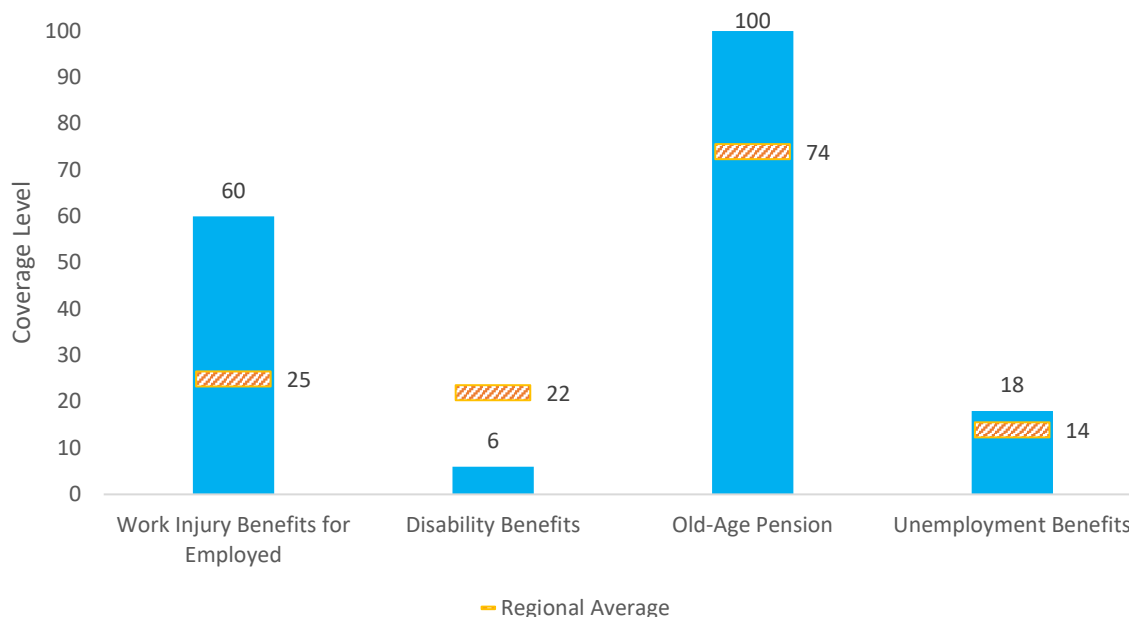
³Turkish Statistical Institute, "Poverty and Living Conditions Statistics", Turkstat. Available at <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Poverty-and-Living-Conditions-Statistics-2022-49746> (accessed on 25 August 2023).

⁴ ILO, ILOSTAT database. Available at www.ilo.org (accessed on 13 July 2023).

⁵ Ibid.

In Türkiye, social protection coverage varies across different life contingencies (Figure 1.2). Türkiye achieves universal coverage for old-age persons through the combination of its contributory old-age pension and non-contributory social pension. Disability benefits remain well under the regional average of 21 per cent with only 5.6 per cent of persons with disability benefiting from social protection. Gaps also persist for Türkiye’s working age population, particularly with regards to unemployment and work injury benefits (Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2: Social protection coverage as percentage of total population by selected contingencies in Türkiye

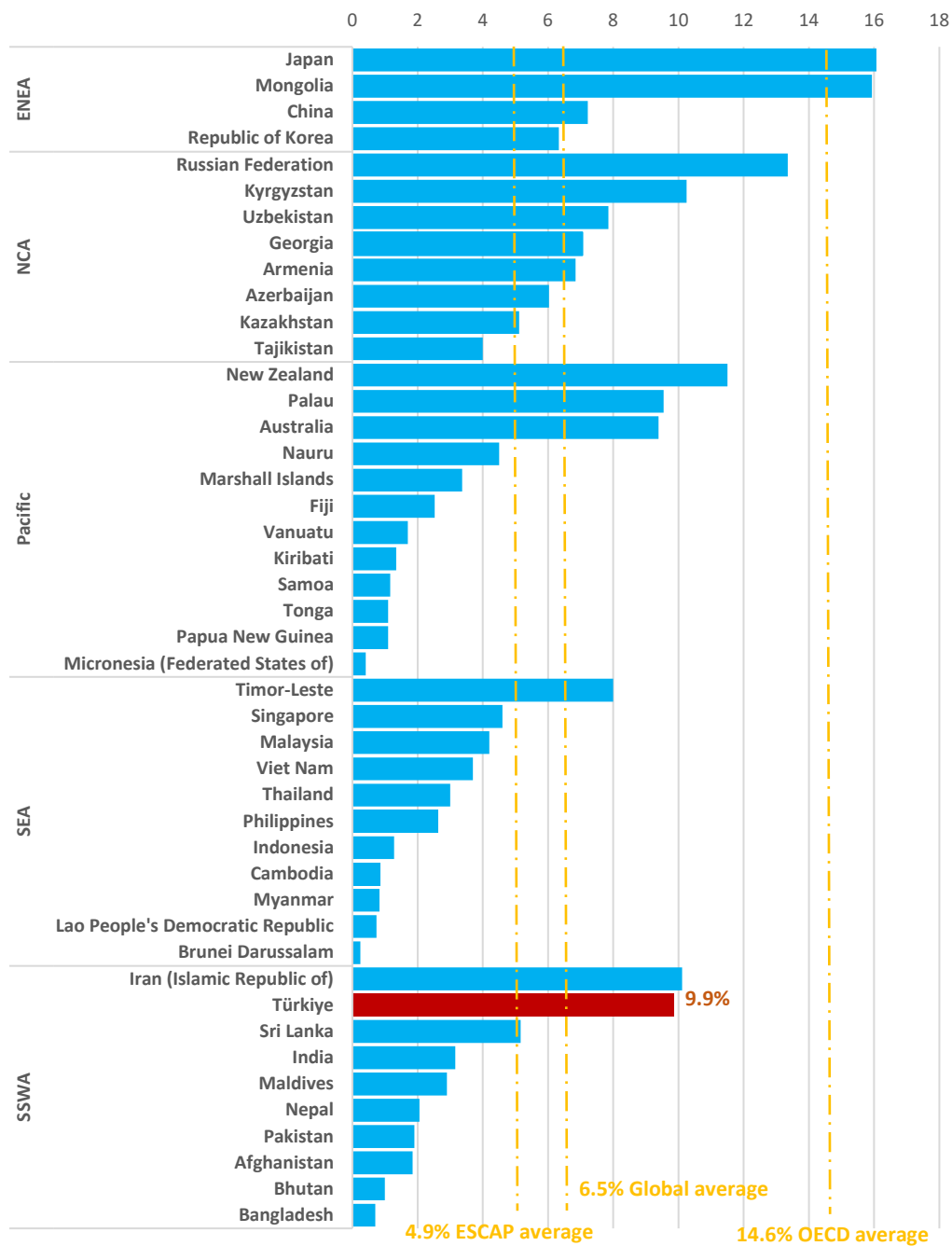


Source: International Labour Organization, SDG indicator 1.3.1 - Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems (%) based on Social Security Inquiry Database (accessed in October 2023).

1.2. Investments are Above the Global Average but Below OECD Average

In 2020, according to ILO data, the Government of Türkiye committed 9.9 per cent of GDP towards social protection (Figure 1.3). Although this may be higher than the ESCAP average of 4.9 per cent and the global average of 6.5 per cent of GDP, it is still lower than the OECD average of 14.6 per cent of GDP, where overall, countries provide more robust and comprehensive social protection systems.

Figure 1.3: Public Expenditures on Social Protection as percentage of GDP in Asia and the Pacific

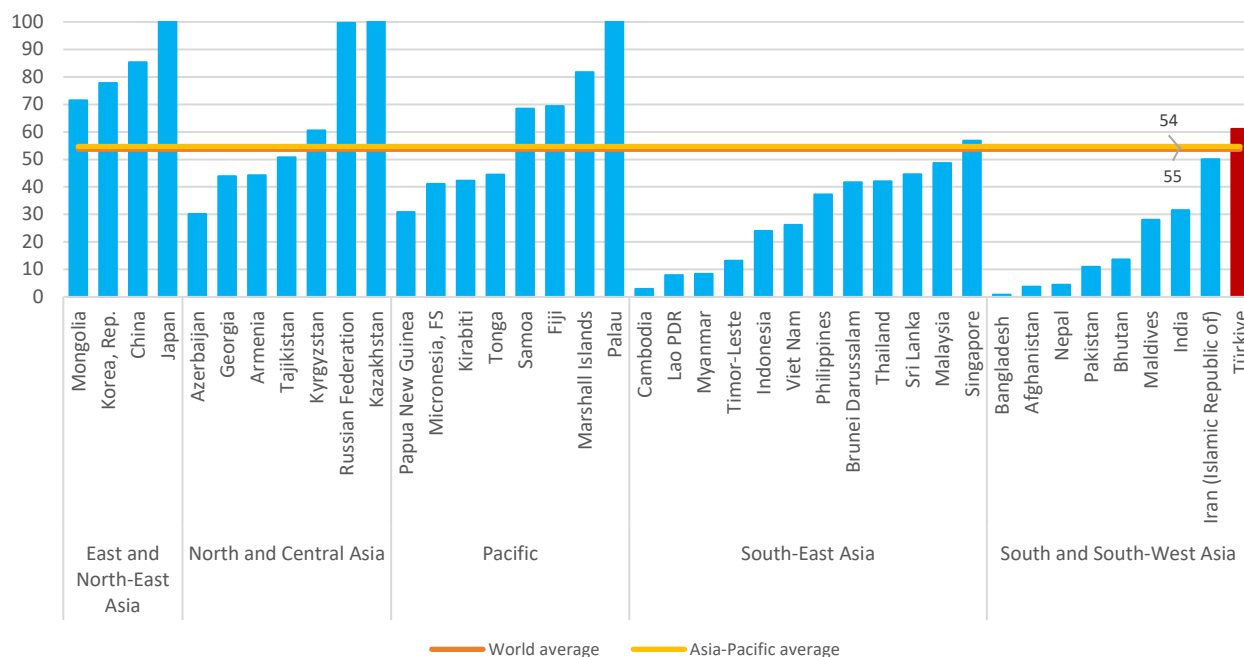


Source: Social Outlook for Asia and the Pacific: The Protection We Want (ESCAP) (2020). Available at: <https://www.unescap.org/publications/protection-we-want-social-outlook-asia-and-pacific>.

1.3. Payments to Contributory Social Protection Benefits in Türkiye

The challenge of social protection coverage is further aggravated by the low level of workers' and employers' payments into contributory schemes (Figure 1.4). There are also apparent sex disparities among contributors with only 34 per cent of females participating in the labor force.⁶ In Türkiye, 61.1 per cent of the labour force is actively contributing to a social protection scheme in Türkiye, above the Asia-Pacific average of 55 per cent.

Figure 1.4: Percentage of the labour force actively contributing to a social protection scheme in Asia and the Pacific



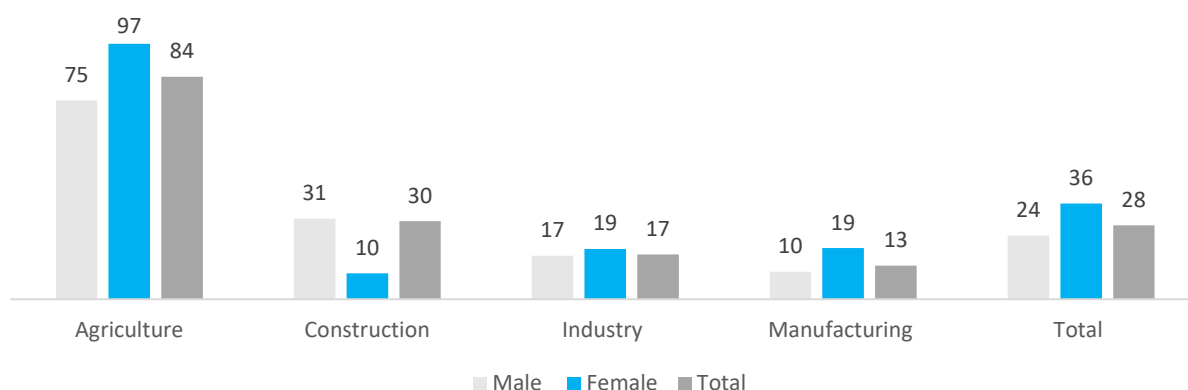
Source: International Labour Organization, World Social Protection Database. Available at <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/WSPDB.action?id=32> (accessed in October 2023).

One reason for the region's low share of workers contributing to a social insurance scheme is labour market informality.

Türkiye has achieved marked efforts to formalize unregistered employment over the last decades. According to latest ILO data, informal workers account for 28 per cent of the total employment in Türkiye (Figure 1.5). With one in three women in informal employment, women are more likely to be in informal employment than men. A vast majority of those employed in the agricultural sector are informally employed, at approximately 87 per cent.

⁶ ILO, Social Protection database. Available at <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/WSPDB.action?id=32> (accessed on 13 July 2023).

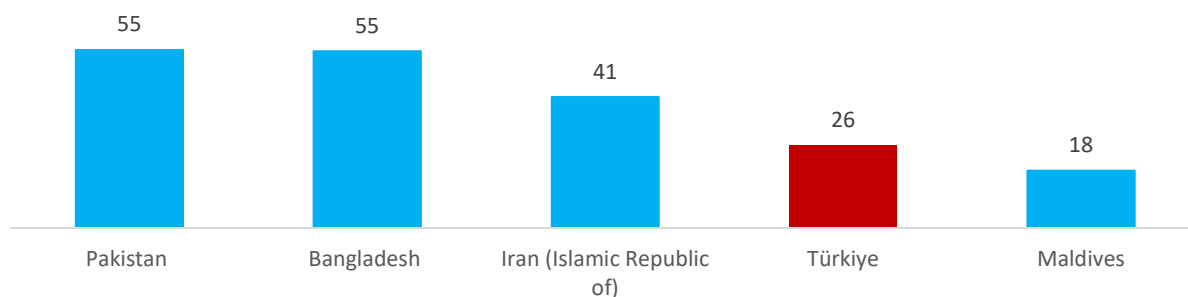
Figure 1.5: Proportion of informal employment as percentage of total employment by sector and sex



Source: International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT. Available at <https://ilostat ilo.org/topics/informality/#> (accessed in October 2023).

At the same time, those in vulnerable employment (defined as the share of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment), do not have formal employment contracts or access to social protection, and often earn low or irregular wages. In Türkiye, one-quarter of the workforce is in vulnerable employment (Figure 1.6), whilst 7 per cent of the workforce are working poor.⁷ This has important implications as those in vulnerable employment often do not meet the regular contribution requirements or the eligibility criteria for social insurance schemes resulting in their exclusion from social protection.⁸ Those who are working poor are left with insufficient earnings to meet basic needs and cope with normal life cycle contingencies.

Figure 1.6: Total vulnerable employment as percentage of total employment in selected countries, latest year available



Source: World Bank, World Bank Database. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/> (accessed October 2023).

Türkiye achieves a high coverage rate with the majority of its population covered by at least one social protection scheme. However, low coverage of work-related contingencies, high levels of informality in the agricultural sector, and low coverage of key populations such as persons with disabilities and women, remain key challenges to achieving more inclusive and comprehensive coverage.

⁷ ILO, “Statistics on working poverty”, ILOSTAT. Available at <https://ilostat ilo.org/topics/working-poverty/> (accessed on 27 October 2023).

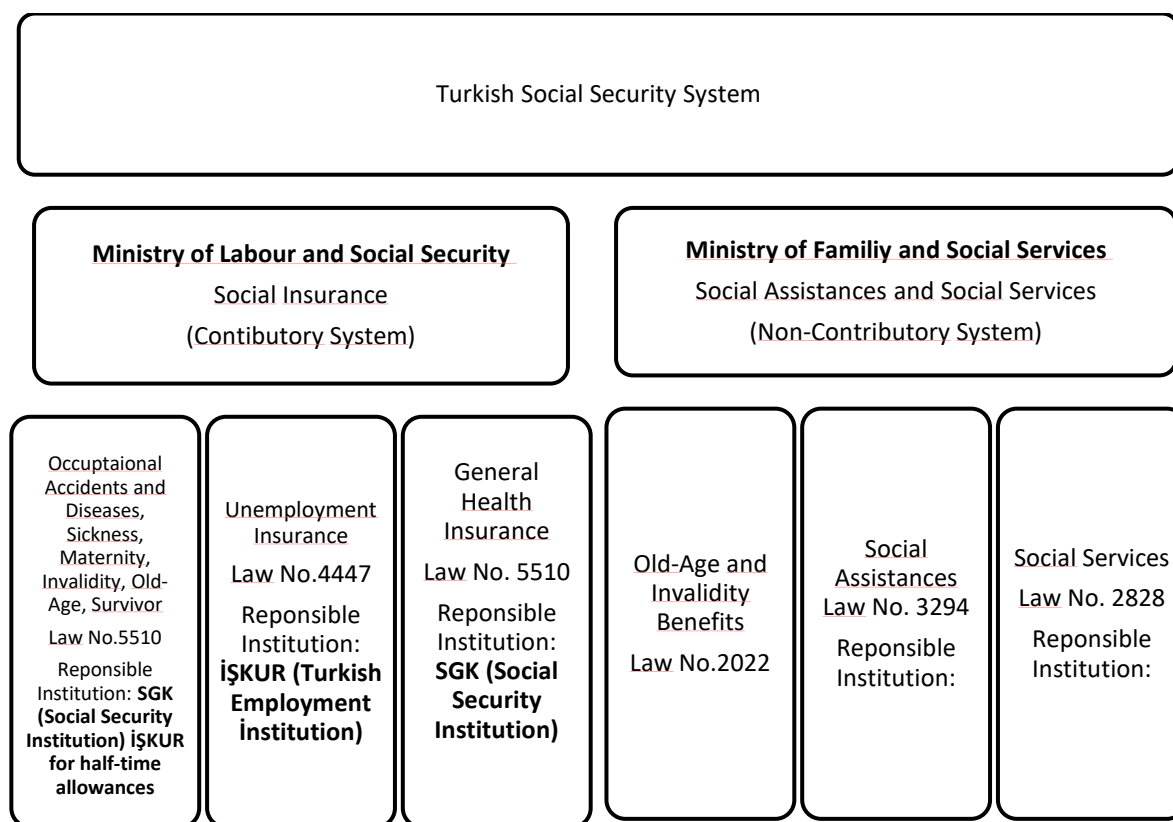
⁸ ESCAP and ILO, *The Protection We Want: Social Outlook for Asia and the Pacific 2020* (Bangkok, ESCAP, 2020).

Chapter 2: Development of Social Protection System in Türkiye

2.1. Introduction

The social protection system in Türkiye is composed of a mix of contributory and non-contributory schemes and has evolved to ensure a wider coverage of contingencies. The fragmented structure for workers in the contributory system, civil servants and self-employed workers was combined in a single Law (Law No. 5510) in 2006 and 2008. The recently adopted Twelfth Development Plan (2024-2028) continues to strengthen this social protection system. With this plan, the aim is to "increase the coverage of the social security system, provide it with a more fair and effective structure, and strengthen its long-term financial sustainability." (TCSBB, 2023/a: 76)

Figure 2.7: Turkish Social Security System



Source: Oguz Karadeniz (2023)

According to national statistics, the share of social protection expenditures in Türkiye is 10.7 per cent⁹ of GDP (Table 2.1). Contributory schemes comprise the largest source of financing, accounting for 90.8 per cent of public social protection expenditure. By contrast, funding of non-contributory schemes comprised only 9.2 per cent of the public social protection expenditure in 2021.¹⁰

Table 2.1: Social protection expenditures by functions, aggregated benefits and grouped schemes (per cent of GDP)

	2000	2007	2008	2009	2010	2015	2018	2019	2020	2021
All functions	7.7	10.8	11.1	13.2	12.5	11.7	11.8	12.4	12.8	10.7
Sickness/Health care	3	3.7	3.9	4.7	4.2	3.4	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.3
Disability	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3
Old-age	3.1	5.1	5.3	6.3	6.1	5.7	5.9	6.1	6	4.9
Survivors	0.8	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.2
Family/Children	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5
Unemployment	0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.9	0.4
Social exclusion n.e.c.	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1

Source: European Union, Eurostat. Available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser> (accessed in October 2023).

Due to the practice of early retirement, more than half of the people receiving old-age pension are under the age of 65. Similarly, due to generous survivors' pensions, more than half of those receiving survivor benefits are under the age of 65. As a result, social security expenditures are mainly made to people over middle age (38 years for women, 43 years for men). Transfers to children are very limited. A significant number of young persons are benefitting from unemployment benefits and active labour market programme support (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Contributory social protection beneficiaries by age groups, and non-contributory scholarship (except on some social assistances) 2020 (per cent of total beneficiaries by social benefits)

Age Groups	Unemployment Benefit	Old-Age Benefit	Survivor Benefit	Sickness Benefit	Scholarship	ALMP
0-17	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0	18.9	13
18-24	7.5	0.0	4.4	7.0	76.3	30
25-29	17.2	0.0	1.4	9.1	2.6	19
30-34	16.9	0.0	1.0	7.2	1.6	12
35-39	17.1	0.1	1.8	9.1	0.5	11
40-44	18.6	0.6	3.1	9.9	0.1	7
45-49	12.8	1.9	5.5	10.3	0.0	4
50-54	6.5	11.7	6.4	10.4	0.0	2

⁹The total expenditure on social protection amounts to 10.8 per cent of GDP when including the administration costs and other expenditures, and without them, 10.7 percent of GDP.

¹⁰European Union, "Tables by functions, aggregated benefits and grouped schemes", Eurostat. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/spr_exp_gdp/default/table?lang=en (accessed on 20 October 2023).

55-59	2.8	19.2	10.3	11.4	0.0	1
60-64	0.3	18.7	11.0	8.4	0.0	0
65+	0.4	47.8	53.0	17.2	0.0	0

Source: Oguz Karadeniz, *Türkiye'de Gençlik ve Sosyal Koruma Spor Yoluyla Sosyal Uyum ve Sosyal İçerme Kitabı* (Detay, 2020).

2.2. Overview of Contributory System

2.2.1. Responsibility and coordination of Contributory System

The contributory social protection system has undergone a series of consolidations since its establishment. The main overhaul came with the introduction of the Social Insurance and General Health Insurance Law No. 5510 in 2008 which consolidated five different social insurance schemes covering employees, civil servants, self-employed, farmers and seasonal agricultural workers.

The two main institutions administering contributory schemes are the Social Security Institution (Sosyal Güvenlik Kurumu, SGK) and the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR), which are positioned under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. Unemployment insurance payments and active labour market programmes are managed by the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) and unemployment insurance premiums are collected by SGK.

In addition, up to 24 separate contributory schemes exist which operate on the same principles of social insurance as the SGK, but are administered by private banks and chambers for their employees.¹¹ It is aimed to bring these funds under the umbrella of the Social Security Institution.

The contributory system administered by the SGK and İŞKUR covers employees, self-employed, farmers, civil servants, and domestic workers. In addition, the law includes voluntary special programmes for groups such as temporary agricultural workers, musicians and artists, and taxi drivers. Persons under the Law on Foreigners and International Protection are also within the scope of Law No. 5510.^{12,13} Low earned tradesman, farmers and some family workers such as unpaid spouses, family workers, and work done within the same residence with relatives up to the third degree are not mandatorily insured (Law No. 5510, Article 6).

Within the scope of İŞKUR's active labour market programmes, those who participate in the public work programmes should be eligible for all insurance branches, and those who participate in on-the-job training programmes and vocational training programmes are eligible for short-term insurance branches (such as work accident and occupational diseases). Apprentices and short-term insurance branches (work accident and occupational disease, sickness, maternity) provisions apply to interns. In addition, non-working persons can register to the social insurance system by paying voluntary

¹¹ During the establishment years of social insurance in Türkiye (1946-1965), banks and insurance companies established funds operating on the principle of social insurance, since the social insurance system initially covered only workers within the scope of the Labour Law (Alper, 2022:17-18). Although the Social Security Law No. 506 (1965), and the Law No. 5510 (2008) provide the legal mandate to transfer these schemes to the SGK, this has not yet taken place. In case the bank funds are closed, all rights and obligations are transferred to SGK.

¹² Oguz Karadeniz, *Social Security Status of Syrians Under Temporary Protection in the Turkish Labour Market and Recommendations for Transition to Formality* (ILO Ankara Office for Türkiye, 2023).

¹³ In Türkiye, these population groups cover: temporary protection holders, international protection status holders (recognized refugees), as well as applicants for international protection (asylum seekers).

contributions. It is also possible for employees who are not covered by compulsory social insurance to pay premiums voluntarily.¹⁴

Overseas migrant workers: Türkiye has provided regular labour migration to Europe since the 1960s and there are currently 5 million Turkish citizens living abroad. Türkiye has bilateral social security agreements with 35 countries that protect the social security rights of migrant workers. Turkish citizens can transfer their social security entitlements from these countries when they move to Türkiye. In addition, Turkish citizens living abroad can, under certain conditions, purchase contribution days from Türkiye for the periods they work or live abroad, and can also be entitled to disability, old-age or death pension from Türkiye, provided that they meet the necessary conditions.

2.2.2. Overview of Contributory Schemes

2.2.2.1. Child Benefits

Contributory benefits currently do not cover child or family allowance insurance. However, low amounts of child allowances, funded through general government revenue, are available for children of civil servants.¹⁵ Assistance is provided until the age of 25 if a child attends university. It currently covers 3,470,727 civil servants.¹⁶ A child allowance can also be paid to the employee by the employer through individual or collective labour agreements. Where child benefits are paid by the employer, up to 2 per cent of the monthly minimum wage per child for up to two children, are exempted from social security contribution.

2.2.2.2. Work Accidents and Occupational Diseases

Employees, self-employed workers, apprentices, interns, and those participating in İŞKUR's active labour market programmes are covered by this insurance branch. Both invalidity and work accident insurances are mandatory for employees and civil servants. There is no eligibility requirement to pay a specified premium period for work accidents and occupational diseases insurance.

In case of a work accident or occupational disease, payments such as permanent incapacity for work benefit (invalidity pension), temporary incapacity for work benefit are made. Survivor benefits and funeral benefits are made in case of death of the insured. The number of permanent invalidity pensioners and survivor pensioners for work accidents and occupational diseases was 203,500 in July 2023 (Annex I, Table B).

2.2.2.3. Sickness

Employees are mandatorily covered but this does not extend to self-employed workers. Civil servants receive their full wages during their sick leave. In case of sickness, 90 days of short-term insurance contribution must be paid within one year from the date the employee's incapacity for work began to get temporary incapacity for work allowances (Law No. 5510, Article 18). Temporary incapacity allowance is half of the gross earnings reported to SGK in inpatient treatment and two-thirds in outpatient treatment. As long as the insured worker who falls ill is not dismissed, he/she can receive temporary incapacity allowance until he recovers. However, the employer may terminate the employment contract of the sick worker after six weeks have passed after the notice period¹⁷, in accordance with Article 25/1 of the Labor Law.

¹⁴ Ali Nazım Sözer, *Türk Sosyal Sigorta Hukuku* (Güncellenmiş, İstanbul, 2023).

¹⁵ Child benefits are stipulated under the Civil Servants Law. A child allowance of TRY 254 per month is provided for public servants for children under 6 years of age and TRY 127 for children over 5 years old.

¹⁶ Ali Nazım Sözer, *Türk Sosyal Sigorta Hukuku* (Güncellenmiş, İstanbul, 2023).

¹⁷ This period is between 8 weeks and 14 weeks, depending on the employee's seniority in the workplace.

As a result of regulatory changes in 2021, the calculation of temporary incapacity for work allowances is based on the average of the last 12 months, instead of the average of the worker's earnings of the last three months before insured became ill. The change resulted in a decrease in the amount of allowances. The amount of the allowance is half of the daily earnings in inpatient treatment and two-thirds in outpatient treatment. According to Article 48 of the Labour Law No. 4857, if employees work for a monthly wage, the employer must pay the difference between the temporary incapacity for work allowance and their wages.

Due to temporary incapacity (or sickness), workers stay on sick leave for an average of 6.4 days (Annex I, Table C). In 30 per cent of cases, workers take sick leave for 2 days or less. These workers cannot benefit from temporary incapacity allowance.

2.2.2.4. Maternity

Employees and self-employed are covered by mandatory maternity benefits. The women insured must have paid 90 days of short-term insurance premiums within one year before giving birth. The amount of the temporary incapacity allowances is half of the daily earnings for inpatient treatment and two-thirds in outpatient treatment for total 16 weeks before (8 weeks) and after birth (8 weeks), and 18 weeks in case of multiple pregnancy.

A Half Time Work Allowance is available on a voluntary basis for employees wishing to reduce their full-time work to part-time for a specified period of time. The women insured must have paid 600 days of unemployment insurance contribution within three years before giving birth and the claim is limited to half the working time the woman normally works. While the employer pays the 15-day wage and contribution of the half-time female worker during the month, İŞKUR pays the 15-day half-time working allowance based on the minimum wage. Half-time work is 60 days for the first child, 120 days for the second child, 180 days for the third child, and 360 days for a child with disabilities (Law No. 4447).

2.2.2.5. Invalidity

An invalidity insurance is available for employee, self-employed, civil servant, farmers, voluntary insured. Employees who have been insured for 10 years and paid contribution or long-term insurance branches for at least 1,800 days are eligible. The disability rate is made in accordance with the Invalidity and Loss of Working Capacity Determination Procedures Regulation.

The invalidity pension is calculated based on 9,000 days for insured people with less than 9,000 days of premiums, and on the total number of premium payment days for those with 9,000 days or more. If the insured requires the constant care of another person, the determined monthly rate is increased by 10 points. However, the number of 9,000 premium days for workers is applied as 7,200 days (Law No. 5510, Article 27). The increase rate is 2 per cent for every 360 days. For example, a worker who has paid premiums for 1,800 days will receive a disability pension as if he had paid premiums for 7,200 days.¹⁸

Due to the young population and early retirement practices, the number of applications for disability pension and the share of disability expenses in social security expenditures are relatively low.¹⁹ This can be explained by several factors. One factor is that persons may be eligible for an old-age pension

¹⁸ The worker is entitled to a monthly salary of 40 per cent of the average earnings reported to the Institution (2*20 years = 40 per cent).

¹⁹ In 2022, 32 per cent of 79,352 disability pension applications were accepted and 49 per cent were rejected. The remaining applications are still being processed.

which can be provided to persons with disability before they join the scheme, regardless of age, and is thus more accessible than the invalidity insurance which only covers those who become disabled after they are enrolled in the scheme. It is estimated that, due to the abolition of the age requirement for old-age pensions for people who were employed before 1999, people who are 40 years old and above and have lost their ability to work, apply for old-age pension instead of invalidity pension. Secondly, assessment is based on a working capacity loss rate of 60 per cent or more, which is strictly evaluated according to the Invalidity Procedures Regulation. Another factor is the low employment rate of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the incentive and possibility to work can be negatively impacted after enrolling in the scheme, as the disability pension is reduced once the recipient is working and mandatorily covered by contributory schemes.

2.2.2.6. Survivor Benefit

The survivor pension is quite generous in Türkiye. Even if the spouse of the deceased works or receives an old-age pension, they continue to receive a survivor pension from their spouse. Daughters can receive a survivor's pension as long as they do not marry or get a job. Eligibility is based on being a surviving family member of the insured deceased person, such as their spouse, child or parent. The insured deceased person must have paid 900 days of premium for actual work (excluding borrowings-credited services) within the 5-year insured period, and self-employed workers and civil servants must pay 1,800 days of premium. Benefits include a lifetime survivor pension, marriage allowance for daughter, funeral benefit, or full refund of contributions for those who could not fulfil the required contribution days.

The survivor benefit is granted to beneficiaries as if they had paid 7,200 days of premium if the deceased was an insured employee, or 9,000 days of premium if they were self-employed. If the widow/widower has no other beneficiary and they are not working or retired, 75 per cent of the pension is provided throughout their life and if there are other beneficiaries or the spouse is working or retired, 50 per cent of the pension is provided throughout their life.

- Widows/widowers can receive a pension for both their spouses and their own work. Widows/widowers' pension coverage in Türkiye has been estimated at 91 per cent (Annex I, Table F).
- Children who are not continuing their education can receive survivor benefit until the age of 18, children who are in high school until the age of 20, and children who are studying at university until the age of 25. The share for each child is 25 per cent and the total share of beneficiaries cannot exceed 100 per cent.
- Under certain conditions, a survivor benefit is also granted to the surviving parents of the deceased insured. If the income of the mother and father of the deceased person is below the minimum wage and they are not retired, a total of 25 per cent pension is paid to both of them. If the age of the parents is over 65, the sum of the shares may exceed 100 per cent.
- The daughter of the deceased insured can receive a survivor's pension as long as she does not marry and she does not work in formal employment.
- Sons with disabilities over the age of 25 who are not working or are not retired can also receive lifetime survivor benefit.

The minimum survivor's pension is the amount of the minimum pension divided into shares. For example, if the survivors are a spouse and two children, 50 per cent of the minimum pension (TRY 7,500) will be given to the spouse monthly (TRY 3,750), and each child will receive a monthly benefit of TRY 1,875. In this case, the ratio of survivor's pension to the pension for the whole family for October 2023 is 65 per cent as a proportion of the net monthly minimum wage.

The survivor pension provides a one-time marriage allowance, equivalent to a 24-month survivor's pension, if a daughter is married. The pension also provides a funeral allowance, which amounted to TRY 2,054 in 2023, and is equal to 18 per cent of the monthly net minimum.

2.2.2.7. Old-Age Benefit

Contributory old-age benefits are provided to all insured who pay long term insurance contribution (invalidity, old-age, survivor) such as employee, self-employed, civil servant and farmers. The number of premium payment days required for workers to be eligible for the old-age pension in the system varies depending on the dates of employment and pension reforms.

Employees who started working after the second pension reform (2008) must pay 7,200 days to qualify for the old-age pension, while self-employed workers and civil servants must pay 9,000 days of contributions into the disability, old-age, death long term insurance schemes.²⁰ The increase in the number of premium payment days was introduced to encourage people to work more registered jobs and to improve the actuarial balances of the pension system. It can be thought that the increase in the number of premium payment days may negatively affect women due to their disproportionate care responsibilities. However, with the second pension reform, women who have children after the first insured date are allowed to purchase a total of six premium years for two years for each child. The minimum premium amount to be paid for each premium day is 32 per cent of the minimum wage.

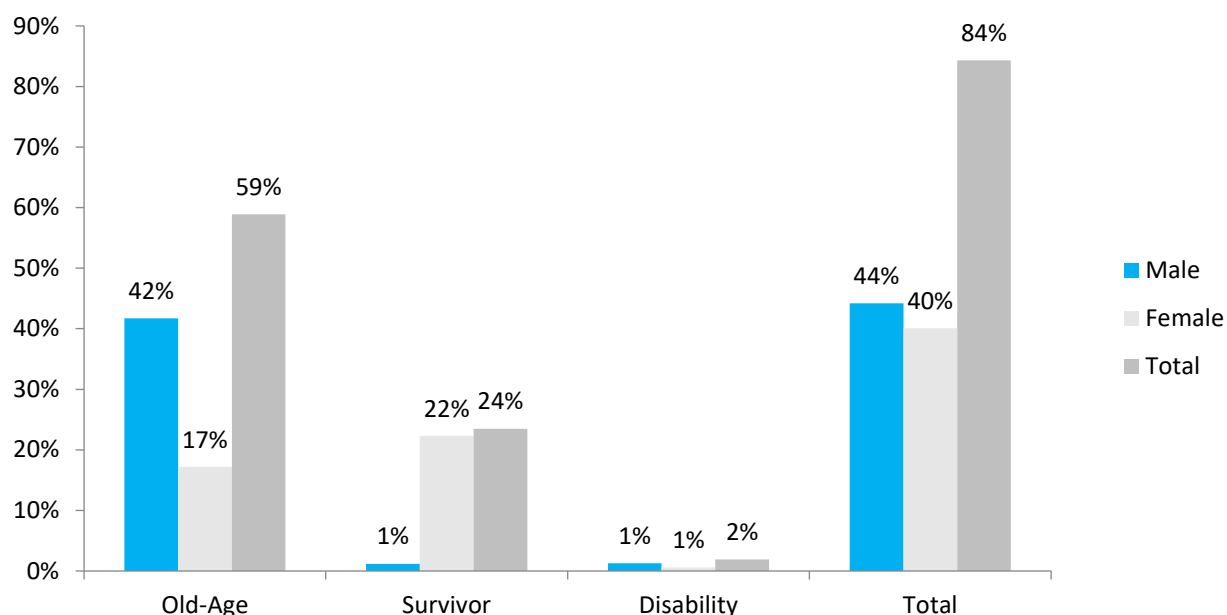
At the beginning of March 2023, the age requirement for those who started working before the first pension reform (8 September 1999) (Law No. 4447) was abolished. The age requirement to be eligible for the old-age pension for those starting to work after this date was then set at 58 for women and 60 for men. From 2035, the age requirement will gradually increase each year and will be equal to the age of 65 for men and women in 2048.

With the removal of the age requirement for insured persons who started working before 1999 in March 2023, the number of retirees increased by approximately 1.5 million people between March and July 2023 (Annex I, Table G). It is estimated that the majority of people retiring in this period are between the ages of 40-54. As of October 2023, the ratio of the lowest pension (TRY 7,500) to the minimum wage (TRY 11,402) is 65 per cent.

It is estimated that 84 per cent of the population over the age of 65 receives old-age, survivor and disability pensions (Figure 2.2). More men receive an old-age pension than women, most often because they have a higher formal employment rate. Women tend to rely more on survivor benefits for old-age income security, but still less than half of older age women are protected.

²⁰ Over the last quarter century, two major pension reforms were carried out in Türkiye in 1999 and 2008. In the reform of 1999, the retirement age was gradually increased from 38 to 43 for women and from 43 to 60 for men. The number of premium payment days has been increased from 5,000 days to 7,000 days for workers, and to 9,000 days for self-employed and civil servant women. During this period, the lower limit of the monthly pension rate was reduced from 70 per cent of the earnings subject to a minimum premium, to 35 per cent of the average earnings reported to the Institution. In calculating the pension, the average of all years' earnings has begun to be taken into account instead of the average of the earnings of the last 10 years.

Figure 2.8: Proportion of those receiving old-age, survivor and disability pensions in the population over the age of 65 (covering contributory and non-contributory beneficiaries)



Source: SGK, SGK 2021 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu (2022).

The pension system in Türkiye is a Defined Benefit and is financed by PAYG. The pension is indexed.²¹ The accrual rate is flat at 2 per cent for each insured year of employment for disability, old-age and survivors' insurance. In this calculation, periods less than 360 days are taken into account proportionally. However, the maximum ratio is 90 per cent of the insured monthly average earning (Law No. 5510, Article 28). The lower limit of disability, old-age and survivors insurance pensions is 35 per cent of the reported average monthly earnings. If there is the dependent spouse or child of the insured in the household, this is increased to 40 per cent (Law No. 5510, Article 55).²²

It can be said that after completing the required number of days, working beyond this period does not impact on the old-age pension. As a result, almost more than half of retirees are under the age of 65. Early retirement practices negatively affect the active insured and passively insured balance of SGK. Spending half of the old-age benefit expenditures on people who are under the age of 65 and whose poverty rate is lower than other age groups obstruct the efficient use of resources.

A voluntary private pension scheme was established in 2001 under Law No. 4362. Regulatory changes in 2014 replaced tax incentives and introduced state subsidies (not to exceed 30 per cent of the minimum wage) for those who pay premiums to encourage payment into the private pension system. In 2017, although the system remained voluntary, automatic enrolment was implemented. As of October 2023, approximately 8.5 million insured persons pay premiums to private pension funds and the amount accumulated in the funds has reached an estimated 2.2 per cent of the national income.

²¹ In calculating old-age survivor and disability pensions, the earnings update coefficient reported to the Institution is the sum of 100 per cent of the change rate in the latest base-year general index of consumer prices announced by the Turkish Statistical Institute according to December of each year and 30 per cent of the gross domestic product development rate at constant prices refers to the value found by adding the whole number (Law No. 5510, Article 3).

²² For example, while the replacement rate for an insured who has worked for 25 years (9,000 days) is 50 per cent (2*25 years = 50 per cent), for an employee who has worked for 7200 days, the rate is 40 per cent, and for an insured who has worked for 40 years, it is 80 per cent. Pensions are calculated based on gross earnings reported to the SGK Disability, old-age and survivor pensions are exempt from income tax (Law No. 193).

2.2.2.8. Unemployment insurance

In order to be eligible for unemployment benefits, an employee must contribute at least 600 days during the last three years before becoming unemployed. The employee's health premiums are paid by the unemployment insurance fund. During the period they receive unemployment benefits, they can benefit from active labour market programmes (on-the-job training programmes and vocational training courses) and İŞKUR assists the unemployed in finding a new job.

The unemployment benefit period varies depending on the number of contribution payment days paid in the last three years. If the number of contribution payment days paid in the last three years is 600 days, the unemployed person can receive unemployment allowance for 180 days. If contribution days total 900 days, unemployment allowance is paid for 240 days, and if contribution days total 1,080 days, the unemployed person can receive 300 days of unemployment allowance. The amount of unemployment benefit varies between 40 per cent and 80 per cent of the minimum wage, depending on the employee's earnings (Law No. 4447).

As of 2020, only 23 per cent of the unemployed received unemployment benefits (Annex I, Table H). Several reasons could account for this low effective coverage. Firstly, unemployed persons may have just entered the labour market or have worked unregistered and thus not paid premiums. On the other hand, some practices exist whereby employers notify the SGK that the employee's reason for leaving the job is at their own request (resignation) in order to avoid paying severance pay. In this case, the worker cannot benefit from unemployment benefits and other benefits.²³ In 2021, an average of 42 per cent of those who applied for unemployment benefits were entitled to unemployment benefits.²⁴ Unemployed women benefit from unemployment insurance less than men, perhaps as a higher proportion of women are in unregistered employment.

A mandatory unemployment insurance fund called Esnaf ve Ahilik Sandığı was established in 2017 for self-employed people. However, its implementation has been postponed to the end of 2023 due to the difficulty of self-employed workers in paying premiums.

2.2.3. Incentives Through Contribution Premiums

The lower limit of earnings subject to social security premiums is the minimum wage, and the upper limit is 7.5 times the minimum wage (Annex I, Table I). Various incentive measures are in place to encourage uptake of contributory schemes for employers and employees, whereby the employer premiums are paid by the State budget.

- A 5-percentage point contribution discount is provided for employers who pay their premiums regularly and do not employ uninsured workers (Law No. 5510, Article 80).²⁵ Additional insurance contribution incentives are in place for employers of young people, women and persons with disabilities.
- The employer's share of the insurance premium of persons with disabilities people who have lost at least 40 per cent of their working capacity is financed from the government general budget at minimum wage (Law No. 4857, Article 30). If children over the age of 18 who are under state protection are employed in the private sector, it is financed from the general budget at the minimum wage for five years (Law No. 2828, Article 1).

²³ Gökten Görmezöz, *Türkiye'de işsizlerin işsizlik sigortası ödeneğinden yararlanamama nedenlerinin işkur verileri üzerinden analizi* (Pamukkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2018).

²⁴ İŞKUR, "İstatistik Bülteni". Available at www.iskur.gov.tr (accessed on 16 October 2023).

²⁵ The contribution ratio for long-term insurance branches is 6 per cent instead of 11 per cent.

- Another incentive aims to promote the employment of young persons and women. If the employer employs a male worker between the ages of 18 and 29 or a female worker over the age of 18 who is registered with İŞKUR and has been unemployed for the last six months, above the average number of workers, the insurance premium of the employed person is covered by the İŞKUR Unemployment Insurance Fund based on the wage they receive (Law No. 4447, Article 10). If the person receiving unemployment benefit is employed by the employer, the employer and employee shares of the insurance premium are covered by the Unemployment Insurance Fund for duration of unemployment benefit (Law No. 4447, Article 50).
- The Ministry of Family and Social Services budget covers the employer's share premium for one year for employers of those who have benefited from regular cash social assistances at least once in the last year before the date of employment are present in their household, and in case of employment of people whose health insurance premiums are paid by the general budget according to Law No. 5510 (Law No. 3294, Article 5).
- The contribution ratio for self-employed workers is 34 per cent. The contribution ratio for self-employed people who pay their premiums regularly is 29 per cent.

The voluntary social insurance contribution rate is 32 per cent (20 per cent for disability, survivor and old-age pensions and 12 per cent towards General health Insurance). However, unlike workers, voluntary insured person, have to pay 9,000 days of contribution, similar to the self-employed conditions to qualify for old-age pensions. This is to disincentivize workers who may choose to shift from compulsory to voluntary insurance due to lower premium rates.

2.3. Overview of Non-Contributory System

More than 50 different cash and in-kind non-contributory schemes, made through both lump sum and regular instalments, are administered by the Ministry of Family and Social Services.²⁶ The basic laws governing the non-contributory system include the Social Assistance and Solidarity Encouragement Law No. 3294. Schemes falling under this law are financed by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Fund.²⁷ The Law No. 2022 on the Provision of Pensions to Needy, Powerless and Desolate Turkish Citizens Over the Age of 65 provides old-age and invalidity benefits, which are financed by taxes from the general government budget. Based on the Social Services Law No. 2828, Home Care Allowance is provided to the person who cares for persons with severe disabilities in poor households.

Persons under the Law on Foreigners and International Protection could benefit from the assistance granted within the scope of the Law No. 3294, on the condition that they meet the criteria specified in the assistance programme, if they have an income below the poverty threshold. Persons under the Law on Foreigners and International Protection can also benefit from non-contributory schemes given to the person providing care for the person with disability in the household, included under Law No. 2828.²⁸ Administration of disability and old-age benefits is carried out within the scope of the Law No.

²⁶ Aile Ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı Sosyal Yardımlar Genel Müdürlüğü, "Sosyal Yardım Programlarımız". Available at <https://www.aile.gov.tr/sygm/programlarimiz/sosyal-yardim-programlarimiz/> (accessed on 29 September 2023).

²⁷ Aile Ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı Sosyal Yardımlar Genel Müdürlüğü, "Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışmayı Teşvik Fonu". Available <https://www.aile.gov.tr/sygm/genel-mudurluk/sosyal-yardimlasma-ve-dayanismayi-tesvik-fonu/> (accessed on 23 October 2023).

²⁸ If the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations assess a need for regular social assistance for persons under International Protection, they are referred to the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) scheme.

2022 on providing a pension to Turkish Citizens Who Turn 65 and Who are Needy, Helpless and Orphan (1976). According to this Law, being a Turkish Citizen is a criterion for eligibility.

In addition to the above, the EU-funded ESSN project, which falls outside the scope of Law 2828, provides persons with disabilities and older persons regular cash assistance, which is implemented by the Directorate General of Social Assistances within the scope of FRIT funds.

Most non-contributory programmes are poverty targeted, with means-testing carried out by 1,003 Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations (SASF) that have been established in each province and district.²⁹ Although the criteria of neediness is sought in most of the social assistances provided under Law No. 3294, households in need without social security and households with social security but whose monthly income per capita in the household is less than one-third of the net minimum wage could benefit from the assistances provided under the Law no. 3294 with regard to the decision of the Board of Trustees. In addition, within the scope of Assistance for Martyrs' Relatives and Veterans, which is one of the assistance programmes carried out by the Directorate General of Social Assistance, assistances which are neither continuous nor regular could be provided regardless of whether the households are covered by social security and their status of neediness based on the aforementioned Law and related sub-legislation regulations.

Increases in the level of benefits are made by administrative decision, with the exception of the disability and old-age benefits and caregivers allowances, which increase in proportion to the salary increases of civil servants (Law No. 2022, Law No. 2828). In recent years, a small increase has been observed in non-contributory benefits for families and children, especially during the COVID-19 period.

The share of non-contributory benefits in the form of cash benefits, as a share of national income, is still low at 0.4 per cent in 2021 (Annex I, Table J). When in-kind social benefits are included, non-contributory regime expenditures reach approximately 0.95 per cent of the national income. It is seen that non-contributory social expenditures increased in 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of COVID-19 (Annex I, Table K).

2.3.1 Overview of Non-Contributory Schemes

2.3.1.1. Child and family benefits

A child benefit is paid as a component to the Türkiye Family Support Programme and additional transfers are provided through educational and health benefits. In addition, the government affiliated Social Assistance and Solidarity (SYD) Foundations provide assistance to cover transportation expenses within the scope of education assistance, aid for higher education students, and assistance for military families, relatives of martyrs and veterans.

Box 2.1: Social and Economic Support Service (SED)

Due to economic deprivation, children who fall into the position of children in need of protection if they are not supported, are supported within their families or relatives within the scope of social and economic support services without taking a care injunction. The aim of the Social and Economic Support Service is to strengthen families by supporting them economically and socially, to protect

²⁹ Additional revenue sources for non-contributory schemes can include: half of the traffic fine revenue, 15 per cent of the advertising revenues of the Radio and Television Supreme Council, 2.8 per cent of the total Income and Corporate Tax collection, all kinds of donations and aids and other income.

family unity and to ensure that children are cared for and supported alongside their families and relatives. It is aimed to support families until they become self-sufficient. Supported within the scope of Social and Economic Support Service, the child and his/her family are followed up with quarterly household visits. In these follow-ups, the situation of the child and family is evaluated and families are guided. SED provides support to young people who have left an institution and foster care service as an adult, and those who are in financial difficulties. Families benefiting from the SED service are directed to İŞKUR vocational training courses, and efforts are made to provide them with jobs and professions where they can lead their own lives.

The Türkiye Family Support Programme is a poverty targeted and means-tested programme which began implementation in 2022. Payments are made on a monthly basis for one year, which was extended for one year by the Presidential Decision in August 2023. In addition, households benefiting from the Türkiye Family Support Programme are also supported by the Electricity Consumption Support. The level of benefit increases according to the number of children and household income. A monthly benefit of TRY 1,250 is provided to households earning TRY 450 and below; TRY 1,100 to households whose income is above TRY 450 - TRY 911.15 and below; TRY 950 to households whose income is above TRY 911.15 - TRY 1,372.30 and below; and a TRY 850 to households whose income is between TRY 1,372.30 and TRY 5,667.37 (as of 2024). Within the scope of the Children's Component, a monthly payment of TRY 350 is made for households with 1-2 children; TRY 450 for households with 3 children; TRY 550 for households with 4 children; and TRY 650 for households with 5 or more children.

A Conditional Education Benefit is provided to families who do not have social security but are identified as in need within the scope of Law No. 3294, provided that the children continue formal education and are not absent for more than four days in a month during the months when the school is open. Within the scope of conditional education assistances, TRY 971.3 million was paid to 2,107,670 people in 2022.³⁰ In addition, the social assistance and solidarity foundations provide stationery, aprons, bags, etc. for primary and secondary school children of families in need within the scope of Law No. 3294, to ensure that basic school needs are met.

The Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) for Refugees, financed by the European Union, is carried out by the Ministry of Family and Social Services as the main implementing partner in partnership with the Turkish Red Crescent Association and the Ministry of National Education. It is a cash transfer conditional on school attendance, which consists of cash and child protection components for foreigners who do not have social security and identified as in need within the scope of Law No. 3294 TRY 654,746,335 was paid to 668,803 beneficiaries in 2023.³¹

Conditional Health benefits are provided to families who do not have social security and are in need within the scope of Law No. 3294, on the condition that they send their children for health check-ups, and expectant mothers go for health checks during pregnancy and give birth in the hospital. TRY 659.71 million was paid to 1,171,583 people in 2022.³²

³⁰ ASHB, *Aile ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı 2022 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu* (Ankara, 2023).

³¹ Data as of November 2023, Ministry of Family and Social Services.

³² ASHB, *Aile ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı 2022 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu* (Ankara, 2023).

Conditional cash transfers have helped improve school attendance of children in poor households and their health check-ups. Evaluations of conditional cash transfers found positive changes in health and education of beneficiaries as well as the empowerment of women and girls.³³

2.3.1.2. Maternity benefits

A one-time lump-sum birth payment made to mothers of newborns. Within the scope of Maternity Assistance, Turkish citizens and Blue Card holders who have a live birth on or after 15 May 2015 are provided with a one-time lumpsum payment upon application, regardless of the neediness criteria. The transfer level depends on the number of children. TRY 300 is provided for the first child, TRY 400 for the second child TRY 600 for third and subsequent children. In 2022, TRY 352.3 million aid was provided for 816,192 children.³⁴ A monthly benefit is paid monthly in the case of multiple births for children between the ages of 0-2, with the aim of supporting the nutrition and self-care needs of their families. In 2022, TRY 42.3 million aid was provided for 28,477 children.³⁵ In addition, civil servants receive their full wages during their maternity.

2.3.1.3. Disability benefits

Disability benefits are provided to Turkish Citizens who do not have social security and whose monthly income per person in the household is less than one-third of the net minimum wage, which amounted to TRY 3,800.78 in 2023 (Law No. 2022). In order to contribute to the economic freedom of persons with disabilities in need and to ensure the participation of these persons in economic and social life, the Directorate General of Social Assistance and Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations carry out the works and procedures for the granting of pensions to persons with disabilities in need within the scope of the Law No. 2022 (1976) on Providing Benefits for Turkish Citizens Who Turn 65 and Who are Needy, Helpless and Orphans. In this context, within the scope of Law No. 2022, a disability benefit is provided to persons with disabilities who have lost working capacity 40 per cent to 69 per cent and who have lost working capacity 70 per cent and above. In January 2024, the disability benefit for persons with disabilities who have lost working capacity between 40 per cent to 69 per cent was TRY 2,797.80; the disability benefit for persons with disabilities who have lost working capacity of 70 per cent and above was TRY 4,196.70 and the benefit for relatives of persons with disabilities under the age of 18 was TYR 2,792.80.

Transfers for Turkish children with disabilities are provided to their parents who do not have social security and whose monthly income per person in the household is less than one-third of the net minimum wage (Law No. 2022). In addition, a disability needs benefit is provided to cover assistive devices and equipment for persons with disabilities. To determine eligibility, a disability assessment is conducted for adults and children with disabilities, based on international classification systems mainly on functioning. A "National Disability Data System" was established within the Ministry of Family and Social Services, which draws on data from Disability Health Board Reports in public institutions and organizations. The number of persons with disabilities registered in the National Disability Data System was 3.465,173 at the end of 2023 (Source: National Disability Data System).

It is estimated that approximately one-quarter of persons with disabilities receive a disability benefit. By the end of 2023, approximately 5505,000 persons with disabilities and 727,000 persons with

³³ Hannah Ring and others, *Programme Evaluation of the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) for Syrians and Other Refugees in Turkey* (American Institutes for Research, 2020).

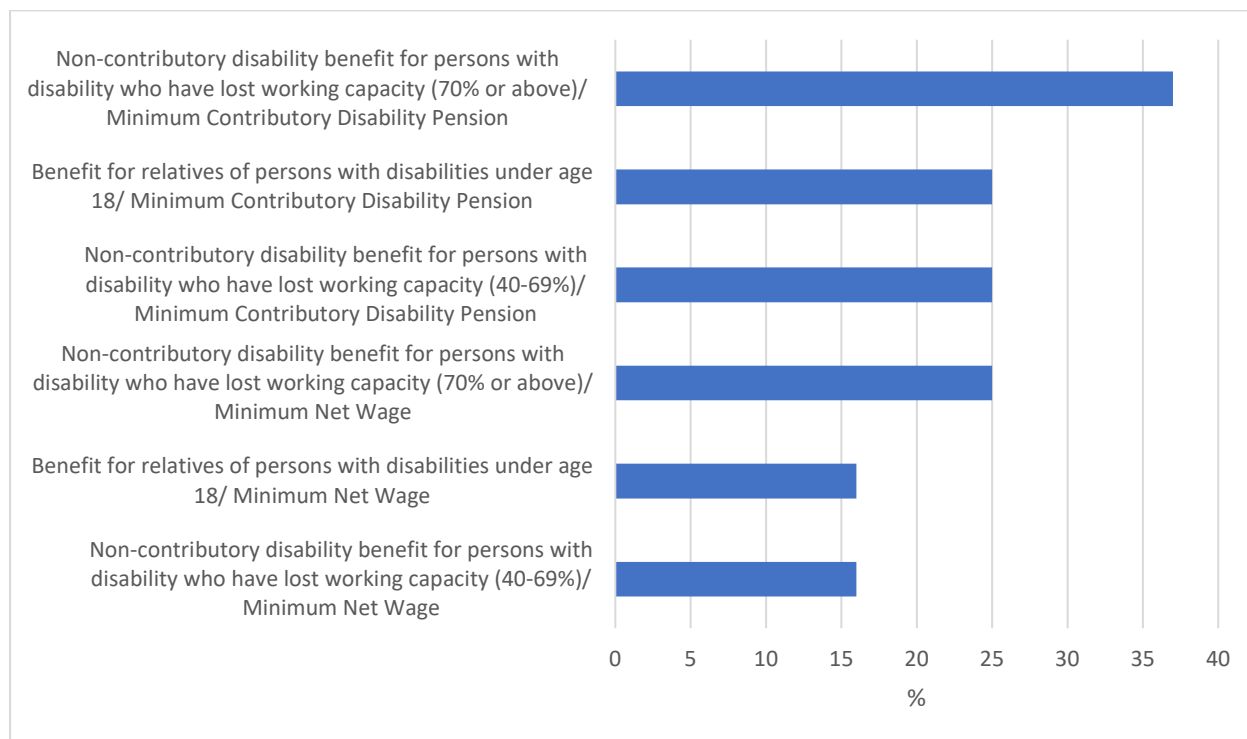
³⁴ ASHB, *Aile ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı 2022 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu* (Ankara, 2023).

³⁵ Ibid.

disabilities below age 18 years old received a disability benefit.³⁶ The disability benefit amounts to nearly 25 per cent of net minimum wage (Figure2.3)

³⁶ ASHB, *Engelli ve Yaşlı İstatistik Bülteni* (Temmuz, 2023).

Figure 2.9: Non-contributory disability benefit as proportion of net minimum wage and as proportion of minimum contributory disability benefit



Source: ASHB, *Aile ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı 2022 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu* (Ankara, 2023).

2.3.1.4. Survivor benefits

A monthly non-contributory Regular Cash Assistance Programme for Women Whose Spouses Have Deceased is made, which amounts to around TRY 1,000. An Orphan benefit is paid monthly at a level of TRY 600. Payments are calculated for each month and made every two months. In 2022, TRY 631.3 million was paid to 89,300 widows and TRY 178 million to 47,362 orphans.³⁷

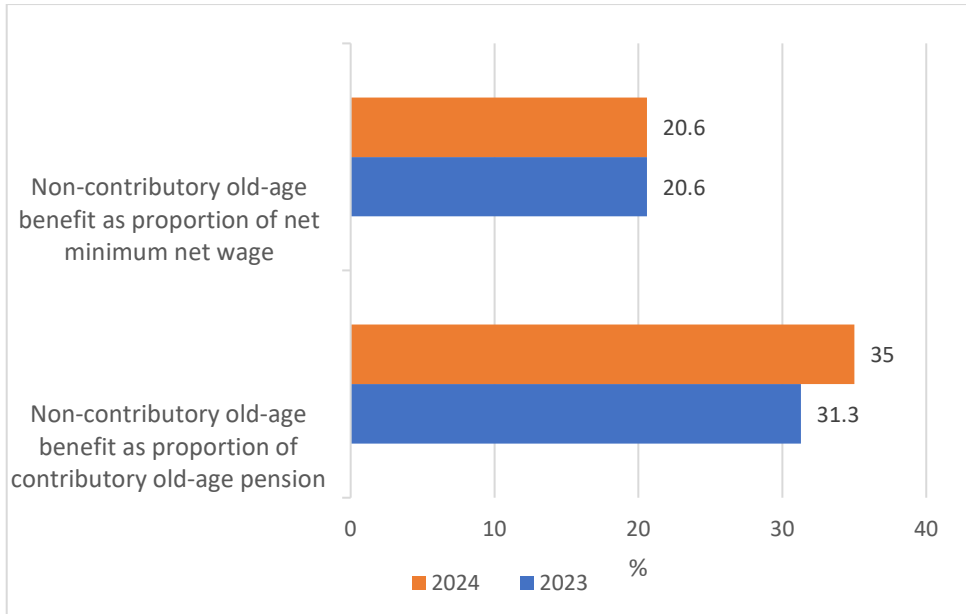
2.3.1.5. Old-age benefits

Non-contributory old-age benefits are provided to Turkish Citizens over the age of 65 who do not have social security and whose monthly income per capita for the individual and their spouse is less than one third of the net minimum wage. By end of 2023, approximately 757,000 old-age persons were receiving old-age benefit.

In order to contribute to the economic freedom of older persons in need and to ensure the participation of these persons in economic and social life, the Directorate General of Social Assistance and Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations carries out the works and procedures for the granting of pensions to older citizens in need within the scope of the Law No. 2022 (1976) regarding Providing a Benefit to Turkish Citizens Who Turn 65 and Who are Needy, Helpless and Orphans. Within this scope, old-age pensions are provided to citizens amounting to TRY 2,348.30 as of December 2023.

Figure 2.10: Non-contributory old-age benefit as proportion of minimum old-age benefit and as proportion of net minimum wage (2023-2024)

³⁷ Ibid.



Source: ASHB/b and ÇSGB Statistics

2.3.1.6. Home Care Allowance

Community-based services are prioritized to enable persons with disabilities to live their lives in line with their own preferences, without having to leave their social environments. A monthly Home Care Allowance is provided to a family member or a relative who provides care for a person with disabilities if the average monthly income per person in the household of the person with disabilities is less than two-thirds of the net amount of the minimum wage (Law No. 2828). As of the end of 2023, the amount of the allowance is TRY 5,098 and the number of beneficiaries is approximately 568,000.³⁸

2.3.1.7. Social Safety Net (SSN)

The Social Safety Net Programme (SSN) is aimed at improving the living standards of vulnerable refugees under temporary and international protection, international protection applicants and humanitarian residency holders in Türkiye through basic needs support. As of July 2023, the Ministry of Family and Social Services has taken over the programme with a direct grant model. The programme covers people residing in outside Temporary Accommodation Centres such as foreigners with Temporary Protection Status, International Protection Status, International Protection applicants and Humanitarian Residence Permits who meet the conditions of meeting at least one of the neediness and demographic criteria. The cash scheme provides a monthly benefit of TRY 300 to foreigners under the ESSN component and TRY 500 to foreigners under the C-ESSN component in vulnerable situations. The severe disability payment is TRY 2,400. An additional payment for ESSN beneficiaries is provided at TRY 600 for households with 1-4 people and TRY 300 for households of 5-8 people is made quarterly. For households with nine or more people, TRY 100 is provided per household monthly.

³⁸ The previous and current regulation on Long Term Care (dated 26 May 2023, <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2023/05/20230526-2.htm>) entitles foreigners with residence permits to benefit from the allowance. While International Protection identity cards are considered as a residence permit (under Law on Foreigners and International Protection, Art. 76), identity documents for persons under Temporary Protection are not, thereby automatically excluding such persons from the scheme.

2.4. Institutional Reforms and Role of Digitalization

Institutional reforms and advancements in digitalization of social protection schemes for contributory and non-contributory schemes have expedited reforms and coverage of social protection schemes.

For the contributory system, one of the most important reforms made over the past two decades is the increase in institutional capacity at subnational levels. As a result, employers, insured persons and retirees can apply to the central directorates in the districts for all their social security-related transactions, instead of applying to the province centre. SGK opened offices in approximately 557 districts and facilitated access to social security services.³⁹ The number of local inspectors of the institution was increased from 500 people (2008) to 2,500 in 15 years. With the reform made in 2008, the coordination and cooperation of SGK with public institutions and organizations was strengthened. According to the law (Law No. 5510, Article 100), SGK requests information about the insured and their earnings from more than 100 institutions and cross-checks this information with the information it holds.

An “ALO 170” information and reporting phone line was established in 2012, which provides 24-hour information to insured people regarding their employment and social security rights. Additionally, thanks to this phonenumber, reports regarding unregistered work are evaluated immediately.

Another important initiative to underpin the success of these institutional reforms was the strengthening of the digital social security architecture. Until 2004, information on insured persons’ employment, number of days worked and earnings were collected manually every four months and processed into the information processing system. Premium accrual documents were received every month. An e-declaration and e-insurance project was carried out between 2001 and 2004 to enable these two documents to be received online in a single document. Now, the Social Security Institution collects all information about insured people (insured person's identity information, occupation, number of days insured, earnings, etc.) through a central and e-declaration system. The Revenue Administration also accrues income taxes through the same system. Insured people can inquire about their services, which have been reported to the Institution since 2002, first through SGK and later through e-government. The mentioned practices have also increased awareness among insured people about registered employment. Currently, these services are among the most used services in the e-government system.

In addition, thanks to the automation infrastructure, transactions regarding contributory schemes and benefits of insured people have been accelerated, abuses related to inappropriate payments decreased, and the premium collection capacity of SGK increased. The initiative is linked to the Integrated Social Assurances Information System (ISAIS), which is then able to determine potential beneficiaries in need of support, based on whether they are working or not and their income levels.

With regards to non-contributory schemes, payments to social assistance beneficiaries have been diversified to ensure better access. One channel of payment is through the Post Telgraphe and Telephone (PTT) debit card, which was introduced in 2010. Beneficiaries of the Directorate General of Social Assistance (DGSA) can withdraw their benefits using the card from any ATM. No fees, commission or other charges are made for use of the cards. The cards function as prepaid debit cards and can also be used in all stores and markets to pay for items such as food and clothing, as well as other expenses. Approximately, 2 million beneficiaries use the card. Persons under the Law on Foreigners and International Protection can withdraw the social integration assistance given to them

³⁹ SGK, *SGK 2021 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu* (2022).

from banks via the KIZILAYKART (Red Crescent Card). Beneficiaries who cannot withdraw payments due to geographic or weather conditions, illness, old-age or disability, can opt for their payments to be delivered to their home. One-off cash benefits can be deposited directly into the beneficiary bank accounts. These payment methods have thereby ensured reliable, regular and efficient payments to beneficiaries, whilst also supporting their financial inclusion.

The Integrated Social Assistance Information System (ISAIS) has helped transform the delivery of non-contributory benefits. Prior to its introduction, an applicant had to obtain 17 different documents from 12 different public institutions, which could take 15 to 20 days. With ISAIS, these transactions are completed within 1-2 minutes, saving time and travel costs to travel to different institutions to obtain the required documents.⁴⁰ ISAIS has also improved the capacity to identify households and deliver payments.

Box 2.2: The Integrated Social Assistance Information System (ISAIS)

The Integrated Social Assistance Information System (ISAIS) integrates 29 different public entities to enables data sharing between them and is one of the most comprehensive social protection information systems globally. The system was created in cooperation with TÜBİTAK (Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu, The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye) and developed drawing on domestic human and financial resources.

Since 2011, the Ministry of Family and Social Services and Social Assistance and Solidarity (SASF) Foundations have used the ISAIS to manage the entire process of non-contributory benefits electronically, from application to payments. ISAIS is also integrated with the Turkish Red Crescent, one of the largest Non-Governmental Organizations operating in the field of social assistance in Türkiye, as well as the municipalities that provide the most non-contributory schemes after the local Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations.

The ISAIS has helped ensure coordination as well as prevent duplication, abuse and waste of resources. It enabled data on individuals in households to be integrated from different sources and stored electronically, such as socioeconomic data, social investigation reports, as well as benefits received. This helped better identify eligible persons for non-contributory schemes and reduce duplication. It also provided scope to introduce online payment applications by integrating the ISAIS with banking systems. In addition:

- By creating linkages with the employment databases, non-contributory beneficiaries could be recorded in the İŞKUR database and thereby linked to employment policies, allowing for the identification of potential eligible beneficiaries for ALMP or other services.*
- By automating coordination across line ministries, this reduced bureaucracy and paperwork between them, thereby enabling a more effective use of public resources,*
- By creating a unified database, the status and results of social assistance applications could be automated through e-government and policymakers could draw on more robust and coordinated statistical data to support their analysis and decision making.*

During the COVID-19 epidemic ISAIS was particularly instrumental in enabling policymakers to make decisions and deliver benefits to citizens quickly. The unified database enabled the government to accelerate the assessment process of 13 million (single) applications for non-contributory benefits during the COVID-19 epidemic, which were received electronically through the e-Government Gateway

⁴⁰ Tekbıyıklıoğlu Bülent, *Sosyal Yardımlar Çalıştayı Vizyonu Sunumu* (Ankara, 2019).

during the epidemic period. Applicants were able to check their entitlement status for non-contributory schemes provided during the COVID-19 pandemic through the Ministry of Family and Social Services "Social Aid Information Inquiry" available on the e-Government portal.

The use of ISAIS to facilitate online applications and payments during COVID-19 was a catalyst for the government to review this initiative and subsequently launch this service nationwide.

Source: Ministry of Family and Social Services

2.5. Active Labour Market Programs

Active Labour Market Programs (ALMP) are managed by İŞKUR and financed from the unemployment insurance fund. From 2009 to 2022, a total of nearly 4.6 million unemployed people registered with İŞKUR benefited from ALMP. It can be said that ALMP cover all unemployed people registered with İŞKUR (Annex I, Table K). Unemployed people who have not paid into contributory schemes insurance can also benefit from programmes such as public work programmes, on-the-job training programmes, and in-class vocational training programmes. Eligibility to enrol in the programmes is mainly based on being unemployed and registered with İŞKUR.⁴¹ There are many ALMP for women, youth, persons with disabilities and ex-convicts. In addition, there are various premium incentives to facilitate the employment of disadvantaged groups such as young people, women and persons with disabilities. Some of these are financed by the unemployment insurance fund.

One-time non-contributory lump-sum payments are provided to encourage the employment of beneficiaries. A one-time non-contributory Job Search Benefit is provided to beneficiaries aged 18-55 who live in households receiving regular non-contributory schemes and are evaluated as employable by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations and reported to İŞKUR. Once the beneficiary is referred to a job interview by İŞKUR, this is notified to the Integrated Social Assistance Information System (ISAIS), and they are eligible for a benefit within 30 days from the date of notification, provided by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation. Benefits levels are determined by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation Board of Trustees and are up to 10 per cent of the monthly net minimum wage (TRY 1,140 for 2023) for a maximum of three times. A one-time non-contributory Job Start Benefit is also provided to those who were referred to a job interview by İŞKUR and start a job with social security. The amount corresponds to one-third of the gross minimum wage (TRY 4,471.50 for 2023) up to once in the same year.

2.6. Universal Health Coverage through General Health Insurance

Healthcare services are made available through universal health coverage. Contributory workers or self-employed persons are eligible if they have paid general health insurance premiums for 30 days in one year and have not accumulated contribution debts. The general health insurance premiums of people whose household income per capita is less than one-third of the net minimum wage and are not contributing into a scheme, are paid by the state (Law No. 5510).

Universal coverage of health insurance was introduced through a series of health reforms in 2003 the introduction of the General Health Insurance in 2008 (Law No. 5510). The entire population, including persons under the Law on Foreigners and International Protection, is thus legally protected by the

⁴¹ Limited impact analyses indicate training on job programmes are efficient for young and women unemployed.

universal health care system.⁴² General health insurance contributions of the lower income bracket are paid by the general government budget.⁴³

The health reforms also expanded access to different hospitals. Before the health reform, employees, retired employees and their families, who made up around half of the population, could only use SSK (Sosyal Sigortalar Kurumu) hospitals, covered by the Social Insurance Institution which included approximately 140 hospitals. Self-employed people and civil servants could use around 744 public hospitals and contracted private hospitals. Through the health reform, SSK hospitals were transferred to state hospitals, thereby increasing access to health services.

Thanks to universal health insurance, the rate of out-of-pocket expenditure gradually decreased from 32.1 per cent in 2003 to 9.6 per cent in 2022.⁴⁴ Satisfaction with health services increased from 39.5 per cent to 65 per cent in 2022. Nevertheless, the ratio of public health expenditures to national income in Türkiye has been nearly the same (3.6 per cent of GDP) for last two decades. The share of the household out-of-pocket payment decreased from 1 per cent of GDP in 2003 to 0.7 per cent of GDP in 2021, despite the increasing number of doctor consultations per capita from 3.4 in 2003 to 8 in 2021.⁴⁵ Despite stable public health expenditures, out-of-pocket expenditure on health decreased. This is mainly because the Social Security Institution, as the main buyer of health services is able to determine prices.

However, insured people who are behind on their premium payments (such as contributory workers or self-employed) cannot benefit from health services except emergency health services, maternity services and natural disasters. However, this condition was temporarily lifted during crises situations such as during COVID-19 and the earthquake that occurred in February 2023.

2.7. Expanding Social Protection to Informal Workers

Türkiye has made remarkable progress in reducing informal employment from 34 per cent in 2004 to 17 per cent in 2023 in non-agriculture sectors (Annex I, Table M), through social protection reforms, increasing registered employment and economic growth.⁴⁶

Türkiye has achieved this through providing incentives for employers to register employment, as well as strengthening enforcement measures, primarily in the industrial sector. To incentivize employers to register employment, procedures on employer obligations were simplified, various premium incentives for employers implemented and information campaigns conducted. Cooperation protocols and data sharing between public institutions and organizations have helped identify and prevent unregistered employment through cross-auditing. Compliance and monitoring measures were also strengthened. For example, the number of local social security inspectors of the Social Security Institution was increased from 500 in 2003 to 2,500 in 2023. The working conditions of local social security inspectors was improved, and risk-based inspection has been introduced. As a result,

⁴² The General Health Insurance covers persons under international protection for the first year after their application for international protection (except for persons with specific needs). After the first year, they are expected to cover their GHI premiums which can lead to challenges in accessing the universal healthcare system.

⁴³ Oguz Karadeniz, *Extension of health services coverage for needy in Türkiye: From social assistance to general health insurance* (Journal of Social Security, 2012).

⁴⁴ TÜİK, "Yaşam Memnuniyeti 2022". Available at https://www.tuik.gov.tr/media/announcements/yasam_memnuniyeti_arastirmasi.pdf (accessed on 7 October 2023).

⁴⁵ OECD, "Health Statistics Data", OECD Stat. Available <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?ThemeTreeId=9#> (accessed on 31 October 2023).

⁴⁶ Oguz Karadeniz, *The effects of the social reforms on reducing undeclared work in Türkiye* (24th International Research Seminar On Issues In Social Security, Sweden, 2017).

approximately 3.2 million unregistered workers were identified over the last 15 years (Annex I, Table N).

Informal employment rates in the agricultural sector are nevertheless still high. One reason is that the contributory system does not compulsorily cover farmers, seasonal agricultural workers and unpaid family workers whose income is below the minimum wage after deducting expenses. In the 12th five-year development plan, it is aimed to develop contributory programmes specific to low-income farmers, and low-income craftsman.

The scope of contributory schemes has also been expanded for other employment groups:

- In 2014, a simplification of the enrolment process for domestic workers by employers was introduced to incentivize employers to declare their domestic employees. As a result, employers do not have to submit a declaration to SGK every month, and only need to declare when the employee starts and leaves the job. The 2014 amendment included domestic workers who work for the same employer for less than 10 days, in the scope of work accident and occupational disease insurance. In addition, an employer can pay the occupational accident and occupational disease insurance premium (TRY 9 per day) for domestic workers who work in domestic services for less than 10 days by sending a text message or by credit card via Internet. The employer sends his/her domestic worker's identification number via text message to 5510 and the premium is added to the employer's mobile phone bill.
- Domestic workers who work for the same employer for more than 10 days a month are subject to all insurance branches. Inspections and information campaigns regarding domestic services have increased in the last 10 years. In addition, through the registered babysitter project, initiated in 2016 and financed by the EU, caregiver support has been provided to female workers earning less than twice the minimum wage who employ contributory babysitters at home. As a result, the rate of unregistered work in domestic services decreased from 97.5 per cent in 2010 to 65 per cent in 2022.⁴⁷
- As of October 2023 in Türkiye, 3.2 million Syrian refugees live under temporary protection. Joint initiatives are being carried out between ILO and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security to prevent unregistered work of Syrian refugees within the scope of ILO's transition to registered employment project. In order to encourage registered employment of Syrian nationals, the government subsidized the insurance premium support and work permit application fee support for employers who employ one Syrian refugee and one Turkish national. Work permit application processes have also been simplified. As a result, the number of Syrians who received work permits and became registered increased from 20,966 in 2017 to 91,500 in 2021.
- Casual Agricultural Employees: Casual agricultural employees can be insured optionally by paying a premium of 34.5 per cent⁴⁸ of the minimum wage. While the premium amount that agricultural workers had to pay in 2008 was 15 days of minimum wage, the amount in question was increased every year and was increased to 30 days in 2023. However, as contributory schemes for temporary agricultural workers are voluntary the take up rate is low. Incomes of casual agricultural workers are low⁴⁹, and so they often lack the capacity to pay premiums. On the other hand, it has been deemed appropriate to evaluate the social security premium

⁴⁷ Oguz Karadeniz, *Coping with informal employment and extending to social security coverage for the domestic services employees Case of Türkiye* (2020).

⁴⁸ Twenty percentage points of the premium is for disability, old-age and death insurance, 12.5 percentage points is for general health insurance and 2 percentage points is for work accident and occupational disease insurance.

⁴⁹ Oguz Karadeniz, *Türkiye'de atipik çalışan kadınlar ve yaygın sosyal güvencesizlik* (Çalışma ve Toplum, 2011).

debts within the framework of the financial means of the Foundations and support can be provided for the payment of premium debts based on the decision of the Board of Trustees of the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation. It is estimated that only 3.9 per cent of daily wage agricultural workers are insured.⁵⁰ Despite the significant decrease in unregistered employment outside agriculture, progress to extend schemes to temporary part-time workers is limited, though efforts are underway to address this.

- a) Taxi drivers, artists and musicians: Taxi drivers, artists and musicians who work for the same employer for less than 10 days can be insured optionally by paying a 35.5 per cent premium.⁵¹
- b) Active Labour Market Programmes: One of the factors that are effective in supporting the transition from unregistered to registered forms of work is the active labour market programmes implemented by İŞKUR. Approximately 6 million people have participated in these programmes since 2009. More than 50 per cent of the participants are women. In a significant part of the programmes, the employer must employ at least 50 per cent of the trainees participating in the programme.

There has thus been a significant increase in institutional capacity in the field of non-contributory schemes in Türkiye.

⁵⁰ TÜİK, “Yaşam Memnuniyeti 2022”. Available at https://www.tuik.gov.tr/media/announcements/yasam_memnuniyeti_arastirmasi.pdf (accessed on 7 October 2023).

⁵¹ 20 percentage points of the total premium rate are allocated towards disability, old-age, survivor insurance premiums, 12.5 percentage points towards general health insurance and 3 percentage points towards unemployment insurance premium.

2.8. COVID-19 Natural Disaster (Earthquake) related responses and potential impact on social protection system

Contributory benefits provide an automatic stabiliser for workers already contributing into schemes in the face of disruptions to livelihoods. In cases where the weekly working hours at the workplace are temporarily reduced by at least one-third due to general economic, sectoral, regional crisis or force majeure, or if the activity at the workplace is stopped completely or partially for at least four weeks without requiring continuity, a short-time working allowance is provided in Türkiye to the insured for the period during which they cannot work at the workplace for a period not exceeding three months.

Short-time working allowance and cash wage support have been introduced for workers who lost income due to workplace closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. Allowances and support were financed from the unemployment insurance fund. In order to expand eligibility for the short time working allowance, the number of premium payment days was reduced from 600 days to 450 days. The amount of short time working allowance is 60 per cent of the insured's average earnings in the last 12 months. The ceiling of the short time working allowance is 150 per cent of the monthly minimum wage. A cash wage support close to half of the daily minimum wage was given to workers who were not entitled to short-time working allowance. Short time working allowance and cash wage support were also applied to workers whose workplaces were destroyed or severely damaged in the earthquakes centred in Kahramanmaraş in February 2023. It was extended through to August 2023. Thanks to e-government application, inspection and payment periods for short-time working allowance could be made online and were thereby shortened.

During the COVID-19 pandemic period, cash wage support was introduced for workers who were not eligible for the short-time working allowance. The application in question was also applied during the earthquake centred in Kahramanmaraş. The amount of short time working allowances and cash wage supports per person is between 41 and 45 per cent of the net minimum wage (Karadeniz, 2023). In order for short-time working allowances to be paid immediately, short-time working allowance and cash wage support were immediately provided to workplaces in the provinces most affected by the earthquake, whose workplaces were destroyed, severely damaged or closed, without requiring any documentation, through an online application and without inspection.

The number of people benefiting from short-time working allowance increased to 82,439 people in June during the 2009 economic crisis, to 3,282,817 people in May 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic period, and up to 100,217 people received the allowance in March 2023 due to the Kahramanmaraş-centred earthquake. Cash wage support increased to 1,235,859 in June 2020 and during the earthquake increased to 71,131 in March 2023.⁵²

Additional support measures included:

- a) During the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake centred in Kahramanmaraş, everyone was able to receive health care, regardless of whether they had premium debt or not. General health insurance benefits were extended to those who owe premiums or did not have an income test.
- b) A non-contributory Cash Lump Sum Benefits was provided to people affected by the earthquake in the form of lump sum payments.

⁵² İŞKUR, "İşsizlik Sigortası Bülteni". Available at <https://www.iskur.gov.tr/kurumsal-bilgi/yayinlar/>, accessed on 26 October 2023

2.8.1. Information Regarding Social Assistance Provided within the Scope of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Pandemic Social Support Programme (Phase-III)

The content of the Assistance Programme:

In order to mitigate the economic and social impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry has implemented the Pandemic Social Support Programme in phases under the Economic Stability Shield Package. Considering the dynamic and uncertain nature of the pandemic process, the Phase-III component has been arranged to support households that have become or are likely to become in periodic need due to the pandemic. It has been deemed appropriate to provide assistance in the amount of TRY 1,000 by using the resources of the Social Assistance and Solidarity Encouragement Fund to households whose neediness are evaluated by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations (SASF) and which are decided to provide assistance.

Applications began to be received via the E- Government Gateway on 20 April 2020 and total amount of TRY 2,409,923,000 was provided to 2,409,923 households which were evaluated to be in periodic need by SASFs within the scope of the Phase-III. The applications were terminated as of 11 May 2022.

Phase-III Application and Pre-Selection Process:

The process of the functioning of the programme is as follows:

1. Phase-III applications started to be received via E-Government Gateway are subjected to pre-selection criteria by Integrated Social Assistance Information system (ISAIS). Controls for pre-selection made by the system are given below:
 - Benefiting from the Phase-II Programme
 - Public Worker (4a)
 - Public Officer (4c)
 - Self-Retired
 - Special Funds
 - Benefiting from unemployment benefit of Turkish Labour Agency
 - Benefiting from short employment benefit of Turkish Labour Agency etc.
2. The applications, which pass the pre-selection, are conveyed via ISAIS to the SASF in the sub-province on which the registered residence of the applicant is located.
3. After detailed examinations are carried out by the SASFs, eligibility decisions are made by the Boards of Trustees of the Foundations and recorded in the Integrated System.
4. In line with the eligibility decisions in the Integrated System, the payment lists are created regularly by the Ministry and the assistances are delivered to the beneficiaries through PTT and Bank accounts.

Biz Bize Yeteriz Türkiye II

Biz Bize Yeteriz, Türkiye National Solidarity Campaign by the MoFSS aimed to unite the state and the nation in helping the people in need due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Donations collected within the scope of the Solidarity Campaign were granted in groups of "Donations," "Zakat," and "Zakat al-Fitr."

Biz Bize Yeteriz II: Biz Bize Yeteriz Türkiye II Funds, created under the "donations" category within the Solidarity Campaign, reached out to those in need. Biz Bize Yeteriz Türkiye II re-evaluated applications received before June 15, 2020, within the scope of Phase III on the e-Government Gateway. These applications were again subjected to Phase III preliminary criteria, yet the applicants who received assistance within the scope of Phase II were not eliminated. Instead, those who received home care allowance were. Applications that passed the preliminary elimination by the system were assigned as of July 14, 2020, to SASFs to assess neediness. Within the scope of Biz Bize Yeteriz

Türkiyem II, 1,949,129 households considered by the SASFs to be in periodical need without the ability to meet their basic needs due to the pandemic were paid TRY 1,000 each totalling TRY 1,949,129,000.

The process of the functioning of the programme is as follows:

The Phase-III applications made by the citizens via E-Government Gateway before 15 June 2020 were subjected to pre-selection over the Integrated system within the scope of the Biz Bize Yeteriz II campaign.

- The applications, which pass the pre-selection, are conveyed via ISAIS to the SASF in the sub-province on which the registered residence of the applicant is located.
- After detailed examinations are carried out by the SASFs, eligibility decisions are made by the Boards of Trustees of the Foundations and recorded in the Integrated System.
- In line with the eligibility decisions in the Integrated System, the payment lists are created regularly by the Ministry and the assistances are delivered to the beneficiaries through PTT and Bank accounts.

Full Lockdown Social Support Programme

Within the scope of the full lockdown programme implemented between 29 April 2021 and 17 May 2021, it was decided to provide assistance worth TRY 1,100 within the scope of the Full Lockdown Social Support Program for each household considered to be in periodical need due to the pandemic. The MoFSS was authorized to carry out due regulations and activities.

In this context, a top-up assistance payment of TRY 1,100 was approved for households included in the Biz Bize Yeteriz Türkiyem II payment lists as of 29 April 2021, and in the Pandemic Social Support Program (Phase III) from 15 June 2020 to 29 April 2021. Payments to those who continued to meet the rights ownership criteria were made on 5 May 2021.

Given the urgency of assistance as the full lockdown was initiated and as the up-to-date information on all households granted rights by the SASFs within the last year were registered on the ISAIS, central assistance payments were carried out without additional applications and repeated SASFs evaluations for rights ownership to those whose continuous compliance with the criteria were affirmed through inquiries on the SGK, Turkish Employment Agency (ISKUR), Central Population Administration System (MERNIS), and other databases. No separate applications were collected through SASFs or via the e-Government Gateway.

The Full Lockdown Social Support payments were transferred to the international bank account numbers (IBANs) if the rights owners had provided an IBAN in their name during their previous application to the Pandemic Social Support Program (Phase III) via the e-Government Gateway. If the rights owners had not provided an IBAN in their name, then their Full Lockdown Social Support payments were either transferred to their PTT account cards, if they held one, or to their registered address via PTT or Vefa Social Support Groups.

Within the Full Lockdown Social Support Program's scope, TUR 1,100 was paid to 2,015,100 households, totalling TUR 2,216,610,000.

State of Emergency and Time Extension

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, assistance was provided within the scope of the state of emergency to households which were assessed to be in periodic need and unable to meet their basic needs. Due to the negative effects of the epidemic process, the duration of the state of emergency was increased

from 30 days to 120 days with the Presidential Approval No. 15703, and following the end of this period, 10 more extensions were made, and finally, with the Presidential Approval No. 70582 dated 3 March 2022, the state of emergency was extended until, and terminated as of, 30 May 2022.

Chapter 3: Extending social protection carries great impact

3.1 Overview of ESCAP Simulator

Extending social protection can significantly reduce poverty and inequality, whilst boosting consumption. Doing so is a wise investment, particularly when compared to the cost of leaving people and families to deal with daily life contingencies and risks on their own. For the purpose of providing countries in the Asian and Pacific region with a quantitative understanding of these impacts and required investments, ESCAP has developed a social protection simulation model based on the latest available national income and expenditure surveys for 25 countries. For Türkiye, simulations are based on the Household Budget Survey (HBS) from 2019.

The Simulator provides estimations of four life cycle non-contributory social protection schemes, namely child benefits, disability benefits, maternity benefits and old-age benefits. Policymakers and other users can adjust parameters such as benefit and coverage levels as well as administrative costs of the schemes. Results from these simulations can be analysed by rural-urban disaggregation, different family constellations and by total household expenditures per capita deciles (referred to in this paper as “income deciles”). The Simulator also illustrates exclusion and inclusion errors resulting from proxy means-testing and positions social protection expenditure against other existing public budgetary streams.

Social protection benefits that leave no child, persons with disabilities, mothers of newborns or older persons behind could act as a bulwark against poverty and inequality, while significantly boosting consumption levels. Simulations were conducted using basic and advanced benefit levels as described below (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Non-contributory benefit levels used in the simulation

		Existing Benefit ⁵³	Basic Benefit	Advanced Benefit
Child Benefit	<i>Monthly Transfer in TRY (PPP USD)</i>	350 - 650 (poverty-targeted)	867 (\$135 PPP)	867 (\$135 PPP)
	<i>GDP per capita per annum</i>	2 - 3%	4%	4%

⁵³ The child benefit component from Türkiye Family Support Programme provides TRY 350 per month for households with 1-2 children; 450 for households with 3 children; 550 for households with 4 children and 650 for households with 5 or more children. The existing disability benefit (Law No. 2022) provides between TRY 1,874.58 and TRY 2,811.30 depending on the lost working capacity to Turkish citizens with disabilities who do not have social security and whose monthly income per person in the household is less than one-third of the net minimum wage. A maternity benefit is application-based, covering birth after 15 May 2015, and is made to blue card holders and Turkish citizens as a one-time (lump-sum) payment to all mothers with newborns, with the amount of TRY 300 for the first child; TRY 400 for the second child; and TRY 600 for third and subsequent children. As this is a lump-sum payment, it does not serve as a reference for the weekly benefit in the Simulator and so the amount is not included in the matrix. The old-age benefit is provided to Turkish citizens over the age of 65 who do not have social security and whose monthly income per capita is less than one-third of the net minimum wage is TRY 2,348 per month.

		Existing Benefit ⁵³	Basic Benefit	Advanced Benefit
Disability Benefit	<i>Monthly Transfer in TRY (PPP USD)</i>	1,875 - 2,811 (poverty-targeted)	3,034 (\$477 PPP)	4,984 (\$778 PPP)
	GDP per capita per annum	8 - 12%	14%	23%
Maternity Benefit	<i>Transfer in TRY (PPP USD)</i>	--- (lump-sum)	2,600 (\$406 PPP) per week	2,600 (\$406 PPP) per week
	Duration	n/a	18 weeks	24 weeks
	GDP per capita per annum	--	18%	24%
Old-age Benefit	<i>Monthly Transfer in TRY (PPP USD)</i>	2,348 (poverty-targeted)	3,467 (\$541 PPP)	4,767 (\$744 PPP)
	GDP per capita per annum	10%	16%	22%

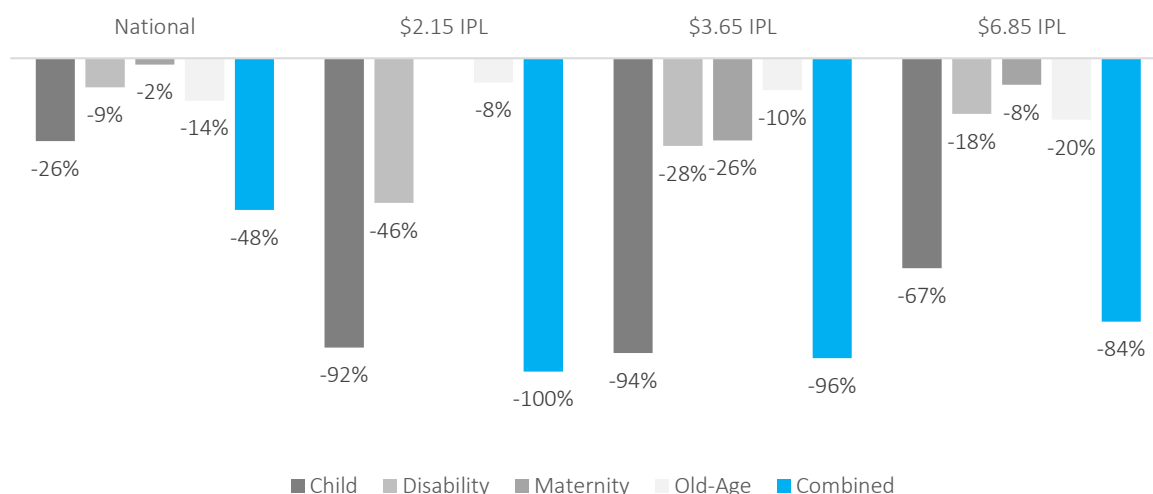
Note: For child, disability and old-age schemes, *basic* benefit level refers to a global average level whilst *advanced* benefit level refers to an OECD average level. For the maternity scheme, *basic* benefit level refers to the global average for providing the minimum wage for the duration of 18 weeks, which is equivalent of 18 per cent of GDP per capita. *Advanced* benefit level refers to the global average for providing the minimum wage for the duration of 24 weeks, which is equivalent of 24 per cent of GDP per capita. Benefit level expressed as GDP per capita corresponds to the total benefit transferred yearly.

3.1. The impact of extending social protection

Using the ESCAP Simulator, the combined impact of universal child, disability (for persons with moderate to severe disability), maternity and old-age benefits at average global benefit levels, are estimated to reduce the poverty rate, measured at the Türkiye's national poverty line, by 53 per cent (Figure 3.1).⁵⁴ Poverty would be eliminated at the international poverty line of \$2.15, and the poverty rate would drop substantially at \$6.85 per day as well, by 86 per cent. The scheme with the greatest impact on poverty rates is the child benefit scheme, which is commonly observed in youthful populations.

⁵⁴ Disability indicator is created based on *Disability3* category, where any 1 domain is coded "A LOT OF DIFFICULTY" or "CANNOT DO AT ALL" in the Washing Group questionnaire, following the recommendation by Washington Group on Disability Statistics.

Figure 3.11: Impact of non-contributory lifecycle benefits for children, persons with disabilities, mothers of newborns and older persons, at the basic benefit level, on poverty for the whole population

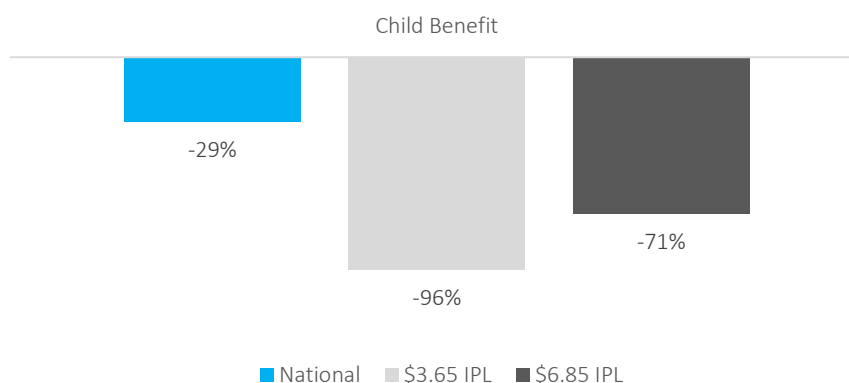


Source: ESCAP calculations using ESCAP Social Protection Simulator. Data accessed in October 2023.

Note: The simulated impact on poverty is compared to a situation where no other scheme exists.

If a universal child benefit of 4 per cent of GDP per capita, on par with the global and OECD average levels, would be introduced for all Turkish households with children below the age of 18, the national poverty rate would be reduced by almost 30 per cent for the recipient population (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.12: Impact of non-contributory child benefit at the basic benefit level on poverty reduction among recipient households

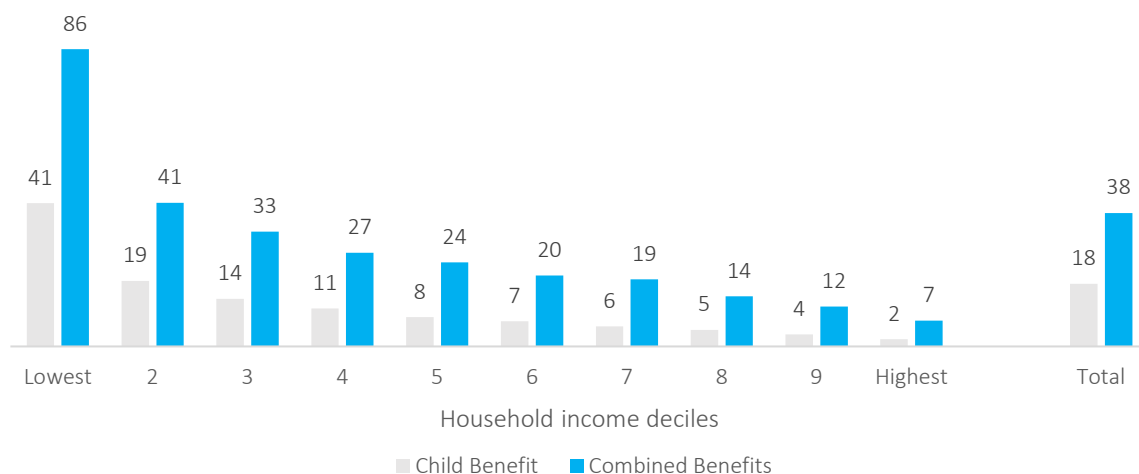


Source: ESCAP calculations using ESCAP Social Protection Simulator. Data accessed in October 2023.

Note: The simulated impact on poverty is compared to a situation where no other scheme exists.

In addition to having a considerable impact on poverty levels, these benefits would also markedly raise household consumption. As an example, providing universal child, disability, maternity and old-age benefits, at basic benefit levels, would boost household consumption by 38 per cent for all recipient households and by 86 per cent for the poorest recipient households (Figure 3.3). Specifically, a universal child benefit at 4 per cent of GDP per capita per annum would on average increase household consumption by 18 per cent for all recipient households, while the poorest recipient households would benefit the most as their consumption increases by almost 41 per cent.

Figure 3.13: Percentage increase in household consumption from universal benefits among recipient households, by household income decile

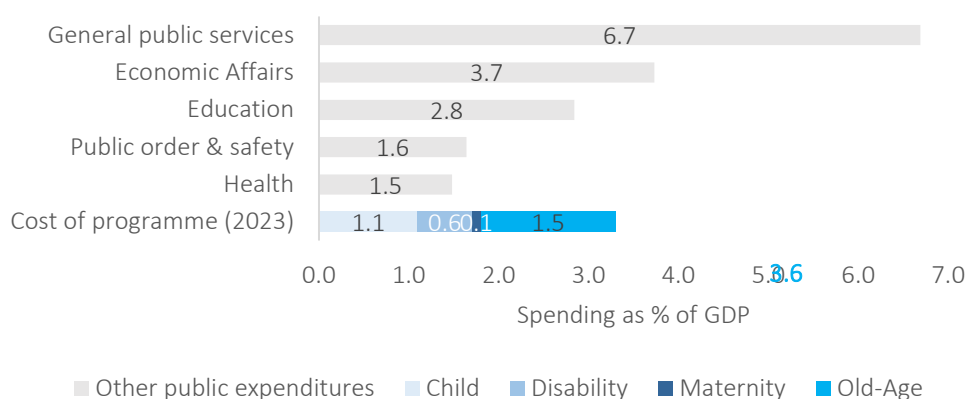


Source: ESCAP calculations using ESCAP Social Protection Simulator. Data accessed in October 2023.

Note: The tool uses household consumption expenditure as the default measure of households' living standards and a measure for constructing household income deciles.

The combined cost for the four non-contributory schemes, covering all families with children below the age of 18, all persons with disability, all mothers of newborns and all older persons above the age of 65 is estimated to be 3.5 per cent of GDP (Figure 3.4). When fiscal space is limited, social protection benefits can begin as a restricted scheme based on age. For example, eligibility for child benefits could be limited to households with children aged 0 to 5, and then expanded over time to achieve full universal coverage within that age category, in line with obligations recognized in international human rights instruments.

Figure 3.14: Public spending by functional expenses as per centage of GDP



Source: ESCAP calculation using ESCAP Social Protection Simulator (accessed in October 2023).

Universal social protection schemes can be an effective way to ensure all intended beneficiaries, including those left furthest behind, have access to a minimum income guarantee. Working towards universality, it is important to also focus on strengthening outreach of both contributory and non-contributory schemes through a multi-pillar system, which provides progressively higher levels of support through different pillars of non-contributory and contributory schemes.

Chapter 4: Stocktaking of existing measures in support of the Action Plan

The Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection calls on countries to establish an intermediate target of social protection coverage by 2025, and then measure progress towards achieving universal coverage by 2030. To achieve this objective, the Action Plan lays out 12 measures to be taken at national level. The matrix below outlines each national action point and a summary of achievements by the Government of Türkiye as well as some identified gaps towards this objective.

Achievements and challenges

Action 1. Ensure the right to social protection for all without discrimination throughout the lifecycle, including by adopting necessary legislative, regulatory, administrative and other measures to this end

Achievement: With the 12th Five-Year Development Plan covering the period 2024-2028, the government aims to ensure that segments of society in need have the best access to social services such as care, rehabilitation and psychosocial support, to increase the effectiveness of social assistance, to minimize the risk of social exclusion with a family-oriented approach. It aims to eliminate poverty by combating all aspects of it, including access to basic services such as education, health and shelter, and to ensure social inclusion. In addition, within the scope of the same plan, increasing the scope of the social security system and creating a more fair and effective structure aiming strengthen its long-term financial sustainability.

Minimum income security is provided for persons with disabilities and older persons. The works and process related to disability and elderly pensions are carried out within the scope of the Law No. 2022 regarding Enpensioning the Turkish Citizens Who Turn 65 and Who are Needy, Helpless and Orphan dated 01/07/1976. In the aforementioned Law, being a Turkish Citizen is mentioned as an eligibility assessment criterion. In addition to this, the persons in this scope (persons with disabilities and older persons) benefit from regular cash assistance within the framework of the ESSN project implemented by the Directorate General within the scope of FRIT funds.

Refugees under international, temporary protection etc. are covered by general health insurance, social insurance and can benefit from social assistance if relevant criteria are met within the scope of Law No. 3294. However, only Turkish citizens can benefit from the Türkiye Family Support Programme carried out within the scope of the Law no.3294.

The Integrated Social Assistances Information System (ISAIS) has helped improve the efficacy and delivery of non-contributory benefits to lower-income groups. For example, benefits can be delivered through an ATM or for those who cannot access an ATM, it can be delivered directly to their homes.

Challenges:

There is a need to expand the social insurance coverage. Low-income tradesmen, craftsmen and farmers, and domestic workers who work under the same employer for less than 10 days in domestic services, and casual workers in agriculture are excluded from the compulsory social insurance coverage.

Action 2. Progressively design and realize, including through social dialogue, comprehensive and sustainable social protection systems for all that enable every person to access social protection

at adequate benefit levels and thereby enjoy an adequate standard of living, in accordance with national circumstances, throughout his or her lifetime

Achievement: Thanks to universal health insurance, health services are effectively provided to the entire population.

Challenges:

A family allowance insurance covering all children is needed. There is a need to expand the effective coverage of unemployment insurance. Regular unemployment benefits are needed for people who do not meet the requirements for unemployment benefits. There is a need to expand the scope and increase the amount of job search assistance.

There is a need for legal regulation to ensure that those who are behind on contribution payments and those who do not have an income test for general health insurance can effectively benefit from health services.

There is a need to expand contributory social insurance schemes for low-income farmers, low-income tradesmen and craftsmen, which should be compulsory and include paying premiums appropriate to their income levels. There is a need to revise social insurance regulations to cover seasonal workers in agriculture.

Action 3. Ensure that social protection systems are shock-responsive, sex-sensitive and relevant to the needs of vulnerable populations

Achievement: In the period after the global COVID-19 epidemic and the earthquake centred in Kahramanmaraş, income support was provided to the population affected by these disasters with short-time working allowance and cash wage support. It is stated in the development plan that incentives for the employment of young people, women and persons with disabilities will continue to increase.

In order to ensure that social protection systems are shock-sensitive, sex-sensitive and relevant to the needs of vulnerable groups; the household approach is valid in the assistance programmes carried out within the scope of the Ministry of Family and Social Services, and it is aimed that the whole household benefits from the assistance, taking into account that poverty is shared in the household. On the other hand, there are also assistance programmes where there is sex-based positive discrimination in the payment phases, such as payment being made primarily to the "mother" (for example, the Maternity Assistance programme or the higher amount of assistance provided to girls in some of the programmes).

Challenges:

Benefit amounts and increases for social assistances provided under Law No. 3294 are made by administrative decisions. The unit amounts and increases are determined by an objective perspective within the framework of economic and financial situation, sustainability, neediness, inflation rate and other areas.

Action 4. Ensure that the implementation of social protection is efficient, coordinated, non-discriminatory, reliable and transparent, with public availability of appeal and complaint mechanisms institutionalized as part of the service delivery process

Achievement: Thanks to the ALO 170 line, all employees are instantly informed by phone about

their employment and social security rights. Additionally, uninsured employees can submit a report to ALO 170. Wishes, requests and complaints regarding the services of institutions can be conveyed via e-government to the Presidential Communication Centre. All wishes, notices and complaints are evaluated and the necessary answers are given as soon as possible, not exceeding 15 days.

ALO 144 line has been serving effectively since 2009 to ensure that people in need have information about social assistance. People who need social assistance and support can apply for assistance via <https://www.turkiye.gov.tr/aile-ve-sosyal-hizmetler-sosyal-yardim-basvuru-hizmeti>.

Challenges:

Despite all the information, request and complaint mechanisms regarding social protection, a more advanced systems could be established in which business intelligence applications are used to reach people in need who do not have information about social assistance, and people in need are identified without the need for application.

Action 5. Allocate sufficient public funds, and increase these levels where required, towards the realization of social protection for all at the national level, with due regard to social and intergenerational solidarity and the sustainability of national social protection systems

Achievement: In the 12th Five-Year Development Plan, the social security system and the main targets were included under the heading of Stable Growth and Strong Economy (Article 3.1).

Long-term financial sustainability of pension and health expenditures will be strengthened by considering actuarial balance in the social security system. Contribution collections will be increased by effectively combating unregistered employment and wages.

Social security coverage will be expanded and the system will be simpler, more effective and fair through policies compatible with the changing labour market and population structure.

405. Social security legislation and practices will be harmonized with changing labour market conditions and new generation flexible working models.

405.1. Work will be carried out to strengthen the technical and legal infrastructure in order to harmonize new working models that emerge outside the traditional workplace concept with digitalization with the social security system.

405.2. The compatibility of social security practices with flexible working models, especially part-time work, will be increased.

406. The financial sustainability of the social security system will be strengthened by implementing regulations that encourage people to remain employed and prioritize equity and actuarial balance.

406.1. Reforms that will strengthen equity and actuarial balance in the social security system will be implemented.

406.2. The monthly pension system will be rearranged in a way that will encourage people to remain employed and will not impose a financial burden.

406.3. In order to ensure the financial sustainability of the social security system, studies will be carried out on automatic adjustment mechanisms compatible with the increase in life expectancy at birth in determining retirement criteria.

406.4. Indicators regarding the long-term financial sustainability of the social security system will

be regularly monitored and reports will be prepared accordingly.

407. Long term care insurance and vocational rehabilitation practices will be implemented to reduce the effects of population aging on the social security system.

407.1. Care insurance will be established to finance care services for older persons.

407.2. Vocational rehabilitation will be implemented to enable people who receive permanent disability income or disability pension to return to the labour market.

408. Contribution collections in the social security system will be increased.

408.1. Enforcement and collection processes of contribution debts will be activated.

408.2. The effectiveness of the social security system will be increased through inspections.

408.3. In the fight against unregistered employment and unregistered wages, the premium base will be expanded by increasing risk-focused audit activities based on data analysis.

409. In order to provide a simple and effective structure to the social security system, employment incentives will be reviewed and the quality of service provision will be increased.

Challenges:

There is a need to develop family allowance insurance that will reduce the poverty rate of children and young people, especially those with high poverty rates.

Action 6. Encourage national civil society entities and private sector organizations to engage actively in the field of social protection, as appropriate, towards the realization of social protection for all

Achievement: With EU and ILO financed projects (such as extending to social security for domestic workers) are carried out by unions and non-governmental organizations to extend social security to the entire population. In addition, information and awareness campaigns are carried out for the private sector to encourage registered employment.

Challenges: Many regulations have been made to combat unregistered employment and expand the social security coverage. Impact analysis studies on which regulations are effective on registered employment are limited.

Workers, self-employed, civil servants and retirees are represented on the board of directors of SGK. There is a need to represent the interests of children and youth in the design and implementation of social assistance programmes, especially those with high poverty rates.

Action 7. Consider setting achievable national targets, including intermediate targets, based on country contexts within the indicator framework of Sustainable Development Goal 1.3, including through the establishment of the following: i) A national baseline of the population covered by social protection programmes for 2021, by sex and age; ii) Intermediate targets for the population covered by social protection programmes by 2025, by sex and age; iii) National targets to reach the entire population with social protection programmes by 2030, by sex and age

Achievement: In the 12th Five-Year Development Plan (2024-2028) Specialization Commission Reports, Under the Title of International Obligations, a separate section has been opened under the title "Relationship of Purposes, Targets and Policies in the plan with Sustainable Development

Goals".

"Global indicators identified as currently available at national level and proxy indicators considered to be appropriate to measure relevant target are published with this press release as total 131 indicators together with definitions. The population within the social protection bases/systems' coverage in terms of old-age, disability, widow and orphan pensions is given according to sex, covering the years 2010-2019. However, the data only gives the population benefiting from certain social insurance and social benefits and does not show the coverage." TÜRKİYE 2nd VNR Report 2019 Strong Ground towards Common Goals (Interactive) was published by the Presidency Department of Strategy and Budget.

Challenges: Disaggregated data on the proportion of the population protected by social protection systems including by sex, age, disability, socioeconomic status, is required.

Action 8. Develop strategies to achieve these targets and integrate them into national development plans and social protection sectoral plans and frameworks

Achievement: There are two main Articles in the 12th Five-Year Development Plan regarding the premium and non-contributory social security system.

3.1.7. Regarding the social insurance system:

The main goal is to increase the the social security system coverage, create a fairer and more effective structure, and strengthen its long-term financial sustainability.

3.3.9 Regarding social assistance and services (non-contributory social security system):

Ensuring that segments of society in need have the best access to social services such as care, rehabilitation and psychosocial support, increasing the effectiveness of social assistance, minimizing the risk of social exclusion with a family-oriented approach, addressing all aspects of poverty, including access to basic services such as education, health and housing. The main aim is to eliminate it by combating it and ensuring social inclusion.

Challenges: There is a need for closer cooperation and coordination to achieve the 2030 targets in the creation, implementation and evaluation of different social insurance and social assistance programmes within Türkiye's large social security system.

Action 9. Develop and strengthen national data management systems and processes to facilitate the collection, management and analysis of social protection data that are accurate, relevant and timely

Achievement:

In Türkiye, both the IT infrastructure of the SGK (e-insurance, e-declaration) and the integrated Social Assistance Information System of the Ministry of Family and Social Services effectively collect and analyse all information for both premium and non-contributory social security systems.

Challenges: There is a need to research further to identify ways to ensure that no one is left behind in enrolment and registration into schemes for which they are eligible.

Action 10. Promote partnerships, peer learning, knowledge exchange and the sharing of good practices among countries in Asia and the Pacific through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation frameworks

Achievement: Türkiye has good practices that will set an example for the countries of the world in areas such as covering the entire population with universal health insurance, effectively combating unregistered employment, the institutional infrastructure of the social security system and providing services to people electronically, and the integrated social assistance information system regarding social assistance.

Challenges: More regional and bilateral cooperation is needed to share Türkiye's successful practices in the field of social protection with other countries trying to establish a social protection system.

Action 11. Ensure that development support from partners is aligned with core national social protection priorities and corresponding technical assistance and capacity building needs

Achievement: Especially with the European Union projects, since 2010, KITUP I and KITUP II projects on Supporting Registered Employment, as well as Educare (Educated babysitters) and Women Up projects, and projects to support registered women's employment have been carried out. Again, with the support of the ILO, the Transition to Registered Employment Project for Syrian Refugees and Turkish Citizens under international protection is carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and SGK.

Action 12. Share national experiences in the form of a progress report, to be produced on a voluntary basis, on the progress made and challenges faced in implementing the Action Plan, at future sessions of the Committee on Social Development.

Participation in this stocktaking exercise is considered to achieve this.

Chapter 5: Moving forward to Implement the Action Plan

Social protection has been identified as an enabler for implementing the 2030 Agenda. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and deliver on the commitments contained therein, most countries in the region need to step up their efforts to build sustainable and reliable social protection systems. For this purpose, the Action Plan and its national actions will be helpful for countries in furthering their inclusive social protection agenda.

Türkiye has a well-established and strong social protection system. With the reforms realized in the last two decades, the effective coverage of health services has expanded and out-of-pocket health expenditures have decreased. Thanks to the Integrated Social Assistance Information System, targeting of social aid is done quickly and effectively. Türkiye was actively fighting against unregistered employment. Thanks to economic growth and reforms, the unregistered employment rate is decreasing rapidly.

Building on these good practices, in order for Türkiye to achieve its 2030 targets, there is a need to provide more income transfer, especially to children in households with high poverty rates. In addition, social aids need to be included in Law No. 3294 with detailed entitlement conditions and detailed amounts, instead of administrative regulations, and non-contributory benefits need to be increased every year in line with inflation. Suggestions for Türkiye to fully achieve its 2030 targets are presented below.

The matrix below identifies key elements needed to achieve each action point. In addition, tailored national level recommendations are presented for consideration by the Government of Türkiye, drawing on the contents of the report.

National action point and recommendations

<i>National Action as Outlined in Action Plan</i>	Progress of Government of Türkiye Towards this Action
<i>Action 1. Ensure the right to social protection for all without discrimination throughout the lifecycle, including by adopting necessary legislative, regulatory, administrative and other measures to this end</i>	
Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:	
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include low-income tradesmen, craftsmen and low-income farmers who are outside the compulsory social insurance coverage by providing them with the opportunity to pay contributions appropriate to their income levels. • Casual agricultural workers and domestic workers who work less than 10 days at the same employer, be covered by compulsory social insurance. 	
<i>Action 2. Progressively design and realize, including through social dialogue, comprehensive and sustainable social protection systems for all that enable every person to access social protection at adequate benefit levels and thereby enjoy an adequate standard of living, in accordance with national circumstances, throughout his or her lifetime</i>	
Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:	

National Action as Outlined in Action Plan	Progress of Government of Türkiye Towards this Action
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal regulations be made so that those behind on contribution payments can benefit from all health services. • Establish unemployment assistance financed by taxes for people who are new to the labour market and have not paid unemployment insurance premiums before. 	
<p>Action 3. Ensure that social protection systems are shock-responsive, sex-sensitive and relevant to the needs of vulnerable populations</p>	
<p>Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:</p>	
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore ways to strengthen its Shock Responsive Social Protection mechanisms. 	
<p>Action 4. Ensure that the implementation of social protection is efficient, coordinated, non-discriminatory, reliable and transparent, with public availability of appeal and complaint mechanisms institutionalized as part of the service delivery process</p>	
<p>Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:</p>	
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect further detailed data and conduct studies regarding the effective social protection coverage and its impact on poverty. 	
<p>Action 5. Allocate sufficient public funds, and increase these levels where required, towards the realization of social protection for all at the national level, with due regard to social and intergenerational solidarity and the sustainability of national social protection systems</p>	
<p>Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:</p>	
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue its efforts to expand contributory schemes to cover hitherto excluded population groups. 	
<p>Action 6. Encourage national civil society entities and private sector organizations to engage actively in the field of social protection, as appropriate, towards the realization of social protection for all</p>	
<p>Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:</p>	
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage institutions and non-governmental organizations representing children, young people, persons with disabilities and older persons with high rates of poverty in the design and implementation of non-contributory schemes. 	
<p>Action 7. Consider setting achievable national targets, including intermediate targets, based on country contexts within the indicator framework of Sustainable Development Goal 1.3, including</p>	

National Action as Outlined in Action Plan	Progress of Government of Türkiye Towards this Action
<i>through the establishment of the following: i) A national baseline of the population covered by social protection programmes for 2021, by sex and age; ii) Intermediate targets for the population covered by social protection programmes by 2025, by sex and age; iii) National targets to reach the entire population with social protection programmes by 2030, by sex and age</i>	
Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:	
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail the social protection coverage according to demographic variables related to the 2030 targets in development plans and annual programmes. 	
Action 8. Develop strategies to achieve these targets and integrate them into national development plans and social protection sectoral plans and frameworks	
Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:	
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase cooperation and coordination in organizing different contributory and non-contributory schemes within Türkiye's large social security system to achieve the 2030 targets. 	
Action 9. Develop and strengthen national data management systems and processes to facilitate the collection, management and analysis of social protection data that are accurate, relevant and timely	
Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:	
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement the Integrated Social Assistance Information System (ISAIS), as well as share its experiences and achievements in building an effective Management Information Systems. 	
Action 10. Promote partnerships, peer learning, knowledge exchange and the sharing of good practices among countries in Asia and the Pacific through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation frameworks	
Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:	
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of regional and bilateral collaborations in order to share Türkiye's successful practices in the field of social protection with other countries trying to establish a social protection system. 	
Action 11. Ensure that development support from partners is aligned with core national social protection priorities and corresponding technical assistance and capacity building needs	
Recommendations to Promote Action Plan at National Level:	

National Action as Outlined in Action Plan	Progress of Government of Türkiye Towards this Action
<p>To this end, it is recommended that the Government of Türkiye:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to ensure that development support from partners is aligned with national objectives on social protection. 	
<p><i>Action 12. Share national experiences in the form of a progress report, to be produced on a voluntary basis, on the progress made and challenges faced in implementing the Action Plan, at future sessions of the Committee on Social Development.</i></p>	
<p>The participation in this report stocktaking is considered to fulfil this action point.</p>	

Conclusion

The Government of Türkiye has made impressive gains in extending social protection through its contributory and non-contributory schemes, which serve as good practices for other countries in Asia and the Pacific. Its achievements in extending contributory schemes to informal workers through enhanced institutional and digital capacity highlight good practices such as incentive structures, enforcement measures and simplified registration procedures. Türkiye's Integrated Social Assurances Information System is recognized as a leading example of the impact that Management Information Systems can have to ensure a more effective, efficient and transparent delivery of schemes. It is hoped that the Action Plan will provide impetus for Türkiye to continue enhancing its social protection system to build resilience, especially for those left furthest behind and in alignment with the objectives of its 12th Development Plan (2024-2028). The Government should build on its demonstrated commitment to broaden social protection and support the actions set out in the adopted *Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific*.

Annexes

Annex I: Statistical Annex

Table A: Contributory public expenditure on cash benefits and grouped schemes (non-means tested) as per cent of the GDP

	Cash benefits (non-means-tested)							
	All functions	Sickness/Health care	Disability	Old-age	Survivors	Family/Children	Unemployment	Social exclusion
2000	4.2	0	0.2	3	0.8	0	0	0.1
2007	6.6	0	0.2	5	1.3	0	0.1	0
2008	6.5	0	0.1	5.2	1.2	0	0.1	0
2009	7.6	0	0.1	6.2	1.1	0	0.2	0
2010	7.5	0	0.1	6	1.2	0	0.1	0
2015	7.3	0.1	0.1	5.6	1.3	0	0.2	0
2018	7.6	0.1	0.1	5.8	1.4	0	0.3	0
2019	7.9	0.1	0.1	5.9	1.5	0	0.3	0
2020	8.3	0.1	0.1	5.8	1.4	0	0.9	0
2021	6.5	0.1	0.1	4.8	1.2	0	0.4	0

Source: European Union, Eurostat. Available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser> (accessed in October 2023).

Table B: Number of the invalidity pensioners and survivor pensioners for work accidents and occupational diseases 2023

	2023/05	2023/06	2023/07
Duty invalidity pensioners (civil servants)	15,287	15,313	15,318
Invalidity Pensioners (employee) for work accidents and occupational diseases	86,176	84,704	86,436
Invalidity Pensioners (self-employed) for work accidents and occupational diseases	403	407	406
Survivors beneficiaries for work accidents and occupational diseases (deceased employee)	99,849	96,054	99,384
Survivors beneficiaries for work accidents and occupational diseases (deceased self-employed)	1,464	1,461	1,461
Total	203,179	197,939	203,005

Source: European Union, Eurostat. Available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser> (accessed in October 2023).

Table C: Number of sickness cases, temporary incapacity (days) per insured by sex

Number of sickness cases			Temporary incapacity (Days)			Temporary Incapacity per Insured		
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
4,433,668	2,990,747	7,424,415	29,123,551	18,577,701	47,701,252	6.6	6.2	6.4

Source: SGK, "İstatistik Yıllığı 2022".

Table D: Numbers of invalidity pensioners, 2023

	2023/03	2023/04	2023/05	2023/06	2023/07

Invalidity Pensioners (employee)	76,105	76,022	76,021	75,756	75,856
Invalidity pensioners (self-employed)	22,096	22,040	22,068	22,132	22,127
Invalidity pensioners (civil servant)	26,931	26,962	27,007	27,021	26,959
Total	125,132	125,024	125,096	124,909	124,942

Source: SGK, "İstatistik Yıllığı 2022".

Table E: Numbers of the survivor pensioners (including orphans), 2023

	2023/03	2023/04	2023/05	2023/06	2023/07	2023/03
Survivor Pensioners (related to employee deceased)	2,292,253	2,296,980	2,304,769	2,310,489	2,311,254	2,312,885
Survivor Pensioners (related to self-employed deceased)	1,057,287	1,057,148	1,057,166	1,058,326	1,060,193	1,060,102
Survivor Pensioners (related to civil servant deceased)	778,478	779,793	780,096	780,950	782,100	783,387
Total	4,128,018	4,133,921	4,142,031	4,149,765	4,153,547	4,156,374

Source: SGK, "İstatistik Yıllığı 2022".

Table F: Distribution of widows/widowers according to pension and effective coverage, 2021

	Male	Female	Total
Old-Age	655,321	821,454	1,476,775
Survivor	100,075	2,593,330	2,693,405
Invalidity	32,424	51,734	84,158
Total	787,820	3,466,518	4,254,338
Number of widows/widowers	757,221	3,367,905	4,176,860
Number of widows/widowers receiving both old-age pension and survivor benefit	85,200	355,565	440,765
Number of widows/widowers with no social security pension (old- age, survivor, invalidity)	61,769	316,090	377,859
Percentage of widows/widowers who do not receive any pension	8.16	9.39	9.05
Effective pension coverage for widows/widowers	91.84	90.61	90.95

Source : TÜİK, *Gelir ve Yaşam Koşulları Anketi Mikro Veri seti* (2021).

Table G: Number of old-age beneficiaries by status

	2023/03	2023/04	2023/05	2023/06	2023/07
Old-Age Benefit (employee)	6,312,817	6,508,318	6,924,222	7,380,482	7,618,822
Old-Age Benefit (self-employed)	1,635,732	1,669,441	1,705,711	1,732,055	1,745,711
Old-Age Benefit (civil servant)	1,595,705	1,608,005	1,617,912	1,618,855	1,618,742
Total	9,544,254	9,785,764	10,247,845	10,731,392	10,983,275

Source: SGK, "İstatistik Yıllığı 2022".

Table H: The beneficiaries of unemployment insurance, the number of unemployed effective coverage of unemployment insurance (per cent)

Years	Beneficiaries Of Unemployment Insurance			Number Of Unemployed			Effective Coverage of Unemployment Insurance (per cent)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2014	344,358	157,278	501,636	1,813,000	1,040,000	2,853,000	19	15	18
2015	397,443	192,445	589,888	1,891,000	1,167,000	3,058,000	21	16	19
2016	536,740	263,107	799,847	2,006,000	1,324,000	3,330,000	27	20	24
2017	460,788	235,179	695,967	2,024,000	1,431,000	3,455,000	23	16	20
2018	576,180	265,667	841,847	2,082,000	1,455,000	3,537,000	28	18	24
2019	694,195	318,861	1,013,056	2,707,000	1,762,000	4,469,000	26	18	23
2020	345,975	163,563	509,538	2,599,000	1,462,000	4,061,000	13	11	13
2021	413,648	234,036	647,684	2,364,000	1,554,000	3,918,000	17	15	17
2022	527,995	284,511	812,506	2,044,000	1,538,000	3,582,000	26	18	23

Source: İŞKUR, "İstatistik Bülteni". Available at www.iskur.gov.tr (accessed 16 October 2023)

Table I: Contribution ratios for employees

Social Insurance Branches	Contribution Ratio for Employer	Contribution Ratio for Employee	Government Share
Short-term Insurance (Work Injuries and Occupational Diseases, Sickness, Maternity)	2 per cent	-	
Long term Insurance (Old-age, Invalidity, Survivor)	11 per cent	9 per cent	Government contribution in the amount of one-fourth of total contributions actually collected annually.
General Health Insurance	7.5 per cent	5 per cent	
Unemployment	2 per cent	1 per cent	1 per cent
Total	22.5 per cent	15 per cent	

Source: Law No. 5510 and Law No. 4447

Table J: Cash Benefits and grouped schemes (means-tested) – as a percentage of GDP

	Cash benefits (means-tested)							
	All functions	Sickness/Health care	Disability	Old-age	Survivors	Family/Children	Unemployment	Social exclusion n.e.c.
2000	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00
2007	0.40	0.10	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.00
2008	0.40	0.00	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00
2009	0.50	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.20	0.00	0.00
2010	0.40	0.00	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00
2015	0.50	0.00	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.20	0.00	0.00
2018	0.40	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.00
2019	0.50	0.00	0.10	0.20	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.00

2020	0.60	0.00	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.40	0.00	0.00
2021	0.40	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.00

Source: European Union, Eurostat. Available at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser> (accessed in October 2023).

Table K: Active Labour Market Programs' Participants (2000-2022)

Years	Vocational Training Programmes			Entrepreneurship Training Programmes			On The Job Training		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2000	-	-	3,483	-	-	-	-	-	-
2001	-	-	882	-	-	-	-	-	-
2002	-	-	1,497	-	-	-	-	-	-
2003	-	-	3,532	-	-	-	-	-	-
2004	-	-	8,585	-	-	-	-	-	-
2005	-	-	11,025	-	-	448	-	-	-
2006	-	-	16,458	-	-	648	-	-	-
2007	-	-	21,382	392	878	1,270	-	-	-
2008	18,992	8,397	27,389	1,462	2,937	4,399	-	-	-
2009	83,653	76,773	160,426	2,490	4,184	6,674	727	558	1,285
2010	74,274	82,310	156,584	4,707	3,599	8,306	2,643	2,028	4,671
2011	72,596	72,797	145,393	13,605	10,540	24,145	10,474	5,919	16,393
2012	100,861	114,538	215,399	13,127	12,348	25,475	18,011	13,762	31,773
2013	60,561	70,688	131,249	13,023	12,143	25,166	33,417	30,243	63,660
2014	48,467	61,199	109,666	16,456	15,192	31,648	30,028	29,428	59,456
2015	64,211	105,191	169,402	21,905	20,002	41,907	81,830	77,246	159,076
2016	41,275	77,897	119,172	35,509	27,752	63,261	131,000	107,205	238,205
2017	35,761	81,819	117,580	47,715	46,301	94,016	145,867	151,388	297,255
2018	32,173	85,066	117,239	40,806	40,377	81,183	141,306	159,206	300,512
2019	36,027	88,893	124,920	21,702	19,405	41,107	208,747	193,646	402,393
2020	27,245	60,127	87,372	-	-	-	177,318	158,443	335,761
2021	28,573	72,928	101,501	-	-	-	176,313	183,857	360,170
2022	4,995	5,768	10,763	-	-	-	77,360	78,996	156,356
Total	729,664	1,064,391	1,860,899	232,899	215,658	449,653	1,235,041	1,191,925	2,426,966

Source: İŞKUR, "İstatistik Bülteni". Available at www.iskur.gov.tr (accessed 16 October 2023)

Table L: Informal Employment by Sector (2006-2023)

Years	Agriculture	Non-Agriculture	Industry	Services	Construction	Total
2006	87.77	34.06	38.12	31.88	-	46.97
2007	88.14	32.34	35.51	30.63	-	45.44
2008	87.84	29.76	31.61	28.77	-	43.5

2009	85.84	30.08	33.43	28.4	-	43.84
2010	85.47	29.06	32.68	27.11	-	43.25
2011	83.85	27.76	31.5	25.71	-	42.05
2012	83.61	24.51	27.89	22.73	-	39.02
2013	83.28	22.4	25.23	20.9	-	36.75
2014	82.27	22.32	20.26	21.09	36.61	34.97
2015	81.16	21.23	19.13	20.05	35.58	33.57
2016	82.09	21.72	20.2	20.35	35.76	33.49
2017	83.33	22.1	20.03	20.95	35.8	33.97
2018	82.73	22.28	20.29	21.46	34.39	33.42
2019	86.62	22.96	20.03	22.55	37.74	34.52
2020	83.46	19.3	16.46	18.76	34.72	30.59
2021	84.56	17.49	14.16	17.16	31.95	29
2022	79.96	16.76	13.06	16.90	28.82	26.76
2023 II. Çeyrek	80.72	17.17	13.29	17.28	29.84	26.63

Source: TÜİK HLSF. 2006-2023

Table M: Cumulative Results of The Fight Against Unregistered Employment (October 2008 – September 2023)

Information Source	Uninsured Employee	Uninsured Self-employed	Uninsured Old-Age Pensioners	Total Uninsured Workers	Total Uninsured Workplaces
Identity declaration forms (Police)	182,985	9,141	9,196	201,322	7,582
Banks, public institutions, other institutions	1,205,216	398,001	73,604	1,676,821	137,158
Local Tax Inspectors	51,571	134,191	19,144	204,906	18,627
Social Security Inspectors	489,056	0	840	489,896	113,538
Alo 170 Report Line	235,181	0	0	235,181	37,600
Written Notice, Complaints	152,126	0	420	152,546	42,029
Other Inspections	101,759	0	420	102,179	33,909
Public administrations inspection	63,227	3,389	4,961	71,254	7,650
Other information and documents	243,469	24,312	253,915	521,679	41,406
TOTAL	2,235,524	569,034	361,660	3,165,878	325,961

Source: SGK, "İstatistik Yılı 2022".

Annex II: Regional Action Plan to Promote Regional Cooperation on Social Protection: Elements of what is needed

National Action as Outlined in Action Plan
Action 1: <i>Ensure the right to social protection for all without discrimination throughout the lifecycle, including by adopting necessary legislative, regulatory, administrative and other measures to this end</i>
Elements of what is needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the social protection system is available and accessible to all. All social protection schemes must be free from discrimination and subjectivity and ensure that women access and receive benefits on an equal footing to men. This requires legislative guarantees as well as implementation arrangements. Social protection schemes must be accessible, barrier-free and inclusive, providing everyone with equal opportunities to access the scheme as well as information about them. National and local administrative systems should ensure that the needs of applicants and local contexts are considered and that information is available in forms and languages understandable by all.
Action 2: <i>Progressively design and realize, including through social dialogue, comprehensive and sustainable social protection systems for all that enable every person to access social protection at adequate benefit levels and thereby enjoy an adequate standard of living, in accordance with national circumstances, throughout his or her lifetime</i>
Elements of what is needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that the design and implementation of the social protection system is based on evidence and assessments of adequacy and sustainability. When social protection benefits are too low to be meaningful they can disincentivize individuals from joining contributory schemes, or fail to prevent families from falling into or breaking cycles of poverty. To ensure adequacy of social protection benefits, it is instrumental to assess and review existing social protection benefit levels and to conduct actuarial reviews to assess issues of financial sustainability.• Progressively extend coverage of social protection to all. To extend social protection coverage to all, a blend of contributory and non-contributory schemes is needed. Prioritizing non-contributory schemes can ensure that no one is left behind in access to a minimum income guarantee. In addition, it is important to gradually extend coverage of contributory schemes to the working-age population. Given high levels of informality, it would be important to complement these with wider labour market efforts to transition from informal to the formal employment.
Action 3. <i>Ensure that social protection systems are shock-responsive, sex-sensitive and relevant to the needs of vulnerable populations</i>
Elements of what is needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop or integrate into existing strategies, national or sector-specific strategies that address shock-responsive social protection mechanisms. These should outline roles and responsibilities of all partners at central and local levels, including community and humanitarian actors, as well as plans and actions to be taken before potential shocks as well as after-shock responses to support households, that can leverage humanitarian infrastructure or other responses.• Ensure a strategy to promote sex-responsive social protection is outlined in one or more

National Action as Outlined in Action Plan

national or sectoral social protection policies. Noting the specific vulnerabilities faced by women, men, girls and boys, social protection systems should design and implement their schemes in a manner that addresses these vulnerabilities to ensure benefits are accessible and eligible to all, regardless of their sex.

- **Innovate, design and implement mechanisms that foster inclusive social protection systems by making them more accessible to the most vulnerable and often excluded groups** such as women or workers in informal arrangements. There are various ways in which contributory schemes can be adjusted to increase coverage through the legal framework, administrative, communications and financial incentives of schemes, especially for women.

Action 4. Ensure that the implementation of social protection is efficient, coordinated, non-discriminatory, reliable and transparent, with public availability of appeal and complaint mechanisms institutionalized as part of the service delivery process

Elements of what is needed:

- **Continue to develop capable and accountable institutions with clear roles and responsibilities.** To this end, an overarching inter-ministerial policy framework that integrates all social protection schemes can facilitate coordination and coherence in policy and implementation among different schemes.
- **Continue to invest in building efficient social protection institutions.** Ensure the effectiveness of systems by building capacity and reliable institutions. Countries may consider applying institutional arrangements that support integration and avoid administrative complexities, such as through an overarching inter-ministerial policy framework and implementing entity.
- **Promote and raise the public awareness of the existing communication strategy.** Clear communication is critical to ensure the public know of existing social protection schemes, understand eligibility criteria, what they may receive and how to engage in the application process. It can thereby manage expectations of a scheme and strengthen trust in institutional and delivery mechanisms.
- **Ensure that complaints and appeal mechanisms are easily accessible and available for all national social protection schemes** to identify and address delivery and administrative issues and ensure accountability, as well as build trust in institutional and delivery mechanisms.
- **Conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of delivery and performance** for continuous feedback and evidence to enhance government understanding on what works, why and for whom. This can in turn inform further improvement of schemes.

Action 5. Allocate sufficient public funds, and increase these levels where required, towards the realization of social protection for all at the national level, with due regard to social and intergenerational solidarity and the sustainability of national social protection systems

Elements of what is needed:

- **Mobilize resources for social protection.** Prioritizing investment in social protection is foremost a matter of political will than resources. Recognizing the impact of social protection on smoothing consumption for households, as well as levelling inequality and promoting trust in national institutions as well as solidarity across income groups and generations, social protection should be seen as an investment in socioeconomic development of a country.
- **Conduct a national assessment of fiscal needs and gaps to implement national social**

National Action as Outlined in Action Plan

protection policies. This is necessary to provide the evidence base for why financing social protection is needed, but also to identify funding sources. Investments grounded in domestic financing can include increasing tax revenues, reallocating public expenditures, tackling illicit financial flow and adopting inclusive macroeconomic frameworks. Countries can also draw on development assistance as a transitional co-financing or to introduce pilot projects.

- **Promote a financial management that is transparent.** This can ensure that funds are used for their intended purpose and that accurate payments reach intended beneficiaries in a timely manner. This can also enhance trust in social protection delivery and implementation mechanisms.

Action 6. Encourage national civil society entities and private sector organizations to engage actively in the field of social protection, as appropriate, towards the realization of social protection for all

Elements of what is needed:

- **Emphasize good governance and embed social dialogue at all steps from design and implementation to follow-up and evaluation.** Good governance and coordination mechanisms can enhance the coherence, transparency and effectiveness of social protection schemes. Social dialogue with workers' and employers' organizations can help leverage their knowledge and build political support. Consultations with civil society organisations representing beneficiaries can help identify the unique needs and circumstances of these populations to better tailor responses. These organisations can also play an instrumental role in ensuring the accurate communication of information regarding benefits, as well as to support beneficiaries in accessing delivery mechanisms.
- **Establish regular mechanisms to consult stakeholders.** The regular convening of stakeholder consultations can strengthen the feedback mechanism on the needs and circumstances of recipients, as well as on delivery and implementation. ILO Recommendation 202 also stipulates the need for a consultative approach to monitor progress on a regular basis.

Action 7. Set achievable national targets, including intermediate targets, based on country contexts within the indicator framework of Sustainable Development Goal 1.3, including through the establishment of the following: i) A national baseline of the population covered by social protection programmes for 2021, by sex and age; ii) Intermediate targets for the population covered by social protection programmes by 2025, by sex and age; iii) National targets to reach the entire population with social protection programmes by 2030, by sex and age

Elements of what is needed:

- **Set achievable national targets, including intermediate targets.** SDG1.3.1 sets out the target to implement national social protection systems and floors for all and, by 2030, achieve substantial coverage of the poor and vulnerable. The setting of national targets serves as a benchmark to track progress to achieve this vision, as well as strengthen the implementation of social protection system.

Action 8. Develop strategies to achieve these targets and integrate them into national development plans and social protection sectoral plans and frameworks

Elements of what is needed:

National Action as Outlined in Action Plan

- **Integrate national targets on coverage levels in one or more social protection strategies.** Strategies to achieve these targets should be developed and integrated into national development plans as well as sectoral social protection plans and frameworks. This will ensure the understanding of social protection as a core strategy for social and economic development, including the protection against economy-wide risks and crises.

Action 9. Develop and strengthen national data management systems and processes to facilitate the collection, management and analysis of social protection data that are accurate, relevant and timely

Elements of what is needed:

- **Establish a national data management system that coordinates data collection, enrolment and registration of beneficiaries, benefit payments and tracking for social protection schemes.** To overcome the fragmentation of databases across ministries, a digitalized Management Information Systems (MIS) should be developed for each social protection scheme that can be integrated and provide a system-wide overview. This integrated approach allows administrators to manage data related to registrations, enrolment, payment, beneficiary updates and grievance. This can enable governments to access data and reports on system level coverage, coordination between schemes and impact.

Action 10. Promote partnerships, peer learning, knowledge exchange and the sharing of good practices among countries in Asia and the Pacific through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation frameworks

Elements of what is needed:

- **Consider engaging in North-South, South-South or triangular cooperation frameworks on social protection.** Through the exchange of peer learning and knowledge, governments can exchange technical know-how and expertise relevant to their national contexts. International development partners can facilitate this exchange among different partners to co-create social protection solutions.

Action 11. Ensure that development support from partners is aligned with core national social protection priorities and corresponding technical assistance and capacity building needs

Elements of what is needed:

- **Link externally-funded projects towards achieving the objectives of national social protection policies.** To ensure policy coherence at the national level, it is important that different sources of funding, including from development partners, are aligned with national objectives on social protection.

Action 12. Share national experiences in the form of a progress report, to be produced on a voluntary basis, on the progress made and challenges faced in implementing the Action Plan, at future sessions of the Committee on Social Development.

The participation in this report stocktaking is considered to fulfil this action point.

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