

WWHR WOMEN FOR
WOMEN'S
HUMAN RIGHTS





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Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) is an autonomous women's organization founded in 1993, to promote women's human rights and gender equality. Its name was inspired by the affirmation that "women's rights are human rights," declared at the United Nations (UN) World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna the same year.

WWHR works locally, nationally, and internationally to support women's participation in all spheres of life as free individuals and equal citizens, based on the belief that lasting social change can only be achieved if women's rights-based struggles are integrated at all levels.

Accordingly, WWHR takes a holistic view to women's human rights, and considers all issues concerning women, including violence against women, education, economic and social rights, civil and political rights, sexuality, and reproductive rights, as being interconnected. To advance and improve national legislation and international documents and mechanisms that pertain to women, WWHR plays an active part in women's platforms and coalitions in Turkey and abroad.

In the struggle to achieve women's human rights and gender equality, WWHR has always collaborated with

similar-minded women's and LGBTI+ organizations since its inception, employing methods such as action-research, producing feminist knowledge and publications, training, monitoring, reporting, advocacy, and networking.

Active now for over three decades, WWHR has been the recipient of numerous awards:

1999: The Leading Solutions Award by the Association of Women in Development (AWID), for contributions to advancing gender equality and social justice

2004: Recognition as one of the best tactics worldwide by New Tactics in Human Rights (OMCT), for the Human Rights Education Program for Women (HREP)

2007: The International Women's Rights Prize by the Gruber Foundation, for founding the Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies (CSBR) and advocacy work

2015: The Joan B. Dunlop Award by the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), presented to WWHR's co-founder Pınar İlkkaracan in support of brave women working to build healthy and safe societies for women and girls

PROGRAMS

PROMOTING RIGHTS-AWARENESS AND EMPOWERMENT IN WOMEN

The Human Rights Education Program for Women (HREP)

Developed in 1995 by WWHR and continuously implemented for over 30 years, HREP aims for women to have a say in their own lives and enjoy their rights fully in all spheres of life, and supports their active participation in social change. The 16-week program covers women's human rights, constitutional and civil rights, violence against women, strategies to combat violence, economic rights, communication skills, gender-sensitive parenting and rights of the child, sexuality, reproductive rights, political rights, feminism, and grassroots organizing.

In a unique model of state-NGO collaboration in Turkey, HREP was run in partnership with the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SSCPA) from 1998 to 2011. After the closure of the State Ministry for Women and the Family and the SSCPA in 2012, WWHR pivoted to running HREP with trainers from municipal women's counseling centers and autonomous women's organizations. Since 2016, the HREP Partnership Protocol has been signed with 22 municipalities, one professional chamber, and one trade union.

- Over 20,000 women from 60 provinces in Turkey and Northern Cyprus have participated in HREP since 1995.
- More than 300 trainers carried out local group work following the HREP Training of Trainers (ToT) held every two years.
- Publications and materials used in the HREP groups, including the *We Have Rights!* booklet series on women's legal, sexual, reproductive, and economic rights, have reached tens of thousands of women.
- HREP also encourages women to unite in the struggle for their rights, which has led to the foundation of numerous autonomous local women's organizations.

Gender Equality Seminars

- WWHR has held over 200 Gender Equality Seminars with the members, employees, and volunteers of public offices, private companies, and civil society organizations since 2017, reaching over 10,000 people.



ADVOCACY

WWHR forms national and international pressure groups and organizes campaigns to push for improvements in the laws and practices that promote women's human rights and aim to achieve gender equality. To this end, WWHR prioritizes building bridges between local, national, and international activism efforts.

Thanks to its activism, advocacy, and networking work spanning three decades, WWHR has contributed to various legal reforms in Turkey, made strides in promoting sexual and bodily rights at the UN level, and been influential in ensuring the inclusion and enforcement of gender equality and women's rights in global policies.

Together with the organized women's movement, WWHR has initiated and coordinated a number of campaigns and achieved desired outcomes:

♀ **1997** Campaign against Virginity Testing; an administrative ban was issued against virginity testing.

♀ **1997-1998** Campaign for Protection Orders against Domestic Violence; Law no. 4320 came into effect.

♀ **2000-2001** Campaign for Full Equality in the Turkish Civil Code; was achieved in the new law.

♀ **2001** Campaign for the Ratification of the CEDAW Optional Protocol; the protocol came into effect in 2002.

♀ **2002-2004** Campaign to Reform the Turkish Penal Code with a Gender Perspective; over 30 articles were amended in the law to protect sexual and bodily rights.

♀ **2011-2012** The End Violence Campaign; Law no. 6284 on Protecting the Family and Preventing Violence against Women came into effect.

♀ **2016-2020** The No Amnesty for the Sexual Abuse of Children Campaign; proposed amendments to Article 103 of the Turkish Penal Code that would have pardoned offenders were blocked.

♀ **2018-2020** The Leave the Right to Alimony Alone Campaign; attempts to modify the right to alimony in the Civil Code were blocked.

■ **The Convention on the Elimination of All Kinds of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** WWHR lobbied at

Turkey's periodic reviews; coordinated the 1997, 2005, and 2010 NGO Shadow Report and advocacy work; and actively took part in the 2018 and 2024 NGO Interim Shadow Reports and the 2016 and 2022 NGO Shadow Reports and advocacy processes.

■ WWHR brought together civil society organizations, researchers, and academicians in the Middle East, North Africa, and Southern and Southeastern Asia in 2001, and initiated the foundation of the **Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies (CSBR)**, acting as its coordinator for 10 years.

■ **At the UN level**, WWHR has advocated for the human rights of women, girls, and LGBTI+ people, and contributed to processes at the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development, Beijing+5, Beijing+10, Beijing+15, Beijing+20, Beijing+25, Beijing+30, ICPD+10, ICPD+15, ICPD+20, ICPD+25, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

■ Thanks to WWHR's efforts and collaboration with the international women's movement, "gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls" was adopted as a distinct goal (Goal 5) among the SDGs. WWHR prepared shadow reports during Turkey's voluntary periodic reviews for the SDGs,

and carried out regional and international advocacy work.

■ WWHR is a founding member of the Turkey Monitoring Platform for The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention).

■ WWHR contributed to writing the shadow report prepared by the Istanbul Convention Turkey Monitoring Platform and its submission to the GREVIO Committee, managed the secretariat of the **#UnitedfortheIstanbulConvention** campaign to stop Turkey from withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention and bolster international solidarity efforts, and continued advocacy work at the national level.

■ WWHR regularly holds **Feminist Get-togethers** to broaden discussions on feminism in Turkey.

■ Since 2019, WWHR annually organizes Solidarity Keeps Us Alive events to multiply allyship spaces between the feminist and LGBTI+ movements.

■ Since 2022, WWHR has been producing documentaries on campaigns run by the women's movement, titled **Remember This Crowd**, to help archive the memory of the feminist movement.

■ WWHR advocates for women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, primarily the right to abortion.



PRODUCING, SHARING, AND DISSEMINATING FEMINIST KNOWLEDGE

WWHR identifies the factors that prevent women from enjoying their civil, economic, political, bodily, and reproductive rights, and conducts national and international research studies that will inform actions and policies to eliminate them. WWHR also prioritizes disseminating and increasing the gains from women's activism and good practices, and documenting relevant information and knowledge. In addition to the publications and materials produced as a result, information on women's human rights is also open to widespread use and disseminated via written, visual, and digital tools.

SELECT PUBLICATIONS*

- ♀ We Have Rights! (Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic)
- ♀ We Have Sexual Rights! (Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic)
- ♀ We Have Reproductive Rights! (Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic)
- ♀ We Have Economic Rights! (Turkish, Arabic)
- ♀ The Purple Newsletter (Turkish, periodical)
- ♀ The Myth of a Warm Home: Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse (Turkish)
- ♀ United Nations CEDAW Process and Advocacy and Lobbying with Non-Governmental Organizations—Shadow Reports from Turkey: Experiences from 1997 & 2005 (Turkish)
- ♀ Beijing+5: Women's Human Rights and Turkey's Commitments at the United Nations (Turkish)
- ♀ HREP: Utilizing State Resources to Promote Women's Human Rights in Turkey
- ♀ Deconstructing Sexuality in the Middle East: Difficulties and Discourses
- ♀ Gender, Sexuality, and Criminal Laws in the Middle East and North Africa: A Comparative Study
- ♀ Women and Sexuality in Muslim Societies (Turkish, Arabic, English)
- ♀ Re/Forming the Penal Code in Turkey from a Gender Perspective: The Case of a Successful Campaign
- ♀ Turkish Civil and Penal Code Reforms from a Gender Perspective: The Success of Two Nationwide Campaigns
- ♀ Women's New Legal Status in Turkey
- ♀ Towards Gender Equality in the Labor Market: Work-Family Life Reconciliation Policies (Turkish)
- ♀ Being a Woman in the Covid-19 Pandemic Research Report (Turkish, English summary report)
- ♀ Reproductive Healthcare Services for Women and Women's Experiences with Abortion Research Report (Turkish, English)
- ♀ Report on Psychosocial Support Carried out in the Earthquake Region: Adıyaman, Diyarbakır, Malatya (Turkish, English)
- ♀ From Local to the Global, Global to Local: What a Difference 30 Years Make! (Turkish, English)

* You can find the full list of all WWHR books, booklets, and research papers published since 1994 at either www.wwhr.org or contact us at wwhr@wwhr.org.

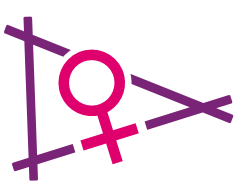
Women for Women's Human Rights is part of many national and international networks, and engages in advocacy work and campaigns with the organizations below:

International Coalitions and Solidarity Networks

- ♀ Association for Women in Development (AWID)
- ♀ Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies (CSBR)
- ♀ Commission on the Status of Women-Women's Rights Caucus (WRC)
- ♀ EuroMed Rights-Women's Rights and Gender Equality Working Group
- ♀ Global Coalition for Human Rights Education (HRE2020)
- ♀ Observatory on the Universality of Rights (OURs)
- ♀ Women's Major Group (WMG)

National Coalitions and Solidarity Networks

- ♀ CEDAW Civil Society Coordination Council
- ♀ European Women's Lobby Turkey Network
- ♀ Feminists in Solidarity for Natural Disasters
- ♀ Human Rights Defenders Solidarity Network (IHSDA)
- ♀ Istanbul Convention Turkey Monitoring Platform
- ♀ Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Platform (CİSÜ)
- ♀ The End Violence Platform
- ♀ The Right to Alimony Women's Platform
- ♀ The Turkish Penal Code Article 103 Women's Platform
- ♀ The Turkish Penal Code Women's Platform
- ♀ The Women's Coalition
- ♀ Women are Strong Together (KBG)
- ♀ Women's Labor and Employment Initiative (KEİG)



*In solidarity
in the struggle*
**FOR OUR RIGHTS
AND EQUALITY**

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